



Instructional Technology Center

Technology Tools for Communication

What can you do with communication tools?

Many of these tools allow for creating posters, presentations, diagrams, etc. together in real-time. They also allow for messaging, annotation, audio and video communication. Before you begin, think about what you need to teach students about communicating with each other.

Model Appropriate Conversation Skills

Conversation is a basic skill to help people share thoughts, opinions, and ideas. In addition, conversation includes listening to others and having a give and take exchange where not only are you sharing, but listening to and maybe even enhancing the original thoughts and ideas. Help students understand that there are several components to having an appropriate conversation. There should be:

- Equal time spent speaking and listening
- Body language that demonstrates openness, engagement, and interest
- Eye contact
- Paraphrasing, repeating, or summarizing content for understanding
- Questioning each other for understanding

One idea is to use the S.L.A.N.T. method. (Sit up straight. Listen. Answer and ask questions. Nod to show interest. Track the speaker.)

Consider privacy

Be familiar with terms of service of the websites you use. The Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) states that sites requiring the collection or use of any personal information from a student must require parental consent for children 13 years of age or younger. There are many web tools and apps that do not require students to sign up for an account, so look for these when possible. Remember, if students will be posting information online, be sure to ask for parental permission first. Some districts have parents sign a form at the beginning of the year, which covers the use of educational technology tools for the year, however it is still your responsibility to check Terms of Use and Privacy Policies for websites before using them with your students to protect their personal information.

Student Safety

Spend time talking with your students about online safety. Your students should know that they should never share personal information with ANYONE in the digital world. They may use their first name but never tell anyone their full name, where they go to school, their address, etc. Students should also know what actions to take if they run across material or people online who make them feel uncomfortable. Check out the [Common Sense Media Digital Citizenship Scope and Sequence](#) or other tools to help teach students about digital citizenship before using online tools.

Teacher – Student Communication Tools



Recap- <https://letsrecap.com/>

Recap is similar to a Twitter but is educational, safe for student use, and is driven by the power of video. Teachers and students can post questions and responses via video. View a short video explaining how to use recap at <https://letsrecap.com/queue/>. This can also be used as a tool for students to communicate with each other.

<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free • Allows participants to respond to questions by video • Allows teachers to introduce a topic or ask a question through a video • Fast set up • Offered in the App Store • Offers “How To” Articles online 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <p>I didn't find any....</p>
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Class Dojo - <https://www.classdojo.com/>

ClassDojo is a communication app for the classroom. It connects teachers, parents, and students who use it to share photos, videos, and messages through the school day. View a video explaining how to use Class Dojo at

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PscdDNmhYKc>

<p>Advantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers instant, private messaging options • Teachers and parents can privately message each other • Teachers can share classroom moments with parents— photos, videos, updates • Works on all devices 	<p>Disadvantages</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires parents to create an account
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Seesaw - <https://web.seesaw.me/>

Seesaw allows students to report what they are learning in school. Students can add photos, videos, drawings, texts, PDFs, and links to their profile. Students and teachers can track progress made overtime.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Free• Offers a student journal where students can upload information that is immediately accessible to teachers• Available on any device• Includes parents in the learning process• Teachers can quickly send messages or announcements to all students and families• Offers private message opportunity• Teachers can monitor all posts• Seesaw website offers printables- activities, posters, etc.	

Student - Teacher Communication Tools



Go SoapBox- <https://www.gosoapbox.com/>

GoSoapBox is a student response system that teachers can use to engage students, conduct formal assessments, and learn students' comprehension on a particular subject. Learn how to use this tool at

[https://www.slideshare.net/gosoapbox/getting-started-with-gosoapbox-](https://www.slideshare.net/gosoapbox/getting-started-with-gosoapbox-25965556?ref=https://app.gosoapbox.com/account/getting_started)

[25965556?ref=https://app.gosoapbox.com/account/getting_started](https://www.slideshare.net/gosoapbox/getting-started-with-gosoapbox-25965556?ref=https://app.gosoapbox.com/account/getting_started)

Advantages

- Free for K-12 and University educators with classes of 30 or smaller
- Offers a Confusion Barometer where students can indicate whether they are confused
- Students can easily submit and vote on things in class
- Offers simple and customizable polling
- Can create a quiz where students get immediate grading as well as answer explanations
- Option for students to be anonymous if needed

