

# TALKING WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHERS

When parents and teachers share information about what's going on at home or school, your child will do better in school as a result.

Tell your child's teachers what they need to know about your child – if she has special needs, for example. If your child has problem with schoolwork or homework, request a meeting with the teacher. You can say, for example, "Tim is having trouble with his social studies homework. I'm worried about why he can't finish the assignments and what we might do to help him."

You can ask questions such as: What are your expectations for my child? What are the school's rules and regulations? Is there a homework policy? Ask about the school website, schedules, contacts, rules, etc.

Trust that the teacher wants to help you and your child, even if you disagree about something. Don't go to the principal without first giving the teacher a chance to work out the problem. Remember that you and the teacher are a team working together for your child's education.



**PIRC KANSAS PARENT INFORMATION RESOURCE CENTER**

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## QUESTIONS TO ASK AT A PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCE

Take advantage of parent-teacher conferences during the school year. Think of some questions and concerns you may have and write them down before your meeting. Keep track of your child's schoolwork to help you with your questions. Remember, you can and should talk to your child's teacher throughout the year.

### Questions to Ask for Students in All Grades

1. Is my child performing at grade level?
2. What are my child's strengths and weaknesses in major subjects — reading, math and science?
3. How much time should my child spend on homework?
4. Are my child's assignments completed accurately and on time?
5. Does the school have special programs to meet my child's needs?
6. Does my child have special learning needs? Are there special classes my child should be in?
7. Do you keep a folder of my child's work? If yes, could you review it with me?
8. Does my child have close friends? How well does my child get along with the other students?
9. What can we do at home to support classroom learning?
10. What is the best way to keep in touch with you?

### Additional Questions for Middle and High School Students

1. How can I help my child to work independently and make the best use of time?
2. How can I help my child prepare for high school/college?
3. What can you tell me about peer pressure and how I can help my child handle difficult situations—drugs, alcohol, and sex?
4. What courses should my child take to satisfy graduation requirements?
5. Do you have a list of courses my child should take to be ready to enter college?
6. If my child plans to attend college, how will the school help with the application process?
7. If my child plans to attend college, how will the school help my child find out about financial aid?

Adapted from U.S. Department of Education, Office of Communications and Outreach, *Helping Your Child Succeed in School* and *100 Tips for Parents*, Washington, DC, 2005.

***For more information or for workshops about effective parent-school communication and collaboration, contact: Kansas Parent Information Resource Center (KPIRC) (see reverse side)***