

Weekly emails from students to parents: This is one of our favorite communication strategies and can be used for a variety of purposes. One team of teachers has their students write to their families every Friday. They carve out 30 minutes to reflect on the week in a variety of categories, including content, habits, skills, and questions. The students cc their home-room teachers, and the teachers have set up the emails to go directly into a folder (so they don't fill up their inboxes!). The expectation is that this is communication between student and family, but the teachers can monitor what's being communicated if necessary. Parents have loved this, and often reply to their kids (parents are told that teachers will not reply to these emails!).

Here are some examples from a 5th grade class:

[Sample email home from student to parent](#)

[Sample scaffolded email](#) (to help students who may struggle writing their own)

[Template to help students organize](#) their thinking before writing the email home

And here is a response from a parent to their child after receiving the first email home:

"Your email MADE MY DAY! Thank you for sharing. I often wish I was more connected to what is happening in school for you. When you were little I used to know every little detail about your day and now that you are older, I don't know as much about your day when you're in school. This email made me feel very connected to you and I appreciate it.

Love you.

Mom"