

Educational Harbor Communications Policies

Communication Philosophy: All communication should be courteous, professional, and well prepared. Written communications should be proofread and written or typed neatly.

How Teachers Will Communicate with Parents and Guardians

Written Form

- All letters or notes to parents should be proofread by at least one other faculty members before the note is sent home.
- A copy needs to be made and put in that student's file of each letter or note sent home to that student's parents.
- All written communication should be professional, courteous, and have contact information to get back in touch with the teacher.
- Avoid the use of jargon.
- If the letter/note is handwritten, make sure that it is legible. If it is typed, make sure that it is at least standard 12-point font.
- All progress reports and report cards should be sent given to the principal for final approval.

Electronic Form

- Copies should be printed and filed of any correspondence via electronic form if there is a serious topic discussed. Serious discussions should not take place on text. The best place to have a serious discussion is in person. Barring that, a phone call.
- Make sure that all text/graphics are large enough to be seen or read.
- Be sure to run spell/grammar check on any electronic communications.
- Only use electronic communications with parents who have expressed that it is the way they prefer to be contacted.
- Include the principal in CC field or in group texts.

Phone

- Be polite and courteous.
- Before you make the call, write down everything you need to communicate with that parent. Be organized with your thoughts.
- Keep a phone log. Record the date, time, and reason for calling that parent.
- Be direct and mindful of the parent's time.
- If the parent is unable to talk to you at that time, politely ask when would be a good time to call them again.

- If you receive a voice mail; identify who you are, what you are calling about, and leave information for them to return your phone call.

Parent-Teacher Conferences

- Dress professionally.
- Create a comfortable atmosphere.
- Be prepared! Have your agenda ready. Have materials available that show the good and/or bad of the student.
- Always start the conference out with something positive.
- Be attentive and listen.
- Never talk about other students or teachers.
- End the conference with something positive.
- Let them know that you care about their child.
- If the situation becomes difficult, call the office for assistance immediately.
- Keep a conference journal. Record the date, time, reason, and key points discussed in the conference.
- Student-led conferences are best. Have the student talk about their own accomplishments, goals, and strengths.

Miscellaneous

- Progress reports from each teacher need to go out quarterly
- Teachers should make an effort to contact parents regularly about student achievements
- All correspondence with parents should be documented. Keep a file on hand for each student in your homeroom.
- Do not discuss other students or teachers with parents. Be professionally mindful.
- Develop a positive relationship with parents. Try to gain their trust and let them know that you have their child's best interest in mind at all times.

Teacher Communications Within the School Community

Principal to Teacher

- We will have monthly staff meetings to go over relevant information and discuss events happening within our school. Please check the schedule for meeting days and times. These meetings are mandatory!

- I am a hands-on principal. I think it is necessary for me to know what my teachers are doing in their classrooms. I will be visiting your classrooms several times per week.
- I would like to have one-on-one meetings with every teacher at least two times per nine weeks. I will use these meetings as an opportunity to see how you are doing, see if you have any needs, and to listen to ideas that you might have.

Teacher to Principal

- I have an open-door policy. Feel free to come to my office and discuss issues with me whenever you need it. I am always happy to answer questions, make suggestions, and listen to my teachers.
- You are always welcome to text me for anything. Email is good if it is a lengthy issue that needs documentation, but please text me to let me know that you sent it.
- If an issue or problem comes up after school. Please feel free to call me at home. I will do my best to address your needs as quickly and conveniently as possible.

Communications With Substitute Teachers

- If you know that you are going to be absent, please let the principal know as soon as possible.
- If an emergency happens after school hours, please call the principal or assistant principal at home as soon as possible.
- Please secure your own substitute teacher if possible, and let administration know who will be subbing for you. If it is an emergency, we will find a sub for you.

Preparation and Materials for Substitutes: All teachers need to put a substitute packet together. The packet needs to be on file in the office. Be sure that you keep the packet up-to-date. The packet should include the following items:

- three days of updated emergency lesson plans
- enough copies of all worksheets for all students
- class schedule
- class roles
- safety procedures and plans (should be by the door)
- class rules
- student discipline policy
- contact teacher information
- miscellaneous information
- If you know that you are going to be absent and are capable of putting current lesson plans together, leave them on your desk. Make sure that they are detailed,

easy to follow, and state specifically what and when you want the substitute to do. Use the substitute lesson plan forms available in the office.

- If you are including worksheets in the lesson plans, try to copy them off for the substitute if it is possible. If it is not possible, make sure that you leave the correct number of copies that they will need for each sheet.
- If it is possible, write a personal note to the substitute making them feel welcome and giving them any information that you feel might help them.

Communication with Students

- Practice Conscious Discipline whenever possible. This includes connecting with students through play, unifying activities and songs, understanding the brain states and acting accordingly.
- All students are to be treated fairly and with respect. If you expect them to respect you, then you have to respect them.
- You need to have an open-door policy with all of your students. Let them know that they can trust you. Allow them the opportunity to come in, talk to you, ask you questions, and voice their concerns and opinions.
- It is our job to provide students with optimal opportunities to learn. We need to create an atmosphere that fosters learning and enhances a student's ability to do such.
- All students regardless of race, color, or gender should be given equal opportunities and fair treatment by their teachers, administrators, and peers.
- All students should be encouraged to ask questions, and all teachers need to provide an accurate of response as possible.
- All teachers should have every student's best interest in mind.

Communication Between Administration and Stakeholders

Principal to Parents

- The principal oversees all-school announcements. These announcements, if serious in nature, will be read by the assistant principal and at least one other parent before being sent.
- The principal needs to contact each family at least once per month. The contact can be informal, or formal. These contacts are absolutely necessary to make sure that the communication line between the school and the parent remains open.
 - Text messages
 - Phone calls
 - Stopping them in the car rider line
- Principal communications to parents should always be polite, even if the parent is upset.

- For potential new families, the principal should check all communication lines at least every 2-3 days. This includes the following forums:
 - Facebook messenger
 - Web site messenger (contact form)
 - Texts / phone calls

Principal to Florida DOE, Step Up for Students, Health Dept, Fire Dept

- Most of these communications will be through email. They do not have to be read by a 2nd party, as they are typically focused on one concise issue at a time. They must be read at least twice before sending. Most of these communications will be no more than 2-3 sentences.
- Communications must be formal, unless there is already a history of friendly informal communications between parties.

Principal to Groups of Stakeholders

- Groups of Stakeholders includes any situation in which the principal is speaking to a group of people – whether parents, the public, or the school board
- Most important points of the speech should be planned by the principal and reviewed by at least one other member of the school.
- Answers to interview questions should be carefully crafted and practiced whenever possible
- Presentations or speeches will be practiced and include some time of visual cue to ensure that main points are covered as planned.