SchoolMessenger App

Parent and Student User Guide - Website

Contents

Introduction

💡*Note: Parents and student users who and require further assistance, please contact your school or district.*

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.

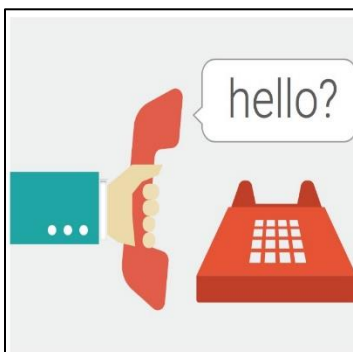Depending on your district's settings, you'll be able to:

- Receive teacher-sent messages from groups automatically associated with your account or groups you've joined manually.

- Join groups with generated codes provided to you by a teacher.

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.

For schools subscribing to SchoolMessenger's Plus Data system, 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 TCPA

hello?

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.

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Welcome Page

The SchoolMessenger app welcome page is simple and uncluttered.

Click the ☰ icon to access more options.

Click either **Log in** or **Sign up** to access the SchoolMessenger app.

Download the mobile app from either Apple's App Store or Android's Google Play page.

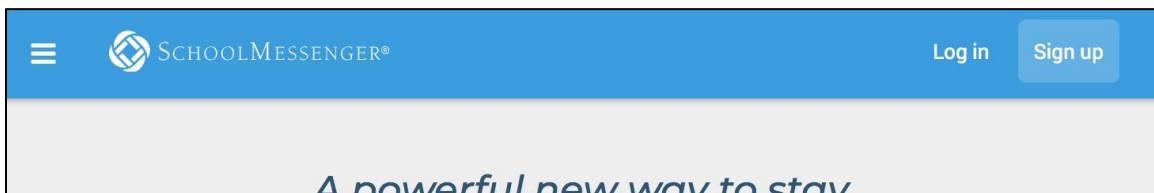Click the link for a quick informational video.

Creating a SchoolMessenger App Account

You must create an account for the SchoolMessenger site before you can start using it.

Signing Up

Enter the following URL in your browser's address bar: **go.schoolmessenger.com**

Click **Sign up** on the menu.

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

Enter your email address, your location and a password.

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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.*

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.

Sign up

Use the same email address your school has on record. If you wish to use a different one, please contact your school and ask them to update your email address.

Email

gchalmers@springfieldisd.com

Password

••••••••••••••

One lowercase letter   One number
One uppercase letter   6 - 255 characters

Location

🇺🇸 United States

Is your school in Canada? Switch location

Sign up

Have an account? Log in

Return to the SchoolMessenger site.

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

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

Logging In
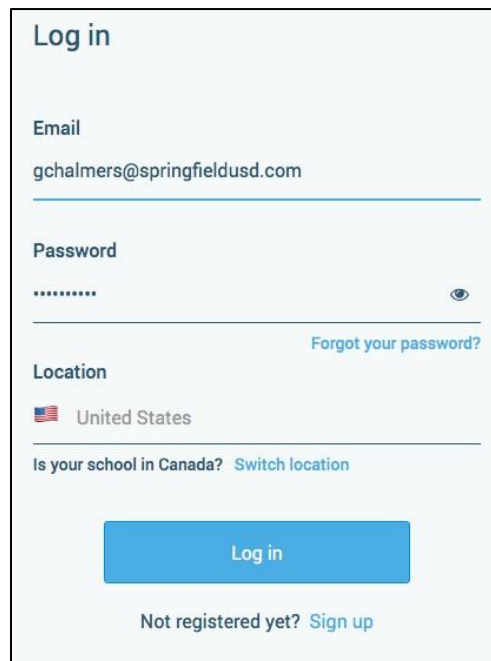
To log into the SchoolMessenger site:

Click **Log in** on the menu bar.

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

Enter your password.

Select your location. United States is selected as default. If your school is in Canada, click **Switch location**.

Click **Log in**.

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

Logging Out

Click the ☰ icon in the upper left corner of your screen.

Click **Log out**.

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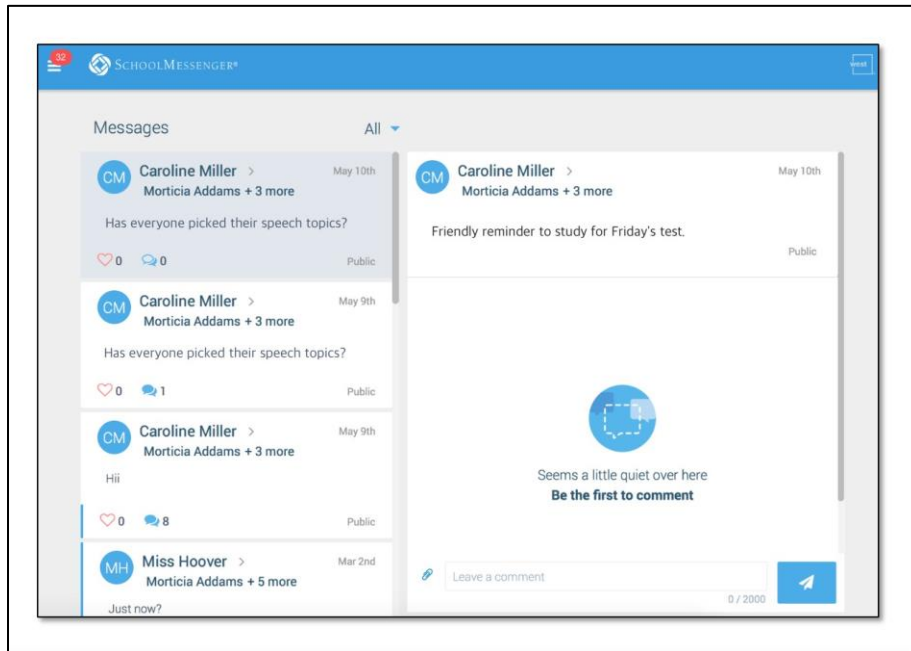
When your email address isn't associated with school-enabled records…

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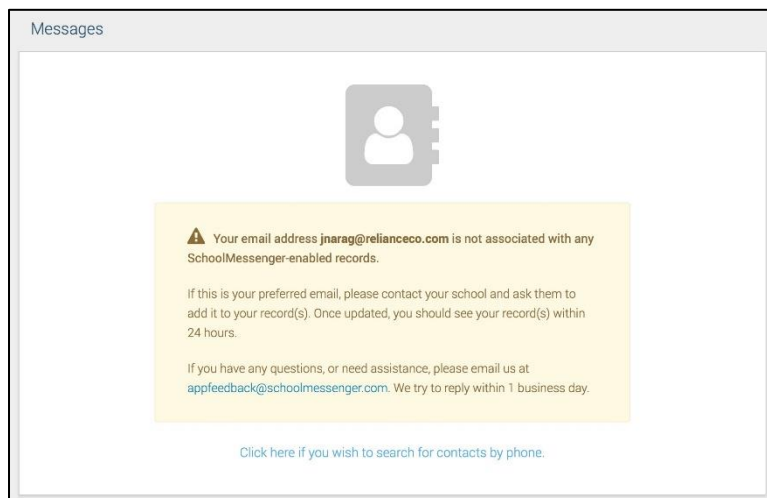
![SchoolMessenger®]

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.

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.

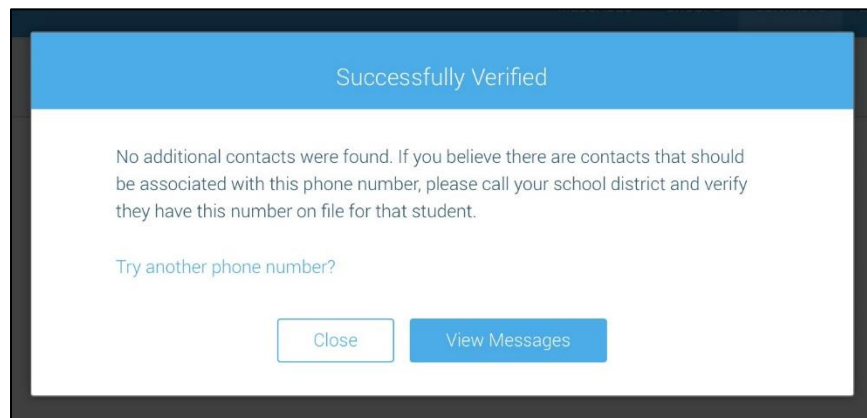Enter your phone number your school district has on file.

