

Home-School Partnership **Guidelines for Effective Communication**

The importance of a healthy, strong, and collaborative home-school partnership cannot be overstated. When educators and parents/guardians commit to such a partnership, students are the beneficiaries. In addition, this commitment helps to foster a school community in which great things could be achieved and our collective best could be discovered.

There are many supports for you and your child at Ramapo Ridge Middle School and in Mahwah Township Public Schools. The best way to take full advantage of these resources is knowing who to contact and when/how to do so.

The guidance presented here provides insight to some of our key supports and offers situational visual flowcharts.

Throughout the school year, we will be in communication with you regarding your child's development and to provide insights to our school-wide programs and activities. We hope our communication encourages meaningful dialogue between the home and school, as well as sparks conversation at home between you and your child. Likewise, our staff looks forward to receiving communication from you. We want to hear your questions, concerns, and great ideas!

The middle school years are a time when, together, parents/guardians and educators should aim to help students towards becoming more independent. Whenever possible and appropriate, students should be encouraged to speak to staff members who are directly involved/connected to the situation. Students should be encouraged to advocate for themselves to the greatest degree he/she is comfortable. Although we are in the age of digital communication, we believe it is best for students at the middle school level to communicate with staff members through face to face communication. We believe encouraging this form of interaction between students and staff fosters essential life skills.

Who, When, & How

General:

Contact information (email addresses and telephone numbers) is located on the middle school webpage under the "About" top menu tab then select "Staff Directory." Please indicate the best times to reach you if you leave a voicemail.

While many initial questions/concerns/ideas will be able to be addressed via email or telephone, should a particular situation require in-depth conversation, then an appointment should be requested. In this case, our staff members will communicate with you regarding their availability to coordinate a day/time/location to meet. As a general practice, we believe it is often beneficial to have the student participate for at least part of meeting in order to help them be active learners, advocate for themselves, and hear messages/outcomes first-hand.

For confidentiality reasons, we respectfully request that staff members not be asked to engage in discussion about individual student situations while other students, staff, and/or parents/guardians are present, or while parents/guardians are at our school/ on our campus for another purpose such as volunteering, attending a class party or event, or during Back-to-School Night.