WSI PC Guide to Message Center for Teachers, Advisors, and Activity Leaders
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Introduction

This Guide explains how to use Message Center as a teacher, advisor, or activity leader.

Who This Guide is For
This Guide is intended for teachers, advisors, and activity leaders who need to understand how to use Message Center to post messages that are visible for students and their guardians in Family and Student Access.

What This Guide Contains
This Guide shows you how to:

- Use Message Center to communicate with your students and their guardians.
- Create a message using Message Center, including using the posting and sending options.
- Understand how messages appear in Family and Student Access.

What You Should Know Before You Read This Guide
Before using this Guide, be sure you are familiar with all of the information in the WSIPC Guide to Skyward’s School Management System, which discusses the system’s basic features. The procedures in this Guide begin with navigation menu paths. Select the Display Navigation Menu Paths check box in User Preferences to ensure that you can follow these paths. The option is not available in User Preferences if it is already enabled for the entire district. To learn more about setting User Preferences, see the WSIPC Guide to Skyward’s School Management System.

You’ll find that the Guide is much more helpful, and that the processes described make more sense, if you have experience using Educator Access Plus.

This Guide is intended to be read while you are working in Message Center, so be sure you are signed in to Educator Access Plus.

If you’re using this Guide electronically, you can click any text in blue font to move to the section of the Guide that the text refers to.

What You Need to Get Started
This Guide references the following WSIPC Guide, so it may help to have this Guide available before you begin:

- WSIPC Guide to Student Demographics and Families
What’s New in This Edition

This section highlights the significant changes to the Guide since the last edition such as content about new features, important notes and warnings, and sections of the Guide that have been expanded or moved.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Change</th>
<th>Page #</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Figures, tables, and features have been updated to Skyward’s October 2013 software release.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview of Message Center for Teachers, Advisors, and Activity Leaders

Message Center allows you to email global messages to students and guardians about school announcements and events. You can also post the messages to the Message Center and Calendar in Family and Student Access. For example, you can notify guardians and students about upcoming tests, projects, and events by posting the information in Family and Student Access and sending an email to the guardians and students. You can create messages for guardians and students in a specific class or activity, or create messages for students and their guardians in several classes, activities, or advisees in multiple entities.

When you create a Message Center message, you have an option to allow guardians and students to respond to your message. Allowing guardians and students to reply directly to your Message Center messages is beneficial when you need to collect information about the students in your class, advisory, or activity directly from the guardians or student themselves. For example, a baseball coach (activity leader) can send a Message Center message to the guardians and students on the team, providing game schedules and collecting additional information such as uniform sizes.

Your Entity can also enable a feature that allows parents and students to use Message Center to initiate messages to you.
Understanding the Message Center Browse

The Message Center browse (Figure 1) is your “home base” for Message Center. Depending on your role, the title of the Message Center screen will be different. For example, if you are a teacher, the screen is titled Class Messages (Figure 1). The functionality on each Message Center browse is similar, regardless of your role or the title of the screen.

![Figure 1 - A teacher’s Message Center browse is titled Class Messages and shows all messages](image)

You use the Message Center browse to perform the following tasks:

- Creating a New Message
- Viewing Messages
- Replying to Messages
- Editing Messages
- Recalling Messages

Each of these tasks is discussed in the following sections, and assumes that you are performing the listed procedures from within the Message Center browse. You can access the Message Center browse in several different ways, depending on whether you are a teacher, an advisor, or an activity leader.
To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to one of the following:

- Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
- Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center

To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:

- Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center

To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:

- Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

By default, the Message Center browse displays all your messages, both read and unread, and both Current and Expired. The browse displays basic information about each message, such as the Post/Send Date, Expiration Date and Description. The Created By column shows who sent the message. When you are the sender of the message, this field is blank. You can use Filter Options to determine which type of messages appears in your browse.

The Message Center browse is also available when unread messages are present in your Message Center. When unread messages are present, a yellow exclamation mark appears to the left of the Favorites link (Figure 2). You can access the Message Center browse from this icon.

Figure 2 - Click the yellow exclamation mark at the top of the screen to access your Message Center browse
To access the Message Center browse from the yellow exclamation mark icon:

1. Click the yellow exclamation mark icon to view information on messages that require attention. The Items Waiting For My Approval/Attention browse appears (Figure 3). This screen displays unread messages, along with the class and section that the messages originated from.

