

PAC Chat #1

Confidentiality

Any parent (or any person for that matter!) that volunteers at the school will be in a position of trust. Whatever you are doing (from helping in the PAC kitchen, to reading with groups of students, to photocopying for a teacher) you may learn information about students or their families.

Your PAC Bylaws likely have a reference to confidentiality:

- **Any information received in confidence by an executive member or representative, from school personnel, a student, parent, or other member of the school community is privileged and must not be divulged without permission of the person giving the information, unless it is a matter of safety or security.**

So, what does that look like? What can you share in casual conversation, and what must you keep to yourself?

- Anything a member of the public would see is fair game to comment on...things like watching a sporting event, (like a basketball game or a race at a track meet), a performance (like a band concert or play), seeing a finished project (at a science fair, art show, or presentation, or posted on a bulletin board or other public forum) or things you see at an open house or all school function.
- Anything you might know because of your involvement at the school is off limits, **even if you know the family well (yep, you can't talk about things you know about a student – even to the student's parents)**...things like, but not limited to, marks (on tests or projects), concerns about behaviour, conflicts between students (unless it's a matter of safety or security), literacy or numeracy levels, attendance, challenges the student is facing, or areas they are ahead of their peers.

It's natural to want to talk about your day. Sharing positive, general things is usually acceptable.

Here are some examples...

- "I was helping with Brady's gym class today. He was having a hoot trying to hoola-hoop!"
- "Oh my stars, I have not seen Mia in forever! Your girlie has grown into a beautiful young lady!"
- "I got to hang out with Amelia's class today. She really liked working with the magnetic math blocks. You might have a future engineer or mathematician on your hands!"
- "Joohan is a good little reader! He read me a book about sharks and seemed quite intrigued by their teeth!"

Keep away from anything that is specific or negative.

Here are some examples of what not to share...

- "I helped with Kelton's math group today. I noticed he's at a level 2 and Mark and Pam's son is at a level 7."
- "Emma seemed to be upset about her mark on her English essay."
- "Bhavan got the highest mark on the spelling quiz! I heard he's the best speller in the class."
- "Kira was in the group I was reading with today. It was kids that need some help catching up."

Final thought...When in doubt, keep it to yourself!

Stay tuned for PAC Chat #2...What is a matter of "safety and security"?