Select an option to receive a verification code.
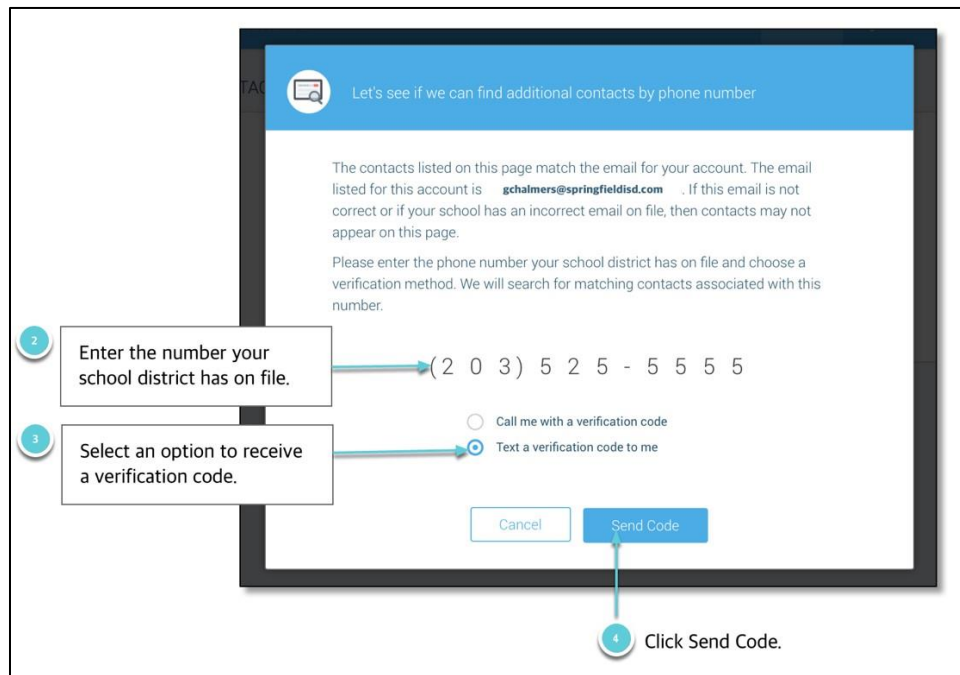
Click **Send Code**. A verification code will be sent to the number you entered.

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 **Try another phone number**..

- Contact your school district to verify that you have the correct phone number and/or email address they have on file.

Notification Preferences

This page allows you to view and edit how you're contacted by your district when they send broadcast messages. 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 through teacher messaging within the SchoolMessenger app.

Access your notification preferences by clicking the ☰ icon and clicking **Preferences**.

- **School / District:** The school district in which your email address is associated with is listed here.

- **My contact information:** Displays all the email addresses and phone numbers (voice and SMS text) at which you can be contacted via that message type (phone, text, or email). The icons in green indicate that you've given your consent to be contacted. 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.*

- **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.

- **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.

💡 *Note: The maximum number of phone numbers and email numbers you can enter into the system is controlled by your district admin*
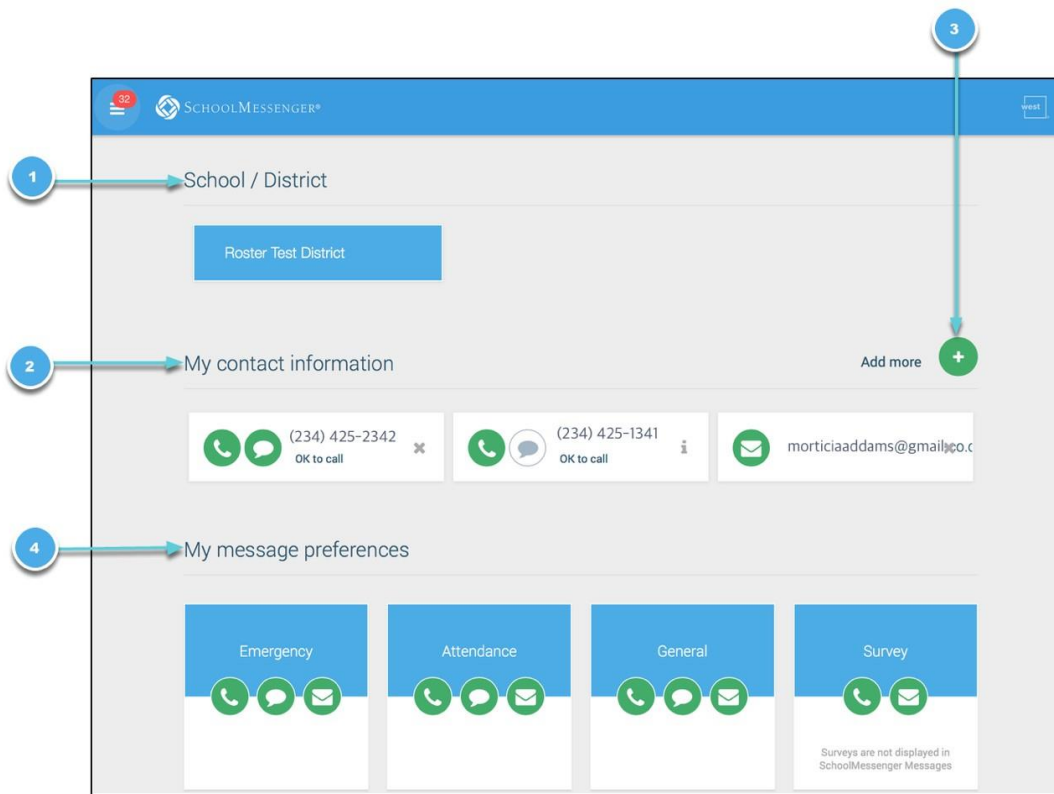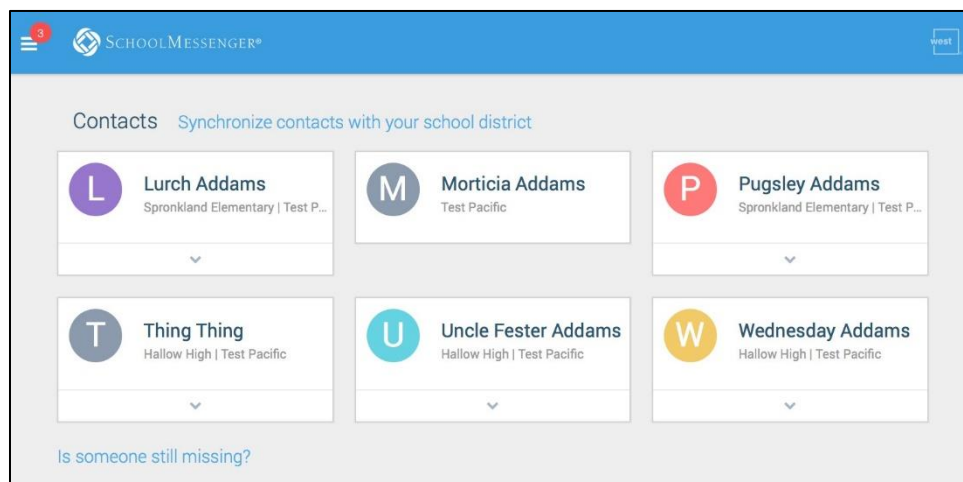
Contacts

⚠️ ***Important****: The contacts listed here are connected to the email address 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.*

Parent and guardian records in SchoolMessenger are linked to students attending one or more schools or districts.

