



# President's Reflections

by Dennis Doughty



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## Call Me

“You don’t communicate very well!” was a comment made to me by a concerned parent not too long ago after a parent meeting. As the president of our schools, I took this charge very seriously because sixty to seventy percent of my day is spent attempting to communicate in some fashion or another. I do know that poor communication can be the undoing of any organization and I need to reach out and find ways to improve.

In the scenario that I mentioned above, I was able to get some clarification from the parent. What she meant to say was, “I don’t know how to express my frustration about an incident that happened at school because nothing happened after I reported it and no one followed up with me.” This takes on an entirely different tact, approach and focus as a parent and school system. While the initial contact is made, follow-up and reporting that follow-up can be disconcerting from both the parent and school perspective. In other words, “I get and understand the concern.”

Our school needs to provide important information to parents and disseminate that message in multiple ways; including our website, emails, regular mail, texts, twitter, Power School, Face book and other less conventional communication methods. It is our goal to fill the gaps where we have not gotten the message across effectively. It is our intention to make an even more concerted effort to get the important information to our parents.

I would like to share this reflection with you. Our administrators and teachers are professional and attempt to follow through with all parental concerns. Unfortunately, getting back to the parents about the action that has taken place regarding the concern doesn’t always take place. Too often, the issue has been addressed but the parent didn’t get informed of that action. In the case of discipline, school policy and federal regulations do not allow discussions with third parties regarding “what happened” to a student. None-the-less, the follow through does need to take place and we need to do a better job of it.

Lastly, parents have indicated that they don’t share concerns because they are afraid of repercussions for their children. We deal with many issues and many concerns throughout the year and would never target a student. But, I understand the concern that is expressed. I suggest parents who have an issue, a concern or suggestion take some time to reach out by email, phone or in person and contact the teacher, the principal or myself (in that order if possible). It is amazing how good you might feel by simply reaching out and making that call. If you want the conversation to be confidential, it will be. Just make that call. When in doubt, don’t hesitate to call me.

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