

Communication Tips

For Families of Students with Disabilities

Working and Communicating Positively with School Staff



Looks Like



Sounds Like

Communicate Clearly



Reminding people of your child's strengths.



"Please remember that the disability is just a part of who my child is. He/she has many strengths and unique characteristics."



Listening to others with an open mind and offering your ideas.



"I agree that my child needs to improve in reading comprehension. Can we adjust the schedule so that he/she will receive intensive instruction during the regularly scheduled reading block in the general education class?"



Taking a step-by-step approach to problems and offering your ideas for solutions. Express your understanding that things can change over time.



"I'm not sure this strategy will work with my child, so let's try it and talk about this again in two weeks. If this doesn't work, I have another idea that we could try."



Jotting down notes before, during, and after you meet with your child's individual educational plan (IEP) team members. Use concrete and specific examples when you share concerns.



"I'd like to share some concerns about my son's/daughter's communication support needs. He/she needs to have a special switch in order to communicate choices. We use this device at home to make choices about foods, activities, and clothing."



Asking questions to understand both sides of an issue. Get a second opinion from other teachers or the school administrator.



"I'm not sure I understand why my son/daughter has been placed in a different reading program. Can you explain how this decision was made? I think I would also like to hear more about the program from the reading coach."

