Parent Teacher Conference Intake and Interview Checklist

_____ **Always make the parent(s) feel comfortable and at ease by setting up a receptive environment**. If possible, hold the meeting in a pleasant setting, use a round table, or any table instead of a desk, and offer some type of refreshment to ease possible tension of the situation.

_____ **Never view the parent(s) as an adversary even if they are angry or hostile**. Keep in mind that the anger or hostility is a defense because they may not be aware of what you will be asking or have encountered a series of negative school meetings over the years. Since this may be an opportunity for parents to "vent", listen to their concerns, do not get defensive, and be understanding without taking sides.

_____ **Inform them every step of the way to the purpose of the meeting and the steps involved in the referral process**. Reassure them that no recommendation will be made without their input and permission.

_____ **Tell parents the purpose of testing and what you hope to gain from the process**. Be solution oriented and offer realistic hope even if past experiences have resulted in frustration. Remind the parent that children can be more motivated, resilient and successful at different stages.

_____ **Make sure the parents know that if the testing reveals a significant discrepancy between ability and achievement, then the case needs to be reviewed by the Eligibility Committee**. This is an important piece of information to convey to the parents since it involves their rights to due process.

_____ **Go over the release form and explain each test and its purpose**. The more information parents have, the less fearful they will be. Explain that their signature requires that the testing be completed 30 days from the date signed and will not take months before they are made aware of the findings.

_____ **Offer them a pad and pen so that they can write down information, terms or notes on the meeting**. Further indicate that they should feel free to call you with any questions or concerns they may have.

_____ **Reassure the parents about the confidentiality of the information gathered**. Indicate the individuals on the team that will be seeing the information and the purpose for their review of the facts.