

# Parent Conferences

*As a result of what I have learned/heard/read/been reminded of . . .*

## One thing I will **stop** doing . . .

- sitting behind the desk
- talking first!
- sitting in a large chair behind a table
- using child-sized chairs
- thinking of them as an inconvenience in planning or time
- using small chairs for parents to sit in
- waiting too long to prepare for them
- scheduling them too close together
- thinking that a parent isn't interested in their child's progress if they can't physically come to a conference
- having parents sit in student chairs
- sitting across the table

## One thing I will **continue** doing . . .

- my "Parent Book Project" to have parents look through while they wait; it's a good conversation starter for "Tell me about your child"
- focus on the positive yet voice concerns
- sitting facing parents in a living room setting on the front rug area
- starting off on a positive note
- focus on strengths and progress
- asking parents to tell me about their child and any concerns they have at the beginning of the conference
- gather work samples all along the way to show as examples
- asking parents to share their thoughts/concerns about their child early in the conference so they can have their concerns addressed without being rushed at the end of the conference
- actively listening to parents during conferences
- invite the students
- organizing student information
- laughing
- offering early conferences to working parents
- having writing samples available, being positive, making outside welcoming for parents who are waiting
- sitting next to the parents when I talk to them
- starting the conference off with positive comments
- focus on only 1 or 2 areas of concern and always begin with positives
- post the schedule
- starting conferences with a positive comment
- organize folders with student work samples
- sending follow-up emails/making phone calls with actions taken
- stay positive and take parent input seriously
- setting up a student folders/sheet individually ahead of time

## One thing I will **start** doing . . .

- have my circle table on the rug with 3 nice chairs around the table with a bowl of mints
- putting up a schedule for all parents to see
- asking parents how they think things are going
- asking parents to tell me about their child at the start of the meeting
- asking parents about what they think first
- send a thank you note after with an update/recap
- using a sandwich effect (good, bad, good) with comments
- use better seating
- following up after meetings with suggestions I make
- sending notes home for parent's input closer to conference time
- thinking more about how the parents feel
- forgiving parents when they call Lisa instead of me
- passing out a 4 question paper about what parents want to talk about a week before conferences
- making a point to find out more about parents
- having adult-sized chairs in and out of the room
- leaving things outside of the room for parents to look at
- have students reflect on their progress around report card time
- review a blank report card with students along with the self-evaluation I already do with the students
- sending parent questionnaires home closer to conference time, not a curriculum night
- making a survey for parents to complete while waiting for a conference
- sending reminders and information for parents to fill out with concerns
- have students complete their own questionnaire which can be a good conferencing tool
- Thank you not to parents after conferences

