

The Learning Bar

Parent & Caregiver Survey Success Strategies

Communications

Communication entails the exchange of thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and emotions, and is critical to the development and maintenance of strong relationships (Adu-Oppong & Agyin-Birikorang, 2014; Lunenburg, 2010). Within the school setting, communication is an important part of partnerships between schools, communities and families, which can benefit students (Epstein et al., 2002). To strengthen communication practices, schools must evaluate the types, content, cadence and clarity of their current communication practices (Proff et al., 2025).



Why is it important?

- Research has demonstrated that student achievement improves when trust is built between teachers, students and parents through effective communication strategies (Bryk & Schneider, 2002)
- By adapting to the varied communication preferences and needs of parents and caregivers, schools can more readily engage families in a child's school experience (Graham-Clay, 2024).
- Successful communication between administrators, parents and other key stakeholders helps create clarity around shared goals and instill a collective sense of commitment within the school community (Lunenburg, 2010).
- Engaging with parents to discuss what is needed to support their child can help build stronger school-family connections (Patel et al., 2008).

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In Practice



What can schools do to improve communication with parents and caregivers?

Use the following strategies when addressing parents and caregivers:

- Provide clear, concise, and timely communications about school affairs.
- Consider using the school's newsletter, Learning Management System platform, website, or even social media to create awareness within the school community.
- Reiterate important messages in follow up e-mails, phone calls and other methods of communication to create broad awareness within the school community.
- Avoid misinformation and miscommunication by providing detailed explanations, with supporting documentation, about organizational changes or decisions.
- Focus on the positive as well as areas for development and consider multiple perspectives when creating messaging.
- Where possible, address parents in their preferred language of communication and, if necessary, make alternative arrangements to ensure that all parents are sufficiently informed (e.g., enlist translators or consider using translation software).
- Give families a say in school affairs to help build a shared sense of responsibility and identity within the school community.

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