

Sycamore Springs Middle School Communications Plan

Mission: We ensure our learners grow their unique talents through future-ready experiences that inspire collaboration, creativity, critical thinking, resilience and compassion. We foster an enduring intellectual curiosity that empowers learners to understand and positively impact their local and global communities.

Vision: Inspiring innovation through exploration and discovery.

Beliefs:

- We believe creative autonomy intrinsically motivates children to learn from failure, to build on success, and to discover their own unique talents and passions.
- We believe guiding and fostering critical thinking skills for all learners allows them to positively contribute to society and adapt to their ever-changing environments.
- We believe it is the collective responsibility of the staff, the student, the family and the community to create a safe, compassionate and diverse environment in order to cultivate, celebrate and foster the strengths and differences of each learner.

Commitments:

- We are committed to providing authentic future-ready and purposeful, life-worthy learning experiences.
- We are committed to building genuine relationships that support a diverse community of acceptance, respect, integrity, accountability, kindness and compassion.
- We are committed to entrusting the staff, the family, and the community as collaborators and innovators to support students on their path towards personal excellence.
- We are committed to modeling life-long learning by valuing and encouraging unique independent thinking, risk-taking, creativity and determination.

Communications at Sycamore Springs Middle School

Our goal is to be excellent communicators with all of our stakeholders. This includes providing excellent customer service to benefit all our students and their families. Staff members are required to return phone calls or emails within 48 hours, however, we will strive to respond within 24 hours. Staff are not required to return emails or phone calls on the weekend, so please keep this in mind.

Phone Calls: When calling a staff member, please leave your first and last name, the name of the student, best phone number to reach you, and a brief message. Phone calls are not sent through to teachers during instructional time, so please consider this when deciding whether to call or email a staff member.

Email: Staff email addresses can be found on the SSMS website. Email communication is an excellent way to convey and exchange information. Many teachers prefer communicating via email because it allows the flexibility to respond when they are not working directly with students. Email may not be the best way to resolve a concern. A face-to-face meeting or phone call may be a better option. If you have a concern, please follow the SSMS Trail to Resolution.

Conference: Parents may schedule a parent/teacher conference directly with the teacher, or the grade level counselor can coordinate a conference with the parent and multiple teachers.

When I have a concern, whom do I contact?

Always start with the person closest to the concern. For example, if your child comes home and says “My Coach punished me by making me do 2,000 push ups!” then you would contact the coach directly with your concern. In this case, the parent should reach out to the coach to resolve the concern. If the parent is not satisfied at this point, they would then go to the next level using the ***Trail to Resolution***. Sometimes emotions get the best of us and we want to go directly to the highest person in charge. Please remember that the person closest to the concern is often more familiar with the situation and is usually best suited to help find a resolution. As a reference, please see the SSMS Trail to Resolution.

I'd like to meet with an administrator

If you have followed the trail to resolution and would like to meet with an administrator, please call the school to make an appointment. Administrators will be happy to meet with you, however, they may not be available if you come to the campus without an appointment. Administrators' first responsibility is safety, which involves supervision before school, during passing periods, during lunch, at the end of the school day, and at campus events. Also, our administrators are instructional leaders who spend significant time in the classroom supporting instruction. For appointments with Ms. McCollum or Mr. Haase please contact Jennifer Houssian at 512-858- 3601. For appointments with Mr. Diehl, please contact Desiree Marshall at 512-858-3602.

Website

Our website includes valuable information that is updated regularly. Parents have access to teacher email addresses and teacher websites here. Also, the website includes information about policies as well as a calendar showing upcoming events. The daily announcements are also available on our website.

SSMS Updates

The Principal sends out a Weekly Update with information about upcoming events and news for Sycamore Springs Middle School. Parents receive these updates through email and they are also available on the SSMS website and Family Access.