

Platform Requirements to Support the Practice of Universal Family Engagement

Districts select communication and engagement tools for scalability, convenience, and ease of use. Beyond these essentials, platforms should be designed to improve outcomes for all students. The strongest solutions deliver urgent alerts and district-wide communication while sustaining daily family engagement from the classroom to the district. The requirements below outline what's needed to enable effective family-school partnerships that drive student success.

Contains 3 essential components to support Universal Family Engagement

1. Universally designed, scaled, multi-modal, translated, one-and two-way communications capabilities driven by family engagement best practices (text messaging access for all family contacts by default)
2. Research-based family engagement best practices embedded throughout interface
3. Data-driven family engagement and multi-tiered interventions targeting key outcome areas, including attendance, academics, behavior, and well-being

Universally designed platform that enables equitable, two-way family-school engagement and eliminates known barriers to effective family-school-student partnerships (technology barriers, socio-economic barriers, language and culture barriers, capacity and knowledge barriers, and time constraints)

- K-12 contextualized, high-quality machine translation
- Human translation support on-demand for understandable translation for staff and families
- Embedded support for varied family literacy levels and/or learning differences
- Support for the full array of languages spoken by families (including those that speak a language without available machine translation)
- Support for families to learn about the US education system
- Default opt-in, two-way text messaging
- Optional mobile and web applications for families
- No cost for families to participate and unlimited usage for staff and families
- Role-based permissioning and support for all roles within a school (SIS-rostered groups, support staff groups (e.g., counselors, social workers, nurses, bus drivers), flexible groups (e.g., club leaders, coaches, classroom subgroups, attendance groups))

Emergency & broadcast communication

- Priority delivery of urgent messages, in families preferred languages, across all channels
- Easily send unified, translated, broadcast messages across text, app, email, audio, video, and automated calls
- Manage district-approved templates and share easily across schools
- Support family communication preferences for non-urgent messages
- Track delivery and read rates across every channel

Embedded coaching tools to scale best practices

- In-app guidance and tools for staff to create best-practice, proactive messages
- Ready-to-use, research-based templates, pre-translated and designed for asset-based messaging across attendance, SEL, positive engagement, and logistics

Data and analytics

- Real-time delivery insights: read receipts, confirmations, cross-channel tracking
- Role-based views of real-time analytics dashboard
- Data insights regarding district, school, classroom, teacher, family engagement levels
- Data hygiene tools to ensure accurate family contact info (e.g., flagging invalid numbers)
- Tools to identify and re-engage hard-to-reach or non-responsive families

Outcome improvement focus

- Attendance tools to prevent chronic absenteeism and identify early warning signs while improving staff workflows and efficiency
- Academic improvement solutions to align educators and families as partners in learning

Services to guide best practices in family engagement

- Embedded PD tools to build capacity and save staff time in daily practice (hands-on, relevant, in-app)
- Support for data integration, implementation, and flexible regular check-ins to review progress and family engagement data with a dedicated staff member
- Professional Learning Services to support best practice implementation and use of the platform

Research-based

- Feature design grounded in research-based best practices
- In-house research team and district research partnerships
- Curated best-practice resources and research-to-practice webinars
- Ph.D.-led studies meeting high rigor (quasi-experimental, ESSA Tier 2+)

Proven results

- Choose solutions backed by 3rd-party research and evidence of impact. The strongest platforms:
 - Have proven causal relationship between platform usage and improved student outcomes
 - Support gap closure among traditionally underserved students
 - Meet rigorous external standards of evidence, including ESSA
- Investments in communication should translate into proven improvements in student success

TalkingPoints offers one research-based platform for urgent alerts, district broadcasts, attendance, and family engagement — all proven to drive student success. As a nonprofit, we are committed to the principles of Universal Family Engagement and to partnering with K–12 districts to strengthen family-school partnerships and support measurable student outcomes. To learn more, visit talkingpts.org.