

Panhandle Schools Parent - Teacher Conferences



Conference Guidelines
&
Helpful Tips

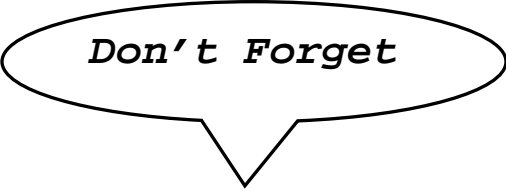
PREPARING **...before the conference**

- ☐ **Know the student** by name and face, not just where they sit.
- ☐ **Prepare a Profile** sheet for each student.
 - Name
 - Test scores previous & present
 - Detailed disciplinary report
 - Current work
 - Strengths & Weaknesses
 - Social / emotional adjustments
- ☐ **Do NOT rely on your memory.** (see above)
- ☐ **Know school policies** that might be discussed.
- ☐ **Be prepared to take notes.** If you don't know the answer, don't guess. Write the question down and promise to find out – DO FOLLOW UP!
- ☐ **Be able to explain and demonstrate** grading scale and evaluating procedure.
- ☐ **Prepare examples** of student's work. Do **NOT** share other student's grades or tests.
- ☐ **Display** student work.
- ☐ **Prepare your room.** Clean, and organized. (Optional: soft music)

When possible, sit at a table or in student desks with parents and teachers next to each other.

The CONFERENCE

- ❖ **Always begin with a positive comment.** This can disarm angry parents and start the conversation in a positive light.
- ❖ **Use definite examples** when discussing strengths and weaknesses.
- ❖ **Explain purpose** of achievement test.
- ❖ **Don't use jargon.** Parents must understand what you are telling them. Try to avoid words such as overachiever, cognitive, regressive, etc....
- ❖ **Allow time for parents to talk,** express concerns, and ask questions.
- ❖ **Suggest techniques** that parents can use with their child at home to support their progress.
- ❖ **Don't Predict** probable future achievements of a child.
- ❖ **Don't argue.** A parent must agree that there is a problem before they can accept any solution.
- ❖ **Stay focused** limit the discussion and be specific. Avoid multiple topics, superficial conversations, comparisons to other students and siblings. Remember, as a professional you cannot discuss any other student, other teachers, psychological evaluations, etc...
- ❖ **Anything said should be treated as CONFIDENTIAL.**
- ❖ **Manage your time.**
 - If others are waiting stay on schedule.
 - If no other parents are waiting be flexible.
- ❖ **Always thank parents** for coming to the conference.
- ❖ **Always end the conference with a positive comment.**



Don't Forget

The FOLLOW UP

- ✓ **Keep notes** of what was discussed.
- ✓ **Note any agreements** or conclusions.
- ✓ **Say** what you will do and **DO** what you say.
- ✓ **Keep communications open with parents.**

...notes

"Let's recap ..."

10 things you should never do in a parent-teacher conference...

1. **DON'T** summon parents into the classroom and direct them to sit in front of your desk. Parents may be anxious or fearful about meeting with you, a key authority figure in their child's life.
2. **DON'T** begin by focusing on the student's problem.
3. **DON'T** dress too casually for the occasion. You are a professional, and professional attire communicates that message.
4. **DON'T** wing it. DO rehearse what you want to say. Practice warm-up introductions
5. **DON'T** rely on verbal descriptions of the student's work and progress.
6. **DON'T** point a finger at parents or place blame.
7. **DON'T** dominate a meeting so that parents can't ask questions or make suggestions.
8. **DON'T** send them home empty-handed.
9. **DON'T** use educational jargon or acronyms.
10. **DON'T** end on a negative note.

Appointments

Time	Child's Name	Parent(s) / Guardian (s) Name

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