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# COMMUNICATION

Parent Bulletin Boards



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## Parent Bulletin Boards

Parent bulletin boards are not typically perceived to be a communication tool, but rather, an information source. Creative uses of bulletin boards (including online bulletin boards) can facilitate parent-to-parent communication, school-to-parent communication, and parent-to-school communication. It can create an avenue that encourages parental interaction with and at the school. Centrally located where parents come and go, a parent bulletin board or message center can reach out to parents who rarely attend school functions or meetings.

In developing a parent bulletin board, think of it as communication central for ships that pass in the night. Your school's parent message center can certainly be a platform to post monthly school information such as announcements, calendars, lunch menus, board minutes, and honor roll lists and other award announcements. But remember, the nature of communication is two-way, and the goal is to generate parental interaction. Posted information can and does inspire communication from parents to school, but in a school community, interaction between parents is just as desirable.

In addition to a school information section on the parent bulletin board, provide a section for parents to communicate with other parents. Individual parents possess individual expertise, talents, and interests in a variety of areas. Try to view parents as resources to the school and to other parents. Not only is parent expertise and talent beneficial to the school in a volunteer capacity, it can also be useful to other parents if there is an awareness. The parent section of your message center opens the doors to parents helping parents and strengthens parental interaction.

The content of the parent section may require some screening. For this reason, a parent volunteer might be designated to manage the bulletin board project. This parent volunteer would receive items to be posted from parents and prepare the items for presentation on the board (or, if the bulletin board is online, monitor posts). This method also keeps the message center looking uniform and organized.

Here are a few things to consider in planning your Parent Communication Center:

- Keep two-way communication as its purpose
- Place it in a high parent traffic area
- Post clear instructions on how to submit items for posting
- Use a parent volunteer to coordinate the project
- Set a schedule for periodic changes in look and content
- Give it an attractive but orderly presentation
- Keep items simple and to the point
- Provide a Parent-to-Parent section
- Organize the bulletin board as a monthly calendar with a monthly theme

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