Dear Caregivers-
Student-led Conferences are next week. This is a new experience for some of you. We view this as an extremely positive opportunity for students to emphasize their strengths, acknowledge their weaknesses, and, with you in attendance, plan for their approach to the next semester. This is an opportunity to open up or improve lines of communication with your children about their education. We strongly encourage you to be a positive part of this conferencing process.

Why do we do Student-led conferences?

* Students assume greater control of their academic progress.
* Students accept personal responsibility for their academic performance.
* Parents and students engage in open and honest dialogue.
* Parents attend conferences at increased rates.
* Students learn the process of self-evaluation.
* Students develop organizational and oral communication skills.

What's the Role of the Parent in Student-led Conferences?

*Your first role is as a listener.* Having a parent audience for learning gives students a powerful reason to learn and work hard. Student-led conferences offer students a real voice in the assessment of their learning and in this context it is a "performance." The first conference can be overwhelming and students may be nervous and need support from their parents.

*Your second role as a parent is to talk with you after the work is presented.* We ask that you take notes and ask questions AFTER your child has presented everything. You will gain a better understanding of the academic expectations set for your child.

*Your third role as a parent is to identify ways you can support the student to achieve goals that will be set for the next grading period.* The focus of the conference is on learning and growth, not simply a “show and tell” display of work. It is a time for parents to “sit beside” their child, listen to and trust their child’s assessment of his/her own learning, and ask good questions. Some guiding questions will be provided at the conference.

What’s the Role of the Student During Student-Led Conferences?

* Students should be able to share what they do well, discuss the samples they show, be able to identify what they need to work on, and set reasonable goals for improving performance during the next academic term.

What's the Role of the Teacher in Student-led Conferences?

Teachers have several roles in preparing and conducting student-led conferences. Critical to the success of the conferences are these major activities:

*The teacher makes sure that all students write a self reflection, complete a checklist, go through all their work critically to choose samples, and practice the conference."
* The teacher makes sure conference materials are available for students and parents.
* The teacher schedules and organizes the conferences to ensure successful communication.
* During the conference, teachers are available to support students if needed but, for the most part, stay in the background.

**What can you expect?**

* Expect the teacher to be observing the conference however all of the information about a student’s work, progress, behavior, and goals will come from the student.
* Expect to step back and allow the student do things his/her way. Save concerns until the presentation is over.
  * Expect to emphasize and nurture mutual respect.
  * Expect to focus on the big picture and not "the single spelling error!"
* Expect other students and their families to be in the room at the same time.

**Points to remember:**

1) Your primary job is to listen.

2) Please step back and let your child do things his/her own way. Save questions and comments until the portfolio presentation is over.

3) There is sometimes a struggle between parent expectations and the student's own understanding of quality, quantity, and presentation. The student ownership of the process is important. Let them be in control.

4) Shortfalls in the portfolio are good motivators for improvement the next time.

5) The portfolio conference is part of the process of learning. Both its successes and weaknesses are valuable in informing the next steps in that process.

6) Teachers will not engage in private discussions about your child at this time. If you need another conference, please schedule with your classroom teacher.

**THANK YOU!**

See you at the conferences!
How Do I See Myself?

Give yourself a:
1 for NEVER, a 2 for SELDOM, a 3 for FREQUENTLY or a 4 for ALWAYS

Quality Producer
I work successfully as a team member.
I produce quality projects, assignments or performances.
I use materials effectively and appropriately.
I met due dates/deadlines.
I go above and beyond.

**Effective Communicator**

I effectively communicate thoughts and ideas.
I make positive contributions to lessons/discussions.
I deal with problems, arguments or fights in a positive way.

**Life-Long Learner**

I know who to ask for help and information.
I know how to find and use a variety of resources.
I am flexible and creative when necessary.

**Responsible Citizen**

I demonstrate personal responsibly for attitude, actions, words and work.
I follow rules and directions.
I make a positive contribution to the classroom and community.
I demonstrate respect and understanding for myself and others.

**Perceptive Thinker**

I demonstrate knowledge and interest in the world and current events.
I use knowledge and creativity to solve problems.
I think beyond the obvious.

**Self-Directed Individual**

I show maturity and responsibility by making healthy, safe and wise choices.
I set goals and follow through with them.
I start work, stay on task and complete the assignment without being reminded or prompted.

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**Other Post Conference Student Reflections**

1. My conference went well because......
2. The best part about my conference was......
3. One of the difficult things about my conference was......
4. For my next conference, I need to remember to.......
5. One of the positive things that I feel that I have learned during the conference process was:
6. One of the positive things that I feel that my parents/guardians learned about me was:

Sample Student Responses

**My strengths are:**

- Getting my homework done in time
- Doing reading responses
- Reviewing problems in math
- Reading advanced books
- Can work independently
- Very creative
- I am good in P.E.
- Helping others
- Respecting all the kids in my classes
- Working in a group
- Imaginative writing

**I need to work on:**

- Getting work turned in on time
- Following through with the goals I set
- Stop procrastinating
- Spelling
- Getting my work from teachers when I'm absent
- Adding details into my writing
- Not talking
- Editing
- I need to organize my work from beginning to end

