

School to Home Communication Tips

In the family/school partnership, everyone has important information to contribute. The parents know the student's history, interests, and what has worked or not worked in the past. The teacher is a professional educator who knows strategies, school policies and procedures, and how the student performs in the school setting. Students are more likely to find academic and social success when families and educators work as partners through cooperative and collaborative relationships. The following are tips to support effective communication between school and home.

Communicate early in the school year

Early communication helps teachers, parents, and students build positive relationships. Parents, communicate your hopes for your child, their strengths and special interests, and any insight you might have about how they learn best. School teams, clearly communicate school and classroom procedures and expectations.

Keep reaching out

Keep the lines of communication open and student-focused. Communicate the "Glows" and the "Grows."

Listen

When people actively listen, everyone feels respected and heard, and important information can be shared. This two-way dialogue paves the way for successful school-home collaboration. Respecting differing points of view does not have to mean agreeing; the aim is to reach consensus and move forward for the benefit of the student.

Practice good communication habits

Communications should be delivered politely, professionally, succinctly, and respectfully.

Use the "communication sandwich"

Always begin and end your communication (verbal or written) in a positive way. The problem or difficulty should be covered in the middle.

Address conflicts

Communicating early and often helps to diminish conflicts, though when conflicts do occur, address the issue right away. School staff and parents can reach out to one another to collaborate on effective strategies or actions to take to resolve the conflict and move forward.

Follow-through and follow-up

During conversations, identify and record the person or people responsible for action items or tasks, and set a schedule to share periodic updates on task progress to all stakeholders.