



COMMUNICATE

# SchoolMessenger App

Parent Guide - Mobile

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# 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 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 broadcast 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 the TCPA

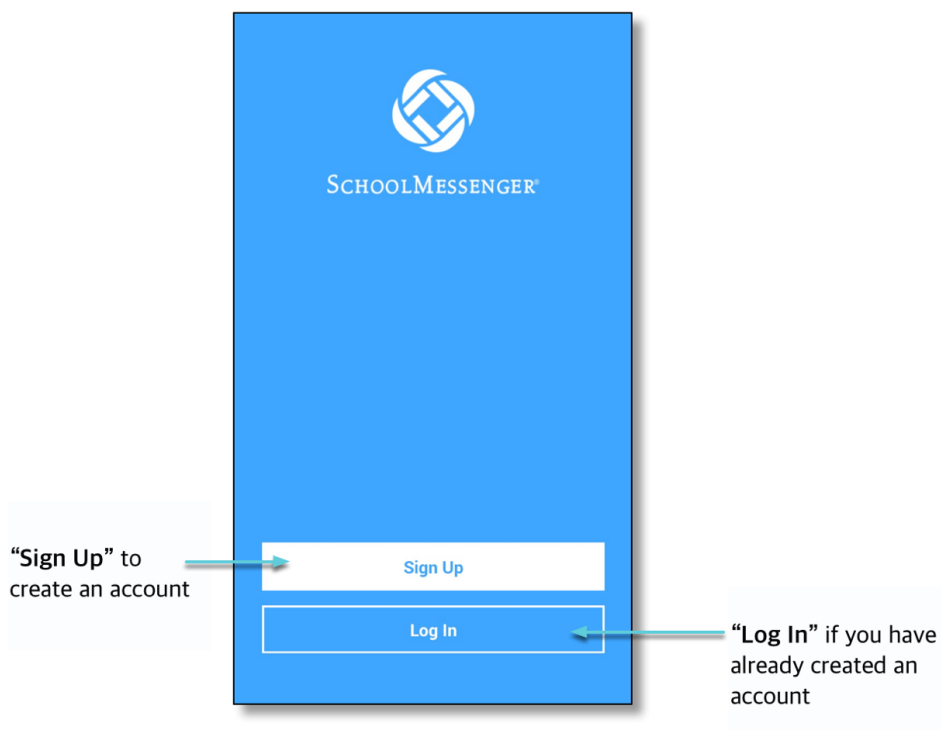


The Telephone Consumer Protection Act (47 U.S.C. 227) is a law that was passed by the US Congress in 1991. This law places restrictions on telephone solicitations and the use of automated telephone equipment, protecting the public from receiving unwanted phone calls.

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.

## Initial Menu

Download the mobile app from either Apple's App Store or Android's Google Play page. You have 2 options after downloading the app and launching it on your mobile device:



# Creating a SchoolMessenger App Account

You must create an account in the SchoolMessenger app before you can start using it.

## Sign Up

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

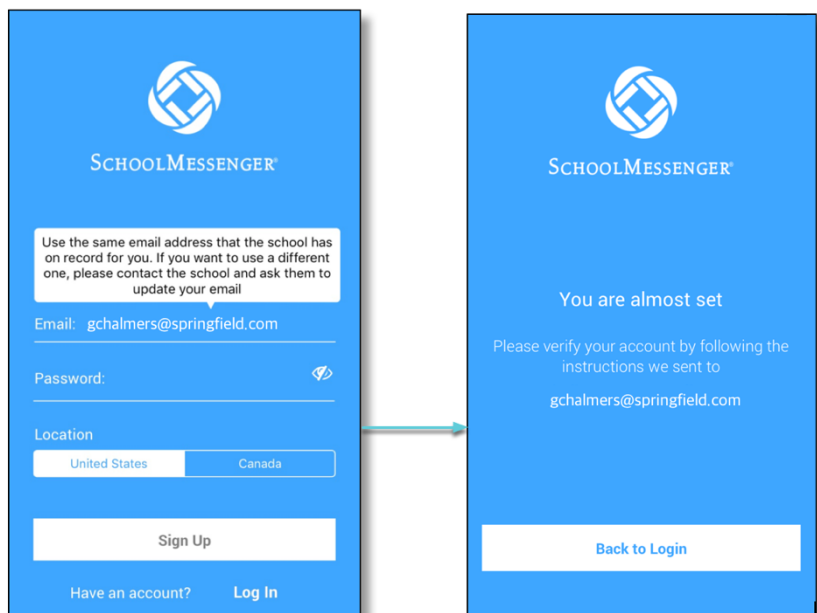


**Important:** If you already have an email address that the school has on record, use this email address when you sign up.

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. Tap 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 tap 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.

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.

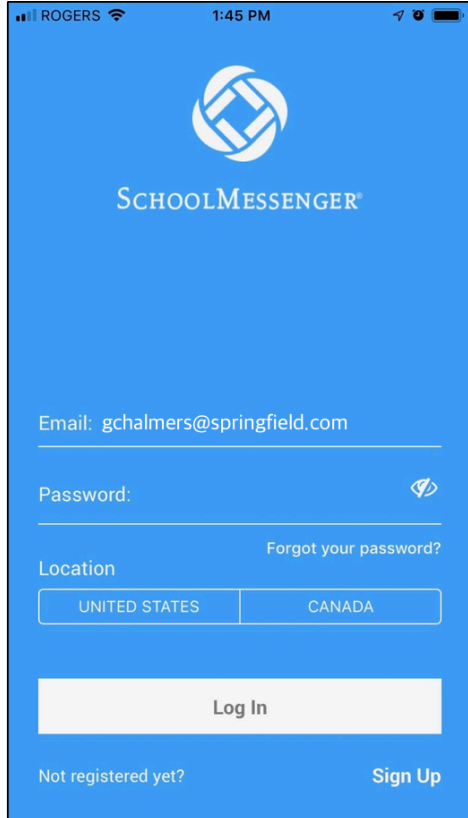
Your school's district admin will configure your message settings and what features you will see when you log in.

