



Questions Families Should Ask Teachers



Keep Learning
California

Developing a strong partnership with your child's teacher is essential in keeping your child learning. Here are key questions to ask to begin the conversation with your child's teacher. They provide you with important information about expectations, guidance, resources, and supports for you to reinforce learning at home.

How is my child expected to participate in class and complete homework assignments and/or class projects?

Understanding what teachers expect for meaningful **"in class"** participation (like the use of a web camera, participating in chats, etc.) and **"after class"** work can help you and your child establish daily routines that support learning activities. This includes how much time teachers anticipate you spending "after class" supporting your child's learning activities. It is helpful to understand if and how teachers will provide feedback on "after class/homework" projects and/or assignments, if these projects are optional, and what resources are available if your child needs help completing them (such as teacher office hours for extra help, tutoring opportunities, videos, etc.).

How will I know how my child is doing?

Constant and open communication leads to strong relationships, which means strong educational support for your child. Understanding how you and your child's teacher(s) will track your child's progress and sharing results with you is critical. Knowing when to expect updates (such as weekly check-ins, after assignments are submitted, progress reports every two weeks, etc.) is important to identify early in the school year, especially if your child needs additional support.

How can we communicate and how often?

Knowing the communication tools teachers plan to use (such as email, texting, apps, phone calls, etc.) and how often they're available to support you and your child (for example, Friday afternoons, every other Monday, etc.) is essential to staying up to date and engaged with your child's education. Access to technology tools, however, can create challenges to effective and ongoing communication. Sharing with the teacher what type(s) of communication that works best for you and any help you might need to communicate with them, can minimize challenges and help develop stronger two-way communication – and better learning for your child.





What if my child can't join an online class? Can the class be made up?

Planning for the unexpected will minimize learning loss by being prepared to address technical challenges (such as the loss of internet connection, blackouts/electricity cuts, slow broadband internet, etc.). If you know there are videos that cover class content, “make-up” classes, or other one-on-one opportunities that your child can access, can prevent your child from falling behind. Also knowing if there are dedicated technology supports (such as a “hotline” phone number to call or a video to watch) and how to access them during “class” and after “class” is important.



How can I get my child help with homework?

Teachers may be planning individual or small group time to provide additional help to ensure your child is learning. Work with your child’s teacher(s) to understand what resources are available and how to access them. There may also be tutors available outside of “class time” to support the teacher’s learning objectives.

Will there be answer sheets for parents? How do I get them?

Knowing what resources are available to answer questions and where those documents are located or how they will be shared, is another way to support and reinforce learning outside “class time”.

Are there videos to watch with the material covered?

Having carefully selected videos aligned to content that your child is learning can reinforce learning at home.



How often and for how long will you meet with my child?

Clarity about when and for how long your child’s teacher will be meeting with your child can help maximize learning. Specifically knowing the weekly schedule, will the teacher meet daily, only twice or 3 or 4 times a week, for how long (15 minutes, 90 minutes) and in what format (large groups, small group, one-on-one). If your child is an English Learner, has an IEP and/or is a special needs student, this information is even more critical, as there may be additional supports or different platforms or resources that will be needed during that time.





How will you meet the needs of my child online?

Teachers may meet with the whole class or group, small group, and/or one-to-one with students. These meetings may happen at various times during the week. The schedule should be shared with you ahead of time and you should be informed if there are changes to those times. It will be important to know the platform that will be used.

If your child has an IEP, ask how many teachers will be working with your child and for how long. The time spent with the various teachers will be added to get to the total amount of minutes they should be getting daily. Make sure to be in constant communication with your teacher, to ensure your child receives the necessary support.

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