SchoolMessenger App

User Guide - Web

West Corporation
100 Enterprise Way, Suite A-300
Scotts Valley, CA 95066
888-527-5225
www.schoolmessenger.com
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Welcome!

⚠️ Important: Some features discussed in this help may need to be enabled by our support teams for your school district and user profile in order to access. If you don't have access or if certain functions are missing, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com

The SchoolMessenger App allows schools and school districts to inform you about school related emergencies, school closures, attendance 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 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

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.

There are two 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.

**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 interface is simple and uncluttered.
Creating a SchoolMessenger App Account

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.

The link in the above email is valid for only 24 hours. If you do not 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.

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.

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.
Log In

To log into the SchoolMessenger App:

1. Click on Log In on the menu in the upper right-hand corner of the login page.

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.
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 Profile and Role**
- **setting Notification preferences** (school-affiliated users only)
- **joining Groups** that you have been invited by teachers to join

**Note**: If you don’t see Groups in your menu, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com
Your Profile and Role

For all User Types, follow the below steps to set up your User Account:

1. Click on the menu option with your login name in it.
2. Click on the **Settings** option.
3. Enter your first name, last name, and your Role type (Teacher, Student, or Parent).

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 next time you log in.

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Note

You can change your Role type (from teacher, to student, to parent) 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 parent, you can use two different email addresses to register and to login into the system.
Notification Preferences (School-Affiliated Users Only)

For all User Types, follow the below steps to set up your User Account:

1. Click on the menu option with your login name in it.
2. Click 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.

Additional email and telephone numbers can be added by clicking on Add more (e.g., a workplace email address can be added in addition to the personal email address already on file in SchoolMessenger).

School/District:
Shows the school(s) and district(s) that you are connected with. There can be more than one school or district here, as it is possible for a student to be enrolled at more than one school, a parent/guardian to have children/wards in more than one school or district, and a teacher to teach at more than one school/district.

Contact Information:
Displays all the email addresses and telephone numbers (voice and SMS text) at which you can be contacted. Icons for voice and SMS text are selected.

Message Preferences:
Shows all 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. You can select how you wish to be contacted for each message type.

Select the card for any type of message and specify your preference of communication for that specific topic. For example, the parent in the above screenshot, has opted to receive attendance messages via email and SMS, but not via voice call.
Joining a Group

Note: If you don’t see Groups in your menu, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com

Teachers can set up conversation or discussion groups in which students and parents 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. Click on the Groups menu option.
2. Click on Join Group.
3. In the Join Group window, enter the access code that was provided to you.
4. Click on Join.

Leaving a Group

Leaving a group is simple:

1. Click on the Groups menu option.
2. Click on Leave Group to the left of the group you wish to leave, and then confirm that you no longer want to be part of the group in the next window.
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.

Parent and 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 parent/guardian accounts are linked to click on the Contacts menu option. In the sample screen shot you will see:

Vivian Bower is the mother logged into the SchoolMessenger App. She appears as a contact for messages that will be sent to her. She is also the contact for messages sent on Billy's behalf.

She will be receiving ongoing meal balance and attendance messages for Billy.

Numerous other kinds of information may appear in the dropdown 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.

Expanding the entry for Billy Bower reveals that she is listed as the primary guardian for Billy in the school's student records.

Use the arrow to expand and contract the entry for each of the contacts that appear on the Contacts page.

Finally, both Vivian and Billy can participate equally in the SchoolMessenger App discussion groups that they have joined and been selected to participate in.

If there is a school or district that you expect to see on the Contacts page, but is not there, you will need to contact the specific school or district to ensure that the email address in the school records matches the one that you use to sign into the SchoolMessenger App. It is on the basis of that match that messages from the school or district make their way to your SchoolMessenger App account. Once the two email addresses have been harmonized, you will need to sign out, then sign in again, to see them take effect.
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 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:

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 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-Affiliates Users Only)

The message is shown here in the Message Details window.

The date the message was sent.

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 currently selected message is highlighted with a light blue background. It was sent by Brian Wilson from the Appleheart United School District. It appears in the Message Header side of the screen.

Email is the currently selected message type, indicated by its presence in the remaining part of the Details window, and the blue line that underscores it.