## Log In

To log into the SchoolMessenger app:

1. 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 the **Forgot your password? link** if you forgot your password. An email will be sent to you allowing you to register a new password.



ROGERS 1:45 PM

SCHOOLMESSENGER

Email: gchalmers@springfield.com

Password: 

Forgot your password?

Location

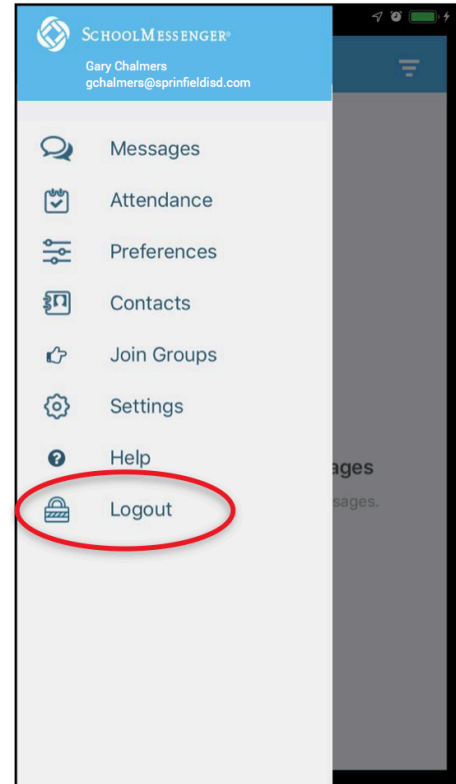
UNITED STATES CANADA

Log In

Not registered yet? Sign Up

## Log Out

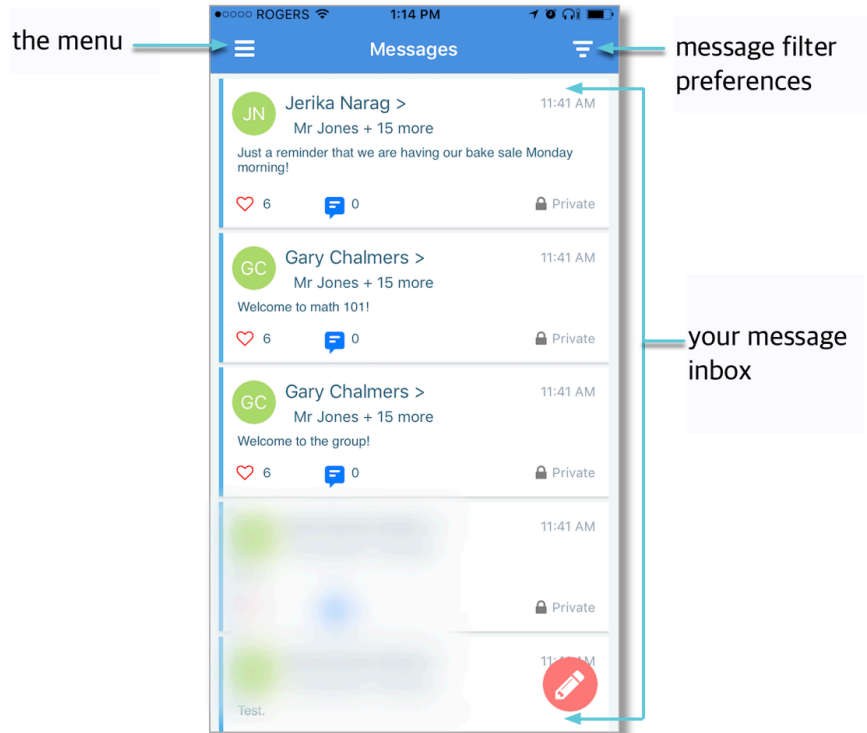
1. Tap the **main menu icon** in the top left corner of the app.
2. Tap **Logout**.



## When You First Sign In...

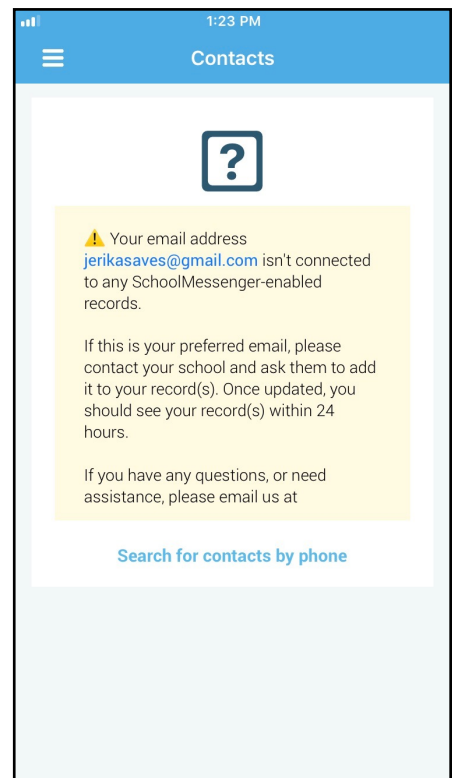
After successfully logging in with a verified email, you should expect to see any messages that you've recently received for any Contacts - student, staff, and/or guardian records - associated with your account email address. You can navigate through your district-enabled options by using the left navigation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

