

At-A-Glance Scholar-Led Conferences

What all families should know in order to make the conference powerful and successful



A scholar-led conference is different from a traditional parent/teacher conference.

During scholar-led conferences, the child leads the conference and does the majority of the talking. Teachers work with scholars ahead of time so they are prepared to lead conversations about their current achievement and next steps. The teacher's role is to be nearby to answer questions, but the teacher does not lead the conference.

The purpose of a scholar-led conference is for children to summarize their strengths and next steps for learning based on their individual work and achievement data. Scholars and families should leave the conference on the same page about individual strengths and areas of focus.

During the conference, your child will walk you through his/her most current achievement data as well as examples of his/her work that represent some of the most important learning for the grade level and subject area. This approach is intentional. Achievement increases when children are able to explain to others what they have already learned, as well as what the next steps are in their learning as they relate to grade-level standards.

Conferences typically take between 20 and 30 minutes, but since the child runs the conference, families can take as much time as they need for a conference.

One of the great things about scholar-led conferences is that there is no time limit, since teachers do not have to close the conference in order to meet with other families. If the conversation takes longer than the estimated time, you can keep talking with your child.

You can schedule a separate meeting with the teacher if you have concerns or questions after the conference.

While your child and the teacher(s) should be able to answer most questions and explain how you can provide support for learning at home, some families will have questions or concerns that require a follow up meeting with a teacher. Every family is welcome to schedule a separate meeting with a teacher if there are concerns or questions at the conclusion of the conference.

You can play a powerful role in your scholar's achievement if you continue the conversation about strengths and next steps at home throughout the school year.

What you learn about your child's individual strengths and next steps in learning during the conference can shift the questions you ask your child about school from "How was school today?" to specific questions about he/she is growing as a learner. This is a powerful motivator for children and creates excitement about school!

We welcome your questions and ideas about scholar-led conferences.

All of our work is a work in progress, and we count on families to provide us with ideas and feedback about how we can improve. If you have questions about scholar-led conferences, or ideas about how we can improve the process, we would love to hear from you! Please reach out to your building principal if you would like to know more about scholar-led conferences, or have suggestions about how to improve the process.



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