“Promise to Families”

The following is a welcoming and open invitation to dialogue:

We are pleased you have come to be with us today. You will be considered a part of your child’s team as we meet with our members and later when we meet with other members of your family, community and your child’s schoolteachers. We will attempt to better understand your child’s condition and to be in partnership with you to make things better for him and for your family.

We fully respect your personal reasons in coming, as well as your individual and unique family experiences and family culture, which can be useful in meeting the challenges you face. We will strive with you to make sense of what’s occurred and, at the same time, we want to point out what we hear from you and talk about how that will make a difference for your family, especially those things which are likely to be representative of the strengths, values and character bearing on your family’s achievements and those accomplishments which have provided unique coping assets for you to this point.

We know what you will be sharing with us are very private and personal issues that may be full of hurt and despair in the retelling. We want you to know, however, that your being here is testimony to your excellent survival knowledge and may be evidence that you are actually thriving. We, too, have a level of expertise, although different from your own. We, too, are members of the human family and naturally share similar positive coping experiences with you, including needs and inspirational events, which helps our work together. Our conversations and your personal stories will remain confidential and protected, although with your permission, we will seek information from other helpers who are familiar with your family. We will work from an extended family perspective for your child in the school and in his or her doctor’s office.

We also encourage you to participate in helping us to craft and to write this report, because the report is yours. Many times we will offer you a draft report that you should feel free to edit and re-author in any way you prefer. Finally, we know that some questions and personal inquiries can be painful and threatening. If bad feelings come up over our inquiry, we apologize in advance and want you to tell us that you may not be ready to talk about that particular subject yet. Then, we will discuss something else you’re more comfortable with.

We will frequently request your opinions during our conversations, so do tell us how you feel we are doing together. We believe that, to the extent you feel more hopeful, have greater understanding and feel you are being listened to, you will have meaningful, positive outcomes from our meetings. Give us comments directly or by means of the Team Meeting Rating sheet or the Parent Outcome Scale. We also have a suggestion box. If you have a computer, you may e-mail us as well.

We will strive to help you with your purposes for coming to this meeting and we appreciate the confidence you have in us to work with you to discover solutions that make things a bit better.