Student and Stakeholder Communication

Communicating with students and stakeholders is essential to ensuring that everyone understands how to best support students as they strive for success. Communication is foundational for clarifying expectations, developing mutual understanding, and increasing commitment and involvement. Establishing and maintaining effective communication requires time, effort, and consistency. Using appropriate communication methods and interpersonal skills are vital to reaching and interacting with students and stakeholders.

1. In what ways do I communicate differently with students, parents/guardians, and stakeholders?
2. What challenges do I face when communicating in online environments with students, parents/guardians, and stakeholders?
3. What tools are available to support my communication purposes with different stakeholders in online environments?

? to Consider

KEY Elements

Effective communication is key to building engaging and supportive relationships with students, families, and stakeholders. The purposes for communication may vary by audience but often include conveying information about class expectations and instructional content, supporting and building relationships with students, families, and stakeholders, gathering information to modify or adapt instruction, and providing feedback to students.

Identifying appropriate communication strategies is essential to reaching students, families, and stakeholders. It is important to communicate promptly, tailor communication to individual circumstances, and avoid making unwarranted assumptions to prevent misunderstandings and improve communication. While communication is often class-wide, sometimes individual parents and guardians must be contacted. In those cases, have a communication plan and maintain a contact information list for parents/guardians with their preferred contact method.

Successful communication should be timely, clear, mindful, and consistent. Establish how often communication should be expected and how the communication will be provided. Regular communication will ensure students, families, and stakeholders are consistently up-to-date, reducing communication gaps. Communication is also more effective when perceived as understandable and supportive. Using positive and emotive language is one way to promote collaboration and convey positive support. Determine what needs to be communicated, and then identify how the information will be communicated. Communication may be more effective when it is received through multiple channels. Use a combination of methods such as announcements within learning management systems, phone calls to families and stakeholders, and written communication through email or text messaging. Utilizing images and video can also support understanding and increase the clarity of the communication.

Many communication tools and strategies are available. Choose the best tool based on the audience and the purpose of the communication. A learning management system can be used for weekly or assignment specific announcements geared towards students and instructional content. To communicate with a specific student, use the school email platform or the messaging feature within the learning management system. There are also various communication tools that can help teachers create interactive communication and foster a sense of community. Some common tools used for interactive communication are ClassDojo, Seesaw, and ClassTag. Effective communication is foundational to establishing positive relationships with students, families, and stakeholders, which will ultimately impact student success.

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