



H A R P E R
CONFLICT RESOLUTION

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Supporting Families through Mediation

Case Study:

Team Jordan (Parents)

Jordan is a 12-year-old student diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder and ADHD. He is currently in 6th grade at his neighborhood middle school. Jordan is academically capable but has significant challenges with sensory regulation, peer interactions, and anxiety in large group settings. The district has placed Jordan in a general education setting with supports, including:

- A resource room for 45 minutes a day.
- Occupational therapy twice a week.
- Access to a sensory break area.
- A paraprofessional available during unstructured times (lunch and recess).

Jordan's parents believe that their son's current educational placement within the district is fundamentally inadequate for meeting his needs. While they acknowledge the efforts of the school (for example, resource room support, occupational therapy, and paraprofessional assistance) they feel these interventions are piecemeal and do not address the core challenges Jordan faces.

At home, they see the toll that school takes on Jordan: heightened anxiety each morning, frequent refusal to attend, and emotional meltdowns after difficult days. They worry about his academic decline, especially in reading and writing, and note that despite years of support, he is falling further behind. Beyond academics, they are deeply concerned about his social well-being. Jordan struggles to connect with peers, spends much of the day isolated, and has yet to develop meaningful friendships. His parents believe this isolation is exacerbating his anxiety and undermining his confidence.

The parents argue that the district lacks the specialized expertise and therapeutic environment necessary to support a child like Jordan. They see the district's proposed adjustments, such as more resource room time or staff training, as insufficient "Band-Aid solutions" to a systemic problem. Outside evaluations they've obtained recommend placement in a specialized school for students with Autism, where Jordan would have access to smaller class sizes, consistent therapeutic interventions, and staff trained specifically to address his needs.

From their perspective, the district's refusal to consider this option reflects a prioritization of cost and convenience over Jordan's right to a truly appropriate education. They emphasize that their position is not about seeking "more" for the sake of more; rather, they believe Jordan's future success depends on access to the specialized supports the district simply cannot provide.