

Appendix A:

Sample Letters for Parents

The following pages contain sample letters that can be used when facing a number of situations described through this guide. These letters are simply suggestions for the reader and should be modified as needed to fit the reader's individual facts and situation.

If you have questions concerning the use of these letters, please contact ISBE at (217)782-5589 or (866)262-6663 and ask to speak with a consultant who can provide further information.

1. Writing to Discuss a Problem

When might I want to write to my child's school?

Sometimes your child may have a particular problem at school. You may have talked to your child's teacher about this concern. The two of you may have written notes back and forth or talked on the phone. If it seems like nothing is happening to resolve your concern, then you may want to write a formal letter. Perhaps the communication hasn't been as clear as you think. Maybe you feel that the seriousness of your concern isn't fully understood. By writing a letter, the school will learn that you consider the matter to be an important one that needs to be addressed. You can write about any concern - an IEP issue, a general education issue, school yard bullying, or the need to help your child with social skills or behavior improvement. There are no rules as to the type of problem you can write about. Any school problem is worth writing about if it is having a negative impact on your child.

It is important to keep copies of all letters in your personal binder. It is also helpful to hand deliver or to send certain letters via certified mail, return receipt requested, so that you are certain the school received your letter. This is especially important when the school must follow certain guidelines and follow specific timelines.

Note: The "cc:" at the bottom of the letter means you are sending a copy of your letter to the people listed after the cc. If you write to the Director of Special Education about a problem at your child's school, you should copy the principal. If you write to the principal about a problem, you should copy your child's teacher or other staff involved with your child. This follows the "chain of command." It also lets people involved know your concerns and that you are taking steps to resolve these concerns.

Always keep a copy of your letter for your own files.

Letter to Discuss a Problem Your Child Is Having at School

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Today's Date

Name of Principal
 Name of School
 Street Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Principal's Name):

In this paragraph say who you are and give your child's full name and his or her current class placement. Say something positive about your child's situation here before you state your reason for writing.

BRIEFLY explain why you are writing. Give relevant history and facts that support your concerns. (For example, your 3rd grader is struggling in school and you want to ask for help. You might say that your child's school work has been getting worse throughout the year. That fact is relevant. Talking about something from your child's infancy probably isn't.)

In this paragraph state what you would like to have happen or what you would like to see changed. You may BRIEFLY say what you would not like, or what has been tried and not worked. However, spend most of this paragraph saying what you want for your child.

Explain what type of response you would prefer. For instance, do you need to meet with someone, do you want a return letter, or would you prefer a phone call?

Finally, state that you look forward to hearing from the person soon or give a date ("Please respond by the 15th").

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's teacher
 Other staff

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2. Requesting an Initial Evaluation for Special Education Services

When would I request an evaluation for special education services?

If your child has been consistently struggling in school, his or her problems may be due to a disability. If the school thinks your child may have a disability, they will contact you to request your written permission to evaluate your child. Under the IDEA, you also have the right to ask the school to evaluate your child. The purpose of the evaluation is to see if he or she has a disability and needs special education services. This evaluation is free of charge.

If your child has been identified by your doctor or other professionals as having a disability, you will want to include this information in your letter to the school. You should also provide copies of any reports you have received that explain your child's condition. If you decide to write the school and ask that your child be evaluated, here's an example of what you may want to say.

Note: If your child has been identified as having a disability by professionals outside the school system, add the following sentence *to the end of the first paragraph* in the letter that follows.

(Child's name) has been identified as having (name of disability) by (name of professional). Enclosed is a copy of the report(s) I have received that explains (child's name) condition.

Letter to Request an Initial Evaluation for Special Education Services

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Today's Date

Name of Principal or Special Education Administrator
 Name of School
 Street Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Principal's or Administrator's Name):

I am writing to request that my son/daughter, (child's name), be evaluated for special education services. I am worried that (child's name) is not doing well in school and believe he/she may need special services in order to learn. (Child's name) is in the () grade at (name of school). (teacher's name) is his/her teacher.

Specifically, I am worried because (child's name) has some problems at school. (Give a few direct examples of your child's problems at school).

We have tried to help (child's name). (If you or the school have done anything extra to help your child, briefly state it here).

I understand that I have to give written permission in order for (child's name) to be evaluated. Before the evaluation begins, I have some questions about the process that I need to have answered. (List any questions you may have).

