

WHAT TEACHERS WISH PARENTS KNEW

As school counselor, I sometimes have the opportunity to serve a liaison between the teacher, student, and parents. In an attempt to be as proactive as possible, I have polled some of our teachers to inquire "What Teachers Wish Parents Knew about Teachers." The results are summarized as follows:

*Teachers welcome opportunities to involve you in your child's education and like to be prepared to discuss your child's progress in a professional manner. Please do them the courtesy of arranging a conference rather than discussing your child's progress in the middle of the grocery store or on the way to the school cafeteria.

*Teachers love for you to volunteer in their classrooms and want to be organized to use your time wisely. Please remember to make prior arrangements and know that they depend on you to show up.

*Communication between your family and Timberlin Creek is critical to your child's continuing academic success as well as being high on our list of priorities. Interim reports are sent home on a regular basis to keep you informed of academic progress. Additionally, school and classroom newsletters, planners, and e-mail are all utilized to keep you informed. (Note: Many teachers send home important papers in the Tuesday folders along with the Eagle Eye newsletter.)

*Let your child know that you expect him/her to abide by the classroom and school rules. Help us reinforce disciplinary actions by reminding your child of appropriate behavior. If your child has been punished at school, re-punishment at home may not be necessary. However, reinforcement of the lesson between school and home is often the determining factor of the learning of the lesson and prevention of future incidents.

* As children get older it is expected that they will begin to assume responsibility for assignments. Give your child the gift of learning from his/her mistakes. Be available to help explore ways to correct the mistake so it doesn't happen again. Coming to the rescue by making excuses for or doing work for your child may help in the short run, but in the long run,

demonstrates that you believe your child is incapable of accepting responsibility.

* The teacher who challenges a child to go beyond mediocrity is often perceived by the child to be a 'mean teacher'. When your child begins to complain, empathize with the child's feeling while encouraging compliance. Gather as much information from your child without jumping to conclusions. Brainstorm reasonable solutions and aid in the process of evaluating possibilities with your child. This process helps your child develop critical thinking and problem solving skills.

*If you have questions or concerns about what is happening in the classroom, try to work things out with the teacher first. Our policy is to return phone calls and e-mail messages within 24 hours. If you have not gotten a response within that time frame it could be that the teacher has not received the message. Please try again.

*Teachers do not assume that a child struggling academically or socially is the product of a dysfunctional family. Normal children struggle and have "issues".

*Teachers want you to know that homework helps to move information from short term to long term memory. If your child is spending more than 2 hours per night on a regular basis and demonstrates a high level of frustration with the homework, it would be appropriate to discuss this with the teacher. It could be that your child is not completing work in class in a timely fashion or that additional help may be required to achieve mastery.

*Cramming the night before a big exam is not a good study strategy. Cramming may get them through the test but is not sufficient for long term memory.

*Most of all.....remember that we are a team and we must work together! Your child's academic success depends on the partnership between you and the teacher. Children need teachers AND parents to help them learn. Let your child see that you support the teachers. (I overheard one parent telling her child that she thought the teacher was wrong and that her child did not have to do the writing the way the teacher taught. Your child will

not respect the teachers unless you model respectful ways to work through potential difficulties.