Activity 2.5: Communication in the Digital Age
Time: 45 minutes

Purpose

To discuss ways in which educators communicate with families about a variety of subjects and to determine whether digital or non-digital means of communication are used, and whether changes of means of communication could, perhaps, enhance the communicative process.

Materials Needed

- Modes of Communication Chart (attached)
- Computers with Internet access to access school website (optional)

Roles

1. Facilitator: Explain the activity and lead the follow-up discussion.
2. Participants: Work in pairs to discuss communication practices but complete sheets individually and be prepared to share findings with the large group.

Activity

1. The facilitator should direct the participants to count off in pairs.
2. Each participant should receive a copy of the Modes of Communication Chart.
3. Allow 20 minutes for participants to discuss and record answers to the questions on the Modes of Communication Chart.
4. Bring the group together to share and discuss their findings.

   Possible facilitator questions:
   1. Which modes of communication do you use more regularly?
   2. What communication types do you feel are most successful in your school or classroom?
   3. What ways could you change your communication strategies to further enhance and develop home-school communication?
   4. How can this information be used to enhance communications with family members?

Modes of Communication Chart

How do you currently communicate with families about the following subjects…	Digitally? (be specific: text, blogs, FaceBook, etc.)	Non-digitally? (be specific: website, daily agendas, parent-teacher conferences, etc.)	How *could* you communicate using a different mode of communication? (be specific: Pinterest, school newsletter, etc.)	What other steps could you take to further enhance communication, aside from changing or adding modes of communication?
1. Homework policies				
2. Curriculum expectations				
3. Grading and progress reports				
4. Daily behavior				
5. Family education/training opportunities				
6. Information on IEP goals				
7. Upcoming events				
8. Cultural diversity				
9. School rules				
10. Expectations of families				
11. Standardized assessment implementation and scoring				
12. Classroom assessments				
13. Using educational portals				
14. Navigating the school website				
15. Opportunities for family members to volunteer				
16. Student successes				
17. How to contact school staff				
18. Inappropriate behavior/academic difficulty				