

OPTING IN

Frequently Asked Questions

Why is my school asking me to provide permission to receive automated telephone calls and SMS text messages?

Recent updates to the Telephone Consumer Protection Act (TCPA) will require school systems and organizations across the nation to potentially 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 written 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.

What if there is an emergency?

An exception to this updated TCPA law is if the call or text is for emergency purposes, in which consent is not required. An “emergency” is defined by the TCPA as a call made necessary in any situation affecting the health and safety of consumers. In the Knox County Schools, this could mean automated calls or text messages to cancel or delay school due to inclement weather, important security alerts absence information, transportation news, etc.

Is my teacher still permitted to contact me?

Yes. 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.

How do I “opt in?”

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).

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.

What is the deadline to “opt in?”

In order for parents and/or legal guardians to continue to receive important information from their school and the district, they MUST verify mobile phone contact settings by **Friday, July 22, 2016**.

Who do I call if I have questions?

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