SCHOOLMESSENGER®

SchoolMessenger App

User Guide - Mobile (Android)

West Corporation

100 Enterprise Way, Suite A-300

Scotts Valley, CA 95066

888-527-5225

www.schoolmessenger.com

west ®

Table of Contents

Welcome!

ⓘ **Important**: Parents and student users who require assistance should contact their school or district.

The SchoolMessenger app allows schools and school districts to inform parents and students about school related emergencies, school closures, or other school-related issues.

- **As a Teacher,** you have the ability to invite students, parents and/or guardians to join groups you've created, and send chat messages to them directly.

- **As a Student, Parent or Guardian,** you can join a teacher-created group and participate in the classroom discussions. You can also customize how you receive messages those messages.

- **For schools subscribing to SchoolMessenger's SafeArrival system**, parents have the ability to report planned absences, late arrivals, early departures to the school in advance.

- **Roster Data Sync:** Districts can use imported Roster Data files to sync users' SchoolMessenger Communicate account with their SchoolMessenger app account. Users with successfully synced accounts can participate in automatically-created groups created based on classroom data. We'll refer to these groups in this guide as **Roster Data Groups**.

You will find all of these messages in an easily-accessible inbox. If you are associated with students in different schools or districts, all matching records will be linked to your account. With flexible preference controls, most kinds of communication can be configured to be accessed exclusively via the SchoolMessenger app.

Three Types of SchoolMessenger App Users

School-Affiliated User

This is a teacher, student, or parent who is directly affiliated with a school or district, and who receives various types of SchoolMessenger Broadcast messages from the school or district. This user will have the ability to retrieve all these messages in the SchoolMessenger app, in addition to participating in the groups that general users also have access to.

School-Affiliated User with Roster-Synced Data

This is a teacher, student, or parent whose school has used imported student, parent, teacher and classroom data to automatically create groups in the app. District admins can restrict teachers to only participate in roster data groups, or can enable the ability for teachers to also create groups with an access code.

General User

This can be anyone who has signed up to use the SchoolMessenger app and has been granted access to one of the discussion groups created by a teacher. They could be a member of the community who has been invited by a teacher (e.g. an aeronautical engineer offering advice and insights to senior high school students interested in the physics of flight and aircraft design).
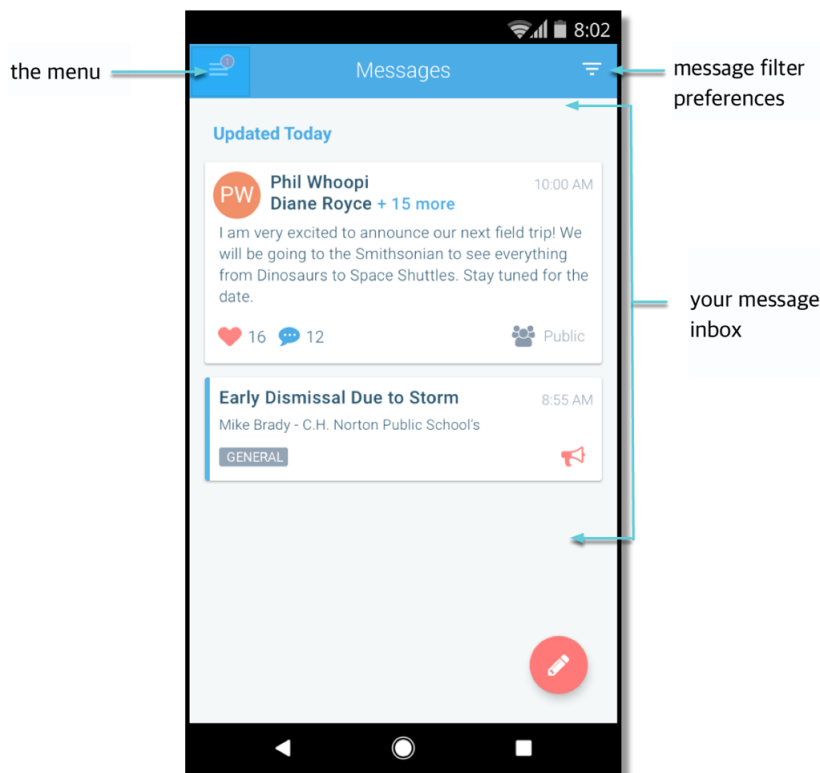
SchoolMessenger and the TCPA
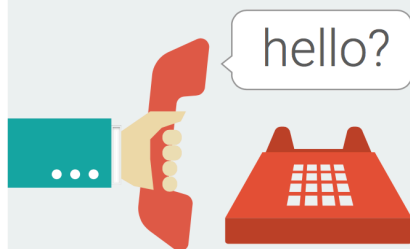
The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (47 U.S.C. 227) is a law that was passed by the US Congress in 1991. This law places restrictions on telephone solicitations and the use of automated telephone equipment, protecting the public from receiving unwanted phone calls.

While schools enjoy exemptions from some of these restrictions, **the preference configurations within the SchoolMessenger App allow you to set your consent state ("yes" or "no") for each phone number associated with your account.** With the exception of emergency calls, which cannot be exempted, any phone number whose consent state is set to "no" will not receive calls from SchoolMessenger.

Look and Feel

The SchoolMessenger app Android interface is simple and uncluttered. When you first log in, the **Messages** inbox appears as the default screen. You can navigate SchoolMessenger's other features by taping the menu option in the top left corner of the screen.
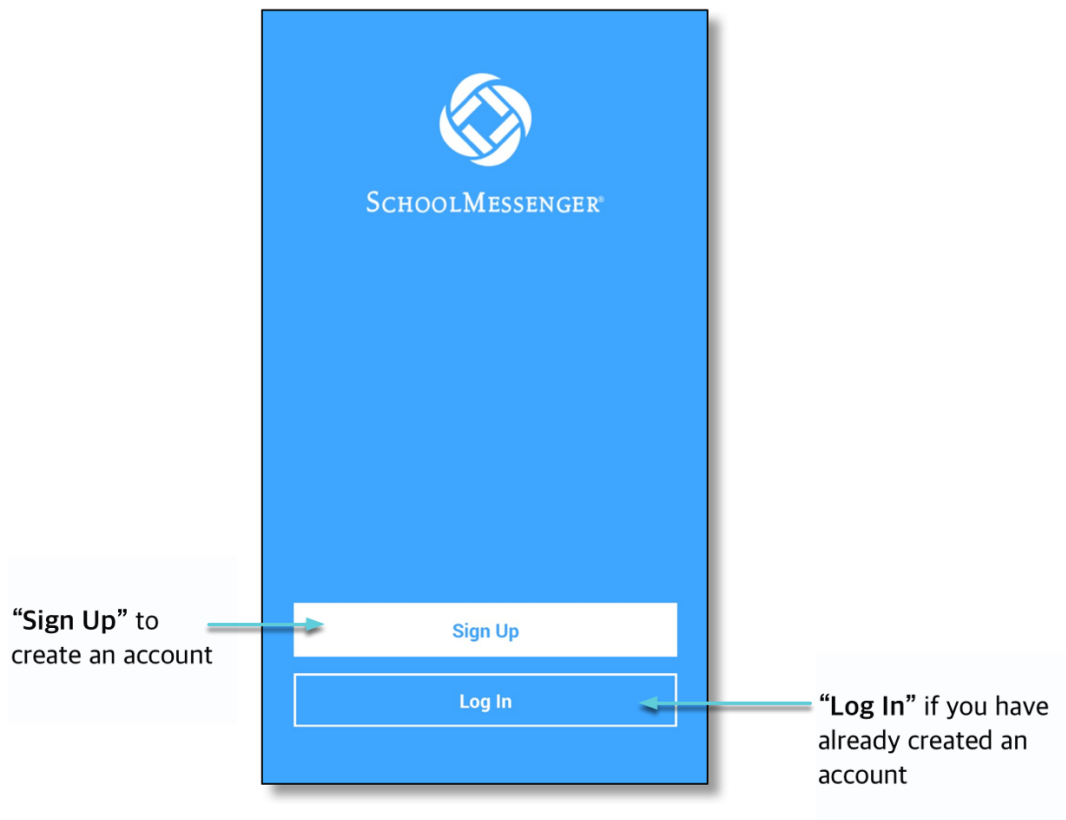
The below screenshot is an example of what you will see after you first log in. The content of your work area depends on the selected menu item. For example, the **message filter** option in the top right side only appears in the **Messages** screen.

Initial Menu

You have 2 options after downloading the app and launching it on your Android device:

Creating a SchoolMessenger App Account

You must create an account in the SchoolMessenger app before you can start using it. Your user type determines which messages you receive and how you receive them.

