

ParentSquare Communication Tools | Deciding which tool is best to use

	Post	Alert	Direct Message	Auto Notice	Secure Document
Best for	Communication or announcement to entire district, school, class(es) or a group(s)	Alerts and short reminders	New message to a single individual or a few individuals, private communication	Sending student-specific notifications to parents - often automated	Sending student specific PDFs to parents
Examples	General communications, newsletters, events/RSVP, forms, permission slips, volunteer & wish lists, appointment sign ups, payments	Smart Alert: reminders, school closures, delayed opening, early dismissal, after-school and activities cancellation; Urgent Alert: natural disasters, critical threats	Student progress, sending photos, behavioral Issues, homework for an ill student	Student specific attendance/tardy notice, lunch/book fees, Saturday school, truancy letters, COVID exposures, transportation & bus route information	Report cards, assessment results, IEPs, certificates
Message Type	Everyday announcements & messages	Important & short logistical updates	Private messages and/or messages to a few people	Student specific information	Document is specific to the student
View Duration	Viewable online for the school year	Viewable for 3 weeks	Viewable online	Viewable online under Alerts & Notices	Viewable online for the school year under Secure Documents
Archived	At end of school year	Not archived, always available to admins for reuse	Not archived, always available	Not archived, always available to admins for reuse	Not archived, always available to admins for reuse
Attachment	Attach files, photos, videos	No attachments	Attach files, photos, videos	No attachments	Only the single secure document
Delivery	Sent via recipient's notification method & frequency. Sender may send immediately or at recipients' preferred frequency	Smart Alert: sender chooses: text, voice call, email. Default to text (voice if text fails) Urgent Alert: Text, voice call, email and app notification	Sent via recipient's notification method (default is email)	Sender chooses delivery method	Delivered to parents according to their notification preferences
Comments	Comments are hidden by default. Can be made visible & can be disabled per post	No comments	No comments, but can reply	Can have response note	No comments
Send to	Existing district, school, classes, groups	Existing district, school, classes, groups and/or csv file of recipients	Individuals or selected users	All parents of the students whose student IDs are in the csv file	All parents of students whose student IDs or state student IDs are in the pdf.
Translation	Translation of post body is automatic, may be edited prior to sending. Translations of add-ons to posts (sign ups, forms) are not automatic	Translation of message is automatic, may be edited prior to sending	Automatic two-way translation	Translations are NOT automatic and should be previewed prior to sending	Translations can be automatic for notification title/message - secure doc PDF is not translated
Schedule	Can be scheduled	Smart Alerts can be scheduled. Urgent Alerts are sent instantly	Cannot be scheduled	Can be scheduled	Can be scheduled
Text/SMS Notification	Message truncated to 140 characters, with a link to view entire post	Character limit is 300	Message truncated to 140 characters, with a link to view entire message	Character limit is 300 with a link to view notice	Subject of the document truncated to 140 characters, with a link to view documents
When Delivered	Sender may send immediately or at recipients' preferred frequency	Immediately or at day/time scheduled.	Immediately. Sender will be alerted if outside of office hours for the recipient	Immediately or scheduled. May be automated to send on a schedule all year long	User preferred notification- instant or digest delivery
Merge Fields	N/A	N/A	N/A	Can insert information from csv	N/A