

UNLOCK THE POWER OF PARENT-TEACHER PARTNERSHIPS FOR INCLUSIVE LEARNING

DEVELOPING AN ACTION PLAN

INTRODUCTION

You are invited to consider the following scenario:

You are a regular teacher at a local school. You have recently received a [diary entry](#) from the parent of one of your new students, who has expressed their frustration and disappointment at not being heard at school so far. The parent's child has special education needs, and they feel that their concerns and opinions are being ignored by the school staff. As the teacher of this student, you are about to meet with the parent to discuss their concerns and to work together to build a new relationship that is based on mutual respect and understanding.

Please note that the layout of the diary entry may appear confusing, but this is intentional. We want you to experience the same sense of frustration that a parent may feel when trying to navigate a complex and overwhelming school situation.

As you read the diary entry, try to put yourself in the shoes of a parent who feels unheard and frustrated. Imagine what thoughts and emotions may be going through their mind as they write this entry.

The main questions you need to consider for the final activity are provided below in a format that includes before, during, and after the meeting.

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GETTING READY FOR THE MEETING

Reflect on the following questions and explain your answer.

Question	Answer & Explanation
<p>What is the purpose of the meeting? Who is present and why?</p>	<p>The purpose of the meeting is to get to know Robbe's parent's concerns and to discuss with him in order to build a relationship based on mutual respect and understanding that will give him confidence and the belief that his concerns and opinions will not be ignored. The involvement of the parent, working with him to understand the situation of Robbe, a child with special needs, helps the teacher in individualizing the inclusion. The meeting is attended by Robbe's parent, teacher and school principal.</p>
<p>What type of collaboration will you try to achieve? What's your vision?</p>	<p>We may encounter obstacles in our relationship with our parents. In order to improve communication, we must continue to maintain a friendly manner, actively listen to parents' concerns, and have a calm attitude during a difficult conversation.</p> <p>The parent must be involved in Robbe's inclusive learning process, be a partner of the teacher. Collaborating and making decisions together discovers the right solutions to help Robbe.</p> <p>A positive view of the child, parent and teacher is of great importance. By addressing diversity thinking, a strong parent-teacher relationship can be created for inclusive learning.</p> <p>The student is part of the class group, the class climate is adapted to Robbe's needs to strengthen the sense of belonging. Parents are recognized as valuable partners, their questions being the starting point in establishing the action plan.</p> <p>The teacher needs support, experts in finding solutions to work with students with special needs, collaborating with externals and parents.</p> <p>This approach helps build resilience in the child and everyone involved.</p>
<p>How do you ensure that parents have the opportunity to prepare? What communication do you have beforehand?? What preparatory question(s) do you give?</p>	<p>Communication between teacher and parent must be clear, transparent and respectful. Listening to the parent will help the teacher identify what is working well and what is not.</p> <p>When parents and teachers communicate and collaborate, they ensure consistency in expectations, routines and approaches.</p> <p>I ask the following preparatory questions:</p> <p>What are your expectations as a parent of me as a teacher?</p> <p>What are Robbe's special needs?</p> <p>Which communication channel works best for you?</p> <p>What motivates Robbe?</p> <p>What does Robbe dislike?</p> <p>What activities does Robbe enjoy?</p> <p>What helps Robbe relax?</p>



	What is the obstacle facing Robbe?
How do you decide on the time and location of the meeting? How do you ensure that the meeting can take place in a safe and confidential atmosphere?	Communication should take place at a convenient time. The time and place of the meeting is decided through open communication, mutually agreed with the parent, to be comfortable for all. The teacher can organize flexible communication channels or weekend events if the parent are busy. An open attitude to listen to each other and to seek viable and family-friendly solutions establishes a successful teacher-parent partnership. The meeting takes place in a safe and confidential atmosphere if open and transparent communication between parent and school is ensured, if important information is shared, an equal, safe, comfortable position is promoted for those involved. Communicating effectively, checking that the parent understands and can make sense of what the teacher is saying, can ensure a safe environment and allow the parent to have a fair position during the meeting.
What plans do you have in place to provide the parents with frameworks to encourage their involvement?	To create a welcoming environment for parents that encourages their involvement, it is important to provide accessible information, create different channels of communication, support emotional and social well-being and a sense of belonging. In the case of Robbe, workshops and activities can be organized in which parents are directly involved.
What digital technologies are available to assist with cooperative projects and simplify communication with parents? How would you go about introducing these tools to the parents?	Digital technologies, such as applications, educational platforms or websites, are available to support cooperation projects and simplify communication with parents. These digital technologies were introduced to parents by sharing demonstrations and videos, tutorials, which are essential for parents to understand how to navigate them (eg: email, phone, Google Classroom, Whatsapp).

DURING THE MEETING

Reflect on the following questions and explain your answer.

