

Some questions for reflecting on mediation observations:

1. Did the mediator elicit observations from the school as well as the parents regarding the student's functioning?
2. Were the parties initially given uninterrupted opportunities to express their thinking?
3. Were the issues clearly captured by the mediator and addressed individually?
4. Were tangential discussions brought back into focus by the mediator's questions?
5. What actual questions from the mediator promoted fresh thinking?
6. Did the assisted negotiation feel like a call and response between parent and school staff or a discussion with each contributing?
7. Were the talking points made by the parties given full weight and attention?
8. If the mediator were doing this over from the start, what might she do differently?
9. What was the relationship between the parties as the session opened? Did that change? If so, what did the mediator or parties do which led to the change?
10. Was there a significant turning point or breakthrough in the mediation? What caused it?
11. What different techniques did the mediator employ effectively?
12. What did the mediator do to recover the agreement when a difference between the school's last best offer and one of the parent's preferences appeared likely to scuttle it?

Art Stewart VDOE