

What to Ask at a Parent-Teacher Conference

Effective parent involvement includes a range of actions from reading and talking with children and asking “What did you learn today?” to attending parent-teacher conferences and helping children and youth make good choices about what they do after school and in the summer.¹⁶

Overview

Take advantage of parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Think of some questions and concerns you may have and write them down before your meeting. Keep track of your child’s schoolwork to help you with your questions. You are in a position to share important information, as well as ask questions. Remember, you can and should talk to your child’s teacher throughout the year.

Questions to ask for students in all grades:

- Is my child performing at grade level?
- What are my child’s strengths and weaknesses in reading, math, and science?
- How much time should my child spend on homework?
- Are my child’s assignments completed accurately?
- Does the school have special programs to meet my child’s needs?
- Does my child have special learning needs? Are there special classes my child should be in?
- Do you keep a folder of my child’s work? If yes, could you review it with me?
- Does my child have close friends? How well does my child get along with the other students?
- What can we do at home to support classroom learning?
- What is the best way to keep in touch with you?

Additional questions for middle and high school students:

- How can I help my child to work independently and make the best use of time?
- How can I help my child prepare for high school?
- What can you tell me about peer pressure and how I can help my child handle difficult situations—drugs, alcohol, and sex?
- What courses should my child take to satisfy graduation requirements?
- Do you have a list of courses my child should take to be ready to enter college?
- If my child plans to attend college, how will the school help with the application process?
- If my child plans to attend college, how will the school help my child find out about financial aid?