COMMUNICATION POLICY

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<th>Written/Reviewed By</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Maria Isabel Leon, Monique Browder</td>
<td>May 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Christen Wilson</td>
<td>July 2016</td>
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The Magellan International School Communication Policy

Clarity around communications between all stakeholders in the school community is an essential component for a successful school year. This Communications Policy is designed to keep clear communication lines within the school community, with defined expectations for parents and school employees.

MAGELLAN PARENTS

CLASSROOM COMMUNICATIONS

All MIS Communications will be centralized through the Join Our Class online system. Through frequent blog posts, event and volunteer opportunity postings, private and group messages and directory listings, parents can view and read about school activities and news both within their child’s classroom and beyond. Parents will be provided with a welcome email at the start of the year to login to the system. They are highly encouraged to bookmark the site and make frequent visits to be well informed of activities at the school.

Teachers will be posting informational blogs on a regular basis, showcasing IB learning in action and sharing photos. When action is required of parents, teachers will send email message through the Join Our Class system. It is the responsibility of the parents to update their contact information in the system and to report any technical issues they are experiencing with the system.

Parents are also invited to participate in end-of-unit showcases of student learning and achievement and conferences to gauge student progress. These events provide parents with additional opportunities to speak with teachers about their child’s education.

SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS

Like Classroom Communications, School-wide Communications will also be centralized through Join Our Class. School events are posted online for scheduling convenience, and operational updates will be shared through blogging and messaging. In addition, all heads of section/curriculum coordinators will post monthly blogs to provide deeper education and reflection on the International Baccalaureate program for our community.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS

In situations where the school is under emergency conditions or is closing due to unforeseen circumstances (e.g. weather, facilities failure) parents will be informed via SMS text messaging. Parents are responsible for ensuring that their cellphone numbers are updated within the Join Our Class system.

ISSUE RESOLUTION
MIS is committed to an effective and fluid communication with parents. We value the ideas and suggestions of the entire community. All of our teaching staff and leadership team are at the disposal of the parents to discuss any aspect of the student’s experience at school.

In situations where concerns or situations arise related to the educational experience of a child, families should try to resolve the issue by proceeding through the following staff members until the issue is resolved:

1. Homeroom or subject teacher
2. PYP or MYP Coordinator
3. Head of Preschool, Head of Primary, or Head of Middle School
4. Head of School

PYP teachers check the weekly folders and initial them to make sure all notes or messages sent by parents are read and answered. Parents may also use email and/or Join Our Class for more time-sensitive communications.

In MYP, if there is a specific issue to be discussed regarding the child’s progress or curriculum matters, meetings may be requested by parents, teachers or members of the Leadership Team.

Where situations arise regarding challenges or concerns related to issues arising outside of the education experience, families should try to resolve the issue by approaching the responsible staff member. If the issue is not resolved, families should approach:

1. Head of Advancement & Administration
2. Head of School

Parents may refer to the chart below to identify the appropriate point of contact to help answer their questions.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEMBERS OF THE TEAM</th>
<th>AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>HEAD OF SCHOOL/HEAD OF PRESCHOOL</strong></td>
<td><strong>Head of School</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>General school policies</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Strategic plan</td>
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<td>Accreditations and authorizations</td>
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<td>Physical plant growth plan</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Serious disciplinary incidents</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Issues not resolved or addressed by faculty or other members of the administration team</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Head of Preschool</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>General school policies in Preschool</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Faculty and staff in Preschool</td>
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</table>
| DEPUTY HEAD OF SCHOOL/HEAD OF PRIMARY | Deputy Head of School  
Academic council (Learning Leaders: Math and English, Mandarin, IDL, MAP Team)  
Professional Learning Communities- PLCS  
Professional development for teachers  
Curriculum Administration  
General School Assessment  
Issues not resolved or addressed by faculty or other members of the administration team in absence of Head of School  

