

# SchoolMessenger App

**Teacher User Guide - Web** 

# **West Corporation**

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## Welcome!

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

Once you've created your account, we'll automatically link the records associated with your email address. You can then:

- View the records associated with your account student, staff, parent records.
- Review the last 30 days-worth of messages for all your associated records.
- View your contact information and configure how you would like to receive notifications.



Depending on your district's settings, you'll be able to:

- Send messages to automatically-created groups associated with your account.
- Create groups with generated codes you can distribute to those who you want join.

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

For schools subscribing to SchoolMessenger's Plus Data system, teachers who are also parents have the ability to view student grades, lunch balance data, class and bus schedules, etc.

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.

# 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.

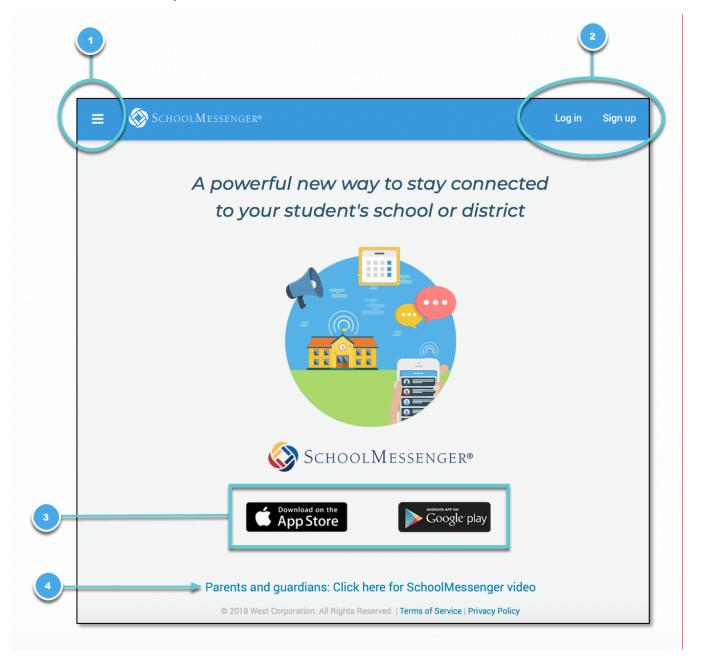
While schools enjoy exemptions from some of these restrictions, the preference configurations within the SchoolMessenger App allow you to set your consent state ("yes" or "no") for each phone number associated with your account. With the exception of emergency calls, which cannot be exempted, any phone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



# **Welcome Page**

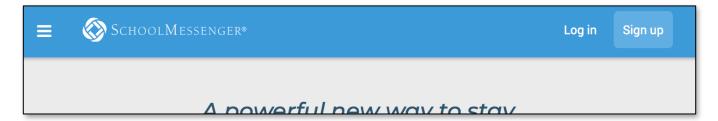
On SchoolMessenger's home page you'll see the following screen with the below options:

- 1. Click the icon to access more options.
- 2. Click either **Log in** or **Sign up** to access the SchoolMessenger app.
- 3. Download the mobile app from either Apple's App Store or Android's Google Play page.
- 4. Click the link for a quick informational video.





# **Creating a SchoolMessenger App Account**



# Sign Up

- 1. Enter the following URL in your browser's address bar: go.schoolmessenger.com
- 2. Click **Sign Up** on the menu.



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

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

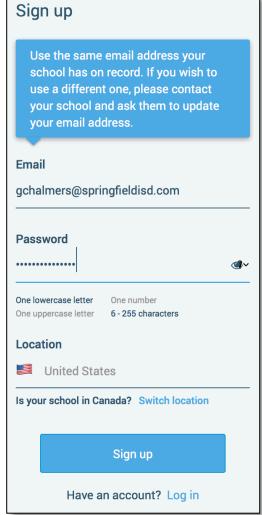
Your password must contain have at least:

- 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.

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.

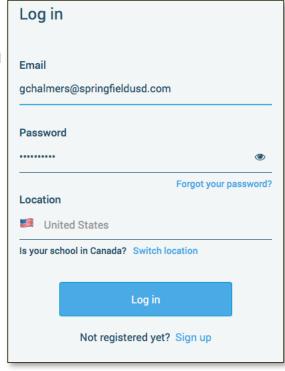


# Log In

To log into the SchoolMessenger app:

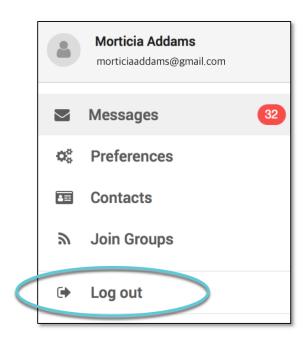
- 1. Click on Log In on the menu bar.
- 2. Enter the email address, password and location you used to register in the SchoolMessenger app.

