

OPTING IN

Updated federal law around mobile devices to affect parent communications

DEADLINE TO OPT IN – July 22, 2016

For many years, the Knox County Schools has utilized an automated parent notification system to quickly and efficiently notify parents of important school and district information – important information such as school closures/delays, security alerts, absence notifications, cafeteria balances, upcoming school activities and more.

Recent updates to the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) will require school systems and organizations across the nation to modify the ways in which it contacts consumers via their mobile device.

In the Knox County Schools, updates to the TCPA law **will now require all parents to “opt in” to receive automated communications on their mobile device** – this means parents must provide permission to receive automated calls and SMS text messages on their mobile device(s). An exception to this updated law is if the call or text is for emergency purposes, in which consent is not required (inclement weather delays/cancellations, security-related alerts, absences, transportation news, etc.). Additionally, revisions to the law do not require a parent to “opt in” to receive non-automated calls directly from a principal, teacher or other staff member.

In order to comply with this updated law, the Knox County Schools’ parent notification system will terminate all subscriptions in order to allow parents and/or legal guardians to legally comply with TCPA opt-in regulations (which means parents must re-register for SchoolMessenger and verify that they give permission to be contacted via mobile and SMS text messaging). **In order for parents and/or legal guardians to continue to receive important information from their school and the district, they MUST legally opt-in and verify mobile phone contact settings by Friday, July 22, 2016.** Parents and/or legal guardians who do not opt-in will not receive important messages such as upcoming school news, activities, cafeteria balances, and more.

Parents can take action now through the SchoolMessenger InfoCenter. Simply go to schoolmessenger.com/start – create an account by clicking “Sign Up” on the top right menu, and use the email address that you have provided the school. Parents or legal guardians can choose how to be contacted based on the category of message (from emergencies to school activities) and provide contact permission. There is also a SchoolMessenger InfoCenter app that can be used directly from your mobile device.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Knox County Schools Technology Help Desk at 594-1830 or email to helpdesk@knoxschools.org.

Thank you.