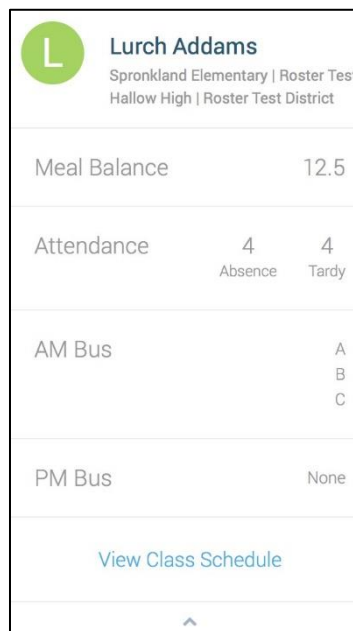Access your contacts by clicking the ☰ icon and clicking **Contacts**.

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💡*Note: 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. You should also click **Synchronize contacts with your school district** to upload the most up-to-date information (more information below). 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 ⌄ icon beneath the contact. Clicking the contact displays the Plus data.

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

Manual Contact Data Refresh

If you're not seeing all of the contacts you're expecting, you must manually refresh your app to reflect the most up-to-date information. A manual refresh is required for every subsequent change to your contact data in order to see the changes reflected in the SchoolMessenger app.

💡*Note: Updates to your account will not be reflected until you manually refresh your contact data.*

Click the ☰ icon in the top left corner of the page.

Click **Contacts**.

Click **Synchronize contacts with your school district**.
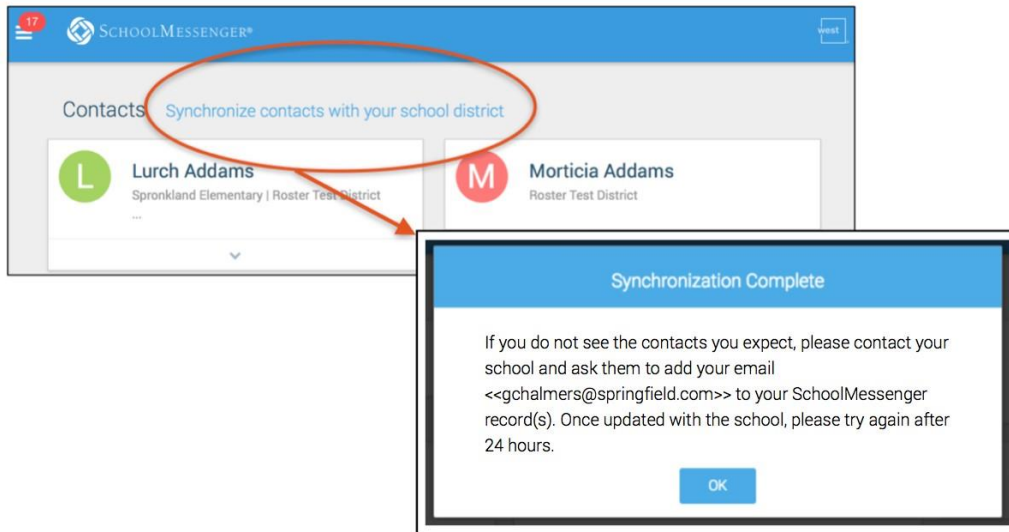
Once the sync is complete, you'll receive a **Synchronization Complete** message. Click **OK** to return to the Contacts page.

Groups and Group Types

If this option is enabled by your district, you will see [Join Groups] in your menu. On this page you can:

- See all the groups you're a member of.

- See only the name of the group teacher, not the other participants in the group.

- Join, leave and view groups you have the access code for.

- View all of the groups you're linked to automatically as a participant based on your account.

Depending on what your district has enabled, there are two types of groups:

- **Automatic Groups**: Groups you're automatically joined with linked to your account.

- **Teacher-Created Groups**: Groups created by a teacher that you can join and leave using a unique access code they've provided to you.

Automatic Groups

Automatic groups will have [icon] icons next to their names. Clicking the group will display the Group Teacher and the district connected to the group. Other than the Group Teacher, you won't be able to see any of the other members of the group.
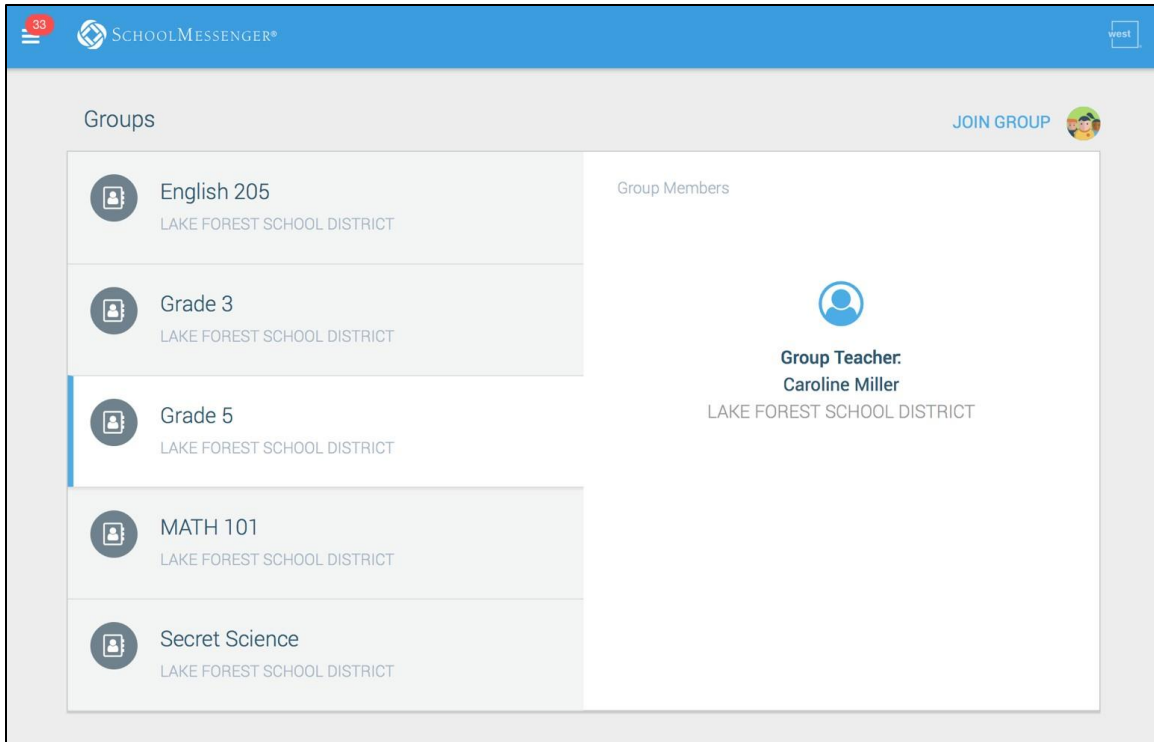
If you're a member of an automatic group, you will not have the option to leave it. These groups are created at the district level and you will need to speak with your school if you're a part of a group you shouldn't be in.

Teacher-Created Groups

If enabled by their district, teachers can create conversation or discussion groups in which students, guardians and other school staff can participate. But before such participation can occur, participants must be invited and provided an access code to join the group.
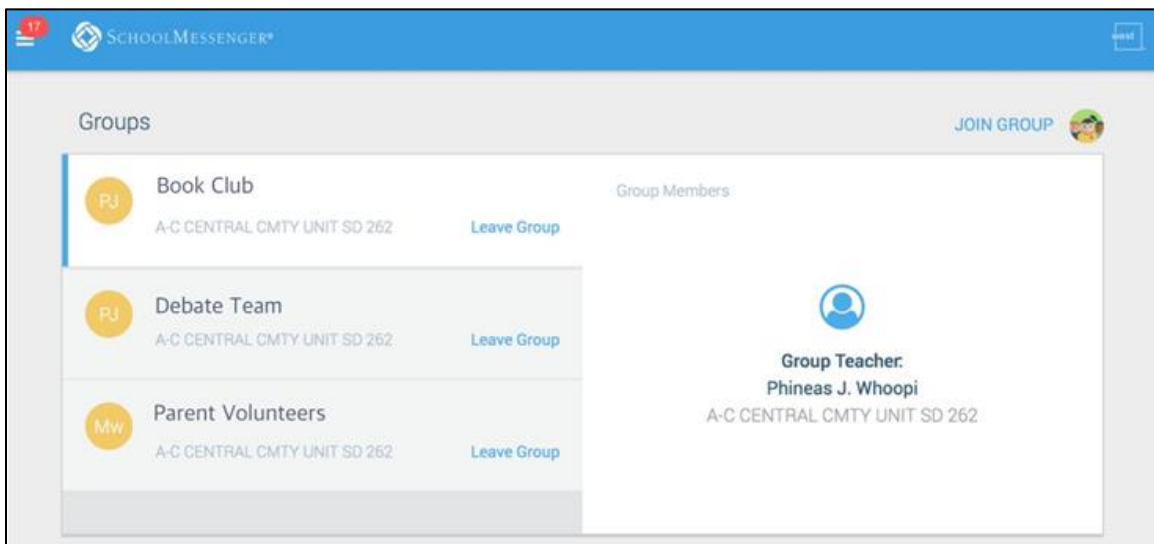
Participants can join as many groups as they are invited to participate in.