Head of Primary  
General school policies in Primary School  
Faculty and staff in Primary  
General operation in Primary  
Report card logistics and assessment in conjunction with PYP coordinator  
Lower and upper primary school counselors  
Behavior in Primary School  
Support Services and Resources Case Management (academic, language and social and emotional learning needs)  
Issues not resolved or addressed by faculty |
| PYP COORDINATOR | Academics in Preschool and Primary  
PYP program structure  
Units of inquiry  
PYP implementation in the classroom  
Homework policy  
Scope and sequence of subjects taught in the PYP  
Content and planning of field trips and action projects  
Report card logistics and assessment in conjunction with Head of Preschool and Head of Primary |
| **HEAD OF MIDDLE SCHOOL/MYP COORDINATOR** | Academics in Middle School  
MYP program structure  
Subject and Interdisciplinary units  
MYP implementation in the classroom  
Homework policy  
Scope and sequence of subjects taught in the MYP  
Content and planning of field trips and service learning  
Faculty in Middle School  
Middle School Counselor  
Assessment and Report cards in Middle School  
Behavioral issues in Middle School  
Support Services and Resources Case Management (academic, language and social and emotional learning needs) |
| **DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND OPERATIONS** | Implementation of financial aid  
Point of contact for billing inquiries  
Advise Head of Administration and HoS in all financial matters  
Physical plant needs, expansion and maintenance  
Oversee information technology infrastructure  
Oversee operations team  
Supervise, implement and monitor all after school programs (After school activities, After school care and MIS school clubs) |
| **DIRECTOR OF ADMISSIONS** | Admission and enrollment of new families to MIS  
Re-enrollment of returning students  
Marketing of the school to meet enrollment goals  
Guidance of new families through school induction  
Re-enrollment process |
| **HEAD OF ADVANCEMENT AND ADMINISTRATION** | Cultivation of donors and acquisition of major gifts for the school  
Supervision and implementation of all school communications and marketing  
Support and supervision of the Director of Finance and Operations  
Advise HoS in all financial matters  
Supervision and support of Admissions Director |
| **FACULTY** | Teaching and learning in the classroom  
Class communications and blog |
<table>
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<tr>
<th>SUPPORT SERVICES AND RESOURCES</th>
<th>COUNSELORS</th>
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<tr>
<td>*SSR Student case-load management monitored by heads of section</td>
<td>Preschool and Lower Primary School Counselor</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Preschool (PP3-PP4) and Lower Primary (K-2G)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Primary and Middle School Counselor</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Upper Primary (3G-5G) and MS (6-8G)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>LITERACY SPECIALIST</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Literacy (K-2G)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Language Learning (2G-5G)</td>
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<tr>
<td>HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGER</td>
<td>Responsible managing and coordinating all human resources initiatives; recruitment, retention, compensation, benefits, training and employee relations</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Ensure policies, procedures and HR programs</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Coordinate arrival and settling of new personnel arriving at the school</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAMPUS MANAGERS/RECEPTIONISTS</td>
<td>Daily operations in terms of security, arrivals and departure</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Planning and executing the logistics of campus-wide or school-wide events</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Answer all incoming calls</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make sure all messages are sent to appropriate party</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collect and distribute all mail arriving at school</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Help set up for events as necessary</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Organize and administer lost and found area</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Records requests</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maintenance of student records (not health related)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Updating system of record</td>
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| **NURSES/MEDICAL ASSISTANT** | Monitor student health  
Provide first aid to injured students or personnel  
Organize and monitor student health files  
Train faculty in the use of Epi-pens and ensure that all personnel has received first aid training |

**GUIDELINES FOR ROOM PARENT COMMUNICATIONS**

Room parents serve as conduits between the school and parents within their class. Through the Join Our Class system, Room Parents coordinate communications within each classroom such as play dates, class specific celebrations or anything the lead teacher would like communicated. Room parents should follow the Room Parent Guideline document provided by the Room Parent coordinator at the beginning of each academic year.

**MAGELLAN FACULTY/STAFF**

As with parents, faculty and staff of Magellan will be active in the Join Our Class system to provide timely, accurate and thoughtful communications within our school community.

**CONFIDENTIALITY AND STUDENT RECORDS**

Teachers are to treat all student information as confidential and private. Disclosure of student information is governed by State and Federal law. Only official school documents (report cards, conference notes -PTC forms, and attendance records) can be released to parents. Student transcripts are managed by the Head of each section.

In order to release student files to other schools, the school must receive the appropriate, signed request from another school. If parents request documents from a student’s file, they must email the Head of section detailing their needs. The Head of section will then file a copy of the request with the student’s file.

