

# Parent– Teacher



# Conferences

## Tips for Parents



Parent–teacher conferences are a great way to start talking to your child’s teachers. This guide suggests ways that you can make the most of parent-teacher conferences so that everyone wins, especially your child.



**P**arents, you are your child's first and most important teacher. You and your child's school have something in common: You both want your child to learn and do well.

When parents and teachers talk to each other, each person can share important information about your child's talents and needs. Each of you can also learn something new about how to help your child succeed.

## What to expect

**A two-way conversation.** Like all good conversations, parent–teacher conferences are best when both people talk and listen. The conference is a time for you to learn about your child's progress in school:

- Ask to see data about your child's attendance, grades, and test scores.
- Find out whether your child is meeting school expectations and academic standards.
- Talk with your child's teacher about what your child is like at home.
- Share information about your child's skills, interests, needs and dreams, so you and the teacher can work together to help your child.

**Emphasis on learning.** Good parent–teacher conferences focus on how well your child is doing in school. They also talk about how your child can do even better. To get ready for the conversation:

- Look over your child's homework, tests and notices.
- Bring a list of questions to ask the teacher.

**Opportunities and challenges.** Teachers want your child to succeed. It is important for you to hear positive feedback about your child's progress and also about areas for improvement.

- Think about your child's strengths and challenges before the conference.
- Be ready to ask questions about ways you and the teacher can help your child with some of his or her challenges.

# Parent-Teacher Conference Checklist

## Before the conference:

- ✓ Note your parent-teacher conference date/time. If you cannot attend, ask the teacher about other times.
- ✓ Review your child's work, grades and progress reports.
- ✓ Talk with your child about his or her progress in school.
- ✓ Talk with others—family members, after school staff, mentors, etc.—about your child's strengths and needs.
- ✓ Make a list of questions to ask during the conference.
- ✓ Think about ways you would like to be involved in your child's learning.



## What should you talk to the teacher about?

### Progress

Find out how your child is doing by asking questions, like:

- ✓ Is my child performing at grade level?
- ✓ How is he or she doing compared to the rest of the class?
- ✓ What do you see as his or her strengths?
- ✓ How could he or she improve?

### Assignments and assessments

- ✓ Ask to see examples of your child's work.
- ✓ Ask how the teacher gives grades.

### Your thoughts about your child

- ✓ Share your thoughts and feelings about your child.
- ✓ Tell the teacher what you think your child is good at.
- ✓ Explain what he or she needs more help with.

### Support for learning at home

- ✓ Ask what you can do at home to help your child learn.
- ✓ Ask if the teacher knows of programs or services in the community that could also help your child.

### Support for learning at school

- ✓ Find out what services are available at the school to help your child.
- ✓ Ask how the teacher will challenge your child and support your child when needed.