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



# **Log Out**

- 1. Click the icon in the upper left corner of your screen.
- 2. Click Log out.

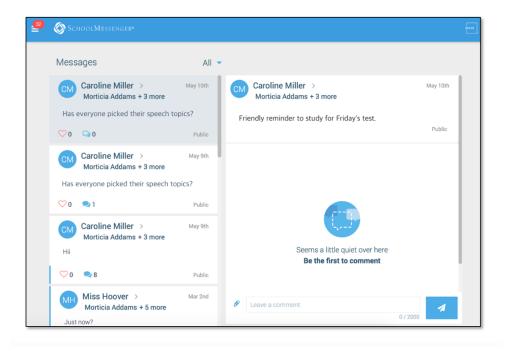




# When You First Sign In...

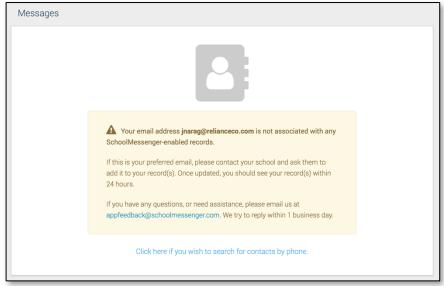
After successfully logging in with a verified email, you should expect to see any messages that you've recently received for any Contacts - student, staff, and/or guardian records - associated with your account email address. You can navigate through your district-enabled options by using the left navigation bar.

Your account information and contacts will already be inputted into the system based on the information you've provided to your school or district.



# When your email address isn't associated with school-enabled records...

If your email address doesn't match with any records kept by the school, you'll see the below screen after your log in:

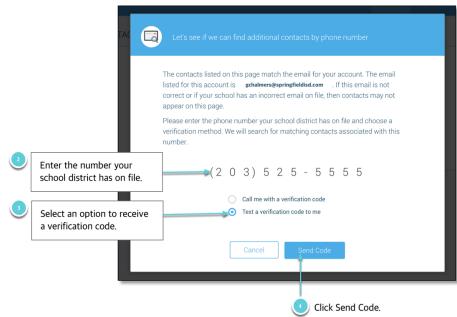




## **Claim by Phone**

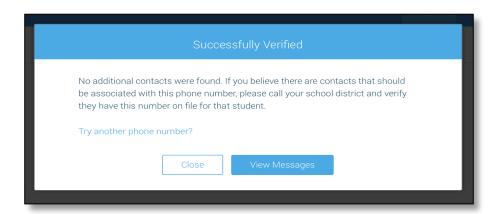
If the SchoolMessenger app isn't able to match your email to any contact data in their systems, your message inbox will appear empty. You'll have the option to try to match a potential school record using your phone number.

- 1. Click the "...search for contacts by phone" link at the bottom of the screen. A window pops up asking you to input your phone number.
- Enter your phone number your school district has on file.
- Select an option to receive a verification code.
- Click Send Code. A verification code will be sent to the number you entered.



5. Input the verification code your received and click Verify.

If verification was successful, you'll see the following screen:



- If the system found additional contacts, they will be automatically added to your app under CONTACTS.
- If the system didn't find additional contacts, you can:
  - try another number by clicking the "Try another phone number?" link.
  - ocontact your school district to verify that you have the correct phone number they have on file.
  - make sure the location you chose at Sign Up is correct.

## **Notification Preferences**

This page allows you to view and edit how you're contacted by your district when they send broadcast messages. Access your notification preferences by clicking the below screen:

- 1. School / District: The school district in which your email address is associated with is listed here.
- 2. **My contact information:** Displays all the email addresses and phone numbers (voice and SMS text) at which you can be contacted. The icons in green indicate that you've given your consent to be contacted via that message type (phone, text, or email). The icons in grey indicate you've chosen not to be notified on that number via that message type.

