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Removing the mystery can help everyone see why the district does what it does. That includes being clear with students about what the goals are and where the district is going so that they can be part of the transparent culture too. Leaders can also share what they've learned from conferences and bring that excitement back to the district. "When you are using digital tools and other social media it's like you're yelling out the front door of your school because you are so proud of something," Mazza said. It gives educators a chance to write their own stories and to connect more easily with parents and other community members. And just as school and district leadership can inspire teachers to connect with their peers, teachers in turn can role model good online behavior for students. "Embrace the fact that everything you do online and off is role-modeling for kids; and they need good role models," Mazza said. Connecting with other educators puts control in the hands of educators, but it also helps push the field forward. "It's important for us not to just look at connectivity for ourselves, but for the entire field of education," Mazza said. He encourages his teachers to pose problems they face to the Twitter-verse, where they can get great ideas from other educators who have faced similar issues almost immediately. "When you're using digital tools and other social media it's like you're yelling out the front door of your school because you are so proud of something." "The more we take, the more we give," said Jeff Zoul, a principal in Deerfield, Illinois. "Sometimes a teacher will tweet something out to the hashtag and the next thing we know we've got educators all over the country sharing other resources." RELATIONSHIPS AT THE CORE OF CONNECTIVITY It's easy to hear the term "connected educator" and immediately think of technology, but the most important connections are made face-to-face. "Every one of our 18 schools are very different and the teachers expect us to meet them where they are," Mazza said. "Every teacher and leader and parent are leveraging tools on a different basis." Mazza will even print out relevant Twitter chats -- yes, print! -- and articles for principals in his district who aren't comfortable with technology. By first showing the power of connecting in a familiar form he hopes reluctant educators begin to see that the benefits can outweigh the hassle or potential harm. "When you see it not as work, but as inspiring and helping you get the work done, that's when your mind opens up," Mazza said. He'll often sit down and look at a school improvement plan or goals with a principal and as they move down the list together he'll list various Twitter hashtags that could offer some suggestions for meeting those goals. Focusing on relationships is equally important for engaging parents and community members with what's happening at school. "You need those families or else the kids aren't going to meet their full potential," Mazza said. He tries to offer parents lots of ways to engage and emphasizes that they should pick what works for them, not necessarily engage on all the platforms. "It's really about listening and getting out there and making relationships with all these stakeholders," Mazza said. "If they are not on the internet at all then it's up to us to get out there and know them. We can't widen the gap just because they aren't online." He makes home visits, especially at the beginning of the year, listening to parent concerns, letting them know about various ways to connect with the school and showing that he cares about the individual student's well being. "The majority are flattered and honored that you would make the extra effort to get to know them," Mazza said. He's also had success holding monthly parent-teacher leadership meetings. Student voice is the center of the meeting, and a group of students always present on something they are doing at school first. Then the discussion can range from how to meet school goals to social and emotional well-being or fundraising. In 2009 when he started these meetings, Mazza would have seven or eight white families coming to those meetings. But he's started moving them around to different community libraries, as well as streaming them online. Participation has spiked to between 50 and 60 families present physically and another 30 participating online. He partnered with the neighborhood gathering places like the mosque and Korean church to put in computer labs that students use for school work, but that also stream the parent-teacher leadership meetings so community members can participate even if they don't have internet connections. GET COMFORTABLE WITH PUSHBACK Including everyone in creating a positive, nurturing and transparent school culture will almost certainly raise questions for parents. "All that pushback is rooted in something," Mazza said. "If your culture is not transparent, you might have pushback automatically because people aren't used to sharing what they're doing. They might not feel it's safe to do that." Mazza sees pushback as a way to bring more people into the discussion. Connected, transparent school leaders are comfortable with pushback, Mazza said. "You can't expect everyone to get it the first time you articulate something," Mazza said. The only thing a transparent leader can do is keep communicating at every step along the way, continually articulating why he is taking that step and answer questions. Community engagement is a huge part of being a good principal, Mazza said. And if done right, those relationships can be leveraged down the road when things might not be going well. During the tough times -- budget cuts, lower test scores -- the community still knows the principal is dedicated, committed and cares about the school's well-being. LEADING FROM A TRANSPARENT PLACE "If you are a school leader right now and you think you have all the resources and can do it all, that's impossible," Mazza said. "You need the rest of the world with perspectives to constantly expose your faculty to people who are trying things." See patterns of learning across all children and lessons in a visual grid. Easily update progress for an individual or group. Track concentration and build Montessori work curves. Observe children's progress over time, gaps in lesson areas, and balance across equity segments with a variety of reports. Working with school or regional standards? We make it easy to connect lessons to standards so you can track a child's progress. Many standards are already available (COSS, TEKS, and many US states), or we will help you upload your own. Organize and prepare for each week with easy, intuitive lesson planning. Change your plans and reschedule lessons on the fly to follow the child. Print it out for your clipboard and enter data later, or record on the fly on a tablet. Choose