TIPS ON HOW TO WRITE A PARENT CONCERNS LETTER

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Montana's Parent Training Information Center

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What does the school staff need to know for your child to be successful?

Ask yourself the following questions and include this information in your parent concerns letter:

1. How does my child learn best?

When you see _____ in the classroom, it usually means _____.

Some Common Examples:

- When my child has their head down, it usually means they need a break.
- When my child stomps their foot or demands help it usually means they are anxious and need reassurance they will be helped when it's their turn.
- When my child is standing up or partly standing up at their desk it usually means they need to walk back and forth in the back of the room.
- When my child is repeatedly clicking their pen, it usually means they need a fidget object.

2. Are there specific things or actions that cause my child to shut down, resist learning, act out, disrupt the class etc.?

Describe the behavior school staff will see. Remember all behavior is communication even if the behavior is negative or inappropriate.

When _____ happens my child usually _____.

Some Common Examples:

- When there is a sudden loud noise, my child will cover their ears and cry loudly.
- When there is too much noise, my child will stop working and stare off into space.
- When my child receives too many directions or steps at once, they will refuse to begin.
- When there is too much visual stimulation, my child will be distracted and disturb others.

Data/Documentation

Why is it Smart to Collect Data About Your Child?
It is important to keep a written record of what you observe at home that relates to your child's learning. This information or data will be useful for the Extended School Year (ESY) IEP meeting in the spring. Waiting to start collecting data until the end of the school year, will not give a complete a picture of your child. It is especially important to collect data during and immediately after school breaks. ESY is based on your child's regression and recoupment of learned skills and emerging skills.

3. What Terminology is Commonly Used When Recording or Talking Data?

A)   Regression: Lost Skills

B)   Recoupment: The time it takes for your child to regain the lost skills

C)   Emerging Skills: Critical skills that your child is just beginning to learn

D)   Continuous Attention/Progress Monitoring: Skills that need tracking on a regular basis while your child is attending school?

E)   Applying Skills across Environments: Is your child able to demonstrate the same skills at home as they can at school?

4. What to Track:

A)   Behaviors, such as:

- Struggles with transitions,
- Short Attention span.
- Those attributed to mental health issues.
- Struggles to apply skills across different environments.
- Struggles with Daily Living Skills (DLAs).

B)   Homework and Assignments

C)   Regression in skills and what it looks like.

D)   Regression in processing speed or reaction time and what it looks like

E)   Things that are working for your child.

Be specific and track what is noteworthy in other words, things that make you pause and wonder…
Not everything is noteworthy.

5. How to Track

A)   Special Notebook to be used strictly for data collection

B)   Pre-Made Printed Tools: www.adayinourshoes.com

C)   Voice Recording App on Your Phone

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