



# Jackson Preparatory & Early College

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# Communication Procedures & Guidelines



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## COMMUNICATION QUICK REFERENCE GUIDE

### QUESTIONS, CONCERNS, COMPLAINTS: *Where to go and who to contact*

Questions on curriculum, discipline, homework, progress reports, academic standards, class trips, class meetings etc.	Your Learner's Teacher/Academic Coach	
Questions with what is going on in your <b>learner's</b> classroom	Your Learner's Teacher/Academic Coach	
Questions on financial matters including invoicing, fees, or financial assistance	Chief Financial Officer	Gimmie Pilaczynski <a href="mailto:Gimmie.pilaczynski@jacksonpec.org">Gimmie.pilaczynski@jacksonpec.org</a>
Questions surrounding policies and procedures at the school	College Prep Principal Early College Provost	Debra Holton <a href="mailto:Debra.holton@jacksonpec.org">Debra.holton@jacksonpec.org</a> Jonathon Marowelli <a href="mailto:Jonathon.marowelli@jacksonpec.org">Jonathon.marowelli@jacksonpec.org</a>
Questions or concerns about a teacher	College Prep Principal Early College Provost	Debra Holton <a href="mailto:Debra.holton@jacksonpec.org">Debra.holton@jacksonpec.org</a> Jonathon Marowelli <a href="mailto:Jonathon.marowelli@jacksonpec.org">Jonathon.marowelli@jacksonpec.org</a>
Questions or concerns about a non-instructional staff member. Questions regarding school communications. Admissions, Withdrawal, and/or new student concerns	Chief Operations Officer	Alex Elfe <a href="mailto:Alex.elfe@jacksonpec.org">Alex.elfe@jacksonpec.org</a>
General information about events, dates, or any other questions or concerns you do not know who to ask.	Administrative Assistant Administrative Assistant Administrative Assistant	Heather Lee <a href="mailto:Heather.lee@jacksonpec.org">Heather.lee@jacksonpec.org</a> Maureen Fernandez <a href="mailto:Maureen.fernandez@jacksonpec.org">Maureen.fernandez@jacksonpec.org</a> Niki Kish <a href="mailto:Niki.kish@jacksonpec.org">Niki.kish@jacksonpec.org</a>
Concerns from parents or staff regarding an unresolved situation, process, or issue with a school leader	President	Shane Malmquist <a href="mailto:Shane.malmquist@jacksonpec.org">Shane.malmquist@jacksonpec.org</a>
Freedom of Information requests	Chief Operations Officer	Alex Elfe <a href="mailto:Alex.elfe@jacksonpec.org">Alex.elfe@jacksonpec.org</a>
Questions on academics, graduation progress, course progression McKinney-Vento/Housing Insecurity/Homelessness Liaison Title IX Liaison	School Counselor	Jessica Yonnick <a href="mailto:Jessica.yonnick@jacksonpec.org">Jessica.yonnick@jacksonpec.org</a>
Questions regarding athletics. Questions regarding student's behavior	Athletic Director Dean of Students	Serafin Llerena <a href="mailto:Serafin.llerena@jacksonpec.org">Serafin.llerena@jacksonpec.org</a>



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Please note that the school differentiates between **questions** and **complaints** and handles them accordingly. In general:

- **Questions** are those enquiries for which one seeks clarification, support, understanding or further information.
- **Complaints** relate to matters where one wishes to register dissatisfaction and/or concern. Complaints range along a continuum of seriousness from mild irritations and/or differences of opinion/outlook to serious concerns. The manner of handling complaints can therefore vary accordingly. The Academy takes complaints seriously and is committed to a comprehensive followed up. We see complaints as an opportunity for professional and organizational learning and growth. We regard complaints symptomatically, that is, we see them as symptoms of an underlying issue or issues. These may reflect responsibilities at any combination of the levels of:
  - a. The district as a whole
  - b. The school
  - c. The faculty/staff member
  - d. The Falcon Family

*\*Additionally, notwithstanding procedural steps outlined in this document, communications with the Academy's Board, such as email and letters, will be noted as Board correspondence. Such communications will be maintained at the Academy's office at the request of the Chairman.*

