

# 10 TIPS FOR PARENT COMMUNICATION



**Strong parent-teacher partnerships are the key to achieving our common goal: student success. Here are reminders or new ideas for building better relationships.**

- 1 Be proactive.** Before school begins or prior to conference meetings, send a survey and ask parents to share their student's strengths and challenges, as well as anything else they would like you to know about their child and family.
- 2 Use the right tools.** Avoid texts. Phone calls, emails, class websites & newsletters are effective ways to share expectations, set boundaries & reduces stress levels. Immediate responses may be unnecessary, but let parents know when to expect a reply.
- 3 Break the ice.** Make a point of sharing some good news, such as something you noticed and particularly like about their child. Ideally, make a quick phone call for the best chance to establish a relationship with the parent.
- 4 Avoid assumptions.** Take rumors and reputations about students and their families with a grain of salt. We should never assume we know what's happening at home. Instead, be curious and learn by asking questions and having real conversations.
- 5 Get their perspective.** Here's a great way to start a conversation with a parent: Ask "*How do you feel the school year is going for (their child)?*" This shows respect for their point of view and can reveal information we may not be aware of before.
- 6 Use the sandwich technique.** Surround the bad news with positives. Start with a student strength to help parents relax. Then bring up the area for growth. End with a positive: appreciation of their willingness to collaborate & confidence in the future.
- 7 Acknowledge effort.** Celebrating achievements is great, but it's also valuable to acknowledge how hard a student is working toward a goal. Remember, parents may not always be aware of their efforts, so sharing that can be a great way to connect.
- 8 Encourage school connection.** Schools bring communities together for sports, performances, workshops, and celebrations. Encourage parents to visit & participate in activities such as reading, cultural celebrations, or career exploration.
- 9 Get ideas from students.** Kids can share information that can help us connect with a parent, like their favorite sports team, special talent, or area of expertise.
- 10 Focus on our common goal.** Beyond the academics, we are preparing our students with the skills required for life after graduation, such as effective communication, planning, organization, and emotional regulation.