

# Tips for a Successful Parent-Teacher Conference

## General Hints

Parent-teacher conferences are an excellent opportunity to find out how your child is adjusting to the new school year and to get to know her teachers. Here are some general hints on how to have a successful conference:

- Ask your child if there is anything that he would like you to discuss with the teacher.
- Jot down everything that you want to talk about at the conference. (See Helpful Questions, below.)
- Arrive promptly or a few minutes early.
- Begin with positive comments about the teacher or classroom.
- Avoid lengthy discussions of topics that are not related to the purpose of the conference.
- Be open to suggestions from the teacher.
- Keep your emotions under control.
- Take notes about what has been discussed and share them with your child.
- Express appreciation for the conference.
- Do not stay beyond your allotted time.

## Helpful Questions

In order to help your kids have a successful school year, you need to know what will be expected of them academically from now until June. You can find out by asking some questions. Take this list with you to your next parent-teacher conference. And don't forget to take notes.

1. What skills and knowledge will my child be expected to master this year?
  - What will my child learn this year in key subjects like math, science, history, and English?
  - Are there challenging academic standards in place at this school? How do they compare with those at other school districts? May I see them?
  - How do you inform students about the academic standards they're expected to meet? What kind of projects and assignments have you planned that will help my child meet higher academic standards?
2. How will my child be evaluated?
  - What kind of information do you use to evaluate students?
  - How do you know if a child is academically ready to move on to the next grade?
  - How are grades determined in your classroom?
3. What can I do to stay more involved in my child's academic progress?
  - What can I do at home to complement what is happening in the classroom?
  - How can I know on a daily basis what homework has been assigned?
  - How can I support teachers' efforts in implementing higher academic standards?
4. How do you accommodate differences in learning?
  - What if my child is a slow learner and falls behind, or is a fast learner and is bored?
  - Are summer school, tutoring, or other programs available for students who need more help?

5. How are older students prepared for further learning after high school?
- Are children encouraged to think about a wide variety of career interests?
  - Are all students encouraged to take algebra by the end of eighth grade?