



## September Staying Connected

Parent involvement is the number one predictor of early literacy success.

**A personalized touch:** When in-person parent meetings are not possible, try embedding short, introductory videos in emails as an effective alternative. The video allows teacher to “share their personality and create a warm and welcoming beginning with families at the beginning of the school year. It also gives you an opportunity to share your class expectations schoolteacher other valuable information that children/families will need to be aware of.

*High School teacher Lauren Huddleston*

**Your child, in a Million Words or Less:** Mail out a “Million Words or Less” survey asking caregivers to tell you everything they should know about their child. Create a survey asking questions about their new classroom, subjects that are being taught, new friends, etc. that captures their child’s attitude towards their new classroom, subject matters being taught, and how they might be feeling about the new school year.

*English teacher Cathleen Beachboard*

**Get active on social media:** Create a classroom Instagram page or Twitter account to post photos and videos of student work or email out a monthly or quarterly blog celebrating student successes and previewing upcoming curricular content for parents. This keeps families in the loop about what their child will be learning next and maintains positive communication with parents. Keeping families informed about what is going to be taught next is helpful. Send home examples of the work and the vocabulary that will be accompanying this new material that will be covered. *Marta Henriksen*

**Give parents a nudge:** Simple text reminders—sometimes called “nudges”—can help parents help their children stay on track. Sending weekly text updates to parents about their children’s grades, absences, and missed assignments led to an 18 percent increase in student attendance and a 39 percent drop in course failures. The Remind app is used at many schools in South Dakota. *A Columbia University study*

Communication for the school, home, and everywhere in between. <https://www.remind.com/>

**Provide pathways for entry:** Create a monthly calendar marked with days on which caregivers are invited to engage with their child inside the classroom. For parents who cannot attend, there is a take-home activity that provides a similar experience. *Teachers from Educare New Orleans*

**Show off your families’ strengths:** Give parents a chance to highlight their talents, experiences, and skills to get them more engaged in the classroom. Create a Google Form where families can mention any skills that they might want to share with the class. Invite these families into the classroom where they can demonstrate their many talents.