Voice messages appear with audio controls and a timer.

Play/Pause button.

Stop button.

Seek bar.

Timer that shows elapsed play time.
Teacher Messaging

**Important**: For school-affiliated users, to access the features discussed in this topic, Teacher Messaging has to be enabled for your school district and user profile. If you don’t have access or if certain functions are missing, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com

Differences between Teacher Accounts and Student/Parent Accounts:

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.

**Only teachers can do the following:**
- Receive SchoolMessenger messages sent from the school or district.
- Create SchoolMessenger App groups and invite students and parents to participate in them.
- Send messages to selected recipients (any combination of all/selected students/parents).
- 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 parents 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.
If your group creation is **disabled**, your Groups page will appear as below:

1. Click on Create a Group from within the Groups page. If you already have one or more groups, their headers will be displayed on the left side and the member list will be displayed on the right side. Otherwise, you will see only a prompt to create a new group.
2. In the Create Group window, give your group a name (e.g. Chess Club).
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. Click on Done. The group you just created will appear on the next screen. It will have 0 members.
5. You cannot add members; only students and parents with the SchoolMessenger App accounts can add themselves.

**Note:** If you would like group creation enabled, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com
Viewing / Edit Groups Membership

- Group headers appear on the left side of the screen.
- The currently-selected group is highlighted with a blue background.
- Group member lists appear on the right side of the screen.

Delete / Rename a Group

Delete a Group
1. Click on Details in the group members heading.
2. Click on Delete.
3. Confirm the deletion of the entire group.

Rename a Group
1. Click on Details in the group members heading.
2. Enter a new group name.
3. Click Update.
Create a Message

Note: If you don't see the button, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com

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:

1. Click on New Message.

2. The Select Recipients window appears. You can select an individual for your message or you can select numerous individuals from amongst the groups you have created.
3. Start entering the first or last name of any individual recipient that you would like this message to be sent to, and 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 from the list.

4. Click on the group that you would like to draw the recipients from. You can only select one group at a time.

5. The group section expands, allowing you to select your recipients from among only students, only parents, or from among both sub-groups.

6. When you click on one of the subgroups, the names of all the individuals in that subgroup will appear in the To: section, indicating that they have all been selected as recipients for the messages. Clicking on the X next to each name that you wish to remove from the recipient list. (Selection here is by exclusion.)

7. Click on Refine if you want to be able to select individuals separately from the Students and Parents subgroups. (Selection here is by inclusion.)

8. Click Next.

The Compose Message window appears.
Select your Comment Settings:

If you’re ready to send your message, select your Comment Settings:

- **The Group**: 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

**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”:

*Note*: If you would like comments enabled, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com
Add Attachments

⚠️ **Note:** If you don’t see the button, please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com

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, click the **Attachment icon: the red paperclip**.

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

1. Click the blue document icon to open a search window. Locate your file on your desktop. Select the file and click Choose.

2. Select the file from the search window and click drag into the Upload box.
Delete an Entire Message Thread or a Member Comment

Teachers can delete whole message threads or single comments.

**Delete an entire message thread**
1. Click on Messages in the menu.
2. Click on the trash bin icon in the message header to delete the entire message thread.
3. Confirm the deletion of the entire message thread.

**Delete an member comment**
1. Click on Messages in the menu.
2. Click on the three dots (…) next to the comment that you wish to delete.
3. Click Delete (it’s the option that will pop up in place of the dots). Confirm the deletion 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, if enabled, read the comments of other group members and reply.

The circumstances are defined by the teacher who created the original message or our support teams. 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

Note: If you don’t see the button please contact support: (phone) 800-920-3897, (email) support@schoolmessenger.com

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:

To attach, you can either:

1. Click the blue document icon to open a search window. Locate your file on your desktop. Select the file and click Choose.

   **OR**...

2. Select the file from the search window and click drag into the Upload box.

Once uploaded, your attachment appears in the message thread.

Add a comment to send with your attachment (required).

Your attachment appears beneath your comment in the message thread.
Questions?

If you have any questions regarding the above, please contact support.

SchoolMessenger Solutions Support

800-920-3897
support@schoolmessenger.com