

Figure 5.4:

Communicating with School Personnel about Your Gifted Child: Your Child's Perspective, Your Insights, and Questions You Should Ask

Talk with your children about work, interactions, and learning experiences at school. Learning is more relevant to children when they believe that their viewpoint is understood and respected. Share applicable insights with the classroom teacher. It is important that everyone is aware of your child's perspective. You could initiate the conversation with the teacher in a manner similar to the following.

I talked with my child about school before coming here today. These are four questions I asked. I thought you would be interested in my child's responses.

1. What is most satisfying for you about school?
2. When do you learn the most at school? What is going on?
3. What is one thing you can do to make school better?
4. What do you think about friends or other kids at school?

✓ These are examples of other possible questions for your child.

- What do you want me to know about school?
- When do you feel joyful at school? What is going on?
- What do you really want to read and learn about at school?
- What subject do you like best? Why?
- What is something you are really good at doing? What is something you are not good at doing?

✓ Use your children's own words and encourage their elaboration to describe their engagement and perspective in learning situations. For example, children often tell adults that they are bored at school. What does your child really mean if she or he says *bored*? Record what

your child says, such as when and how she or he is bored at school, so you and the teacher can specifically problem-solve solutions.

- ✓ Pretend that you can only use five words to describe your child to an educator or someone who wants to help your child learn and flourish. Which five words would you select?

10 Questions Families Should Ask School Personnel about Your Gifted Child

Select one or several of these questions to help you address your observations and concerns about your child. The objective is to access specific information rather than generalities. It is also beneficial to determine if the teacher's perceptions differ substantially from your family's assumptions.

1. What questions do you think I should regularly ask my child about learning and the work at school in your class?
2. What can we do at home to support our child's learning, interests, and talents?
3. How do you think my child feels about school? Why?
4. What subjects or learning experiences does my child most enjoy? Why do you think that is?
5. What have you noticed so far about my child's capabilities and potential?
6. What are you able to do to differentiate your instruction for advanced learners?
7. What are your concerns about my child's work or behavior in your class?
8. What have you noticed about my child's interactions with classmates?
9. My child is passionately interested in _____. In what ways can you foster this interest in your curriculum and class?
10. What have I not asked about that is important for me to know?