

## Building and Maintaining a Positive Parent-Teacher Partnership

A strong parent-teacher partnership can begin before a problem appears. A short introduction helps the teacher see the child as a whole person, not only as a name on a class list. The goal is not to tell the teacher how to run the classroom. It is to share useful information and begin a respectful, two-way relationship.

Start with the child's strengths, interests, needs, and successful strategies. Explain what helps the child learn, stay organized, recover from frustration, or communicate clearly. Keep the message brief and practical. Include only information that may help the teacher understand and support the child at school.

Ask how the teacher prefers to communicate and what response time is normal. Some teachers use email, a school app, a phone message, or scheduled meetings. Use the approved channel and respect working hours. A delayed reply does not always mean that the concern is being ignored; teachers may be teaching, supervising, preparing lessons, or responding to several families.

Keep communication balanced. Share positive progress, effort, or a successful strategy, not only problems. When a concern appears, describe the specific event or pattern, ask what the teacher has observed, and request one reasonable next step. Listen to the teacher's information before deciding what the situation means.

After a plan is made, record who will do what and when the family and teacher will check progress. Allow reasonable time unless there is an urgent safety issue. When the matter improves, send a short message that recognizes the progress and closes the issue respectfully. This prevents the same concern from remaining open after it has been resolved.

A workable relationship grows through useful contact, not constant contact. Revisit the partnership at natural points during the year, such as after the first progress report, a conference, a support plan, or an important change. The shared purpose is to help the child learn, feel supported, and make progress at home and at school.

## Did You Know?

- ✓ The CDC defines parent engagement as parents and school staff working together to support children's learning, development, and health.<sup>1</sup>
- ✓ National PTA recommends proactive, timely, two-way communication and learning each family's communication preferences.<sup>2</sup>
- ✓ The Institute of Education Sciences explains that students can thrive when families and teachers share progress information and strategies that support learning beyond the classroom.<sup>3</sup>

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### Research Sources

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ["Parent Engagement in Schools."](#) November 22, 2024.
2. National Parent Teacher Association. ["Standard 2: Communicate Effectively."](#) National Standards for Family-School Partnerships.
3. Institute of Education Sciences, Regional Educational Laboratory Northeast & Islands. ["What Are Academic Parent-Teacher Teams?"](#) February 2024.

## Family-to-Teacher Introduction and Year-Long Check-In Plan

Use this page to prepare a brief introduction, record communication preferences, and plan respectful check-ins across the school year. Keep each message specific, useful, and child-centered.

|                         |                      |
|-------------------------|----------------------|
| Parent/caregiver: _____ | Date: _____          |
| Child: _____            | Teacher/grade: _____ |

  

### 1. Child Snapshot

Strengths and interests: \_\_\_\_\_

Important needs or learning considerations: \_\_\_\_\_

One goal for this school year: \_\_\_\_\_

  

### 2. What Helps My Child Succeed

Strategies that work at home or in past classrooms: \_\_\_\_\_

What helps with organization, attention, or transitions: \_\_\_\_\_

What helps after frustration or a difficult moment: \_\_\_\_\_

  

### 3. Communication Preferences and Expectations

Teacher's preferred channel: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent's preferred channel: \_\_\_\_\_

Normal response expectation: \_\_\_\_\_ Best contact time: \_\_\_\_\_

Language, interpretation, or access need: \_\_\_\_\_

  

### 4. Draft the Family-to-Teacher Introduction

Greeting and child introduction: \_\_\_\_\_

Strength, interest, or successful strategy to share: \_\_\_\_\_

Helpful need or goal to share: \_\_\_\_\_

Question about communication preference: \_\_\_\_\_

### **5. Year-Long Check-In and Closure Plan**

Beginning-of-year check-in date/purpose: \_\_\_\_\_

Progress-report or conference check-in: \_\_\_\_\_

Positive update I can share: \_\_\_\_\_

Concern, agreed action, and follow-up date: \_\_\_\_\_

Resolution or respectful closure message: \_\_\_\_\_