Student Work Folder Toolkit

Organizing a system for sending your students’ work home can save you and parents time in maintaining close contact with each other. Once parents are familiar with your system, they can:

- take an active role in making sure their student brings the work home
- talk with their students about their current work
- communicate with you about their student’s progress
- communicate with you about questions and comments

Below are two tools to help you design and implement a folder system. Depending on your grade level and subject matter(s), you will need to decide how frequently you want to send folders home.

1) What should a work folder contain? Below is an example of a work folder with two pockets. It is designed to be interactive, where parents are communicating with the teacher and with their student.

**SAMPLE STUDENT WORK FOLDER DESIGN**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parent-Teacher Communication</th>
<th>Student-Parent Communication</th>
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**What to look for in this pocket:**
- Weekly newsletter
- Personal notes about your student
- Field trip notices/permission slips

**What I will look for when the folder is returned:**
- Personal notes from you about your student
- Personal notes from you about questions/comments for me
- Field trip permission slips

**What to look for in this pocket:**
- Collection of week’s work
- Student notes about this week’s accomplishments and future goals
- Interactive homework

If you and your student are not able to find a time to sit down together to look at the work, please write him/her a note!
2) How will parents understand the student folder system I create? A brief cover letter to accompany the work folder will help orient parents to its purpose and the routines you will follow.

**Making Connections: Introducing the Student Work Folder!**

Dear Parents,

I mentioned at our Back-to-School Night that I would be organizing a Student Work Folder system to assist you, your student and me in communicating about your student's progress. The folder will be sent home every [day/month] and your student will bring it back the following [day].

This folder system is designed with two types of communication in mind:

**Parent-Teacher Communication:** Each week there will be items in the left hand pocket that will keep you informed about what is currently happening in the classroom, your student's progress, and upcoming special events such as field trips. When the folder is returned, I will look for materials you send back to me such as notes about your student or permission slips you are returning.

**Parent-Student Communication:** Your student will be involved in making decisions regarding which work samples will be sent home, and in writing comments about accomplishments and future goals. You also may find “interactive homework” activities that you and your student can do together. Ideally, you and your student will sit down together to review the contents of the folder. However, sometimes family schedules do not make this easy, so another option is to write comments to your student so s/he knows you reviewed the work. This is a great time to recognize your student's accomplishments and help him/her identify next steps for learning!

I hope you will find the weekly folder system to be a helpful way to keep all of us involved in your student's education. Please let me know if you have questions or comments! I always enjoy hearing from you.

Sincerely,

[your name]