- **If you are a school-affiliated user,** our support teams would have entered your email address into their system. As your information is registered in the school or district records, you will receive all the messages you have subscribed to receive from the school. You must use this **same email address** in creating your SchoolMessenger app account.

  Your school's district admin will configure your message settings and what features you will see when you log in.

- **If you are a general user,** you can still participate in any of the SchoolMessenger app groups that you have been invited to participate in, but you will not, of course, receive Broadcasts from the school or district.

Sign Up

1. Tap **Sign Up** at the bottom of your phone screen.

   > **Important**: If you already have an email address that the school has on record, use this email address when you sign up.

2. Enter your email address, location and a password.

Your password must contain have at least:

- 1 lowercase letter
- 1 uppercase letter

- 1 number
- 6 characters

You will be sent an email at the email address provided. Click the link in the email to verify your account. A new page will open on your browser.

> **Note**: the link in the email is only valid for 24 hours. If you don't click on it and log into the SchoolMessenger app within that time period, it will expire and be of no further use. You will have to restart the registration process and have a new email sent to you with a renewed link.

3. Return to the SchoolMessenger app.

4. Enter the same email address and password you used to create the account.

5. Tap **Log In**. A message appears that you've successfully logged in. You may now launch the app and log in using the same email address and password you used to create the account.

Log In

To log into the SchoolMessenger app:

1. Tap the **Log In** button.

2. Enter the email address you used to register in the SchoolMessenger app.

3. Enter your password.

4. Tap your location.

5. Tap the **Log In** button.

Tap on **Forgot your username/password?** if you forgot your password. An email will be sent to you allowing you to register a new password.

Provide Consent for New Phone Numbers

When you first sign into the SchoolMessenger app, you will receive the following prompt for any phone numbers at which you have not already provided SchoolMessenger consent to receive voice calls.

Select your preference and this will be saved for each of your phone numbers. Consent preferences can be changed at any time through the SchoolMessenger app's **Preferences** option (discussed later).

We recommend that you spend a few moments considering your notification preferences to ensure that you receive all the emails, phone calls, and text messages you would like to receive.

Note: Certain factors (a changed of phone number or billing info, or a temporary disconnection) may nullify consent for a phone number for which you had previously provided consent. If this happens, you will see the above permission prompt reappear. Simply reselect and save your preference.

Log Out

1. Tap the main menu icon in the top left corner of the app.

2. Tap **Setting**.

3. Tap **Logout**.
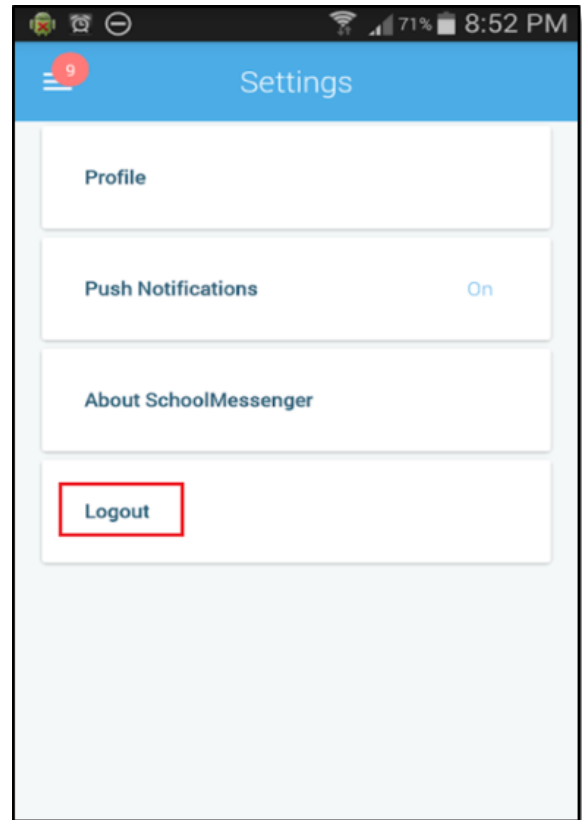
Set Up Your User Account

Once you have logged in successfully, you must set up the SchoolMessenger app for your use. Set up includes the following:

- setting up your User Account

- setting your Preferences (school-affiliated users only)

- joining Groups that you have been invited by teachers to join (guardians/students)

- creating Groups that you will invite parents and students to join (teachers)

Follow the below steps to set up your **User Account**:

1. Tap on the menu button [≡] on the upper left corner of your screen.

2. Tap on the **Settings** option.

3. Tap on the **Profile** option.

4. Enter your first name, last name, and your **Role** type (Teacher, Student, or Guardian).

Your settings must be completed before an account can be used. Failure to do so will cause the system to log you out, and you will be prompted to enter this data the next time you log in.

Important: You can change your Role type (from teacher, to student, to guardian) whenever you like, BUT in doing so, you obliterate your entire message history and essentially restart as a new user. If you are a teacher and a guardian, you can use two different email addresses to register and to login into the system.
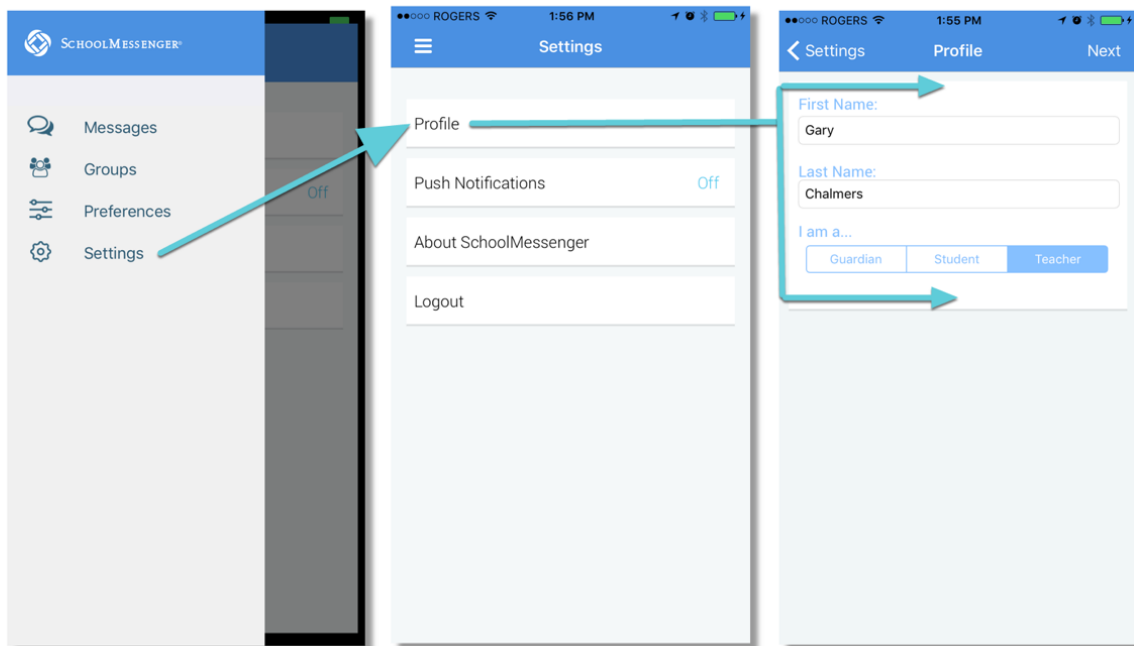
# Preferences (School-Affiliated Users Only)

To configure your **Contact** and **Message Preferences**:

1. Tap on the menu button ▤ on the upper left corner of your screen.

2. Tap on the **Preferences** option. The preferences on this page affect SchoolMessenger Broadcasts that may be sent to you from the school/district. They do not affect messages sent and received from within the SchoolMessenger app.
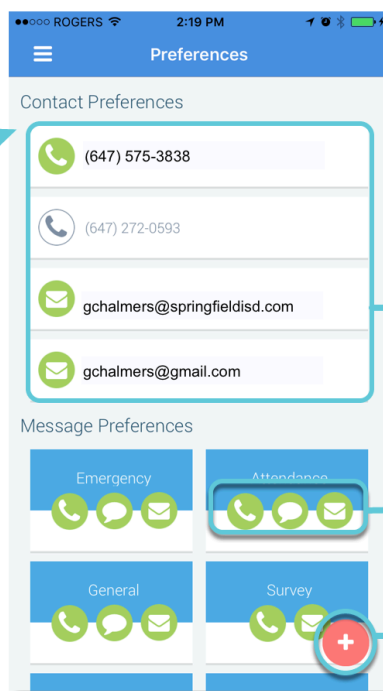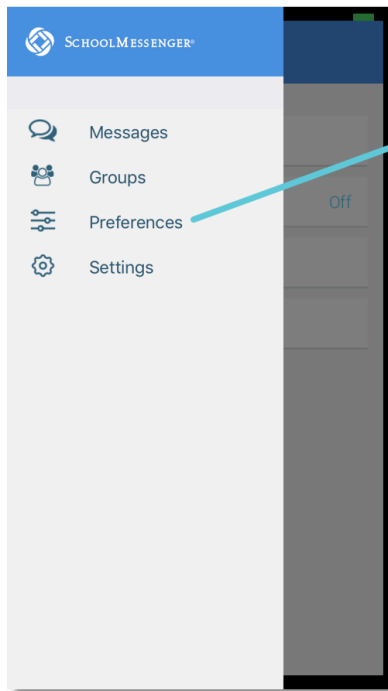
Your Preferences screen shows your contact information and the types of messages which the school/district has set up in their SchoolMessenger setup. Hence, more or fewer message types may appear here with unique names, defined as such by the school/district.

