

## Best Practices Guide

# ParentSquare for Athletics

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## Overview

In this practical guide, you'll find resources for using ParentSquare for athletics at every level. From sending day-to-day team updates to driving fan attendance for big games, we've included best practices for consolidating communication for athletic directors, coaches, and student families alike.

Here's what we'll cover:

- [Part 1: Introduction to using ParentSquare for athletics](#)  
New to using ParentSquare for athletics? Start here.
- [Part 2: Set up a ParentSquare group for athletics teams](#)  
Get step-by-step instructions for creating groups for teams of all kinds.
- [Part 3: Ways to use ParentSquare for team communication](#)  
Examples of how coaches can use groups to manage team communication.
- [Part 4: Cleaning up groups at the end of the year](#)  
Plan for a smooth transition for your teams at the end of the school year

Each section includes how-tos, resources, and other tips that you need for a successful ParentSquare rollout for athletics. Let's get started!

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## Part 1: Introduction to using ParentSquare for athletics

While you might be familiar with using ParentSquare for district, school, or even classroom communication, having a unified platform means being able to support communication for all of your extracurriculars as well—including athletics.

Here's a breakdown of how stakeholders in your district can use ParentSquare for athletics at every level.

## District administrators

For superintendents, PIOs, and CTOs, ParentSquare brings all sports team communications into the platform you're already using for your schools and district. With **centralized oversight**, you can make records requests and improve accountability across all of your athletics teams, even if coaches aren't in your student information system (SIS).

## Athletic directors and administrative assistants

Athletic directors and administrative assistants overseeing multiple teams can use ParentSquare to help **organize communications** across the entire department. Along with setting up groups for individual teams, you can share department-wide updates with all teams, send targeted notifications to specific recipients, and start conversations with specific coaches.

## Coaches

For coaches, ParentSquare includes the features you need **for day-to-day updates**. From sharing updates with students and families to handling sign-ups, forms, and calendar functions, you can manage all of your team communications on one easy-to-use platform.

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## Part 2: Setting up ParentSquare groups for athletic teams

**Groups** are the best way to manage team communication on ParentSquare. With a group, coaches can share team updates and announcements, communicate directly with families, and collect volunteer sign-ups.

In this section, we'll walk you through the steps for setting up a ParentSquare group for an athletic team.

### 1. What are groups?

First, spend some time familiarizing yourself with groups and how they work. The help article below includes a brief video that goes over the basics.

- [What are groups?](#)

District and school admin, teachers, and users with individual permissions for groups can all create groups.

### 2. Designate coach permissions

Coaches can be assigned the role of group manager or group owner, even if they haven't been added via SIS sync. If they aren't a part of your sync, or don't already have a ParentSquare

account, an admin can add them as **staff** or a **guest**.

- [Add staff/teachers to ParentSquare](#)
- [Add guests/external users to ParentSquare](#)

If the coach already has an account, you can assign them a role within the group based on the necessary permissions. If they're already set as teachers in ParentSquare, they have this permission by default.

**Group owners** can make and manage posts, send messages, add and remove group members, and see the full district or school directory.

- [Add or remove a group owner](#)

**Group managers** can make and manage posts, send messages, and remove group members.

- [Add or remove a group manager](#)

### 3. Determine group type (school vs. district)

The next step is deciding whether the group will include members from a single school or members from multiple schools.

If the group members are from a single school, create the group at the **school** level.

- Click on the school: *Home > Participate > Groups > New Group*.

If the group includes members from different schools, like a junior varsity team with middle and high school students, create it at the **district** level.

- Click on the district: *Home > Participate > Groups > New Group*.

For district groups, keep in mind that group members can only initiate direct messages to a group owner or group manager **who's in ParentSquare as a staff member at the same school**.

However, they can reply to a direct message initiated by the group owner or group manager.

**TIP:** [Send a direct message](#) to your parents and students at the beginning of the season to welcome them to your team.

If you'd like students to participate in the group along with parents and guardians, StudentSquare will need to be enabled at your district or school. You can contact [support@parentsquare.com](mailto:support@parentsquare.com) to get started.

## 4. Create the group and add members

You have multiple options for creating your group based on how you'd like to add members. You won't be able to change your group type after you select it, so make sure to choose the right one for your needs.

**Open groups (public groups, community groups)** allow anyone to join or leave. **Public groups** are open to all ParentSquare users at your school or district, and **community groups** can additionally be joined by community members without ParentSquare accounts.

- [Create a public group](#)
- [Create a community group](#)

**Managed groups (private groups, rule-based groups)** let you control who's in the group. **Private groups** allow you to add members manually or share a join code, while **rule-based (auto-update) groups** automatically add members based on conditions you set. Managed groups can also be marked **confidential**.

- [Create a private group](#)
- [Create a rule-based \(auto-update\) group](#)

When you've decided what type of group you need for your team, you can create the group, assign a group owner or manager, and add or invite group members.

If your SIS supports group creation, some groups may be created automatically during the SIS sync. You can reach out to Support or visit your [SIS's integration article](#) to learn more.

## 5. Launch your group with a welcome message

After you've set up your group, you're ready to start using it! Part 3 of this guide will cover all the different options and features in ParentSquare for team communication, but we recommend starting with a simple welcome message to let your team know what to expect.

With groups, you can either **create a post** or **send a direct message**. Feel free to use the sample posts and messages below as a starting point.

- [When to use a direct message or a post](#)

**TIP:** Include an image (like a team logo) or take advantage of Studio Editor's design capabilities to create a stunning post!

### Sample post:

Dear [Team Name] athletes and parents,

Welcome to our new team group on ParentSquare! I'm excited to kick off this season and

keep everyone connected and informed through this platform.