I would be happy to talk with you about (child's name). You can send me information or call me during the day at (daytime telephone number). Thank you for your prompt attention to my request.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal (if the letter is not addressed to the principal)
 Your child's teacher(s)

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3. Requesting an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at Public Expense

The IDEA gives you the right to have your child evaluated independently. This means you have the right to have your child evaluated by someone other than staff who work for the school system. The purpose of the evaluation is to see if your child has a disability and, if so, what his or her special needs are. In some cases, you may pay for an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE). In other cases, the school system may pay for it. If the school system pays for the IEE or sees that the IEE is done at no cost to you, this is known as an *IEE at public expense*.

Why would I want to request an Independent Educational Evaluation (IEE) at public expense?

Sometimes a family may feel that the results of the school's evaluation do not accurately describe their child. Some parents may want additional academic tests or medical exams, or they may be interested in having evaluations done in skill areas the school staff did not test. Parents can choose to have their child tested outside the school system, for these or other reasons.

However, if you want the school to pay for an Independent Educational Evaluation, you will need to make your request **BEFORE** any independent testing is done. Some reasons you may want to request an independent evaluation include:

- You believe the original evaluation was incorrect.
- The original evaluation was not done in your child's native language.
- You believe that the original evaluation was incomplete and additional tests are needed.
- The evaluation was not done with the needed accommodations (for example, in Braille or administered by someone who knows sign language).

The school system may agree to your request and pay for the IEE. On the other hand, the school system may deny your request and ask for a due process hearing to show that its own evaluation was appropriate. You will have the chance at this hearing to state your reasons why the school system should be required to pay for the IEE. An impartial third person (called a hearing officer) listens to and reviews the evidence. This individual then decides if the school system must pay for an independent evaluation. If the hearing officer decides in favor of the school system, you may still obtain an independent evaluation, but you must pay for it. The results of the IEE must be considered by the school in any decision made regarding your child's free appropriate public education.

Letter to Request an Independent Educational Evaluation at Public Expense

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Person to Whom You Are Writing (e.g., Superintendent, Director of Special Education, Principal, etc.), Title
 Name of School or District
 Street Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Name):

My son/daughter, (child's name) is in the () grade at (name of school) in (teacher's name) class. He/She was evaluated for special education services in (month/year). I am writing to request an Independent Educational Evaluation at public expense for the following reasons.

(BRIEFLY list your reasons. Be very specific. For example, you may choose from the following starting statements.)

"I disagree with the evaluation results because . . ."

"The evaluation should have included . . ."

"An evaluation should have been done in the area of . . ."

I would like an Independent Educational Evaluation to be done as quickly as possible so that we can fully address (child's name) needs. Please respond as soon as possible and send me copies of the school's guidelines for this. My daytime telephone number is (give your phone number).

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal (if the letter is not addressed to the principal)
 Your child's teacher

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4. Requesting Your Child's Records

The IDEA gives you the right to look at all of your child's education records. This includes records about his or her identification, evaluation, educational placement, and special education program. You also have the right to ask the school to explain and interpret the records for you. You may ask the school to give you a copy of your child's records. They may charge you a reasonable fee for making a copy.

What might be some reasons to request copies of my child's school records?

School records contain valuable information about your child's strengths and areas of need. These records can provide a formal way of communicating between the professionals at your child's school, you, and other professionals who may work with your child. Here are some reasons you might have for requesting a copy of your child's records:

- Reviewing records lets you be sure that the records are correct and contain all necessary information.
- When your family is moving to a new school district, records may need to be sent.
- When you are taking your child for an independent evaluation, copies of past records may be useful.
- The records may help the staff at other programs your child attends (like camp, tutors, or in-hospital schools) design their activities.
- Postsecondary programs may need to see copies of your child's records.
- It's a good idea to have a copy for your home files, especially if your child is finishing school.

Letter to Request Your Child's Records

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Person to Whom You Are Writing (e.g., Superintendent, Building Principal, etc.), Title
 Name of School or District
 Street Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Name):

I am writing to schedule a time to come and review all of my child's records. My son/daughter, (child's name), is in the () grade at (name of school) in (teacher's name) class. I will also need copies of some or all of these records.

Please let me know where and when I can come in to see the records. I need these records by (date). You can reach me during the day at (give your phone number).