Your Contact Preferences shows all the email addresses and telephone numbers (voice and SMS text) at which you can be contacted. Phone numbers that are grey are pending consent approvals.

Select how you want to be contacted for each message type by clicking the icon. If green, the notification message type is enabled. If grey, you will not receive the notification in this message type.

Click the Add button to either add a new phone number or email address.

Joining a Group (Parents and Students Only)

Teachers can set up conversation or discussion groups in which students, guardians, and general users can participate. But before such participation can occur, participants must be invited and provided an access code to join the group.

Participants can join as many groups as they are invited to participate in. To join a group:

1. Tap on the **Groups** menu option.

2. Tap on **JOIN A GROUP USING A CODE.**

3. In the **Join a group** window, enter the **access code** that was provided to you by a teacher.

4. Tap the **Join** button in the top right of the screen.
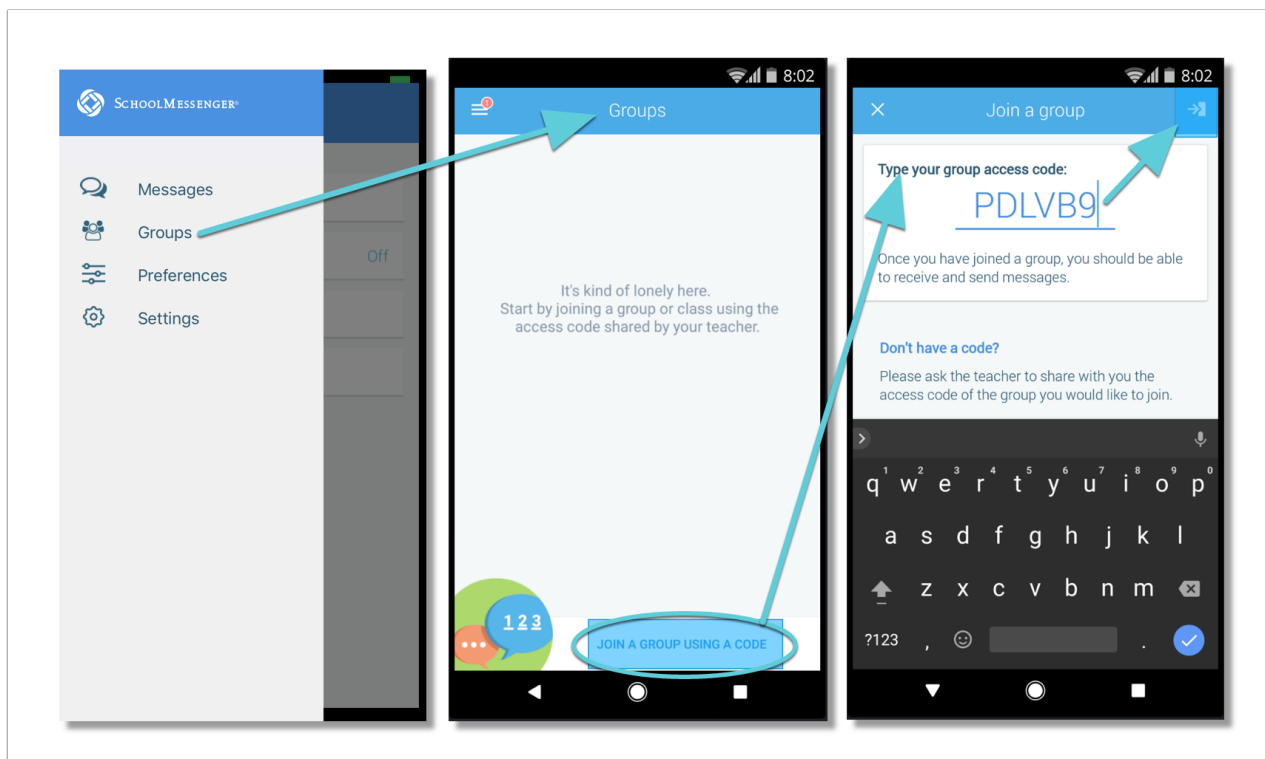
For Roster Data Groups

If the system syncs your email address with roster data your school has imported, you will find yourself already signed up to Roster Data Groups. The system automatically creates Roster Data Groups based on Classroom and Teacher data.

Leaving a Group (Parents and Students Only)

Leaving a group is very simple.

1. Tap on the **Groups** menu option.

2. Tap on **LEAVE GROUP** to the right of the group you wish to leave, and then confirm your leave in the next window.

For Roster Data Groups

You will not have the option to leave Roster Data Groups you're assigned to. If you're a participant of a group you're not supposed to be a part of, contact your school district to correct this.

Contact Links - Parents and Guardians

(Plus Module-Subscribed School-Affiliated Users Only)

The **Contacts** menu option will only appear in the SchoolMessenger app implementation in which the school/district has subscribed and purchased the SchoolMessenger app Plus Module.

Guardian records in SchoolMessenger are linked to students attending one or more schools or districts. In fact, the SchoolMessenger app accounts are validated with reference to those records.

To see which students are linked to a guardian account, tap the **Contacts** menu option:
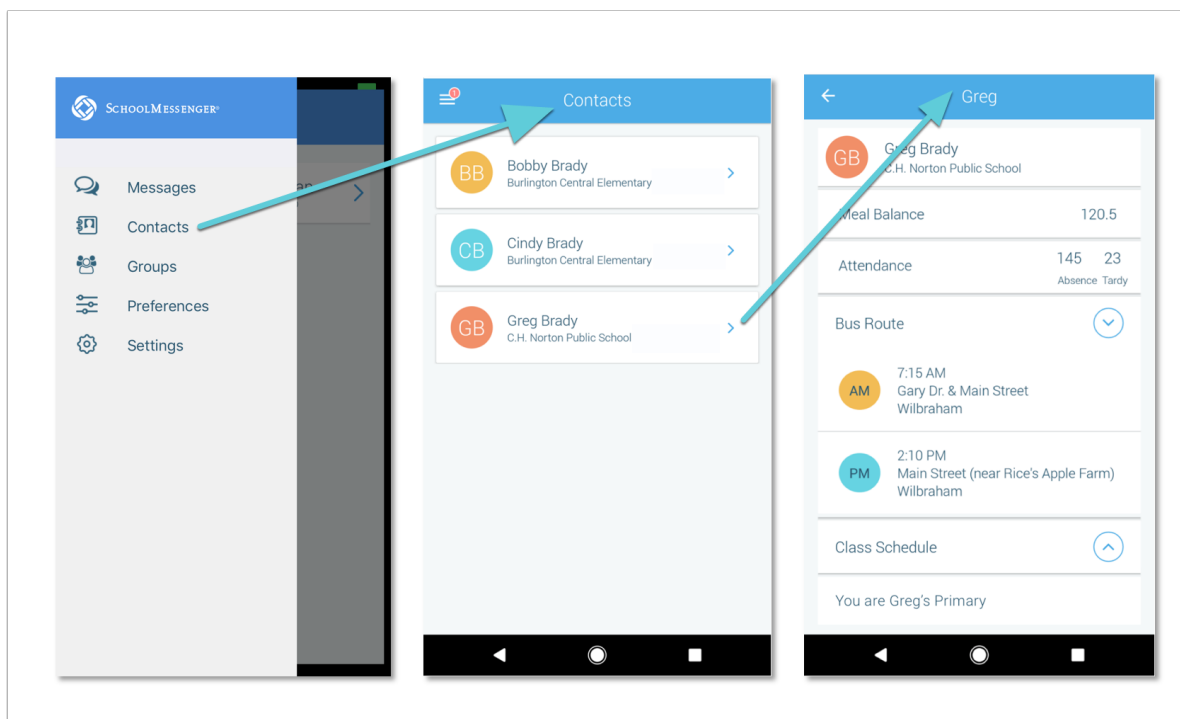
In the above example, the Guardian's children appear in their Contacts. Expanding Greg's Contact Profile reveals his Meal Balance, Attendance, Bus Route, Class Schedule and that the Guardian logged in is their Primary contact.