Joining a Group

Teachers can set up conversation or discussion groups in which students, guardians, and other school staff can participate. But before such participation can occur, you must be invited and provided an access code to join the group.
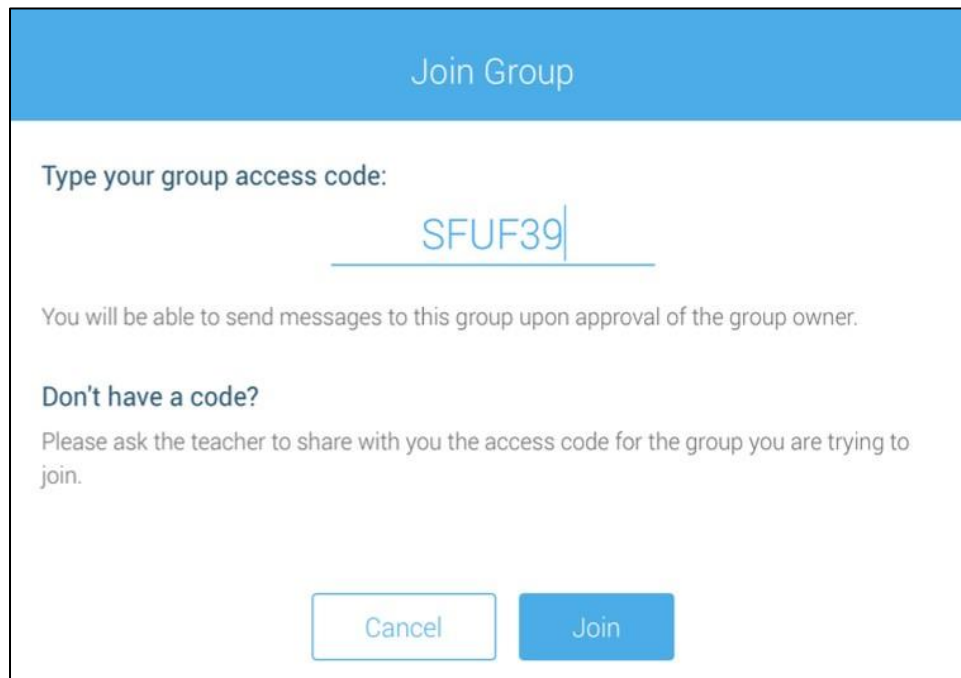
You can join as many groups as you are invited to participate in. To join a group:

Obtain the access code from your student's teacher.

Click the **Join Groups** option in the menu.

Click **Join Group**.

In the Join Group window, enter the **access code** that was provided to you.

Click **Join**. You'll be taken back to the Join Groups page.

The group you've just joined will appear at the bottom of the list.

Leaving a Group

You can only leave teacher-created groups. You will not be able to leave automatic groups you've been 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.

Click the **Join Groups** option in the menu.

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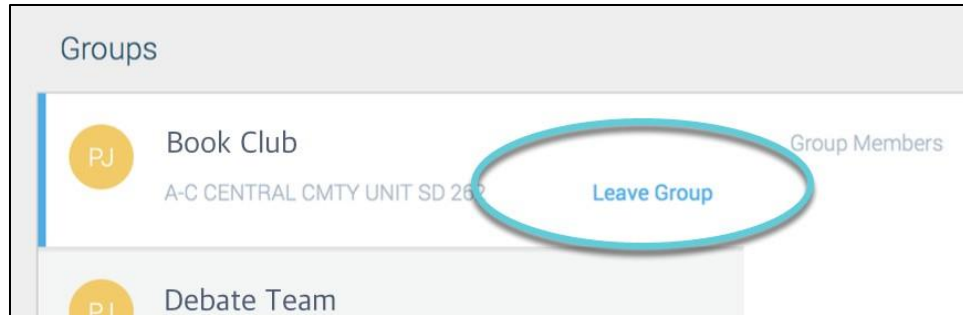
Confirm that you no longer want to be part of the group in the next window.
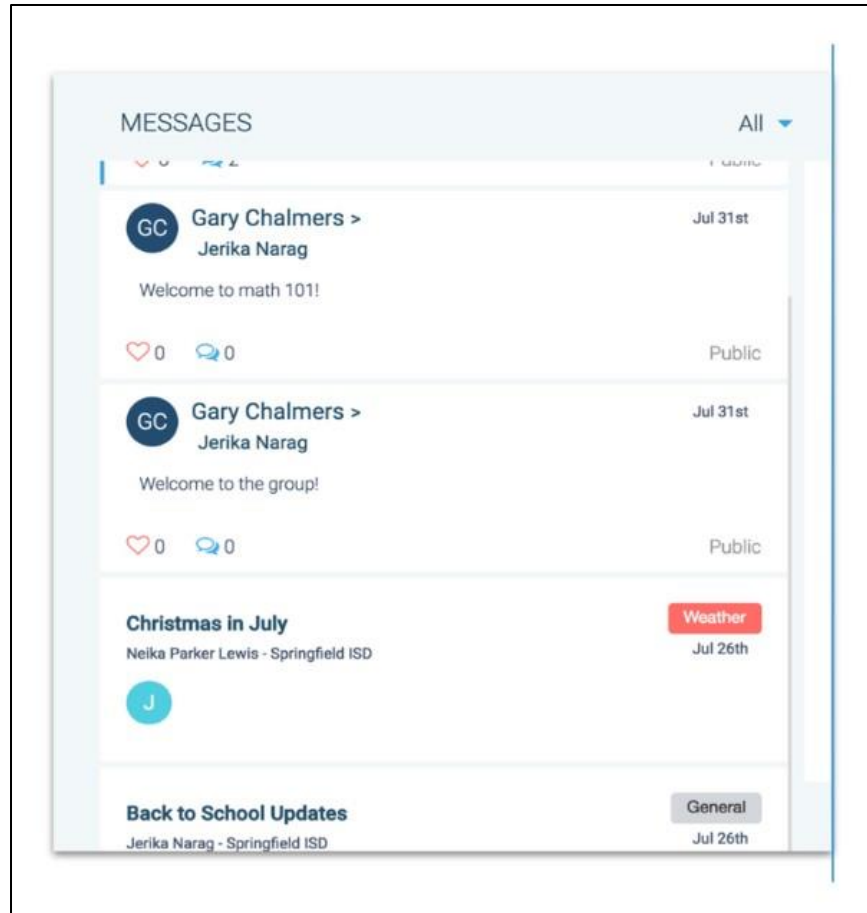
Messages

