

# Pittsburgh Public School District



## At a Glance

The Pittsburgh Public School District is the second-largest in Pennsylvania. The District's 54 schools serve 20,080 Pre-K through 12th grade students; 95% qualify for the free or reduced-price lunch program. Families in the district speak 95 home languages and hail from 57 countries.

## District Challenges

- When the pandemic began, the district needed to reach families urgently to distribute tech to 20k+ students. **The tools they'd relied on before - backpacks, phone calls, after school meetings - no longer worked.**
- They knew **texting would be crucial** as a fast way to reach families on their most-used device: their mobile phone.
- Post-pandemic engagement and access for all families remains a priority. However, for families who don't speak English or read in their home language, **paying to translate materials doesn't help.** Alternatively, paraprofessional staff found videos worked well.

## TalkingPoints Solutions

- TalkingPoints' **two-way, instant translated text messages in 145+ languages** offer real-time communication with all families.
- TalkingPoints is the **only platform with the highest-quality translation for K12 schools**, contextualized for education, with **human translation + machine learning/AI.**
- **Videos with translated captions** help staff support families with low literacy levels in their home languages.

## Engagement & Impact

- **Teachers love that TalkingPoints is so easy to use**, and that rostering is done for them so it's quick to get started.
- **Principals, too, have really embraced TalkingPoints** and want to collaborate on sequencing messages and communications from the school and the district.
- **Steady and ongoing growth:** By March 2023, staff and families had exchanged **2.7 million messages**, an **80% increase over the same period the prior year!**



**Mercedes J. Williams**

District Director of Communications and Stakeholder Engagement



**We saw a huge increase in parent engagement** with TalkingPoints. So we really appreciate that platform in a unique way because **we're not seeing it in any other channel**, whether it be social media, on the website, letters, or robocalls. The texting has really been really important.



From the district level, when I'm looking at those text messages I'm also seeing things **de-escalating**. I'm seeing **happiness**. I'm seeing **joy**. I am seeing **questions answered**. I'm seeing **homework being distributed**. So I think it's very important for Pittsburgh Public Schools to be able to sustain that relationship and say that we want to keep our families engaged in this way.

Causal study results show TalkingPoints improves student academic and attendance outcomes with outsized impacts for historically underserved subgroups.