



Parent Corner

Welcome to the Parent Corner. With the end of the first full month of school quickly approaching, we wanted to share a few tips for working well with teachers this year as you advocate for your gifted child. We want to foster a partnership between home and school; a partnership that will only create a supportive environment for your student.

Here are a few ideas! Some may be common sense, or tried and true, but hopefully you will find a few things to think about as you navigate this school year.

1. Change can be difficult for many children, but for gifted children who are often quite sensitive, this time of year with all the transitions can be more difficult.
2. Despite the hectic nature of the start of the school year, teachers want to develop positive, respectful, professional working relationships with families.
3. You'd like teachers to recognize that your gifted child has learning needs that differ from other students.

There is no one way to create these relationships, but trust and respect go far. Here are some key ideas:

- a. Share information that will help support your child and his/her learning needs. Be specific and concise. You may want to start with two or three strengths, a specific challenge you'd like your child to work on this year, and any special interests your child may have. Those interests may help create a bond between your child and teacher or give the teacher an avenue to use to make learning more personal.
- b. Teachers entered the field because they want to help children learn and grow. Approach the relationship with respect. It may help to understand that teachers get very little training on gifted education in school; as a parent, you may have more knowledge about giftedness. If you ask the teacher if he/she is open to you sharing information that is relevant or relates to your child, most teachers will welcome the opportunity to increase understanding.
- c. Appreciate all the attempts a teacher makes to meet the needs of your student. Keep in mind that teachers have a range of students with

whom they work and believe that all children deserve to make progress. Offer your support when you can.

- d. While clear communication is key, a teacher's time is limited. Meetings are most difficult at the start of the year and end of grading periods. If you do set up a meeting, know what it is you want to focus on. Using email, websites, Schoology, etc. are great avenues for communication, also. Do all you can to learn about your child's classroom/classes.
- e. Unfortunately, there is a lot of misinformation that is passed along. If you hear something you aren't sure about, first check with the teacher or an administrator so that you have valid information.

If you approach teachers with trust, respect, and enthusiasm you can develop relationships that will benefit your child.

Source: "How to Start the School Year On a Positive Note with Your Gifted Child's Teacher," by Dr. Dina Brulles and Karen L. Brown. Published in *Parenting for High Potential*, Summer 2016.