The SchoolMessenger app's Messages page displays all broadcast 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.
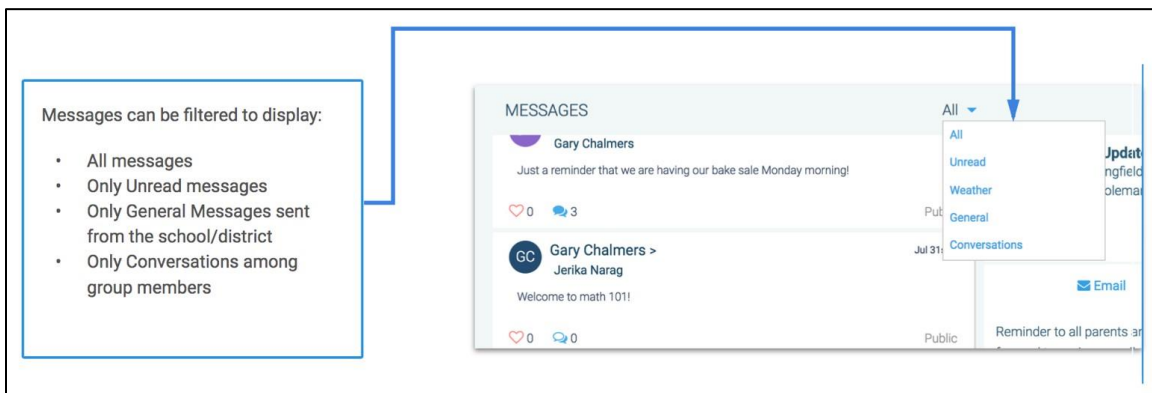
There are two types of messages:

Broadcast Messages: Sent by the school or district as SchoolMessenger Broadcasts (Emergency, Attendance, General, etc.). These will expire and be removed from your messages page after 30 days.

Teacher-Sent Messages: Messages sent initially by teachers either publicly or privately to participants who are members of a SchoolMessenger app group. Unless deleted by the teacher, these remain in your message page indefinitely.
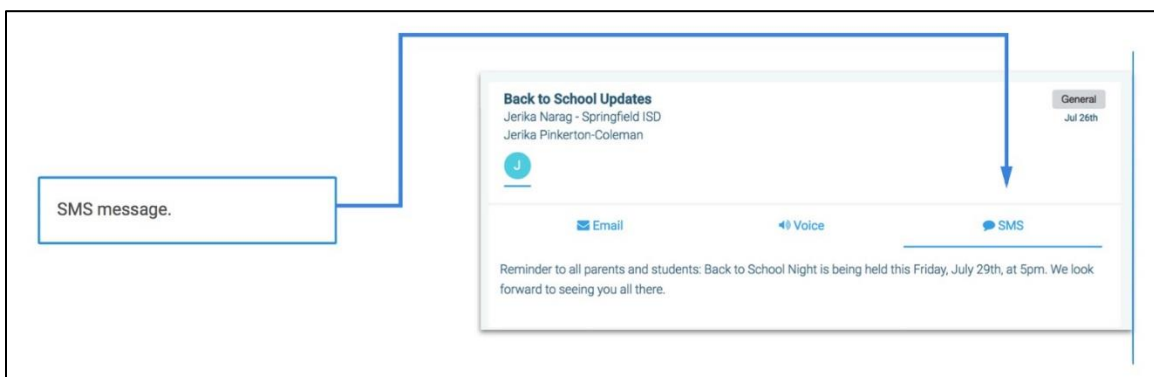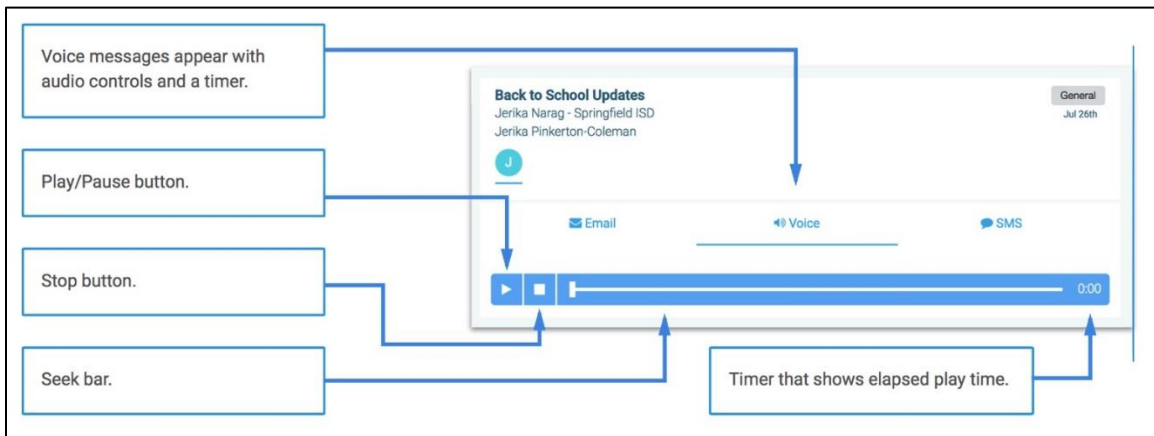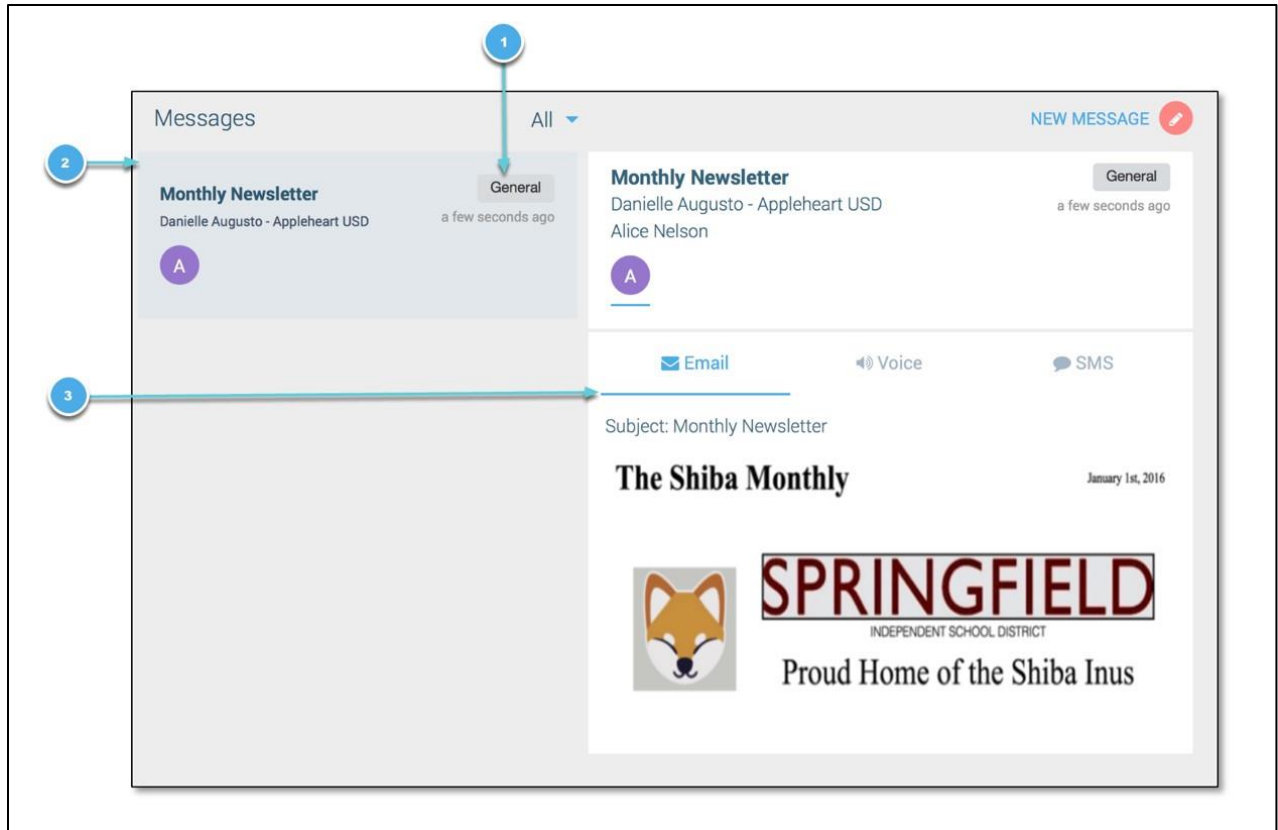
💡 **Note**: *The SchoolMessenger app automatically assigns the color and initial of the each of the student-identification circles. Neither the color nor the initial are editable.*

Broadcast Message

Unlike with teacher-sent messages, these are messages sent by the school or district and not meant to be replied to or engaged with within the SchoolMessenger app. These will expire and be removed from your messages page after 30 days.