I look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Your Name

YourName Your Add

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5. Requesting a Meeting to Review the Individualized Education Program (IEP)

If your child is receiving special education services, he or she must have a written plan known as an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP lists, among other things, annual goals and objectives for your child and it also lists the special education and related services that he or she will receive. You are a member of the team that writes your child's IEP. As an IEP team member, you can ask that your child's IEP be reviewed and revised, if needed.

Why might I ask for a review of my child's IEP?

Some reasons for requesting an IEP review include:

- Your child has met one, or several, of the goals written in the IEP.
- Your child does not seem to be making enough progress toward one, or several, of the goals written in the IEP.
- You feel your child needs more services or other services in order to make progress.
- You feel that your child no longer needs a service he or she is currently receiving.
- Your child has experienced a major change, such as an illness, injury, or surgery.
- You feel that the supports and services written in the IEP aren't being provided.

Letter to Request a Meeting to Review the IEP

Your Name
Your Address
City, Illinois Zip Code

Date

Name of Your Child's Special Education Teacher
Name of School
Street Address
City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Teacher's Name):

I am writing to request an IEP review meeting. I would like to discuss making some possible changes in (child's name)'s IEP. I am concerned about (state your reasons, but don't go into detail about the specific changes you want to make—save those for the meeting).

I would also like to have (names of specialists or other staff) attend. I think his/her/their ideas about the changes we may need to make will be valuable.

I can arrange to meet with you and the other members of the IEP team on (days) between (give a range of time, such as between 2:00 and 4:00). Please let me know what time would be best for you.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. My daytime telephone number is (give your phone number). Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Specialists or other staff

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6. Requesting a Change of Placement

Placement means where your child's IEP is carried out. Depending on your child's needs, his or her placement may be in the general education classroom, in a special education classroom, in a special school, in your home, in a hospital or institution, or in another setting. Placement is based on the IEP; therefore, when you request a change in placement, you are actually requesting an IEP review to discuss your child's needs and where those needs are met.

Why might I ask for a change in my child's placement?

You might want to request a change in your child's placement if you feel that your child's needs are not being met appropriately. For example, you may become concerned about your child's placement after reviewing your child's progress reports; reviewing the results of any state, district-wide, or alternate assessments your child has been given; talking with your child's teacher or other service providers; or talking with your child.

Placement concerns might also include:

- changes in your child's needs
- current class size is too large or too small
- current class is too academic or not academic enough
- the placement does not meet your child's social or emotional needs
- the building is too difficult for your child to get around
- any other reason that is interfering in your child's success.

Letter to Request a Change in Placement

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Principal or Special Education Administrator
 Name of School
 Street Address
 City, State, Zip Code

Dear (Principal's or Administrator's Name):

I am writing to request a meeting to discuss a change in placement for my son/daughter, (child's name). He/she is currently in the () grade in (teacher's name) class. I feel he/she needs to be in (name of alternative setting, if you know; otherwise describe the type of placement you feel is more appropriate for your child, such as your neighborhood school, a center-based program, general education class, or special class).

I am most concerned about (keep this paragraph brief and mention your child's unmet needs, not problems with individual people).

I would also like to have (name of teachers and/or any specialists you would like from the current and/or requested placement) attend this meeting.

I can arrange to meet with the rest of the IEP team on (days) between (give a range of time, such as between 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m.). Please let me know what time would be best.

I look forward to hearing from you soon. My daytime telephone number is (give your phone number). Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal (if letter is addressed to an administrator)
 Your child's teachers
 Specialists or other staff

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7. Requesting Prior Written Notice

What is prior written notice, and why would I want it?

There are certain times when the school must put in writing its decisions about your child's education and the reasons for those decisions. This written communication is called *prior written notice*. You have the right to receive prior written notice, whenever the school wants to (or refuses to) -

- evaluate your child.
- change your child's disability identification.
- change your child's educational placement.
- change the way in which your child is provided a free and appropriate public education.

The school system is supposed to automatically provide you with prior written notice in any of these events. In practice, though, sometimes the school may tell you its decision over the telephone, in a meeting, or in a one-on-one conversation. If you want the notification in writing, you may ask the school system to provide it. It is best that you put your request in writing.

For example, you may have asked for an IEE at public expense. The school system may tell you on the phone that it has denied your request. You may ask for prior written notice of this denial. The school must then put its decision in writing and explain the reasons for the decision. This information can be helpful if you pursue the IEE through a due process hearing. You will then have in writing the school system's reasons for denying the IEE.