Numerous other kinds of information may appear in the student's profile list for any student, depending on how the SchoolMessenger app Plus Module has been configured by the school and the types of information that are being tracked for students by the school.
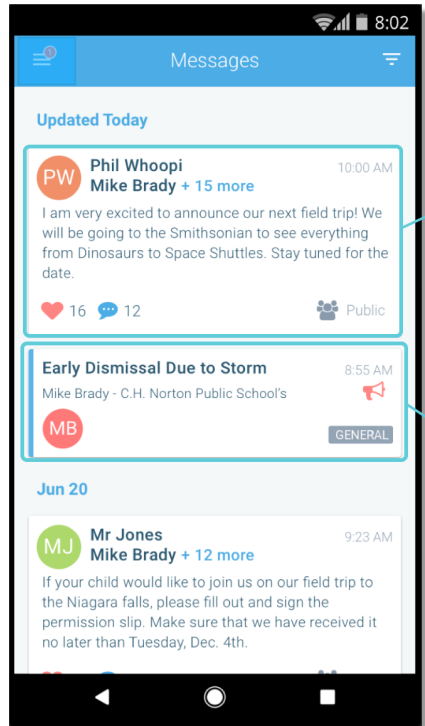
About Messages

The SchoolMessenger app's Messages page displays all messages (voice, email, or text) sent to you from your school and/or district during the last 30 days, as well as the messages and conversations that have taken place in the SchoolMessenger app groups you have joined.

They are sorted by newest first, oldest last. There are two types of messages:

1. Sent by the school or district as SchoolMessenger Broadcasts to school-affiliated users (e.g. Emergency or Attendance messages).

2. Sent either publicly or privately by participants who are members of a SchoolMessenger app group.

Message Components

The SchoolMessenger App-only messages will include:

- the initial-icon of the group sender
- the name of the sender
- the name of the contact the message has been sent to, followed by the number of other group members who have received the same message. Clicking on the **+ [number] more** link will produce a list of the names and roles (student/guardian) of all the other recipients of the message
- the content of the message

The school/district Broadcast messages will include:

- the title of the school/district message
- the name of the sender and the name of the school/district
- the message type (e.g. General, Emergency, Survey, etc.)
- the time on which the message was sent
- the initial-icon indicating whom the message was sent to (when sent to a student) or the student concerning whom the message is about (when sent to a guardian). Multiple circles indicate that the same message has been sent for multiple students

Note: The SchoolMessenger app automatically assigns the color and initial of the each of the student-identification circles. Neither the color nor the initial are editable.

Anatomy of a Broadcast Message

School-Affiliated Users Only

The following screen shot shows a SchoolMessenger Broadcast message sent from teacher Mike Brady to a student.

Messages can be filtered to display all messages, only Unread messages, and various other categories.

- Clicking the Broadcast message in your message inbox opens the message in the Broadcast Details window.

- The message originated as a General-type Broadcast from SchoolMessenger (as opposed to a posting within the SchoolMessenger App itself, in which case nothing would appear here).

- The blue line beneath **Email** indicates that the currently selected message format is **Email**.

Voice messages appear with audio controls and a timer, Play/Pause button, Stop button, and a seek bar

Broadcasts can also be sent in SMS text form.

Teacher Messaging

In addition to receiving school/district messages and engaging in the SchoolMessenger app-based discussions just like any other SchoolMessenger app user, teachers have additional abilities that students and guardians do not have.

Only teachers can do the following:

- receive SchoolMessenger messages sent from the school or district

- create SchoolMessenger app groups and invite students and guardians to participate in them

- send messages to selected recipients (any combination of all/selected students/ guardians)

- delete messages that have been posted in any of the forums that they have created and control

- engage in discussions and conversations in any of the forums that they have created

**While students and guardians can only:**

- receive SchoolMessenger messages sent from the school or district (if their account is school-affiliated)

- engage in discussions and conversations in any of the forums they have group participation in

- delete their own comments

If group creation is **disabled**, a teacher's Groups page will not have a **CREATE A GROUP** button.
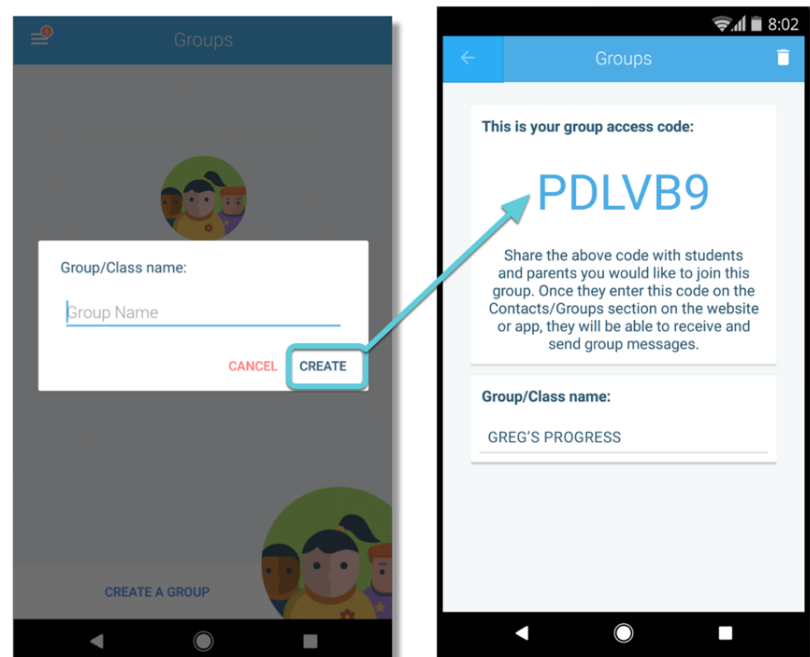
Create A Group

1. Tap on the **Groups** menu option. Groups you've already create will appear here.

2. Tap **CREATE A GROUP**.

3. The SchoolMessenger app will create your group, and then generate and assign a **group access code**. This is the code that anyone wishing to join the group will be required to enter before they can become a member of the group. A unique code is generated for each group you create. Distribute it to all those you would like to invite to the group you created.

4. Tap on **CREATE**. The group you just created will appear on the next screen. It will have 0 members.
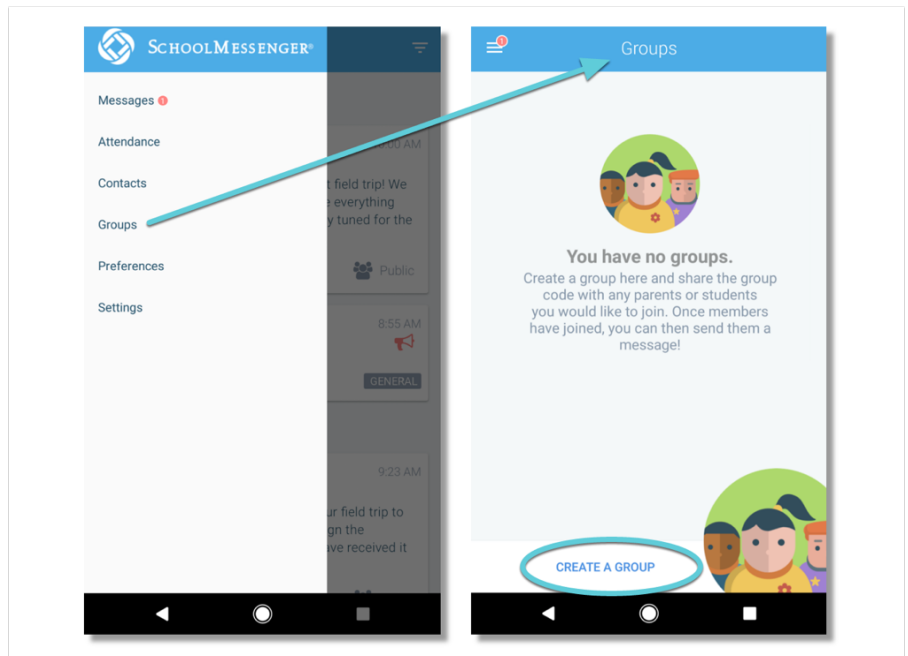
You cannot add members once the group is created; only users who have the unique Group Access Code with SchoolMessenger app accounts can add themselves.