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.

3. The message view type (Email, Voice or SMS) will be highlighted with a blue line.

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Voice messages appear with audio controls and a timer.

Play/Pause button.

Stop button.

Seek bar.

Timer that shows elapsed play time.

SMS message.

Teacher Messaging

If enabled by your district, you will see messages sent by teachers to groups you're a participant in. Unless deleted by the teacher, these remain in your message page indefinitely. These are different from Broadcast messages in that as a participant, you may be able to reply and engage with the sender and other participants.

Your ability to comment depends on the message settings determined by either the district, teacher, or both.

Below is an example of what your Messages Page will look like.

1. Message senders will have their own colored icon with their initials.

2. Recipients can like a message.

If enabled…

3. Attach a file to your comment.

4. Write your comment in the provided field.

5. Click the ◢ icon to send your comment.
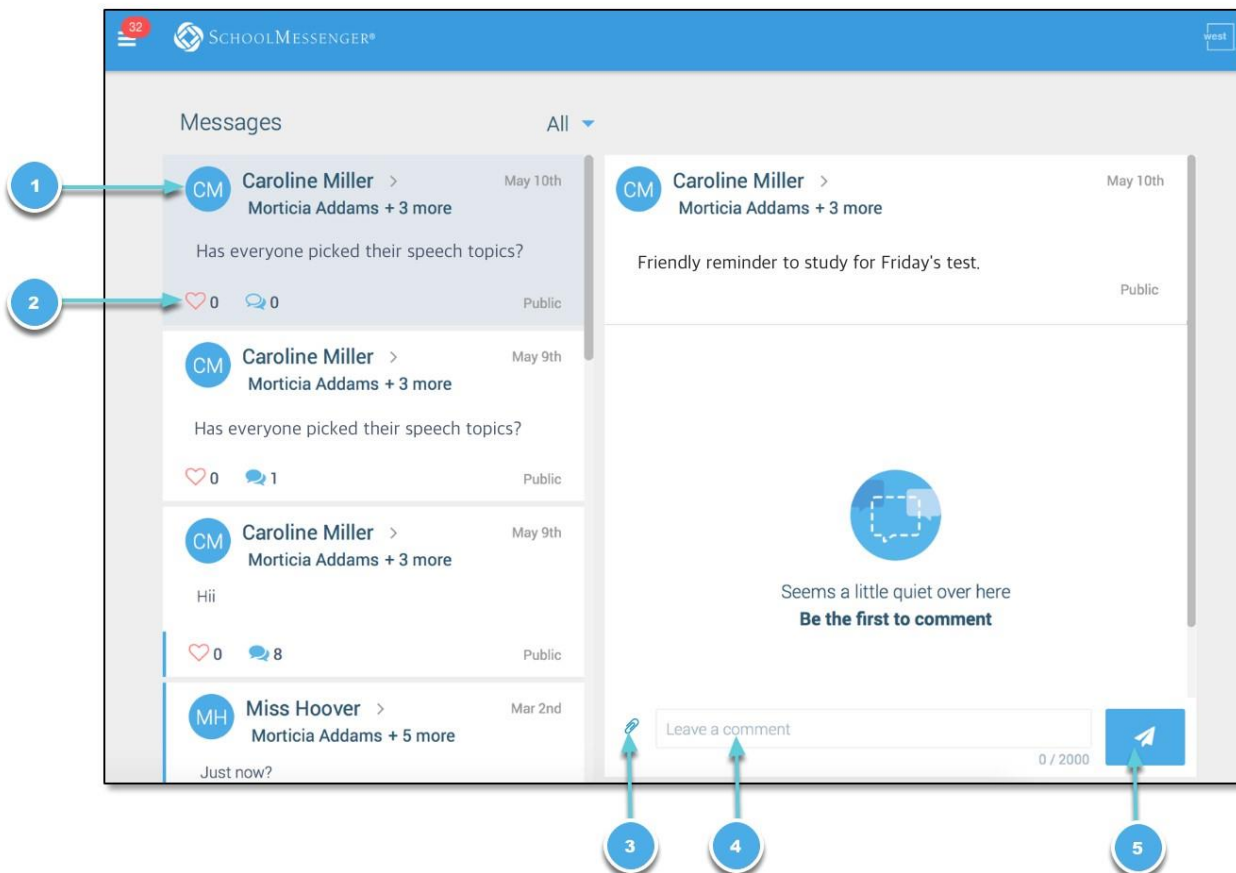
Responding to a SchoolMessenger App Message

Anyone receiving a 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 or the district. 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.

- Group members won't see each other's names.

If comments are enabled:

1. Enter your response in the comment box below.

2. Click the ![icon] icon to respond.

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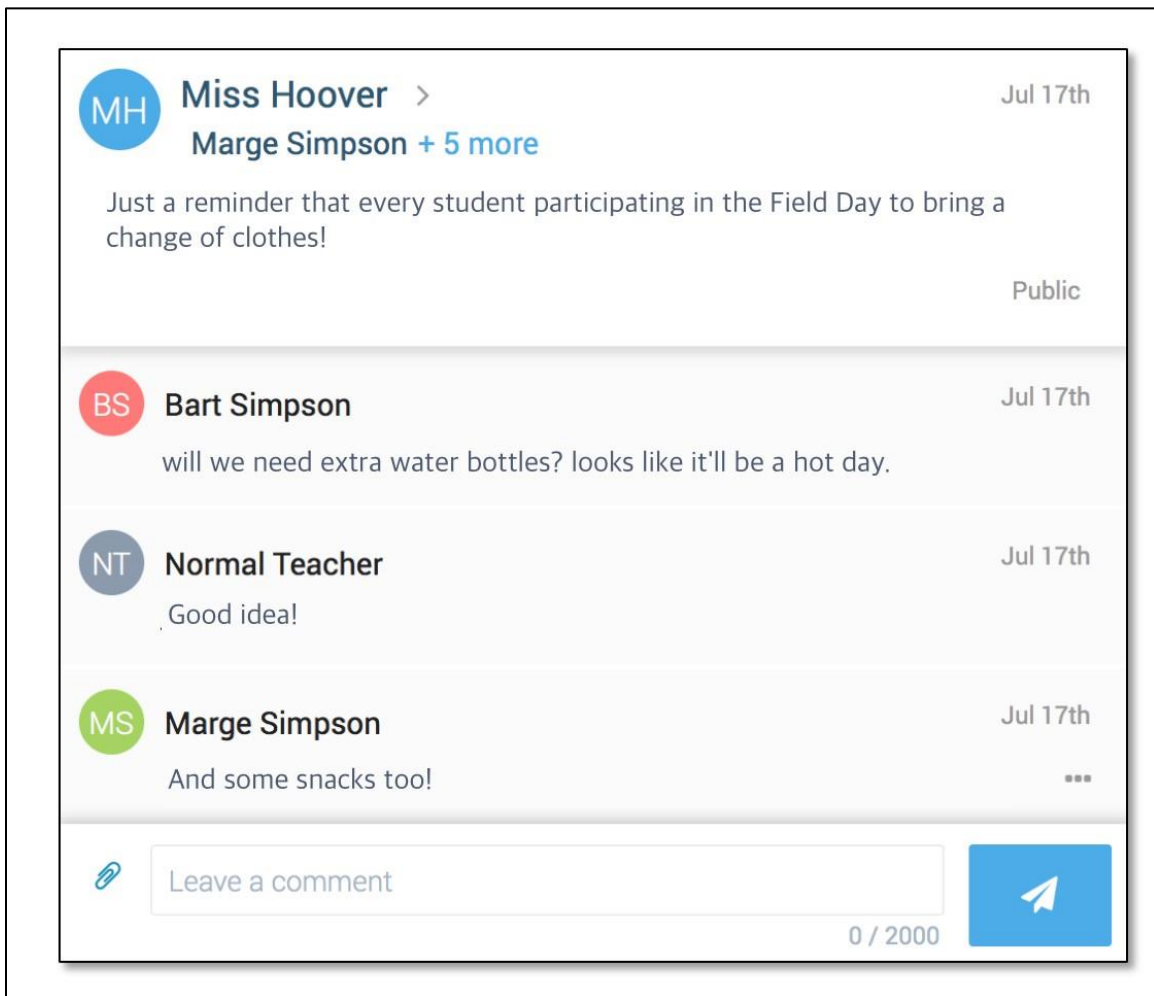
Delete Your Comment

Participants can delete their own comments by clicking ⬚ to the right of their comment.

