Initial School Meeting

Sample meeting agenda:

Purpose of our meeting
1. I want you to know who my child is and discuss their experiences as a gender-expansive or transgender child.
2. To make sure that you are aware of the challenges facing my child.
3. To make agreements and commitments through a Gender Support Plan (link) or similar tool about how we will work together to ensure my child has a positive and successful experience at school.
4. To clarify what I can expect from school, including how you will get the necessary information for staff, parents, and students about gender diversity.

Who is my child (including history of their gender journey)?
1. I want you to see all of my child – what they’re good at, and proud of, and what makes them THEM!
2. (if applicable) Persistent/consistent/insistent, starting at what age.
3. (if applicable) Not wants or wishes s/he were a girl/boy; s/he IS a girl/boy.
4. You may think that this is a choice or something that has been caused…it is not! This is simply who my child is.
5. I have not chosen this path for my child; I am working to make that path easier for them.
6. Sometimes I wish we weren’t in this situation, not because I’m ashamed but because I’m scared.

Why am I scared?
1. Gender-expansive and transgender kids suffer from higher rates of suicide, victimization from violence, drop out, HIV, homelessness, drug use, and lower achievement levels and lower expectations about college attendance or for finding happiness as an adult.
2. Why? Because there is something wrong with them? Absolutely not! These are kids whose very essence is rejected by society. Their negative outcomes are frequently a response to their negative treatment.
3. Research shows that when supported, gender-expansive kids have very bright prospects.
4. Schools can and are successfully handling this “issue;” in many cases there is nothing at all to “handle.” Like any other student, I need you to simply help my child remain safe and happy.

www.genderspectrum.org
To date, my child’s experience at school has been
(review the following areas):

1. Treatment by teachers and other staff.
2. Treatment by other students in their class/grade.
3. Treatment by other students in general.
4. Treatment by other families.
5. Respect for privacy, including using name and pronoun.
6. Access to facilities.

Privacy:
It is very important that we are all on the same page on this topic.

1. (If child is going to be private in this matter) We want the number of people who know about their gender to be limited. This is confidential information; we must weigh the safety considerations of having adults aware against the potential of being inadvertently outing. Once people know, we can’t take it back, so we ask that we are very cautious in this regard.
2. (If child’s gender status is more public) How will we insure that they are treated respectfully by others who knew them as a different gender? Even though my child’s status is public, we still expect that they will not be subjected to unfair stigmatization by others.

What I am asking you to do.

1. To respect my child’s gender and treat them as you would any other student at this school.
2. To create a Gender Support Team that will work with me to support my child’s gender.
3. To use a Gender Support Plan or similar tool to account for my child’s specific gender needs.
4. To commit to learning more about this topic, including to get your staff the necessary professional development and resources to support the gender diversity of every child attending this school.

www.genderspectrum.org