If group creation is **disabled**, a teacher's Groups page will not have a **CREATE A GROUP** button
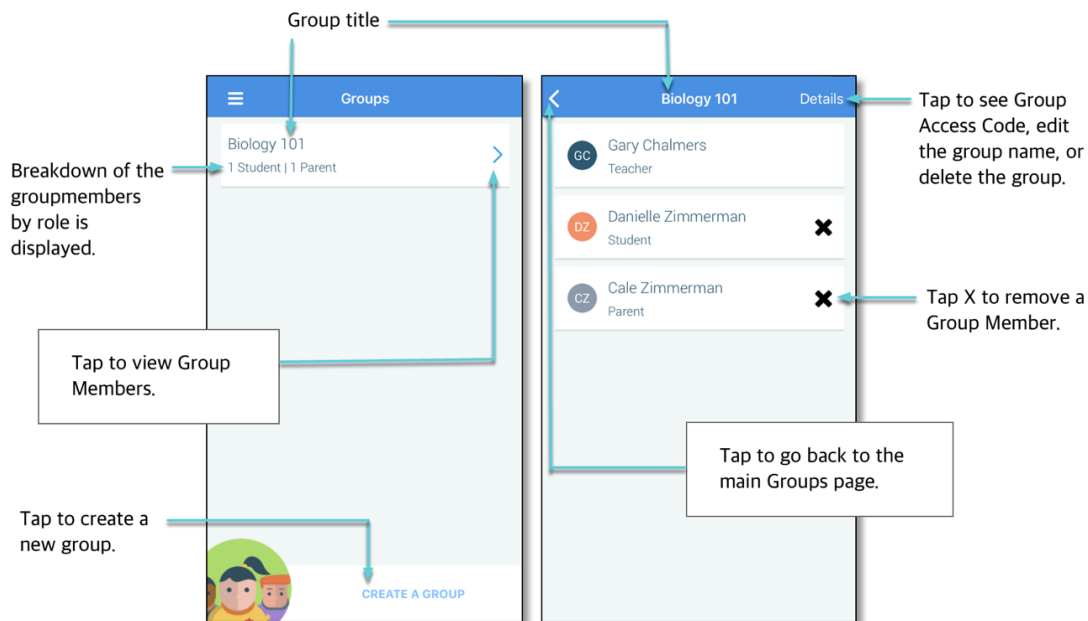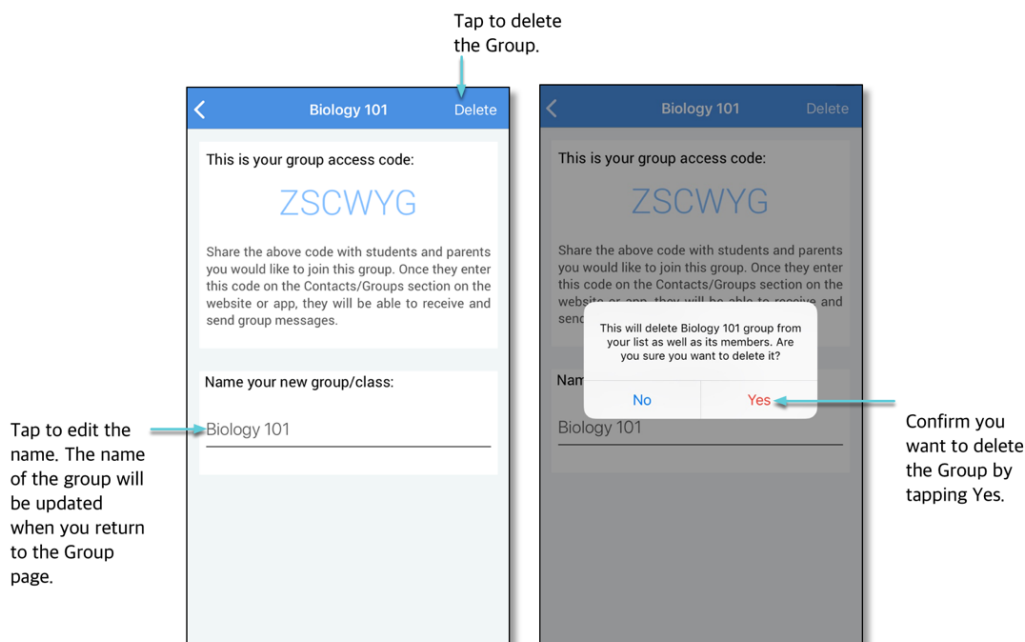
Viewing Groups

For user-created groups:

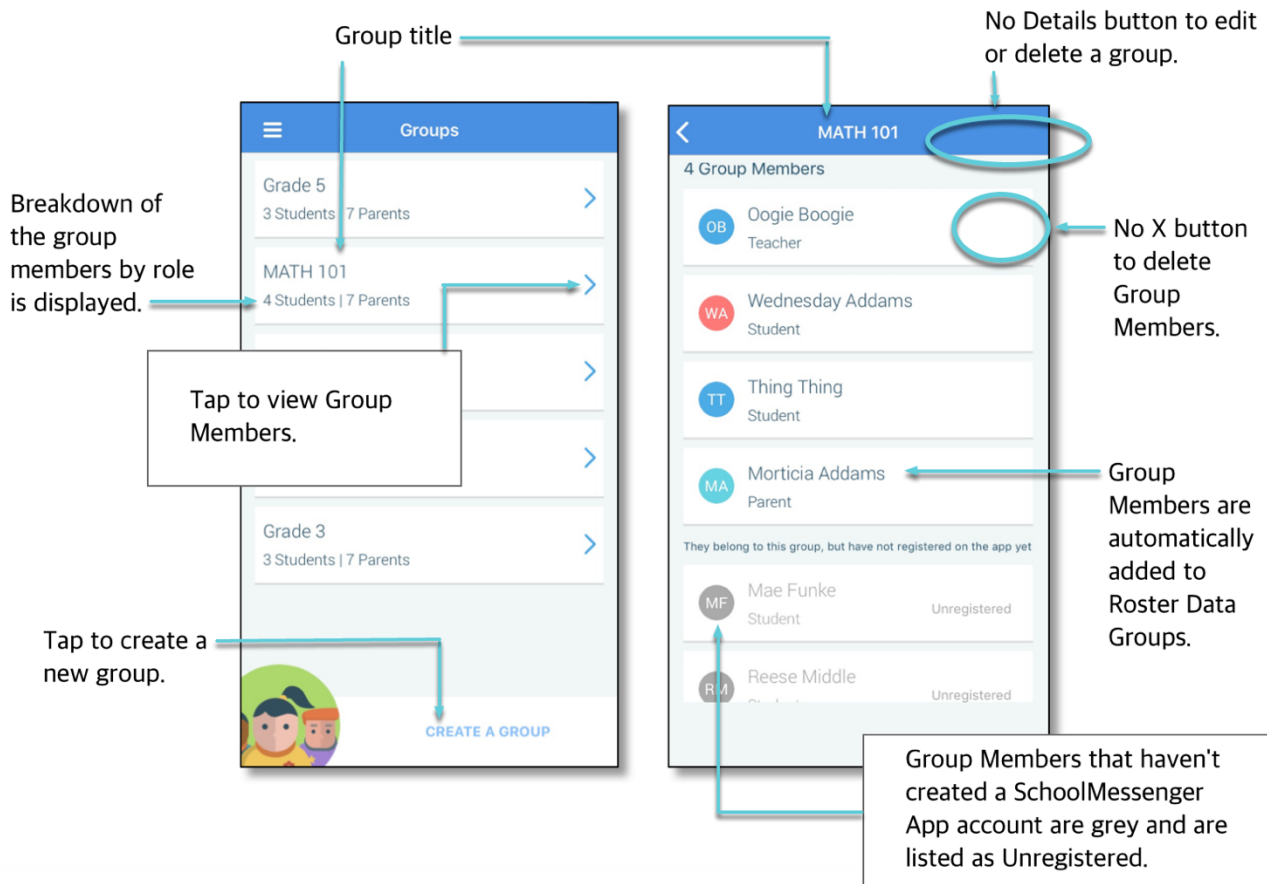Tap on the **Groups** menu option to view a full list of all of the groups you've created.

Group title

Breakdown of the groupmembers by role is displayed.

Tap to see Group Access Code, edit the group name, or delete the group.

Tap X to remove a Group Member.

Tap to view Group Members.

Tap to go back to the main Groups page.

Tap to create a new group.

Delete and Rename the Group

Tap on the **Details** button to edit or delete your group.

Tap to delete the Group.

This is your group access code:

ZSCWYG

Share the above code with students and parents you would like to join this group. Once they enter this code on the Contacts/Groups section on the website or app, they will be able to receive and send group messages.

Name your new group/class:

Biology 101

Tap to edit the name. The name of the group will be updated when you return to the Group page.

This will delete Biology 101 group from your list as well as its members. Are you sure you want to delete it?

No   Yes

Confirm you want to delete the Group by tapping Yes.

