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February 27, 2025

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Nothing is more important than student safety and well-being. To ensure that every student arrives safely at school every day, School District No. 8 (Kootenay Lake) (SD8) has now activated *a new, more effective* student absence reporting system called [SafeArrival](#). Families at Wildflower School are now invited to sign up.

### SafeArrival is Part of SchoolMessenger

SafeArrival is a student absence-tracking tool that is part of [SchoolMessenger](#), a system that enhances communication with families by allowing you to customize how SD8 communicates with you.

SchoolMessenger is used successfully by school districts, parents and guardians across B.C. It has now been activated across the district.

### Customized Notifications and Opting In

In December 2024 you were emailed inviting you to “opt in” to receive text notifications through SchoolMessenger. If you choose not to opt in to text messages, you will receive notifications by email or a voice message. This was a precursory step that allowed us to activate the SafeArrival tool, and other SchoolMessenger tools to improve communication with families. You can also customize how you are notified.

If you did not opt in to receive text message notifications, you can still do so by texting “Y” to 978338 from your cell phone. You will get a text response from School messenger. Your number will only receive texts if your cell number is associated with a student in our system and you have the legal rights to receive the information.

If texting “Y” to 978338 does not work, contact your child’s school to update your contact information and ensure the province-wide [MyEducation BC](#) system is set up correctly for parent/guardian and child.

### Sign Up for SafeArrival

This new system will reduce the time it takes to verify student attendance, make it easy for you to report your child’s absence and easy for staff to respond to unexplained student absences.

With **SafeArrival**, you are asked to report your child’s absence in advance using one of three methods:

1. Using your mobile device, download and install the **SM Home app** from the Apple App Store or the Google Play Store (or from the links at [go.schoolmessenger.ca](https://go.schoolmessenger.ca).) The first time you use the app, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**. (See attachment for further SM Home App instructions) OR
2. Use the SafeArrival website [go.schoolmessenger.ca](https://go.schoolmessenger.ca). The first time you use the website, select **Sign Up** to create your account. Select **Attendance** then **Report an Absence**. OR
3. Call the toll-free number **(833) 309-1246** to report an absence using the automated phone system.

These options are available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time.

## Automated Absence Notifications and Staff Follow-Up

In addition, Wildflower will use an automated notification system to contact parents whose child is absent when the absence was not reported in advance. **The automated notification system will attempt to contact parents at multiple contact points until a reason is submitted for the absence.** If our system is unable to reach the designated contacts, office staff will follow up.

If you report your child's absence in advance using the **SafeArrival** toll-free number, website or mobile app, you will NOT receive these notifications.

Starting March 6, 2025, please report absences in advance using **SafeArrival** instead of sending notes or calling/emailing the school.

Starting March 6, staff will be using the **SafeArrival** notifications to let you know if your student is absent (when you haven't reported the absence in advance).

**If you have children attending other schools, please continue to report absences using the existing procedures for those schools.**

## What to Do Now

In summary, please do **one** of the following

1. Download the SM Home app OR
2. Create an account at the website [go.schoolmessenger.ca](https://go.schoolmessenger.ca)

If you have Texted "Y" to 978338 you have set your default in the system to receive communication by text.

If you do not create an account, the default will be an automated phone call.

## Privacy is Paramount

[SchoolMessenger Home](#) and other SchoolMessenger features are configured to meet privacy requirements of the [B.C. Freedom of Information and Privacy Act \(FIPPA\)](#), and [SD8's Privacy Management Program](#). If you have any questions about privacy, please contact our [SD8 Privacy Officer](#).

Thank you for your patience and cooperation as we implement this new system.

Nick Graves,  
Principal, Wildflower Nelson

Darryl Adams,  
Principal, Wildflower Creston

Anne Cavicchi,  
Secretary, Wildflower Nelson & Creston