



# STAR: Students Talking And Relating Curriculum

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## **STAR**

The Students Talking And Relating (STAR) program was conceived from many different resources and ideas. It is a program to enhance and enrich the social and communication experiences of both typically developing peers and students with disabilities. STAR was created to mend the bridge between students wanting to play and befriend other students with disabilities, but not knowing what to say or how to approach them. Typically developing children enjoy being around their peers with disabilities, but may have questions, curiosity, and/or be afraid of offending the peer.

The STAR program was built using information from resources such as the Michigan Statewide Autism Resources Training (START) initiative, The Get Into It curriculum from the Special Olympics, and from other peer-to-peer programs, like the LINK program. Some of the information, curriculum materials and outlines were also generated from the need that was observed from the students at Saline Area Schools and within peer relationships between students with disabilities and their typically developing peers.

The goals of the STAR program are to teach social and communication skills to students with and without disabilities and to build relationships between peers that are within the same grade/age-level starting in elementary school. By using peers as supports, we can establish and strengthen students' social skills, communication, and independence.



## **STAR and the Common Core**

The STAR. program applies and relates to the following Common Core Standards:

### Speaking and Listening

3.SL.1: Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners grade 3 topics and texts, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly

3.SL.3: Ask and answer questions about information from a speaker, offering appropriate elaboration and detail

3.SL.6: Speak in complete sentences when appropriate to task and situation in order to provide requested detail or clarification

3.L.1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking

3.L.4: Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibility from a range of strategies



## How, When, Where: Tips about STAR

- S.T.A.R. works well when the group meets on a weekly basis (this will be especially beneficial when student group rotation starts)
- October is generally a good time to start the program, as this gives the students a month to become familiar with their peers in their current grade-level.
- It is recommended that you consult your building principal and other administrators (i.e., director of special education) prior to implementing the S.T.A.R. program, as it is essential to obtain support and communicate expectations, time requirements, group goals/outcomes, and logistic information (i.e., classroom space, schedules, etc.).
- It is best to have the program meet during the students' lunch time so as to not interfere with classroom instruction. It is recommended that you speak to the lunch personnel about which students will be purchasing lunch and seating arrangements in the cafeteria.
- Peers are selected to participate in the program based on how many students with disabilities will be supported in that grade level.
- Choosing the focus/target students (typically students with disabilities) will help in the process of deciding which classroom teacher(s) to work with.
- Talk with the teacher(s) that of the student(s) with disabilities, as they will be a critical link between the program and other school settings.
  
- Starting in the lesson plan for Week 8, invite guest speakers to present information about how they help students with and without disabilities. In

September/October, ask the Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, School Psychologist, Speech-Language Pathologist, Social Worker, Resource Room teacher, Hearing Impaired consultant, Visually Impaired consultant and any other individuals that assist students, if they would like to speak to the STAR group (some of these individuals may already be STAR instructors; in this situation, each week a new instructor or staff member can present about his/her profession).

- Another option is to invite individuals (adults or children) from the community who have a disability or use service animals or other assistive devices to present about what it is like to live with a disability. It is recommended that contacting and coordinating schedules with these individuals begin as early in the program as possible, preferably within the first few weeks of the program.
- At the beginning of each session, have the weekly goals/discussion points displayed, welcome the students, and use the first 5 minutes to review group rules and expectations, lessons from the previous week, or student reflections.
- Reusable name-tags are helpful if there are a lot of support students in the program. Putting them on the counter or table and having the students put them on as they come in is an easy and efficient way to take attendance.
- See the appendix for parent consent forms.
- Consider communicating the weekly lessons and group progress to the parents each week via email. We found that parents often reply and enjoy knowing what their students are learning.
- At the beginning of each session, ask students to reflect from the week before and give them an opportunity to ask questions or state concerns.
- Remember to celebrate success! Plan an evening graduation ceremony for the students and parents to attend one to two weeks before the STAR program will end. Consider also planning a pizza party for the last session to allow students to celebrate, reflect, and enjoy their accomplishments.



