

Building Block: Connection

Parent-Teacher-Student Conferences

Parent-teacher-student conferences can be a very effective means of communication if a few simple principles are followed.

Principles for effective conferences:

- The conferences are held at least twice a year;
- The conference follows a standard agenda that all teachers and parents know about in advance;
- The conference includes a discussion of the School Community Compact, homework policy and learning standards;
- Each conference concludes with agreed upon Next Steps for the parent(s), teacher and student; and
- A file of “Next Steps” is kept that passes from conference to conference, teacher to teacher.

Some schools use “student-led” conferences, at which the student leads the discussion, showing a portfolio of work and asking questions of the teacher and parents. This is especially effective in upper grades and requires preparation for the students beforehand. Even when the conference is not “student led,” it is always healthy for the student to be in attendance and able to participate.

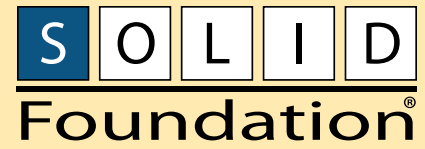


Parent-teacher-student conferences are always a good time to encourage parents to participate in courses offered for them by the school and in other key parent activities. *Source: Solid Foundation/ADI*

Welcome parents' questions about academic and social issues.



Check out Section 10, pages 14-22, of your Solid Foundation Resource Manual for Parent-Teacher-Student Conference Ideas.



Reading • Studying • Respect • Responsibility

Solid Foundation is a school-based team process that helps:

- Strengthen family-school connections
- Engage parents in their children's learning
- Improve student, academic and social learning

NEED HELP?

Contact:

Caroline Allen

Education Partnership Coordinator
callen@csc.csiu.org

Kathy Kurpeikis

Education Specialist
kkurpeikis@adi.org

Karen Shanoski

Family-School-Community Partnerships Project Manager
kshanoski@csc.csiu.org

For more information, go to:

www.center-school.org/pa-pirc
www.adi.org/solidfoundation
www.families-schools.org

Solid Foundation Team:

Hamilton Elementary School, Lancaster School District
Team Leader: Melanie Abney
mlabney@lancaster.k12.pa.us • (717) 291-6166

Consistent Communication Success Story

Communication between the school and home needed to be improved at Hamilton Elementary School. A decision was made to institute a new tool called the *Thursday Folder*. The *Thursday Folder* is sent home every Thursday full of information for parents to review. Not only is there information from the teacher about classroom curriculum and activities, but also details about school events, policies and more. The end result is that the entire school community can count on information being shared in a consistent and timely manner.