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1. Before You Schedule

Before creating a single appointment slot, answer these questions:

Conference Basics

Conference date: _____

Conference hours: _____

Individual conference length: _____

Break between conferences: _____

Location: _____

Virtual option available?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Virtual platform:

- ☐ Google Meet
- ☐ Microsoft Teams
- ☐ Zoom
- ☐ Other: _____

Who Is Scheduling?

- ☐ Individual classroom teachers
- ☐ Grade-level teams
- ☐ Department teachers
- ☐ School-wide conference night
- ☐ Parents scheduling with multiple teachers
- ☐ Other: _____

What information do you actually need?

Keep the scheduling process simple.

At minimum, you may need:

- Parent/guardian name
- Student name
- Parent/guardian email
- Teacher
- Conference date
- Conference time
- In-person or virtual
- Optional question or topic they would like to discuss

What you probably DON'T need

Avoid turning your scheduling form into a student-information database.

Do not ask parents to enter:

- Grades
- IEP information
- Medical information
- Discipline information
- Counseling information
- Detailed student concerns
- Other confidential student information

If the teacher needs that information, use the district-approved system or communication method.

The scheduling form is for scheduling.

2. Free Scheduling Tool Comparison

Tool	Best For	Parent Account?	Reminders	Best Feature
SignUpGenius	Conference nights and sign-up slots	No	Yes	Very easy for families
Google Calendar Appointment Schedules	Google schools	Depends on setup	Yes, depending on account	Integrates with Calendar
Google Forms	DIY scheduling and collecting information	Usually no	Requires setup	Flexible and familiar
Microsoft Forms + Teams	Microsoft 365 schools	No Microsoft 365 account required for the parent meeting	Yes through meeting workflow	Uses district tools
Microsoft Bookings + Teams	Larger Microsoft-based scheduling systems	No	Yes	Booking-page experience
Calendly Free	Individual teachers	No	Limited by plan	Simple booking link
Koalendar Free	Individual scheduling	No	Plan dependent	Simple booking page

Mrs. Office Lady's quick picks

Want the easiest setup?

→ SignUpGenius - <https://www.signupgenius.com/>

Your school is a Google school?

→ Google Calendar Appointment Schedule or Google Forms

Your school is a Microsoft school?

→ Microsoft Forms + Teams

One teacher wants a simple booking link?

→ Calendly <https://calendly.com/> or Koalendar <https://koalendar.com/login>

3. Choosing the Right Tool

Option A: "Just Give Me Something Easy"

Use SignUpGenius

This is a great choice when you simply need:

"Here are the available times. Pick one."

SignUpGenius currently offers a free plan with sign-up creation, automatic confirmation/reminder emails, and no-cost participation for families. Parents do not need an account to sign up.

Best for:

- Elementary conferences
- Parent conference nights
- 15–30 minute appointments
- Teachers who don't want to manage spreadsheets
- Families using phones

Option B: "We're a Google School"

Use Google Calendar Appointment Schedules

Google Calendar can create a booking page where people select an available appointment time. Booked appointments are added to the calendar, and unavailable times can be blocked automatically.

Some features vary by Google account or Workspace subscription, so check your district's setup before building your entire conference system around a feature.

Best for:

- Individual teachers
- Counselors
- Administrators
- Parent meetings throughout the year
- Schools already using Google Workspace

Option C: "We Are a Microsoft School"

Use Microsoft Forms + Teams

Microsoft specifically supports a parent-educator conference workflow using Microsoft Forms and Teams.

A teacher can send parents a Microsoft Form to identify an available conference time and then create the Teams meeting. Parents do not need a Microsoft 365 account to participate in the Teams meeting.

Best for:

- Microsoft 365 districts
 - Virtual conferences
 - Teachers already using Teams
 - Schools wanting to stay within their existing technology environment
-

4. Parent Invitation Template

Subject: Parent-Teacher Conference Sign-Up

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Parent-teacher conferences are a wonderful opportunity to connect with your child's teacher, celebrate progress, ask questions, and talk about ways we can continue to support your child.

Our upcoming conferences will be held:

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Virtual option: _____

Please use the link below to select a conference time:

Conference Sign-Up:

Please select only one appointment time for each conference.

If you have more than one child attending our school, please be sure to schedule a separate conference with each appropriate teacher.

If you are unable to find a time that works for you, please contact the school office at:

Phone: _____

Email: _____

We look forward to partnering with you and your child's teacher!

