



Northern Community Mediation

Where The Solution Is Up To You

November 23, 2021

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY, STATE ZIP

Dear NAME:

Second-grader Johnny and third-grader Jimmy were brothers at the same elementary school. Within the first two months of school, Johnny had been absent from school 10 days and Jimmy for 12 days. The school contacted the parents of the boys to arrange for a meeting. The mother explained that it would be very difficult for her husband and her to meet with the school officials, but did assure the principal that the boys' attendance would improve.

Unfortunately, the pattern of poor attendance continued. Based upon school policy, the principal sent a letter to the parents stating that Northern Community Mediation (NCM) would be in touch with them to schedule a mediation with the principal, the boys' teachers, the school counselor and themselves. It was explained to the parents that failure to comply could result in truancy charges.

Reluctantly, the parents came to mediation. They said very little as they listened to the concerns expressed by the school staff, at which point the father just bowed his head and the mother began to cry. "We are so ashamed. We did not want the school to know how poor we are. My husband works two and sometimes three jobs just to pay our bills. I have to go to the laundromat to wash our clothes, but I can only do so when the car is at home—when my husband is not at work."

The staff listened intently even though they were somewhat perplexed where all of this was going. The mother continued. "We have only two pairs of pants that the boys have to share. If one pair is dirty, then only one of the boys can go to school. Do you have any idea of what it feels like to say to your son "only one of you can go to school today"?"

With this revelation, the principal pulled up the boys' attendance records. Just as the mother had indicated, the boys were never absent on the same days. The counselor spoke up and suggested that if the parents were willing, she would make arrangements for the boys to go to the local resale shop where they would be outfitted at no cost to the parents or the school. The principal volunteered to help the parents get assistance from a local, non-profit organization so that they could get a car, which meant that the mother would be able to get to the laundromat and get a part-time job.

415 State Street, Petoskey, MI 49770 Phone 231.487.1771 Fax 231.487.1770 Website www.northernmediation.org

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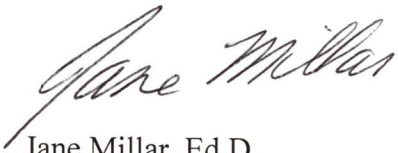
The end result is that not only do the boys rarely miss a day of school, they are A and B students. The mother has a part-time job and the father is working one full-time and one part-time job.

Your support of Northern Community Mediation (NCM) makes the mediation of cases like this one possible. Whether assisting our local schools with attendance issues, mediating life-altering cases, or resolving rent disputes, we know that mediation is a productive way to resolve conflicts.

Your contribution to NCM makes mediation services accessible to members of our northern Michigan community. In these particularly challenging times, we need your help to raise \$10,000 before the end of this year so that we can continue offering high quality services to which the citizens of Charlevoix and Emmet counties have become accustomed. Every gift, small or large, will make a difference--\$25, \$55, \$100 or more.

Please, make your donation today. For your convenience, an envelope has been enclosed. Your support of NCM makes a significant difference in the lives of our northern Michigan neighbors and friends.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jane Millar".

Jane Millar, Ed.D.
Executive Director