## **STAR Fun Fridays**

- Each month after week 12, plan a “Fun-Friday” for the students.
- This typically occurs on the last Friday of the month.
- On Fun Friday, all of the students (with and without disabilities) eat lunch together in the STAR classroom and participate in games/activities that facilitate social skills and communication. This is a great opportunity for students to engage in supervised, structured play to practice the skills they have been learning throughout the STAR program.
- Fun Friday sessions are 30 minutes longer than typical STAR lessons to allow students time to eat their lunch and interact/participate in activities. Because students will be out of their classrooms for an extra half-hour this day, parent notification and teacher notification/approval should occur in advance.
- These Fridays do not consist of STAR curricular instruction, as this is a time for students to practice the skills they have been learning through use of fun activities and games (i.e., Uno, Headhandz, Wii, Sorry, etc.) in small groups.



# Week 1

## Weekly Goals:

- Introductions of STAR instructional staff
- Introduction of STAR students
- Explain what STAR stands for and what it is about
- Establish ground rules
- Explain: confidentiality, respect and disability

### 1. Introduction of STAR instructional staff:

Ask all STAR instructional staff to introduce themselves to the students by sharing: a). What they teach (i.e., speech-language pathologist, social worker, teacher consultant, school psychologist, etc.), b). why they want to be a part of STAR, and c). one interesting fact about them.

### 2. Introduction of STAR students:

Ask each STAR student to introduce themselves to the group by sharing: a). their name, b). what grade they are in (only if you have multiple grades together), c). why they want to be a part of STAR and d). one interesting fact about them.

### 3. Explain what STAR stands for and what it is about

Explain what the acronym S.T.A.R represents (Students Talking and Relating) and the main components of STAR: to educate students about differences and disabilities and to help students with disabilities learn social and communication skills.

### 4. Establish ground rules

Talk about and establish ground rules for the group. Have the students discuss/brainstorm what rules they think would be beneficial. Also, establish and communicate discipline procedures and dismissal from the group (i.e., one office discipline referral = a warning; two office discipline referrals = dismissal from the group).

### 5. Explain: confidentiality, respect and disability

Write the words *Confidentiality*, *Respect*, and *Disability* on the white board and ask the students what they think each word means. After, give the students the formal definitions of these words and compare/contrast their original understanding of the words with the actual definitions.

(These definitions were obtained from dictionary.com)

**Confidentiality:** to keep in strict privacy or secrecy.

**Respect:** to show regard or consideration.

**Disability:** anything that disables or puts one at a disadvantage.





## Week 2

### Weekly Goals

What is an IEP?

What are special education services?

How do students receive special education services?

Who helps or provides service to students?

#### 1. What is an IEP?

Explain that the IEP is an *Individualized Educational Plan* that the target students (if age appropriate), teachers and parents write up to help the student learn the curriculum most effectively and in a way to meet his/her potential.

#### 2. What are special education services?

Ask the students what they know about special education services. Discuss what special education services are, and how these services help students learn the curriculum and help them with social and communication skills.

#### 3. How do students receive special education services?

Talk to the students about how teachers monitor and observe students and their performance. Explain your school's problem-solving or evaluation process, if appropriate, in terms that is developmentally appropriate. Typically, we choose to explain that when teachers or parents have a concern regarding how a student is doing (academically, socially,

etc.) they meet with a team and the team gives suggestions or ideas to help the student in the classroom. If those new ways of helping the student do not improve the student's ability to learn, then the team may meet again and might agree to evaluate the student in the area(s) in which he/she is having difficulty (i.e., reading, writing, math). If the evaluation shows that he/she has difficulty in an area of learning, then that student may receive special education services if the parents and teachers agree and feel it will help the student.

#### 4. Who helps students that have special education services?

Ask the students to brainstorm which teachers they think help students with different needs. Then, list all of the special education teachers/providers: teacher consultant, resource room, speech and language therapist, occupational therapist, physical therapist, social worker, hearing impaired consultant, visually impaired consultant, school psychologist, etc.