Sample Goals and Action Plans

**Work on not procrastinating**
- Make a plan - write due dates down - post on refrigerator
- Trying to get it done ahead of time
- Working on my work before turning on the T.V.
- Doing my homework right away instead of at the last minute
- Plan my days better
- Stop putting things off

**Controlling my talking in class**
- Sitting with people I won’t talk to
- Focusing on my work
- Tell my friends ahead of time
- Don’t talk back when they talk to me
I will explain I’m not being rude to my friends but that I’m trying to accomplish my goal.
Stay in my seat
Mind my own business

To be more consistent with commitments
- By staying focused on my work and working until it's done
- Trying hard in class and leave reminders for myself

Getting my homework done in math
- Set aside 15 minutes to get homework done
- Try not to talk so much in class

To get better at doing responses to reading
- By thinking before I write
- To understand the reading scoring guide better

Taking my time when doing projects
- Plan ahead
- Be more creative

Hacer mas esfuerso para estudiar
- No mirar mucha television
- Estudiar cada noche

Interact better with people/Manage my emotions more positively
- I have talked with mom and dad about anger
- Identify my anger and get advice on how to deal with it
- Listen to other peoples ways - find a common ground
- If I can't handle it seek outside help

To read every day
- See the media specialist or my teacher for new books
- Read at night before I go to bed
- Read 4 nights a week for 20-30 minutes
- Remember to bring my book to school so I can read in DEAR

Remember to study for tests
- I will write a not to myself with everything we have to do
- Study for at least 20 minutes a night
- Put notes in my math text as a reminder

I need to get more active in what my class is doing
- I will ask questions on problems that my class is doing
- I will try to understand the problem and how to solve it

I will keep my binder clean
- Weekly cleaning (once a week)
- Make sure loose papers are securely in their places

I will keep track of my papers so I'll have what I need when I need it
- Remember where I put everything I need
- Stick with my system of using the binder

I will work on my speaking in front of the class
- Practice my speech
- Write out speech and plan

I will write my due dates in my plan and check it daily
- Write down my assignments when I get them
- Check my plan on a daily basis
I will reduce electronic time
1 hr per day
1 hr or 1/2 hr on weeknights  Shorten from 4 hrs to 2 hrs

I will have a more respectful attitude in my classes
Follow school rules
Use class time to do work

People who can help me attain these goals:
Mom           Sister
Brother       Dad
Mom's boyfriend
Grandma       Grandpa
Friend        Teacher
Of course, my self

Distractions that may get in the way:
TV                          Telephone
Friends                   Radio
Negative attitude        Video Games
Playing time

Recommended Questions for Parents:

These questions are to help you guide your child during the conference.

- What are your goals this year?
- What have you learned this term?
- What would you like to learn that you do not already know?
- Are you proud of your portfolio?
- Which piece of work are you most proud of?
- Which subject is difficult for you?  Why?
- Which is your favorite subject?  Why?
- What makes you happiest at school?
- Which occurrences frustrate you at school?
What would you like to accomplish by the end of this year?
What are three things you hope to change in the future?
How can I help you achieve your goals?
Student Reflection of the Conference:

1. Do you feel your conference was a success? Why or Why not?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

2. What was your favorite part of the conference?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

3. What would you do differently next time?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Parent Reflection of the Conference:

1. What are your child’s interests?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

2. What have you learned about your child during the conference?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

3. Do you feel your child has progressed in his/her portfolio? In which subject do you feel your child has improved?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

4. In which areas would you like to see improvement?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

5. What changes would you like to see in the next term?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________

6. Did you enjoy your child sharing their portfolio with you during the conference?

____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________
Student reflection of the conference:

Draw a picture about the student-teacher conference.

Circle the face, which shows how you think you did during the conference?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Understanding of Academic Progress</td>
<td>Using my artifacts, they describe what they like about my reading, writing, and math artifacts. They can point out what I want to improve upon.</td>
<td>They can remember most of what I said about my work in reading, writing, and math.</td>
<td>They need another conference because they do not remember what I said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Understanding of Work Habit Improvements</td>
<td>Referring to my data chart and action plan, they describe my work habits (on-time/complete work/class participation). They can point out what I want to improve upon.</td>
<td>They can remember most of what I said about my work habits (on-time/complete work/class participation). They point out what they like about my action plan or things I should add to it.</td>
<td>They need another conference because they do not remember what I said.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of Improvement Goals</td>
<td>My parents are convinced that my improvement goals are right for me now.</td>
<td>My parents are convinced that my improvement goals are right for me, but they need additional information on 1-2 goals.</td>
<td>My parents need for me to conduct another conference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent Help</td>
<td>We will have a written assistance plan by (specific date) that matches my improvement plan. It includes ways of measuring improvement.</td>
<td>We will specific ideas of how my parents will help me. They state how they are willing to help and gave me some examples.</td>
<td>My parents need me to give them additional ideas or have another conference. If not, no assistance plan will be set up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback Card Information</td>
<td>All items rated with many specific written comments included.</td>
<td>All items rated with general written comments included.</td>
<td>Card is incomplete or not turned in.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What can you tell me about this assignment?
What did you have to do to complete this assignment?
What skills did you have to use?
What would you do next time to improve your work?
What goals have you set?
How can I help you meet your goals?