



October 2, 2023

Hello, Madison staff and families!

We are very excited to share that over the next few weeks, the district will be moving away from the use of the SchoolMessenger alert system and implementing a much more robust, engaging ParentSquare communication platform.

ParentSquare offers a unified platform for all communication, more parent/guardian involvement, more robust engagement features, an app for mobile users, two-way language translation, etc. all things that were separate functions or did not exist in our SchoolMessenger program.

There are a number of other features available that we will eventually roll out over time within ParentSquare but for right now, we will begin with familiar messaging options such as emails, texts, and calls - while introducing posts!

Please be on the lookout for an invitation to create your ParentSquare account and download the app from your app store.

This project has many moving parts and our goal is a positive experience as we transition to our new platform. We will implement in phases with some potential overlap as comfort level grows. The plan is as follows:

- **Phase 1** (beginning October 2) our building administrators will begin to establish a familiarity with the new platform, begin using the 'post' functionality, and be able to send alerts - if necessary. This will ensure a seamless transition from our current tool kit with SchoolMessenger. *In the event of an emergency/crisis, we will be running both systems to ensure coverage. However, non-critical communications will move to ParentSquare.*

- **Phase 2** (beginning October 9-20) our staff and parent invitations will go out. As we all join, you can begin to explore the ParentSquare platform, and staff, and parents can begin to navigate their school pages and receive messages in the new format. *In the event of an emergency/crisis, we will be running both systems to ensure coverage. However, non-critical communications will move to ParentSquare.* As part of this phase, we will be working with families and staff to be sure that all information in our system is up to date and that your accounts are established and 'contactable' on the platform.
- **Phase 3** (throughout 2nd semester) we will begin to launch classroom-level participation. This will give us some time to ensure that the class rosters are loaded correctly before we get too in-depth with the direct messaging functionality.
- **Phase 4** (which will run behind the scenes in Phase 2) with the migration of automated notifications such as lunch balances, attendance, and tardies. This will be a tiered launch as functionality comes online.

This may sound like a long-term initiative, but our most basic communications will be in place by the end of October! Please note, that as things begin to post on ParentSquare, you will receive those notifications once you activate your account. **The sooner you activate (AND download the app!) the sooner you get in on the action!**

We will be sharing more information and easy-to-follow, self-guided training materials soon, but please take a moment and view the short [introduction video](#) / [Espanol video here!](#)

We are very excited to offer this communication tool and hope you enjoy the platform!

Sincerely,

Ashley Schutte
Communications Coordinator