

PROMPTS FOR STUDENT PANELISTS

Beginning-of-School-Year Discussion

Note to facilitator: Feel free to paraphrase these questions (especially for early elementary students) and to take them in any order. The main point is to get students' opinions about what teachers can/should do (or not do) to have a great start to the school year. Do not worry about getting through all of the questions. *The person moderating the student discussion should allow the discussion to flow naturally, without unnecessarily interrupting or attempting to steer the conversation.* After ten minutes, invite questions from teachers. Take questions for no more than five minutes. People will probably want to talk to the students longer, but remind them that they can talk to students much more after the meeting and throughout the school year. Thank the students and dismiss them from the room, so teachers can talk among themselves for the final twenty-five minutes of the meeting without the students present. (An effective way to prepare students before the meeting is simply to read each question to them and ask, "What do you want to be sure you don't forget to say when you get on the panel." This tends to get them talking.)

General Prompt for Opening Statements

What are some things that you like your teacher to do to make it a really good start to your school year? Are there a few things that you prefer teachers NOT to do on the first day of school, or in the first few days of school? Why do you prefer for teachers not to do them?

Additional Target-Related Prompts

Questions related to Target One:

1. What are some things that you might be thinking or feeling on the first day of school?
2. In the first week of school, what would you like to know about the teacher AS A PERSON? Why?

Question related to Target Two:

3. Does anything that teachers do at the beginning of the year determine whether students are going to be on their best behavior for the rest of the year?

Question related to Targets Three and Four:

4. Does what happens in the first few days of class affect how hard students are going to work and much they are going to learn all year? Why or why not?

Catch-All Wrap-Up Question:

5. Were there ideas from the VIDEO, *First Days*, (or any other thoughts) that you would like to EMPHASIZE or react to?