Warmly,

[School Name]

[School Office / Teacher Name]

5. Conference Reminder Template

Subject: Reminder — Parent-Teacher Conference

Dear Parents and Guardians,

This is a friendly reminder that your parent-teacher conference is coming up!

Student: _____

Teacher: _____

Date: _____

Time: _____

Location: _____

Virtual Meeting Link:

A few reminders:

- Please arrive or log in a few minutes early.
- Conferences are scheduled for approximately _____ minutes.
- If you need to cancel or reschedule, please contact _____.
- If attending virtually, please test your internet connection before the meeting.

We look forward to seeing you!

[School Name]

6. Conference-Day Checklist

One Week Before

- ☐ Confirm conference dates and times
 - ☐ Confirm teacher availability
 - ☐ Review appointment schedule
 - ☐ Identify unfilled appointment slots
 - ☐ Contact families who have not scheduled, if appropriate
 - ☐ Confirm room assignments
 - ☐ Confirm virtual meeting links
 - ☐ Send parent reminder
 - ☐ Give teachers the final schedule
 - ☐ Confirm interpretation services, if needed
 - ☐ Confirm accessibility accommodations, if needed
-

The Day Before

- ☐ Print or electronically prepare the conference schedule
 - ☐ Check for cancellations
 - ☐ Fill open slots when possible
 - ☐ Confirm virtual meeting links
 - ☐ Check conference rooms
 - ☐ Check chairs and tables
 - ☐ Prepare directional signs
 - ☐ Prepare visitor sign-in procedures
 - ☐ Prepare name tags, if needed
 - ☐ Confirm interpreter schedules
 - ☐ Confirm staff coverage for the front office
 - ☐ Send final reminder
-

Conference Day

Before Families Arrive

- ☐ Turn on office computers
 - ☐ Check email
 - ☐ Check voicemail
 - ☐ Check conference schedule
 - ☐ Place directional signs
 - ☐ Check conference rooms
 - ☐ Check virtual meeting links
 - ☐ Have extra pens available
 - ☐ Have visitor badges available
 - ☐ Make sure the front office knows where teachers are located
 - ☐ Have a plan for late arrivals
 - ☐ Have a plan for parents who arrive without an appointment
-

During Conferences

The front office may become the information hub.

Be ready to answer:

"Where is Mrs. Smith?"

"I'm here for a conference."

"I thought my appointment was at 6:00."

"Can I see the principal while I'm here?"

"I can't get into the Teams meeting."

"I need to change my appointment."

This is why a **current master schedule** is your best friend.

After Conferences

- ☐ Record cancellations/no-shows according to school procedures
 - ☐ Give teachers an opportunity to report follow-up needs
 - ☐ Follow district procedures for documentation
 - ☐ Remove public access to scheduling information when appropriate
 - ☐ Save the final conference schedule according to district records procedures
 - ☐ Thank staff who helped
 - ☐ Note what worked
 - ☐ Note what should change next time
-

7. Google Forms Setup

A Simple DIY Conference Scheduler

If your school uses Google Workspace and you don't need a complicated booking system, a Google Form can be a very practical starting point.

Step 1: Create the Form

Name it:

[School Name] Parent-Teacher Conference Sign-Up

Add a short introduction:

Please complete this form to request a parent-teacher conference. Select the teacher and conference time that work best for your family.

Step 2: Add Your Questions

Parent/Guardian Name

Short answer

Required

Student Name

Short answer

Required

Parent/Guardian Email

Short answer

Required

Teacher

Dropdown

Example:

- Mrs. Smith
- Mr. Jones
- Ms. Brown
- Mrs. Garcia

Conference Date

Dropdown or multiple choice

Conference Time

Multiple choice

Example:

- 4:00 PM
- 4:20 PM
- 4:40 PM
- 5:00 PM
- 5:20 PM

Conference Format

Multiple choice:

- In person
- Virtual
- Either is fine

Optional: Is there anything you'd like the teacher to know before the conference?

Paragraph

Make this optional.

****Important Google Forms Tip**

A basic Google Form does **not automatically behave like a true appointment-booking system**.

If 20 parents can see:

4:00 PM

they may all select it unless you've built a mechanism to control the choices.

Before sending the form to families, test the workflow.

You can also use Google Calendar's appointment scheduling feature instead of trying to turn a basic Form into a booking system. Google Calendar's appointment schedules are specifically designed to let people select available times from a booking page.

