

Appendix 5.1: Sample Summary Letter

To:

From: Matthew J. Sullivan, PhD

Re: Special Master Work on Los Angeles Superior Court

Case number:

Dear:

What follows is a summary letter, including commentary, documentation of agreements, and Special Master directives that resulted from our meeting on April 20, 2012. Please inform me, copied to the other parent, if you have questions or concerns about the content below. In the absence of feedback, you have agreed (by the Court order of my appointment in your case) to follow these directives until modified in this process or by further order of the court. If you intend to formally object and request the court to review any of the decisions documented in this letter, please advise me in writing of the objection. Please consult the appointment order for the procedure to object.

Commentary: I'm really encouraged by the progress the two of you have made during the time we have been working together. Your engagement—in our meetings and with each other through email, etc.—is respectful, child-focused, and reflective of major, positive shifts in your attitudes about your coparenting relationship. Good work! This hard work will benefit tremendously.

1. Children's passports: N will submit the passport applications. A will reimburse her for 1/2 of the application cost. N will deliver the passports, once she receives them, to Dr.

Sullivan to hold. N will provide A with the old passports for him to scan and give back the original to N.

2. Remaining summer vacation schedule (N will post on Our Family Wizard calendar—all transitions at 9:00am unless otherwise agreed): 8/02–8/03 (N); 8/04–8/12 (A); 8/12–8/20 (N); 8/20–21(A)—back to the regular custody schedule.
3. Camps: The kids will be in Newman camp in June and July, Cates camp from 8/01–8/03. A will pre-pay the total amount online, you will each decide which location to have them attend during your day(s).
4. Fall timeshare schedule (N will post on OFW calendar by the end of this month): 8/22–23 (N); 8/24–28 (A); 8/29–30 (N); 8/31–9/1 (A); 9/02–9/06 (N); 9/07–9/11 (A); 9/12–13 (N).
5. Haircuts for the children: We had a discussion about coordinating haircuts and how to deal with hairstyle changes, children's preferences, etc. It was productive dialogue. You agreed that you will not change their basic style, without discussing and agreeing to do so. You agreed that D can grow her hair out (her request).
6. Communication to third party professionals (about appointment scheduling and other issues): You agreed that you will first connect with the other parent about scheduling, billing, information, rather than bringing the professional or their office directly into the communication. You agreed not to copy professionals on your coparent communications unless it's clearly a communication that warrants that copying.
7. Missing professional appointments: The fact that Dr. B. was not informed about the kids not attending the therapy appointment over spring break raised the issue of notification of professionals and activities about missing scheduled activities because of vacations. The

custodial parent is responsible for notifying the professional and the other parent, so that we don't drop the ball in the future.

8. Notifying the other parent about a child not attending school (due to illness): Use voicemail to communicate this information, and provide information about the reason and if there are plans to have the child seen by a physician.
9. Kids' sports activities: P will continue in Tae Kwon Do probably until the fall. A will check with the teacher about an upcoming performance and what they think M's practice schedule should be to prepare. You'll coordinate his practice schedule based on feedback. You agreed to register the kids for soccer in order to hold that opportunity, subject to further discussion and decision.
10. Dad's day at school: You agreed that only A will participate in Dad's day.

Our next meeting is set for June 30th at 2:30–4:00 in my office.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew J. Sullivan, PhD