## Week 3

### Weekly Goals

How to get a peer's attention

Personal space

Role-playing (with a ball & discussion of other games/activities)

#### 1. How to get a peers attention

Ask the students how someone's attention. Ask how they feel when they try to get someone's attention and they get ignored, or if someone is trying to get their attention and won't stop asking them questions. Discuss ways to get a peer's attention: stand close (talk about personal space), tap on the shoulder if appropriate (discuss how sometimes it is not appropriate to tap someone on the shoulder and how some people do not like to be touched), say the person's name and when the peer/person looks or responds, ask them to play/if they would like to join the activity.

#### 2. Personal Space

A very important part of getting and maintaining a person's attention is keeping and respecting personal space. Have the students pair-up with a peer. Ask them to face each other and stand about three to four yards apart. Next, have one walk toward the other; when the walking friend comes into the standing friend's personal space, have the standing friend put his/her arm out. Then, ask the students to reverse roles and try the activity again. After both students have had turns, discuss personal space. Note that everyone's perception of personal space is different, and ask the

students how it feels when someone gets too close to them, how they behave/react, etc.

### 3. Role-playing

Ask the students to role-play from the beginning of the sequence: getting a peers attention, asking him/her to play, and playing a simple ball toss. Do this activity in pairs and/or in small groups.



## Week 4

### Weekly Goals

- Providing wait-time
- Talking to a peer in an appropriate voice
- Providing choices

#### 1. Providing wait-time

Demonstrate through role-play how wait-time is an important component of social interaction between the listener and speaker. Have two instructors role-play the importance of having wait-time by having one instructor ask questions in rapid succession, without waiting for the other instructor to respond. The instructor who was not given time to reply to the questions should look confused and eventually walk away. Discuss wait-time, noting that some peers may need more wait time than others, that we should respond with patience and understanding rather than frustration, and that it can be helpful for students to ask a question such as “Would you like to play with me?” and wait for their peer to respond before “giving up” and walking away.

#### 2. Talking to peers in an appropriate voice

Model talking in a high pitch or “baby” voice, and other voice levels that are not appropriate to talk to peers. Explain that we talk to students with disabilities with respect, and one way we do that is by speaking to them with the same voice we use to talk to other friends. After, ask the

students how they should talk to the peers with and without disabilities and allow them to give examples.

### 3. Providing choices

Model how to give choices when asking a peer to play, explaining that sometimes it can be easier for people to make decisions when given choices.



## Week 5

### Weekly Goals

Conversational topics

Helping with directions during game/activity

#### 1. Conversational Topics

Ask students to share the topics that they talk about with their friends. Explain that students with disabilities might also share interest in similar topics, and encourage them to discuss their interests with their friends with disabilities (see Appendix for sample conversation topic cards).

#### 2. Helping peers with directions during a game/activity

Ask students how they feel when someone rushes in and helps them with something they didn't need help with. Talk about the importance of being/becoming independent, and note that they should nicely ask a peer if they need help with a task before actually providing help. Have students role play asking a peer "Do you need help?" or "Can I help you?" As a group, brainstorm how they could respond if the peer does not want help, yet is doing a task/activity incorrectly.



## Week 6

### Weekly Goals

Modeling Social Statements  
Encouraging Social Language

#### 1. Modeling Social Statements

Ask the students what kind of things they say or talk to their friends about when they are playing. Give examples to help the students generate a list (i.e., “That was a good catch!”-if playing a ball game; “That’s cool”; “I like to play four-square too!”). Talk to them about how they can model these statements around their peers who need help learning phrases during play/activities.

#### 2. Encouraging social language

Ask the group how they will help the students with disabilities use some of the statements mentioned above. Assign the students to pairs/ small groups and ask them to practice asking a question to a peer with a disability, such as “Did you like that game?” or “Who would you like to play first base?”, etc. Discuss how STAR students can help teach their peers with disabilities to use social language in different activities and contexts.