Disadvantages

- If a class is larger than 30, it costs



Poll Everywhere- <https://www.polleverywhere.com/>

Poll Everywhere is a tool that can be used to gauge audience participation during presentations. The audience can respond in a manner of different ways from any mobile device. User guides can be found at

<https://www.polleverywhere.com/guides>

Advantages

- Free for K-12 use
- You can insert polls into Google slides, Powerpoint, or the Keynote app
- Different question types can be used

Disadvantages

- Does require you to install an add-on to use in real time if you insert into Powerpoint, Keynote, or Google Slides
- Free version for educators is limited to 40 responses per poll

Teacher – Parent Communication Tools



Remind- <https://www.remind.com/>

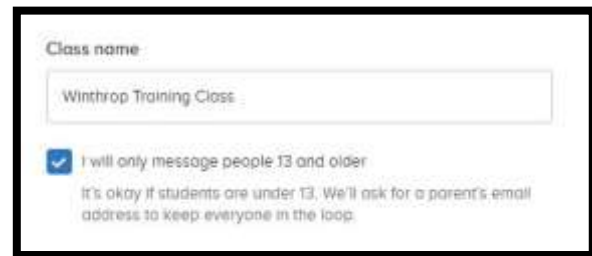
Remind is a communication tool that teachers can use to communicate with students and parents. This offers the option to send text messages without using your personal phone number. In addition to text, you can send attachments like images or documents.

Advantages

- Free
- Instant communication
- Provides an easy way for teachers to communicate with students and parents
- Option to schedule reminders ahead of time
- Offers individual and group messaging
- Can translate messages into more than 70 languages
- Teachers can see who has read the messages
- Can send photos, PDFs, voice clips, and more
- Teachers can set up their office hours so students and parents know when they can reach you
- Can add other teachers or interns to your class for extra support

Disadvantages

- Offers school and District plans but are not free
- Not a negative- but if students are under 13, then parent emails will be asked for.



When you get started creating your class, you can enter phone numbers or email addresses yourself, or give information out and let those who are interested

Remind creates a sheet for you to distribute with information on how to get started using this resource when you create a new class. Super easy to use!

Student – Student Communication Tools



Emaze- <https://www.emaze.com/education/>

Emaze can be used as an alternative to Powerpoint or Prezi.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre designed templates • Can upload own PowerPoint and merge designs • Multiple design options • Can create ecards, websites, blogs, and photo albums • Runs like a Prezi • Has more special effects and options than PPT • Works on all devices but have to download the HTML to use on other devices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cannot download presentation • Can only create and share 5 presentations and websites • A little overwhelming • No bullet point format options • Not offered in the App Store



Poster My Wall- <https://www.postermymwall.com/>

Poster My Wall is a free website used to create digital posters. This is a great tool for communicating information about a subject or for advertising an event. See how you can create a classroom account where students can log in and create or share their posters. Students do not need an account to access your classroom. More information can be found at <https://www.postermymwall.com/index.php/edu>

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free • No log in needed • Download as an image when done • Easy to edit • Create a teacher and classroom account 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are fees if you want to save this and continue editing



Flipgrid- <https://info.flipgrid.com/>

Flipgrid allows you to use video as a way to explain understanding about topics. A how to video is located at: <https://resources.flipgrid.com/>

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free • Can see grids from other users around the world and can connect like having pen pals • Students can use from any device with a webcam or videocamera • Videos can be up to 90 seconds long 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Free version only allows for one grid, so to have more, you would need to upgrade your account to the premium version

Other Resources

Websites you may want to try

Classtag- https://www.classtag.com/	Celly- https://cel.ly/
Simply Circle- https://www.simplycircle.com/	Bloomz- https://www.bloomz.net/
Class Messenger- https://my.classmessenger.com/signup	Today's Meet- https://todaysmeet.com/ Socrative- https://www.socrative.com/

Using your school website or learning management system

One of the best ways to communicate with students and parents is by taking advantage of the communication tools purchased by your district. In most cases this would be a classroom website, or learning management tool like Canvas, Schoology, Blackboard, or Edmodo. Posting pictures, videos, student work, news stories, etc. is a great way to share what is going on with parents and the community. Again, just be sure you have permission from parents before posting.

Social Media

Typically schools have a designated person who shares content on social media channels. Be sure to look for opportunities in your classroom to share on social media, and send them to that person to highlight what is happening in your classroom.