



Parental Communication and Involvement

It is vital that teachers build a relationship with parents/guardians. This success of the relationship building will hinge on communication. Teachers should make every effort to stay in communication with every parent/guardian. This can be done with weekly newsletters, Friday folders, progress logs, telephone calls and conferences. The use of technology has also opened new venues for communication, such as email, web pages and podcasts.

One of the most effective parent communication techniques at a teacher's disposal is a quick telephone call home to let parents know how well their child is doing. Phoning parents often with good news makes it less difficult to call them when a problem develops. In an effort to keep the lines of communication open between parents and teachers, please return all telephone calls within 24 hours of the time of the call. Document and summarize major points discussed during the telephone conversation on the Family Contact Log.

Teachers are required to maintain a record of communication by documenting conferences and telephone conversations with parents/guardians. A copy of a Family Contact Log can be found in section 3 of the *Teacher Performance Assessment Handbook (3:30)*. **All teachers in the summative evaluation process are required to complete the Family Contact Log (or its equivalent) and submit it prior to June 1 in preparation for the final summative conference.** If required by your school, please have parents sign-in during conferences on the provided sign-in sheets, e.g. Title I Conference Sign-in.

Parents are the most important and influential people in a child's life. Effective teachers understand that when parents are involved, students perform better both academically and behaviorally. Teachers who are most successful in gaining parental support adhere to the *golden rule* of positive parental relations: *Treat parents the way you would want to be treated if you had a child in school.*

Teachers need to form partnerships with parents in an effort to do what is in the child's best interest. This may be accomplished by:

- Working closely with the Parental Involvement Specialist
- Attending parent workshops
- Inviting parents to volunteer or participate in class projects
- Making positive telephone calls to parents throughout the school year
- Making home visits, when appropriate

Additionally, the National PTA has developed national standards and provided a comprehensive and practical guide to family involvement. This document, The National Standards for Family-School Partnerships, may be viewed online or as a PDF file at the following link: http://www.pta.org/family_school_partnerships.asp

RESOURCES:

The Parent-Teacher Partnership: How to Work Together for Student Achievement
Scott Mandel

Dealing with difficult parents and with parents in difficult situations.
Todd Whitaker, Douglas J. Fiore

How to deal with parents who are angry, troubled, afraid, or just plain crazy.
Elaine K. McEwan