

Teacher August Newsletter

It's an exciting time of year! You are busy getting your room ready and preparing lesson plans to welcome students back to school. As you begin this school year, keep in mind that parent-teacher communication is essential to ensuring a student has a successful school year. While it takes effort on both your part, as well as the parent's, the results are worth the effort and result in a well-rounded student.

According to the National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools (Henderson and Mapp, 2002), "When schools, families and community groups work together to support learning, children tend to do better in school, stay in school longer and like school more."

To help get the conversation with parents started, below are some questions for you to consider.

- What is the best way to communicate with my students' parents?
- What is the best way for parents to communicate with me?
- What is the best time to contact my students' parents?

Other suggestions include reaching out to parents to tell them how excited you are about the new school year. Let them know about some of the activities you have planned. Use the excitement of the new school year to build a relationship now. Invite them to come and tour your classroom and meet you.

More ideas for engaging parents can be found at <http://www.edutopia.org/home-school-connections-resources>.

Encourage Good Attendance

Research shows that poor attendance in the first month of school will predict chronic absence for an entire year. Improving attendance is an essential strategy for reducing achievement gaps and helping the student make academic gains.

During the first few weeks of school, be proactive. Encourage student attendance with both the student and parents. Promote a culture of attendance in your classroom year-round. Make an effort to recognize good or improved attendance. Positive attention goes a long way.

A toolkit for teaching good attendance can be found at <http://www.attendanceworks.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2010/05/AWTeacherToolkit-August-2014-new2.pdf>.

School Bus Safety

Student safety is a school's responsibility the entire day. If a student rides a school bus, this responsibility begins the moment a student is picked up in the morning until the time the student arrives at home. To help ensure student safety in and around school buses, ask yourself the following questions.

- What is the best way to communicate with my students' parents about school bus safety?
- How can my school get involved in the Flashing Red. Kids Ahead. campaign?
- What are some helpful tips I can give to my students' parents about school bus safety.

As a driver, you also can do your part. It is illegal to pass a school bus that has stopped with its red lights flashing, as students are getting on and off the bus. Remember: Flashing Red. Kids Ahead.

To learn more about the Flashing Red. Kids Ahead. campaign, go to <http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/communications/flashing%20red.%20kids%20ahead>.

Source

Henderson, A. T. & Mapp, K. L. (2002). *A New Wave of Evidence: The Impact of School, Family, and Community Connections on Student Achievement*. National Center for Family and Community Connections with Schools. Austin, Texas: Southwest Educational Development Laboratory. Retrieved from <https://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/evidence.pdf>.



<http://www.arkansased.gov/divisions/communications/my-childmy-student>