

## Send a weekly parent newsletter

Keeping parents happy by keeping them informed

***“Having had children in two different Adventist schools, I found it much easier when there was one place I could go for information. Whether it is online or on paper isn't as important as having weekly updates which are accurate and complete.”***

Anonymous Parent

### Send a weekly parent newsletter

I believe most of you are already doing this. If you aren't, please start now.

Remember, research suggests that parents are likely to judge your *professional competence* based on their interactions with your school's *organizational systems* (i.e. Is their bill accurate? Did their phone call get answered? Are they kept adequately informed?)

### Make it simple for them.

The purpose of a newsletter is to ensure parents have accurate, up-to-date information about school events, deadlines, requirements, homework, etc. Here is my do and don't list for structure.

#### Do:

- Make this the one-stop shop for all information a parent needs to know and do something with. I'll explain this more later.
- Use clear headlines. Make it easy for them to skim and see what they need to read and what they can skip.
- Make it easy to identify as this week's newsletter. Include the publication date in a prominent, and consistent, place each week. (If you think they remember that this week's version is pink and last week's version was blue--think again. Do you remember what color last week's was?)

#### Don't:

- Use clipart. It takes time for you to find and parents to skip over. And contrary to what clip art publishers say, it does not call attention to your message.
- Change the format. Pick a simple approach and use it consistently.

## **Make it simple for you.**

Ideally, you should have a template that allows you to publish the same information, in a similar format, both digitally and on paper. And without retyping it.

Some schools may be ready for digital only. But don't assume. Some parents may have very poor internet access. Some may simply prefer paper. Some may want to hand their second-grader a spelling list on paper rather than worrying about after-school snacks getting spilled into the keyboard or onto the phone.

I can create a template which any school can choose to use. To do that I need to know what software you are using, or have available to use, for typing your newsletters.

- Email software: Zimbra, Microsoft Outlook, Apple Mail, Google Mail, Mozilla Thunderbird, other
- Word processing: Microsoft Word, Apple Pages, Google Docs, other
- Other

Please reply to this message and list those programs you have available to use.

### **Delegating:**

A volunteer or other staff person can get the information from each of your teachers (or just you), type them into your template, send them and/or copy them and distribute to students on the designated day. (BTW, I've actually seen this done very effectively. And a second volunteer proofread each week's newsletter for typos. A+ work.)

**Binder tab:** Ongoing (put in front of the January tab in your binder)

**School size:** All