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Description automatically generated with medium confidenceCommunicating About Homework Help and Tutoring

**Tip Sheet**



**What to do:** Use these strategies to establish or strengthen your partnerships with students’ school-day teachers, tutors, and family members. Use the sample forms and logs to develop a system for communicating with the school day as you identify, access, and share resources.

**Why it matters:** Successful homework help and tutoring sessions occur when out-of-school time professionals work toward the same outcomes as school-day teachers.

# Strategies for Building Robust Relationships and Systems of Communication

* **Plan for the Initial Meeting** 
  + Outline out-of-school time homework and tutoring help policies, goals, procedures, and expectations.
  + Prepare contracts or memorandums of understanding (MOUs), if needed.
  + Prepare a checklist of topics, ideas, and questions to help guide the conversation.
  + Develop or collect samples of communication tools and homework logs to share at the initial meeting or follow-up meeting (see samples below).
* **Establish Communications**
  + Compose a brief memo or email to school staff to communicate information about your program’s homework or tutoring help and to request a meeting.
  + Follow up with a call to the designated school staff member to confirm date, time, and place for the meeting.
  + Provide items from the meeting planning template a few days in advance of the meeting; this will remind everyone of the meeting and advise them of topics so they can prepare.
* **Manage the Initial Meeting**
  + Begin the meeting by sharing your program’s homework help or tutoring goals, policies, procedures, and expectations. Ask about the school’s homework or tutoring goals, policies, and guidelines.
  + Review and discuss items on your meeting planning template.
  + During the discussion, update items and customize your meeting template to include mutually agreed-on communication methods and schedules, goals and objectives, curricular resources, course work, supplemental tools, and materials to support students.
* **Check In and Follow Up**
  + Send meeting reminders using the communication system established during the initial meeting (e.g., email, text, phone, other).
  + Communicate with school-day staff members regularly (e.g., daily, weekly, biweekly) to report on student progress and needs.
  + Modify and revise student homework help or tutoring support services as needed.
  + Coordinate efforts to regularly involve and inform caregivers about student progress.
* **Assess and Evaluate**
  + Determine if students reached their goals, and gauge their level of independence with homework.
  + Reflect on students’ overall attendance in homework help or tutoring sessions.
  + Determine whether students showed academic, social, and emotional growth. Share methods of measuring progress with school-day partners, along with the evidence that supports your evaluation (e.g., student reflection logs, samples of student work, grades).
  + Reflect on student improvements in study and homework habits and include observations when communicating evaluation results to school-day partners.

# Sample Planning Meeting Form

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Planning Meeting for 21st CCLC Homework Help/Tutoring Program** | | | | | | | |
| **21st CCLC Provider:**  **21st CCLC Homework Help/Tutoring Instructor:** | | | | | | | |
| **Goals:** | | **Priorities:** | | | | **Procedures:** | |
| **Student Information** | | | | | | | |
| **Student Name:** | **School:** | | **Grade Level:** | | **School-Day Teacher:** | | **Teacher Contact:** |
|  |  | |  | |  | |  |
| **School-Day Information** | | | | | | | |
| How do you recommend that 21st CCLC educators learn about student needs? Email? Phone call? Teacher page or school website? | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
| How can 21st CCLC educators find out about homework assignments? What is the preferred way to learn about missing student work or upcoming assignments or projects? | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
| Do school-day teachers use an assignment sheet or homework log to give homework assignments and track completion? (21st CCLC may also share template.) | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
| Do you recommend any materials that 21st CCLC instructors might use to support students in academics? Can teachers supply a school-based curriculum guide, standards documents, or resource materials? Does the student use any online apps or programs in school? Can 21st CCLC staff be added to an account or access resources to support students’ academic, social, and emotional needs? | | | | | | | |
|  | | | | | | | |
| **Topics to Consider** | | | | | | | |
| Communication Schedule:  How:  When:  Where:  Shared resources: student syllabi, textbooks, worksheets, supplemental resources, school library, apps and access codes, online databases | | | | Instructional strategies — What do teachers use in class: graphic organizers, motivational strategies, log sheets, note-taking tools?  Professional development: Can 21st CCLC staff participate in school-day staff professional development?  Other: | | | |

