



Back-to-School Night Helpful Hints

On back-to-school night, you have a captive audience of parents. With these tips, you can make sure it's also a *captivated* audience. This is the best time to inform parents about the curriculum and to lay the foundation for good communication between home and school. Remind parents that this night is not for individual conferences, but is an informational session about your classroom. Incorporate some of these tips for a successful night:

- Have students make eye-catching invitations and give them to their parents.
- Decorate your classroom. Let students choose some favorite pieces of work to display. For privacy purposes, remember to not display grades.
- Welcome parents.
- Convey your confidence that parents are the most important people in their children's lives who can influence their child to achieve their full potential. Explain your commitment to students and parents. Discuss parents' role.
- Explain how and when you will communicate with parents and how they can communicate with you.
- Have a handout or packet for parents to take home that includes:
 1. Summary of curriculum for the school year
 2. Goals
 3. Expectations (starting and ending times, daily or weekly schedule, dress code, bathroom use, students bringing items from home policy, show & tell, homework policy, birthday celebration policy, etc.)
 4. Classroom discipline plan
 5. Describe the kind of support students need from parents on academic work, discipline and homework.
- Explain how parents can reinforce students' progress at home.
- Explain your philosophy on teamwork between parents and teachers. Encourage parents to call with concerns and suggestions, along with spending time to volunteer in the classroom.
- Answer questions.

Send home the information folders the next day for parents who were not present. It is also a good idea to follow up with the parents who did attend by sending thank-you notes that express your interest in seeing them again.