For Roster Data Groups

Group title

No Details button to edit or delete a group.

Breakdown of the group members by role is displayed.

Tap to view Group Members.

Tap to create a new group.

No X button to delete Group Members.

Group Members are automatically added to Roster Data Groups.

Group Members that haven't created a SchoolMessenger App account are grey and are listed as Unregistered.
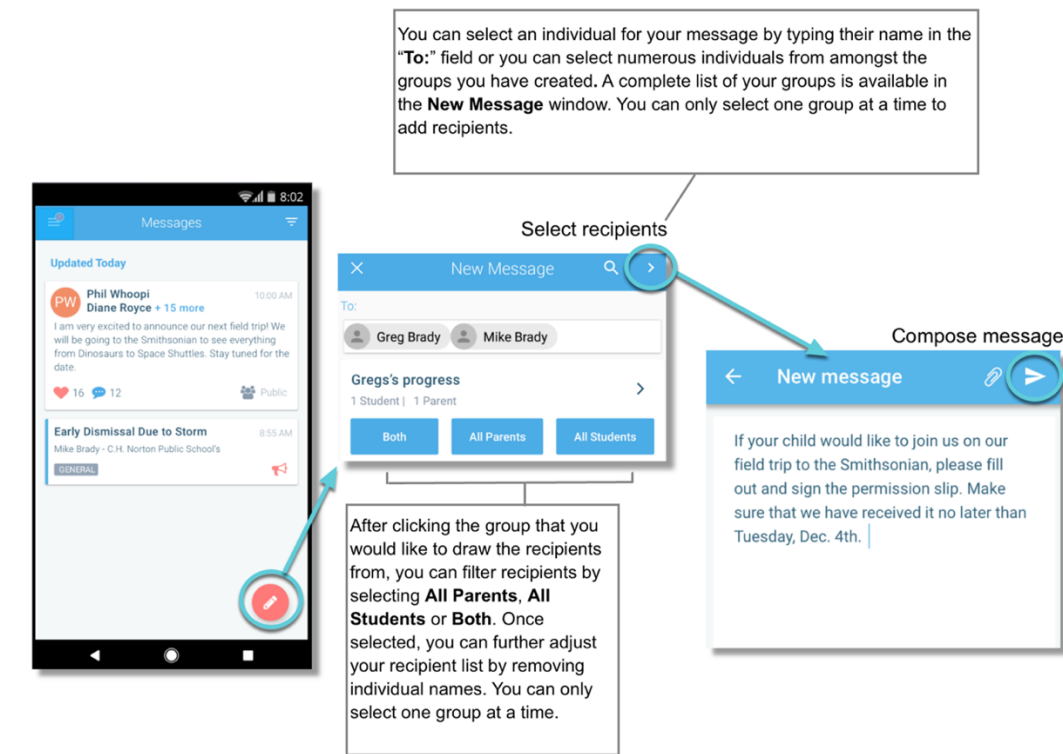
Unlike user-created groups, Roster Data Groups cannot be edited by the teacher. There isn't a **Details** button that will allow the user to change the group name or delete the group. Teacher's also can't remove or add participants and participants can't remove or add themselves into roster data groups.

Create a Message

Creating a message is a very simple process. You select the recipients your message will be sent to, designate whether their comments will be readable to others in the group, solely by the teacher, or not at all (comment not permitted).

To create a **Message**, tap on the **Messages** menu option:

You can select an individual for your message by typing their name in the "**To:**" field or you can select numerous individuals from amongst the groups you have created. A complete list of your groups is available in the **New Message** window. You can only select one group at a time to add recipients.

Select recipients

Compose message

After clicking the group that you would like to draw the recipients from, you can filter recipients by selecting **All Parents**, **All Students** or **Both**. Once selected, you can further adjust your recipient list by removing individual names. You can only select one group at a time.

For Roster-Data Groups

Teachers will not be able to send messages to Group Members who haven't created a SchoolMessenger app account. These participants are considered "**Unregistered**" and you won't be able to select them as recipients to your message.

These unregistered participants are not included when you select either the **All Parents, All Students** or **Both** buttons.
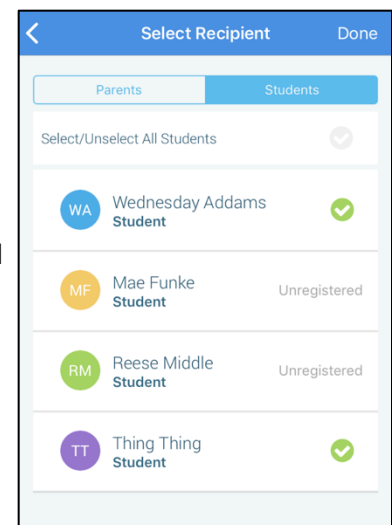
Select your Comment Settings:

If you're ready to send your message, tap **Send**. You'll then be prompted to select your **Comment Settings**:

- **Everyone in the conversation:** comments to your message will be seen by the entire group

- **Me Privately:** only the teacher will see comments sent by individuals

- **Comments not allowed:** no one will be able to send a response

- **Commenters' names:** check the box to allow everyone to see everyone's names

Teacher Messaging – Replies Disabled

The latest version of SchoolMessenger allows System Administrators to disable replies to your Teacher Messages. If your replies have been disabled, you will only have 1 option when sending your message - "Comments Not Allowed".
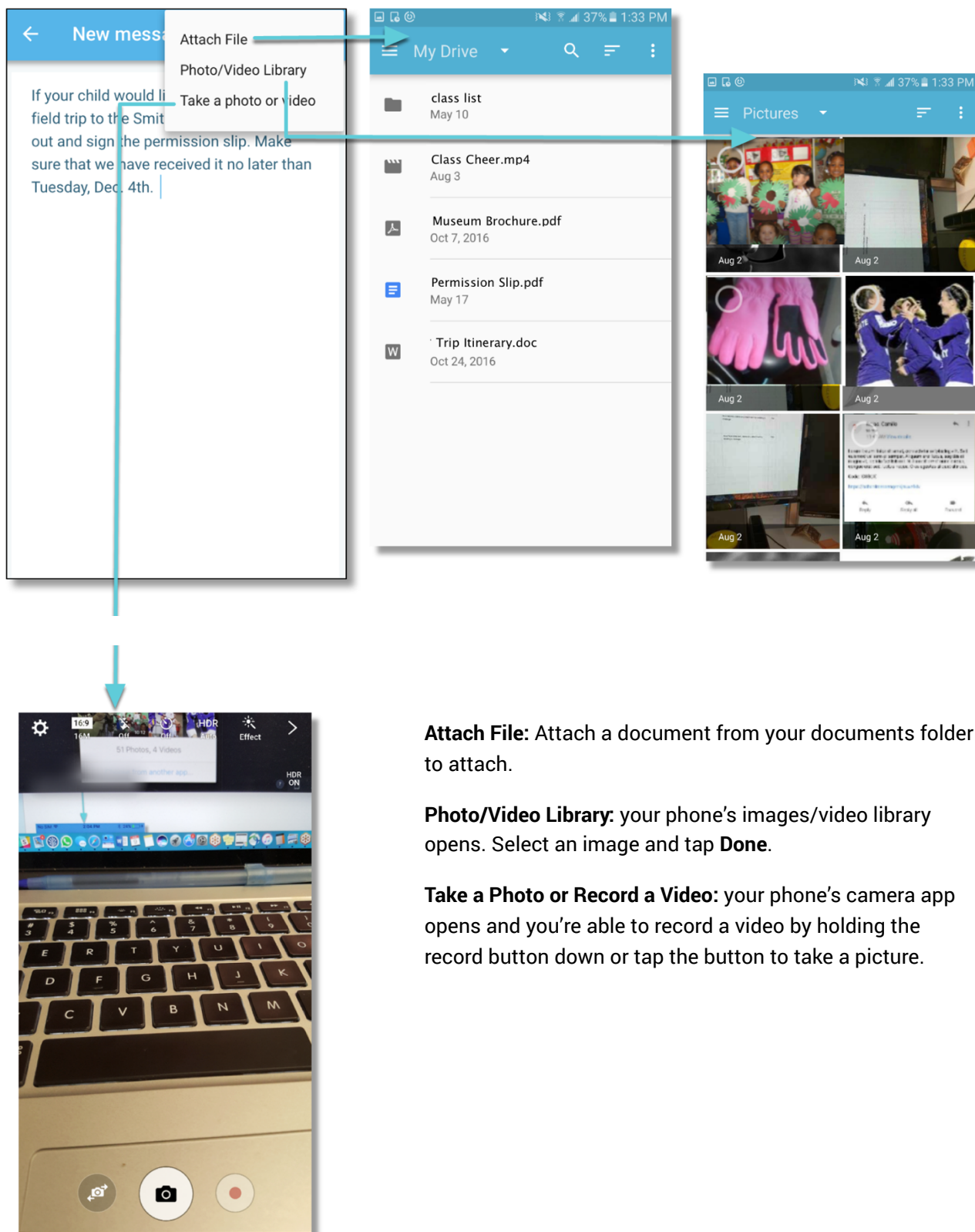
Add an Attachment

Use attachments to send the following file types to parents, guardians and students:

- images (PNG, JPG)

- documents (PDF, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX)

- video (MP4)

- audio (MP3, WAV, M4A)

Note that the **max file size** is 20MB and you can only send **1 attachment** per message.

