

A PARENTS' GUIDE TO STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES



Prairie Crossing Charter School

WHERE EDUCATION COMES NATURALLY!

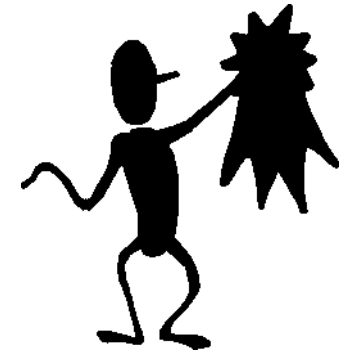
Important:

Student-led conferences will be most useful to your family if EACH parent who plans to attend reads this guide.

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HOW CAN I MAKE SUGGESTIONS TO MY CHILD IN A POSTIVE WAY DURING STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES?



You may be surprised to see how perceptive your child is in terms of his or her own strengths and needs. However, each of us can benefit from helpful suggestions from time to time. In general, these suggestions should be preceded by an acknowledgment of what already has been accomplished.

Some ways to begin goal setting or problem solving are:

"I noticed that you (list some positive ideas)."

- "What about _____ ■"
"When will you _____?"
"How might you _____?"
"Next time you might _____."
"How might I be able to help you _____?"
"What else might you have done?"

WHAT IS THE TEACHER'S ROLE DURING STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES?

Most of the teacher's responsibilities occur before the student-led conferences take place.

The teacher's responsibilities during the actual conference include:

- Encourage the student to keep focused on his or her portfolio
- Answer minor questions
- Maintain a positive and supportive environment
- Act as facilitator
- Encourage parents to fill out conference reflection forms and return them to school in a timely manner

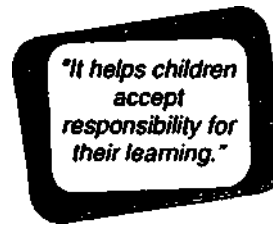
What are student-led conferences?

Student-led conferences are school conferences planned and conducted by your child. Student-led conferences are intended to be a way for children to share their learning with parents. There will be several conferences occurring at the same time within each classroom. For several days before the conferences, the children review their recent and ongoing projects and activities.

The teacher will often provide the children with suggestions of

specific activities that all should share as well as categories of activities that should be represented. The children then decide what they think is important for their parents to know about the learning they have been doing as shown in the selected

activities. The children use one another as "parents" in order to practice sharing their ideas in a comfortable and natural way. By the time the parents and children arrive for their conferences, the children are ready to present their learning in an organized manner.



Why Have Student-led Conferences?

There are several reasons to have student-led conferences.

- Student-led conferences place the child in a new position of responsibility for his or her own learning.

- Student-led conferences provide an opportunity for the child to think back over what has been accomplished and to pull it all together in an organized way, thus solidifying learning.

- Student-led conferences provide an opportunity for parents to hear about school from the child's perspective.



- Student-led conferences provide a time for the family to focus on learning.
- Student-led conferences provide a positive opportunity for the parents to come to school.
- Student-led conferences provide the family with a structured time to set goals.

WHAT DO PARENTS DO AT STUDENT-LED CONFERENCES?

Your child has planned and organized this conference. Allow your child to take the lead.

Make specific, positive comments about the work samples you are seeing. For example:

- "I notice that you met all criteria on this activity."
- "I see that you revised this activity to improve it."
- The way you _____ on this activity was a particularly good idea. As a result _____ "
- "It is obvious that you _____ "

Ask questions that will cause your child to elaborate. For example:

- "What had you done to get ready for this?"
- "Tell me more about this idea (or part)."
- "Help me understand that more."
- "Is there anything else?"
- "Will you be working more with these ideas?"