

Quick guide to communication planning for education



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How can schools or school districts easily, effectively, and efficiently communicate with parents and caregivers?

There are so many considerations to keep in mind, from figuring out how parents and caregivers want to communicate to complying with complex regulations.

The answer lies in choosing the right technological framework.

In this quick guide to communication planning for education, we'll explore what steps to take to ensure you keep parents and caregivers up-to-date.

What's involved in planning communications for schools or school districts?



There are three steps involved in creating a communications plan for schools or school districts:

1. Understanding regulations
2. Surveying parents and caregivers about their communication preferences
3. Choosing the right technology

1. Understanding regulations

[All schools and districts have the obligation](#) to communicate with parents in a language they understand. If they don't do so, they're violating Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. Moreover, there's also the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, which protects the privacy of student education records.

Whichever communication system you choose to share information with parents and caregivers, it must be compliant with all local, state, and federal regulations. Otherwise, you could find yourself facing penalties and an increased administrative burden when you need to rectify non-compliant communication.

2. Surveying parents and caregivers about their communication preferences

Not all parents and caregivers have the same communication preferences. Some people prefer phone calls, while others prefer text messages. Some parents and caregivers feel comfortable holding a video conference with their children's teachers.

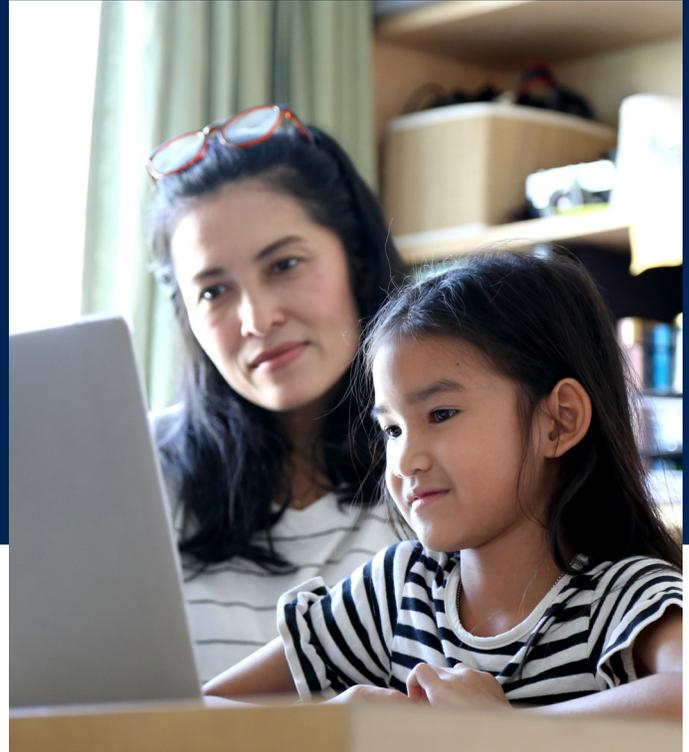
When creating a communications plan, take parent and caregiver preferences into account. It's no good if a teacher calls a parent, only for the call to go straight to voicemail. If a teacher has an important update to share with a parent or caregiver, it should be shared in a way that ensures the recipient will read it or hear it.

3. Choosing the right technology

When developing a communication plan, schools and districts must consider their resources. Automating mass communications saves staff time and money.

At the same time, the technology needs to be flexible enough that it allows one-to-one communications for teachers to reach out individually to parents and caregivers (and vice versa). More importantly, it must be compliant with regulations so the school or district avoids penalties. Education collaboration tools offer schools and districts the flexibility, reliability, and compliance assurance they need to communicate effectively with parents and caregivers.

Executing your communications plan



Once you've taken the time to understand regulations, parental communication preferences, and which education communication tools are right for you, the next step is to execute your communications plan.

Here's how to ensure that your communications plan is successful:

- Train staff and teachers on how to use the education communication tools
- Let parents and caregivers know there's a new way for them to communicate with teachers
- Measure the effectiveness of communications
- Fine-tune if necessary

Train staff and teachers

Teachers as well as administrative staff need to be trained to use education collaboration tools. Teachers will need to communicate with parents and caregivers. Additionally, staff and administrators will occasionally need to send out mass communications about events at the school or within the district.

To that end, choosing education communication tools that are easy to use reduces the learning curve.

Let parents and caregivers know there's a new way to communicate with teachers

Everyone who's seen "Field of Dreams" remembers the famous line, "If you build it, they will come." When it comes to introducing new technology, that's not true. You have to [let people know](#) that you're using education communication tools so teachers can share information with parents and caregivers.

Determine how best to alert parents and caregivers about this change. A successful publicity campaign might be through social media, posters in school, or teachers handing out flyers to students. It won't look the same at every school or district; it depends on parent and caregiver communication preferences.

Measure the effectiveness of communications

Once you're using the education communications tools, you need to measure their effectiveness. Are they being utilized? Are parents opening text messages? Are video conference calls being dropped, or can parents or caregivers hold a video conference without worrying about technical issues?

There are two ways to assess how effective the education communication tools are:

- Parent/caregiver surveys
- Built-in analytics

The problem with sending out [parent/caregiver surveys](#) is that parents or caregivers might not fill them out. Also, if parents or caregivers don't understand the survey questions, or if the surveys aren't worded properly, you might not get a clear picture of how effective your education communication tools are.

However, built-in analytics accurately measure education collaboration tools. They give you insight into usage, open rates for text message, and the quality of video conferences. They save the time, effort, and money of surveys.

Fine-tune if necessary

Maybe your open rates for text messages aren't as high as you hoped. Perhaps parents aren't taking advantage of video conferencing capabilities to the extent you were expecting.

You might need to fine-tune your automated communication tools to ensure that you're reaching the highest number of parents and caregivers. Also, those tools must be reliable; if messages aren't transmitted properly, that's problematic.

Communicate effectively with parents and caregivers with RingCentral's education communication tools

RingCentral's education communication tools offer reliable, secure, flexible communication channels to share information between parents, caregivers, teachers, schools, and districts. Schools and districts can leverage text, telephony, and video conference to keep everyone up-to-date.

To learn more, [get a demo](#).

With RingCentral, learning is always in session.

Learn more about RingCentral for Education at ringcentral.com/education.

For more information, please contact a sales representative.

Visit us at

ringcentral.com/education

or call 844-569-2989.

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RingCentral, Inc. 20 Davis Drive, Belmont, CA 94002. ringcentral.com