

HOLY SAVIOR MENARD CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL, INC
PARENTAL
COMMUNICATION POLICY

Approved by: HSM Board of Directors
Effective: December 1, 2021

STATEMENT OF PHILOSOPHY & PURPOSE

Communication can be either constructive or, at times, destructive. The purpose of this Communication Policy is to act as a guide for professional, respectful, constructive and effective communication. We encourage our school parents to communicate with the HSM Administration, Faculty, Staff and HSM Board of Directors. All parties need to hear about the positive elements of the school and affirmation to the persons involved is always appropriate. All parties also need to hear about those issues that concern parents. Concerns should be stated and received in a professional, respectful, and constructive manner that will facilitate growth and improvement.

This policy is intended to encourage and enable HSM parents to discuss serious concerns with the appropriate parties. Parents, students and families who follow this policy may do so without fear of consequences, retaliation or adverse effect. The HSM Administration and Board of Directions welcome, and appreciate, open communication, to discuss issues and concerns with all involved parties.

The following guidelines are supported and endorsed by the HSM Board of Directors and the HSM Administration.

GUIDELINES FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

Defining the Issue: It is important to have a clear understanding of the issue when one intends to communicate an affirmation or concern. Carefully review the facts and circumstances and, with an open mind, evaluate and consider every conceivable cause and decide if there are one or more persons affected or involved. It may be helpful to write down or outline some of these ideas. Once the issue is clear, it is usually helpful to wait at least 24 hours before making an appointment to communicate the affirmation or concern to allow time to put the issue in better perspective.

With Whom to Communicate: The next step is deciding who is the appropriate person to receive your affirmation or concern. It is usually best to initially communicate with those who are

directly involved with the issue. We ask that you follow the chart below as a starting point.

Concerns:	Initially Involve:	Next:	Next:
<i>Student's Performance by Faculty</i>	<i>Student</i>	<i>Student's Parent</i>	<i>Student's Parent in conjunction with Asst. Principal</i>
<i>Student's Performance by Parent</i>	<i>Student</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Asst. Principal</i>
<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Involved Teacher</i>	<i>Asst. Principal</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Discipline</i>	<i>Person who disciplined child</i>	<i>Dean of Student Development</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Specific classroom assignment</i>	<i>Teacher</i>	<i>Asst. Principal</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Club or team members</i>	<i>Involved Coach</i>	<i>Faculty Sponsor</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Athletic coach</i>	<i>Involved Coach</i>	<i>Athletic Director</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Spirit group coach</i>	<i>Involved Coach</i>	<i>Faculty Sponsor</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>Club coordinator</i>	<i>Involved Sponsor</i>	<i>Assistant Principal</i>	<i>Principal</i>
<i>School rules or procedures</i>	<i>Asst. Principal</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>HSM Board of Directors</i>
<i>HSM Board Policy</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>HSM Board Chairman</i>	<i>HSM Board of Directors</i>
<i>Non-Faculty/Other Administration Professional</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>HSM Board Chairman</i>	<i>HSM Board of Directors</i>
<i>Principal</i>	<i>Principal</i>	<i>HSM Board Chairman</i>	<i>HSM Board of Directors</i>

Verbal vs. Written Communication: A verbal "face-to-face" meeting is the most effective form of communication. This type of communication allows for a dynamic exchange and sharing of ideas. It allows for question, answer, clarification, generation of collaborative solutions and prevents a misinterpretation of the "tone" of a communication. Our preferred form of communication is always a personal, "face-to-face" meeting. Written communication is not as effective because it typically states one perspective and does not allow for collaborative discussion of solutions. Written communication that is provided anonymously or that contains derogatory or insulting comments against any person will not be given consideration.

Guidelines for Meetings: The following guidelines are set forth for all meetings between Parents and School Administration, Faculty or Staff.

1. Any parent wishing to have a meeting should make an appointment. Setting up a mutually convenient time helps provide a setting where all parties can focus on the issue(s) without frequent disruption.
2. The HSM Board recognizes that it is healthy for Administration and Faculty to separate their professional career from their home and families. We ask that Parents respect their privacy. Please ensure that all phone calls to arrange conferences/meetings take place during normal school hours.
3. All meetings of any type should take place on a mutually agreeable date and time and in a setting conducive to such a meeting.
4. If appropriate, it is recommended that all involved parties be included in the meeting in order to discuss the situation and concern together.
5. At the beginning of each conference, a mutually agreed upon agenda should be established. The focus of the discussion should remain faithful to the agenda.
6. Once all the predetermined agenda items have been discussed, all parties will conclude the meeting professionally. A follow-up response will be delivered to the individual who initially raised the concern, and all involved parties, within 3 business days. The response will provide an update to any action taken to address the concern and to see if there are additional items that need attention.

Boundaries/Confidentiality: The effectiveness of our educational program and our continued growth and improvement is very much affected by the morale of our Administration, Faculty, Staff and Students. School spirit, morale, and enthusiasm can be bolstered when communication is conducted within certain boundaries. Communication can be destructive when conducted in an inappropriate manner or time, when it involves non-affected parties or betrays the boundaries of confidentiality.

Problems or concerns should involve only the parties directly affected by the issue. For example, if a parent believes that a problem exists between their child and his/her teacher, then the involved parties are the teacher, the student and the parents. It is not helpful to contact other parents to see if their children are having similar problems and can actually create more problems and have a detrimental effect on school morale.

