

Sample letter 3: Informing a Teacher about a Student's Concussion

Dear Teachers & Staff,

Your student _____ has suffered a concussion — a concussion is mild traumatic brain injury impacting memory, processing speeds, mental efficiency and overall stamina, thus limiting their ability to process information efficiently. In general, most students recover in a few weeks. You play a key role in ensuring the successful recovery of your student. By following the academic accommodations, providing specific work, and learning goals you will help reduce the stress placed on the brain. Your input to how the student is progressing and changes you notice will help us provide the best support and recovery for your student. The primary goal upon return to school is maximizing his/her exposure to instruction, but not to impede the recovery process. Please review the material and concepts that he/she may have missed and create a plan to focus on what is critical to learn the current material.

Per [high school name] policy, provide the student with the following accommodations to help reduce the mental demands placed on the recovering brain:

- REDUCE OVERALL CLASS WORK _____%
- Grades based on adjusted work
- Decrease academic expectations for time being
- HOMEWORK: ____ [#] ____ assignments each night
- TESTING: not this week; not until student understands concepts; 1 per day; no standardized exams (i.e. SAT)
- Assign a project to assess mastery. Give oral exam.
- Use notes, graphic organizer, formula sheet, word bank.
- Provide extra time to complete tests.
- Provide testing in a quiet environment.
- Break exams into 2-3 sections.

FOCUS on key points and quality of work over quantity:

- No Physical Activity — physical education, dance, recess, band, vocational class, field trips or extracurricular activities.
- No Computer for 1-2 days and then limit computer use to 20 on 20 off (reduce blue light/use night vision).
- Prioritize essential work to reinforce learning goals (provide short specific assignments).
- Provide extended and staggered due dates — reduce length of work.
- Allow student to take 10-15-minute breaks or send to nurse when symptoms increase.
- Provide class notes/outline/PowerPoint prior to class to limit overstimulation — some teachers have turned notes into a fill-in-blank form to reinforce key points.
- Student should sit at the back of class when smart board is in use or have student sit in less distracted area.
- Turn off class lights/pull shades when possible and/or allow student to wear sunglasses (no hats).
- Avoid loud areas (cafeteria, music or chorus class) while sensitive to noise.
- Increase font size/large print for worksheets or reading material to reduce eyestrain.

- Allow student to provide answers with key points or bullets.
- Provide audio version of reading material when possible.

Please remember that the goal is to show proficiency in his/her subject matter. Please do not tell a student to do as much work as they can, as this often sets students up to do more work than they should be.

Thank you and if you have further questions or concerns please contact me.

_____, [title]

_____ [school name] _____