

REPORT CARD CONFERENCES are around the corner!

December 20, 21, 22 (Tues., Wed., and Thurs.)

The early dismissal schedule on all three days will begin at 11:30am (for Kindergarten) and complete at 12:00noon (for all other students).

There will be NO In-House care for students on ANY of those three days.

You will be contacted in a separate communication with your child(ren)'s conferences time(s).

Parent-Teacher Conferences: A Tip Sheet for Parents

As a parent, you are your child's first and most important teacher. You and your child's school have something in common: you both want your child to learn and do well. When parents and teachers talk to each other, each person can share important information about your child's talents and needs. Each person can also learn something new about how to help your child. Parent-teacher conferences are a great way to start talking to your child's teachers. This tip sheet suggests ways that you can make the most of parent-teacher conferences so that everyone wins, especially your child.

The conferences are brief, so it is important to organize and prepare your thoughts ahead of time.

Checklist: Before the conference

- ✓ Review your child's work, grades, and progress reports.
- ✓ Talk with your child about his or her progress in school.
- ✓ Talk with others—family members, after school program staff, mentors, etc.—about your child's strengths and needs.
- ✓ Make a list of questions to ask during the conference.
- ✓ Think about ways you would like to be involved with your child's learning so that you can discuss them with the teachers.

What should you talk to the teacher about?

Progress: Find out how your child is doing by asking questions like: Is my child performing at grade level? How is he or she doing compared to the rest of the class? What do you see as his or her strengths? How could he or she improve?

Support learning at home: Ask what you can do at home to help your child learn. Ask if the teacher knows of other programs or services in the community that could also help your child.

Support learning at school: Find out what services are available at the school to help your child. Ask how the teacher will both challenge your child and support your child when he or she needs it.

How should you follow up?

Make a plan: Write down the things that you and the teacher will each do to support your child. You can do this during the conference or after. Write down what you will do, when, and how often. Make plans to check in with the teacher in the coming months.

Schedule another time to talk: Communication should go both ways. Ask how you can contact the teacher. And don't forget to ask how the teacher will contact you too. There are many ways to communicate—in person, by phone, notes, email. Make a plan that works for both of you.

Talk to your child: The parent-teacher conference is all about your child, so don't forget to talk to him or her about it and share what you learned. Show him or her how you will help with learning at home. Ask for his or her suggestions.

This tip-sheet was adapted from the Harvard Family Research Project, Harvard Graduate School of Education, 3 Garden St., Cambridge, MA, 02138, website: www.hfrp.org, email: hfrp@gse.harvard.edu, phone: 617-495-9108, fax: 617-495-8594