## Week 7

### Weekly Goals

Play and then discuss how play helps children learn social and communication skills

#### 1. Playing with peers with disabilities

Discuss activities that the students like to engage in at recess. Have the students talk about which activities they would like to ask their peers with disabilities to play.

\*\*\*Refer to Special Olympics *Get Into It* Curriculum for activity lesson:

(<https://www.specialolympics.org/get-into-it>).



## **Weeks 8,9,10 &11**

### Weekly Goals

Guest speakers start this week

- Four weeks are allotted for guest speakers
- Each of these weeks, STAR instructors should continue to welcome the students and write the agenda on the board
- If you do not have enough guest speakers to fill four weeks, use some of the activities from the Special Olympics *Get Into It* curriculum, which can be found at <https://www.specialolympics.org/get-into-it>. These activities work well after week 7.



## **Week 12**

### Weekly Goals

Talk to students about lunch and recess buddies/groupings

#### 1. Lunch and Recess Buddies

- Students will be put in groups of four (three peer models in a group with one student with a disability - small groups work well for turn taking, peer modeling, and games/activities during lunch and conversations during recess).
- STAR students will be selected to be either lunch or recess buddies for that week.
- There will be two different group per student with a disability (one group will be a lunch group and one will be a recess group)
- Explain to the students that sometimes they will be in groups with friends who are in their class, and other times they will be with peers from other classes.
- Email teachers, lunch/cafeteria staff, recess staff etc. so they know who have been selected as lunch and recess buddies for the week. These students might need to move seats at lunch, or play in a different area on the playground. They may also need playground equipment (playground balls to play four-square etc.) or other toys to help facilitate play.

- Let all students know that if they are not chosen to be in a group that week, they will eventually get a turn, as the groups are rotated each week.
- If there is indoor recess and the peer models are in a different class, they do not go to the other class to have indoor recess and should stay in their regular classroom.
- If STAR students are in a different classroom than their peer with a disability and they have different recess times, talk to the teacher - sometimes the peer model can go with the other class, and sometimes it is not possible.
- NOTE: this is a BIG week for the students and it is best to have a whole session planned for this. They have many questions during this day and are also very excited to learn who they will be grouped with. If they have not already learned in the previous weeks who their friends with disabilities are that they will be playing with at recess and sitting with at lunch, this is the week to talk about those students.



## Week 13

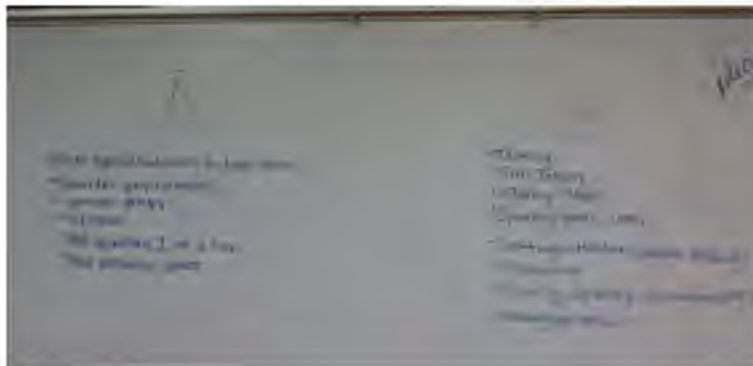
### Weekly Goals

*\*\*Starting this week, the first 5-10 minutes of each lesson is always reserved for students to reflect and share about their experience providing support to their peer with a disability.*

*\*\*Starting this week, announce the new lunch and recess groups at the end of each lesson!*

Creative Communication & Problem Solving

- A PLUS/DELTA chart (*Figure 1.*) is helpful to use each week as students reflect about their experience (+ represents what went well, while the delta indicates things that could be changed for next time).



