

Prepare for a Successful Conference

BEFORE THE CONFERENCE

- Find out your child's questions and concerns about school. -
- Check progress reports, report cards and work your child has brought home.
- Write a list of questions you want to ask the teacher. Start with the form in this brochure and add to it. Bring your list to the meeting with you.
- Write down information about your child that the teacher should know, such as a family death, - divorce, changed finances, illness or a new home. -
- If you need a ride, childcare or a different time or day for the conference, the school can help. Call the school office and ask.
- If English is not your first language, have someone contact the school before the parent-teacher conference and request an interpreter to assist you during the meeting.

AT THE CONFERENCE

- Let the teacher begin the meeting but be sure to ask the questions on your list before time runs out.
- Ask the teacher what your child should know and be able to do by the end of the school year. Make a plan for how you and the teacher will work with your child to reach those goals.
- Find out the best way (notes, phone calls, e-mail) and the best time to communicate with the teacher throughout the school year.

Continue the Conversation Through the Year

AFTER THE CONFERENCE

- Talk with your child about what the teacher told you, especially the positive comments. Talk about learning goals and make a plan to reach them together.
- Follow up on the plan you made with your child and the teacher every few weeks.
- Check your child's backpack daily for materials sent home from school. Read all of it. If English is not your first language, ask a relative or friend to read the school information to you in your language.
- Contact the teacher whenever you have questions. If your child is not doing well, set up a regular check-in schedule with the teacher to monitor progress. If English is not your first language, get a friend to help you contact the teacher or to ask the school office for an interpreter.
- Send the teacher a thank you note when something good happens in the classroom. -
- Make sure your child knows that school is important. Talk with your child every day about school, attend school events, offer to help from home, volunteer in the classroom, join the parent organization.

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Contact the Office of the Education Ombudsman if you'd like to receive this document in an alternative format to accommodate people with disabilities.

The Office of the Education Ombudsman provides information and referral services to students, families and communities regarding the public education system, promotes family and community involvement in education, and helps families and students resolve conflict with schools.



Make the Most of Parent-Teacher Conferences

Office of the Education Ombudsman A Guide for Families of Elementary School Students



State of Washington
Office of the Governor

