

Class Messenger Quick Reference Guide

for Teachers

1 What is Class Messenger?

- **Class Messenger** is a private messaging service that keeps Teachers, Parents and Students in sync. It's like if you took all the good parts of Twitter, texting, email, blogging, newsletters, permission slips, Survey Monkey and Instagram and rolled it into one application specifically for education. It's available wherever you are on a mobile device or on a tablet or computer. We use push notifications, a web application, email and text messaging so every single person can use it with virtually no effort.
- **It makes communication easier & better** We make it easy to send messages and importantly, make it almost impossible to have them get missed on the other end (with Parents & Students).

Note: We think if software needs 'best practices' or a 'training manual' it's too complicated. Explore the product yourself and you'll figure it out. We promise.

✓ Why should I use it?

Teachers are being bombarded with the 'next' thing in tech every school year. We have lots of reasons but here's our best shot as why you should use Class Messenger:

- You can create and send broad or targeted messages in seconds
- Your Classes and all your messages are available at any mobile device or computer
- It's built for Teachers, Parents and Students...nothing else
- Ok...one more. It costs nothing and it's super easy to learn and use

✓ Technical Requirements

Teachers need access to a smartphone, tablet or a computer to use it. Here's a rundown:

- **Web based** Any computer with a browser.
- **Mobile** People using Apple products (iphones, iPads) have an app they can download. Android, same thing. Everyone else can use the web based version if they have a browser.
- **Parents & Students** Everyone has Parents or Students who won't sign up for anything...ever. Just input their email or phone number and we'll send all your messages to them by email or text message.
- **Parents or Students?** Most of the time, Teachers use the product to keep Parents in sync but as Students get older, communication with them outside Class becomes appropriate. Up to you.

✓ Better than Twitter? What??

Class Messenger Is built for broadcasting messages AND individual messages. It's also a great two way messaging service with features customized for the classroom.

We think direct communication with Parents & Students made simple will be a big help in the Class. Twitter has many great use cases for Teachers but Class Messenger Is a more specific tool to help you with that job.

✓ 30 second use cases

Homework: If we make it easier for you to send the reminders, and easier for the Parents to not lose the messages, more homework is going to get done right and on time. Even attach documents if you need to.

Pictures from the Classroom: Being able to pull out your phone and capture more moments will thrill everyone.

Volunteer for the trip to the zoo: Instead of hoping Students remember to ask, create a Volunteer form instantly and we'll collect the results for you.

Individual follow up: you can pivot from broadcast messages down to individual messages easily. If you need to talk to a Parent about something, keep using the service that they're used to hearing from.

2 Getting Started

Go to classmessenger.com and create an account. We don't 'sell' the software to school boards and there's no license you need to use it. We're a consumer software product like Tumblr or Foursquare. There's lots of help and videos on our site but we think if you just jump in with the Demo Classes we'll start you with...you'll figure it out very very quickly.

✓ Build a Class

Teachers build Classes...Parents & Students join Classes as Members. Add other Teachers, Volunteers and Administrative Members as well.

To build a Class simply log in and you'll click 'Add Class'. Give it a name and choose some settings. Done.

You can build as many Classes as you like.

✓ Build your Member list

- **Members:** These are the people who you trade messages with. Parents, Students, other Teachers, Volunteers or Administrators
- **Add them Manually:** If you have a small Class or if you just want to get going immediately, you can manually add your Class Members. They'll get messages immediately without even having to join the Class.
- **Using 'Sign Up':** if you turn this on, Members can Join your Class by searching for it on classmessenger.com just like they would follow someone on Twitter. You can set it to 'open' or 'teacher approval' which means you have to accept them before they can join (recommended).

✓ 100% Coverage

Most of the time, Members are going to be 'passive' recipients of information from you. If they have to go to a blog, or check a Twitter account they may not have time or frankly, not check all that often. That can be very frustrating if you're taking the time to provide timely information. That's why we want to put your messages front and center no matter how they want to get the info and even if they didn't take the time to sign up.

Even if Parents & Students never...ever log in or even create an account, we have you covered. Once they have been added, we convert all your messages to email or text.

A word on getting going. No matter how good something is, there will be people who won't sign up or wait a long time. What we recommend is that you use the Sign Up feature to start (so you don't have to enter all the information) and then add the last few stragglers Manually to make sure you have 100% coverage.

3 Tips & Tricks

The blog on our website is full of interesting tips & tricks that highlight features that may not be obvious on day one. Our best piece of advice is to start right away with your messages to Parents & Students. People tend to participate in a new program only after there's a perceived 'need' to get going.

The fact that the service can be used with mobile devices of all kinds (including a dedicated app for iPhones/iPads) means Teachers can capture moments that were probably lost in the past. When you can pull out your phone, type a quick note to a Parent with a picture and send it in less than 30 seconds...you'll be surprised at how much everyone will appreciate knowing more.

✓ The cool stuff to talk about

A few things that might not seem obvious but are pretty neat:

- **Pictures & Documents:** they make a huge difference when trying to let people know what's happening in Class.
- **Sharing on Twitter, Facebook:** we have a 'share' button in the app that lets you instantly post your messages to those services as well
- **Action Messages** We think these are huge timesavers to have in one service:
 - **Surveys** Launch as many quick polls as you like and we'll total up the results
 - **Meet with Me** A fast way to send out requests and with one click 'accept' or 'reject' or 'suggest a new time' buttons
 - **Donations** Get some understanding of what people want to donate without a paper form everyone will lose anyway. We total up your results
 - **Volunteers** Forget to ask for help? A fast way to send out the request and get one click responses from your recipients

4 FAQ

We provide a full (and growing) set of FAQs on our website but here are the most popular ones. Anyone can send us a question at support@classmessenger.com to get more help. We also have a growing library of demos and documents (handouts in the Teacher Resources section) to help explain key features but most of them are pretty straightforward and simple to use.

✓ Cost?

The service is 100% free of charge. We may in the future launch additional features that are optional for a small fee but the basic messaging product costs nothing to use.

✓ Privacy? Advertising?

Our full Privacy Policy is online. If you collect information DIRECTLY from kids under 13, you need to get consent from their Parents first. To protect them further, we require kids under 13 to get a 'Class Code' from the Teacher (we put it in your Class Info section). We put no advertising in our product.

✓ Who can use it?

Anyone. Our software has been tested across all the popular browsers and on mobile devices running Apple's software and Android. Use it from your desk or from your pocket. We turn all your messages into emails or text messages (depending on what your recipients want). We want you to have 100% coverage.