Letter to Request Prior Written Notice

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Today's Date

Name of Person to Whom You Are Writing (e.g., Director of Special Education, Case Manager, etc.), Title
 District or School Name
 Street Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Name):

At our meeting (or) during our phone conversation on (date), we discussed my child's (evaluation, eligibility, placement, IEP, services, etc.). I requested () and was denied (or) I was told the school intends to (), but I have never received any information about this decision in writing. In accordance with the IDEA regulations, I am requesting prior written notice regarding (be very specific about the issue/decision you want the school to respond to. Bullet or number the items.)

According to the IDEA, at 34 CRF 300.503, prior written notice must include the following:

- A description of what the school is proposing or refusing to do
- An explanation of why the school proposes or refuses this action
- A description of each evaluation procedure, assessment, records, or report the school used as a basis for the proposed or refused action
- Information on how to obtain a copy of procedural safeguards available and a full explanation of the safeguards
- Sources for parents to contact to obtain assistance in understanding of this part
- A description of other options that the IEP team considered and the reasons why those options were rejected
- A description of any other relevant factors that went into this decision.

I look forward to receiving a detailed response to my request as soon as possible. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Your name

cc: The principal, supervisor, or special education administrator

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8. Requesting Mediation

When would I make a request for mediation?

Mediation may be used if you have a serious disagreement with the school. In mediation, you and school personnel sit down with an impartial third person (called a mediator). All parties then try to reach an agreement. Mediation is voluntary though, and *both parties must agree to meet with a mediator*. There are benefits to mediation, both for you and for the school. Mediation agreements are binding and enforceable agreements.

Letter to Request a Mediation

Your Name
Your Address
City, Illinois Zip Code
Your Telephone Number

Date

Mediation Coordinator
Illinois State Board of Education
100 North First Street
Springfield, Illinois 62777

Dear Mediation Coordinator:

My son/daughter, (child's name), currently attends (name of school) and is in the () grade in (teacher's name) class. I am writing to inform you that the school and I are in disagreement concerning (BRIEFLY state what the disagreement is about). We have been unsuccessful in resolving this dispute, and I am requesting mediation so that we may resolve our differences.

I would like the mediation to be done as soon as possible. Please let me know when this can be arranged and contact the Illinois State Board of Education to arrange this service. My daytime telephone number is (give your phone number). Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Sincerely yours,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal
Your child's teacher

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Illinois State Board of Education, August 2020

9. Informing the School that You Intend to Enroll Your Child in a Private School at Public Expense

What do I do if I think my child's placement should be in a private school?

In a very few cases, the most appropriate placement for a child is in a private school. When this placement decision is made by the public school IEP team or placement group, the public school pays the cost of the private school. Sometimes a parent may feel that a recommended public school placement is not appropriate for his or her child. The parent may reject that placement and decide to enroll his or her child in a private school. If you find yourself facing this decision, *and* you want the public school to reimburse you for the cost of the private school, there are several things you need to know.

- A court or a hearing officer may require the school district to reimburse you if the court or hearing officer decides that -
 - » the public school did not make a free and appropriate public education available prior to your child's enrollment in the private school, and
 - » the private placement is appropriate.
- Your request for reimbursement may be reduced or denied before enrolling your child in the private school if -
 - » at the most recent IEP meeting, you did not inform the school that you reject the proposed placement and intend to enroll your child in a private school at public expense, and
 - » at least 10 business days prior to removing your child from the public school, you did not give the school written notice.

Here is an example of a letter you might send if you decide to enroll your child in a private school and want the public school to pay for it.

Once you have sent this letter to the school, you will also need to make a request for a due process hearing so that a hearing officer can decide whether or not the public school must reimburse you for the costs of the private school.

Letter to Inform School of Private School Enrollment at Public Expense

Your Name
Your Address
City, Illinois Zip Code
Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Principal or Administrator
Name of School
Street Address
City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Principal's or Administrator's Name):

My son/daughter, (child's name), is a special education student in the () grade in (name of teacher)'s class at (name of school). Recently, I attended a meeting to determine (child's name)'s school placement. I am writing to inform you that I reject the proposed placement for (child's name) and intend to enroll him/her in a private school at public expense. At the most recent IEP meeting, held on (date), I informed the other team members of my decision.

The reasons for my decision are as follows: (keep this section brief, list specifics about why you believe the public school placement is not appropriate for your child).

(Child's name) will be attending (name of private school) effective (date).