*Figure 1. Plus/Delta chart to facilitate student reflection.*

- This week, it might take more than 5-10 minutes for the students to reflect on how things went, or they may need some prompting. As the weeks progress, students will generate more ideas on their own.

## 1. Define: Communication and Problem Solving

### Activity: Human Knot

Ask the students get in groups of five to eight students. Have each student fold their arms across their chest and hold the hand of the person beside them. This will essentially make a “human knot”. Ask each group to first attempt to “untie” their knot without using words to communicate. Then, ask the students to try the activity again using their words to help them problem-solve.

Reflection: Was it easier to untie the knot the first time or the second time, and why? When they weren’t able to use words to communicate, how did they problem-solve with their teams? How did they know which way to turn and twist? Did it take the groups longer/shorter to untie the knot than they thought? What kind of words/language did they use with each other? Did anyone become frustrated? How does this relate to when we play with our friends with disabilities?

- Allow the last five minutes to announce the new weekly lunch and recess groups.



## Week 14

### Weekly Goals

\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection

\*\* *Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups*

Creative Communication & Problem Solving: Communication & team work

1. Communication and Team Work (you will need a large tarp/sheet for the activity): Define and discuss team work.

Activity: Group students into two or three groups of 5-10 students. Give each group a large tarp and ask them to unfold it and stand on it with both feet. Explain to the groups that when you tell them to fold their tarps, they must fold their tarps in half without taking their feet off of it (all feet should be on the tarp after it is folded, and students should not step off of the tarp to fold it). Practice this activity with and without using words.

Reflection questions: Who talked? Did anyone not talk? What kinds of words did they use? Did they work as a team? Did they encourage and help each other? How do they use team work when playing a team sport or game or with their friends with disabilities? Did they use encouraging language discussed in week 6?



## Week 15

### Weekly Goals

**\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection**

**\*\* Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups**

Creative Communication and Problem Solving: Team work, nonverbal language, problem solving

#### 1. Creative communication and problem solving unit concluding activity:

Discuss concepts from previous weeks: team work, problem solving and also incorporate information about nonverbal language.

**Activity:** Divide students into small groups of 5-10. Ask them to form a circle and hold the hand of the person beside them. Next, place a hula hoop between two of the peers (so that their arms are through the middle of the hoop) and ask the students to walk/wiggle through the hula hoop without talking or letting go of their peers' hands.

**Reflection:** How did it feel to solve a problem without talking? Did they become more/less frustrated because they couldn't talk? Did they use facial gestures to communicate? Did they use more "wait-time" as discussed in week 4?





## Week 16

### Weekly Goals

\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection

\*\* *Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups*  
Citizenship

#### 1. Citizenship

- Help the students define citizenship.
- Talk about school rules (Be safe, Be respectful, Be responsible) and how they apply to us and our friends.
- Discuss examples of how we show good citizenship skills by following the rules.
- How are we helping others by being good citizens?



## Week 17

### Weekly Goals

\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection

\*\* *Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups*

Citizenship: How are we good citizens at school, home, and in community

#### 1. Citizenship

Review last week's definition of citizenship

Ask the students the following questions:

How are you a good citizen at home?

How are you a good citizen at school?

How are you a good citizen in the community?

How can you be a good citizen to all friends?



## Week 18

### Weekly Goals

\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection

\*\* *Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups*

Leadership

#### 1. Leadership

Ask the students to think of leaders they know.

How do they know that person is a leader?

What are characteristics of a leader?

Have any of them ever been a leader?

Compare and contrast a leader and follower

Is it ever good to be a follower? When?



## Week 19

### Weekly Goals

\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection

\*\* *Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups*  
Leadership

#### 1. Leadership

Ask the following questions to the group, then have them turn to a friend and discuss before sharing as a whole group.

Why do we join groups?

Name three good characteristics of a leader

Compare and contrast examples and non-examples of good leadership



## Week 20

### Weekly Goals

**\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection**

**\*\* Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups**  
Leadership

#### 1. Leadership

Start by having them reflect in pairs or triads how they have been leaders since joining the S.T.A.R. group.

