

COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Revised April 2021

RATIONALE

Parental engagement means families and schools working together to connect a student's home life and school. This builds student belief in the importance of education to nurture a love of learning, and link school work to current events and things that happen at home.

Parental/caregiver engagement is a key factor in developing students both socially and academically. Research demonstrates that parental engagement results in higher grades, lower dropout rates, and a greater likelihood of commencing postsecondary education. Students have higher attendance levels, better social skills, and improvement in their behaviour and their home environment.

In this digital age, communication and engagement between STHS and parents/caregivers must use a multi-faceted approach.

Along with more traditional paper communication, the school employs a number of electronic communication mechanisms, as well as face-to-face meetings, to disseminate information and engage with parents/caregivers.

WEBSITE

The school website www.sths.nw.edu.au is a rich source of information for parents and caregivers. It aims to deliver the latest information on school policies, staffing, curriculum, extra-curricular activities, news and events, as well as providing contact details for the school. The school calendar is available on the website, as well as the latest newsletter.

TEXT MESSAGING AND EMAILS

Event updates, reminders and absentee notifications are distributed to parents/caregivers via text message and/or email, using Sentral, the main school administration and student data software. Parents can also respond officially to absentee notifications via this process.

SCHOOL BYTES

School Bytes is a school administration software program utilised by the school to disseminate school fees. Parents click on a link in an email from the school, and it takes them to a user-friendly interface so that they can pay their outstanding school fees easily.

FACEBOOK

STHS has a public Facebook page that highlights the latest news, events and achievements of STHS students, as well as providing a weekly "what's on" at the school.

NEWSLETTER - TECH TALK

Tech Talk, the monthly school newsletter, provides updates from the School Executive, as well as from various faculties. It also contains news stories, important information for parents/carers, and a recap of the latest school events.

PARENT PARTNERSHIP

Parent and carers of students in each year group are invited to attend a series of talks by the School Executive, Head Teachers, Careers Advisor, School Counsellors, and Year Advisers regarding various aspects relating to their son's education, including: school curriculum, study techniques, student wellbeing, NAPLAN and HSC preparation, and postgraduate opportunities.

PARENT TEACHER INTERVIEWS

Twice a year, parents/carers are invited to sit down with their son's teachers in a one-on-one discussion about their son's progress in specific subjects.

LETTERS TO PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

Written communication is a more formal means of communication with parents/caregivers and is used to disseminate important information, such as letters of congratulation, or disciplinary action.

Permission notes for excursions are also sent home to parents/caregivers, as are school fees, if an email address has not been supplied.