

CASE STUDY

Improving Family Engagement at Milan (IN) Community Schools

Renee Hartman's second-graders doing independent work.

In August 2023, communications at Milan Community Schools was at an all-time low. “The app we were using was not secure, my newsletter was being sent as a link instead of a PDF, and parents were uninformed about conferences,” says Travis Rohrig, principal at Milan Elementary School.

John Prifogle, principal at Milan Middle School, was also discouraged. “We wanted a tool for teachers to communicate with parents easily,” he says. “We needed to know that parents were receiving information about NWEA testing, for instance.”

The final straw came when Rohrig had to fire a staff member. She contacted parents through Class Dojo and caused “all kinds of chaos,” he says. “Clearly, we needed to find a platform that was secure.”

Rohrig asked his staff to find other options, and one of his teachers suggested Bloomz. “I called another principal in Indiana who used Bloomz and loved it,” he says. Within a month, the school was up and running.

Second-grade teacher Renee Hartman enjoys sharing what her students are doing. “I send tons of pictures, shoutouts, and classroom tidbits,” she says. “It’s especially beneficial for parents who never make it into the classroom.” She says Bloomz improves parent engagement. “I’ll send a quick announcement about an upcoming test with study suggestions and can tell who read it because their kids do really well on the exam.”

One of Rohrig’s favorite things is the customization. “Our students come to us with different physical,

COMMUNICATION SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

- A secure, safe platform
- Increased newsletter deliverability/readability
- Student behavior management
- Easy to use for teachers and parents/caregivers



“In two days, my newsletter had 360 views vs. 70 with our previous platform. Deliverability is much better with Bloomz.”

Travis Rohrig, Principal
Milan Elementary School



Hartman's class excitedly displays their brand new "reading buddies."

emotional, and social needs. Bloomz has been a great tool to assist with behavior at all three levels. The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) module lets staff track behavior assessment data, change classifications, and streamline the process," he says. "Since teachers have the Bloomz app on their phone, it's always accessible."

The PBIS reports let Hartman reward students with the highest amount of positive interactions. "Parents appreciate how quickly they can see the behavior information as well," she says.

Bloomz adoption at the middle school has been equally positive. "It syncs well with our student information system and the transition took only two days," says Prifogle. "The platform was easy for teachers and for me to understand and use."

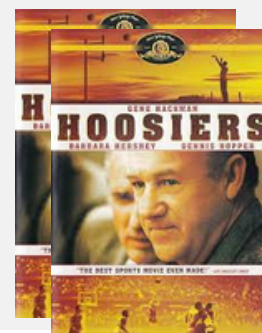
He specifically appreciates being able to see the quality and quantity of messaging. "A parent told me they hadn't talked to a teacher and I was able to find a conversation they had," he says.

Sixth-grade teacher Shawna Potts is another fan of the transparency. "I prefer sending messages that my administrator can see," she says. "It's much easier than having to remember to cc or bcc them on everything."

"We are still getting used to Bloomz and its functionality but I already see that it's a great way to stay connected with parents," says fifth-grade teacher Heather Sterwerf. She posts "I CAN" statements to help parents understand what their children are working on. Even better, she's able to quickly message a parent if a student forgets something at home.

FUN FACT

The movie *Hoosiers* was based on Milan High School. People from all over the world visit to see the gym and the trophy.



"The one-stop shop is the biggest selling point. It's all right there."

John Prifogle, Principal
Milan Middle School