



COMMUNICATION THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

As teachers, we know that communication with students and their families is crucial to their success in school, so we need to communicate as often as possible, in accordance to the district's policies. However, it can be difficult to communicate with parents that you might not see every day or with students whose heads are always looking down toward their phones. In the digital era in which we live, communication is simpler and easier than ever before, and it can actually encourage all students to participate in discussions during class because it is not as intimidating. Communicating in any way we can, whether through calling, emailing, or even handwritten notes, is beneficial to our students and their families. In the classroom, students can feel empowered to lead research and discussions utilizing the technology they have been given. While nothing beats face-to-face communication, there are several apps that can help us more effectively communicate with our students and their families.

Great Parent Communication Tools:

Class Dojo: Free communication app for students, parents, and teachers.

Edmodo: Similar to Facebook, but used for classroom announcements, reminders, and even assignments.

Remind: A free platform that allows teachers to text parents individually or in groups. Parents cannot reply to the text and do not see your real number. Instead, they must call or email.

Bloomz: A free communication app that keeps all parent communication organized, including text messages, videos, reminders, and calendar dates.

Seesaw: A free/paid platform which allows each student to create a portfolio of hard copy and digital work that can be shared with family and friends. It also allows teachers to communicate with parents and maintain a class blog.



Student Communication Tools:

Communication skills are extremely important in every aspect of our students' lives. Therefore, we need to do our part to ensure that our students are able to effectively communicate with each person they meet. Several neat apps are available for a variety of ages to help our students develop these invaluable communication skills that they will use for the rest of their lives:

Paper Telephone: A free iOS app for younger students that encourages students to communicate with each other in small groups.

Class Pager: Free for classes of up to 25 students, students can answer poll questions and text their questions to the teacher. Their answers are saved for easy progress monitoring.

Study Blue: A free collaborative study app/website where students can make and share study materials.

Sources:

"The Tech Edvocate's List of 11 School Communication Apps, Tools & Resources." Matthew Lynch, *The Tech Edvocate*, 24 July 2018, <http://www.thetechedvocate.org/tech-edvocates-list-11-school-communication-apps-tools-resources/>

Find more E-tips at <https://goo.gl/qPn7bN>.