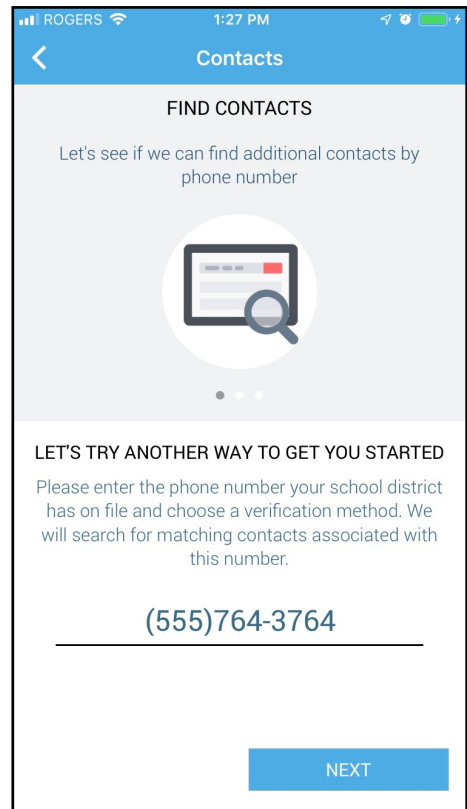




## Claim Contacts by Phone

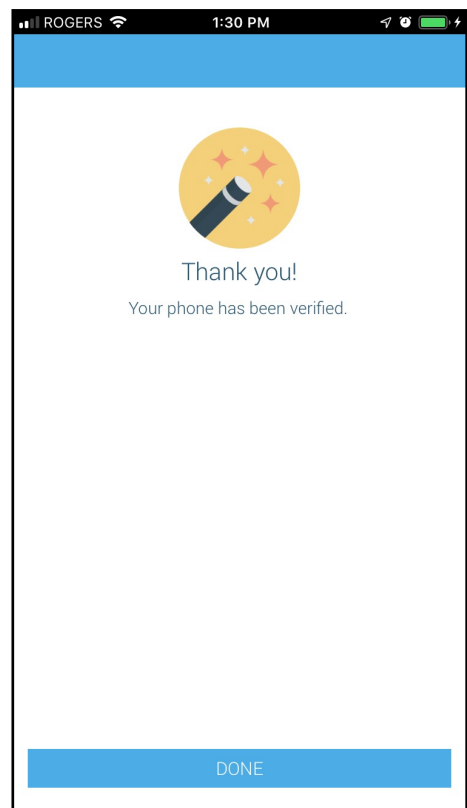
If the SchoolMessenger app isn't able to match your email to any contact data in their systems, your message inbox will appear empty. You'll have the option to try to match a potential school record using your phone number.

1. Tap the **"Search for contacts by phone"** link at the bottom of the screen.
2. Enter your phone number your school district has on file. Tap **NEXT**.
3. Select an option to receive a verification code.
4. Tap **SEND THE CODE**. A verification code will be sent to the number you entered.
5. Input the verification code your received and tap **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.
  - 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.

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

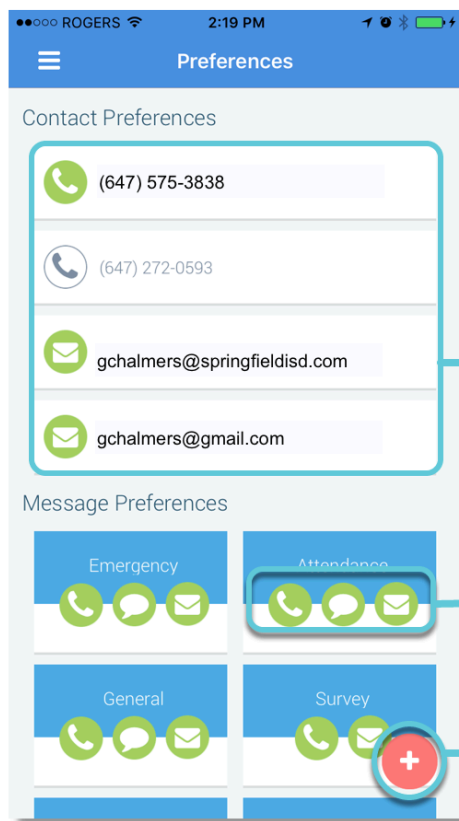
1. Tap on the  button on the upper left corner of your screen.
2. Tap on the **Preferences** option.



**Note:** Your district will control over whether you'll be able to add contact information. While the ability to add contact information may be limited by your school district, you can change your consent selections and preferences at any time.



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




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.

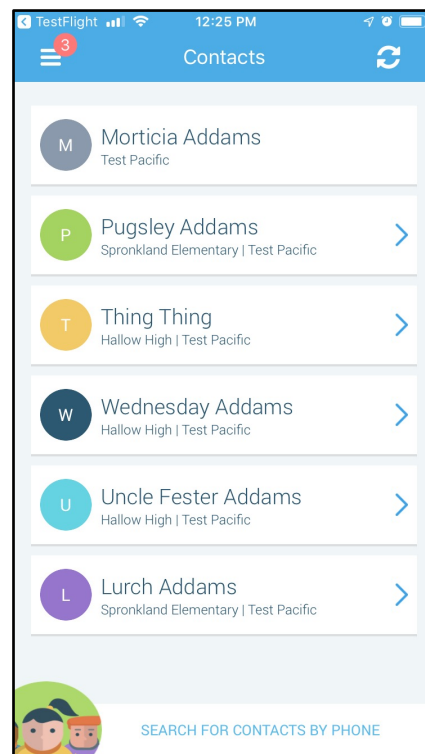
# Contacts

 **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 tapping the  icon and tapping **Contacts**.

 **Note:** If you are missing contacts, tap the **SEARCH FOR CONTACTS BY PHONE** link at the bottom of the screen to claim possible missing contacts using your phone number. You should also tap the **Refresh icon** located in the upper righthand corner of the screen to upload the most up-to-date information (more information below). If that doesn't work, please contact your school or district.

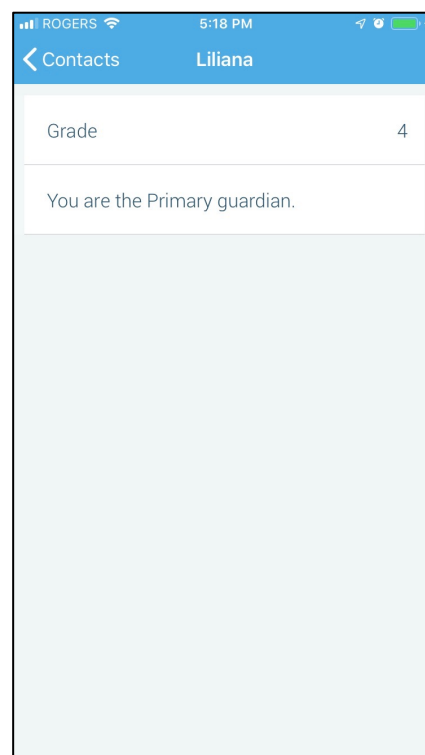


## Plus Data

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 small arrow next to the contact. Tapping the arrow displays the Plus data.

