

# A GUIDE TO PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES

Effective home school communication is supported through positive parent teacher conferences (PTCs). In the book ***Bridging Cultures between Home and School: A Guide for Teachers*** by Elise Trumbull, Carrie Rothstein-Fisch, Patricia M. Greenfield and Blanca Quiroz, the parent teacher conference is called a “mini-laboratory” where we are able to discover how the home values and culture and those of the school might combine in the development of our students. *It is a crucial moment for creating bridges and establishing trust between these two sets of values and cultures.*

*Here we share several key suggestions to guide us in our conferences in November:*

1. **We are a community.** Our own students created the school’s norms through the Social Contract. If we ask them to follow these rules, let’s do the same during parent-teacher conferences (PTCs) and throughout the school year!
  - a. Let’s take responsibility for your actions.
  - b. Let’s respect and honor our diverse community.
  - c. Let’s push our limits and exceed expectations.
  - d. Let’s make good decisions and be responsible.
  - e. Let’s use and appreciate our bilingualism.
2. A successful PTC is designed to be a reciprocal conversation between teachers and parents: *a time to learn from one another.*
  - a. Do we have questions for the teachers? Let’s consider sending them before the conference so our teachers have the time to think more deeply about their answers.
  - b. Do we have doubts or concerns? Let’s share them with our teachers and work together to solve them.
  - c. Do we have happy stories to share?
  - d. Do we have positive feedback to give?
3. Let’s remember that a PTC is an opportunity to ***build bridges instead of judging each other.*** If we use different strategies to achieve success, what are they? How can we use effective strategies from home at school, and vice versa?
4. We would like to develop strong ties between each other and **understand that each bridge and each family is unique.** As a result, each conference will be different because there is not *ONE style of conferences that will work for all families.* For some of us, talking about socio-emotional development is key; for others of us, academic development is what most interests us. Considering that this is still the beginning of the first semester, *we have more socio-emotional knowledge of our students than academic at this point.*

For example, in JK, Noelle Damian asks families: *Where do you see your son/daughter in 30 years?* What would we answer?

\*Sections of this letter have been adapted from ***Bridging Cultures between Home and School*** written by Elise Trumbull, Carrie Rothstein-Fisch, Patricia M. Greenfield y Blanca Quiroz.\*