

RESPONDING TO PARENT CONCERNS

HELPFUL HINTS FROM THE



MOST PARENTS CARE DEEPLY ABOUT THEIR CHILDREN AND HOW THEY ARE DOING IN SCHOOL. AND MOST PARENTS ARE REASONABLE, RESPECTFUL, AND COOPERATIVE WHEN DEALING WITH TEACHERS. HOWEVER, WHEN PROBLEMS ARISE, HERE ARE SOME BASIC GUIDELINES TO FOLLOW.

TRY NOT TO BE DEFENSIVE:

YOU SHARE A COMMON GOAL WITH PARENTS: TO HELP THEIR CHILDREN SUCCEED IN SCHOOL. TRY TO APPROACH EVERY CONVERSATION WITH THAT IN MIND.

UNREASONABLE REQUESTS:

IF A PARENT MAKES ONE OF YOU, RESPOND IN A FRIENDLY, YET FIRM, MANNER AND TRY TO WORK IT OUT. FOR EXAMPLE, IF A PARENT WANTS YOU TO CALL EVERY NIGHT TO REPORT ON A CHILD'S PERFORMANCE, YOU MIGHT SAY: "I'M SURE THAT YOU'LL UNDERSTAND THAT WITH THIS NUMBER OF STUDENTS, I'M NOT ABLE TO CALL EVERY NIGHT. HOWEVER, I DO HAVE A SUGGESTION..."

MAINTAIN CONFIDENTIALITY:

DON'T TALK ABOUT OTHER STUDENTS TO ANY PARENT, AND DISCOURAGE PARENTS FROM DOING SO AS WELL. NEVER MENTION OTHER STUDENTS' NAMES OR EVEN THE CHILD'S SOCIAL GROUP. TALK ABOUT THEIR CHILD AND THEIR CHILD'S BEHAVIOR ONLY.

PROTECT YOURSELF:

KEEP A LOG OF ALL THE PARENT CONTACTS (PHONE CALLS, VISITS, NOTES, ETC.) NOTING DATE, TIME, PLACE, AND WHAT WAS DISCUSSED. KEEP COPIES OF ALL DOCUMENTS. IF A PARENT COMPLAINS TO YOU, CONSIDER GOING TO A COLLEAGUE, YOUR ASSOCIATION REPRESENTATIVE, OR YOUR PRINCIPAL AND TELL THEM ABOUT THE COMPLAINT.