In the example to the right, the plus data shows the student's grade and that the user is this student's primary guardian.



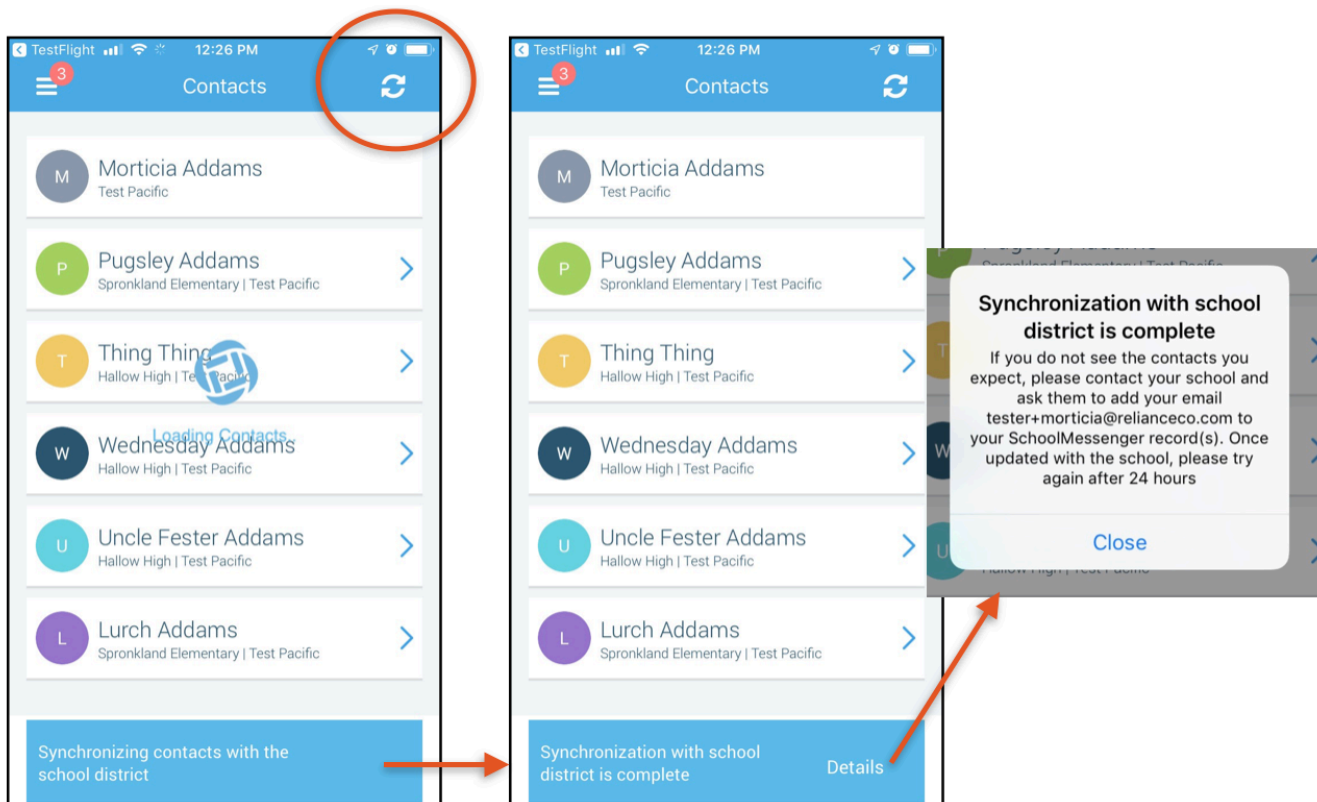
# Manual Contact Data Refresh

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.



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

1. Tap the **main menu icon** in the top left corner of the app.
2. Tap **Contacts**.
3. Tap the **refresh icon** in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. The app will begin syncing with the latest school data.
4. Once the sync is complete, you can click the **Details link** to view some information on the synchronization.



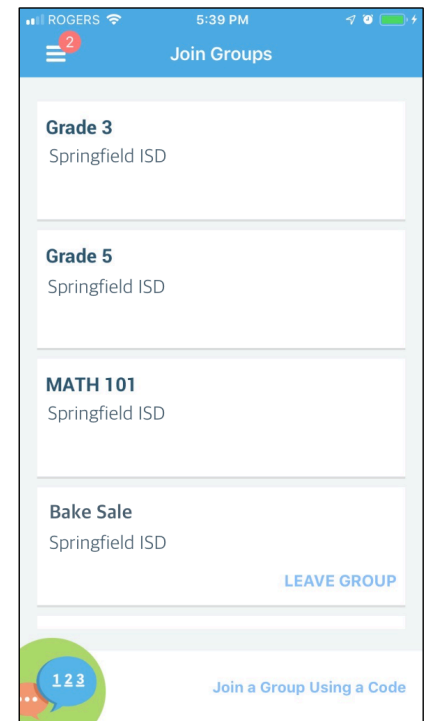
# Groups and Group Types

If enabled by your district, you will see a  menu option 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 and leave groups you have the access code for.
- see 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

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

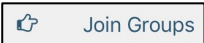
If enabled by their district, teachers can create conversation or discussion groups in which students, guardians, and other school staff can participate. But before such participation can occur, participants must be invited and provided an access code by the teacher to join the group.

