



The ParentNet Philosophy

The underlying philosophy of ParentNet is a belief that, through open discussion with other parents, we become more aware of our own parenting styles, make better-informed choices, and help build a community where our children can thrive. Our primary focus is always on how we can be better parents.

PARENT CONTRACT

Honor the Philosophy and Spirit of ParentNet

ParentNet meetings are an opportunity to gather new ideas, become well informed about issues affecting our children, and become better acquainted with other parents. Because our focus is always on fine-tuning our skills as parents, discussion should center on appropriate parenting topics. It is helpful and appropriate to share general references to children and events in order to better understand issues and discover solutions. However, it is hurtful to share names of people, particularly when they are mentioned in relationship to a perceived problem. ParentNet meetings are never a forum to argue school policy or curriculum issues nor a setting to discuss individual faculty and administrators.

Speak for Yourself -- Avoid Hearsay

The most successful groups are made up of individuals who use "I statements" rather than "you statements" or "they statements." In other words, always speak for yourself, saying what you believe, think, and feel. Contribute facts only when you know them to be true. Avoid saying what you know someone else thinks or feels. Using ParentNet as a means for gossip, rumor, or collusion is contrary to its mission.

Stay Within Your Comfort Zone

ParentNet meetings are structured to encourage openness and promote trust among parents. However, everyone's comfort zone differs. Please respect your own limitations, the confidences you share with others, and particularly information that is confidential between you and your child.

Respect Diverse Opinions

ParentNet welcomes all opinions. No agreement or consensus is required on any topic. What's important is that parents *hear* what other parents think regardless of how different it may be from their own beliefs.

Following ParentNet Meetings...

Maintain Confidentiality

To nurture a safe, supportive parent-school community, it is *essential* that references to people, what they said or how they feel, not be shared with others outside of the meeting. It is particularly important that information shared by parents about their children not be shared with other students.

Continue the Dialogue

General summaries of ParentNet meetings are made available to other parents and school staff so that important topics can continue to be discussed and problem solved when necessary. As we dialogue about these parenting topics, it is important to abide by the same guidelines and supportive spirit that underlie the ParentNet program.