Should you wish to discuss this matter further, I can be reached at (give your phone number).
Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal (if letter is addressed to an administrator)
Your child's teacher(s)

10. Requesting a Due Process Hearing

Due process is one approach that parents and schools can use to resolve disagreements. During a due process hearing, you and the school present evidence before an impartial third person called a hearing officer. The hearing officer then decides how to resolve the problem.

You have the right to request a due process hearing on any matter related to -

- your child's identification as a "child with a disability"
- his or her evaluation
- his or her educational placement
- the special education and related services that the school provides to your child.

Some reasons why a parent might file for due process include:

- The school refuses to evaluate your child.
- You disagree with the eligibility decision.
- You disagree with the services, goals, or objectives in the IEP.
- The school refuses to provide a related service, modification, or supplementary aid you think your child needs.
- You disagree with the placement decision.

For more information on the due process proceedings, please see Chapter 11, "Conflict Resolution."

Send your letter requesting a due process hearing to the superintendent of schools in your home district. Under IDEA, when you ask for a due process hearing, your request must include:

- the name of your child
- the address of your child's residence
- the name of your child's school
- a description of the problem, including facts relating to the problem
- how you would resolve the problem, to the extent that a solution is known and available to you as parents.

Each state is required to have a model form to help parents request a due process hearing. You are not required to use the model form, but this ISBE form can be found at https://www.isbe.net/Documents/dp_parental_19-86a.pdf. This form can be used instead of the sample letter. If the information in your request does not fit within the spaces provided on the form, please attach additional pages.

Letter to Request a Due Process Hearing

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of School District Superintendent, Title
 Name of District
 Street Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Name):

I am writing to request a due process hearing on behalf of my child, (child's name), whose address is (give your child's address, even if it is the same as your own). (Child's name) attends (name of school).

I have met with school personnel in an effort to resolve our differences concerning my son's/daughter's (IEP, placement, testing, or . . .) and have been unable to do so. The nature of our disagreement is as follows.

- Explain the problem with BRIEF statements of fact.
- Consider listing the facts with bullets or numbers.
- An acceptable resolution of the problem would include . . .

(To the extent that you know how you want the disagreement to be resolved, state the facts here, again bulleting or numbering the items if possible.)

Please advise me as soon as possible as to the date and time of this hearing so that I can make the necessary arrangements. My daytime telephone number is (give your phone number).

I also request that this hearing be (open to all involved personnel/closed) to anyone other than those directly involved). (Child's name) will/will not attend the hearing. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal
 Your advocate/attorney

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11. Filing a Complaint with the Illinois State Board of Education

What's a complaint, and why would I file one?

You can file a complaint with ISBE about any of the matters for which you might otherwise file a request for a due process hearing, as well as for any other reason you feel that the school system has violated the IDEA. However, be aware that, if you write a complaint on an issue that is also part of a current due process hearing, ISBE will not investigate this issue. The due process hearing takes precedence over the complaint process. ISBE will only investigate those issues in your complaint that are not part of your due process hearing. Some examples of issues you might write a complaint letter about include:

- The school is not providing services required by your child's IEP.
- You were not allowed to participate in your child's IEP.
- Your child is denied the opportunity to attend or participate in school-sponsored events, such as field trips or after school activities.
- Your child has a shorter school day because the special education students arrive later or are dismissed from school earlier than the general education students are.
- The school fails to give you appropriate prior written notice.

How do I file a complaint with ISBE?

Illinois' policies for filing a complaint are included in the regulations at 23 IAC 226.570. The complaint letter should include:

- a statement detailing the alleged violation(s) (for example, your school district has violated a requirement of Part B of the IDEA or its regulations), and the facts on which the statement is based.
- the student's name, parent/guardian name, mailing address, daytime telephone number, and the name of the student's resident school district.

The letter on the next page is an example of how you might write this complaint. Note that it is important for you to describe what you believe the school district did wrong with regard to your child's special education.

Letter to File a Complaint

Your Name
 Your Address
 City, Illinois Zip Code
 Your Telephone Number

Date

Complaint Coordinator
 Illinois State Board of Education
 100 North First Street Springfield, Illinois 62777

Dear Complaint Coordinator:

I am writing to file a complaint on behalf of my son/daughter, (child's name), regarding his/her education in the (name of school district). The nature of my complaint is as follows:

- Explain the problem with BRIEF statements of fact.
- Consider listing the facts that support your complaint with bullets or numbers.

