



Performance Learning Day – Lite

Task #3

Item: Letter from EC Teacher regarding Math Teacher and EC Student Issue – left on your desk while you were away at the conference

TO: Principal of Cherry Lane Middle School

FROM: Ms. Satterwhite, EC Teacher

I hope your trip and conference were productive, but I need your immediate help with a major problem that occurred while you were away. I felt the need to document this in writing. I would like to meet with you at your very earliest convenience to discuss this matter in more detail.

Joseph, one of my 8th grade EC students, is enrolled in an Algebra class. I think you know this student. Mrs. Turner, Joseph's math teacher, has refused to make a simple accommodation for him as required by his IEP. Since Joseph has a processing deficit, he is to be allowed extra time to solve algebraic problems as agreed upon in last spring's IEP meeting/conference. Mrs. Turner has flatly refused, stating that she "will not water down her curriculum." She told me in person, in no uncertain terms, and very firmly, that "I have certain standards, and I am not going to compromise them for you, Joseph, or any other student in this school." I asked her if she was referring to state standards. She said, "No! I mean I have my own professional standards for teaching algebra!" I told her that I would bring this matter to you, as principal, because she is violating the law when she overrules what the IEP calls for in Joseph's case. She said that going above her would not result in her changing her decision about allowing any student "extra time to complete assignments, problems, or even on tests." She stormed off from our conversation, saying, "Take it to the principal. This is my classroom. I run it the way I see fit. Our principal doesn't teach my class -- I do!"

I am at a loss about what to do. Just so you know, Joseph has made really good progress in the class thus far, but I am now very concerned that Mrs. Turner's refusal to make a simple accommodation will result in a tragic setback for Joseph. We may be sued, too, by the student's parents!! Joseph has already been told by Mrs. Turner that he will not be given any extra time, so you may be hearing from the parents. Maybe they've called while you were away about this. They have not contacted me, at least not yet.

Please schedule a meeting with me as soon as you can. I don't think this can wait. I am sorry to burden you with this problem, but I don't have the power to make Mrs. Turner change her mind. I feel sure that you do.

(Reading this memo, you are surprised to learn of this particular math teacher's stance on this issue; even as you have known her for only a few weeks now, she has seemed open to new ideas and change, and she doesn't strike you as someone who would violate agreed upon accommodations that were written into a student's IEP.)