



# COMMUNICATION STANDARDS

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## **Intro**

Communication is the basis of our relationship with God and each other. At St. James we honor others by respecting that they are also created by God to serve in His kingdom. Consequently, our process of communication is as important with them as it is with God himself.

It can be easy to send your message and forget about it or receive one and not respond. However, at St. James we believe we can be most effective when we define communication as a two-way process. An open dialogue with parents, staff, faculty, administration and the community is important in getting our message across. Please take the time to familiarize yourself with the following standards.

## **General Communication**

Don't keep the exciting activities and milestones in your classroom to yourself. Share events, field trips, class projects, speakers and news with the rest of the community. It's important that the other students and parents see what each class is doing. Email this information to Kate Donovan. When sending information, include a description, dates, times and contact information. Calendar information should also be emailed to Kate.

## **Formatting**

When sending information to other members of the staff or posting information on a fellowshipNet Bulletin Board, please use Times New Roman in 12pt font. The recipient shouldn't have to reformat your letter or email in order to read it.

## **Written Communication**

Written word is one of the main ways we communicate with parents, students and the St. James community. Therefore, it is essential that you take care to choose your words carefully and construct your message so that it informs all parties involved. Ask yourself, "What is my purpose for sending this message?"

Individual contact with a person does not require pre-approval. If it is part of a thread of conversation it should be saved until the issue or purpose is clearly over. If it involves an education or legal issue the communication should be copied to the appropriate supervisor.

Newsletters, notices, etc. require pre-approval for content and presentation. Please allow appropriate time for review.

Every communication piece must contain the St. James logo. However, the logo may not be used on materials with other organization logos if St. James does not approve the partnership or event.

Strive for professionalism and quality in your print materials.

Every communication piece must contain a link to the website.

Every communication piece must contain contact information.

Verify dates and times before publishing.

Proof Read! We follow the Associated Press guidelines.

## **Email**

Email can be effective in communicating with parents and other members of the faculty and staff and is encouraged.

The only email address that is to be used in the context of St. James is the one given to you by administration. This includes staff/faculty communications as well as communication with parents.

Email must be checked daily. You don't want to miss important messages from administration or parents. Faculty must use Mail. This is the email client supported by St. James. If you want to use a different email client, you need approval. An ill functioning email is not an excuse for not responding to messages. Please contact the office if you are having trouble.

We have a standard signature that includes important contact information and our mission statement. This will be posted on a bulletin board and can be copied and pasted into your email signature.

Please remember that once something is sent through email, you can't take it back.

## **fellowshipNet**

fellowshipNet bulletin boards are a great tool for posting snack schedules, student of the week, spelling lists, etc.

Each class group should have a class picture as the group "logo."

Teachers are responsible for creating three sub-groups for their class: Parents, Students and Email. The parent and student list should be published. See Kate Donovan or Catherine Sitz if you need help.

## Communication with Parents

**Newsletters:** eTempo will be sent out to the community each week and will contain community wide information. If you have something you'd like included please email it to Kate Donovan (and copy Joy Mullaney) by Thursday at noon for consideration.

Links to classroom newsletters will be included in the left hand column of eTempo each week. This newsletter should include class specific information. The categories are as follows: Classroom News (field trip reminders, parties, ect.), Religion, Language Arts (K-Middle School), Math (K- Middle School), Social Studies/Science (First – Middle School), and Themes/Units (preschool). Please send your Word document (12pt Times New Roman) to Joy each week by Thursday noon.

**Social Networking:** Marty is on Twitter! This year we're introducing Marty Tweets. Many parents are interested in what's going on during the school day, so we're answering the Twitter question, "What are you doing?" through daily updates. Teachers will have the opportunity to share tidbits each day.

**Handouts:** Weekly paper communication with parents is not encouraged. However, there are times when handouts are the only way to get the message to its recipient. Each student will receive a plastic zip envelope to be sent home daily for information from administration. It will be the parent's responsibility to check the envelope each day. This is how a seasonal magazine, permission slips, invitations to St. James events, etc. will be sent home. *This is not the place for homework assignments or student projects.*

## Internal Communications

Faculty and staff will receive an e-newsletter, Plumb Line, to keep everyone informed. It's your responsibility as an employee of St. James to read this newsletter as well as eTempo and *Maverick*.

## Technology

### Social Networking Website and Blogs

Please remember that your page is an extension of our organization. What you post or is posted about you by someone else is a reflection of St. James and your professionalism. Inappropriate pictures and comments must be taken down.

Inappropriate content includes, but is not limited to:

- Drinking/Drunk pictures, comments, groups
- Drug references
- Pictures, comments, groups that refer to anything sexual in nature
- Gossip about members of the community
- Complaints/ill words about St. James or another member of faculty/staff
- Anything that does not reflect the mission of St. James

Members of the faculty and staff may not use social networking sites during work or office hours.

Members of the faculty and staff may not be "friends" with St. James families without approval.

Social networking sites are not a medium for official school communication. If you'd like to communicate electronically, please use your St. James email.

If you have to question if an action, group membership, photo etc. is appropriate, it probably isn't and should be avoided.

**Cell phones and Email** may not be used during the school day unless it's your lunch or planning period. Please let parents know if they need to contact you or have an emergency to call the office.

## **Gossip**

As faculty and staff, you will hear things that are not to be repeated. Gossiping is sinful and detrimental to our organization. Gossip is defined as, "Idle talk or rumor, especially about the personal or private affairs of others." Just because something you hear may be true, does not mean it should be repeated.

If you're upset about something you've heard or something that has happened, please see Joy Mullaney or Pastor Donovan. They are happy to listen to you and work through the situation. It is best to make an appointment with them or ask if they have time to sit down in an office or conference room. Airing your grievances in the hallways, classrooms or at the reception desk is inappropriate and not professional. Complaining/talking to parents is also not acceptable.

*Communication standards and policies are subject to change as issues arise and technology evolves.*