

Sample Page: Positive and Productive Parent Conferences: A Guide for Teachers

Meetings That Matter

"What makes for an effective meeting? Having a purpose, preparing ahead of time, setting goals during the meeting, and making provisions for follow-through and assessment afterwards are critical."

Gregorio Billikopf

Setting the Stage

In order to have a productive meeting, certain elements need to be in place at the beginning of the meeting.

Structure

- State the time allotted for the meeting.

- Set an outline for the meeting.
- State the goal or reason for the meeting.
- Introduce the idea that you both have the same goal-to help the student be successful.
- Explain the need to work together to make that happen. The teacher and parent should be allies not adversaries.
- Share information. Address concerns expressed through the questionnaire.
- Ask for questions.

- Develop an action plan.
- Discuss time and type of follow up.

At the end of the explanation regarding structure, transition to the main part of the meeting by accentuating the positive. Tell an anecdote about or mention a positive quality the student possesses. For example, he may be artistic, polite, a leader or have a good sense of humor. It is important to remember that all students have strengths that need to be celebrated.