

## Parent Teacher Conference FAQ's

### 1. How often are Parent Teacher Conferences held?

The Department of Education provides two official conference days, one in the fall (November) and one in the spring (March). These conference days are split into an evening (5-8 pm) and afternoon session (1- 3pm). These dates are scheduled near report card distribution dates.

However, Parent can contact their child's teacher at ANY time to discuss concerns. Teachers can be contacted by sending in a note or via phone or email. All staff emails are listed on ps39.org. Teachers also have dedicated Family Engagement time on Tuesdays from 2:45- 3:30pm to communicate more informally with families about student progress.

### 2. The conference appointment with my teacher is only 10 minutes. Why can't I have more time?

PS 39 offers conference appointments to all families. In order to accommodate the high number of appointments, slots are limited to 10 minutes during the most popular conference times (evening and half day afternoon).

### 3. What can I do to maximize the usefulness of the time I have with my child's teacher?

A little bit of preparation can make for a much more effective conference. Start with carefully reviewing your child's report card and Student Assessment Portfolio. As you review this work, think about your child's strengths and areas of concerns. Make a list of questions you have about your child's performance or issues that you notice. You may want to use the attached Parent Teacher Conference Discussion template to help.

For older students, you may want to have your child review their work with you and have them identify their strengths, areas of concerns, and *specific* goals that they have for the next term ("Do better in math/reading/spelling" is not specific enough. Encourage your student to think about the parts of the subject that seem to be the most challenging)

Bring your questions, concerns *and* reasons to celebrate to the conference with you as a guide for the conversation

### 4. Why does my teacher have a timer on the conference table?

Each conference has a scheduled ending time and appointments are scheduled closely together. In order to be fair to ALL families waiting for conferences, teachers will use the timers to be sure to monitor the progress of the conversation before time runs out.

### 5. My child's teacher and I have started discussing a serious concern about my child. The time slot for my conference is almost over, what should I do?

If you have more serious academic or behavioral concerns, the ten minute conference time may not be enough. At your conference, if you feel that the conversation you are having with your child's teacher is not going to be resolved before your conference time is up, please ask to schedule a

follow up conversation on another day. Be respectful of the families that are waiting for their appointment with the teacher.

Alternately, if you know before you schedule a conference that there is a more complicated issue that needs to be discussed, you may ask your teacher to schedule a conference appointment for you on a different day when there will be more time for discussion.

**6. My conference time is starting, but there is still another parent in the room.**

When your conference time is starting, please let your teacher know that you are there by stopping in the room and respectfully identifying that your conference time is about to begin.

**7. I am a few minutes late for my appointment with my child's teacher.**

Unfortunately, if a parent is late for the appointment, they will need to reschedule for another time. You can check with the teacher, *in between conference appointments*, to see if there are other available times that day.

Parent Teacher Conference Discussion Sheet

**Strengths:**

(What does my child do well? Where have they shown growth?)

**Concerns and Questions:**

(Where does my child have more difficulty or seem to need more support?)

**Goals:**

(What areas should my child focus on in the next term? What support can be provided in class and at home?)

