

Helpful Tips for Parents

Discussing Your Child's Report Card

A report card is one way teachers communicate with parents and students. The report card is the teacher's appraisal of the student's work for the past grading period. The following tips may be helpful to parents in discussing a child's report card with the child:

Meet privately with your child, without distractions.

Be sure you have enough time.

Your child deserves your attention without interruptions. Be sure you allow enough time for a relaxed discussion.

Start with a review of what the child has learned in each subject during the past grading period.

Ask your child to tell you about the activity in each subject. Talk about what the child has learned.

Ask your child to tell you how the report card grade was determined in each subject.

Tests? Homework? Reports? Class participation?

Ask your child to tell you if he/she is satisfied with the grade.

If not, what could the child do to improve the grade? Discuss concrete steps your child could take. How can parents help?

Review other indicators on the report card.

Teacher's comments, number of absences, marks for effort, conduct, and attitude. Listen to your child's explanation of each indicator.

Discuss your child's goals for the next grading period.

Are the goals reasonable and challenging?

Help your child plan his or her next steps.

Should your child talk with the teacher to discuss concerns, explain new goals, or ask for the teacher's suggestions? Are changes needed in your child's study habits at home? Is your child interested in learning more about certain topics?

Discuss your next steps.

If your child is to talk with the teacher, will you discuss the meeting with your child afterwards? How will you help your child meet his/her goals? If your child is interested in learning more about certain topics, what can you do to help?

How about meeting with the teacher or sending the teacher a note?

As a result of your discussion with your child about his/her report card, do you have questions to ask the teacher? Do you now have information about your child that would be helpful to the teacher? Do you want to show your appreciation for the teacher's work or just say "thanks?"

When praise is in order, let your child know you are proud of his or her efforts.

When changes must be made, let your child know that you will help. Leave the discussion with a firm understanding of everyone's next steps.