

Tulare County Office of Education

Tim A. Hire, County Superintendent of Schools

Initial Conversation Guide – Parents & Students

This document is a guide for connecting with students and their families – parents, caretakers, etc.. You don't have to use the script or questions word for word. The MOST important thing to convey to them is that by talking with you, they will be helping you find ways to support distance learning with students in your district, and that there is no wrong answer to the questions you're asking. The *italicized text* is a script you can read. The underlined text is optional follow-up questions and additional guidance around the questions. We recommend taking notes while the parent/guardian and student/child are talking.

Contact Dr. Annie Camey Kuo (kuoannie@stanford.edu) if you have any questions or feedback on the guide - we would also love to hear how you have used and modified it!

Parent/Guardian

1. Start the conversation by thanking the parent/guardian for making the time to speak with you. Greet the family (don't forget the social-emotional aspect of the conversation) and make connections with them - ask them how they are doing, make them feel welcome.
2. Let them know that the conversation will be 10-15 minutes with them and 5-10 minutes with the child/student.
3. Remind them of the partnership and participation:
 - a. *____ (school name) ____ is working on finding ways to support students and families during school closure because of COVID-19. Our goal is to learn about how to make distance learning work for all the families. At this time, we are going to start with the families of children learning English. We know you are doing valuable things at home with your kids, and we want to know more about those things as we develop various ways to provide distance instruction and support (you may want to substitute "distance learning with a term your district/school uses). We want parents (you) to partner with us, to share information, and to figure things out together.*
4. Ask them if they have any questions about what we are going to do and provide some wait time.
5. Ok, let's get started. Here are the questions:
 - a. **General Well-Being**
 - i. How are you and your family doing?
 - ii. What does your day-to-day look like?
 1. What kinds of things do you do on a typical day?
 2. What is a typical schedule for you and your child?
 - iii. How can we better support you as a parent/caretaker during distance learning?
 - b. **Learning Opportunities**
 - i. When you are at home with your child, what kinds of things do you do with them?
 1. We want them to know that everything they do in the home has value. If the parent only shares activities that are directly related to school and/or learning, ask them what other things besides learning/school-related activities they do with their child(ren). If you need to probe further, you might share examples of non-school activities such as cooking, caring for younger siblings, repairing bikes, cleaning, etc.

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- ii. Remind parents that bi/multilingualism is important, and that it's great for kids to be exposed to multiple languages. How do you and your child use language at home?
 1. What language(s) do you speak with your child?
 2. What language(s) does your child speak with you?
 3. What language(s) do you speak with others in your home?
 4. What language(s) does your child speak with others?
 - iii. What do you most value about this experience of learning at home?
 - iv. Tell me about the things your child is doing during the day.
 1. What is their typical schedule like?
 2. What else does your child do on a typical day?
- c. Other Activities**
- i. Who does your child interact with on a typical day?
 - ii. What makes your child smile/happy during this time?
 1. What are they doing well with?
 2. What do they enjoy doing?
 - iii. What makes your child sad?
 1. What don't they enjoy doing?
 2. What are they struggling with?
- d. School**
- i. How has the school communicated with you about your child's class schedule for the fall?
 - ii. How has your child's teacher(s) communicated with you about their instruction, technology use, and resources?
 - iii. What has been the most difficult thing about communicating with your child's school teachers?
 - iv. What have you enjoyed and/or appreciated most about the way your child's teacher/school has communicated with you and your child?
 - v. What else can the school do to support you?
6. Finish the conversation by asking if the parent/guardian has anything else they would like to share with you. And ask them to pass the phone/Zoom/etc. to the child.

Student

1. If you don't know the child, start by asking by their name and introducing yourself.
2. Tell them about the partnership and conversation:
 - a. *____(your school name)____ is trying to find ways to support students and families when the school is closed. In order to make sure that what we do will work, we want you to tell us what you like and what you do not like and what kinds of things you are doing at home. I'm going to ask you a few questions, and I want you to share what you know because it's going to help other students. There are no wrong answers, and if you don't know something, that's ok.*
3. Ok, let's get started. Here are the questions:

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a. General Well Being

- i. How are you doing?
- ii. What's the best thing about being at home all day?
- iii. What's the hardest thing about being at home all day?
- iv. Tell me about what your typical day looks like now.
 1. What kinds of things do you do during the day? (Be sure to ask about non-school activities. If it's helpful, ask about a specific day like yesterday)
 2. Do you find anything fun to do at home? Can you tell me more about it?
 3. Who do you talk to the most during the day?

b. Learning Opportunities

- i. What's the best thing about learning at home?
- ii. What's the hardest thing about learning at home?
- iii. When you don't understand something, who do you go to? What do you do? How do you problem-solve?
- iv. Remind student that bi/multilingualism is important, and that it's great for them to be exposed to multiple languages. How do you and your family use language at home?
 1. What language(s) do you speak with your parents?
 2. What language(s) do your parents speak with you?
 3. What language(s) do you speak with others (siblings, relatives) in your home?
 4. What language(s) do others speak with you?
- v. Who do you interact with on a typical day?

c. Other Activities

- i. What makes you smile/happy during this time?
 1. What are you doing well with?
 2. What do you enjoy doing?
- ii. What makes you sad?
 1. What don't you enjoy doing?
 2. What are you struggling with?

d. School

- i. Tell me about the school work you are doing now.
 1. How is it different from school last year?
 2. How much time do you spend on school work every day?
 - ii. What time of day are you usually working on school work?
 - iii. How is the school/teacher communicating with you about activities and your schedule?
 - iv. How could your teacher/school help you feel more supported while you are learning at home?
4. Finish the conversation by thanking them for their answers and asking if the student has anything else they would like to share with you.