To attach a file, tap the **Paperclip icon** in the Compose Message window.

Attach File: Attach a document from your documents folder to attach.

Photo/Video Library: your phone's images/video library opens. Select an image and tap **Done**.

Take a Photo or Record a Video: your phone's camera app opens and you're able to record a video by holding the record button down or tap the button to take a picture.
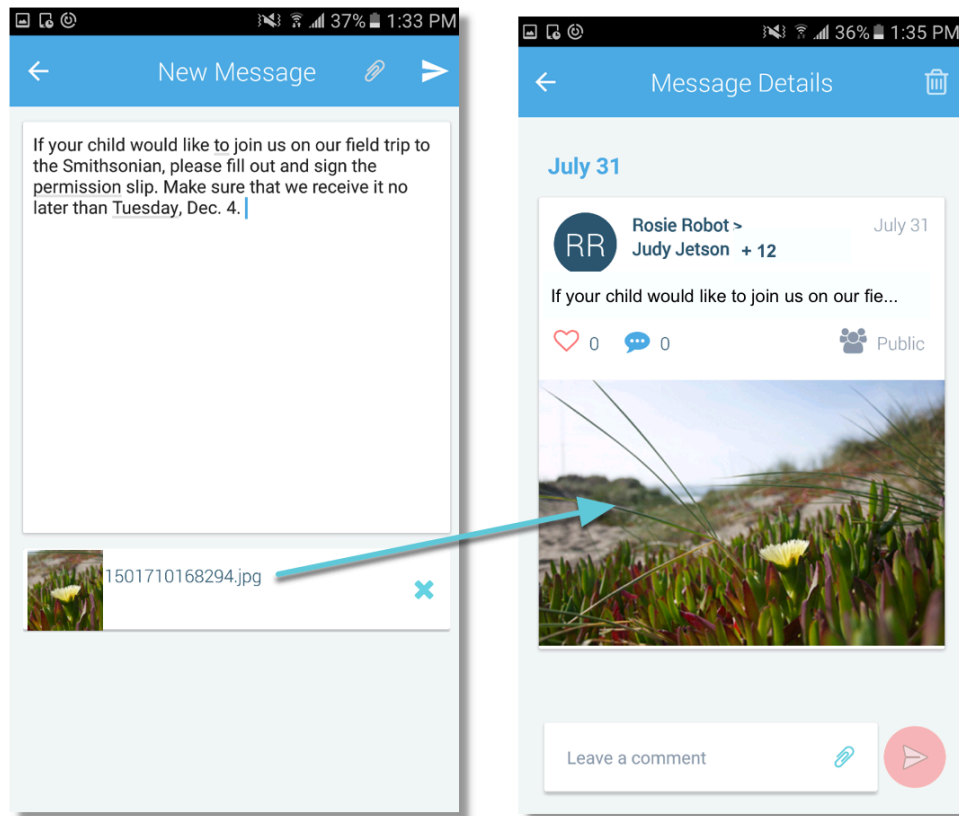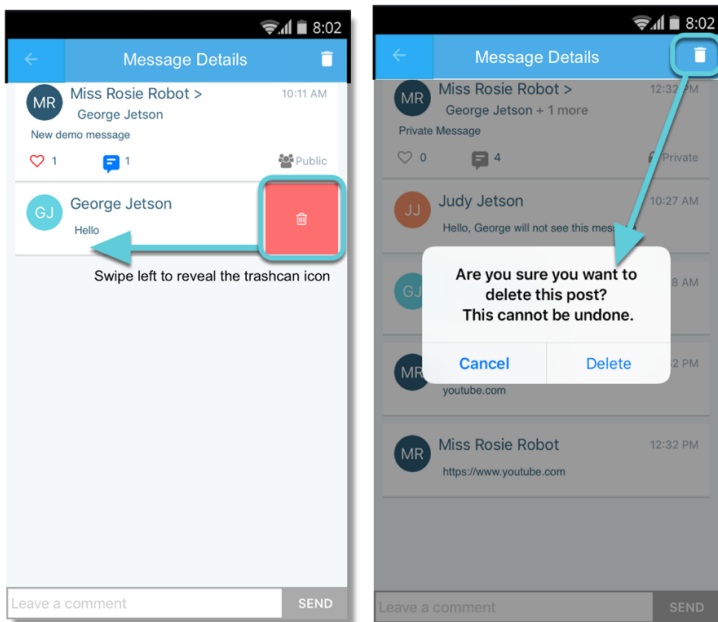
Tap each file to view them in fully.

Download file

Full screen view
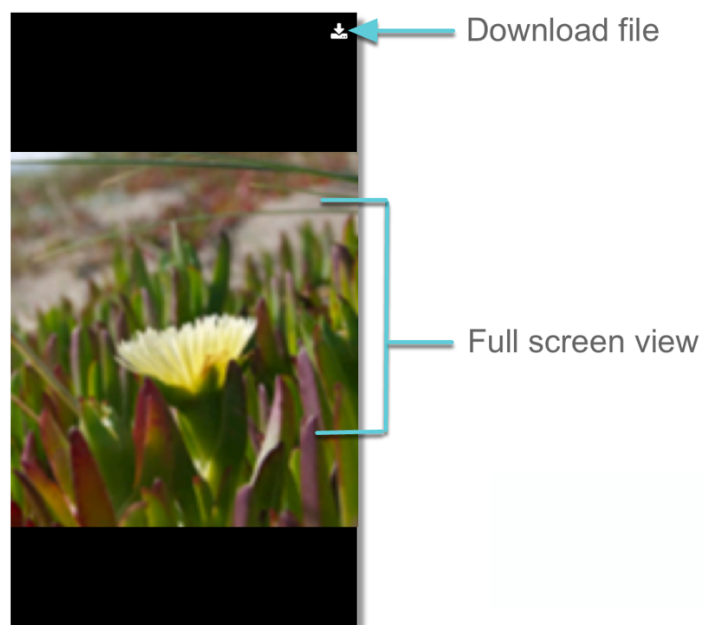
Delete an Entire Message Thread or a Member Comment

Teachers can delete whole message threads or single comments.

- Click on the **Messages** menu option.

- Select the message thread you'd like to delete.

- Click the trashcan icon at the top right corner of the screen to delete the thread.

- Confirm you would like to delete the thread in the next screen.

- To delete a comment, swipe left of the comment to reveal a red trashcan icon.

- Click the trashcan icon.

- Confirm you would like to delete the comment in the next screen.

# Responding to a SchoolMessenger App Message

Anyone receiving a SchoolMessenger app-based message created by a teacher may read the message, and, under the appropriate circumstances, read the comments of other group members and offer their own comments.

The circumstances are defined by the teacher who created the original message. The teacher can set up the message so that:

- comments can be entered and read by everyone

- comments can be entered by group members but will be received privately and read only by the teacher

- no comments are allowed

- group members won't see each other's names

If comments are **enabled**:

1. Enter your response in the comment box below.

2. Tap the red **paper airplane button** to respond.
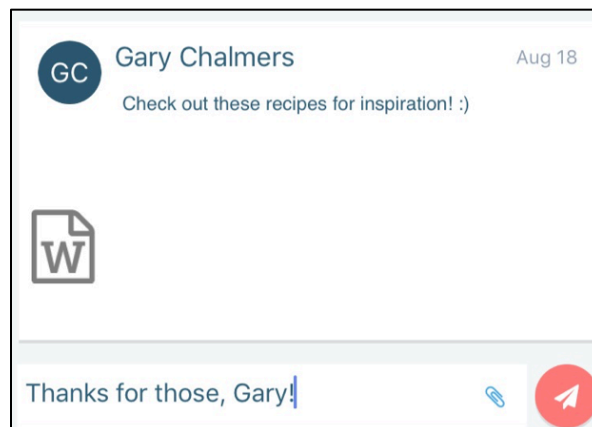
Add an Attachment

Use attachments to send the following file types in your reply:

- images (PNG, JPG)

- documents (PDF, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX)

- video (MP4)

- audio (MP3, WAV, M4A)

Note that the **max file size** is 20MB and you can only send **1 attachment** per message.