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

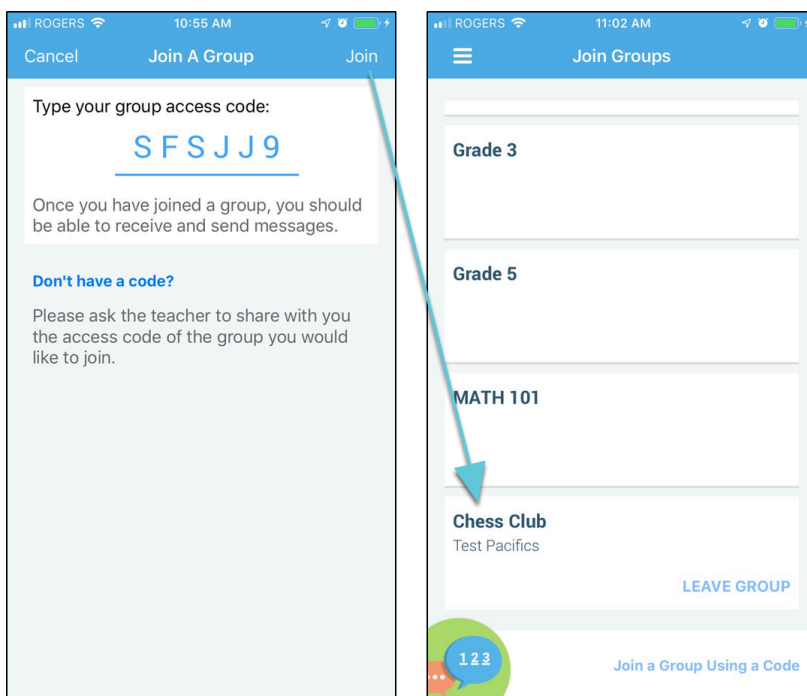
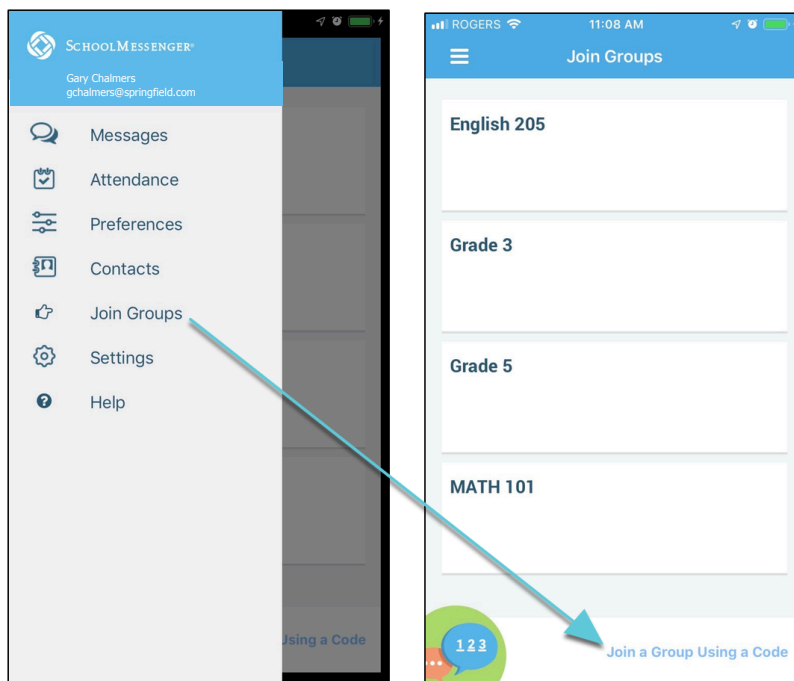
## Joining a Group

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:

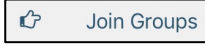
1. Obtain the access code from your student's teacher.
2. Tap on the  **Join Groups** menu option.
3. Tap on the **Join a Group Using a Code** link at the bottom of the screen.
4. In the Join A Group window, enter the **access code** that was provided to you.
5. Tap **Join** at the top of the screen. You'll be taken back to the Join Groups page.

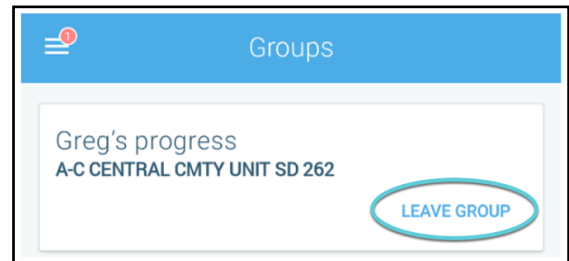
The group you've just joined will appear at the bottom of the list.



## 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.

1. Tap on the  menu option.
2. Tap on **LEAVE GROUP** to the right of the group you wish to leave.
3. 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.

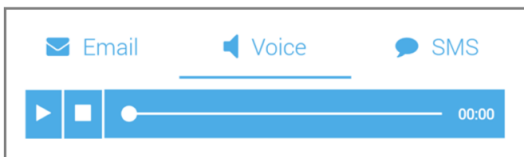
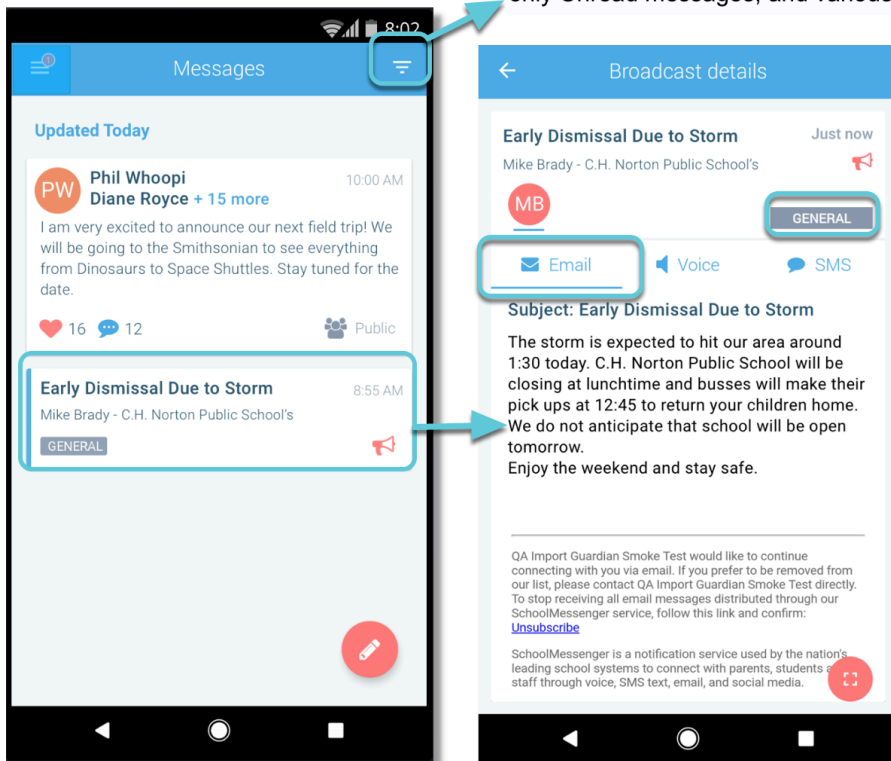


**Note:** The SchoolMessenger app automatically assigns the color and initial of the each of the student-identification circles. Neither the color nor the initial are editable.

