Resources for Partnering

COMMUNICATION WHEN PARTNERING AT A DISTANCE
ROUTINES FOR FAMILIES
ROUTINES FOR SCHOOL STAFF
TECHNOLOGY RESOURCES AND ONLINE PLATFORMS
OTHER IDEAS AND ACTIVITIES

COMMUNICATION WHEN PARTNERING AT A DISTANCE

1. **Send updates to families and receive communications through multiple channels.** Determine what channels are the best with the family. Check those channels at set times in the day. Research indicates sending information out daily or two times a week can be effective. Using clear, concise, and descriptive subject lines is also helpful (i.e., "Resources for Mental Health Services," rather than, "March 3 Message to Parents").

Families may be requesting information on the following:
* Food services and access to food
* Mental health services
* Community resources and programs
* School schedules and content
* Extracurricular opportunities
* School and staff contacts
* How to connect with other families
* How to get access to or device support for connectivity
* How to get a homework tutor or learning support
* Support for special education and special learning needs

2. **Keep centralized websites and platforms up-to-date and include archives.** Include sections such as the following:
* Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
* Updates
* Contacts

Tips for creating a welcoming website that invites partnership:
* Incorporate two-way communication methods, such as opportunities for families to submit questions or live chat during certain hours.

3. **Build two-way communication in classroom and online platforms.** In addition to the tips above for centralized websites, these may also prove helpful:
* *Provide opportunities for families to share pictures of what they did each day and to share lessons learned with other parents.
* *Provide opportunities to share feedback about how things are going and areas where support or further guidance would be helpful.

4. **Use technology to amplify and enhance relationships.** Be aware that many families still struggle with internet access. Effective communication may require phone calls and creative use of other opportunities. For example, teachers or staff may be able to send information with food deliveries. One-on-one communication is the best avenue for personalizing support and building relationships, especially for families preparing for significant transitions, such as graduation or starting kindergarten.

ROUTINES FOR FAMILIES:

The following questions or prompts may help families create and carry out routines that work for them:

- How many hours do you think your child should focus on their schoolwork?
- What time of day does your student focus best?
- What time of day would work best for a daily check-in with your child? With family?
- What other routines help your children be their best selves (e.g., bedtime, breaks, and movement)?
- What physical space is available for your child to do schoolwork? (An ideal space is quiet but not isolated.)
- What way do you want to be connected to your school's teacher (e.g., Schoology, ClassDojo, or other technology platform; phone calls)?
- What do you want to know about how students are getting their information, learning activities, and assignments?
- How do you help your student when they are struggling? What tools would be helpful to support your student and help them problem solve?
- Which of these (or other) physical activities might be helpful to your child?
  - walk around the neighborhood
  - exercise video
  - yoga and exercises downloaded onto devices
  - doing physical chores
  - dancing
  - other

- Which of these outlets and activities help reduce your child's stress?
  - talking to you
  - talking to other family members
  - talking to a school counselor
  - talking to friends
  - grounding visualizations
  - listening to music
  - singing
  - drumming
  - crafts, such as beading or carving
  - games
  - other
- Do you know how much time your child is spending online? Does this exceed seven hours a day?
- How much time do you think your child should spend studying?
- How much time is ok for watching or surfing activities?
- How much time should be reserved for connecting with peers?

SOME IDEAS TO INCORPORATE INTO THE DAY:

- Read for fun. Have your children read to each other or to a family member, and ask questions about the story. There are many online recordings that can be downloaded and used offline.
- Family projects. What are your children interested in? Explore this topic online, in person, or through stories.
- Social time. Try social distance meet-ups, Facebook Chat, or other platforms.
- Family time. Prepare a meal, play a game, take a walk, or work on an art project together. Family time is reassuring to students of all ages.
- Chores and contribution. Most children can help with chores or can think of way to provide a kind act for someone else. What are some things you could do?
- Exercise. This is important for adults as well as students. Ideas include a short walk, dancing, or a video workout.
- Sleep. Getting sleep is more important now than ever. To help get good sleep, make sure all screens are turned off two hours prior to bedtime. Have set times for bed and waking up, even if these times differ from your normal routines. Try to be consistent.
- Art/coloring or quiet time. Coloring can be calming for students and adults. Other creative activities include drawing, beading, carving, or crafting.

SHARE LOCAL, REGIONAL, STATE, AND NATIONAL RESOURCES FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND PARENTING SUPPORT AND COVID-19 RESOURCES:

Stay up-to-date on resources available in state or nationally:
https://aasb.org/resources-for-parents-and-educators-with-students-at-home/

Alaska mental health and at-home support resources:

https://www.uaa.alaska.edu/academics/college-of-arts-and-sciences/departments/psychology/psychological-services-center/

https://www.stonesoupgroup.org/resources-for-families/

or national resources:
https://childmind.org/coping-during-covid-19-resources-for-parents/

Technology resources for Covid-19:

One-on-one conversations and group discussions
- Technology: Zoom, Skype, Facebook Chat, Google Meet, GoToMeeting.
- Capabilities: Some of these platforms have breakout rooms, screen sharing, and chat capabilities.

For school or class coordination
- Technology: Class Dojo, Schoology, Remind, Seesaw
- Capabilities: These range from integrated systems to ways to send text messages, videos, photos, class notes, etc.

Sites and coursework
- Technology: Google sites, Google Classroom, Class Dojo, Schoology, Wakelet, and Slack.
- Capabilities: Most include sharing documents, videos and templates, uploading and commenting on work, and texting and chatting.

Group work, planning, and storyboarding
- Technology: Shared Google Documents, Wakelet, Padlet, Jamboard
- Capabilities: These platforms generally enable shared content creation and editing.

Sharing live lessons and videos
- Technology: Facebook Live, Zoom meetings, YouTube, Vimeo, etc.
- Capabilities: Most of these platforms allow live sharing as well as recording for future use.

Organizing support services
- Technology: Meal train, Helping Hands, SignUp Genius
- Capabilities: Organizing volunteers, scheduling slots, and soliciting help.

Creating Digital Student Portfolios:
Below are some resources to share student learning with families. These are platforms that push content out rather than require families to check information. Here are three articles about the impact of digital portfolios for students and families:
- https://www.gettingsmart.com/2017/08/engaging-parents-to-engage-learners-digital-portfolios-can-make-it-happen/
- https://www.gettingsmart.com/2016/01/10-tools-to-create-online-student-portfolios/
- https://www.gettingsmart.com/2017/05/3-lessons-learned-with-digital-portfolios/

For families who do not have internet access, there are many creative ways to download recordings and content onto school-distributed devices. These may include activities, videos, and Zoom meeting recordings.