

IEP/504 NERVOUS SYSTEM LENS

Parent Cheat Sheet

Regulation First Parenting™ Talking Points for School Support

This one-page cheat sheet is for parents of dysregulated kids who want to frame school conversations through a **nervous system lens**—without turning it into a formal request, diagnosis, or confrontation.

It helps you explain *how your child's brain works under stress* so supports can be aligned with learning, not punishment.

Regulate. Connect. Correct.

The Big Picture (What to Know)



- Behavior challenges increase when the nervous system is overwhelmed
- Learning and listening shut down under stress
- Regulation must come before redirection or correction
- Supporting calm improves access to education

This is the foundation of **Regulation First Parenting™**.

How Dysregulation May Show Up at School

When my child is overwhelmed, it can look like:

- Shutdown or withdrawal
- Refusal or avoidance
- Emotional outbursts or tearfulness
- Impulsivity or restlessness
- Increased anxiety or rigidity



*These behaviors signal **nervous system overload**, not intentional noncompliance.*

High-Stress Moments to Watch

Dysregulation is more likely during:

- Transitions or schedule changes
- Academic demand or testing
- Unstructured time (recess, lunch)
- Social interactions
- End of the school day



Regulation Supports That Help (Before Correction)

Supports that calm the brain so learning can happen:

- Calm adult presence
- Reduced verbal demands when upset
- Movement or sensory breaks
- Quiet or low-demand space
- Visual supports or predictable routines
- Co-regulation before expectations increase



Regulation Before Redirection – Key Reminders



- Calm the body before giving instructions
- Fewer words are more effective than explanations
- Staying nearby helps more than isolation
- Redirection works best after calm returns

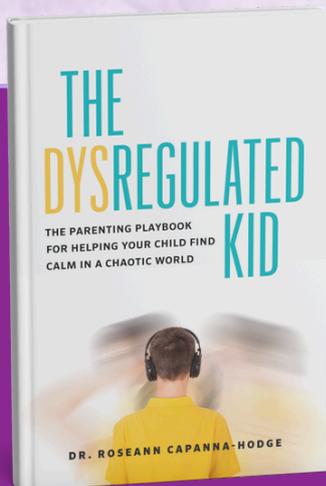
Signs of readiness to learn:

- Calmer body
- Steady voice
- Able to engage
- Can follow a simple direction

How This Lens Supports Learning

When regulation is supported:

- Escalation decreases
- Cooperation increases
- Shame and power struggles are reduced
- Learning becomes accessible



Helpful Resource

The Dysregulated Kid expands on Regulation First Parenting™ and helps parents understand school behavior through a nervous system lens while offering practical tools for advocating calmly and effectively.

- Dr. Roseann