

Frequently Asked Questions

1. *Why are we requiring families to opt in to receiving our phone calls?*

The FCC released a declaratory ruling regarding the Telephone Consumer Protection Act last year at the request of several organizations centered on the practice of phone communications with consumers. Included in the ruling's directives were points that included school systems. In short, the ruling stipulated that anyone using an automated, multi-target calling system had to have consumers opt-in to receive the informational messages.

Informational calls at schools can include, but are not limited to reminders, weekly updates, announcements, and more.

2. *How will we obtain express consent from parents and guardians?*

Henry County Schools will utilize a simple form to be sent home with students during the first week of school which would give families the option of opting in or out of receiving informational messages. Several pieces of information are requested from this document for record-keeping purposes. Whether a family opts in or opts out, the form must still be returned to the school in a prompt manner.

3. *How will we contact parents/guardians for emergencies?*

Emergency phone calls are exempt under the ruling. Any call pertaining to the health and safety of a student can be classified as an emergency. Lockdowns, evacuations, etc. can be classified as emergencies. The general practice of Henry County Schools is to send out notifications, informational messages surrounding brief, non-threatening lockdowns or evacuations. More serious emergencies are classified as such, and calls are sent out as soon as accurate information is collected and corroborated.

4. *How will we send general information out to our school communities?*

Schools can still utilize phone messages, but they will only go to those who have opted in to receiving these messages. There are many other ways to get messages out to school communities. Websites should continue to be the main source of information, and this includes teachers using their teacher pages. Social media is another great way to get information out in a quick and routine manner. Traditional methods are still options as well: newsletters, flyers, etc.

5. *What should I do if my phone number changes?*

Contact the school immediately to have them update the numbers and your preferences for receiving messages. If you wish to change your selections for the types of informational messages you receive (you cannot change the emergency or attendance selections), you can do so by logging onto the Parent Portal and making the changes/updates yourself.