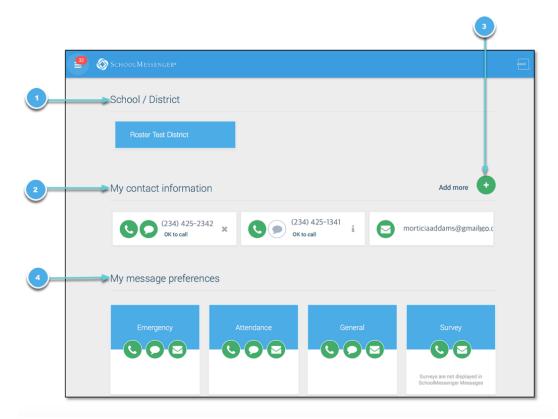


Note: Your district will control over whether you'll be able to edit or delete this information. You will know which phone numbers or email addresses can be deleted if they have a small X next to it. While the ability to edit or delete contact information may be limited by your school district, you can change your consent selections and preferences at any time.

- 3. Add more: Click this button to add more email addresses or phone numbers that aren't already listed. If this button is not present, your district has disabled this ability.
- 4. My message preferences: Click each message category (emergency, attendance, etc.) to view which contact email addresses and phone numbers will be contacted. You can also adjust your notification preferences for each message type here.



<u>Note</u>: The maximum number of phone numbers and email numbers you can enter into the system is controlled by your district admin.





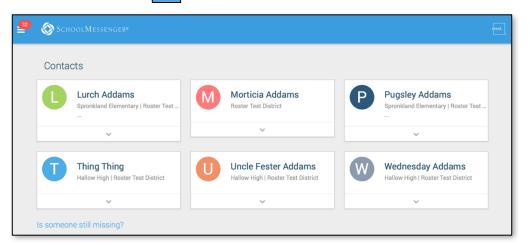
#### **Contacts**



**Important**: The contacts listed here match the email for your account. If this email is not correct or if your school has an incorrect email on file, then contacts may not appear on this page.

You'll see a contact card with your name and school district located here. If you're also a parent to a child in the same district, you will see your child's name with their school and district.

Access your contacts by clicking the icon and clicking **Contacts**.





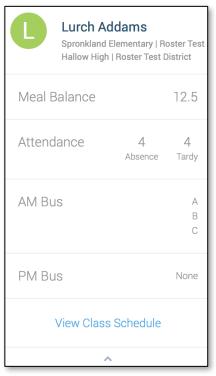
<u>Note</u>: If you are missing contacts, click the "Is someone still missing?" link at the bottom of the screen to claim possible missing contacts using your phone number. If that doesn't work, please contact your school or district.

#### **Plus Data**

You will see more information for each contact if your school or district have subscribed and purchased the SchoolMessenger App Plus Module. The data shown depends on what your school and district have chosen to record and display.

You will know if your school has purchased the Plus Module if you see the small arrow beneath the contact. Clicking the contact displays the Plus data.

In the example to the right, this school district has chosen to track and display the student's meal balance, attendance, bus and class schedule.





# **Groups**

**Join Groups Manage Groups** If enabled by your district, you will see a option in your menu.

The differences between the two pages are listed below:

#### Join Groups Page (Participant and/or **Manage Groups Page (Group Teacher) Group Teacher)** All groups you're a member of, whether Only groups that you've either created or are you're the group teacher or just a participant joined automatically as the main group appear here. teacher based on your account appear here. When you click the groups listed on this You can see all participants. page, you will only see the name of the group You can create groups and generate access teacher and not the other participants in the codes here. You can also delete and edit group. these groups. You can join, leave and view groups you have the access code for here. You can view all of the groups you're linked to automatically as a participant based on your account here.

# **Group Types**

Depending on what your district has enabled, there are two types of groups you will see in both the Join Groups page and the Manage Groups page:

- Automatic Groups: Groups you're automatically joined with linked to your account.
- Teacher-Created Groups: Groups created by you that you can edit or delete. You can join and leave groups other teachers have created if given an access code.

## **Automatic Groups**

Automatic groups will have an address book



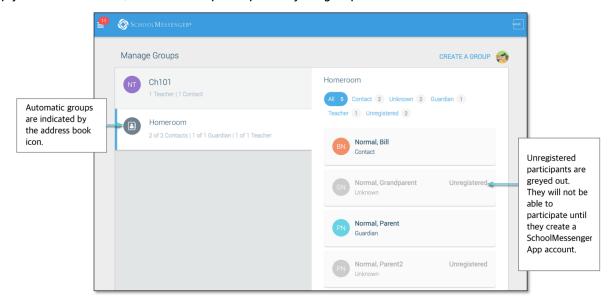
icon next to its name and are created using district data.