To add an **attachment** to your response, tap the blue **paperclip icon** next to the comment field.

To take a Photo/Video and select a Photo/Video from your library, tap **OK** to grant "SchoolMsgr" access to your camera app.
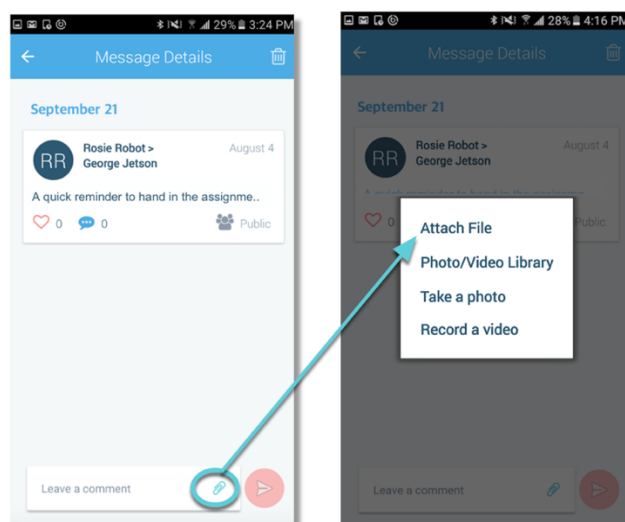

Attach File: Select a document from your Google Drive or phone files to attach.

Photo/Video Library: your phone's images/video library opens. Select a photo or video.

Take Photo or Record a Video: your phone's camera app opens and you're able to record a video or tap the button to take a photo. Once complete, you can either retake or use the photo or video.

Once your file is attached:

- Write a corresponding response to your attached file (required).

- Tap the red **Paper Airplane** icon to send.
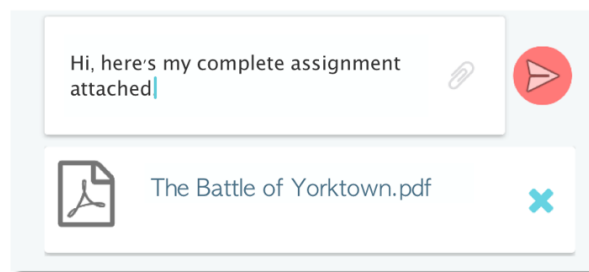
SchoolMessenger App with SafeArrival

If your email address is associated with at least one child in a school that is actively using SafeArrival, you will see the **ATTENDANCE** option on the menu. This is shown at the top of the screen on the website or in the menu that is displayed when you tap the menu icon in the top left corner of the mobile apps.

Note: If you do not see the **ATTENDANCE** menu or your student(s), please check with the school to make sure you are using the email address that they have on record for you.
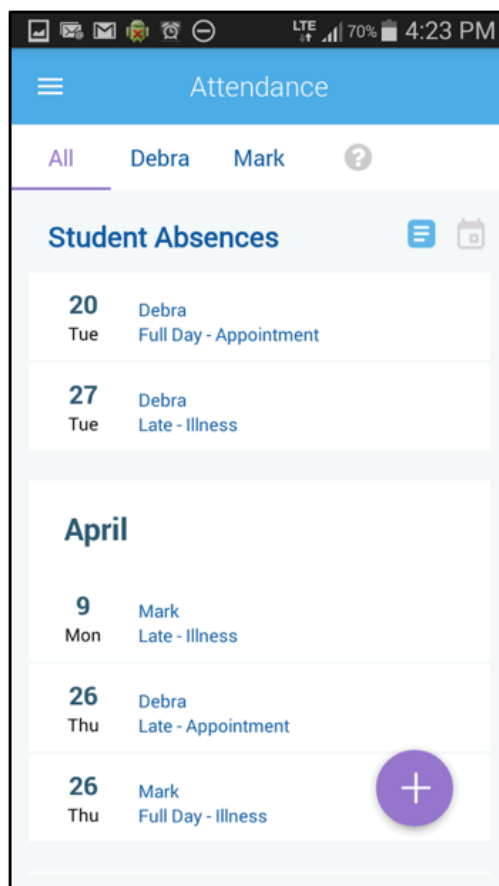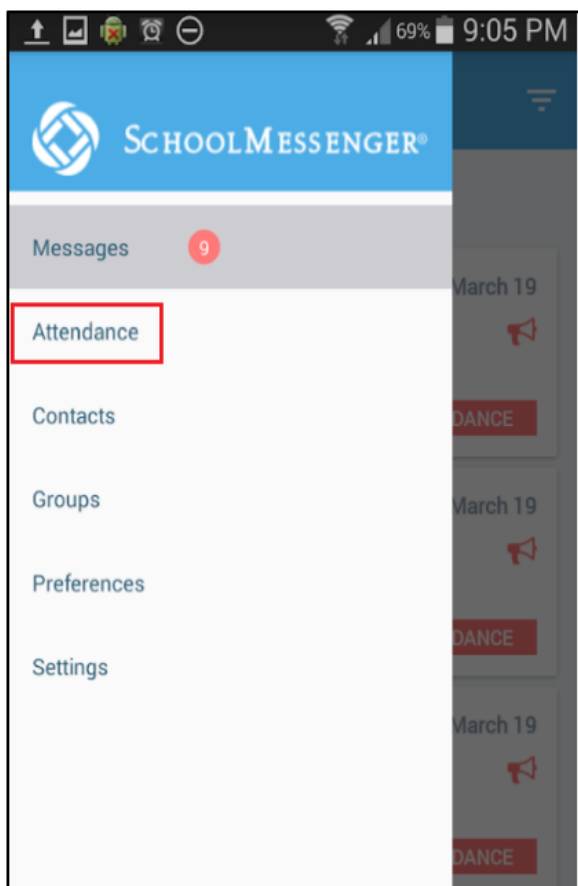
Views

Calendar View

To go to the previous or next month, tap the name of the previous or next month.

List View

To scroll through the list of absences, tap the list and drag your finger up or down the screen to move the list.
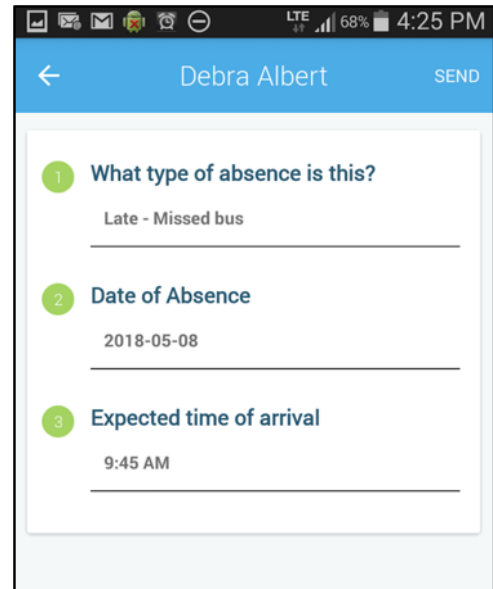
Absences

Absences can be reported in advance for the school year. On the day of the absence however, absences cannot be reported after the school's cut-off time. The cut-off time is determined by the school and may vary. If SafeArrival tells you it is past the cut-off time for reporting absences for the current day, you will need to contact the school directly.

Reporting an Absence

Follow these instructions to report an absence using SafeArrival:

1. Tap the ⊕ button.

2. Be sure to enter your selections for all of the requested items. If the SEND button is not activated, it means you've missed something.

3. Select **SEND** to report the absence.

Editing an Absence

If you have reported an absence in advance and decide that you need to edit the absence BEFORE the cut-off time on the day of the absence, follow these steps:

1. Tap the absence (in List View) or the day of the absence (in Calendar View), then **EDIT**.

2. Make the required changes then tap **SEND**.

If you need to change the details for an absence after the cut-off time on the day of the absence, contact the school directly.

Deleting an Absence

If you have reported an absence in advance and decide that you need to delete the absence BEFORE the cut-off time on the day of the absence, follow these steps:

1. Tap the absence (in List View) or the day of the absence (in Calendar View), then **DELETE**.

2. Tap **Delete** to confirm that you want to delete the absence.

If you need to delete an absence after the cut-off time on the day of the absence, contact the school directly.

Explaining an Absence

If your student is marked absent and you have not reported the absence in advance, you will be notified of the absence. You can use the mobile apps or website to explain your student's absence.

Push Notifications

If you would like to receive absence notifications directly to the SchoolMessenger app on your mobile device:

1. Go to the Settings menu.

2. Tap **Push Notifications**.

3. Tap the name of your child's school district.

4. Tap **Attendance** as a type of message that you want to receive as push notifications.

Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact your school or district.

Feel free to forward app inquiries or feedback to the following:

appfeedback@schoolmessenger.com