For the above reasons, I believe the school district is in violation of certain requirements in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the Illinois School Code, specifically:

- List the issues you want addressed by ISBE.
- If you have more than one issue, please list them by bullet or number.

Enclosed are copies of relevant documents and correspondence I have sent to and received from the school district concerning this matter. These documents are (list the documents you have enclosed, giving the date sent, by whom, to whom, and the issue discussed).

If you need further information or clarification on my complaint, I can be reached at (give your phone number). Thank you.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: School district special education director
 Your child's principal
 Your advocate/attorney

Enclosures:

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12. Writing a Follow-up Letter

What do I do if I don't get a response to the letter I sent to the school district?

When you have written a letter making a request, you should get a response from the school system, either by telephone or in writing, within a reasonable period of time. In some cases, "reasonable" is defined. For example, local policy may say the school must answer you within 15 working days. In other cases, the timelines are not exact. So, you should be reasonable in your expectations. But if you feel too much time has passed (10 working days or so) without receiving a response to your letter, then call and ask if your letter has been received. If you are sure the school has received your letter (some parents send their letters by certified or registered mail), then ask when you can expect an answer. More than likely, when you call you will talk to a secretary or administrative assistant. Leave a message for the person you wrote to and ask for that person to call you back.

If your request still goes unanswered, then you may want to write again. It's useful to enclose a copy of your original request with this letter. Be sure not to send your only copy. Remember, you always need to have a copy for your records.

Follow-up Letter

Your Name
Your Address
City, Illinois Zip Code
Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Person to Whom You Originally Wrote, Title
School or District Name
Street Address
City, State, Zip Code

Dear (Name):

I wrote to you on (date) and also called to make sure you had received my letter. I left a message for you to call me back on (date), but since I have not heard from you, I thought it best to write again.

I am writing to request . . . (restate what you are asking of the school district). Enclosed is a copy of my first letter to you.

I would like to hear from you by (give a date, 3-5 working days). Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Your Name

Enclosure

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13. Writing a Positive Feedback Letter

Once you've begun to write letters, be sure to write when things are going well, too! If a teacher, therapist, or other staff member has made good things happen for your child, let them and their supervisors know. Everyone likes and needs compliments and encouragement from time to time. Positive feedback is what keeps good schools running well. Just as you want to know "how it's going," so does the school staff.

Good communication, team work, and effective schools take a lot of hard work. There's an old saying that advises, "Things can go wrong all by themselves, but you have to work hard to make things go right." According to the National Dissemination Center for Children with Disabilities (NICHCY), now the Center for Parent Information and Resources (CPIR), this statement applies doubly to maintaining a successful parent-professional working relationship. Be sure your child's teacher(s), principal, and superintendent also hear from you when things are going right.

Positive Feedback Letter

Your Name
Your Address
City, Illinois Zip Code
Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Person to Whom You Are Writing, Title
School or District Name
Street Address
City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Name):

I am writing to let you know how very pleased I am with the education my son/daughter, (child's name) is receiving at (name of school).

(Child's name) has had great success with (briefly say what is going right). In particular, (name the professionals working with your child and how they have made a difference). I look forward to (child's name) continuing progress. Thank you for all your efforts and those of your staff.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: If you write to the school district's Superintendent or Director of Special Education, make sure to copy the people who directly deserve recognition for your child's success - the principal, teachers, and other staff.

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14. Revocation of Consent for Special Education

This letter can be used if you, as the parent, wish to revoke your consent to allow the school district to continue providing special education services to your child. Before delivering such a letter to the school district, it is very important that you understand what will occur once such a letter is delivered. Once delivered, the district may then terminate all special education and related services to your child after the district has provided you with prior written notice of its plans to terminate the services.

It is strongly recommended, if you haven't done so previously, that you turn to Chapter 6 of this guide for a further discussion of revocation of consent and what it may mean for the student in question.

Revocation of Consent Letter

Your Name
Your Address
City, Illinois Zip Code
Your Telephone Number

Date

Name of Superintendent or Director of Special Education
Name of School District
Street Address
City, Illinois Zip Code

Dear (Name):

This letter is to inform you that I hereby revoke my consent for my child, (child's name), to continue in special education. I understand that my decision will result in the termination of all special education services to my child, as well as a possible change in the placement of my child. I further understand that services will not end until you have provided me with prior written notice about the termination of special education services.

Sincerely,

Your Name

cc: Your child's principal
Your child's teacher(s)