If an automatic group appears in your Manage Groups page, you're the "Group Teacher" and will be able to see all participants linked to that group. Participants who don't have a SchoolMessenger app account will be greyed out and marked as "Unregistered". These accounts will become live as soon as they create a SchoolMessenger app account with the email address they use with the school.

You can be either a participant or the group teacher if an automatic group is in your Join Groups page. Automatic groups that you're only a participant in will only appear on this page, not the Manage Groups page and you will not be able to view the other participants of that group.

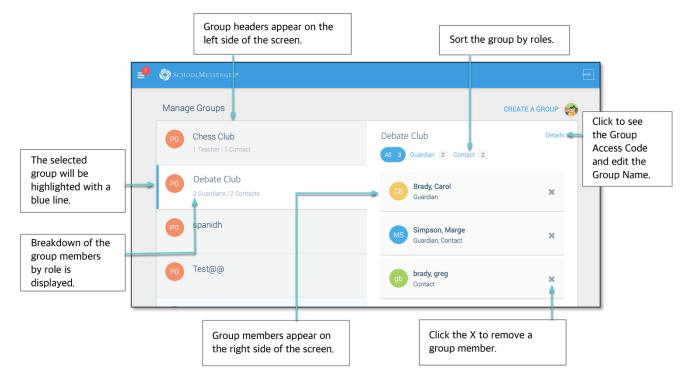
Unlike teacher-created groups, automatic groups cannot be edited by the teacher. There isn't a **Details** button that will allow the user to change the group name or delete the group. Teacher's also can't remove or add participants and participants can't remove or add themselves into these groups.

These groups are created at the district level and you will need to speak with your school if you're a part of a group you shouldn't be in, or if there's a participant in your group that shouldn't be there.



## **Teacher-Created Groups**

If enabled by your district, teachers can create conversation or discussion groups in which students, parents and other staff can participate. But before such participation can occur, participants must have a record or user account in Communicate. Below is an example of how a teacher-created group looks like in the Manage Groups page:





Teacher-created groups will have a coloured icon with the group teacher's initials next to its name:



Once participants create a SchoolMessenger app account that links successfully to a Communicate record, they can use the access code generated and provided by the teacher to join the group.

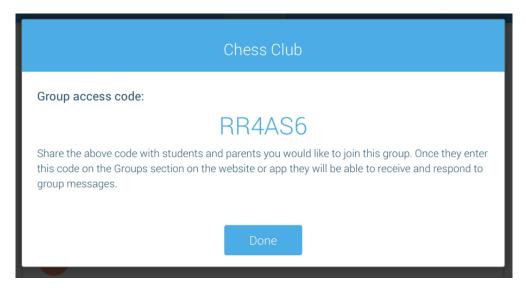
Participants can join as many groups as they are invited to participate in.

#### **Creating a Group**



Note: If group creation has been disabled by your district, you will not have a CREATE A GROUP link.

- 1. Click the Manage Groups menu option.
- 2. Click the link. If you already have created one or more groups, they will be listed on this page. Otherwise, you will only see a prompt to create a new group.
- 3. Create a name for the group (e.g. Chess Club).
- 4. Make note the **Group access code** the SchoolMessenger app generates. Anyone who joins will need to know the exact access code in order to join the group.



- 5. Click **Done**. The group you just created will appear on the next screen with 0 members.
- 6. Distribute the access code to those you want to add to your group so that they can join.

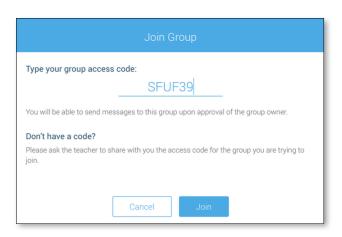


**Note**: You can't add members to your group. You can only provide the Group access code to the people you wish to join. They will need to download the SchoolMessenger app and join the group themselves.



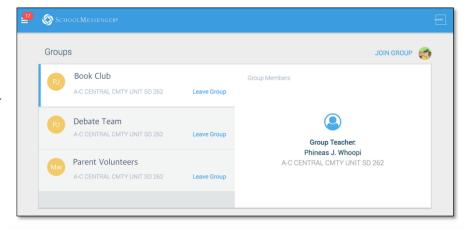
#### **Joining a Group**

- 1. Click on the Join Groups menu option.
- 2. Click on the JOIN GROUP ink.
- 3. In the Join Group window, enter the **access code** that was provided to you.
- 4. Click on Join.