from one of many layouts to organize by day, by child, by lesson, and more. We have tried to make a planning view that meets the needs of each Montessori level. After presenting lessons, you can easily record meeting notes and plan next lessons and follow-up work with planning notes. With just 10 minutes a day, you can enter all your presentations, observations, notes and photos. Connect photos to child progress, creating a visual diary of a child's learning journey that can be shared with parents via email or mobile app. Snap and upload photos quickly with the mobile app, then tag children and lessons later on the web. You can capture a timeline of the day so you can stop trying to remember everything that happened. You decide what to share, and parents only see information about their child. We never delete a child's data unless you ask us, even after they have left the school. Their records are retained for free. Whether you're tracking food, naps, toileting, or temperatures, we have a wide range of Daily Tracking events available. Quickly and easily mark events for your classroom using a phone or tablet. You can choose to have a summary of events sent to the parent at the end of each day, so parents can be kept informed easily. Create fully customizable conference reports to share with parents, showing a snapshot of the child and what they've learned. Whether you need to showcase lessons, standards, skills, photos, or more, our conference report editor makes it easy to drag-and-drop elements that will pull in data when generating a report. Ever discover a mistake when you're halfway through creating 100 reports, and dread doing it all over again? When you make a change to a template, we make it easy to pull those changes into generated conference reports. It's as easy as clicking a button. Whether it's a field trip permission form or one to gather general information, Transparent Classroom has a powerful form editor to design your own school forms for parents. Our system makes it easy to keep track of all the information, notify parents of new forms assigned, and even provide reminders and due dates. Need to have parents update their contact information? Just assign a form! You can connect forms and use them to update data, including contact info, child's allergies, and so much more. You can create a Form Checklist to link to other forms, embed forms, allow the parent to upload a file, and so much more. Our form builder has so many features, even we forget some from time to time! Closed for winter break? No problem. You can customize your school's sessions and manage classroom placement for each session. You're only charged for children in your current session, so you don't have to be billed when you're not using us. If you have a child joining or leaving mid-session, we offer fine-grained controls with a child's First Day and Last Day, so they only show up once they're enrolled at your school. Track why and when children leave your school, and automatically request an Exit Survey from families to gather more information. Parents can only see information about their child, and you get to decide what to share. Adding parents means schools always have updated contact info, and parents have one place to find all the information they need Connect Google Calendars to your school or individual classrooms to display events and help keep everyone up to date. You can finally centralize school info onto a single platform. Create School Info pages to radiate information outward, and stop worrying whether you sent that one spreadsheet link to the new parents that just joined. Our pages are highly customizable with embeddable content, links to external resources, or Google Spreadsheets. Jumpstart your record keeping with included lesson sets for AMI Toddler, Primary, and Elementary and AMS Elementary. Lessons are organized using familiar concepts like Areas, Groups, and Materials. Customize the lessons to your heart's content. They can be shared across classrooms or individualized to suit each teacher's needs. Share lesson pages with parents so they can engage with the Montessori lesson set, learning alongside their children. Lessons include information on why Montessorians teach this lesson and how to help out at home. Track attendance and signatures with a fully customizable system that you can tailor to your school's needs. Generate reports for entire classrooms or for individual children to satisfy the myriad state reporting requirements. No need to waste another minute of your precious time wrangling a spreadsheet, so you can focus on what matters. Whether attendance is managed by staff, by parents at a shared school tablet, or on a parent's personal device, we have many options to meet your school's needs. Provide COVID-19 health screenings and temperature checks before each dropoff to help protect everyone. Each screening is fully customizable to meet any needs required of your school. Screenings can be completed either by staff onsite, or on a parent's device with Distance Dropoff before they come to school. We know how incredibly hard it is to be a teacher or administrator of a school. We've designed Transparent Classroom every step of the way with you in mind, to bring a bit more ease to your demanding life. Learning a new tool can be difficult, and we're here to help. Sign up for free, live trainings to answer all your questions. Our team, many of whom are Montessori trained, will walk you through our plethora of features and help you tailor the platform to meet your needs. Our support is unparalleled and fast, with email responses within 24 business hours and bugs addressed within five business days. Software doesn't have to be a frustrating, lonely experience. We're here to prove that it can be different. Request a Demo \$2.50 USD per child / month Unlimited classrooms. Unlimited staff. Unlimited support and training. Each month, you are charged only for children actively enrolled the previous month. If you are closed in the summer, you pay nothing. If you have fewer children some months, you pay less. Request a Demo Copyright© 2025 Transparent GMBH. All rights reserved. Transparent Classroom provides cloud based record keeping, parent communication, and school management for Montessori classrooms. We make it fast and easy to record what happens in the classroom. Then we share it with the parent to see gaps and patterns, so that they can make decisions, and quickly plan what a child can do to excel at home. We allow you to share as much of the classroom with parents as possible with things like photos and conference reports. What sets Transparent Classroom apart from other Montessori record keeping software is a relentless focus on simplicity and the user experience. We enable the Montessori guide to accurately and effectively record your child's progress, so that you as a parent stay up to date with your child's education!