

Lines of Communication

A key aspect of promoting effective communication between families and teachers is helping everyone be clear about the lines of communication that are available to them. Teachers may assume parents “know” they can call or e-mail them, or that they have organized a homework or weekly folder system to help parents become involved in their child’s learning. But lines of communication may not be so obvious to parents, and if they learn about them one at a time, it is hard to keep them all straight. Therefore, it can be helpful to provide an outline of the various ways communication will take place, and to remind parents periodically of the full range available.

Below is a sample handout that you can adapt to your situation. You could distribute it several times over the course of the year (parent nights, send home with students mid-year, review at parent conferences). You also could consider adapting this design and laminating it so parents can post it somewhere at home.

Making Connections: Lines of Communication for Families in Room 201	
Dear Families,	
I think it is very important for us to have clear and open lines of communication so we can work together to support your child's learning. Below is a list of the materials and events that will be available to us this year. I also hope that you will make other suggestions to add to our list!	
	Sincerely, [your name]
Materials	Events
Classroom Handbook: explains expectations and procedures (e.g., homework, weekly folders, telephone, e-mail, parent observations, home visits)	Back to School Night: August 28
Weekly Newsletter: updates you on current events and curriculum topics	Parent Conferences: October 12 and March 18
Assignment Calendar: lets you know what is due each month	Parent Workshops: November 8, February 10 and April 17
Classroom Website (URL:_____): updates you on current events and curriculum topics	Parent Volunteer Orientation: September 20 and January 12