

Customer Service Standards

We believe that every customer should be:

- Made to feel welcome
- Made to feel important and valued
- Listened to
- Kept informed
- Made to feel comfortable with our service

Touch Point Communications

PURPOSE: To provide consistency in telephone calls, emails, and voicemail practices throughout the Atlanta Public Schools system.

USE: As a reference when answering telephones and emails.

Telephone

1. Answer calls by the third ring.
2. Always answer with a formal greeting.
3. Avoid and limit hold time.
4. Listen and repeat caller's request.
5. Allow callers to express their concerns without interrupting.
6. Inform caller of the extension and contact person's name when transferring.
7. Take messages when needed ... time/date, caller's contact information, and nature of call.

8. Always ask callers if there is anything else you may assist them with.
9. Ensure that voicemail is updated, informative and functional (able to receive messages). Outgoing greeting should indicate business hours.
10. Thank caller for calling.
11. Return calls within 24 hours.
12. Maintain confidentiality and privacy.

Emails

1. Return emails should be completed within 24 hours.
2. Personalize emails by referencing the customer's question and using their names in the response.
3. When referencing a district webpage, provide a "deep link" that directs the customer to the information that addresses the specific needs of the request.
4. Proofread all responses for clarity, completeness, and comprehension.
5. Maintain confidentiality and privacy.

Difficult Situations

PURPOSE: To help work through difficult situations with customers.

USE: As a reference when dealing with upset and angry customers over the phone and face-to-face.

1. Allow customers to express their concerns by listening before speaking.
2. Don't argue with the customer. Maintain a professional demeanor.
3. Apologize and take ownership of the problem. Refrain from blaming anyone else.

4. Empathize with the customer.
5. Repeat and rephrase to make sure you understand the problem the customer may be having.
6. Thank the customer for being the customer.

7. If you can't reach a resolution with the customer, escalate the matter to another level of authority.
8. Focus on options and alternatives.
9. Maintain confidentiality and privacy.

Walk-Ins & Visitors

PURPOSE: To ensure a welcoming environment for all customers.

USE: As a reference any time a customer enters the workplace.

1. Greet each visitor with a smile.
2. Use a positive and professional greeting.
3. Treat all customers with respect and dignity.
4. Always remain courteous during customer interactions.
5. Maintain eye contact with customers.
6. Speak the same language as the customer – making sure that the customer understands what you are communicating to them.
7. Give visitors specific directions when referring them to other locations.
8. Maintain confidentiality and privacy.

Colleagues as Customers

PURPOSE: To ensure appropriate discourse between colleagues, process partners, and all internal customers.

USE: As a reference to establish and promote a spirit of teamwork within the workplace.

1. Always remember that students and APS staff are customers, too.
2. Speak respectfully to visitors and to each other.
3. Always remain courteous and respectful during interactions with employees and internal customers.
4. Maintain confidentiality and privacy.