Blackboard ConnectTxt

Texting is how both parents and students communicate today. ConnectTxt puts you in the conversation.

Two-way text messaging is the fastest, easiest and most relevant way to engage your school communities. Transform how your district and school leaders communicate with parents, students, staff and community supporters in ways that make it easy for them to respond. Whether it is a small group or thousands of parents, Blackboard ConnectTxt™ gets everyone talking.

Create a conversation.

ConnectTxt makes it simple to send targeted, mass text and email messages from your computer or smartphone and receive a response. Using powerful personalization and automation tools—like shortcodes, keywords, QR codes, and filters—your communications become informative conversations that make it easier to interact with thousands within your school communities.

Streamline tasks and stay organized.

ConnectTxt can quickly help you do more with less. Create templates for commonly used messages, then filter and re-direct incoming texts to other phones and email addresses for fast follow-up. You can also label your messages and create helpful reports by topic to better analyze your responses.

Scalable, reliable and secure.

ConnectTxt is secure software-as-a-service (SaaS) technology that relies on the same encryption used by online banking organizations. In addition, Blackboard Connect has significant capacity and reliability with over one billion messages sent in 2011 and 99.99% uptime.

Get help whenever you need it.

While ConnectTxt is easy to use, you might occasionally have a question or two. Our client care team is ready with the answers, and product training is always free. Our team can also provide strategic counsel, with deep knowledge of best practices, advanced features and unique use cases.

> *Our district's senior leadership jumped at the chance to add ConnectTxt to our arsenal of communications tools. We didn't have to survey our parents about how they would like to receive important information….we see them texting day in and day out! Now with Blackboard ConnectTxt we can conduct and document timely two-way 'conversations' on a wide variety of events, topics and school safety issues.*

Charlie Glazener
Executive Director
Community Relations & Communications
Asheville City Schools, NC

[1]Ball State University Study, 2010

blackboardconnect.com

PUT 2-WAY SMS TO WORK FOR YOUR INSTITUTION

Combat bullying, abuse, crime and mental health issues.

ConnectTxt allows K-12 districts to provide an easy-to-use SMS tipline for students, parents and staff to report safety issues, including bullying, abusive behavior, crime, and mental health issues. ConnectTxt is text-based, allowing anyone in your district – students, teachers, staff or parents - to report incidents and concerns quickly and discreetly. Powerful inbox filters and rules will allow you route inbound messages to the appropriate district staffer for follow-up. If the responder needs more information, the 2-way SMS tool allows them to engage in real-time text conversation with the report initiator.
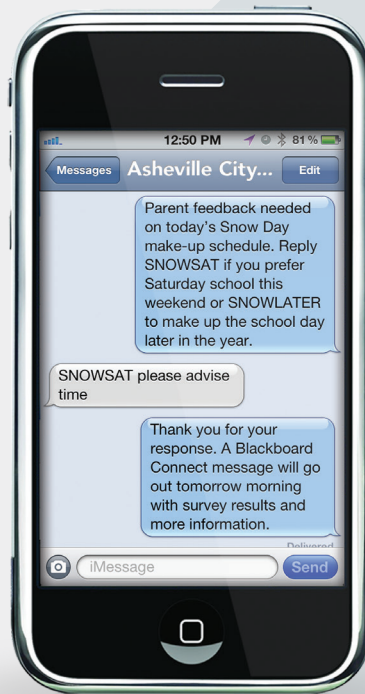
Messages are confidential: only the mobile number of the report initiator will be apparent to the administrator. This is vital for follow-up purposes, and it avoids the risk of false or frivolous submissions. The ConnectTxt user environment is wholly separate from the core Blackboard Connect 5 interface and contact database – limiting access and further enhancing confidentiality.

Promote parent engagement.

Using text effectively can help you create a robust sense of community on your school campuses. For today's increasingly mobile parents, targeted and relevant messages for everything from parent preference surveys to event RSVPs and volunteer requests can improve parent engagement with student success as the ultimate goal. Conduct parent surveys via SMS – the preferred mode of communication for today's millennial parent – and get significantly higher response rates.

Create efficiencies for everyday processes.

Use 2-way messaging to automate certain processes by using real-time reports that are texted in and then routed to a designated person. For example, you can use 2-way text to poll substitute teachers for availability or roster bus drivers on severe weather days. The possibilities are nearly endless for improving the delivery of immediate, relevant updates as they happen.

KEY FEATURES

- **Two-way messaging:** send and receive SMS – the way parents and students prefer to communicate

- **Email, Twitter and RSS feeds** improve communication through multi-channel messaging

- **QR Codes** let your community scan a barcode and receive information on the spot

- **Shortcode keywords** make it easy for your recipients to text in (Just like on *American Idol*)

- **Auto-replies** let you send an automated response message

- **Message forwarding** alerts designated officials to the text and makes follow-up fast

- **Mail merge tools** let you personalize messages

- **Message delivery reporting** tracks delivery all the way to the handset

- **Groups and address book actions** help you develop robust contact databases

- **Data integration** makes importing your contacts simple

Blackboard