

Ms. Jahoda,

Obviously this has been a difficult year and the vast majority of stakeholders feel that our school is not functioning properly. Thanks to Ms. York, Ms. Meyer, and all the teachers involved, everything relating to special education has managed to work out as best as possible. We have had many wins. However, I feel that your lack of involvement has been detrimental to our progress and I'd like to address some concerns.

In previous years we have held meetings each marking period to which all teachers who serve students with disabilities were invited to discuss individual student progress, share best practices and ideas, and receive updates on new information pertaining to special education. These meetings were an excellent tool for us and kept everyone in the loop and on the same page. The principal, Ms. York, Ms. Meyer and I attended the meetings and kept progress notes shared at the meetings to help guide our program and practice. This was brought to your attention earlier this year in hopes that it would continue. However, we never heard back and you have not followed up on the request.

Furthermore, I was given the opportunity to turnkey special education information from outside meetings and share important matters at faculty meetings or on PD days. I have not been included on an agenda except for the SESIS training. You have not asked me about the program after our initial meeting at the start of the year, about the students and their progress, or the day to day tasks relating to special education. I speak with teachers daily about our students and regularly disseminate information via email, but unfortunately I have not felt any support from you. Our team does a great deal of work so the students can succeed, but you have not collaborated with us or shown interest, which is difficult for me to understand.

In the past you have made condescending comments about my work and undermined my knowledge, pointing out errors of which you wrongfully accused me. Yet, you do not seem to be interested in finding out what we are doing or how it is going or in providing support in any capacity. You said at a town hall that you dislike being compared, which I can fully understand and respect, but you leave us no choice at times. Our last principal checked in regularly, respected my input and position, worked with me closely to strengthen our services and knew a great deal about the students with IEPs in our building. Your tone relating to special education on the few times we spoke has been somewhat antagonistic and focused on blame and accusation.

Last week during an important meeting about a student with an IEP, you walked in, interrupting the meeting, and without addressing us at all, pulled out Ms. York who was an important part of the meeting. I found this not only rude, but a blatant disregard of the real work of our school. Our great lack of access to our APs due to meetings has already set us back.

Also last week you did not grant permission for me to attend a PD because, as I understand it, I am leaving, though it is clear I'm still here and still very much serving the students. I still need to be able to fully do my job.

I asked for help earlier in the year and your answer was no, not until next year. Yet, when time does not always allow for us to cross our t's, I find that you are quick to call me in to reprimand me, rather than support me and help problem solve when we are faced with inevitable issues. I don't have an ally in you in special education and that creates discord in the school environment and is very concerning. I have not felt listened to and I do not feel that you have prioritized our students with IEPs (and without) in any way. As their advocate, this upsets me most of all.

What are your plans going forward and how do you plan to repair relationships with all the teachers and students in our school who feel such a lack of support? How do you think our many programs can run without you as our ally and partner? Why do you seem disinterested in appropriately addressing special education in our school? How can our school run properly when you do not work with us, but rather against us?

Respectfully, Georgia Brandeis