

BrightArrow's Direct Chat Two-Way Communication Portal

For effective communication between your schools and your school community, a two-way dialog is often necessary, at many levels. A tool you can use for this purpose, at no additional charge, is the BrightArrow Direct Chat Portal. With this portal, you can provide a web link to all parents, students, staff and community members so they can ask questions, register concerns, or even just provide feedback.

Without a tool like Direct Chat, parents reach out either to email addresses on your website, or through their respective school's teachers and principals. With Direct Chat, parents and community members can initiate the communication in a way that is much more tightly managed. Not only can they be assured they are reaching the right person, but the system manages both sides of the communication so that questions, suggestions and complaints are indeed addressed properly instead of becoming lost in an email inbox.

Here is the sequence of what happens when a parent clicks on the Direct Chat portal link (thank you, Judson ISD, for letting us use your Direct Chat Portal as an example):

Once a parent or community member clicks on the link, this page appears:



The top section above relates to the different categories of communication. Each button is linked with one or more staff members who will be receiving the respective requests or comments from the person who selects it. The lower section can be a list of schools, or for a larger district (such as Judson ISD) it can be a button you click to see a button for each of the individual schools.

For example, if I click on "Elementary Schools" button above, I see the below choices:



Let's now say the parent wants to report a school transportation issue. They would click on transportation in the first page:



The parent then fills in the Direct Chat page with their question or comment, and presses the Submit button.



The parent then sees this window:



At the same time, the appropriate staff member (or members) receives an email with a link. When they click on the link, they see the below form.

If they want to assign it to another department, they can do so from a menu as illustrated below:



If the message is for that staff member to address, they can respond by filling out the form and choosing the appropriate button at the bottom.



The parent then receives an email, and when they click on the link in the email, they see this:



In fact, the conversion can go back and forth as many times as is necessary to effectively address the issue or concern. Here are the advantages of Direct Chat over an email communication thread:

Since the district or school identifies the correct person for each department, and the system lets them setup the links appropriately, the communication is always directed to the correct person, without revealing email addresses.

If you identify multiple people for each department, then it can be assured that somebody will answer even if one of the people may be out of the office.

If one person answers, their colleague sees that and doesn't need to worry about double-answering.

The system checks to make sure each issue is addressed promptly (the time-frame can be adapted to our site). If nobody responds, the system automatically reminds the person, as well as escalating it to the appropriate communication supervisor so a lack of response is very visible. It will keep doing so daily until there is a response or the issue is explicitly closed.

There is also a full log of all communication available to the authorized administrators.

In summary, Direct Chat is a managed two-way communication mechanism to allow parents, students, staff and community members a way to reach out to the correct person. It helps ensure all communications are addressed and logged for future review. This level of communication can greatly enhance a school or district's efficiency, reliability and accountability in communicating with their community. The best thing is that you can acquire this entire system without paying any more than what you are already paying for your BrightArrow Notification system. If you would like to set it up, please schedule a time with one of us at GetTechSupport@BrightArrow.com to help you setup the categories and layout.



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