Customize and share this sample log with school-day teachers for their input.

| **Daily Homework Help/Tutoring Communications Log** | |
| --- | --- |
| **Student Name:** | **Date:** |
| **Teacher Name:** | **21st CCLC Instructor:** |
| *However often teachers send homework assignments, you might choose to have a student record homework expectations and goals for each session. For younger students and students with special needs, 21st CCLC instructors may assist, giving as much responsibility as possible to the student.* | |
| **The homework for today is:** | **I am prepared to complete my homework successfully because I:**   * Copied my homework assignment or have a copy of the assignment from my teacher * Have the correct book, worksheets, and materials * Arrived at my session on time |
| **My goal(s) for this session:**  (*Note: Separate goal sheets can be used to encourage student motivation, attention, and effort.*) | |
| **Student Reflection (Check all that describe how you felt about today’s assignment):**   * I completed the homework easily and independently. * I needed a little help to complete parts of today’s assignment. * I had difficulty understanding what was asked in the homework and needed a lot of help to complete today’s assignment. * I had some difficulty focusing on the assignment but could finish it with support. * I had a lot of difficulty focusing on the assignment and could not finish it because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * I met all of my goal(s) because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * I met some of my goals because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * I did not meet any of my goal(s) because\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * During my next session, it would help if\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Next time, I will\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| **21st CCLC Instructor Notes:**   * Today’s homework took \_\_\_\_\_ minutes to complete. * The student needed a little help and support to complete the homework assignment. * The student needed a moderate level of help to complete the homework assignment. * The student needed a great deal of help to complete the assignment. * Although much support was provided, the student was unable to complete the assignment because \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * These strategies, resources, organizers, manipulatives, or tools helped the student \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Additional comments/observations:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ | |
| **School-Day Teacher’s Notes:**   * In class, I’ve noticed \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Next session, consider \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Pay special attention to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ * Let’s meet on \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to discuss**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** | |

Set up a communications log to keep your complete correspondence in a central place for easy reference. If you maintain the log electronically, you can sort all communications by student. If you prefer a printed log, consider preparing a separate log for each student.

| **Sample Homework Help/Tutoring Summary Communications Log** | | | | | |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **21st CCLC Instructor:** | | | | | |
| **Student Name** | **Form of Communication/Date** | | | **Topic** | **Next Steps** |
| In-person (face-to-face) | Phone | Electronic (email, homework log, other) |  |  |
| 1. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 2. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 3. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 4. |  |  |  |  |  |
| 5. |  |  |  |  |  |

# Messaging Apps and Websites for Homework Helpers, Tutors, Teachers, Students, and Caregivers

Apps and websites for texting or messaging can make it easier for teachers, homework helpers, and tutors to send homework reminders, communicate with students, and share assignments.

# Tips

* Consider equity when you choose a platform or tool.
* Ask teachers, students, and caregivers for their preferred modes of communication, and consult each before selecting a platform. Note: In-person (when possible) is usually the best means of communication.
* Look for useful features, such as translation for family members who don’t speak English.
* Encourage students to establish goals and lead virtual conferences about their progress.

# Examples of Online Communication Tools

* **Seesaw** is a free learning journal that can be used as a digital portfolio of student work. It can include comments made by the student and a homework helper, tutor, teacher, or caregiver. Students can record themselves “thinking aloud” as they work a math problem or read a story or poem. Homework helpers, tutors, and teachers can easily share and keep track of assignments and student progress. <https://web.seesaw.me/>
* **Classting** takes a social media approach to communicating. It offers a free platform for homework helpers or tutors to share information with teachers, parents, and students in real time via smartphones. Information is available only to specified members. Homework assignments can be posted and can include videos, photos, and files. <https://en.classting.com/>
* **SchoolStatus Connect** is a free tool you can use to communicate with families on their preferred platform (e.g., app, email, text message, or phone call), and it automatically translates your messages into more than 100 languages. It works for communicating weekly student homework and has the ability to link files. Tutors and homework helpers can also use this tool to help students, teachers, and parents schedule appointments and sign up for time slots to participate in an event. <https://www.classtag.com/get_started>

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