

SchoolMessenger Mobile App

Best Practices for Athletic Coaches

NAMING YOUR GROUPS

- Create a new group for every sport and season. Name this group with the season, sport and year. *Example: Fall Basketball 2019*
- Handout a flyer with the group access code during your initial team meeting.

SETTING UP CONVERSATION THREADS

Students **cannot** initiate a thread. To enable access and two-way conversation, we recommend **creating a thread for each student** so students are able to privately communicate with you.

Start the message by saying:

- “PRIVATE MESSAGE: Hi [Student Name]. I am excited to have you on the team. Message me here if you have any questions this season.”
- If you are communicating about a personal injury, academics, eligibility, it needs to be on this private thread.
 - I.e. “How are you feeling today after hitting your head in yesterday’s game?”

Create a **public group thread** with all students in the group. Note in your intro that this is public.

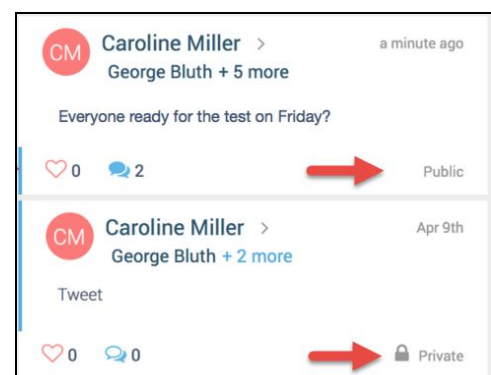
- “PUBLIC BOARD: Hi Team. If you have any questions that are beneficial for the group, please use this thread. This is where I will post team resources and practice information.”
- Double check who is in your group before sending a new message. This is especially important if a student or parent is no longer a member of the team.

Note: If a new student joins your group mid-season, they will not be able to see conversations and resources that have been shared previously. Start a new thread and reshare resources.

Messages are sorted newest to oldest, similar to how text message threads are displayed on a cell phone. Families and students will also see school and district communication in the app.

PRIVATE vs. PUBLIC

Be aware of what threads are public and what are private. If you are communicating about a **personal injury, academics or eligibility, it needs to be on a private thread between just you and the student or parent/guardian.**



The thread will say Public or Private in the bottom right hand corner.

On threads marked private with more than you and the student: The student's replies to you will be private but your replies in the same thread are public to the whole team.

When initiating threads at the beginning of the season, we recommend starting the conversation with "PUBLIC BOARD" or "PRIVATE THREAD." As a reminder, this is the difference.

- **Private:** In a private thread with more than one student, a student's reply will only be seen by you, the coach. However, your replies to that reply will be public. If you need to address or follow up on something privately, go to your pre-established private thread with that student.
- **Public:** If you create a public thread, all replies will be public, including yours and the students. This acts as a group text scenario.

Examples

Public thread with "Everyone in the conversation" comment setting

COACH: Hi team. Don't forget, practice is at 4:00 p.m. this week. (*seen by all*)

Student 1: Got it. Thanks for the reminder! (*seen by all*)

Student 2: I'll be a little late, but I will be there. (*seen by all*)

Private thread with "Me Privately" comment setting

COACH: Hi team. Don't forget, practice is at 4:00 p.m. this week. (*Seen by all*)

Student 1: Got it. Thanks for the reminder! (*Seen by just coach*)

Student 2: I'll be a little late. (*Seen by just coach*)

Coach Replying to Student 2 in this thread: Please try to be on time. I'm worried about your performance. (*seen by all - not good!*)

Private thread between you and just one student:

COACH: How are you feeling after hitting your head?

Student 1: I'm doing okay. I have a doctor's appointment on Monday.

COACH: Okay. Let me know if you need anything. Take it easy.

SHARING FILES

Files Under 20MB

Files shared in the SchoolMessenger app need to be under 20MB. When sharing a file, make sure to put text into your comment when sending the attachment. Attachments cannot be sent without text accompanying it.

- You can only send one attachment per message.
- You can send the following files: PNG, JPG, PDF, DOC, DOCX, PPT, PPTX, MP4, MP3, WAV, M4A

Files Exceeding 20MB

- If you need to share a file that exceeds 20MB, you can upload the file to your Highline Google Drive and share a link to this file in the group. *Example: drill team music, game replays, routine videos.*