



## BUYING GUIDE

# Universal Family Engagement Platform Requirements

Districts choose communications and engagement tools based on many requirements for scalability, convenience, and ease of use. However, in addition to these essential requirements, platforms should also be purposefully designed to improve outcomes for all students. The following requirements are essential for a solution to enable effective family-school partnerships in ways that improve student outcomes.

### Contains the 3 essential components of Universal Family Engagement

- Universally designed, scaled, multi-modal communications capabilities driven by family engagement best practices (text messaging access for all family contacts by default, translated audio messaging, translated video messaging, and email notification)
- Research-based family engagement best practices embedded throughout interface
- Data-driven family engagement and multi-tiered interventions targeting key outcome areas (e.g., universal Tier 1 best-practice attendance messages)

**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 app and online sign-in 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)

### **In-app support** for best practices of family engagement

- In-app support for teachers to create best-practice messages
- In-app tools and guidance to build family engagement capacity and save time for teachers and staff
- Pre-created, pre-translated templates based on best practices research to support topical, asset-based messaging (Attendance, SEL, Positive Engagement, Logistics)
- Ability to create role-based customized templates at all levels (classroom, site, district)
- Intuitive platform that does not require synchronous training for staff or any training for families
- In-app chat support

### **Services** to guide best practices in family engagement

- Embedded professional development tools and features to build teacher and staff capacity within the context of daily job activities (hands-on, relevant, and 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 Development to guide family engagement best practices
- Webinars and resources to support best practice application of platform tools for different use cases

### **Data and analytics**

- Role-based views of real-time analytics dashboard
- Data regarding district, school, classroom, teacher, family engagement levels
- Data hygiene support to ensure the accuracy of family contact information (e.g., invalid cell phone numbers)
- Reports to show the ratio of communication vs. two-way engagement based on configurable time scales
- Actionable, improvement-centered tools to identify hard-to-reach or non-responsive families to motivate engagement and target areas of needed support

### **Research**

- Solution and feature development grounded in research-based best practices
- In-house research team
- Support for analyzing and surfacing insights about family engagement best practices
- Access to curated best-practices resources from the field of family engagement
- Research-to-practice webinars and district partnership research projects, Ph.D-led research meeting high rigor and standards (quasi-experimental, ESSA Tier 2+, etc.)

### **Proven results**

- Proven causal relationship between platform usage and improved student outcomes (e.g. attendance, academics)

*TalkingPoints is an education technology nonprofit that drives student outcomes by unlocking the superpower of effective family-school partnerships. The TalkingPoints Universal Family Engagement platform removes barriers so all families can engage. It provides educators with embedded, research-based guidance, actionable data-informed insights, and universally designed auto-translated two-way communication in families' preferred languages. Across districts nationwide, TalkingPoints has empowered more than five million educators and families, facilitating nearly one billion conversations that drive student success.*

*As a nonprofit, we are committed to providing a platform that meets the requirements of a universal family engagement platform and to partnership with K12 school districts to support student outcomes improvement. To learn more, contact us at [partnerships@talkingpts.org](mailto:partnerships@talkingpts.org).*