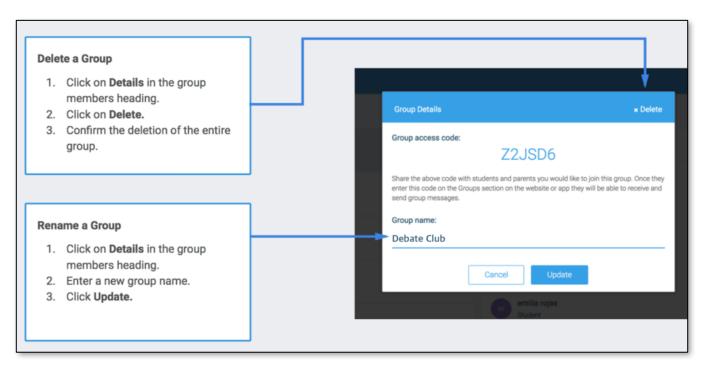


#### **Leaving a Group**

- Click on Leave Group to the left of the group you wish to leave.
- Confirm that you no longer want to be part of the group in the next window.



#### **Deleting and Renaming a Group**



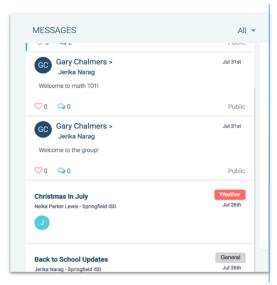
# Messages

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 group(s) you have joined.

They are sorted newest first, oldest last. The headings of all messages will appear on the left side of the Messages screen.

There are two types of messages:

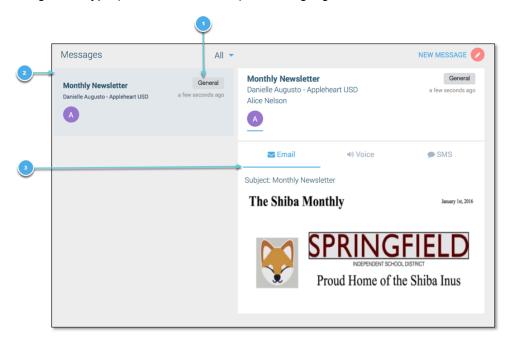
- Broadcast Messages: Sent by the school or district as SchoolMessenger Broadcasts to school-affiliated users (Emergency, Attendance, General, etc.).
- Teacher-Sent Messages: Messages sent initially by teachers either publicly or privately to participants who are members of a SchoolMessenger app group.

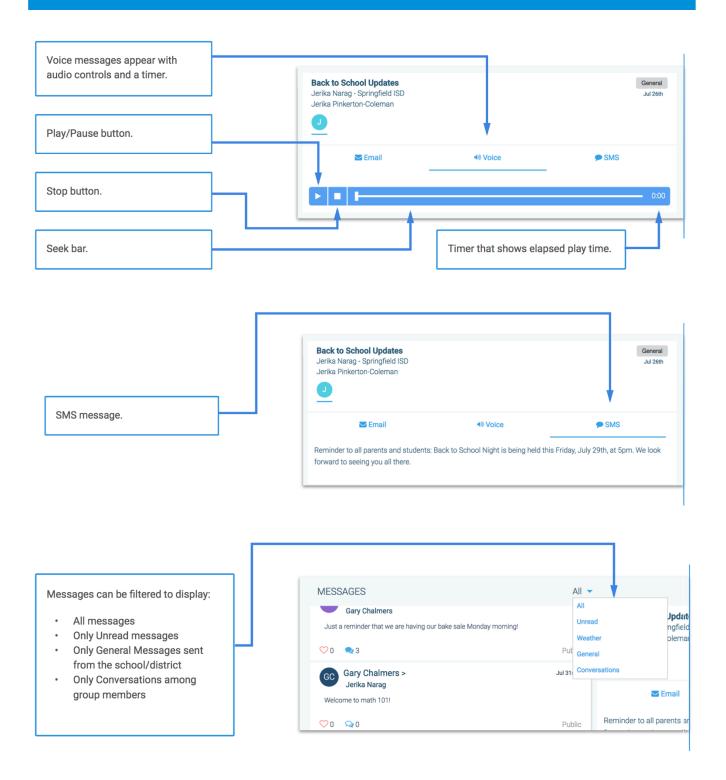


# **Broadcast Message**

Unlike with teacher-sent messages, these are messages sent by the school or district and not meant to be replied to or to engage with within the SchoolMessenger app. Below is an example of how a broadcast message looks like in the SchoolMessenger app.

