

GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS

PHONE

****CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPECTATIONS:**

Each staff member will:

- ✓ *Respond promptly. Phone calls and emails will be returned by the end of the day or no later than within 24 hours. If a response cannot be provided in the allotted time, the customer will be notified and given an estimated time of response.*
- ✓ *Treat all internal and external customers with respect and dignity.*
- ✓ *Be courteous and friendly during all customer interactions.*
- ✓ *Be responsible for creating an inviting, family-friendly environment.*
- ✓ *Ensure that information provided to customers is accurate and consistent.*
- ✓ *Utilize active listening techniques in all customer interactions.*
- ✓ *Personally assume the responsibility of assisting or directing customers to the appropriate person or department.*
- ✓ *Contact a supervisor for support if the staff member notices that the customer speaks a language other than English.*
- ✓ *Contact a supervisor for support if a conversation did not go well and/or if the customer was unhappy at the end of the call.*

****Customers are students, parents, staff, colleagues and community members. Responses to telemarketers and salespeople are left to the discretion of the employee.**



Where to Get Assistance

Employees may contact any of the following individuals or offices for guidance regarding District telephones:

- Your supervisor, principal, or director
- Office of Human Resources: 268-6010
- Department of Instructional Technology: 268-6068
- Office of the Superintendent: 268-6001

Where to Get More Info

* www.wikihow.com/Handle-an-Irate-Customer-on-the-Phone

January, 2018

1100 4th St. S.
Great Falls, MT 59405
Phone: 406-268-6001



HOW TO BE A PHONE PRO



The new GFPS phone system provides the opportunity to communicate effectively and efficiently with parents, staff and community members...
OUR CUSTOMERS.

In order to fulfill our obligation to **WORLD CLASS CUSTOMER SERVICE**, it's critical that **EVERY** phone interaction is professional, courteous and positive.

This brochure contains some key points to follow when conducting professional telephone interactions that reflect the brand and culture of Great Falls Public Schools.

INFORMATION FOR



EMPLOYEES

GREAT FALLS PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Office of the Superintendent
Tammy L. Lacey

VOICEMAIL GREETING

BASIC PROTOCOL (Mandatory):

“Hello! You have reached the voicemail of [your name], [your job title]. I’m sorry that I am unable to take your call at this time. Please leave your name, telephone number, and a brief message, and I’ll get back to you as soon as possible.”

The name and number must match the GFPS directory.

OUT OF OFFICE PROTOCOL:

“Hello! You have reached the voicemail of [your name], [your job title]. I will be unavailable beginning on [date] and will be returning on [date]. Please leave your name, telephone number, and a brief message, and I’ll get back to you as soon as I return. If this is an emergency or you need to speak with someone before I return, please contact [name of colleague/supervisor], [their job title], at [their phone number].”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Return phone calls as soon as you can.* The expectation is ASAP or no later than within 24 hours.
- *Sound upbeat in your message.* When recording, be sure to say your message with a smile on your face. Grumpy and abrupt greetings are not appropriate. Ride for the brand with a happy-sounding voicemail message.
- *Speak clearly & articulately* with proper grammar.
- *Avoid background noise* and distracting sounds such as gum chewing.
- Practice your message so it sounds *friendly, natural and welcoming.*

PERSONAL CALLS

District phones are intended to be used for educational or work-related purposes only. Use for informal or personal purposes is permissible within reasonable limits. All voicemail and phone records are considered District records.

Personal phone calls should be made on landlines or cell phones only during breaks and lunch. Texting should also only be done when on break or at lunch. Cell phones should be in quiet mode at all times.

RECEIVING A CALL

BASIC PROTOCOL (Mandatory):

“Thank you for calling. This is [your name], [your job title] at [your location]. How can I help you?”

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

- *Answer the phone as promptly as you can.*
- *Use a happy, friendly and positive tone.* Projecting an enthusiastic, natural, and attentive tone can help the caller feel comfortable. Answer the phone with a smile. It helps.
- *Use clear enunciation and speak clearly.* Use simple words and phrases. Don’t use overly complex vocabulary or jargon.
- *Use professional language.* Avoid slang and filler words. Saying things like “dude,” “yeah,” and “um” will detract from the quality of the interaction, making constructive problem solving harder to attain. Never swear.
- *Do not chew gum or eat* while on the phone.
- *Use their name.* As soon as you receive the caller’s name, use it throughout the conversation.
- *Be sincere.* Answer the caller’s questions and conduct the conversation with sincerity and positivity.
- *Leave the caller satisfied.* At the end of the call:
 - * Summarize what was discussed.
 - * Ask the caller if there is anything else you can help them with.
 - * Answer any final questions to ensure complete comprehension and satisfaction.
 - * Provide any information that the customer might need in the future. For call backs, share optimal contact times and whom he or she should call.
- *Finish the call in a friendly manner.* Say, “Have a nice day” or, “It was nice talking with you”. This will let the customer know that you happily helped them and that you would be willing to aid them again in the future.

Avoid making or taking phone calls in the presence of students.

LEAVING A MESSAGE

More than 50% of phone calls go to voicemail. You should be prepared to leave a concise voicemail message that states your purpose and doesn’t waste anyone’s time. Here’s how:

- *Do a mini-rehearsal* before you pick up the phone. Narrow down the purpose of the call in one or two sentences. No one likes to listen to a rambling incoherent message.
- *Introduce yourself.* Begin every voicemail message this way so the recipient knows who is calling right away. It should include your full name and other identifiers. Example: "This is Jane Doe, 5th grade teacher from X Elementary, calling for Suzy Jones."
- *Speak slowly and clearly* so the person receiving the message can hear every word. Speak directly into the mouthpiece. Don’t hold the phone between your cheek and shoulder.
- *Keep it short.* Leave a short summary of the reason for your call and close with a request for a call back. When calling parents, be specific enough to alleviate unnecessary worry or anxiety.
- *End it professionally.* Slowly leave a callback number and repeat it twice so the person can jot it down. Say something pleasant like, “I look forward to talking to you soon.”
- *Follow up.* Set a reminder to call them back if you don’t hear from them in a reasonable timeframe.

ANGRY PHONE CALLS

- Do not react. Keep calm.
- Allow venting. Let the angry customer talk. Do not interrupt.
- Use a level voice. Do not use sarcasm.
- Be sympathetic & apologize when appropriate.
- Offer to try to fix the problem (if possible).
- Ask questions to calm the customer down.
- Stop the customer if they become directly abusive toward you.
- Do not hang up mid-call on a customer.
- Thank them for bringing the issue to your attention.

*See back panel for more information.