

# *Home School Communication Guide*

Parents often ask how they can best communicate their questions or concerns to their child's teacher. The CSES administration and PTA have prepared these guidelines as a way to direct parents toward the most effective communication with staff. While individual teachers may have their own preferences, which they will share with parents, the following guidelines should help you to reach the appropriate staff member in the timeliest manner.

## ***Changes in schedule and bus plans***

Any variation from your child's daily routine requires a note from home, addressed to the teacher. If you have forgotten to send a note in the morning, you may email or call the office staff before 3:05 p.m. Please do not email the teacher regarding schedule changes -- they often do not have the opportunity to check mail mid-day, and we cannot ensure that your message will be received. After 3:00 p.m., the office staff is focused on dismissal, and cannot respond to email or convey last minute messages to teachers. The main office can be reached at 301-469-1034 or [Linda\\_N\\_Kurinsky@mcpsmd.org](mailto:Linda_N_Kurinsky@mcpsmd.org).

## ***Questions or concerns about homework***

Teachers may not have access to their email after 4:00 p.m., so we recommend that if you have a question about what homework has been assigned, you should contact another parent. If you have concerns about your child's ability to do the homework assigned, you should email those concerns to the teacher, who may set up a telephone call or meeting, if warranted, or reply by email, if a simple reply is more appropriate.

## ***Concerns about safety, discipline, or social issues***

Unless a situation requires immediate intervention by the principal, contact the staff member involved first, letting them know of your concern and giving them the opportunity to follow up and problem solve. If you would like to request a meeting or telephone call to discuss the problem, you can arrange it via email. When necessary, that staff member will initiate and facilitate communication with other staff members (i.e. principal, guidance counselor, lunch/recess aide) to resolve situations.

## ***Concerns or questions about your child's academic performance***

If you have questions or concerns about your child's academic performance, we encourage you to reach out to the teacher via email, and briefly describe your concerns. If the teacher cannot respond with a simple email reply, and a discussion is warranted, the teacher will arrange a phone call or meeting with you.

If your child has received an interim report, indicating the teacher's academic concerns and you would like to discuss the matter further, please contact them by email to arrange a phone call or face to face meeting.

In general, we encourage you to use email and handwritten notes to share factual information or to arrange phone conferences or meetings with the staff. Be specific and brief in your communication, and include your own contact information. Please allow at least 24 hours for a response. If you feel very emotional about an issue, please allow yourself a cooling off period before sending your email. For more complex issues and for problem-solving, a call or meeting may be required.

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The partnership between parents and teachers requires support and encouragement. We are part of a team with an extremely important objective -- the education of our children. We encourage communications that build a respectful, constructive, and informative dialogue between parents and teachers.