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How to Talk To the Teacher About Your Child's Report Card

After the important report card discussion comes the parent-teacher conference. It's a key step in the partnership between you, your child, and your child's education.

Often, it can give you insights into your child's behaviors and weaknesses—things that become evident when he or she is away from home and family members. Here are some tips on how to make the most of the parent-teacher interview:

- **Be prepared.** Bring your child's report card with you, and know all the details. If relevant, bring last year's report cards as well. If your child has a grade that doesn't seem in sync with test marks or project scores, then bring an assignment along as well.
- **Ask your child for insights.** "What do you think your teacher will say about you?" is a question that might eliminate any potential surprises. After all, your child spends several hours a day with his teacher.
- **Write a list of questions to ask.** There is only one teacher and many parents, so your time with the teacher is limited. If you run out of time, you can leave the list with the teacher, or save it to refer to next time.
- **Take notes.** Write down any actions that the teacher has suggested.
- **Don't be confrontational.** A harmonious atmosphere in the spirit of partnership in your child's education isn't aided by tension.
- **Leave on a high note.** Say, "Thanks for taking the time to talk with me!"

Sample Questions

- What key areas is Tom strong in?
- Where does Sarah need to improve?
- What can we do to help Andrew achieve improvement?
- As Mary's teacher, what can you do to initiate improvement?