Question	Answer & Explanation
<p>How do you start the conversation? (consider your own body language) Where is everyone seated? In what ways are you fostering a friendly atmosphere during the meeting?</p>	<p>Taking an open, relaxed attitude on the part of the teacher is an important point in starting a conversation with Robbe's parent. A calm tone, non-verbal behavior (posture, facial expressions) a simple change in language can make a difference in our actions to build strong relationships with the parents of the child with special needs.</p> <p>All participants in the meeting occupy equal positions, so that the parent is relaxed and confident that a collaboration with the school is beneficial in establishing solutions that can have a positive effect on the development of the child with special needs.</p> <p>Parents often feel vulnerable due to uncertainties and obstacles. Positive relationships are built by professionals who listen and prioritize the child over labeling. Active listening and responding to parents' stories and concerns fosters a friendly atmosphere during the meeting. This emphasizes the importance of being sensitive to the challenges faced by the child with special needs.</p> <p>Openness and real involvement of the teacher are important in establishing a meaningful relationship with parents.</p>
<p>What are the crucial things that should be communicated from your perspective and from the parents' perspective? How can you promote this exchange of information?</p>	<p>Parents and teachers must invest time and energy in facilitating the communication and exchange of relevant information.</p> <p>The teacher must inform the parent of the diversity in his class and the fact that those involved will do the best for the student, he ensures that everyone is working towards the same goals. It assures the parent that they will find support and understanding to deal with the challenges their child is facing.</p> <p>Parents inform about the challenges they face, about the obstacles encountered in their child's development, they can discuss different strategies they have implemented at home (creating a quiet study space, trying an alternative method of reading - Robbe had to memorize all the words for dictation) or old school to support his learning.</p> <p>In Robbe's case, the parent can present what worked and what didn't, based on their own experiences, information gleaned from conversations with other parents and educators. The teacher presents to the parent that in the development of Robbe they will collaborate with various specialists and professionals, the involvement and cooperation will bring the desired effect, their concerns and opinions will be heard by the school staff.</p> <p>Open attitude, mutual trust, cooperation, effective collaboration, constant contact with parents promote the exchange of information.</p>

<p>What do you focus on during the meeting? How do you ensure that the conversation stays focused on the goals?</p>	<p>Conducting the discussion, calm tone, active listening to the parent's concerns, real involvement, openness in establishing a meaningful relationship for him, sensitivity to the challenges the child faces, ensure that the goal is a common one - to identify effective solutions that can have a positive effect in their child's development.</p>
<p>How can you ensure that your vision for inclusion is aligned with the feelings, the needs and expectations of the parents?</p>	<p>Building a good working relationship with parents, concrete actions taken to build this positive relationship, effective teaching approaches, collaboration with other professionals in the field, parent trust, increasing parental involvement ensure that the vision for inclusion is aligned with feelings, needs and expectations parents.</p>
<p>How do you end the conversation?</p>	<p>The conversation ends by setting up a new meeting with Robbe's father, the assurance that if there is to be permanent cooperation, the obstacles Robbe faces will be overcome.</p>



AFTER THE MEETING

Reflect on the following questions and explain.

Question	Answer & Explanation
<p>How are you planning to follow up after the meeting? How do you ensure that the parent can still be involved after the meeting?</p>	<p>To ensure that the parent is still involved, it is important that we continue to welcome parents and approach them in a friendly manner by organizing meetings, consultations and workshops where parents are directly involved. The teacher should step up to the parents and start a conversation, putting aside any reluctance, if that is the case (for example, the parent is busy with work). The positive conversation that conveys the good news should take place at a time convenient for the parents. It aims to involve parents in school decision-making through the use of multiple communication tools. During the conversation, the teachers assure the parent that they have a common goal, the inclusive learning of their child.</p>
<p>How are you planning to evaluate the partnership effort and keep a record of the outcomes considering the following question: What impacts, effects or consequences has the partnership had for the student?</p>	<p>An important step in ensuring that parent-teacher partnerships are effective, sustainable, and aligned with our learning goals is to monitor and evaluate partnership outcomes. Thus, we can assess the impact, value and challenges of our collaboration. I will identify areas for improvement and learning by collecting and analyzing data and interpreting and reporting results. Parent meetings give teachers a fantastic opportunity to communicate with the most influential and important people in their students' lives. These are an opportunity to discuss the child's strengths and areas for improvement, their latest report, progress data, behavior and any key concerns. By doing so, I can ensure that the assessment is relevant, participatory and inclusive, and that it reflects Robbe's needs.</p>
<p>What does the reporting look like after the parent-teacher meeting?</p>	<p>By monitoring the child's progress, evaluating the success and impact of the support provided, we evaluate whether they were effective. It is important to keep a record of the provisions that have been implemented. When we implement any reasonable adjustments in the classroom, it is important to keep a record of them and share this information. This can provide other teachers with details of effective strategies and also be useful for access arrangements. The parent-teacher meeting will end with action steps. These are actions that the teacher, parent, or student will complete and could include tutoring, in-class remediation, referrals to outside support staff, or even performance celebrations.</p>

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