2. Click on a line item in the Items Waiting For My Approval/Attention browse to go to the Message Center browse.

![Figure 3 - Items Waiting for Approval dialog box](image)

**Creating a New Message**

You can create messages to send to multiple classes, Entities, or activities, or to a specific class, Entity, or activity. Additionally, you can email messages to guardians only, students only, or to both guardians and students, and you can post these messages to Family Access only, Student Access only, or both Family and Student Access.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NOTE</th>
<th>The following procedures assume that you are a teacher, creating messages to send to a class.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you are an advisor or activity leader, do the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you are an advisor, the buttons available to you are Add Message for Multiple Entities and Add Message for Current Entity (instead of clicking Add Message for Multiple Classes or Add Message for Current Class).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If you are an activity leader, the buttons available to you are Add Message for Multiple Activities and Add Message for Current Activity (instead of clicking Add Message for Multiple Classes or Add Message for Current Class).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The options and functionality on the resulting screens are the same as what is discussed in the following procedures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
To create a new message:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:

   • To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center

   • To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center

   • To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click Add Message for Current Class, or Add Message for Multiple Classes.

   **NOTE** When you select Add Message for Current Class, the New Class Message for Selected Students screen appears. When you select Add Message for Multiple Classes, the New Class Message for Multiple Classes screen appears.

   These screens function in the same way, and the majority of the options on each screen are identical. See Table 1 below to learn about each available option.

3. Configure the New Class Message screen (Figure 4 shows an example of the New Class Message for Multiple Classes screen).

4. If you want to attach a file to your message, click Attach, and then do the following:

   a. Click Browse and locate the file you want to attach.

   b. Click Upload.

   c. Click Save.

   If you do not want to attach a file to your message, skip this step.
NOTE Instead of attaching large documents to your message, such as a school newsletter, consider sending a message to parents and students with a link to the web site where the newsletter is posted.

5. Click Save.

Figure 4 - The New Class Message for Selected Students screen
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>PURPOSE OF AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Add a New Message</td>
<td>This area is where you enter the content of your message.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Options In This Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Message Summary</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Priority</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Message Detail</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>PURPOSE OF AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Posting Options</td>
<td>This area contains options that control where, when, and to whom your message should be posted.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Options In This Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description of Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post From/to</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Only Post for Students currently enrolled in selected classes</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post to Family Access</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Post to Student Access</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Options In This Area</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow parents to respond to this message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allow students to respond to this message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post my email address for parents viewing this message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post my email address for students viewing this message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post to Calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This option is only available when either Post to Family Access or Post to Student Access is selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Place on Calendar Date</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Text</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### AREA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PURPOSE OF AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emailing Options</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Options In This Area</strong></th>
<th><strong>Description of Options</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Send as Email on [MM/DD/YY] at [HH:MM] [AM/PM] from [sender’s email address]</td>
<td>Sends your message as an email. In the on and at fields, enter the date and time in which the email will be sent. The date and time must be at least 15 minutes later than the current time. In the from field, type the email address from which the message will be sent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You may find the default value in the from box is your district email that doesn’t allow guardians and students to reply to Class Messages.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Options In This Area</td>
<td>Description of Options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Only Send Email for Students currently enrolled in selected classes | When you access this screen by selecting Add Message for Multiple Classes, this option emails your class message to students and guardians of students who are currently enrolled in the classes you select.  

*Example:* You are sending an email message for a year-long course and you have students who are only enrolled in Semester 2 of the course. If the email message is sent out during the Semester 1 timeframe, students in Semester 2 will not receive the message. |
| Email to Students                                        | Emails the message to students. This option is only available if you select Send as Email.  

The message is sent to the email address found in the student’s School Email box on their Profile tab (Educator Access Plus\Teacher Access\My Students\select Student\Profile). If there is no School Email, the message is sent to the email address found in the Home Email box. |
| Email to Guardians                                       | Emails your message to guardians. This option is only available if you select Send as Email.  

