

What Parents and Students Need From Teachers

The following questions will help you focus on ways you can effectively connect with parents. While they may be interested in how you approach your subject, it's more likely that they will be even more interested in *how you approach your life*. Underneath all of their questions about curriculum is, "What kind of influence and role model will you be for my child?" Teachers who anticipate these questions and appropriately address them *can make a strong positive impact on a family's choice of schools*.

Parents and students choose schools based on **evidence of good teachers and good teaching and a feeling that the School wants them**. Parents tell me that answers to these typical questions help them determine if a school is the right "fit" for their family:

1. What motivated you to become a teacher?
2. Why did you choose to teach *here*?
3. What do you want my child to get from having known you?
4. What is the most important life lesson you want my child to learn in x course/activity?
5. What do you enjoy most about teaching?
6. Who are your mentors? What experiences or people had the most influence on you? How? Why?
7. What are some of your interests/hobbies?
8. What community service activities or youth organizations are you involved in?
9. What interests you outside the classroom? What are you passionate about?
10. What are your favorite moments with a student?
11. What traits do you look for in your "ideal" student?
12. How do you get the results you want each student to achieve?
13. How do you help them learn to learn?
14. How do you keep current with the subject areas you cover?
15. How do you apply the latest learning research in your subject/class?
16. What professional development activities have you participated in recently?
17. Have you written articles for publication or received other types of professional recognition?

Other questions?

How Can Teachers Help Increase Applications?

...And therefore enable us to select and enroll students and families who will get the most from what we offer...

Help convey the dynamic, engaging, and exciting aspect of the School!

1. Speak at admission events.
2. Be a faculty representative at an evening admission panel or reception.
3. Be open to personal contact with a prospective family, e.g. follow-up with prospective students or parents who express interest in your subject, extracurricular activity, or sport via voicemail, e-mail, or a personal meeting if requested.
4. Welcome and, if possible, engage in conversation with tour groups or visiting families.
5. During group tours plan a dynamic, engaging, participatory lesson.
6. As visitors stop by to look in on your class, briefly welcome and explain (or have student explain) what you're doing and what you're learning.
7. Remember every note or communication home or parent conference is an opportunity to validate the enrollment decision or philanthropic gift.
8. Systematically update your website page.
9. Notify communications or admission director of noteworthy achievements or events in your life or your students' lives.
10. Consider editorials, conduct a workshop for parents, or provide a program for a civic or service organization.
11. Never denigrate another teacher; it makes the School look bad, it makes you look bad.

What Teachers Need From Parents

Parents expect a teacher to bring certain things to the table; in exchange, teachers should expect certain things from parents. Setting expectations of parents is the other half of the equation that forms successful, long-term relationships. Among these expectations, parents should:

1. Be informed.
2. Attend important functions and events.
3. Communicate family contacts: Who needs to know what?
4. Best times and means of contacting them?
5. Values, concerns, beliefs, shaping events or perspective to help you understand their child?
6. Show interest, insure student rest, good diet, being on-time, taking responsibility, being organized. Support good study skills in the home.
7. Advocate, seek assistance and recommendations, understand limitations of school. Be honest when talking about child's needs.
8. Respect and trust our professionalism as teachers.
9. Don't "overbook" your child.
10. School is a five day a week job.

© 2007 CONNOR ASSOCIATES

*Image research to communicate value, build enrollment, enhance retention, and increase fundraising.
Workshops, team-building, performance assessment, and coaching for organization-wide marketing.
Media and constituent relations to raise visibility and public purpose.*