# Broadcast Message

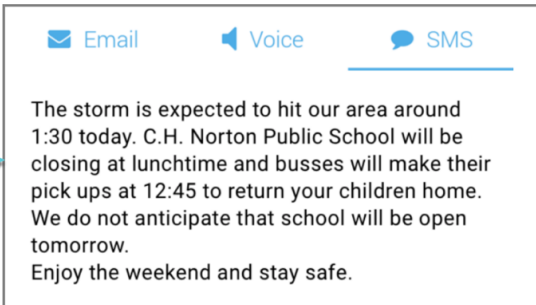
Unlike with teacher-sent messages, these are messages sent by the school or district and not meant to be replied to or engaged with within the SchoolMessenger app. These will expire and be removed from your messages page after 30 days.

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



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

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.

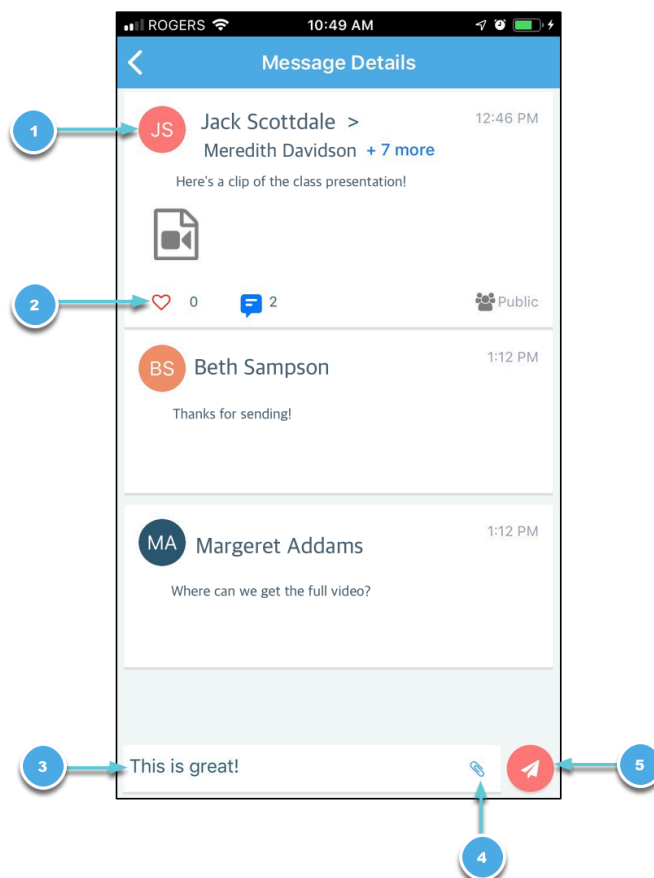
Your ability to comment depends on the message settings determined by either the district, teacher, or both.

Below is an example of what a teacher-sent message looks like when opened.

1. Message senders will have their own colored icon with their initials.
2. Recipients can like a message by tapping the heart.

### If enabled...

3. There'll be a field where you can write a comment.
4. Tap the **paper clip icon** to attach a file to your comment.
5. Tap the **paper airplane button** to send your comment.



## Responding to a SchoolMessenger App Message

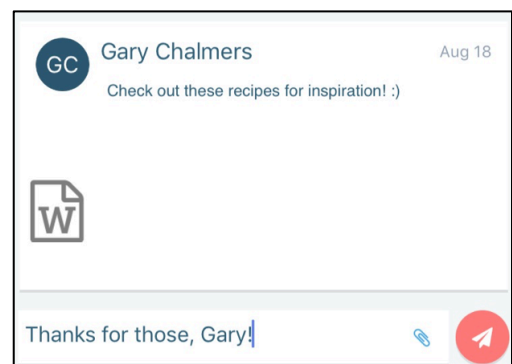
Anyone receiving a message created by a teacher may read the message, and, under the appropriate circumstances, read the comments of other group members and offer their own comments.

The circumstances are defined by the teacher who created the original message. 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**:

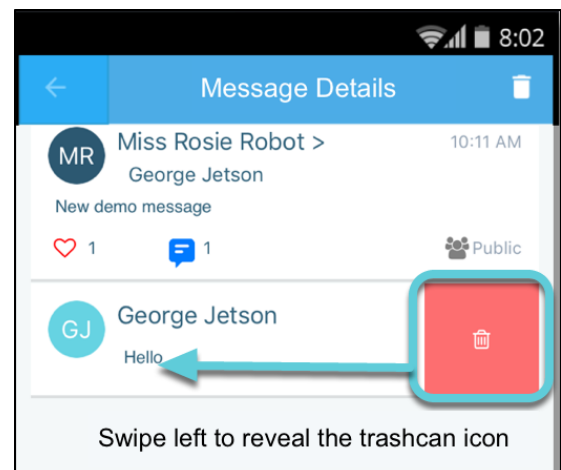
1. Enter your response in the comment box below.
2. Tap the red **paper airplane button** to respond.



## Deleting Your Comment

You have the ability to delete their own comments after they've been sent.

1. Open the message thread where you've sent your comment.
2. Pressing down on your comment, swipe left to reveal the trashcan icon.
3. Tap the **trashcan icon**.
4. Tap **Delete** to confirm your decision to delete your comment. Your comment will be permanently removed from the message thread.



