

I-6: Respectfully inform, involve and invest students' influencers

Share Good News

Keep families up-to-date on student academic and behavioral progress. Positive progress reports can support the idea that students have the ability to succeed and will do so if they work hard enough. As soon as students show any sign of improvement, be sure to inform parents (so they can praise their child and provide essential positive reinforcement to perpetuate the cycle). Too often students and parents are wary of a note or call from the teacher. Sending home words of praise and encouragement can change this perception and improve communication with families.

<p>Proactively share positive news</p>	<p>Don't just reach out to parents when there's a problem. Call/email/send a note home to inform parents when students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • show improvement (see below) • show personal growth or character development • do quality work • do/say something kind • prove especially helpful in class • say something appreciative/loving about their families (positive reinforcement for parents!) • express an interest or curiosity in academic work
<p>Acknowledge and celebrate improvement as well as achievement</p>	<p>Create systems and structures that enable you to regularly report relative growth to families. Families need to know when their children are working hard and showing improvement even they are still behind where they "should" be. Thus, notifications (calls, emails, notes, certificates etc.) can praise students for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student improvement of 15% or more over a prior quiz or unit score (or some other threshold improvement). You can create standardized forms to communicate this, but be sure to personalize some aspect of the notice (by filling in the students' name and exact rate of improvement, for example). • A personal best (for example, the first time a student scores higher than 70%). • Determination and commitment (for example, tell families how proud you are of Roberto for coming to your after-school tutoring session for three weeks in a row, or for handing in every one of the last five homework assignments). • Completing their first full week without having any time outs (or "yellow" traffic behavior warnings, etc.). • Working particularly well with his/her group members (especially if this is sometimes difficult for the student). • Notable achievement (for example, being the only student in the class to answer a particularly challenging question correctly) or for making a particularly valuable or insightful contribution to a class discussion. <p>Publicly acknowledge students' relative progress in class newsletters or in displays ("Congratulations to the following four students for all improving more than 20% over last week's quiz!"). Even things that might seem minor to you will probably mean a lot to families (who, after all, spend fewer awake hours with their child than you do). A positive phone call, note or email acknowledging a student's improved work or continued effort can be the highlight of a parents' week and is a powerful way for you to communicate to your student that you notice and value the effort that he/she is making. Keep in mind that you can encourage parents as well to thank them, with notes, emails, calls, certificates, public acknowledgement, etc. for the impact they are having in your classroom.</p>