

Teacher Care Meeting Protocol

What is it?

The Teacher Care Meeting protocol is a 20 minute brief intervention designed to provide the structure and communication style that will promote a positive meeting with parents/caregivers and a student. It can be done exclusively with a student, if parents are unable to attend. The positive impact is amplified when parents are included, especially in providing support to the student for meeting their goal(s). The Teacher Care format was developed by local Wisconsin educators at a diverse middle school, and has become an integral part of the continuum of support, with dozens of brief meetings over the past fourteen years. In fact, it was so well received, the protocol was used for more traditional parent/teacher conferences. Parents have offered generous feedback about how positive the meetings are, and that they realized how much staff at school care about their child. Students describe feeling supported and hopeful, capitalizing on their resilience to get back on track to reach their full potential.

How can this meeting protocol fit into our existing student supports?

Teacher Care Meetings have been successful, beginning at the upper elementary grades through high school. This brief intervention is best applied with emerging issues at Tier Two, and generally addresses behavioral issues, motivation, attendance, and academic work completion targets. The design is tightly structured so that the meeting does not exceed 20 minutes. Thus, it is possible to facilitate and attend Teacher Care meetings during prep periods, lunch (if most accessible for parents), and after school. It is not necessary for the whole teaching team to attend, only those who are most interested in supporting student change and those who have the best relationship with the student.

How to prepare for a Teacher Care Meeting:

The beauty of this protocol is its simplicity. To initiate Teacher Care Meetings in your district, share the general approach with teachers before the meeting (via the video or the visual handout of the steps), advising them that the biggest challenge will be to come up with succinct responses, and framing concerns in a positive way. Business as usual will sometimes include a detailed description from each teacher about how the student is falling short of expectations. This simple, but critical, shift in a Teacher Care Meeting is at the essence of why it is so effective. Teachers are asked to say one positive thing they enjoy about a student, one wish for them that succinctly describes the positive outcome they are looking for (rather than a problem or concern), and an offer of support. The student decides what the goal(s) will be, and chooses what type of support will be most useful. Student voice and choice in identifying the goal and plan of support are also critical for the most powerful positive impact. A point person at the Teacher Care meeting will follow up with the student to see how it is going and adjust the plan, as needed.

For additional questions or consultation, please contact:

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