What have they liked about being a leader? What challenges have they experienced in their roles as a leader?

Ask the following questions:

What is it like being a leader to their peers?

Have they had to "stand up" for their friend with a disability, or other friends?

Compare and contrast being assertive in a positive way vs. being a bully (connect this to the school rules, if applicable)



## Week 21

### Weekly Goals

\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection

\*\* *Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups*

Review of all concepts covered in S.T.A.R.

#### 1. Review:

Confidentiality

Respect

Disability

Problem Solving

Team work

Citizenship

Leadership

Who were some guest speakers?

What jobs did they have?



## **Week 22**

### Weekly Goals

**\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection**

**\*\* Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups**

**Continue Review**

1. Continue Review, Program reflection and additional problem-solving and/or team building activities as needed



## **Week 23**

### Weekly Goals

**\*\* Allow 5-10 minutes for weekly reflection**

**\*\* Allow 5 minutes at the end of the lesson to announce new lunch and recess groups**  
Reflection Sheet

#### 1. Reflection Sheets

Give students program reflection sheets. Let students know that they can volunteer to read their responses at the graduation ceremony.





## **Week 24 & 25**

# **Graduation Rehearsal & Ceremony**

### Suggestions & Tips for Graduation

- Print simple diplomas to give the students during the ceremony (most word processing programs have these templates, or they can be found online)
- The graduation is for ALL of the students (with and without a disability) who participated in STAR group
- Reserve your schools stage, cafeteria, etc. to provide enough space for the students and families
- Assign families to bring in refreshments (i.e., last names that begin with A-M bring a dessert, N-Z bring juice boxes or water). Also ask for paper product donations.
- Invite your guest speakers, administrators, teachers, tech. support, and anyone else who supported the program. Have the students give these individuals a flower or a nice card they made. This is a good opportunity for students see the team work that is necessary to support this program and also shows respect.
- Ask students to volunteer to read their reflection sheets at the graduation ceremony.



## **Week 26**

### **Pizza Party/Celebration Party**

- Ask for parents to donate money, beverages, paper products, or snacks (carrot sticks, desserts etc) for the celebration party.
- All STAR students are invited and encouraged to attend



## Appendix

*Sample STAR Informational Flyer*

# Woodland Meadows Students Talking And Relating (S.T.A.R.) Program

## What is a STAR Support Student?

A STAR support student is a volunteer who supports a student with a disability.

## Who can become a STAR Support Student?

STAR support students are selected on a voluntary basis from the 3rd grade classrooms at Woodland Meadows Elementary. STAR support students must have parent permission to participate in the program.

## What are the STAR Support Student Responsibilities?

A STAR support student participates in the program 5 days a week during their regularly scheduled classes. He/she follows the same daily schedule, but will meet once a week with Ms. Jozsa and Mrs. Munn during their regularly scheduled lunch. STAR support students are there to participate in the activities scheduled and be models for the students with disabilities. The STAR support students will be under the direction of the school psychologist and speech-language pathologist.

## Benefits of the STAR Support Program

The STAR support program provides many opportunities for general education students as well as the students with disabilities. Students learn to relate to people with different needs and develop an increased understanding of individual differences. Student responsibility is also an added benefit of the program.

*Sample Permission Slip for Students with Disabilities*

Woodland Meadows'  
STAR Peer to Peer Program Permission Slip for  
Students with Communication Disorders

My child, \_\_\_\_\_, has permission to participate in the STAR peer-to-peer support program. I understand that the following activities will take place to implement this program:

- STAR team talks with general education class about communication disorders, social challenges, disabilities, and my child.
- STAR mentor works with my child in their classroom.
- STAR mentor eats lunch and participates at recess with my child.
- STAR mentor participates in social groups/parties with my child.

If you would like your child to participate in the STAR program, please sign this permission slip and return it to your child's classroom teacher. If you have questions about the STAR program, please contact Ms. Jennifer Jozsa at your earliest convenience.

