

Quick and Easy Ways to Connect with Students and their Parents

By Diane Mierzwik

Sample Congratulations Certificate

Congratulations

has received this certificate of merit for a job

well done in

presented on this ____ day of ____ in the year ____

by

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Sample Introduction Letter #1

Date

Dear Parents or Guardians,

Welcome to the new school year and my classroom. I am looking forward to a successful year with your child and want to assure you that I am prepared for a wonderful experience.

I hold a bachelor of arts in English from the University of California, Riverside where I also earned my teaching credential. I also have done post graduate work in Education Administration and English Composition. I have participated in many professional trainings most notably the Inland Empire Writing Project and as a Language Arts Consultant for California Language Arts Project. I have been teaching for over fifteen years.

My goals this year is to help your child build on the skills and knowledge attained last year and to extend those successes to future success. I will work diligently to be sure that all students in my classroom master the grade level standards. Student work will often have a reference to which standard the work is aimed at. If you are interested in a viewing the standards for this grade level, feel free to contact me or visit www.ca.edu/standards.

My classroom policies are very simple. Students have homework every night. If a child explains that he/she already finished the homework, the child should be reading for pleasure for at least twenty minutes. My classroom expectation for students is that every student does his/her best work. I am available for extra help before and after school to ensure that every child is successful. If your child is going to be absent for an extended amount of time, please contact me so we can prepare the child for his/her return to the classroom.

It is important to me that we work together to ensure your child's success. Please feel free to call me before or after school or by email. I will do my best to respond within twenty-four hours.

Sincerely,

Ms. Mierzwik

Email/phone number

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Sample Parent Survey K-2 Your Child as a Learner (K-2)

Name _____ Date _____
Grade _____ Class _____

Please indicate your observation of your child's learning behaviors in the following areas. Please provide explanations or examples where appropriate.

MY CHILD	yes/no	comments/examples
1. Enjoys "playing" with language - listens to - participates in - stories - poems and rhymes		
2. Communicates with others - about own activities - about information discovered - explaining ideas clearly - in community talk		
3. Expresses ideas: - in an understandable way - in an appropriate way		
4. Is aware of some print conventions - capital letters - end punctuation (periods, etc.) - text and picture carry a story		
5. Is interested in school		
6. Learns from watching others		
7. Voluntarily engages in: - reading - writing - problem solving		
8. Appears confident about learning		
9. Cooperates with others		
10. Can count orally to ...		
11. Is able to manipulate objects in number groups		

Any additional information you think might help me to better know your child as a student, please feel free to include on the back of this page or another paper.

Thank you for your help and I look forward to working with you this year.

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Sample Parent Survey 3-5 Your Child as a Learner (3-5)

Name _____ Date _____
Grade _____ Class _____

Please indicate your observation of your child's learning behaviors in the following areas. Please provide explanations or examples where appropriate.

MY CHILD	yes/no	comments/examples
1. Chooses to read - for pleasure - favorite books repeatedly - for information - challenging text		
2. Communicates with others - about own activities - about information discovered - explaining ideas clearly - in community talk		
3. Expresses ideas: - adjusting speaking patterns to audience - in an understandable way		
4. Displays control over mechanics - punctuation - grammatical constructions - spelling of high frequency words		
5. Monitors understanding of spoken language by asking questions		
6. Is able to summarize text for retelling		
7. Is productive and involved during - homework time - personal time - problem solving		
8. Appears confident about learning		
9. Plans, organizes and carries through on tasks		
10. Differentiates between relevant and non-relevant information		
11. Understands not all problems have simple solutions		

Any additional information you think might help me to better know your child as a student, please feel free to include on the back of this page or another paper.

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Sample Request for Parent Letter About Child

Date

Dear Parent of Guardian,

I'm very excited about working with your child this year. I have an exciting school year planned and look forward to watching each of my students grow and learn during their time with me.

It would help me to know about your child from your perspective. You are in the unique position of observing your child outside the school situation and can give me many insights into their habits and behaviors, their likes and dislikes and their interests. With this information, I will be able to manage, monitor and adjust the curriculum to be sure it is meeting the needs of your child. Success breeds success and I want your child to be successful in my class.

Please spend a few minutes writing a letter explaining to me your child's homework habits, interests in school and out of school, how your child has done in this subject in the past and any techniques used by previous teachers which were successful with your child.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Diane Mierzwik

Name of course

Phone number

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Sample Classroom Procedure Letter

Dear Parent and Student,

Welcome to Ms. Mierzwik's class. I hope that like me, you had a wonderful break and are looking forward to a very successful year. To make this year a success, it is important that every student be held to high expectations. I want my expectations to be very clear.

I expect every student to be prepared for class each day with the proper supplies including writing utensils, paper and the proper books. It helps if students have a notebook for class and a backpack to carry all belongings.

