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## Schools introduce Communicate broadcast tool



COMMUNICATE

Limestone District School Board schools are rolling out a new broadcasting tool to communicate need-to-know information to families in a timely and efficient way.

The new and improved “Communicate” system will allow all of our schools to communicate directly with families through email, text or voice message. Secondary school families will be familiar with a previous version of the broadcast tool (Synrevoice) which would allow schools to send voice mail messages about student attendance and/or important school information.

Communicate will be used by schools to update families on pressing items such as event cancellations or school emergencies. It might also be used, however, to share nice-to-know information such as upcoming progress reports, school council meetings or special events.

Registered parents/guardians will receive these messages through contact information collected in our student information system. Parents/guardians may choose how to receive these alerts by text message, email or phone call with the exception of emergency events which will always be communicated via all contact methods on file with the school. If parents/guardians choose to receive text messages, they must opt-in.

It is important that parents/guardians ensure schools have the most up-to-date contact information at the beginning of the school year. For returning students, this information is sent home for review and verification. Students new to Limestone would include this information during the registration process. If your contact information changes during the school year, parents/guardians are asked to contact the school with the updated information.

Communicate does not replace current school communication tools but enhances the way in which schools will provide information to families. In most cases, information will still be provided on school websites, school newsletters, notices home and social media accounts, where applicable.

Parents/guardians should expect to receive notifications from the system soon.

### **SMS Texting Opt-in:**

If you choose to receive these alerts via SMS text message, you must indicate your willingness to receive text messages to your phone. The Board offers this service for free, however, the Board does not pay for text message charges that may be incurred by you for sending or receiving text messages. You should check with your wireless carrier for possible charges related to using this feature. To receive text messages, simply text the letter Y to the number 978338. You will know you were successful if you receive the following reply message from SchoolMessenger: “[your school name inserted here] messages. Reply Y to confirm, HELP 4 info. Msg & data rates may apply. Msg freq varies.” If you have not opted in before November 15, 2018, the Board will send out a text message to all families for whom we have a cell phone number on file. If you’re uncertain



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as to whether or not you've already opted in simply repeat the opt-in process above. There's no harm in sending the opt-in message more than once.

### **Teacher/Coach/Extra-Curricular Leader Messaging:**

Teachers and coaches/leaders of extra-curricular activities will also be able to take advantage of an instant message option to keep students and families up to date regarding classroom or practice/game activities in a timely manner. Students and parents/guardians will be invited to join a group and receive messages related specifically to their group. Information on how to join groups will be shared directly with students and families by the teacher, coach/leader. [See \*Setting up a School Messenger App Account for instructions.\*](#)

### **School Messenger App Account:**

All of our new electronic communications tools can be accessed anytime, anywhere online and/or via Smartphones. To take advantage of this new convenience and functionality, we encourage you to create a School Messenger account on your desktop, laptop, tablet and/or download the SchoolMessenger app. While an account is not required to use these new tools, it will allow you to review your contact information and communication preferences, and it stores all of your messages in one place. [See \*Setting up a School Messenger App Account for instructions.\*](#)