

General notes and background

You have two goals for this conversation:

- Convey that their family and child will be missed, and
- If there are wounds in this relationship (which there often are on both sides) then resetting the relationship enough that healing can begin.

So listen, listen, listen.

Sample introduction

I am so sorry we will not have you and your child(ren) as part of our school family this year. We will miss all of you. [Then add some specific trait or talent that you will miss about the student and/or parent. Otherwise, it can easily seem like you are just missing their tuition.]

Ideas for the core of the conversation

It is harder for me to make specific suggestions here because this is based on the specifics of your personal relationship with the parent. The point is to avoid an “he said, she said” discussion. So you will need to prayerfully think about your personal relationship with this person. Is there anything you need to apologize for or address with them in order to leave with a positive relationship?

Sample closing

Would you be interested in closing with prayer? [Any prayer should be short and focus on asking the Lord’s blessing on the child and family.]

A couple dos and don’ts

- Do take notes if you are talking on the phone. You won’t remember it all afterward.
- Do stay calm regardless of what they say.
- Don’t try to correct their perceptions or erroneous information. Even if you aren’t trying to argue with them, there is a high probability it will sound that way to them. If something is egregiously wrong and it is about someone or something besides you, you may say, “That hasn’t been my understanding. Would you mind if I check that out and get back to you?” (If this happens, ***be sure to get back to them.***)
- Do try to find out if there is a family, person or staff member at the school with whom they have a friendship. These are the people who may be able to change poor perceptions in the future.