## Add an Attachment to Your Comment

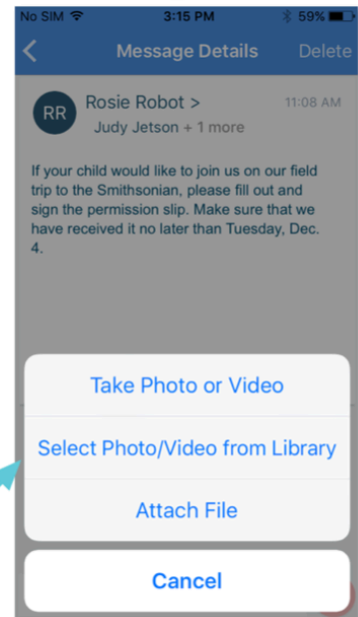
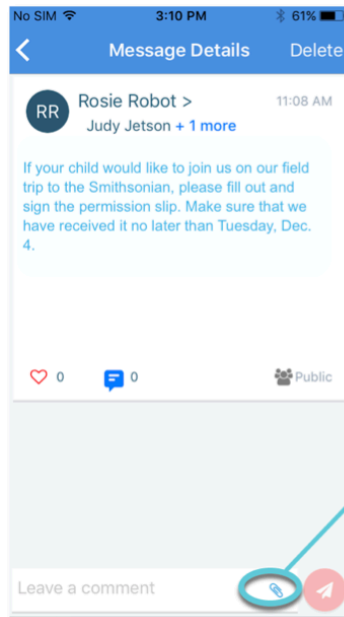
Use attachments to send the following file types in your reply:

- 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.

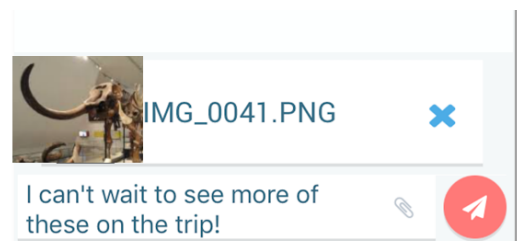
1. Tap the blue **paperclip icon** to the right of the comment field.
2. Select an option for attaching your file:
  - Take a Photo or Video
  - Select Photo/Video from Library
  - Attach File



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

### Once your file is attached:

3. Write a corresponding comment to your picture (required).
4. If the attachment is correct, tap the red **paper airplane button** to send. If you wish to remove the attachment, tap the **X** to the right of the attachment and tap the **paperclip icon** to attach a new file.



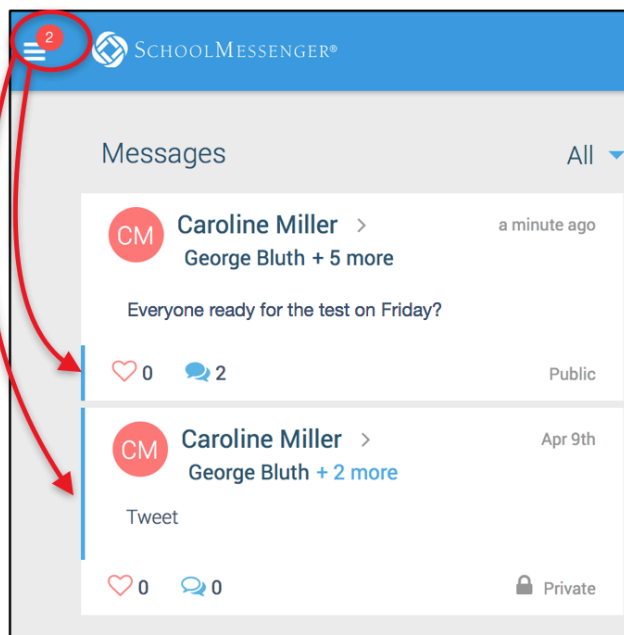
Tap the attachment in the message to view the attachment fully.

## 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 to the right, 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 menu option in the menu and your students listed.

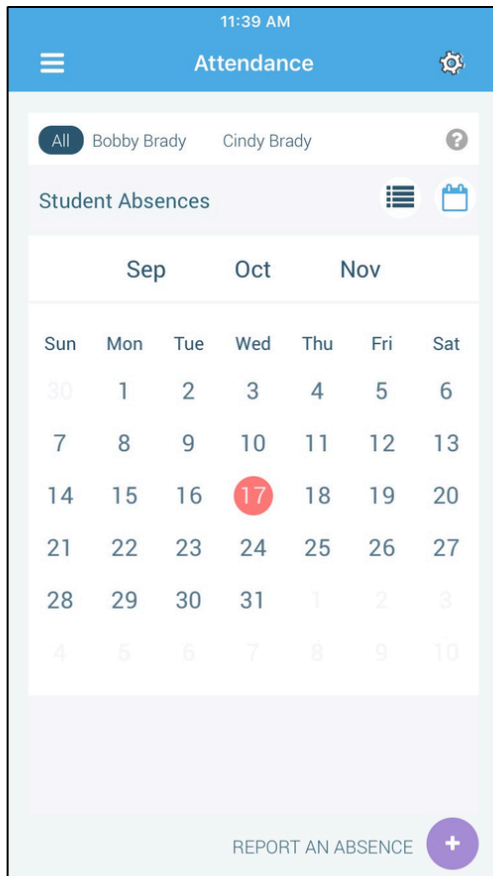


**Note:** If you don't see the Attendance option or your children, go to the Contacts page and tap the **Refresh icon** to upload the most up-to-date information. If that doesn't work, check with the school to ensure they are using SafeArrival and that you signed up with the email address they have on record for you.