## Questions:

If parents have a question about their student(s) and/or their students' education, or what is happening in the classroom, the first step is to speak directly with their Academic Instructor or Academic Coach. The process for establishing this forum is as follows:

- 1) Request the Instructor/Coach arrange an individual meeting at a mutually convenient time.
- 2) Please indicate the issue to be discussed as some lead time provides an opportunity for the Instructor/Coach to give prior thought to the matter.
- 3) Parents may request a meeting with their learner's Instructor/Coach either in person, via email, or by leaving a message with the Office Secretary.
  - a. *At no time is aggressive or disrespectful language acceptable by any party in any communication between a parent and Instructor/Coach. A meeting may be terminated and re-scheduled for another time if required.*

If a parent is dissatisfied with a previous communication surrounding a question, the process is:

- 1) To write their concerns to the school leader (College Prep Principal or Early College Provost), stating the issue and requesting that a facilitated meeting be established with the instructor and the school leader.



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- 2) The school leader is responsible to ensure that this facilitated meeting occurs within two weeks from the letter being received. Another member of the school administration may be called as a second person at this meeting.
  - a. The purpose of a facilitated meeting is to ensure that:
    - i. The parent(s)/guardian(s) can accurately convey their concerns to the instructor.
    - ii. The instructor fully understands them and that they have been witnessed and recorded by another member of the school.
    - iii. The instructor has an opportunity to respond directly to the concerns.
    - iv. The nature of the instructor's response has been heard and understood by the parent.
    - v. A clearly articulated action plan for taking any next steps is made and that a member of the administration be assigned to support its implementation.
  - b. All meetings will be fully documented with records kept in the student files.
  - c. If this initial facilitated meeting does not result in a satisfactory outcome,
    - i. The parent(s)/guardian(s) or instructor address their concerns in writing to the school leader.
    - ii. The school leader will then determine the most effective process to resolve the concerns. This may include another facilitated meeting.
- 3) *Respectful communication, with the student's needs always at the center, is required at all levels of these processes.*

## **Complaints:**

If you wish to register a complaint, please give some initial consideration to how you regard the seriousness of the matter. If you decide that the issue is not seriousness it would be most appropriate for you to try to resolve it through the same process as described above for addressing questions. If, however it is more serious in nature, please refer to the following process.

- 1) Address your complaint in writing or in person to the school leader (College Prep Principal or Early College Provost) and identify that you wish that it be addressed. The school leader will acknowledge the communication and respond in a timely manner; within five business days, depending on the seriousness of the complaint.
- 2) The school leader will request permission that the written record of the information provided is shown to the instructor(s) concerned and that the complainant be identified. (Except in claims of physical, emotional and sexual abuse in which case the matter falls under the JPEC Child Abuse Prevention Policy and Protocols.) The school leader cannot process anonymous complaints.
- 3) The school leader will then, in collaboration with the President, or a nominated senior admin member, assist in the process of response. If the complaint refers to an instructor who has a mentor, it is appropriate that they be part of this process.



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- 4) The School Leader and the President/nominated senior admin member will assess the complaint. In assessing the complaint, they will consider:
  - a. The grounds for the complaint
  - b. The complaint as a symptom of an underlying issue relating to responsibilities occurring, in some combination, in the three levels: organization, teacher, parent/family.
  - c. On that basis they may:
    - i. Address the complaint directly. This address will provide a clear description of their assessment of the matter, the response to be made and the reasons for that response.
    - ii. Share the details of the complaint with the instructor(s) concerned who will, in the first instance, be asked to reply to the complainant with a direct written response to the issues indicating how the concerns will be addressed and in what time frame.
  - d. Should there be more than one complainant or should another subsequent new complainant raise the same or similarly related issues, the President and the School Leader will initiate a review of the program delivered by the teacher. In this case the response to the complainants will come from the President. The President will provide a direct response to the issues indicating how they will be addressed and in what time frame. The President is charged with following the matter up with both the complainants and the instructor(s) within the time frame.
  - e. If, after this response, the complainant is still dissatisfied, they may follow up with the **Grievance Procedure**
- 5) ***\*If the complaint is about a School Leader, a complainant will follow the same steps and communicate directly with the Chief of Staff and President.***

## Communication with the School Administration

*Respectful communication between parents and those working in these administrative and support roles is required at all times.*

The school welcomes feedback and information on any aspect of school operations as a part of a philosophy of overall accountability, responsiveness, transparency, and continuous improvement. Feedback on matters of governance, management or administration should be provided *in writing* to the President, who will then ensure that it is addressed in the appropriate forum.

