

Parent-Teacher Conference Question Card

ElevateTheNorm.com

Free. No email required. Grades 6-12.

For families of students in grades 6-12. Pick four or five questions and ask the same ones in every room, so you can compare answers instead of collecting impressions. Bring your student with you and let them answer first.

Ten questions, and what each one is for

- **"What is the one thing you'd change about how she works in your class?"** Forces one specific answer instead of a summary.
- **"Is this a skill problem or a habit problem?"** Separates doesn't understand it from isn't doing it. The fixes have nothing in common.
- **"What does strong work look like on the next big thing?"** Gets the standard in concrete terms your kid can aim at.
- **"What would you want him to do differently tomorrow?"** Converts a judgment into an action with a date on it.
- **"When is the best time for her to come see you?"** Hands the relationship to the student, which is the point at this age.
- **"What is he like in class when I'm not there?"** You know your kid at home, not at 10:40 in a room of thirty.
- **"Is anything I'm doing at home making this harder?"** Rarely asked, often answerable, and it signals you are not here to litigate.
- **"How will we both know in six weeks whether this worked?"** Sets a measure before anyone has reason to argue about one.
- **"What's the fastest way to reach you, and how fast is realistic?"** Prevents the two-week silence that turns into a grievance.
- **"What should she be doing now if she wants that next year?"** The academic socialization question — the one with research behind it.

When the news is bad, ask these four, in this order

- **1. What is recoverable and what isn't?** Some of it can be fixed; some is arithmetic that already happened.
- **2. What is the first thing, and when is it due?** One task with a date. A list of eleven will not get started.
- **3. What do you need from me, specifically?** Sometimes a quiet place and a bedtime. Sometimes nothing.
- **4. What do you need from him?** Asked with the student in the room, so the agreement has a witness.

Five that waste the fifteen minutes

"How is he doing?" · "Does he behave?" · "Is she one of your better students?" · "Can he get extra credit?" · anything that is really about a different teacher.

Parent-Teacher Conference Question Card

One row per teacher. Fill it in during the conversation — a teenager reads a parent taking notes as evidence the meeting was real. Leave with a date in the last column, every time.

Conference notes

Teacher / subject	The one problem, specifically	What my student does next	Follow-up date

Before you go in

The one question I most need answered tonight

What my student predicts each teacher will say *(ask them first — the gap is often the most useful thing you learn)*

After

Share what you heard with your student and ask for their suggestions. If you could not attend, email the two teachers who matter most this term and ask for ten minutes by phone. If English is not the language you want this conversation in, ask the school for an interpreter, in writing — districts receiving federal funds are required to communicate with families in a language they understand, and a bilingual student translating a conversation about their own grades is not meaningful access.