- 1. Broadcast messages are labelled with their type in the upper right-hand corner of the message.
- 2. Selected messages to be read will be highlighted in blue.
- The message view type (Email, Voice or SMS) will be highlighted with a blue line.





# **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 parents do not have.

## **Teacher Accounts vs Student/Parent Accounts**

The below table lists what each account type is able to do, depending on their district settings. Users who are both a teacher and a parent will have the ability to do all of the below.

Teachers	Parents and Students
<ul> <li>Receive SchoolMessenger broadcast messages sent from the school or district.</li> <li>If enabled, create SchoolMessenger app groups and invite students, parents, and other teachers to participate in them.</li> <li>Create and send messages to selected recipients (any combination of all/selected students/parents).</li> <li>Delete any comments sent by any participant that have been posted in any of the message threads that they have initiated.</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Parents and Students</li> <li>Receive SchoolMessenger broadcast messages sent from the school or district.</li> <li>Engage in discussions and conversations in any of the groups they're a participant of.</li> <li>Delete any of their own messages that they've sent to a message thread.</li> <li>Leave teacher-created groups.</li> </ul>
<ul> <li>Delete entire message threads that they've initiated.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>Delete any comments sent by any participant that have been posted in any of the message</li> </ul>	Leave teacher-created groups.
<ul> <li>Engage in discussions and conversations in any of the forums that they've created or are a participant of.</li> </ul>	
<ul> <li>View all members within a group (if they're the main group teacher).</li> </ul>	

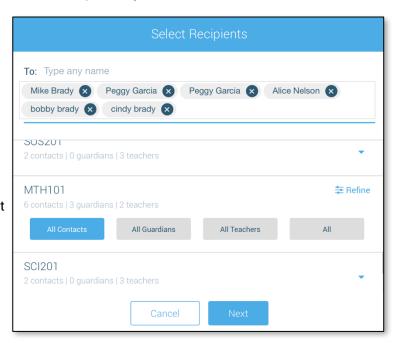


# **Create a Message**

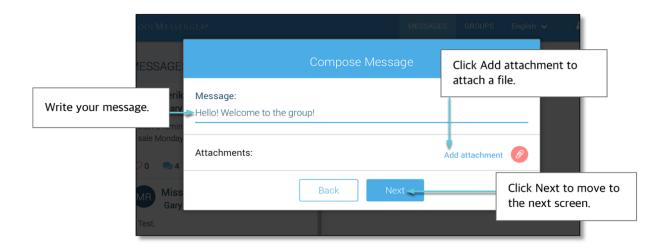
Creating a message is a very simple process. You select the recipients your message will be sent to, designate whether their comments will be visible to others in the group, only visible to the teacher, or not at all (comment not permitted).

- 1. Click on the Messages menu option.
- 2. Click the NEW MESSAGE button. The **Select Recipients** window appears.
- 3. Click the group that you would like to draw recipients from. You can draw recipients from multiple groups in one message, if required. You can select recipients by:
  - Clicking any of the All subgroup buttons.
  - Clicking the Refine button. You can select specific individuals from all subgroups.
  - Typing an individual's name in the "To." field. The SchoolMessenger app will locate and display all records that contain the sequence of letters you typed in either the first or last name. Click to select the appropriate individual.

You can remove individuals from the recipient list by clicking the **X** next to their name.



4. Click **Next**. The **Compose Message** window appears.



#### **Add Attachments**

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

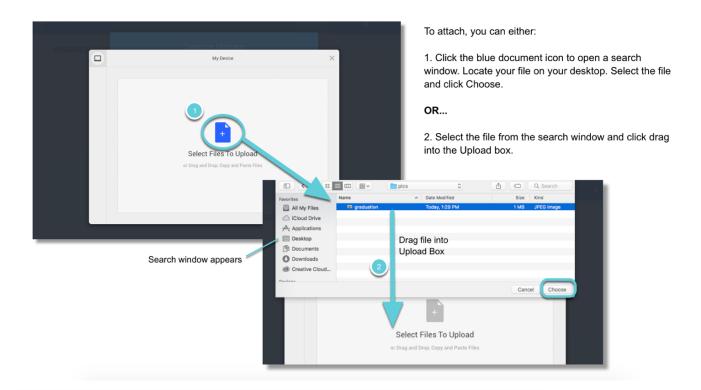
- images (PNG, JPG)
- documents (PDF, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX)
- video (MP4)
- audio (MP3, WAV, M4A)