Add an Attachment to a Comment

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: The max file size is 20MB and you can only send 1 attachment per message.

To attach a file:

Click the 🔗 icon. After clicking the 🔗 icon, the Upload box appears.

Upload your file by either selecting it from your computer or dragging and dropping it into the space provided.

Write a corresponding comment for your attachment (required).

If the attachment is correct, click the ✈ icon to send. If you wish to remove the attachment, click the **X** to the right of the attachment and click the 🔗 icon to attach a new file.

Click the attachment in the message to view the attachment fully.
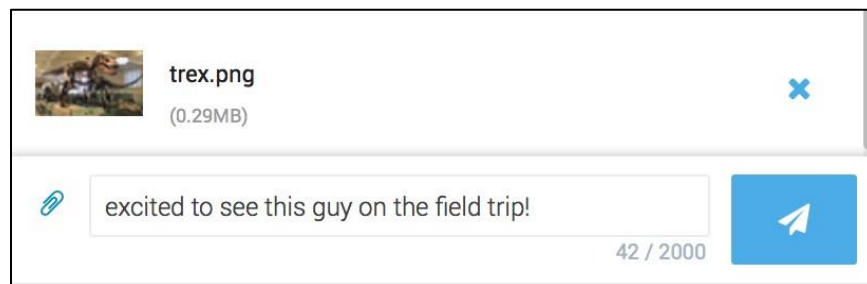
Receiving New Messages

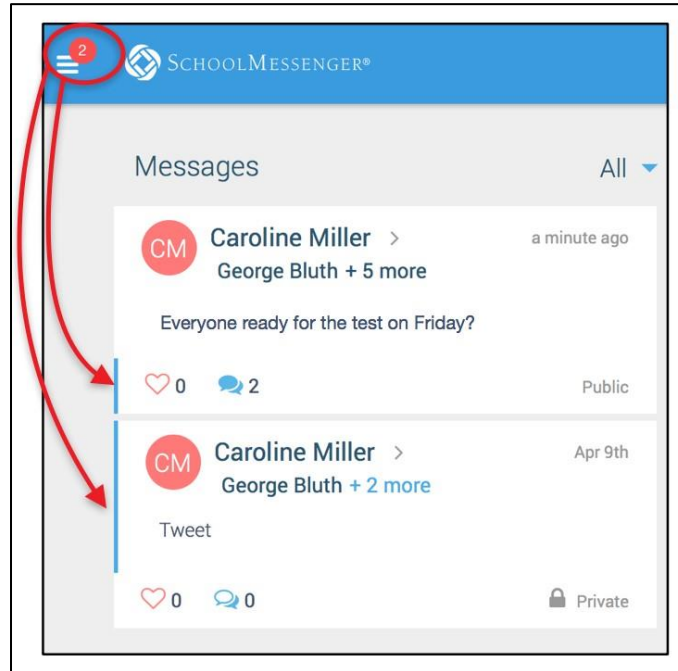If the user receives new comments within a conversation thread, the entire conversation counts as only 1 unread message. No matter how many unread messages a conversation thread contains, the unread messages count will only increment by 1.


In the example above, the unread messages number displays as 2 because there are 2 conversations in the user's message inbox that are either unread or contain unread comments. The example shows how both scenarios look like.

Unread comments within an already opened conversation are marked with a half blue line. Unread conversations not yet opened are marked by a full blue line.

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, go to the Contacts page and click **Synchronize contacts with your school district** to upload the most up-to-date information. If that doesn't work, 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.*
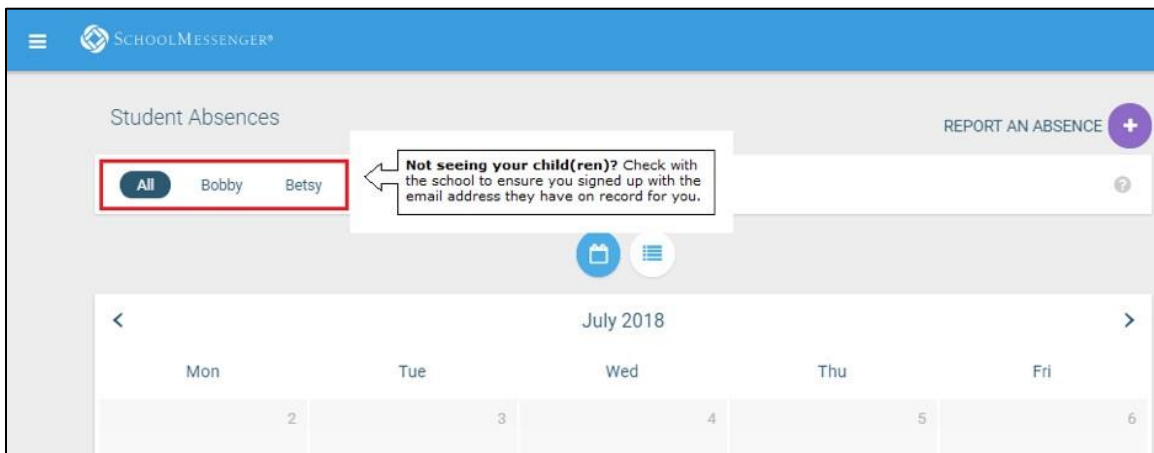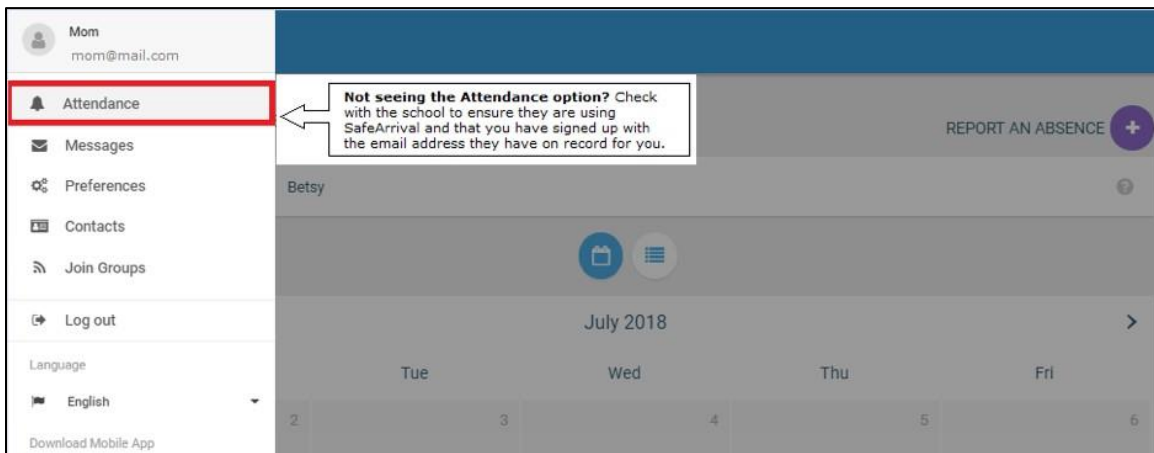
Views

You can review and edit your child's reported absences in two views: Calendar and List View. Select the student's name in the Student Absences section to filter submitted absences displayed.