Thank you for your support with the STAR peer-to-peer support program!

Kind regards,

Jennifer Jozsa

School Psychologist  
Saline Area Schools

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
parent signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
date

*Sample Permission Slip for Peer Volunteers*

## Woodland Meadows' STAR Peer to Peer Program

Dear Parents and Guardians,

The Students Talking And Relating (STAR) program was created to support students with communication disorders or difficulty relating to peers socially who attend Woodland Meadows Elementary. The program involves 3rd grade students who spend time with the students with communication disorders and social challenges. Similar programs are established in school districts throughout the state of Michigan and have met with great success. Not only does the program benefit the students with communication and social difficulty, but parents and teachers alike have reported great benefits to the general education students as well. If your child decides to become a STAR support student, he or she would be working with/under the supervision of the school psychologist, Ms. Jozsa, and speech-language pathologist, Mrs. Munn. As a peer-to-peer support, your child would help provide support and act as a participant in the activities scheduled.

As part of the STAR program, your son or daughter would volunteer their time during their regularly scheduled lunch once each week to meet with Ms. Jozsa and Mrs. Munn. In addition, they may miss approximately 1/2 hour of class per month, at a designated time during the school day that will be pre-arranged with their classroom teacher.

If you would like for your child to be a STAR support student for students with communication disorders and social challenges, please fill out the information below and return this form to your child's classroom teacher by Monday, October 29, 2012.

For questions regarding the STAR program, please contact Jennifer Jozsa. Thank you for your support with the STAR peer-to-peer support program!

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I give my permission for \_\_\_\_\_ who is in \_\_\_\_\_ class to participate in the STAR peer-to-peer program at Woodland Meadows Elementary.

Parent/Guardian Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Sample Parent Information Letter*

# Woodland Meadows Students Talking And Relating (STAR) Program

Dear Parent(s)/Guardian(s),

Your child was selected as one of the STAR program students. We are so excited to have him/her with us! We wanted to gather some basic information from you and to share some information with you.

Below, you will find a general outline of what we will be teaching the STAR students. We are also including a calendar of events and dates. To help with the regularly scheduled Tuesday meetings, we are asking, if possible, that the students pack a lunch. This will help decrease the transition time and provide us more time as a whole group. Thank you kindly for your help with this!

There are several general units of study from which we will be developing our framework. Some of them are: Creative Communication and Problem Solving, Leadership, and Citizenship. These units of study are correlated to the Michigan Core Curriculum Standards.

Meeting dates (these are all on Tuesdays and will take place during the 3rd grade lunch time 11:40-12:10):

Introduction:

October 30: Introduction, confidentiality, respect & disability

Role-playing:

November 6

November 13

November 27

December 4

December 11

Guest speakers (Occupational Therapist, Physical Therapist, Social Worker, Teacher Consultant, Resource Room Teacher, School Psychologist, Speech-Language Pathologist, etc)

December 18

January 8

January 15

Review, Guidelines, etc

January 22

Creative Communication & Problem Solving

January 29

February 5

February 12

February 19

Citizenship

February 26

March 5

March 12

March 19

Leadership

March 26

April 9

April 16

April 23

Review main concepts, start discussions about graduation end-of-year etc.

May 7

May 14

May 21

STAR graduation night

Thursday May 23rd 6:00 PM



In addition to the above mentioned meeting dates, we will also be meeting once a month for Fun Friday. During this time, we will be interacting with various games, activities and tasks that are motivating to the students and assist in developing social and communication skills. These dates are typically the last Friday of the month during the students regularly scheduled lunch. Dates are as follows:

February 22

March 29

April 26

Thank you so very much for giving your child permission to participate in this program. Please contact us if you have any questions, concerns, would like more information, or would like to discuss any information further.

We are excited to start with our STARs!!

Jennifer Jozsa  
School Psychologist

Kimberly Munn  
School Speech Language Pathologist

