



Wendy Crocker-Roberge  
Assistant Superintendent for  
Schools & Leadership  
155 Merrimack Street  
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

LOWELL PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
Phone: (978) 674-2163  
E-mail: wcrocker-roberge@lowell.k12.ma.us

TO: Liam Skinner, Superintendent

FROM: Wendy Crocker-Roberge, Assistant Superintendent for Schools & Leadership

DATE: January 9, 2025

RE: *Response to Motion Regarding MS Two-Way Communication Discipline*

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The following report is in response to a motion by Elieen DelRossi:

***Request the superintendent to report on two-way communication at the middle school level when it comes to a student being disciplined at school. How is the parent notified? Phone call? Email? Talking Points?***

When student behavior issues arise in middle school, several different interventions and responses can happen depending on the nature of the behavior issue and the frequency and severity of the infraction. Student discipline infractions are often highly contextual and are not treated with a one-size-fits-all approach.

Schools have a variety of resources for communicating with parents/guardians when a student discipline issue warrants the outreach. These include:

- Phone calls (via school phones or Google Voice numbers; with translation services such as TalkingPoints or Lionbridge as needed)
- Emails
- Text Messages (using applications such as Google Voice, Remind, Class Dojo, Schoology, or Talking Points)
- Home Visits (for serious or repeated discipline issues when other outreach methods are not effective)
- Written Notification (i.e. school-issued detention slips, writing reflections for parent/guardian)

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acknowledgment, and legally required notification letters for in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or emergency removal)

School personnel often use multiple communication methods to ensure the information is accurately relayed to the parent/guardian, such as a short text or Class Dojo message prompting parents/guardians to check their voicemail/email or to call school staff at their earliest convenience to discuss a situation.

When a conduct referral to the administrative office is actioned and a consequence or other restorative practices are initiated, then written or verbal notice is provided to the parent/guardian using one of the methods outlined above.

It's important to note that throughout a given school day, a student may receive a redirection or intervention from a teacher or staff member that is meant to help them identify a behavior that is interfering with the learning process or the ability to maintain an orderly school environment and provide the student with the opportunity to reflect and make a correction to that behavior. These interventions typically include verbal redirection, a reflection prompt, or taking a few minutes in a break space to reset. They do not rise to the level of a formal conduct referral unless they are repeated or the student is unwilling or unable to engage in the low-level intervention strategy offered. In these situations, parent/guardian contact is initiated if the intervention is ineffective and the infraction is repeated, but not if the student responds appropriately to the intervention.

Two-way communication is promoted with families at every school and is considered essential for proficient practice as outlined in the educator and administrator evaluation rubrics. School personnel are expected to use a variety of strategies to communicate with parents/guardians and families to support optimal growth for students and a safe learning environment for all. It sometimes takes multiple methods to reach a parent/guardian and there are several methods and tools available. It is in the best interest of students for parents/guardians and families to engage willingly in open dialogue with school personnel about student learning and any barriers to learning that arise, including discipline issues, so that interventions are successful.