

Missoula County Public Schools Parent and student engagement - Administrative Procedures

The District believes that the cooperation of school and home is vital in the growth and education of the student and recognizes the responsibility to keep parents informed of student welfare and progress in school. Additionally, the District acknowledges the importance of communicating directly to high school students with information pertaining to school, classroom, and extracurricular activities and athletics.

Employees are encouraged to use websites and social media to provide information, support communication and collaboration, publish student work for authentic audiences, and develop student skills necessary to participate online in a safe and productive manner.

Employees are also encouraged to use electronic communication (telephone, cellular telephone, sms text, email) to sustain positive, professional, collaborative relationships with all student families and high school students for educational purposes and District-related business. These guidelines complement, but do not replace, any existing policies regarding the use of technology, computers, email, electronic communication, and the Internet that are in place at Missoula County Public Schools.

All District employees who utilize social networking, District websites, and electronic communication shall follow District guidelines for posting student owned or created information, photographs, District logos, or district owned or created information. Material protected under FERPA on such platforms is strictly prohibited.

Guidelines

MCPS establishes the following guidelines with regard to tools used for electronic communications (telephone, cellular telephone, sms text, email) to students and their families.

- As with other forms of communication, when communicating electronically, all staff shall maintain professional conduct and boundaries with students and their family members.
- District provided email accounts, website hosting services, and mass communication tools shall be used when communicating electronically with students and their families. Further, all district electronic communication must be initiated from District provided cell phones, email accounts and mass communications tools, except in instances of life/safety emergencies when use of a personal cell phone, email, text message may be required.
- District employees are prohibited from using personal email, text messaging, instant messaging, and social networking accounts, websites, and any other applications for communicating with parents and students with District-related correspondence unless they are specifically authorized by their supervisor to use these personal resources.

Exceptions

An emergency situation or a legitimate educational reason may justify deviation from the requirements set forth in these guidelines. District employees may be asked to explain any deviation from these requirements and explain their reasons in making those decisions.

The District understands that many employees are involved in various other roles in the community through non-District-related civic, religious, athletic, scouting or other organizations and programs whose participants may include District students. We commend our employees for this involvement and these guidelines are not intended to interfere with or restrict an employee's ability to serve in those roles. However, District employees are strongly encouraged to maintain professional boundaries appropriate to the nature of the activity with all youth with whom they interact in the course of their community involvement and to ensure that all communication that is related to District business is conducted using District approved communication platforms. Additionally, employees should not be conducting work for these other activities during the time they are performing work on behalf of the District.

Frequency of Communication

Parents and students engage in collaborative relationships with our employees when they can rely on communication about what is occurring in our schools and classrooms. Parent feedback indicates that parents appreciate communication about class content, assignments, assessments, and special activities. In order to create more consistency in communication for parents who have children in multiple grade levels and schools, classroom teachers shall follow these guidelines for frequency of sharing information.

Feedback on student work product given directly to students	Classroom information (i.e. content of lessons, assignments, links to appropriate curriculum page on district webpage, special classroom or school events)	Classroom information updates posted to:
Twice per month at a minimum	Twice per month at a minimum On the 1st and 4th Tuesday of the month	Website (mandatory)
		Emailed to parents (optional)
		Texted to parents (optional)

Frequency of communication is designed to provide information that will be helpful to the student, teacher, school counselor, and family members. Student assignments should be graded and returned to students in a timely manner, taking into consideration the type of assignment given. Appropriate and timely feedback to students allows students to adjust and improve.

Basic information and updates regarding classroom activities, which may currently be sent via email or classroom blog, may continue to be distributed. This information must also be updated on the classroom website twice per month, allowing the website to be a common resource for parents, students, counselors, and fellow teachers to find information.

Teachers should use a variety of District communication devices, including classroom website, email, and telephone, along with personal conferences and written grade reports, to keep parents well informed.

Teachers should consider the classroom website to be the anchor resource for all information related to the class which may also be shared in a variety of other methods.

Teachers must adhere to [WCAG 2.0](#) (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) design standards when placing content on their classroom websites.

Consistency in image and brand

Email signatures

In considering how to represent a classroom, school or the District in email signatures, employees will consider the following guidelines:

1. The only appropriate logos to use are the MCPS Forward Thinking High Achieving logo, the school logo, the logos of education-related professional organizations which the employee is a member of or credentialed by (i.e. PLTW, International Baccalaureate, Advanced Placement, NBCT, etc.). All other images should be avoided.
2. Text included in the email signature must include:
 - a. Name, title, contact information
3. Text included in the email signature may include:
 - a. Professional memberships and credentials
 - b. References to school goals
 - c. References to school mission and vision
 - d. References to District goals
 - e. References to District mission and vision
 - f. Appropriate quotes that connect to the staff member's role in the District
4. Please do not use wallpaper or other background images