- 1) The President will acknowledge communications in writing in a timely fashion and confirm the course of action and timelines that will be followed.
  - a. Communicating with the Board of Governors
    - i. If the matter is related to overall school governance, the President may recommend that the communication be addressed to the Board of Governors. Falcon Families or staff members may communicate in writing directly to the Board of Governors through correspondence to the Board Chairman.
    - ii. The Board Chair will:
      1. Acknowledge receipt of correspondence
      2. Ensure that correspondence is tabled at the next available meeting of the Board.



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- 2) Communicating with Academy Employer on Administration matters
  - a. Individuals wishing to give feedback about aspects of school management should initially contact the President.
  - b. The President is responsible for any concerns about the school management and administration, clarification with fees or fee statements, school finances, communication, or school daily administration; educational aspects of the school; including faculty, curriculum, health and safety, etc.
  - c. Contact the Development Coordinator with feedback or concerns on enrollment or withdrawal.
  - d. If the individual is unsatisfied with the outcomes of this initial communication/response, they should submit their concerns in writing to the Academy's Employer Representative clearly stating the issue and requesting that a facilitated meeting be established at which at least one other Administrative and Employer Team members will be present.
    - i. The purpose of this facilitated meeting will be to ensure:
      1. That the concerns or feedback raised by individuals are accurately conveyed to the school Administration.
      2. That the Academy President understands the concerns and that they have been witnessed by representative(s) of the Academy Employer.
      3. That the President has an opportunity to respond directly to the concerns and that the nature of the response has been heard and understood by the complainant.
      4. That the President takes responsibility to support a clearly articulated action plan for taking any next steps.
    - ii. All meetings will be fully documented with records kept in the administration's and employer's offices.

## **Grievance Procedure**

Rationale: *This Grievance Procedure is invoked only in situations when the previously prescribed steps have been followed and one or both participants are still unhappy with the outcomes on the grounds that they were:*

- Unfair or unreasonable and/or
- That they believe that due process as described previously was not followed.

To begin a formal Grievance Procedure a written request must be filed with the President, Academy Employer Representative, or with the Academy Board Chairman. The request must state the evidence to support the claim of unfair or unreasonable treatment and/or the grounds for the belief that due process has not been followed.

- 1) The President, Academy Employer Representative, or the Academy Board Chairman will acknowledge the receipt of the letter within two working days and inform the Board of Governors that a Grievance has been filed (with or without relevant specifics) at a suitable time.
- 2) If there is a conflict of interest by the Chair, the Vice Chair, or other designated board member will be advised, who will then advise the entire board, as above.



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- 3) The President, Academy Employer Representative, or the Academy Board Chairman will assess the nature of the complaint and assign relevant school representatives to a Grievance Team, to follow up the matter. The President will, in most instances, act as the school representative.
- 4) The school representative will contact the individual to discuss their written statement and to inform them of the next steps. The school representative, in consultation with the Grievance Team, will then promptly initiate appropriate actions to resolve the grievance. Appropriate action includes but is not limited to:
  - a. Making enquiries
  - b. Reviewing reasons for the contentious decision or the cause of grievance.
  - c. Reviewing the process of arriving at the contentious decision or the cause of grievance.
  - d. Engaging external mediators to work towards conciliation for employees.
- 5) The school representative will then be responsible for:
  - a. Tabling a report which includes clear recommendations for the resolution of the matter to the Chair of the Board of Governors,
  - b. Providing a written reply to the complainant informing them of the outcome.
- 6) All parties to the grievance are to sign and date a written agreement to the resolutions to the grievance.
- 7) A grievance which was filed to question due process will result in the Board's Governance Committee reviewing the process and submitting to the Board a report on the review.