



# Parent's Guide for Student-Led Conferences

EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW AND MORE





# What are Student-Led Conferences?

A Student-Led Conference is similar to a parent-teacher one, but **the student is present and in charge of leading the discussion.**

- The teacher acts as a facilitator for the discussion.
- The student presents their work and guides the discussion.
- The parents listen and speak with their child about their academic progress, needs and goals.



## Why SLCs?

It give students an opportunity to practice one of our core values: **responsibility**. Students take ownership of their learning as they reflect on their strengths, needs and goals. They also develop important organizational and oral communication skills as they present their portfolio of work.

## What can I Expect?

4-6 families will be present in the room as the conference takes place. At the conference, your child will do most of the talking as they share their portfolio with evidence of their learning experiences, and discusses progress and goals. Then, you will have the opportunity to ask questions.

(See suggested questions on the next page).

## How are the Teachers Involved?

**Here, the spotlight is on the most important person in the process: the student.** While the homeroom teacher will be in the room, they will not be directly involved in your discussions with your child. However, they are available to support the students if needed (to clarify points, or answer questions).

Since many conferences are going on at once, they have limited time to speak with parents. If there is a specific topic you want to discuss, we suggest scheduling an individual meeting with the teacher in order to respect the students' privacy. Teachers of specialty classes will be available in the Library for quick questions or clarifications.

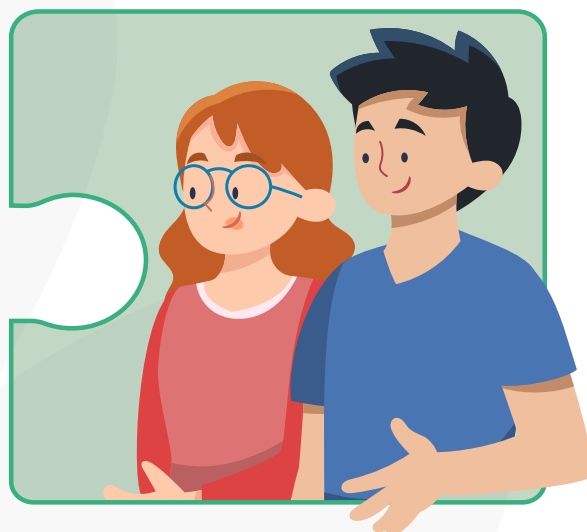
## What is my Role as a Parent?

- **Be present.** Focus on your child, put your cell phones and other distractions away. Take notes if you find it helpful.
  - Let the student lead, avoid taking over. **Listen to understand, not to respond.**
  - **Take notes.** Paraphrase or summarize key points you hear.
  - **Be encouraging.** Balance positive feedback with probing questions.
  - **Focus on growth.** Ask open-ended (non judgemental) questions.
- Avoid phrases like "Why didn't you", "I told you to", "You know better"

# Suggested Questions and Conversation Starters

In an effort to make student-led conferences as beneficial as possible, below is a list of questions you may ask your child as you sit down and review his/her portfolio of work together.

1. What made you decide to share this piece with me?
2. Which piece of work are you most proud of? Why?
3. If you could do this piece of work again, what would you do differently?
4. What do you think is your strongest subject? Why do you think that?
5. What is challenging for you in this subject/topic? What strategies can you use to face these challenges?
6. Which subject/activity do you enjoy the most? Why?
7. What can you tell me about working in groups? What strengths or weaknesses do you bring to group projects?
8. How has homework been going? What has been helpful? What can you improve?
9. What can we set up for you at home to support you and help you do your best? (Find websites, games, set up a homework routine, determine how you will get books to read at home, find extra practice work, etc.)



## Conversations after the Conference

- I am pleased to see your effort in...
- I am proud of your improvement in...
- I know you sometimes have difficulty with..., however...
- I would like you to focus on...
- I can help you by...