



# Building an Engaged Parent Community at School

**“It takes a village to raise a child”**

**“Parental involvement in children’s education improves students grades, test scores, and graduation rates.”<sup>1</sup>**

School Rush! has been recognized as one of the most innovative School Community Communication tools by District Administration Magazine.<sup>1</sup> How can School Rush! help schools build a community of involved parents?

## Mobile As The Entry Point

Email open rates at schools is 20% - 40% i.e more than half the parents don’t even open emails from Schools. School website logins are even worse, less than 5% of existing school parents log into parent portals and school websites on a daily basis. On the other hand an average person looks at his or her phone 46 times every day.<sup>2</sup> Mobile is the entry point to communicate with parents and parents prefer texts over emails and newsletters. Parents are increasingly relying on smart phones and mobile apps to organize their lives.

What if, instead of distancing us, technology were instead designed to help families bond and children grow?



**Apps That Aim To Give Parents 'Superpowers'**

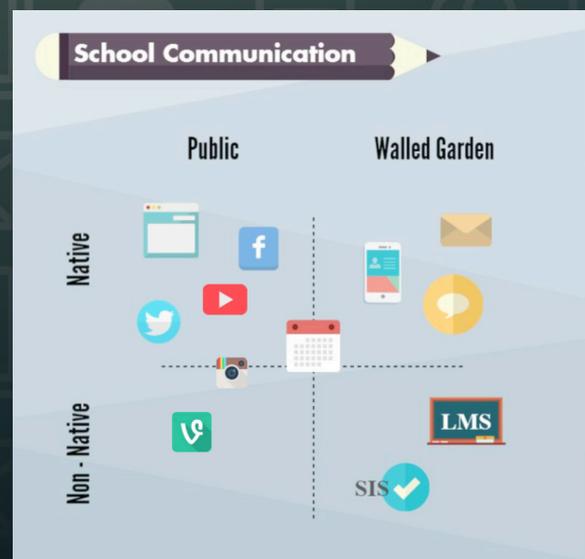
A new wave of educational technology focuses on building family connections. Here's a look at two new approaches.

[npr.org](http://npr.org)

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## Native vs. Non-native Systems for Communication

Student Information Systems (SIS) and Learning Management Systems (LMS) are native tools for school administrators, teachers and high schoolers. For parents, social media tools and apps are native i.e. they use social media apps to communicate with their friends, family and even at work. Social media however does not provide a secure environment for teachers and students. To communicate with parents, schools need to adopt apps that provide social media like communication experiences in walled gardens. School Rush! provides a secure walled garden communication and syncs with SIS systems for class rosters and contact information.



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**School Rush!™**

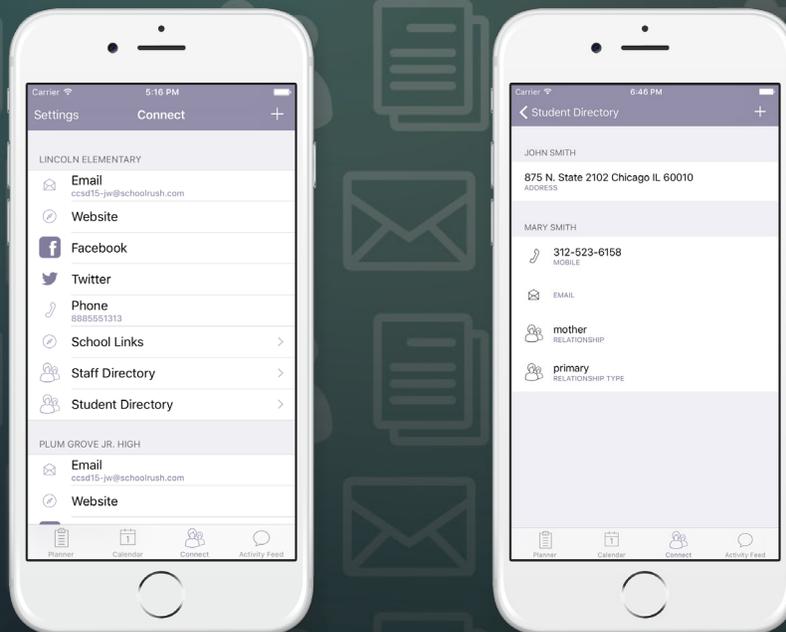
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**“We had a student injured at the basket ball game, we were able to pull up School Rush! App Student Directory, look up the parent contact information and notify them immediately.”**

**- Coach Al, Inverness, IL**

## Connect with Student & Staff Directory

School Rush! Connect, student and staff directories remove the hurdles for communication and put the contact information for the school, teachers, students at the finger tips of staff members as well as parents. No more printed school directories or online web directories that are hard to access or do not work on mobile phones. Staff can lookup contact information for their students, parents instantly on their mobile phone and even initiate a call, text or email straight from the School Rush! App. Teachers tell us they have used this feature during emergencies such as sports injuries or mishaps during field trips to contact a parent.



