



Advocating for
disability civil rights
since 1979

12 RULES FOR WRITING GREAT LETTERS

Adapted: Wright's Law www.wrightslaw.com

1. Ask: **Why** am I writing? **What** do I want?
2. First letters are always **drafts**.
3. Allow "cooling off" and revision time.
 - **Never** send therapeutic letters. "Glad I got that off my chest!"
4. You are negotiating for services.
 - Share your information, not your wish list or bottom line.
5. **Never** threaten. Never tell them what you are going to do.
 - Maintain "the fear of the unknown."
6. Assume you will **not** be able to resolve your dispute.
 - This is key to good letter writing. Can serve the child later.
7. Make your problem unique.
 - Avoid: "we always handle situations like this, this way."
8. Assume you are writing to a stranger, not the school.
 - Sell the stranger on the **justice** of your cause.
9. Use your brain. Don't ventilate anger, frustration or emotion.
 - Resist the urge to take cheap shots.
10. **Never** make judgments.
 - Don't say: "what a jerk!"
 - Provide information logically. Let the stranger conclude: "what a jerk!"
11. Write your letter chronologically. Tell a story.
 - Don't broach the main issue in the first paragraph. Weave in the facts.
12. Write letters that are clear and easy to understand.
 - Create a positive impression.
 - Be Clear. Brief. Accurate.