



## Choice School Policy Manual

### COMMUNICATION POLICY S-10

#### Policy Statement

Choice School encourages ongoing communication between the School and home. The school welcomes parents and students to share information expectations and inquiries. The school remains committed to make every effort to keep parents well informed and to make them feel welcomed in the Choice School community.

**The following are strategies and tools in place to facilitate open communication and information sharing.**

#### School's Communication with Parents/Students:

1. The **School Newsletter** is published weekly and is e-mailed to parents. Parents are urged to read the newsletter as it is a major information/communication tool for the school. The Newsletters are also posted on the Choice School website.
2. The **School Website** is the property of Choice School. The website consists of an external site and a Parent Portal accessed by a password provided to parents. The website serves three purposes:
  - a. External communication and general information about the School.
  - b. As an internal (protected) communication with families and staff.
  - c. As an internal (protected) communication from the Parent Advisory Committee (PAC)

Posting on the site is managed by the Principal and no items may be posted without his or her approval.

#### 3. General Parent Meetings

The Choice School Constitution stipulates that an Annual General Meeting of the School be held once a year and not more than 15 months after the last preceding meeting. Notice of a general meeting will specify the place, the day and the hour of meeting. The purpose of this meeting is primarily to hear the annual report of the Board of Directors and to have elections for board members. The Principal also gives a report on the school at this meeting. This meeting is also an opportunity for parents to raise general concerns and to voice opinions on issues of the school.

In addition to the General Parent Meeting, the school may find it appropriate to host other meetings which are designed to give information on matters of curriculum, school program or to provide information on matters relating to “giftedness.”



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4. **School Assemblies** are an important way to support our sense of community. They are a way of celebrating successes, creating school spirit and discussing issues as they arise. Parents are always invited to and welcomed at assemblies.

### **Teachers' Communication with Parents/Students:**

At Choice School we employ multiple methods of communication between staff and parents to share the many excellent learning opportunities provided in our classrooms. It remains extremely important to life at Choice School that staff communicate regularly with the parents. Teachers are the primary source of information concerning students' progress. Neither parents nor students like to be surprised with respect to the student's learning. Parents always appreciate, and expect, teachers to share information about successes or concerns.

Teachers are expected to retain regular contact with each parent in their class on a formal and an informal basis. It is strongly advised that a record of meetings and phone calls be maintained. Increasingly, email is used to facilitate communication between home and school. It is essential that email be understood to be confidential.

### Scheduled Formal Parent Teacher Meetings

The first meeting between parents and their child's classroom teacher is scheduled early in the first term. The purpose of this meeting is to establish and agree upon the goals which comprise the student's Individual Education Plan (IEP). Based on information gathered at this meeting, teachers draft an IEP which is sent to parents for their perusal and feedback.

The entire educational program of the school, including the reporting and assessment system, are tied to the IEP and it is therefore critical that the initial meeting develop a clear understanding of the child's needs and the desirable goals for learning for the current year.

### *Progress Reports*

Choice School regards reporting to parents as a critical function. Three times a year a written report is sent home to parents that reflects progress against standards for performance in the BC Curriculum. In the case of students at Choice, these standards are further specified and adapted to the student's special needs as articulated in the IEP document.

### First Term

A meeting with parents is offered in conjunction with the close of the first term and the first progress report. Parents are invited to schedule a meeting time with the classroom teacher and/or any specialists working with the student to discuss student progress.

### Second Term

At the close of the second term, in conjunction with the written report, parents are invited to participate in a 'student-led conference' concerning their progress in the term. In a student-led

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conference, the student takes responsibility for explaining his or her learning goals and reflecting on that learning and progress during the first two terms of the school year. In preparing for the conference, students have revisited their personal learning goals and selected individual work samples to share in their portfolio as evidence of their progress towards these goals. They will be asking their parents to assist them with setting goals for the final term.

### Third and Final Term

This progress report summarizes student progress for the year and notes the grade/learning assignment for the following year.

Progress Reports must be signed by the parent and returned to the school as soon as possible. A copy of the student's progress report is retained in the student's educational file at the school. Again, parents are encouraged to request a meeting with their child's teacher(s) to further understand their child's progress.

### **School's Communication with Teachers:**

#### Staff Handbook

The Staff Handbook provides information for teachers including the school policies, timetables, calendar of school events for the year, information on school discipline, and expectations for teachers, etc. The Handbook is provided to teachers before the beginning of the academic year.

#### School Policy Manual

This Policy Manual has been approved by the Board of Choice School and contains information for teachers on all policy matters regarding the running of the school. Teachers must familiarize themselves with this manual, especially the areas dealing with student safety, reporting child abuse, earthquake and fire drills, transportation, etc.

#### Staff Meetings

Staff meetings are usually held once a month. These meetings serve as a basis for on-going planning for events and programs and to make collaborative decisions regarding the operation of the school.

#### School-based Team Meetings

These meetings are scheduled monthly or when the need arises. Their purpose is to focus on individual needs of students. Teachers bring student information forward to the meeting(s) to collaboratively problem solve learning issues and seek innovations to respond to emerging needs.

#### Individual meetings with Teacher and Principal

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Teachers are encouraged to meet with the Principal to discuss any particular problem or issue or seek advice.

### **General Communication with Choice School Community:**

All employees are expected to communicate with the Choice School community (parents, students, teachers, volunteers ...), prospective parents and the general public in a friendly and professional manner. Polite, courteous and clear communication is required at all times. The office staff are often the first and the most frequent point of contact when answering telephone calls/e-mails/letters or with visitors to the school and have an important role to play in creating an open and welcoming environment.

We want our parents and visitors to have a favourable impression of our school. An efficient, dependable and knowledgeable demeanor by the professional staff promotes the school's image as an education institution worthy of a prospective parent's consideration.