

Education - communication with families



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Communication with Families In the first paragraph of the speech, the teacher does demonstrate some sensitivity to her audience. First of all, she thanks them for coming to Back-to-School Night. Working evenings is an important part of being a teacher. We grade papers and make lessons plans, and sometimes come back to school for meetings - but hardly anyone enjoys leaving their home after dinner to come back to work. Instead of feeling inconvenienced by having to attend the meeting, the teacher demonstrates that the parents' time is also valuable, and that the school is grateful to have their participation in the event. Also, the teacher has provided translators for parents whose first language is not English. Since " translators" is plural, it is possible the teacher arranged for translators of more than a single language to be present at the meeting. Also, the teacher announces a willingness to stay late one day a week until 8: 00 PM.

Showing sensitivity to parents provides instant benefits. Thanking attendees for their presence is a basic element in many addresses, because it focuses attention on the audience and the effort they made to get to the meeting. As Mendoza (2003) notes, geographic distances can be difficult for some parents to cross so they can get to school events. By providing translators, the teacher is indicating an understanding that language barriers might exist and need to be addressed. This action says, " Those of you who can't speak English deserve to know this, too." The teacher's willingness to stay late once a week would positively affect parents who could not make it to the school during regular school hours. Mendoza (2003) cites a study that showed how the structure of the school day limited information exchange to transition periods. A meeting at 6: 00 PM would be more peaceful and productive for both parties than a hurried exchange in the parking circle at <https://assignbuster.com/education-communication-with-families/>

3: 00 PM.

While the speaker clearly has good intentions, the speech is not without examples of insensitivity. The teacher states, " E-mail is one of the best ways for us to communicate!" This is only true for homes with Internet access, though. Students in households with low incomes might not have such access. Also, while the teacher has not peppered the speech with jargon, it is still not free from confusing vocabulary such as " state education office," " national standards," and " country reports," though she does make an attempt to explain her " disclosure document" (there has got to be a friendlier name for that!).

Such insensitivity can immediately turn parents off. They may feel badly if they have no home computer - it may seem like, without one, their children are starting off behind the others. The statement makes it seem like a home computer is standard, and something could be wrong with your home if you do not have one. Using confusing vocabulary tells parents the teacher is a poor communicator and incapable of knowing the needs of other language speakers (Mendoza, 2003).

The teacher could have easily found other ways to show sensitivity. For instance, at no point did the teacher ask parents what they needed to promote their children's success in the upcoming school year. Also, the teacher could have offered specific ways for parents to be involved. Parents could be made aware of opportunities to tutor, guest speak, act as translators, or which school clubs needed advisors. Mondoza (2003) notes a study wherein Hispanic parents grew increasingly frustrated over their school's inability to provide this information.

The role of parents in a child's education is paramount to that student's

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success. No one knows more about a child's strengths, abilities, history, and potential than parents. As a teacher, I will facilitate parental input in my classes by finding ways to stay after school for parents who can not come to school during regular hours (Mendoza, 2003), and to keep my communications with parents free of jargon, filled with easy-to-understand vocabulary, and at a suitable reading level (Mendoza, 2003).

Reference

Mendoza, J. (2003). Communicating with parents. Clearinghouse on early education and parenting. University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Retrieved July 23, 2008, from <http://ceep.crc.uiuc.edu/eecearchive/digests/2003/mendoza03.html>