Teachers, staff, and parents are responsible for communicating any changes to student files to the operations managers. Faculty and administration have access to files as needed. Information that is considered confidential is kept in a separate file by SSR. Under no circumstances are student files shared outside the school, unless written consent is given by the parent to ensure HIPAA compliance. (HIPAA is the federal law that establishes standards for the privacy and security of health information, as well as standards for electronic data transfer of health information)

All communications where decisions are reached regarding a student need to be recorded and placed on file. Copies should be in student file and Admission Director, Program Coordinator, Head of Sections and Lead Teacher informed as appropriate.
COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS

Through Join Our Class, teachers will be responsible for sharing activities inside/outside the classroom with parents through blog postings and messaging on a regular basis. The frequency of these communications provide parents with an understanding of the uniqueness and impact of an International Baccalaureate learning environment.

Parents are expected to bring questions or concerns regarding the educational experience of their child first to their lead teacher. Teachers are expected to respond in a timely fashion. An acknowledgement of the parent’s outreach within 48 hours is required to ensure that parent’s outreach is recognized and next steps are articulated. However, to respect work/life balance, responses M-F after 6 PM and on the weekends are not customary.

Often, parents bring questions or concerns to members of the Leadership Team who are expected to respond in a timely fashion. An acknowledgement of the parent’s outreach within 24 hours is required to ensure that parent’s outreach is recognized and next steps are articulated. However, to respect work/life balance, responses M-F after 6 PM and on the weekends are not customary.

Teachers shall maintain and file documentations on all questions or concerns as well as actions taken, including notes from meetings and sensitive conversations utilizing the PTC form. Important email exchanges with parents should be stored and archived as well. Accident reports should be filled out immediately after a child receives care from the nurse or medical assistant by the teacher or staff member witnessing the incident. This report needs to be sent to parents for signature and a copy filed with the nurse in the child’s health files.

ISSUE RESOLUTION

Parents may request individual conferences with teachers to discuss their child’s progress or challenges, and for other issues related to education. And teachers may arrange individual conferences with parents with academic and/or social concerns arise. Teachers and parents are responsible for working together to schedule a conference or meeting. Teachers should communicate with the front desk where the meeting will take place in order to direct parents.

If needed, conferences must include both a first language Spanish speaking teacher and a first language English speaking teacher. If applicable, SSR staff may also attend. Conference notes must be taken (please use the PTC form available to you) and should be signed at the conclusion of a meeting before all participants leave; one copy is given to the parent and one copy signed by all conference attendees and stored in student’s file. The school’s signed copy should be taken by the teacher, or faculty member responsible for the meeting, directly to the Head of Section for date stamping review and then delivered to the Operations Manager of the respective campus to be stored in the student’s file. With sensitive/complex issues, it is advisable to enlist the support of a colleague to act as ‘scribe’ (TA) and representatives from SSR should be there.
GENERAL EMAIL/MESSAGING ETIQUETTE FOR MIS FACULTY/STAFF

- Include a subject line, with the topic of the message
- Use an MIS approved signature including disclaimer
- Use spell-check
- Group messages are to be sent without recipient addresses being visible/accessible
- In sensitive situations consider an alternative method of communication (phone calls, personal meeting) and complete a PTC form.
- Proofread your message before sending to check for appropriate tone. Electronic messages lack the verbal or facial cues of other communication tools.
- Print and/or file messages that refer to a decision, particularly in relation to students
- During periods of absence (vacation, personal leave, etc), teachers and staff must set up an out-of-office message to include dates of absence and point of contact(s) through absence

MESSAGING/GOOGLE MAIL AMONG TEACHERS/STAFF

To ensure a strong culture of communication internally at MIS, teachers and staff are expected to respond to emails from colleagues within 48 hours. As stated above, teachers and staff are not expected to respond to emails after 6 PM on weekdays and on weekends. Often, email communications require more timely response. For example, significant facilities issues which compromise learning, escalating situations with students and/or parents, personnel issues. In these cases, please send an email leading the subject line with “URGENT:...” Colleagues are expected to respond to messages marked urgent within 24 hours.

When needing to send a message to the entire faculty and staff, please send it first to HR Manager who will edit it and post it on the Bamboo HR dashboard. If you need to send weekly emails to particular groups please follow the same procedure. This will also be used for the Faculty and Staff weekly Flash Announcements. All faculty and staff are required to read the Flash Announcements.

Purpose

- Disseminate school-related information to and from the Faculty, Staff, Administration, and MISPA.
- Group messages are intended to enhance communication efforts of the school as a whole and provide a convenient service to notify parents and faculty of upcoming events and deadlines.