A few things to look forward to:

- **Practice and game schedules:** Check the group's calendar for all practices, games, and events. Any last-minute changes will be updated here promptly.
- **Team announcements:** Stay updated on important news, weather delays, live game updates, and celebrations of team achievements.
- **Direct messaging:** Use this 2-way messaging feature for any private conversations you might need to have with me directly.

I encourage everyone to use ParentSquare for all team communications. If you have any questions or need assistance, feel free to reach out to me directly through the ParentSquare app.

Looking forward to a fantastic season with all of you!

Go [Team Name]!

Best regards,  
[Coach's Name]

#### Sample direct message:

Hello,

We're looking forward to the upcoming season! If you have any questions, need clarification, or just want to chat one-on-one, feel free to drop me a message here. While I'll keep everyone updated with team-wide posts, this thread is your direct line to me.

Let's make this season one to remember! Go [Team Name]!

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## Part 3: Ways to use ParentSquare for team communication

Now that your new group for your team is set up and ready to go, here are some ideas to help you get started—shared with us by other coaches who use ParentSquare for team communication.

### Posts

Think of **posts** as your building blocks for team communication on ParentSquare. They're a great way to share information with your entire team at once, from making announcements to handling logistics.

Here are some of the benefits of sharing posts:

- Group members receive post notifications through **their preferred channel**, including app notification, SMS text, or email.
- They can also choose to get **individual updates** or a **daily email digest** with all of the notifications for the day.
- All ParentSquare posts are **automatically translated** into the recipient's preferred language.
- **Private or public comments** and the **“Appreciate”** feature encourage members to interact with a post. Comments can also be disabled for each post.

**TIP:** Encourage families to [manage their notification preferences](#) to select a modality that works best for them.

Creating a post is easy, whether you're sending a quick update or embedding media like team photos and videos.

- [How to create a post](#)

ParentSquare also includes optional add-ons that you can use to manage logistics and parent participation, including calendar entries, RSVPs, volunteer sign-ups, and more. These are a great way to go paperless and increase engagement at the same time, since you're bringing all of your team communication into a single channel.

- [Add-on options for a post](#)

Looking for more ways to use posts for team communication? We've got you covered.

### Team announcements

- **General updates** - Share team news and motivational messages
- **Important news** - Announce major updates like team selections or awards
- **Celebrations** - Celebrate birthdays, achievements, and more
- **Positive reinforcement** - Recognize efforts and improvements

### Scheduling and reminders

- **Practice and game schedules** - Post team schedules ahead of time
- **RSVPs** - Get an accurate headcount for team events
- **Event reminders** - Send reminders for all team events.
- **Last-minute changes** - Share delays, cancellations, and other scheduling updates

**TIP:** If you have timely communication that needs to be sent immediately, rather than at the end of the day in a digest summary, make sure to set your post to “Send Instantly.”

### Logistics and participation

- **Forms and permission slips** - Distribute and collect digital forms and responses
- **Polls** - Conduct pulse checks or quick surveys
- **Sign-ups** - Organize volunteers or snack sign-ups for events.
- **Payments and donations** - Collect one-time fees and expenses (available for districts with ParentSquare Pay)
- **Calendars** - Link existing calendars to your group so everyone has up-to-date schedules

## Media

- **Photos and videos** - Post highlights from games and practices or instructional videos and resources
- **Files and links** - Share resources like training plans, nutrition guide, and more

## Two-way communication

Along with sharing posts with the entire team, you can also use ParentSquare to **message** individuals or a small group. This is ideal for sharing sensitive or confidential information, or any communication that requires members to respond.

- [Send a direct message](#)

There are two types of two-way messaging on ParentSquare. **All messages in two-way conversations are archived** for accountability and oversight—even if they're deleted by the sender.

### Direct messages

Send a direct message to start individual conversations with selected recipients, from just one person to your entire team (up to 150 users). Think of direct messages as BCCing recipients on an email—when you send a direct message to multiple people, recipients can respond to you directly but won't see other replies.

You can use direct messages for:

- Inviting questions or responses
- Following up with a parent about a student absence
- Sharing a personal win or achievement

### Group conversations

Group conversations are the best way to manage team collaboration and discussions. Group conversations are the equivalent of CCing multiple people (up to 50 users) on an email, so your recipients can see all replies and reply to each other as well. Plus, even if the creator of the conversation deletes their message, it will remain for everyone else on their account and can be reviewed at any time.

Group conversations are great for:

- Communicating with volunteers
  - Organizing small-group practices
  - Planning a surprise celebration
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## Part 4: Cleaning up groups at the end of the year

As a rule of thumb, it's helpful to know what happens to ParentSquare groups at the end of every school year. Here are three things to keep in mind to plan for a smooth transition for all of your teams.

### 1. Find archived posts

Depending on your school or district's preferences, posts in your group may be archived at the end of the school year. However, you can still find these posts in your account to reuse next season.

- [Locate archived or published posts](#)

### 2. Review coach permissions

To close out the school year, review any guest users or staff members (non-SIS syncing) who might have been manually added to ParentSquare and will no longer be a part of the school or district.

- [Delete a guest](#)
- [Delete a staff](#)

### 3. Re-add students as needed

During the summer SIS rollover process, students who graduate or change schools are automatically removed from their groups. If you have a district-level group, don't forget to re-add any students who might have changed buildings but need to stay in the group.

- [How to add members to a group](#)
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## Additional resources

You're all set! We can't wait to see what your athletics departments and teams can do with ParentSquare.

**Looking for more resources on using ParentSquare?** Please review our training options [here](#).

**Questions on any of the material?** Don't hesitate to contact our Support team for assistance [here](#).

**Interested in optional enhancements?** Administrators can contact your account managers for more information about community groups, Virtual Phone, ParentSquare Pay, and more.