

Communication PRinciples for Principals

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KEY COMMUNICATOR GROUPS - TEACHERS



IDEA

- Reward deserving teachers.
- Send personal handwritten notes.
- Develop a program to recognize significant achievements.

DEALING WITH KEY COMMUNICATOR GROUPS – TOOLS AND STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH TEACHERS

Principals have a variety of tools and strategies to build communication with teachers. Specific and frequent communication disseminates information and keeps teachers informed, and it helps teachers stay organized by providing essential information to help them navigate through the week.

Motivating teachers and cheering them on.

Staff Bulletin:

The staff bulletin is the traditional means of communication. A key advantage is that everyone receives the information at the same time. You can provide information about new policies and directions and employees can save it to refer to in the future. You can also share achievements of your school and your staff. If you choose to publish a staff bulletin, do it consistently and distribute it to all staff – teachers and support. Electronic distribution is an option, but only if all staff members have access to and knowledge of e-mail systems.

- Vary the format of the bulletin each school year. Give the bulletin a new look each school year. This gives staff members a subtle change that this is a new year with new opportunities and challenges.

Supplementing the bulletin:

Don't rely solely on the staff bulletin to keep everyone informed and up to date. Take advantage of the following communications tools to provide information on late-breaking news, a sudden change in plans or a particularly important event.

- **Intercom announcements** – start each day with a brief announcement to students and teachers to remind them about important events that day and offer an interesting fact about something that happened on “this day in history.”



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- **Electronic news** – Use your school’s e-mail network to congratulate employees on awards or significant events in their lives, meeting times or any important news you want distributed instantly.

Personal interaction:

Never underestimate the value of personal interaction in communicating with teachers. If you make a promise, follow through and deliver on it. Make a concerted effort to get to know your faculty on a more personal basis. Getting to know the whole child is a guiding rule, and the same applies to teachers on your staff. The more effort you make to get to know your teachers, the better your chances are of understanding them better and helping them to become better teachers, which benefits students in the long term.

Recognition:

- **Reward deserving teachers.** Rewards take many forms and sometimes they need to be no more elaborate than a pat on the back or a kind word. Take the time to walk around and visit your teachers’ classrooms and give them positive feedback about the great things they are doing in the classroom.
- **Send personal handwritten notes.** A personal note from the principal placed in the teacher’s mailbox can be a great motivator. Remember not to be overly patronizing with praise and don’t bombard teachers with notes. Insincere compliments lose their significance.
- **Develop a program to recognize significant achievements.** You can designate a parking space each month and award it to a staff member or place a plaque in a common area to record names of employees who accomplish significant achievements or make noteworthy contributions.

Content adapted from Principals in the Public, published by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA).

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TIPS