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





After clicking the **Attachment** icon, the **Upload** box appears:

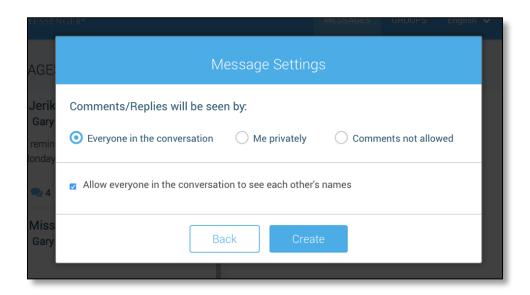




## **Select your Message Settings**

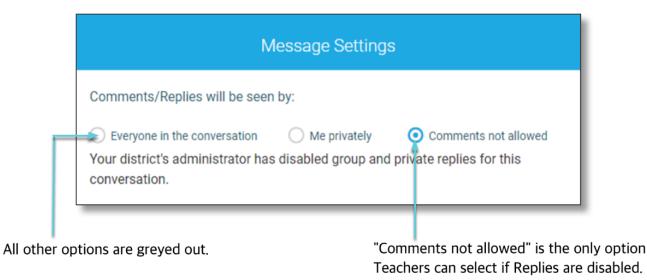
If you're ready to send your message, select your Message Settings:

- 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



## **Replies Disabled**

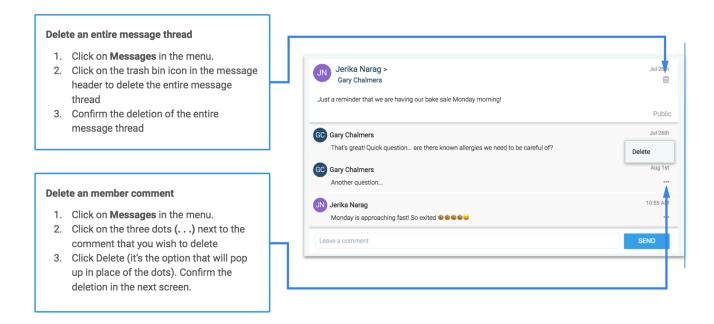
If your replies have been disabled by a system administrator, you will only have 1 option when sending your message – "Comments not allowed":





## **Delete an Entire Message Thread or a Member Comment**

- Teachers can delete whole message threads or single comments.
- Parents and students can delete their own comments.



## Responding to a SchoolMessenger App Message

Anyone receiving a SchoolMessenger app-based message created by a teacher may read the message, and, **if enabled**, read the comments of other group members and reply.

The circumstances are defined by the teacher who created the original message or your district admin. Messages may be configured 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.

The below is an example of how a message thread appears to a recipient:



## Add an Attachment to a Reply

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.

After clicking the **paperclip icon**, the **Upload box** appears.

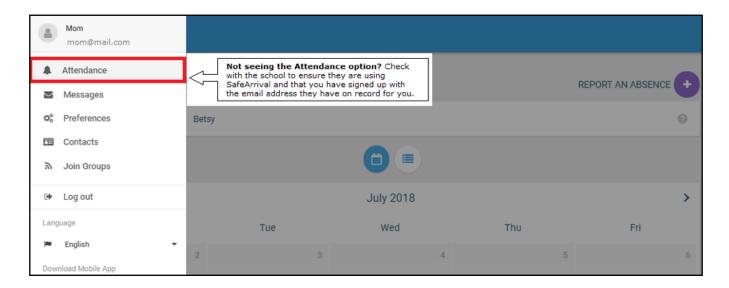


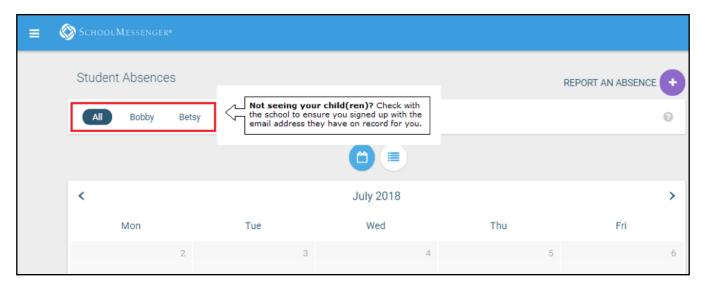
# SchoolMessenger App with SafeArrival

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.



