

Guidelines for Report Writing

Classroom Teachers

Understanding what information the question is asking to be collected is critical for all team members. Your information is important for making educational decisions. Federal and State laws require multiple observers reporting on performance in differing environments. Objective, factual, and observable information about the student's performance must be included in reporting. Answering a question for determination of a disability does not include emotional reactions as these weaken the strength of the answer. Examples of questions are as follows.

A question may ask:

What is this student's classroom performance in areas of reading/math? It may be focused on fluency, comprehension, phonics, etc. It may also be focused on math operations, comprehension, or applications.

Your answer may include standardized testing. (Check with Psychologist to be sure just one of you is using Aims Web, Maze, etc. in reporting) It may also include classroom data such as examples of weekly tests, unit tests, assignments and homework. Current grades and comparisons to peers should be included in your answer. Classroom Teachers provide information gathered over time which is important in rate of learning, and amount of interventions needed to learn. Your analysis of strengths and weaknesses and interventions that have helped and those that have **not** helped is significant.

A question may ask:

How well is this student's speech understood in the classroom?

Your answer may include how easily understood is the student when he/she is answering impromptu questions, giving an oral report, playing with peers, or asking others for information. Important information would include if you or any peers have to ask the student to repeat, if someone is "interpreting" for them, if the student or listener expresses frustration or when telling a story with unknown context, how easily can you understand them?

A question may ask:

How does this student understand and use language in the classroom?

Your answer for "understanding" language may include how often you have to repeat directions; if the student waits to see others start tasks and cues off of them, if the student can follow 1-2-3 step directions, if they can answer WH questions, or if they seem to need extra time to produce an answer. Compared to peers how quickly does this student understand novel vocabulary/concepts can be valuable information from teachers. Do you have to spend more time with this student using extra strategies or visual supports?

Your answer for "using" language may include if you have noticed the student struggling with correct vocabulary, if they use the terms, "thing", or "stuff" often, if they do not ask for help when it is obvious they are unsure of how to complete a task. They may show frustration when trying to get ideas down on paper or ask repeatedly for words to use to express an idea.

A question may ask:

How does this student's behavior impact classroom performance?

Your answers may include examples of behavior reports, examples of when a student has needed interventions to comply, change their behavior, or "cool down". When the student has had difficulty it is important for the team to know the "when" and "where" of the observable behavior as there may be "antecedents" to behavioral incidents. The number of and the time needed to intervene are important facts. If the student will accept re-direction and the number of times it takes before the student changes their behavior can be gathered by the classroom teacher. Any time the student has been aggressive to peers or adults and the number of times this aggression has happened is vital information. The classroom Teacher's reporting is critical for determining what happened first, the student's reaction, and then how it was resolved. The classroom Teacher is best known to the student, and may be the one adult they feel comfortable telling "why" they reacted as they did. It can be challenging to report behavioral information in a non-critical manner as you easily can be drawn into the emotional aspect of negative behavior. Reporting in an objective manner, "just the facts", gives strength to the reporting. Your Assessment team including the School Psychologist, the Social Worker, and the Program Supervisor are all available to assist with this reporting. And just one more thing, don't forget to celebrate when strategies work! Even a small step forward can help everyone keep up the interventions and help parents understand we are all working for the benefit of the student.

A question may ask:

How does this student process sensory information in the classroom? Or what distracts this student from focusing on their work?

Your answers from the classroom teacher may include how many times a student leaves their seat without being asked to do so by the teacher. (8 times in a 10 minute period for non-directed activities) Another answer may be describing how often the student chews on their collar/sleeve/button while trying to do seat work. Talking out in class, asking repeatedly for help with task completion, or not being able to stand in line/wait turns can be important information. Taking counts of behaviors over short periods of time can be strong indicators of where and when a student has the most challenge in their focus. Can this student complete seat work if they have a wiggle seat, stand up at their desk, or work at a table away from peers? Can they focus better if the lights are turned low, or they have music on in the background? By trying a few strategies and then reporting on what worked or did not work the classroom Teacher provides information over a time period and a glimpse of daily life in the classroom with this student. If the Occupational Therapist is to answer this question

also, you may consult with them as they can help you structure your answer or give you ideas on how to gather this information.

Remember!

When it comes to writing the answers to questions, the Teacher may discuss answers with the Psychologist, and/or Social Worker and work together with them for reporting on shared questions. The Teacher may also write their answer individually. Program Supervisors are willing to assist Teachers in this matter too. Direct answers with supporting artifacts, examples or copies support what is written. Once again emotional reactions in answers do not strengthen the reporting. Answers need to be in complete sentences with correct grammar and structure. It is important to know these answers will not be edited by the LCSSU secretary. They will be put in as written as the only editing she may do is capitalizations and punctuations. Your answers to questions carry much weight in decision making for students. This report becomes part of the legal process when determining the student's future education. These reports may be shared by parents to other institutions and/or used in legal proceedings.

When you have completed your answer, please email it to Jean at the LCSSU office. Her email is jcorrigan@lcssu.org. You may also fax a copy to her at 815-842-3170. Please use the Times New Roman size 11 font when writing. It is Jean's responsibility to get this information into the reports before the Eligibility Review meeting. Answers must be to her at least **two weeks** before the date of the meeting. Final edits will be done at the meeting by the Team and then given to Jean to complete.