I will be assigning homework Monday through Thursday. If a student feels he/she has no homework, he/she should spend time reading for the assigned book report or future projects. Occasionally, a student may have to work on a project over the weekend if he/she has not been able to budget weekday time accordingly.

If a student is absent, the child has the number of days absent upon returning to complete all make-up work. I would strongly urge that for an extended absence I be contacted for missed work so the student does not feel overwhelmed.

Late work is accepted for partial credit if turned in within a week of the due date. Work turned in later than a week will be accepted only on a case by case basis.

Adherence to classroom behavioral expectations is expected from all students. When a child has a difficult day, time-out in another classroom may be used along with a parent notification. If the problem persists other consequences will follow.

Grades are based on the child's ability to meet the grade level standards as evidenced by class work, homework, assessments, and teacher evaluations of performance in class. I will do my best to keep you informed of each student's progress.

I look forward to working with each student and am anticipating another successful year. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Ms. Mierzwik

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Sample Request for Parent Suggestions for Unit/ Quarter

Dear Parent,

We have just completed first quarter. We had a successful quarter with completion of our *House on Mango Street* project, our first book report and our end of the quarter assessments.

To help me plan for second quarter, I would like your perception of how things went. If you have suggestions for ways I could have made the quarter more successful for your child, I would like you to share these with me. I strive to make my class a positive experience for every child and your help in this endeavor is invaluable.

Please take a moment to complete the bottom survey and return it with your child. As with any time I ask for your input, if there are concerns, feel free to explain them here, to leave a phone number and time I can reach you, or to call the school to set up a time we can meet to discuss these.

I know that with your continued support, we can continue our success into the second quarter.

Thanks,

Ms. Mierzwik

Child's Name _____

1. The homework load was reasonable: yes / no
2. The homework extended or affirmed learning; yes / no
3. Directions for units and projects were clear: yes /no
4. Large assignments were organized so that students were able to complete smaller units of the assignment before the final project was due: yes / no
5. My child feels capable in class: yes / no
6. My child feels able to ask for extra help in class: yes / no
7. My child had a successful quarter: yes / no

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Sample Letter Regarding Email Communication

Dear Parents,

To ensure your child's success in my class this year, I feel very strongly about being able to communicate with you about important due dates and expectations. I also want to be available to you if you have any questions or concerns regarding your child, class projects and activities or class expectations.

One way for us to communicate easily is through the use of email. I realize that not every parent has email and if you do not have email, rest assured that I am always available through a phone call. For those parents who do have email, if you would like to use this vehicle as a means to keep in contact with me, it is a very easy process to set up.

My email address is _____ . If you would like me to use email as a way to keep you informed, please email me a message indicating this and I will be able to add your email address to my address book. I will use email to inform you of upcoming due dates and activities in class, as well as inform you of any specific information I feel you need regarding your child.

I believe the success of your child in my class depends on a good working relationship between the school and family. Being able to communication with you is very important to me. I hope that the use of email will provide one more way for us to work together toward a productive year.

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I look forward to email messages from those of you who are able to take advantage of this technology, but once again want to assure parents who do not have this technology that I will be available in other ways for you.

Thank You,

Diane Mierzwik

Letter Confirming Email Message

Dear _____

Thank you contacting me via email. I look forward to using this technology to keep you updated on your child's progress as well as important due dates and activities occurring in class.

If you ever have a question, please feel free to contact me using this account. I will be diligent about responding to email and try to get back to you within 24 hours.

I look forward to a successful year with your child.

Sincerely,

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Sample Letter to Education Reporter

Date

Dear (Name if known),

I am a seventh and eighth grade English teacher at Parkview Middle School for Yucaipa Calimesa Joint Unified School District. I recently read your article on the postponement of using the high school exit exam as a requirement for graduating titled, "Ruling on test rattles policy: Schools work to adjust graduation standards" in the July 14th paper. I couldn't help but wonder if the test requirement might be postponed again.

I'm writing to inquire about what types of school events you might be interested in covering for your paper. I know you have an **Education** page in the local section of the paper and am interested in having my class contribute to this page. I also would like to offer myself as a resource for you when you are writing about educational issues. I have been a teacher for fifteen years, having taught in Yucaipa-Calimesa School District for the last eight. I have acted as department head, coordinator of GATE programs, Leadership team member and as a mentor teacher over the years. As you can see, I have a varied background which gives me an informed perspective on issues. Please feel free to contact me at any time regarding school issues.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Diane Mierzwik

(Include phone number and email address)

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Sample Press Release

School Letterhead

IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Your name

Telephone number where you can be reached (probably the school's)

Fax number if you have one

Email

Website if you have one

PRESS RELEASE

Headline (in bold)

400-500 words describing who, what, where, when and how.

