10 THINGS PARAS CAN DO TO FIND & GROW "SUCCESS MINUTES"



Success minutes are short moments, sometimes just seconds, when a student is engaged, regulated, connected, or participating in a meaningful way. Tracking these moments helps teams see growth that traditional data often misses.

1. Notice and jot down one small win.
Before the end of the class or activity, record one moment when the student joined in, connected with a peer, stayed engaged, asked for help, or did something with less adult support.

2. Time the success.
When you notice engagement, regulation, connection, or participation, note how long it lasts. Write "engaged with group for 4 minutes," rather than "had a good math class."

3. Write what you actually saw.
Keep notes short and observable: "Joined peers at the science table for 3 minutes" or "Asked for help and returned to the activity."

4. Count participation, even when it isn't perfect.
Don't wait for an entire activity to go well. Record the successful minutes or moments even if the student struggles before or afterward.

5. Look for when success happens.
As you move through the day with the student, notice the activities, people, places, or times when participation is easier. Jot those down so the team can look for patterns.

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6. Record what YOU or others did that helped.
When something goes well, note the support that was in place:
I stepped back. I gave a choice. A peer helped. We added movement.
I waited instead of prompting.

7. Notice moments when you are NOT the student's main connection.
Record when the student talks, laughs, works, plays, or solves a problem with a peer without you needing to make it happen. This feels especially important for paras because it connects Success Minutes directly to independence and belonging.

8. Bring one success example to the team.
At a teacher check-in, PLC, or planning meeting, be ready to share: What happened? How long did it last? What seemed to help?

9. Help recreate what worked.
Instead of only asking, "How can we create more moments like this tomorrow?", identify one thing you can repeat, change, add, or step back from tomorrow.

10. Tell the student what you noticed... without turning it into praise.
Use neutral noticing language: "You stayed with the group for five minutes," "You figured that out with Maya," or "I noticed you asked for help when you needed it."



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