Group Messaging Guidelines:

- Where possible, general information should be included in the Monday Flash Announcements.
- All information must be school related and of general interest to the majority of recipients.
- All group emails to parents must be revised and edited as needed. The Deputy Head of School will make all final decisions regarding appropriateness of content.
- A native speaker of the language in which the email is written should proofread the email.

**Appropriate use of group messaging includes:**

- School meeting announcements
- Parent education events at school or co-sponsored events at other schools
- Emergency information
- Student shows and events at school
- Apertura and Gala announcements and updates
- Athletic programs
- School Division announcements
- School Community Service information
- Changes in schedule

Group messages cannot be sent with personal announcement information unrelated to being a parent or a student at the school, or advertisements unrelated to approved fundraising for the school, unless authorized by HoS. E-mail addresses cannot be used for any commercial, political, or advocacy purposes.

**Emails for Instructional Purposes**

Faculty may use email to communicate with students and vice versa in the upper grades. Emails should be strictly academic. Non-academic emails sent by students should be responded with a copy to parents. Faculty should not email students for behavioral or personal matters.

Types of e-mails that are not acceptable:

- Anything not directly to do with an MIS-sponsored activity or event
- Notices with a narrow audience sent to the entire school
- Communicating anything that could be viewed as excluding or hurtful to any individual or group
- Discussing or expressing opinions about school policies, curriculum, discipline or disciplinary actions, or students/faculty/staff/ administration/trustees as a group or individually. These opinions should be pursued through regular channels
- Being the source or vehicle for the exchange of gossip and rumors about the school
- Providing a forum for debate regarding world, national, local current events or politics
Advertising or promotional messages for individual participants’ personal “causes” or self-interests.

EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION: The MIS Brand

The Magellan International School’s goal is to communicate effectively within the local, national and international communities to expand awareness and recognition of the school’s unique educational experience.

This will result in attracting families who fit our target profile, faculty and staff who will contribute to our learning and management objectives and partners who can support our strategic vision financially and in other ways.

The Magellan International School has adopted publications and graphics standards that allow the School to have an image and style that is immediately recognizable. We have worked hard to present a single, consistent image to parents, students, donors, and the national and international community in which we operate.

All printed items such as the brochures, posters, clothing items, invitations, event notifications including logos, colors and general presentations must be approved by the Head of Advancement and Administration. This ensures that the content is approved by the school and that we have consistency in terms of message and brand standards.

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION

The following guidelines have been set to ensure that all MIS correspondence (letters, memos, flyers, invitations, notices, etc.) has a consistent and easily recognizable style, and also to help to prepare the composition that will be immediately identifiable as an MIS communication.

It is the responsibility of the Head of Advancement and Administration to proofread and keep a record of all major MIS external communications that are distributed and sent throughout the year. To facilitate this, staff and faculty need to prepare correspondence 3 business days prior to the event or mailing. This helps to avoid scheduling conflicts among all the many activities and events taking place at and around the school.

When sending an MIS communication internally or externally, please keep the following guidelines: When referring to MIS with its full name, the correct form is “The Magellan International School, not “Magellan International School.”

1. All documents, if for external use, **must** have the MIS and IB logos.
2. For formal letters please use letterhead provided by the Head of Advancement and Administration.
3. Our font is Calibri (as used here), preferably in size 12.
4. The possessive form of MIS is “MIS’ In some cases, it may be preferable to rewrite it as “the school’s...”
5. Please note that most abbreviations are used without periods, eg.
   1. The Magellan International School = MIS
   2. International Baccalaureate = IB
   3. Preschool = PrS
   4. Primary School = PS
   5. Middle School = MS
   6. Primary Years Program = PYP
   7. Middle School Program = MYP
   8. Council of International Schools = CIS
   9. Texas International Baccalaureate Schools = TIBS
   10. Department of Family Protective Services = DFPS
   11. The Magellan International School Parent Association = MISPA

6. Letters: It is very important that at least one person proofreads your letter/document. A native speaker should proofread/edit anything written in English. If you are writing in Spanish, please ask a colleague who is a native speaker to review it for you. An independent reader can often be invaluable to the clarity of your piece.

Creating your own Document

Virtual MIS letterhead already has the logo, school address, telephone numbers, and website address imprinted. The Head of Advancement and Administration can provide this.