



SUCCESSFUL PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Planning is the KEY!



I. PREPARING FOR THE CONFERENCE

A. Pre-conference information needed

1. Scheduling – how long?
2. Potential Problems – check with last year's teachers
Interpreter needed?
Difficult conferences? Alert principal
Need to schedule separate conference for each parent?



B. Prepare a flexible agenda/outline/sequence

1. Have notes on what you want to share on index cards
Parents' names – important to list name(s) correctly
2. Determine what you'd like to accomplish
Prioritize and limit issues
Information/questions/suggestions
3. Plan for Problem-solving
What positive actions can be taken by the school/teacher?
What positive actions can be taken by the family?
4. Anticipate questions from parents; Common ones are:
Does s/he get along with others?
Is s/he working to potential?
What can s/he improve? How?



C. Prepare a friendly environment

1. Insure confidentiality
2. Avoid physical barriers
3. Adult-sized chairs
4. Post schedule outside door

5. Kleenex, paper, pencils
6. Dress appropriately



D. Materials needed at the conference – be organized

1. Schedule of conferences
2. Grade book/ Teacher records
3. Seating Charts
4. Work folder for each student
 - a. Tests, homework, projects
 - b. Survey/self-assessments

This quarter I liked the study of _____best

My strengths in this class are_____

I still need to work on_____



II. THE CONFERENCE – focus on solutions

- A. Start and end on a positive note
- B. Watch the use of “educationese”
- C. **Listen** and ask for parents’ opinions
Has this problem come up in the past/school/home? What worked?
Is there anything the parent(s) think you should know?
- D. Problem areas/concerns – be specific, but tactful
(Note: If a major problem, parent(s) should have already been contacted)
- E. Develop a plan of action **with** the parents – stress **collaboration**
 1. Identify responsibilities: teacher, parent(s), student
 2. Schedule follow-up
- F. Stay on schedule – if more time is needed, arrange another meeting;
don’t keep other parents waiting
- G. Keep a record of the conference –make notes on back of index card as soon as possible after the conference
- H. Make sure you follow-up on requests/commitments
- I. Confine comments to scheduled student (not other students or teachers)