Calendar View

Click the ![calendar icon] icon to see your child's absences in a calendar. To go to the previous or next month, click **<** or **>** at the top of the calendar.
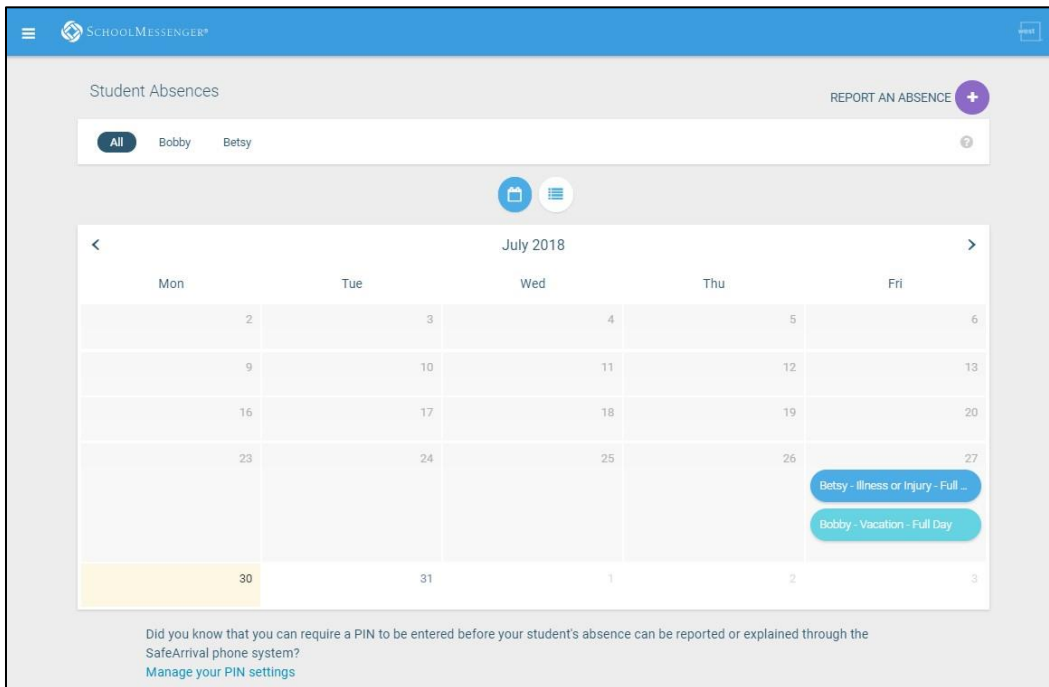
List View

Click the ![list icon] icon to view your child's absences in a list. To scroll through the list of absences, the scroll bar on the righthand 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.
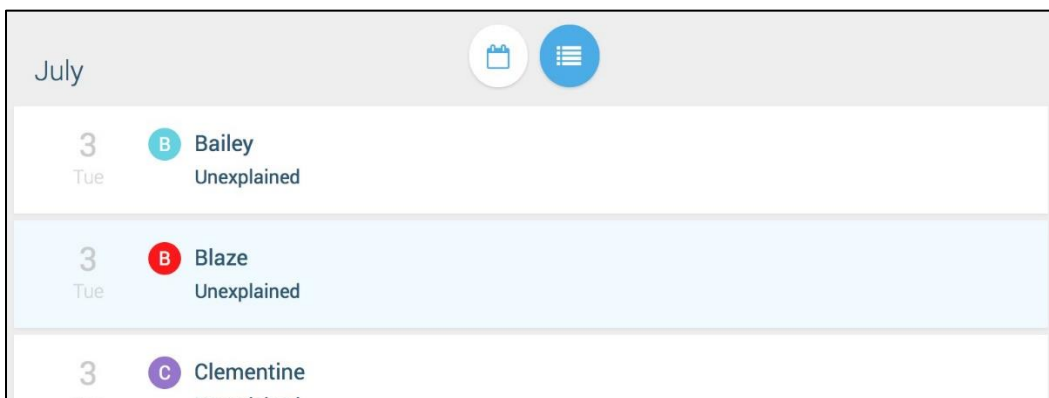
Reporting an Absence

Click **Report an Absence**.

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 you the field is available, you can also optionally add a comment or add an attachment to further explain an absence.

Click **Send** to report the absence. If the **Send** button is not activated, it means you haven't filled out a necessary field.

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:

- Click the absence (in List View) or the day of the absence (in Calendar View), then **Edit**.

- Make the required changes and 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:

- Click the absence (in List View) or the day of the absence (in Calendar View), then **Delete**.
- 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. Depending on the school's configuration you will be notified by some combination of the mobile app, email, text or phone. Each notification method will provide you an opportunity to explain the absence.

Managing PIN Settings

Parents/guardians may assign their own 4-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) to an individual student through their SchoolMessenger app. If guardian assigns a student a PIN, this number will need to be entered before an absence can be reported or explained for this particular student when using the SafeArrival phone system (using a mobile device or a landline). This provides an additional layer of security and also prevents students from reporting their own absences.

When more than 2 or more parents/guardians are connected to a student…

Once a PIN is set for a child, a PIN must always be used to report or explain that child's absences. Multiple guardians connected to the same students can share and use the same PIN, or they can set their own individual PINs for the same student. All PINs assigned will work when reporting or explaining an absence for that child.

💡 *Note: PINs are not associated with the phone number the parent calls from to report the absence or the mobile device the parent is using the app on. PINs are managed within the app and all guardians associated with the student who know/share a PIN or set their own PIN for that child will be able to report or explain an absence for that student from any device or landline they choose.*

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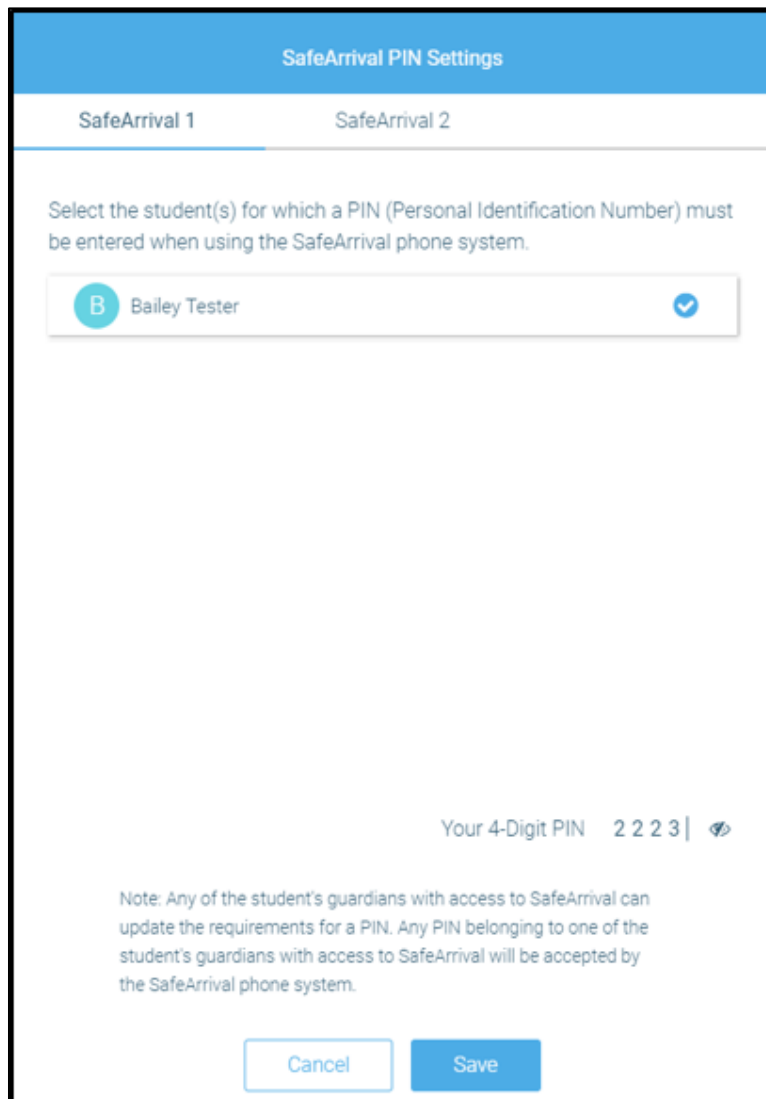
Set a PIN for a Student

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.

Click the 👁 icon to see the PIN. Click the **PIN** to modify it.

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.