

Westbrook School Communication Policy

(Established September 2008 and Revised December 2009)

I. Communicating with Staff

Westbrook School practices the concept of extra-ordinary respect. This means respecting others, accepting individual differences and acting politely towards each other. We encourage this among staff and students.

We also expect parents to model this behaviour when communicating with staff and students. What this means is:

- ✓ Conversations are polite and positive and based on “assisting the child” with their learning.
- ✓ Conversations that take a negative tone – i.e., accusations, put-downs, shouting or rudeness **will not be tolerated**; all Westbrook staff has been instructed to end these conversations immediately and to bring the matter to the attention of the school’s administration.
- ✓ Conversations that parents feel have not addressed their concerns can be taken to the school’s administration provided the staff member has been spoken to first; Westbrook’s School Council, together with the school’s administration, has established a “Communicating with the School and Communicating with School Council Policy” which can be seen below
- ✓ Dropping in on teachers during class time may seem unobtrusive, but it can disrupt the routine of the class and the flow of the lesson. If you would like to discuss an issue or concern with your child’s teacher, **we ask that you arrange an appointment or make a request for them to call you.**
- ✓ After school may also seem like a good time to catch a teacher, but this is often important time for teacher meetings and preparation. Once again, **we ask that you book a formal meeting time** so that the teacher can devote the time needed to properly deal with your questions.

Please help us model our “extra-ordinary respect” concept by adhering to the items above.

II. Communicating with the School

A. How to deal with a concern or issue regarding your child or a classroom activity?

1. **First talk with the staff member involved** (932-5443). If you would like to talk with the staff member at the school, please make an appointment.
2. If no resolution can be reached, **then talk with the school principal** – Mr. G. McClure (932-5443) or gamclure@rockyview.ab.ca
3. If you still have not been able to reach a resolution, then you **have the option of speaking with the Director of Schools** – Mr. Dave Morris (945-4000) or dmorris@rockyview.ab.ca - or **the Associate Superintendent of Schools** - Mr. Murray Besenski (945-4000) or mbesenski@rockyview.ab.ca

B. How to deal with a concern or issue regarding programming or the operation of the school?

1. **First talk with the school principal** – Mr. G. McClure – (932-5443 or [gamclure@rockyview.ab.ca](mailto:gmcclure@rockyview.ab.ca))
2. If you still have not been able to reach a resolution, then you **have the option of speaking with the Director of Schools** – Mr. D. Morris (945-4000) or dmorris@rockyview.ab.ca - or **the Associate Superintendent of Schools** - Mr. M. Besenski (945-4000) or mbesenski@rockyview.ab.ca

III. Communicating with School Council

C. How to bring a suggestion to the Westbrook School Council?

1. We have a protocol to make suggestions to School Council and to have them put on the next council agenda. A suggestion form is available at the office.
2. You will be advised that your suggestion will be on the next School Council Agenda and encouraged to attend the meeting to speak to it
3. School Council Agendas will be made approximately two weeks in advance. The School Council Chair(s) and the Principal sit down together to review and formalize it. Items NOT on the agenda will not be discussed at Council

Please Note: It is **not the role** of the School Council Chair to deal with school related concerns from parents. School Council is an advisory body to the Principal. We strongly suggest that the above procedures in Sections A and B be followed when addressing concerns to the school. Suggestions to School Council can be done through the procedures set out in Section C and the form attached to this document.

IV. What Happens Should the Discussion Get Out Of Hand?

Teachers welcome and support a high level of cooperative parent-teacher interaction and recognize the legitimate rights of parents to participate in educational decisions for their children. The key here is to express concerns within appropriate channels. Although it is extremely rare, “acts of persistent parental criticism of or interference with school programs or teacher performance can be seen as a violation of the Alberta School Act”. Section 27 states that:

- “No person shall ...
- a) disturb or interrupt the proceeding of a school ...
 - b) loiter or trespass in a school building or on a property owned by a board” without prior permission.

Similarly, “parental threats or assaults [verbal or physical] upon a teacher are criminal offences and are governed by the Criminal Code of Canada”.