# App Views

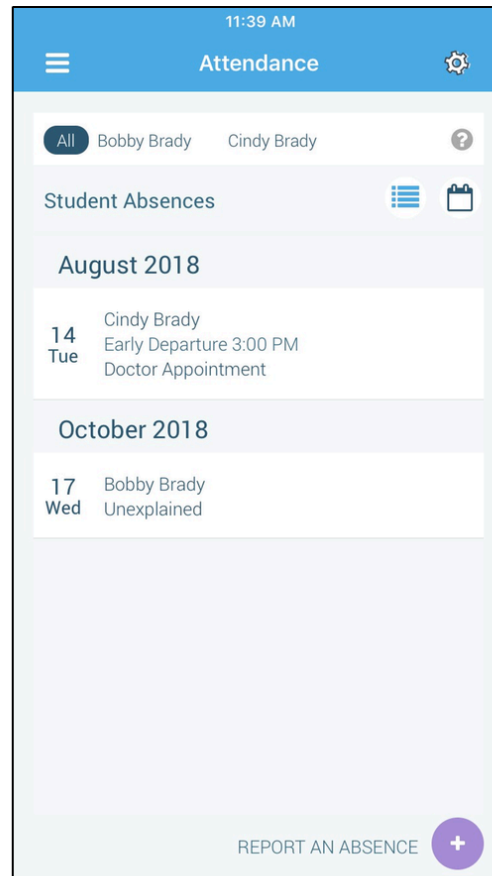
## Calendar View

Tap the calendar icon to see your child's absences in a calendar. The absence dates will be circled in red.



## List View

To scroll through the list of absences, tap the list icon 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.

## Report an Absence

1. Tap the **REPORT AN ABSENCE** button.

2. Select a student by tapping their name.
3. Select an absence type.
4. 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.
5. Tap **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

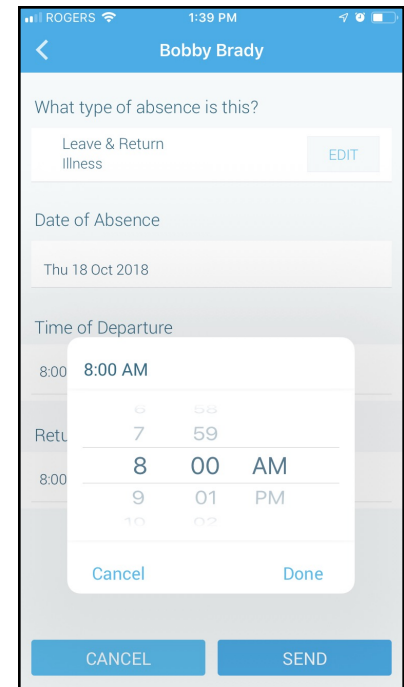
If you have reported an absence in advance and decide that you need to delete the absence **BEFORE** the cut-off time on the day of the absence, follow these steps:

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 app to explain your student's absence.



## Manage 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.

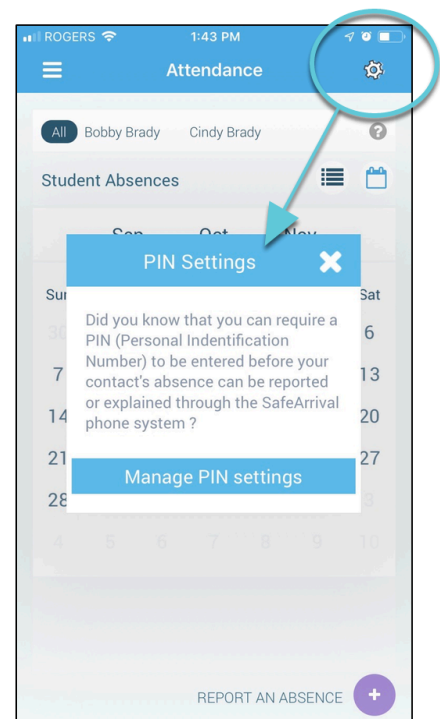
For parents/guardians who do not use the SchoolMessenger app, staff with access to the SchoolMessenger Communicate Contacts page can manage the PIN settings.

### Set a PIN for a Student

Using the mobile app, tap the **gear icon** in the upper right-hand corner of the Attendance page. You will be shown a brief description of PIN settings. Tap the **Manage your PIN settings link** to continue.

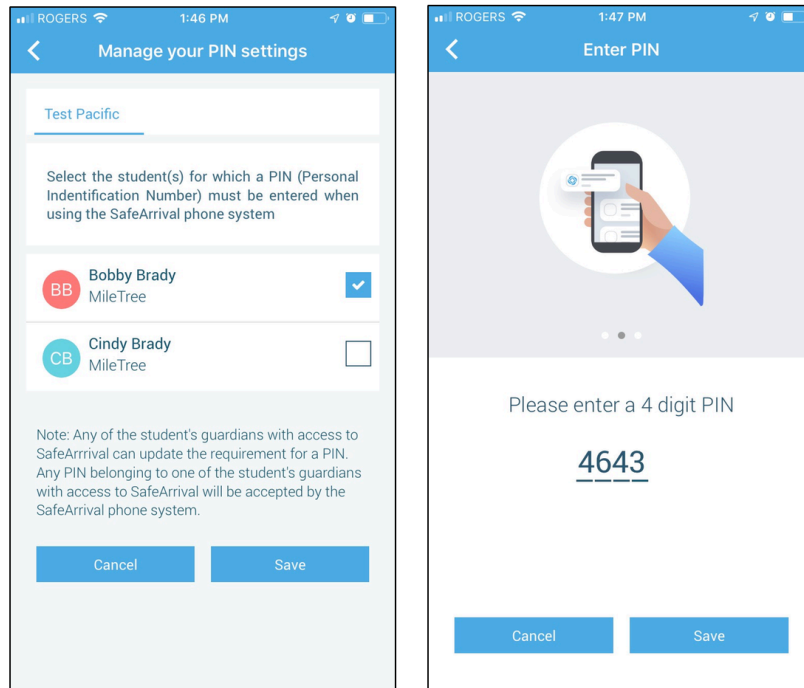
On the Manage your PIN Settings screen, you can choose the district in which the student is enrolled (if the parent has students enrolled in more than 1 district). The parent will see a list of his/her students and will be able to tap the checkbox to request that a PIN be required for when reporting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

1. Tap the **eye icon** to see the PIN.



2. Tap the **edit icon** to modify the PIN.

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.



# Push Notifications

If you would like to receive notifications of specific message types directly to the SchoolMessenger app on your mobile device:

1. Tap the **Settings** menu option.
2. Tap **Push Notifications**.
3. Tap the name of your child's school district.
4. Select which types of messages 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](mailto:appfeedback@schoolmessenger.com)