

PARENT TEACHER CONFERENCE GUIDE

FAMILY RESOURCE



Prince George's County Public Schools firmly believes in the power of the home-school connection. Parents and families are our partners as we work together to develop the best educational experience possible for students. We are grateful for the opportunity to support and promote academic growth for your student(s) and look forward to partnering with you for the duration of their educational journey.

Conferences Overview

A conference is a meeting with your child's teacher(s). It can also include other members of your child's instructional team, such as a professional school counselor, special educators, ESOL teachers, and/or reading specialists. The school staff in attendance will vary depending on the student's grade level, student's needs, and/or established goals for the meeting. Depending on a variety of factors, your student may or may not be present with you at this conference.

Before the Conference

- Think about what your goals are for your student.
- Check in with your child – how do they feel about school this year? What are their concerns or celebrations?
- Check their grades on the SchoolMAX Family Portal and see if any questions arise. Record your questions for easy reference during the meeting.
- Would you benefit from an interpreter during the conference? Indicate that preference to the school in advance of the meeting so that they can schedule a licensed interpreter.
- Verify the time and location of the conference (either virtual or in person).

After the Conference

- Inform your child that you had a conference with their teacher.
- Discuss main ideas from the conference with your child.
- Follow-up with the teacher or instructional team regarding next steps.

During the Conference

- **Seek Clarity** - If unfamiliar acronyms or terms are being used, ask the speaker to clarify their terms.
- **Ask Questions** - Now is the time to learn more from educators regarding your child's strengths and growth areas. Here are some questions to consider asking during the meeting:
 - » What are some of my child's strengths (academically, socially, linguistically, behaviorally)?
 - » What are some needed growth areas for my child?
- **Share Context** - Instructional teams benefit greatly from learning more about your child. Does your child have a special interest outside of school? Any goals for their future? Families can feel free to share about their child's interests and experiences so that educators can gain context about their lived experiences and further personalize instruction when possible.
- **Respect Time Boundaries** - There is most likely another conference after your timeslot. If the conversation is not finished, please make arrangements for a follow-up. This ensures other conferences are not delayed.



For more information, please visit:
pgcps.org/about-pgcps/academics



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RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

Office of Interpreting and Translation (OIT)

INTERPRETING SERVICES

The OIT provides interpreters for approved school activities to ensure that parents/guardians who are not primary speakers of English, or who are deaf or hard of hearing, can fully participate in their children's education. Interpreters can assist with parent/teacher conferences, PTA meetings, parent workshops, back-to-school nights, administrative conferences, SIT/SST meetings, special education assessments, IEP meetings, home visits, suspension conferences, expulsion hearings, and other meetings or school events.

SUPPORTED LANGUAGES

Amharic, American Sign Language, Arabic, Chinese/Mandarin, Dari, Farsi, French, Haitian Creole, Hindi, K'iché, Kaqchikel, Mam, Masalit, Nepali, Pashto, Punjabi, Spanish, Tigrinya, Urdu, Vietnamese, Yoruba.

HOW TO REQUEST AN INTERPRETER

Interpreters work on an on-call basis and a minimum of 72 business hours is needed to fill most requests; some lower-incidence languages may require more time to arrange. Parents may ask the school to submit a request for a scheduled meeting/event or may request an interpreter by contacting the OIT at 301-408-5511 or interpreter@pgcps.org.

Technology Training Team

SCHOOLMAX FAMILY PORTAL:

All authorized caretakers are encouraged to register for a Family Portal account. This account provides access to SchoolMAX for monitoring grades, attendance, discipline and service-learning hours. Family Portal accounts are required for you to receive messages from SchoolMessenger and to access Canvas as a parent observer.

Please access this site for step-by-step directions for accessing your Family Portal Account:

<https://tinyurl.com/PGCPSPortalReg>

Terms and Acronyms

504 Plan - A "504 plan" is written for a child with a documented and qualifying disability. This plan details accommodations that will make their education experience equitable.

AP - Advanced Placement- This is a program run by College Board. Students who take these high school courses have the option to earn college credit.

ELL - English Language Learner - This is a student whose native language is anything other than English. This student is learning the English language while also learning grade level skills and content.

IEP - Individual Education Program - An IEP is written for a student with a qualifying disability. It is a written statement of the educational program designed to meet a child's individual needs. Every child who receives special education services must have an IEP.

Lexile Level - This is one way to measure a child's reading ability.

Maryland Comprehensive Assessment Program (MCAP) - This is a mandatory standardized test, created and monitored by the state of Maryland, that all students take from Grades 3-12. Questions assess student mastery of the state standards and provide teachers with timely information to inform instruction and provide student support.

SIT/SST Meeting - Student Intervention Team (SIT)/ Student Support Team (SST) is a regularly scheduled meeting of educators to discuss the student's needs for whom there are concerns. The team addresses the implementation and level of success of the general education classroom, program modifications, and available resources or programs.

Wida Access - This is a test that English Language Learners take in February to assess their language skills in four domains: reading, writing, speaking, and listening.



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