Dear Staff & Teachers,

My child, [student name], is a student at [school name]. He/she has Crohn's disease/ulcerative colitis, a form of inflammatory bowel disease (IBD). This disease causes him/her to use the bathroom 5-20 times per day, often with little or no warning. The disease also causes abdominal pain and cramping, nausea, vomiting and fatigue, and can be very unpredictable – resulting in many absences.

Living with Crohn’s or colitis also means multiple medications with various side effects - from moodiness and irritability to joint pain and nausea. To make his/her transition into the school/to your class, I offer a few suggestions on ways to help you both make the best use of the time he/she is in class so he/she can be successful:

* Allowing bathroom use without requesting permission each time – this will save potential embarrassment and even an accident. We could discuss a protocol that works for you and your class so she can signal you while still using the bathroom promptly when needed.
* Homework assignments – IBD could cause him/her to miss time in the classroom, so it would be very helpful to discuss a way for him/her to catch up on missed assignments/lessons. A way to email or post assignments online would be especially helpful, or this may simply include a friend or relative that can pick up assignments.
* Crohn’s and colitis can be an awkward and embarrassing disease to talk about, especially for a young person. Please let him/her open up and discuss the disease with classmates at his/her own speed. Singling out or bringing attention to his/her disease could create a very uncomfortable environment. It is important to keep his/her life as normal as possible!

I welcome you to visit Crohn's and Colitis Canada's website to learn a bit about IBD at [crohnsandcolitis.ca](http://www.crohnsandcolitis.ca/). They offer a number of educational resources, including a brochure especially for teachers. A copy of this brochure is included with this letter. Another great resource is a very informative short video (<https://youtu.be/Keqzt83KMVA>) to help people young & old to better understand Crohn’s and colitis.

Thank you very much for your consideration and understanding. Please feel free to contact me at [email] or [phone].

Thank you,

[name]