



Merit Academy Parent Communication Policy

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define the expectations and procedures for communication between parents and teachers or staff members at Merit Academy.

Communication Philosophy

Positive and pro-active communication is critical to maintain a positive working relationship between parents and staff members, which is in the best interest of every student. Parents will always be asked to give a staff member an opportunity to work through a concern before the concern is escalated to their supervisor.

Expectations for Communication

All communication between a Merit Academy parent and a Merit Academy staff member should be civil, respectful and without bias. If the school receives a communication (in person or electronically) that the administration deems inappropriate and/or threatening, the school reserves the right to request a redirected communication or to restrict communications accordingly (this may include limiting physical and/or electronic access to school staff).

General School Questions

For general questions send an email to info@merit.academy. Parents may expect a response within two business days.

Conflict Resolution Process

In the event of a conflict with a teacher or a school staff member or if a parent has questions or concerns pertaining to classroom practices, academic programs or their student, the parent should:

- 1) Discuss with the teacher or staff member (if unsure which teacher to talk to, the parent should start with the student's homeroom teacher). The parent may not go to step 2 until a discussion has taken place.



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- 2) If the issue cannot be resolved at the teacher or staff level, the parent should next discuss the issue with the appropriate administrator, who may, if appropriate, mediate a discussion between the parties in conflict.
- 3) If the issue cannot be resolved by the appropriate administrator, then the parent should discuss the issue with the Dean of Students or his/her or designee.
- 4) If the issue cannot be resolved at the executive level, parents should bring the issue to the Merit Academy Board of Directors (BOD).

Policy Suggestions or New Program Ideas

For suggested changes, additions or policy-related complaints as well as ideas for new programs or policies:

- 1) Submit your input to the Director of Development (DOD) at gpekron@merit.academy. The DOD may decide to draft a policy change or new program proposal for the Board of Directors.
- 2) If the DOD does not feel a policy change is warranted, the parent may escalate the issue directly to the Board of Directors.
- 3) Prior to consideration, the BOD may request more information from the DOD or the parent, or refer to another advisory committee for further development and analysis. If so, the committee will investigate the feasibility and advisability of the recommendation and provide a report to the BOD in a timely manner.
- 4) The BOD will then vote on the recommendation.

Policy Questions

Submit your question to gpekron@merit.academy. You will be contacted within two business days with the answer to your question or a referral on where to find the answer.

Social Media

Merit Academy respects the right of every individual to express themselves on social media. Social media can provide a productive arena for all of us to communicate a variety of beliefs and points



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of view that help enhance our free society and communities. This applies to furthering Merit Academy's mission and beliefs as well. Unfortunately, some social media activity has replaced civil, direct person-to-person conversation geared toward problem-solving.

Given this, Merit Academy respectfully requests that anyone looking to express a major question or concern about a Merit Academy program, policy, or procedure first follow the communication protocol discussed above. Doing so provides Merit Academy a fair and reasonable opportunity to resolve the issue for you and your child.

In addition, the short form of social media can sometimes facilitate incomplete or inaccurate information about something Merit Academy has done or implemented. Sometimes, such limited information may cause a concern for those reading it.

Where this happens, Merit Academy also respectfully requests that any such concern be communicated to the appropriate administrator so that they may fairly and reasonably address it.

Merit Academy welcomes the robust conversation that social media facilitates. Used responsibly, it will help all of our staff and families to produce the best possible school environment for each of our students.

Exit Procedures

Should a Merit Academy family choose to leave the school for any reason, the following process must be followed in order for the school to strive for continual improvement and to learn from that family's experience:

- 1) Upon notification of disenrollment, the registrar will give the parent an exit interview form to complete. The parent will also be given the option to meet with the DOD and/or Dean of Schools.
- 2) The DOD and/or Dean of Schools will meet if requested, and will complete and file the exit interview form if returned.