



Parent-Teacher Conference Tip Card

BEFORE

- Try to make a positive connection with parents prior to conferences (postcards, phone call, note, etc).
- Confirm conference date and time in writing.
- Use labels, yarn necklaces or construction paper "hats" as reminders.
- Have children write a personal invitation to their parents.
- Write down the topics you want to discuss. Include goals for communication and suggestions on how parents can help their children at home.
- Plan ahead and schedule additional time when a child has higher needs or if an interpreter will be used.

DURING

- Give families folders of their children's work to review while they wait.
- Discuss children's strong points, as well as areas that need improvement.
- Do not present a long list of negatives.
- Ask questions to determine parents' concerns.
- Allow time for questions and discussion.
- Be as diplomatic as possible if your viewpoint differs from that of the parent.
- Ask parents what has been tried at home that has been helpful to their child's learning or behavior.
- Set a timetable if you are working on goals.
- End the conference by summarizing what has been said.
- Do not use conference time to discuss library fines, lunch money, field trip forms or PIF updates. Instead, set up an after conference station for parents to stop at to take care of any necessary paperwork.
- Invite parents to be involved in the school (PTO, Site Council, African-American Parent Support Group, etc.).

AFTER

- Follow up with a phone call, written note or positive postcard. Include ways to contact you if there are additional questions and concerns.
- Mention conferences in your newsletter and thank parents for attending.
- Ask students and parents for reflections.
- Make sure to follow through on promises made to parents.
- Schedule appointments with parents that request additional time.
- Contact other staff if issues discussed during conferences involved them.
- Make a plan with the appropriate staff to reach families that did not make it to conferences.



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