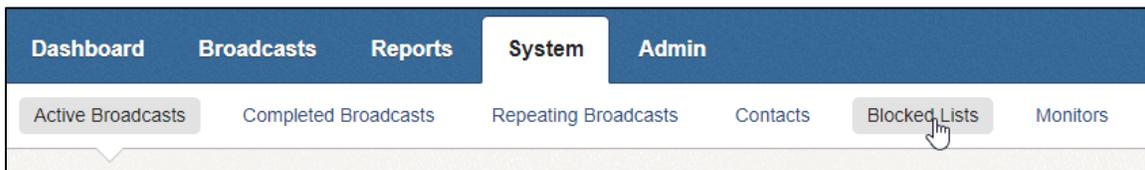# Managing Blocked Lists

# Contents

# Introduction

The blocked list is an extremely useful feature of your SchoolMessenger Communicate service. It not only allows you to block all messages to particular phone numbers and email addresses, it also allows you to identify disconnected and other invalid phone numbers and bad email addresses in order to correct them and improve the accuracy of your source data system(s).

# Where is the Blocked Lists feature, and do I need permission to access it?

To access your Blocked Lists, click the **System** tab, then the **Blocked Lists** sub-tab. There are two separate blocked lists: one for phone/SMS numbers and one for email addresses.

💡 **Note**: *If this option is not visible, contact your system administrator to request access.*

| Dashboard | Broadcasts | Reports | System | Admin |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Active Broadcasts | Completed Broadcasts | Repeating Broadcasts | Contacts | Blocked Lists | Monitors |

# What does "Blocked" in the status column of a report mean?

When reviewing a job completion report, if you see the status of "blocked" on a particular phone number or email address in a notification report it means that the number or email address is on your system's blocked list. It does not mean that the phone company or email provider is blocking the message that you tried to send.

⚠️ **Important**: *If the report shows **Blocked** for an SMS text message, and the number is not on your blocked list, this indicates either: the recipient has not opted-in from their cell phone giving you permission to send SMS text messages to their phone number; the recipient has explicitly unsubscribed their number from receiving SMS text messages; the number is associated with a telephone that can't receive text messages – like a land line.*

# How do numbers and email addresses get on the Blocked Lists?

Numbers and email addresses can only be added to the blocked list in one of two ways: Either by an individual user manually adding an entry to the list or by the system automatically adding a disconnected phone number or invalid email address to the list.

# Should I manually add numbers and email addresses to the Blocked Lists?

You should only add phone numbers and email addresses to the blocked list when it is not possible to resolve the issue by correcting the source data. For example, if a person contacts you to indicate that they are receiving your notification calls but they do not have any association with the school or district, you should locate the source of the incorrect number (i.e. your SIS or HR data system(s)) and correct the information there. If however you

receive a request from a parent who no longer wishes to receive any calls to a particular number or emails to a particular email address you may choose to add that number to the blocked list and include a note as to the reason for the requested block.

# Auto-blocked entries on the Blocked Lists

The auto-blocked number information is a tremendous resource for schools and districts. Entries in the list that are blocked by Communicate are automatically added by the system when it confirms that a phone number or email address is not valid. This is determined either by identifying a pattern of numerous consecutive failed calls over a period of several months or by information sent back from the receiving email server indicating an invalid email address. The reason for the block is indicated in the description field making it easy to follow up and correct the source of the bad data.

# Blocked List Review and Maintenance

Regular review of the blocked list will help ensure that your contact data is accurate and up to date. The following sections cover the available tools and recommendations for managing your blocked list data.

## Blocked List Management Tools

The blocked list allows you to identify the person associated with the blocked data as well as their school association. You can export that data into an Excel spreadsheet for easy sorting and distribution.

To export your blocked list data to Excel, click the **Display Contacts** checkbox.

Click the **CSV Download** link.

Open the exported file in Excel.

## How do I determine which person and school the blocked data is associated with?

The blocked list includes the school associated with the blocked phone/email, making it easy to sort and distribute the blocked list to those sites so they can follow up with the students/parents in order to correct the data. See the prior instructions for displaying contacts and downloading data into Excel.

Records that do not display a school and/or student ID# are either no longer associated with a student in your system or may be linked to a manually entered contact. This would either be a contact manually entered into a user's address book or through a manual CSV file list upload by an individual user; therefore, no school association or ID# would exist. It is recommended that you leave such unassociated records in your blocked list.

# Can I delete numbers or email addresses from the Blocked List?

If a number or email is no longer associated with any contacts in your account, it is safe to delete the record from the blocked list. To determine this, click the **Display Contacts** checkbox. Any records that do not show an association in both the ID and name fields and do not display the magnifying glass drill-down icon can be safely removed.

You should always attempt to correct data at the source whenever practical (e.g. your SIS system, HR system, etc.). Your regularly scheduled data imports will then automatically update the incorrect data, obviating any need to manually add/delete the information to the blocked list. However, there may be times when a parent wishes to have a certain phone number or email addressed blocked from all notifications, and it is not practical to remove it from the source system (e.g. a work phone number). In such a situation, you can simply add the information to the blocked list.

# Questions?

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

## SchoolMessenger Solutions Support

**Phone**: 800-920-3897

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