

Academic Support Emails

Many families struggle to support their children academically, either due to time constraints or lack of knowledge about academic concepts. The Common Core State Standards are very rigorous and we teach in very different ways than many parents learned! Parents especially struggle to understand many of the math strategies taught today, and while they may want to reinforce the way their child is learning how to solve math problems in school, they may not know how to. Academic support emails can help provide parents with the resources they need to support their child's learning effectively and efficiently.

Tips about academic support emails:

- Include some sort of visual! This could be a photo of a teaching chart or another graphic
- Videos make great tutorials for families. Learn Zillion and Khan Academy have great videos, or you can find almost anything on YouTube and families don't need an account for that!
- Explain any terms you think families would not understand
- Explain the purpose of the resource in words you know the family will understand

In the following artifacts, a teacher is sending emails to support math strategies and concepts taught. You'll see in the first one that, since the strategy is difficult and cumbersome to explain with just words, this teacher sends a YouTube link that the parents and child can watch at home. As you can see, the teacher names out the strategy and gives some background. The teacher also explains part of the strategy that is not included in the video. In the second email, the teacher explains what was taught and gives Quick Codes for Learn Zillion videos, along with photos of teaching charts used in the classroom. These charts are very familiar for the students, and therefore help them remember what they learned when trying on new strategies at home.

Teachers:

- Know your audience-if many families don't have access to email and/or internet, then you will need to find another way to provide academic support
- Set aside a day each week as your day to send academic support emails
- Set up a system to keep track of which families you email (I like using a blank item analysis form to make sure I send each family at least a few individualized emails during the year)

School Leaders:

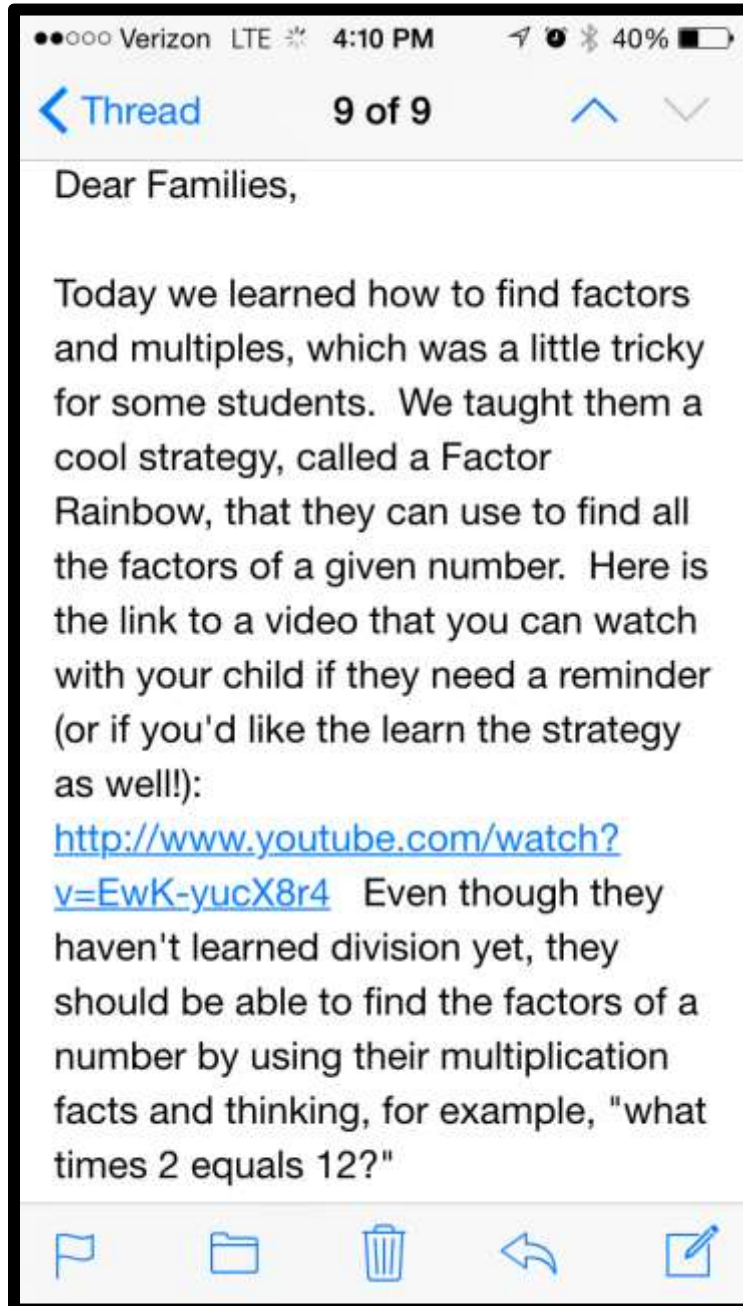
- Allow 'expert' teachers to provide models and/or lead workshops during PD sessions on academic support emails and other family engagement strategies
 - Provide teachers with ideas for websites and resources that are family-friendly
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Created by Ellie Crutcher

- Promote use of home resources in the school newsletter and through school-wide incentives

Sample excerpt from an academic support email:



Sample full academic support email:

Dear Families,

Here are some additional resources to help you and your child understand a few other concepts they missed on their weekly quiz. I included additional practice problems in their Friday Folder. Attached are photos of a few more math charts and links to a few more Learn Zillion videos.

Go to www.learnzillion.com

Type in the Quick Code

Watch the videos!

-Comparing & Ordering: LZ521

-Adding: LZ3122

-Subtracting: LZ3160

Have a great weekend!

Best,
Ellie

Attachments:

