

ST. GENEVIEVE SCHOOL

Three-Way Conferences

Our Tradition



Three to Get Ready

Three-way conferences are a St. Genevieve School tradition of long standing. Two of the three parties have already begun getting ready. The teachers and students are into their one-on-one preliminary meetings in preparation for the big day. In advance of that day the parent as third party, should be in preparation as well.

We believe that the self-concept of the child rests on two legs, both of which need to be strong. One is competence and the other is self-esteem. Central to our purpose at St. Genevieve School is the evaluation process. Our focus is on the TOTAL development of each child. Report cards, progress reports and even parent-teacher conferences are not enough. In the area of academics it is much easier to measure and report progress objectively. In the spiritual, emotional and social domains we have found no substitute for a well-prepared talk TOGETHER – child, parent and teacher. Good preparation for this encounter is the key to its success. All three parties concerned need to be well prepared. We strongly believe that the child must play an active role in the process. Our students should be taking more and more responsibility for the conference with each year's experience. The setting for the three-way conference is an occasion when the adults should pay deference to the child.

What we ask of you is to make whatever special arrangements (some we know may demand a sacrifice on your part), to be here with us for the conference time. The other request is that you spend some time in reflecting on what you personally can bring to the success of this sharing.

Please study these directions carefully:

1. If your child should happen to be ill on conference day, we ask that you call the school office so that we can make a decision together as to what would be best for us to do.
2. The teacher will be eager to hear about the things that concern you and your child, and will be prepared to discuss the child's self-concept, his/her strengths and weaknesses, and academic progress. Important to the conference will be the time set aside for setting a goal for the second semester.
3. If your child has a serious problem we need to consider the wisdom of discussing such a problem in his/her presence. It may be that another conference time, for parent and teacher only, would be in the child's best interest where the problem is concerned. You can count on the teacher having considered this. We know you will do likewise.
4. If you choose to talk about your child's strengths and weaknesses, remember that the teacher will want to hear your assessment and that of your child. True to St. Genevieve School tradition, we will want to accentuate the positive.

5. It is imperative that *everyone* be punctual. You can certainly expect this from the teacher. Minutes run overtime, or those lost because the conference did not begin on time, will cost someone somewhere along the line. If you arrive late for your conference, the lost time cannot be made up.
6. When it is time for your conference please knock on the classroom door. Your knock will remind those within that, from that point on, it's *your* time. You might thus be helping the folks in the conference before yours to end their meeting gracefully and in a timely fashion.
7. Though it is human nature to want to do so, please do not save the weightiest and most profound topic for last. It is utterly frustrating to all concerned to have to terminate in a moment of unresolved dilemma or to hurry through what you feel is the most important topic.
8. Siblings can not be allowed in the conference setting.
9. Resource teachers will be available for conferences for those students in the program, provided the arrangement to meet is made in advance of the day of the conference.
10. The administrators are available for conferences. Please check with the office to determine whether or not the person you would like to meet with is available before or after your child's conference.
11. It goes without saying that parents, as well as teachers, need be very prudent and cautious as to what topics are appropriate to a discussion *with* the child present. Our rule of thumb is to respect the child's self-image. A good test question: "Will it help or hinder the child's progress for us to discuss this question with the child present?"
12. This is not to say that anything "unpleasant" or that which might make the child uncomfortable should be written off as taboo for a conference topic. There are times when it might be necessary to discuss sensitive issues. We are preparing the children to hear good things and things that could be better.
13. Many of our students will have their conferences on the Friday of conferences. These students need not wear their uniforms to school on the day set aside for conferences.
14. In an effort to be accommodating parents have, on occasion, taken it upon themselves to swap their conference time with another person. Please note that we can only honor changes made officially by the teacher and those which were made prior to the deadline date.

15. If you have any questions at all concerning school policy, please address your inquiries to the office staff rather than take any of the precious moments of your child's three-way conference.

SOME FOOD FOR THOUGHT

Consider these questions before your child's conference:

- What is my child's reaction to school?
- Is there something my child especially likes or dislikes?
- Does my child feel able to do the work at school?
- Are there health problems that might be affecting school performance?
- Are there many "little things" troubling my child?
- Under what conditions does my child seem fearful or worried?
- Does my child's self-confidence need bolstering?
- What hobbies, special interests and abilities has my child shown at home?
- Does my child have responsibilities at home?

IMPORTANT:

1. It is from the pink sheet that you take home from the conference that we expect to learn, most importantly, from you. Consider for a moment the time and attention that your child's teacher spends on *your* child in preparation for the conference. You certainly can expect that your conference will be personal and particular to your child. We believe that your evaluation of the conference should be the same. Your child's teacher should expect to hear from you in a way that is personal and particular to your conference.
2. We ask that you sit down with your child very soon after your conference to complete this written evaluation. It is important that we have your comments and those of your child as soon as possible after the conference.
3. We expect that children in grades first and up are capable of completing their own written evaluation. Children in Pre-K and kindergarten may need writing assistance from their parents. Please have your child sign in the appropriate space on the evaluation form (even preschoolers and kindergartners can do this). We hope you agree that this lends special importance to the experience. This is far and away the best way you can say "thank you" to the teacher.