

Collaborative communications

Proactive and productive parent-school relationships positively impact student success and well-being. The purpose of communication between parents/guardians and school employees is to create, maintain and enhance positive relationships in support of the student's educational plan.

STEP 1

Employee

Communication should remain as close to the source as possible. Communicate with the employee directly involved. By starting with the source, communication is more efficient and effective.

Guide for collaborative communication:

1. Speak to the appropriate person.
2. Be simple, clear, concise.
3. Be prepared.
4. Establish next steps.
5. Follow through and follow-up.

Communication is most effective at the school level

There are many resources available at the school-level:

School Based Resource Team

Extended School Based Resource Team

Family of Schools
Behaviour Support Worker

Learning Services Teacher

School psychologists

Speech-language
pathologists

EA support

Indigenous Support Workers

Social Emotional Learning team

Indigenous Education department

Inclusive Education department

Teacher Leaders

School counsellors

STEP 2

Principal*

If actionable next steps are not determined in collaboration with the employee, communicate with the school principal. Principals work hard to provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students and staff.

*At secondary schools, communicate with the grade level administrator first, then with the principal.

Moving to steps 3, 4 & 5 means entering the Policy 406 process. If solutions are not determined through the collaborative communication process, please refer to: *Policy 406: Resolving Concerns Regarding Personnel, Programs or Procedures.*

STEP 3

Director of Instruction

STEP 4

Assistant Superintendent

STEP 5

Superintendent

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Levels of communication

Parents often need to communicate with various staff members – teachers, support staff, administrators, and/or school district-level staff. As a general guideline for determining who to communicate with, communication should remain as close to the 'source' as possible. For example, if the topic pertains to something within the classroom, speak to the classroom teacher. Even at times when conversations may be uncomfortable, it is most productive to speak with the staff member directly involved and responsible. By starting with the source, communication is more efficient and effective.

Guiding questions

Here are some example guiding questions that can be used to prepare for and during meetings. These questions are designed to ensure communication meets the objective of supporting student success and well-being:

- What is the topic/issue that needs to be addressed?
- Given the student's needs, what is our overarching purpose or goal?
- What is the overall plan for the student's education?
- How would we like the student to be involved in the process of creating their educational and future goals? Does the student need to join the conversation?
- What is the role of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP)?
- What is our communication plan (timeline and process) moving forward?
- What are the choices or options of support we ought to consider?
- What actions do we need to take next?

Guide for collaborative communication

1. **Speak to the appropriate person.** Teacher or Principal – person closest to the source.
2. **Be simple, clear, concise.** As a general rule of thumb, keep digital communication short and to the point. If more in-depth communication is required, set-up a meeting.
3. **Be prepared.** Determine the purpose and objectives of the meeting, and the questions the meeting needs to address.
4. **Establish next steps.** Collaboratively determine what actions are required from all those involved. Determine what the communication timeline and process will be moving forward.
5. **Follow through and follow-up.** Complete action steps and communicate progress back to all those involved according to the communications timeline and process that was established.

Communication is most effective at the school level

There are many resources available at the school-level, making schools the most effective level for communication.

Resources include:

- School counsellors
- School Based Resource Team
- Extended School Based Resource Team
- Family of Schools Behaviour Support Worker
- Learning Services Teacher
- EA support
- Indigenous Support Workers
- Social Emotional Learning team
- Indigenous Education department
- Inclusive Education department
- Teacher Leaders
- School psychologists
- Speech-language pathologists