8. SignUpGenius Setup* Recommended

SignUpGenius is particularly straightforward for conference scheduling because you create the available time slots and let families choose from them.

SignUpGenius's current conference guidance recommends creating defined appointment slots and setting each conference slot for one family.

Step 1: Create Your Sign-Up

Title:

2026 Fall Parent-Teacher Conferences

or

Mrs. Smith — Parent-Teacher Conferences

Make the title obvious.

Parents shouldn't have to wonder:

"Is this the right link?"

Step 2: Add Your Conference Dates

Example:

Thursday, November 12

4:00 PM

4:20 PM

4:40 PM

5:00 PM

5:20 PM

5:40 PM

6:00 PM

Step 3: Add One Family Per Slot

For individual conferences:

Quantity = 1

That prevents multiple families from selecting the same appointment.

Step 4: Include Only the Information You Need

Suggested information:

Parent/Guardian Name

Student Name

Email Address

That's it.

You don't need a paragraph about the student's academic performance.

Step 5: Add Conference Instructions

Example:

Please select one available conference time. You will receive a confirmation after completing your sign-up. If you need to cancel or change your appointment, please follow the instructions in your confirmation email or contact the school office.

Step 6: TEST IT!

This step is frequently skipped.

Don't.

Open your sign-up as if you were a parent.

Check:

- ☐ Correct school name
- ☐ Correct teacher
- ☐ Correct date
- ☐ Correct times
- ☐ Correct time zone
- ☐ Correct location
- ☐ Correct virtual meeting information
- ☐ One family per appointment
- ☐ Parent contact information is correct
- ☐ Confirmation message makes sense

SignUpGenius itself recommends testing the sign-up before distributing the link.

9. Conference Schedule Planning Sheet

Master Conference Schedule

School: _____

Conference Date: _____

Conference Hours: _____

Time	Teacher	Student	Parent/Guardian	Format	Status
4:00					
4:20					
4:40					
5:00					
5:20					
5:40					
6:00					
6:20					
6:40					
7:00					

Status Key

Confirmed

Cancelled

No-show

Needs follow-up

10. Mrs. Office Lady's Conference-Day Tips

Tip #1: Don't make parents hunt for the information.

Your conference email should answer:

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

How?

If a parent has to email the school office asking:

"Where am I supposed to go?"

the message wasn't complete enough.

Tip #2: Build in breathing room.

If conferences are 15 minutes long, don't necessarily schedule them back-to-back with zero transition time.

A five-minute buffer can be the difference between:

"Everything is running smoothly!"

and:

"WE ARE FIFTEEN MINUTES BEHIND!"

Tip #3: Have a plan for late parents.

Someone will arrive at 5:17 for a 5:00 appointment.

Decide ahead of time:

Who handles the parent?

Does the teacher continue the conference?

Does the parent wait?

Does the appointment need to be rescheduled?

The front office shouldn't have to invent the policy at 5:17 PM.

Tip #4: Don't forget families with multiple children.

A parent with three children should not have to become a scheduling detective.

If possible, make it easy for families to identify all of the teachers they need to see.

SignUpGenius supports organizing multiple teacher schedules, while Google and Microsoft environments can use their existing calendar/scheduling tools for more structured workflows.

Tip #5: Don't put confidential information on the sign-up sheet.

A public appointment schedule should never become a public student-information document.

Instead of:

"Johnny's mother — discuss failing math grade and medication issue"

use:

"Jane Smith — 5:20 PM"

The teacher can handle the confidential information through the district-approved system.

11. Privacy & School Technology

Reminder

Free does not automatically mean **district-approved**.

Before using any third-party scheduling service for school business, check your district's:

- Technology policies
- Student privacy requirements
- Data-sharing agreements
- Approved application list
- Records-retention requirements
- Staff account requirements

If your district already provides Google Workspace or Microsoft 365, those tools may be preferable because they are already part of the school's technology environment.

Mrs. Office Lady Rule:

Don't introduce a new app just because it's shiny.

If the district already owns a tool that does the job, learn how to use the tool you already have.

Conference Survival Formula



Quick Reference

Already have a district-approved tool?

Use that first.

Need a simple sign-up?

SignUpGenius

Google school?

Google Calendar Appointment Schedules

Microsoft school?

Microsoft Forms + Teams

Individual teacher?

Calendly or Koalendar