Confidentiality is an essential element in fostering effective communication and respect. *All discussions, conferences and resolutions should remain only with involved parties.* For example, issues involving adults should not be discussed or reviewed in the presence or within the earshot of a child or student. The details of a conference between a teacher and a given family is not a matter for other non-involved parties. *Maintaining confidentiality will encourage respect, cooperation, and will help foster more effective problem solving.*

THE PURPOSE OF THE HSM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Role/Purpose of the HSM Board of Directors:

A parochial school board is a body tied to a school directly affiliated with one or more Church Parishes whose members are selected to participate in decision-making in specific and designated areas of responsibility. HSM is different than a parochial school and is categorized as a “Diocesan School” because it is tied to the Diocese of Alexandria and not to a particular Church Parish. The HSM Board of Directors is a “policy making” group that places the responsibility of enacting its policies on the Principal. The HSM Board’s general responsibilities include:

1. Assisting in developing and implementing long-range and short-range strategic plans in accord with the HSM mission statement, goals and objectives.
2. Developing and formulating HSM policies in accord with Diocesan policies that give general direction for administrative action.
3. Offering financial advice by developing plans/means to finance the HSM educational programs including tuition, development and fund-raising, approving and monitoring HSM budgets and allocating resources accordingly.
4. Evaluating itself periodically to determine its own effectiveness in light of its mission and responsibilities as outlined by diocesan policy and its own constitution.
5. Recruiting, screening, hiring and evaluating the HSM Principal and the school’s performance. Hiring can only occur after submitting a candidate’s name to the Bishop and obtaining the Bishop’s approval.

What the HSM Board of Directors is Not: The HSM Board of Directors does not hire, evaluate, or terminate non-Principal members of Administration, Faculty or Staff and does not administer or operate HSM on a day to day basis. The Board does not tell the Principal *how* to operate the school, rather it gives direction through policy.

COMMUNICATION WITH THE HSM BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Communication With the HSM Board Regarding a HSM Board or School Policy:

Persons who have a general concern that falls within the scope of HSM Board matters and/or is generally in regard to HSM School policies or operations should communicate with the HSM Board as follows:

1. Anyone wishing to address the HSM Board must outline their issues in writing and submit them to the Principal or HSM Board Chairman by the 10th day of the month. The person will be placed on the agenda if the issue falls within the HSM Board jurisdiction. The HSM Board Chairman contact information can be found on the HSM School website.
2. Only those people who have been placed on the agenda will be permitted to address the Board.
3. Those addressing the Board should focus their presentation on only those issues approved prior to the meeting.
4. Any presentation or expressed viewpoint that becomes or borders on a personal attack of a particular person or family will not be tolerated.
5. Any communication which is not expressed in a calm respectful manner will not be tolerated.

At the Board meeting, in the vast majority of instances, the Board members will simply receive, without response or interaction, the comments of the person making the presentation. After the meeting, the Board will determine how to follow-up including, but not limited to:

1. Discussion at a HSM Executive Committee meeting.
2. New business item at the next HSM Board meeting.
3. Personal contact regarding issue by letter, phone call or face to face meeting.
4. Referral to the proper group, Board Committee or Principal.

Communication with the HSM Board of Directors Appeal Committee:

The members of the HSM Board Appeal Committee are all members of the HSM Board of Directors Executive Committee and any person added to the Appeal Committee by the HSM Board of Directors.

If a person, or group of persons, with a concern has followed the HSM Communication Policy and wishes to pursue the concern because it has not been resolved to his or her satisfaction, the person(s) may file an appeal to the HSM Board Appeal Committee as follows:

1. The person(s) with the concern must submit a written request to the HSM Board Chairman within five (5) business days of receiving a final decision on the matter in accord with the communication guidelines listed above asking that the HSM Board Appeal Committee review the matter.

2. The request for review must include a description of the concern, the steps taken to address the issue at the HSM School and/or Board level, the result of that effort and why the person(s) with the concern believes the result was incorrect or not in the best interest of the school.
3. In particular, the person(s) with the concern should provide information on how HSM failed to follow and/or inconsistently applied its own policies or violated any state or federal law, rule, or policy, his/her perception of the treatment or service level received, the perception of the incident and the steps taken to try and resolve the issue(s).
4. The HSM Board Chairman will forward the request to the HSM Board Executive Committee which will determine whether the matter presented should or should not be referred to the Appeal Committee.
5. The decision of the HSM Board Executive Committee will be sent in writing to the person(s) who presented the concern.
 - a. If referred to the Appeals Committee, the person(s) who presented the concern will be contacted by the Appeals Committee Chairman to schedule a meeting to address the concern.
 - b. If not referred to the Appeals Committee, the matter is concluded and no further action will be taken.
6. If a meeting to address the concern is conducted by the Appeal Committee, a decision will be made by the Committee and its decision is final.
7. Whether the matter will be heard by and/or the final decision rendered by the Appeal Committee will be communicated to the involved parties within 5 business days of receipt of the Appeal request or the rendering of a decision.

Approved by the HSM Board of Directors

Date: 11/17/21

HSM Board of Directors Chairman

W. F. Wilson

HSM Principal

Chris Hatlin

HSM Chaplain

Fr. William Green