# Understanding SchoolMessenger

Since the district expanded the use of SchoolMessenger to send email and text messages to enhance communication with parents and staff members, there have been questions about how the service works.  A system like this requires a lot of moving parts in order for it to meet the expectations of the clients.

Listed below are some tips to help ensure SchoolMessenger works for you.

## Make sure the district has your correct contact information (Parents/Guardians)

Multiple guardian records are maintained for each student in the district's student information system (SIS).  The SIS is our source for extracting contact data to send to SchoolMessenger.  It is important for us to not only have your correct contact information, but we must also have it in the correct field.  Here is an example of how we store phone numbers for a given contact.

| Phone Type* | | Phone Number* | Ext. | Listing Status | Delete |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H | Home/Primary | (234)567-8901 | x | L - Listed | ☐ |
| M | Mobile | | x | L - Listed | ☐ |
| W ⬇ | Work | (123)456-7890 | x cell | L - Listed | ☐ |
| ⬇ | | | x | L - Listed | ☐ |

We have a process that runs every night, to pull the data seen above into a file and send it to SchoolMessenger.  This is the information we use to send mass notifications to guardians.  As part of this process, we take whatever value is in the **Mobile** field and map it to the **SMS Text** field in SchoolMessenger.  Therefore, if your mobile number is stored in the **Home/Primary** field because you don't have a land line, or it's stored in the **Work** field because that's how we stored mobile numbers prior to implementing an actual **Mobile** type, this number is never being sent to SchoolMessenger for the purposes of receiving text messages.

Please contact your building to verify that your contact information is correct and that we have it stored in the correct fields.  Remember, to receive text messages from SchoolMessenger we MUST have a valid mobile number listed in the **Mobile** field.  If this is your only phone, it should be stored in BOTH the **Home/Primary** and **Mobile** fields.

***NOTE: The Home/Primary number of the primary guardian is the number used for attendance calls.***

## Make sure the district has your correct contact information (Employees)

In the context of an employee record, we map your **Personal Cell Phone** number to the **SMS Text** field in SchoolMessenger.  If we don't have this number in the appropriate field, you will not receive text messages from SchoolMessenger.  This information can be updated using Employee Access Center.  ***Two more things need to happen for this information to be available in SchoolMessenger:***

1. HR must approve the pending change
2. The nightly process must pull the new data and send it to SchoolMessenger

## Allow time for the information to update in SchoolMessenger

When contact information is updated in the student information system or via Employee Access Center, that doesn't mean it is updated in SchoolMessenger at the same time. The process that collects and sends the data to SchoolMessenger runs in the middle of the night. Therefore, depending on when we send a broadcast, you may still not receive it if the data is not current in SchoolMessenger.

Please allow 24-48 hours for this information to be updated.

## Self-service for opt-in/opt-out of text message service

Once your contact information is correct, you have the ability to enable and disable the SchoolMessenger text messaging service for your mobile number. To allow SchoolMessenger to send you text messages, simply text **Y** to **68453**. You will immediately receive a confirmation message. To prevent SchoolMessenger from sending you text messages, simply text **STOP** to **68453**. You may send either one of these requests as many times as you'd like.

## Unsubscribe from email broadcasts

If you would like to no longer receive email from the district via SchoolMessenger, simply click the **Unsubscribe** link displayed at the bottom of the email message. This will tell SchoolMessenger to no longer send you email.

If you unsubscribe in error or change your mind and would like to resume receiving email from the district, please contact the school and ask to have the block removed from your email.

## Text messages for students

Students are not eligible to receive text messages from Midland Public Schools. The district does not currently store mobile numbers for students, therefore, we have no information to send to SchoolMessenger. ***Note: students can follow the district on Twitter at @midlandps if they have an account.***