Optionally schools can also open up the Student Directory in the App to the parents. Parents can access the contact information for other parents in their kid's class. School Rush! also shows the Student address (when provided) in Student Directory with GPS integration. Mom's tell us they love this feature! Think car pooling for sports, study groups or play dates to which Moms often drive to pickup or drop off each other's kids!



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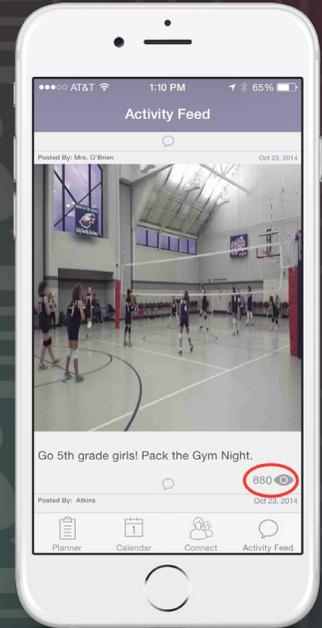
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## Parents Love To See Pictures From School and Classroom

Pictures are worth a thousand words. The ability to capture an exciting moment happening at school and to instantly share it with parents securely is what makes School Rush! so engaging. It is not an exaggeration when we say each of our Schools post over 1000 pictures per month using School Rush! Parents love seeing the picture of their child performing in a sports event after school or an exciting project presentation in the classroom. For example when a School principal posted a sports “Pack the gym night” picture in School Rush! 90% of the parents of the School opened the App and saw the message within one minute!

## A Daily Planner That Helps Everyone Stay Informed and Organized

If you are an adult you live off of your calendar/planner. Schools typically have many calendars. There is a district calendar, and a school calendar, a sports calendar, a facilities calendar, and each teacher has their own classroom calendar. Parents have to check many calendars to see relevant events coming up for their children. The problem is compounded for parents with multiple kids. Schools on the other hand have to send repeat reminders for important events and still have parents asking them “when is that event again?” or say “I did not get that reminder”. Some schools are starting to use google calendar. But google calendar does not solve the problem, all these google calendars are still separate and schools that try to consolidate them find that there is not enough colors in the color palette to color code all the ‘calendars’ in google calendar a school might want to create. Asking parents to sync to these calendars ends up creating more tech support issues than helping. School Rush! calendar is built for schools. School Rush! supports district wide events, school events and classroom or other events in the same calendar. School Rush! planner filters out and only shows relevant events. With School Rush! planner educators and students, parents can go to one place to check for all the relevant events coming up for them. School Rush! calendar automatically syncs to users personal icloud or google calendars. We see an uptick in Planner access in the App by parents around 10 PM and 7 AM. Our analytics show that parents are accessing the Planner at that time to plan ahead for the up coming school day. This simple yet sophisticated Planner helps parents make that important event at school and makes them much more engaged in their child’s education!





**School Rush!™**

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## This is what parents have to say about School Rush!

- “I can’t live without my School Rush! app!”
- “I love having everything right on my phone”
- “I use it to refresh my memory.”
- “It provides a great conversation starter at dinner.”

## And this is what teachers have to say about School Rush!

- “This app is one of the best ways to communicate with Parents on a daily basis. It ensures that everyone is getting the most up to date class information as quickly as possible. The best feature is the ability to include photos. The second is each parent receives notifications when anything is posted. I would be lost without it!” -Teacher
- “Excellent features and improving daily. Very responsive support for problems and improvements. Easy interface on desktop or mobile devices. Well recieved by parents. Easy platform to communicate daily or emergency information.” -Principal

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.hfrp.org/publications-resources/browse-our-publications/parental-involvement-and-student-achievement-a-meta-analysis>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.districtadministration.com/article/community-communications-tools-evolve?utm\\_source=twitter&utm\\_medium=social-media&utm\\_campaign=addtoany](http://www.districtadministration.com/article/community-communications-tools-evolve?utm_source=twitter&utm_medium=social-media&utm_campaign=addtoany)

<sup>3</sup> <http://time.com/4147614/smartphone-usage-us-2015/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://t.co/OrvnOG6qqX>