**Note**: If you don't see the Attendance option or your children, check with the school to ensure they are using SafeArrival and that you signed up with the email address they have on record for you.



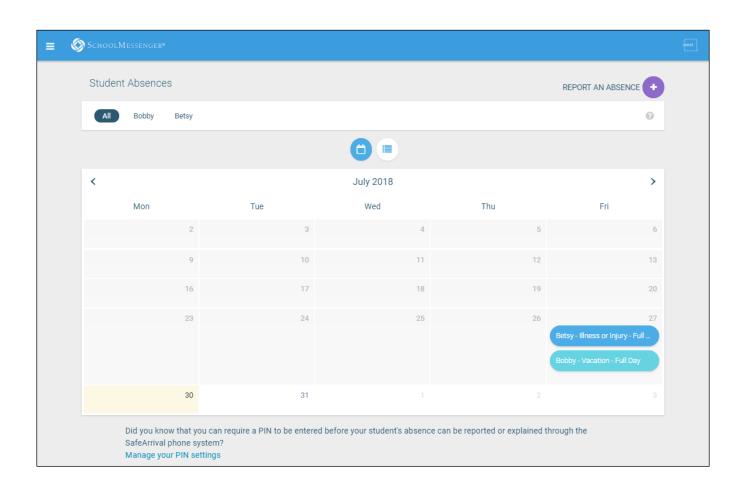


#### **Views**

You can review and edit your child's reported absences in two views: Calendar and List View.

#### **Calendar View**

Click the icon to see your child's absences in a calendar. To go to the previous or next month, click the or > at the top of the calendar.





#### **List View**

Click the icon to view your child's absences in a list. To scroll through the list of absences, the scroll bar on the right-hand side of 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.

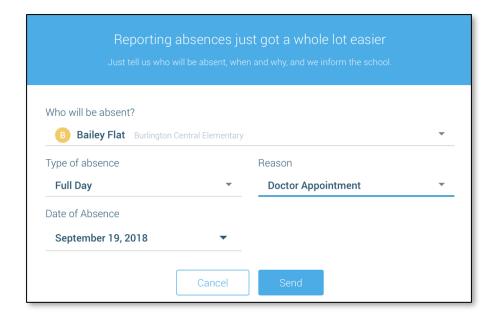
## **Reporting an Absence**



- 2. Be sure to enter your selections for all of the requested items:
  - Select which student will be absent.
  - Select the type and reason for the absence.
  - Select the date(s) and any time(s) of the absence.

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. Click the absence (in List View) or the day of the absence (in Calendar View), then Edit.
- 2. Make the required changes then click 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. Click the absence (in List View) or the day of the absence (in Calendar View), then Delete.
- 2. Click **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.

## **Manage PIN Settings**

Parents/guardians may choose to require that a 4-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) be entered before an absence can be reported or explained for individual students when using the SafeArrival phone system. This provides an additional layer of security and also prevents students from reporting their own absences.

For parents/guardians who do not use the SchoolMessenger app, staff with access to the SchoolMessenger Communicate Contacts page can manage the PIN settings.

Using the SchoolMessenger app website, parents click the **Manage your PIN settings** link at the bottom of the Attendance page.

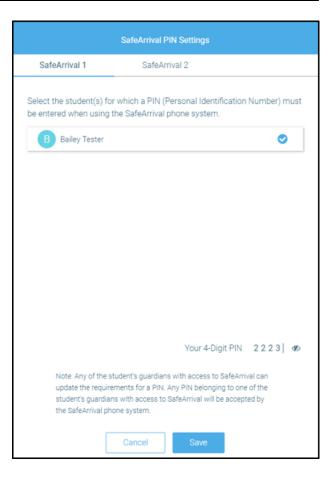
Did you know that you can require a PIN to be entered before your student's absence can be reported or explained through the SafeArrival phone system?

Manage your PIN settings

On the SafeArrival PIN Settings screen, the parent can choose the district in which the student is enrolled (if the parent has students enrolled in more than 1 district). The parent will see a list of his/her students and will be able to tap the checkbox to request that a PIN be required for when reporting and explaining absences for this student by phone. A 4-digit PIN can then be entered.

- 1. Tap the **"eye" icon** to see the PIN. Tap the PIN to modify the it.
- 2. Click **Save** to save any changes.

This screen will be slightly different for Districts who do not use the Guardian Data Model. In that case, a separate PIN is required for each STUDENT.



# **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