7. **Communicating With Families:** Use the box below to describe tools that you would use to communicate regularly with families about students' progress, achievements, or behaviors. If your environment does not allow family communication, identify how you would provide regular communication with school administrators.

Family Communication	
Tools for Regular Communication: What tools will you use to ensure that you regularly communicate students' progress, achievements, and behaviors to families?	- Remind - MCPSmd .org and .net emails - Class Dojo - Canvas Homeroom pages (provided by MCPSmd) REMIND: In September, 2023 MCPSMd approved and introduced the use of a new communication and messaging tool for this current school year. The tool is called Remind, and all MCPS schools and staff, including teachers, central office students and parents will all have Remind accounts created to allow all concerned with the ability to send and/or receive messages. The other useful part about Remind is that people may choose which communication tool they would like to use: text message, email or phone, people can even choose a preferred language. Prior to its official implementation this year, my first grade team leader suggested we all use Remind and so I got my first try with Remind last year. It worked great. I was able to use it to send quick non-urgent messages. I could send group messages 'reminders" such as "It's PE tomorrow, remind students to wear sneakers and bring a water bottle." Or, "We have Media tomorrow, library books can be returned". I also used it to send little "glows" about the class from the day. I often used the tool to send images so my parents felt like they had a window into our day. I used it to send art project images, hallway images, classroom decorations and so on. It worked really well and I became a fan of it. In emergencies I was also able to use it to send direct messages to a parent or caregiver, as well as send any last minute schedule changes. History: Since I'd only heard of Remind last year, I looked up when it was first developed and apparently the Remind platform was developed in 2011 by Brett and David Kopf. It was also originally called Remind101. The intention of use has remained the same with updates and expansion of features: a communication tool designed to help teachers and students stay connected about class-related matters. (Now, note now the educational group has expanded.)

Remind

https://www.remind.com/blog/remind-rebrand

Also, the platform can be used via SMS, the web, email, iOS app (Apple/Mac devices), and Android app. As an Apple and Mac devotee, the ease of use with my phone was easy and convenient.
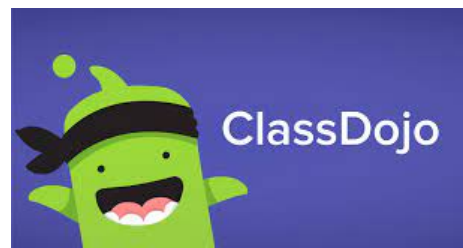
MCPSmd.org and .net
As an employee of MCPS we are automatically given a .org and .net account. The .org account is the secure account also known as our portal account. All official correspondence comes through the teacher or educational staff's member's account. Emails between teachers and families tend to be more formal in approach. I use this platform to email any concerns I might have about a student that occurred during the day.
Interschool/interoffice emails use .org and we receive all county updates through this account. If we receive any emails from outside the organization, they are immediately quarantined. All emails are deleted after a year.

Our .net/gmail email address is more informal and associated with Google. It is the email that is used when documents have been shared to us from our Drives. We can receive external email in this account. I will also use this account to correspond with parents. Usually it is less formal conversations that come from this account. Parents may want to share some fun news that happened over the weekend or send me some images using this email address.

Class Dojo
I've used Class Dojo for about 5 years. While I was told about the tool to use as a classroom management tool, I quickly did use it for that. I did use it for rewards and sending informal messages and images to parents similar to how I use Remind. Younger students like ClassDojo because of the ability to create a monster avatar after an egg has hatched. Each student in the class starts with an egg and as parents initiate the account, the hatching countdown begins.

It's always a fun conversation starter with student's to discuss their style of monster avatar. It gets students invested in the program. Other features I use are the random picker, points distributed whole group or subject specific.

CANVAS homeroom page provided by MCPSMd

Our district uses CANVAS which became in use during the pandemic and remote distance learning. It was a way for teachers to post the work and students and parents to access it.

We still have access to CANVAS and some teachers enjoy building their classroom pages. I'm one of those teachers. I can use CANVAS to post resources to my students and parents. I can post messages about upcoming activities and events. This is not an efficient method for relaying any time sensitive messages and instead it acts as a placeholder for course information and grade specific supplemental educational materials.

I enjoy the creative side of CANVAS. Teachers can have the settings to send alerts to parents when content is updated.