



(Tests of the system will be done during the week of May 18)

Macomb School District Telephone Broadcast Service

Dear Parent,

In our efforts to improve communications between parents and school, the Macomb School District is instituting a telephone broadcast system that will enable school personnel to notify all households and parents by phone within minutes of an emergency or unplanned event that causes early dismissal, school cancellation or late start. The service may also be used from time-to-time to communicate general announcements or reminders. This service is provided by SchoolReach, which specializes in school-to-parent communications. Macomb Schools will continue to report school closings due to snow or weather on local radio & TV stations and will use this system as an overlay to the public announcements.

When used, the service will simultaneously call all listed phone numbers (home and cellular) in our parent contact list and will deliver a recorded message from a school administrator. The service will deliver the message to both live answer and answering machines. No answers and busies will be automatically retried twice in 15 minute intervals after the initial call. We will use phone numbers provided to us during registration times. This information is stored in our Skyward database and can be checked through your Family Access account. Visit your school office to obtain login credentials if you do not currently have an account. Please keep your phone numbers updated.

NOTE: 1) This requires NO registration by the parent on the SchoolReach website. 2). All information and contact numbers are strictly secure and confidential and are only used for the purposes described herein.

Here is some specific information you should know.

- **Caller ID.** Depending on where the phone call originates within our district, one of the following numbers will display on your caller ID: (309) 833-4161, (309) 833-4273, (309) 833-2095, (309) 837-3993, (309) 833-2074, or (309) 837-2331. These are the district office and school offices' main phone numbers.
- **Live Answers:** There is a short pause at the beginning of the message, usually just a few seconds. Answer your phone as you normally would "Hello" and hold for the message to begin. Multiple "Hello's" will delay message. Inform all family members of this process who may answer your phone.

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- **Answering Machines:** The system will detect that your machine has answered and will play the recording to your machine. The maximum numbers of rings before hang up is 5. Make sure your machine answers after 4 rings or you may miss the message.
- **Message Repeat:** At the end of the message you will be prompted to 'press one' to hear the message again. This is very effective when a child answers the phone and hands it to a parent, who can then 'Repeat' the message in its entirety.

If you have any questions, please contact Macomb Schools Technology Department at (309) 833-4161.

SchoolReach, the service provider, uses the best available technology in the industry to detect the difference between human answer and machine answer.

How detection works:

1. The system detects and measures the voice energy when the phone is answered.
2. The system measures this energy in combination with the background noise and line impairments.
3. If the system determines that it is a "live" answer it will immediately start playing the message.
4. If the system determines that it is a machine it will wait for 3 full seconds of silence before playing the message with a maximum wait time of 20 seconds.
5. If the system cannot make a determination it will default to answering machine thus requiring three seconds of silence for the message to play. In this case, you may hear a prompt to "Press any key to hear the message immediately."

Some reasons for false detection:

1. Loud background noise; television, radio, general noisy environment.
2. Cordless phone that has static or other foreign noise.
3. Not saying hello or delaying saying hello.

What can be done to remedy this?

1. Do not say hello more than once, if the system detected your answer incorrectly all noise will reset the three-second counter.
2. If, after you answer, the message does not immediately play- you can cover the mouthpiece of the phone to cutout all background noise the message should then play after three seconds.