The message is sent to the email address found in the Email box in the guardian’s record on the student’s Profile tab (Educator Access Plus\Teacher Access\My Students\select Student\Profile). |
<p>| Heads of Household Only                                  | Sends your message to the Head of Household for each family. The Head of Household is the first guardian listed for each family. This option is only available if you select Email to Guardians.  |
| Primary Guardians Only                                   | Sends your message to the Primary Guardians. The Primary Guardian is the first guardian of the student’s first Family (Family 1). This option is only available if you select Email to Guardians.  |
| Report Card Recipients Only                              | Sends your message to each guardian in each family for which you’ve selected the Receive Report Cards option (Educator Access Plus\Teacher Access\My Students\select student\select guardian’s name). The Report Card Recipients Only option is only available if you select Email to Guardians.  |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options In This Area</th>
<th>Description of Options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Families Only</td>
<td>Sends your message to each guardian in the student’s first family listed (Family 1). This option is only available if you select Email to Guardians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send an Email For Each Student in Same Family</td>
<td>By default, one email is sent for all students in the same family. This option allows a separate email to be sent for each individual student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do Not Show Student Name in Body of Email</td>
<td>By default, the email body begins with “This email is regarding: (student name).” If you select this option, the student’s name doesn’t appear in the email body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Display Additional details in the Email Body</td>
<td>Allows you to select additional information to include in the email body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Description</td>
<td>Includes the course description in the email body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Includes the period of the course in the email body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher Name</td>
<td>Includes the name of the course’s teacher in the email body.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post to All Classes</td>
<td>Sends your message to all students (and/or their guardians) enrolled in the classes selected.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post to All Students</td>
<td>Sends your messages to all students and/or guardians of the students selected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AREA</th>
<th>PURPOSE OF AREA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select students to receive the message</td>
<td>Displays a list of students enrolled in the class you accessed by selecting Add Message for Current Class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Allows you to select which students receive your message. If you are sending the message to guardians, selecting students sends the message to the selected students’ guardians.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If all students should be selected, select the Post to All Students box.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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December 2013
### Viewed Messages

When a student or guardian sends a message to you, you can view the message from the Message Center browse in your Message Center.

To view messages from the Message Center browse:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:

   - **To access the Message Center browse as a teacher**, go to:

     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center

   - **To access the Message Center browse as an advisor**, go to:

     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center

   - **To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader**, go to:

     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click the arrow next to the message you wish to view, to expand the record. Each message has three sections: Message Detail, Unread Responses, and All Responses (Figure 5).

3. Click the arrow next to Unread Responses or All Responses.

The Message Detail section shows the content of the message that was posted. Unread responses to your message from students or guardians appear under Unread Responses, and are sorted by date. All responses to your message from students or guardians appear under All Response, and are grouped by sender.
Marking Messages as “Read”

When you respond to a message that you have received, the message is automatically marked as “read.” You can also manually mark messages you have received as “read.” There are two ways to manually mark messages as “read,” depending on whether the message was sent to you in response to a message you posted, or if the message was initiated by the student or guardian.

**NOTE** To allow students and guardians to initiate email messages to you, your Entity must select the Allow Guardians to Send Messages and Allow Students to Send Message options on the Message Center Entity Configuration screen (Student Management\Families\FM Setup\CF\EC).

**NOTE** Once you mark a message as “read,” you can’t mark it as “unread.”
To mark a message as “read,” that was sent in response to a message you sent:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:
   - To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click the arrow next to the message record.

3. Click the arrow next to Unread Responses.

4. Click Mark as Read next to the desired message.

Figure 6 - Expand the Unread Responses area to locate the Mark as Read option
To mark a message initiated by the guardian or student as “read”:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:
   - To access the Message Center browse as a *teacher*, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an *advisor*, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an *activity leader*, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click to highlight the message in the browse.

3. Click Mark as Read (Figure 7).

![Figure 7 - To mark a message originating from the guardian/student as read, use the Mark as Read button](image-url)
Replied to Messages
You can reply to messages that were sent to you. Students and guardians can initiate messages to you, as well as reply to messages that you post.

You can reply to a message in two different ways, depending on whether the message was sent to you in response to a message you posted, or if the message was initiated from the student or guardian.

To reply to a message that was sent in response to a message you sent:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:

   - To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center

   - To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center

   - To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click the arrow next to the message record.

3. Click the arrow next to Unread Responses, or All Responses.

4. Click Respond to this Message next to the message (Figure 8).

5. Configure the Respond to Message screen (Figure 9).

6. Click Save. Your response is sent.
Figure 8 - Expand the message you posted to reply to a student’s message

Figure 9 - The Respond to Message screen allows you to send a response to messages you've received
To reply to a message initiated by guardian or student:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:
   - To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click to highlight the message in the browse.

3. Click Respond to Selected Message (Figure 10).

4. Configure the Respond to Message screen (Figure 11).

5. Click Save. Your response is sent.
Once you reply to a message, your response appears in your Message Center. An icon of an envelope with a red arrow (Figure 12) appears, indicating that the displayed message is a response that you sent.

Figure 11 - Configure the Respond to Message screen to reply to a message initiated by student

Figure 12 - Once you respond to a message, your response appears in Message Center with a special icon
Editing Messages

You can edit the content of messages that you have posted. This can be useful if, for example, you make a spelling or typographical error.

You can’t edit some options, such as the Post Date or Expire Date, on a message that has a Post Date of today or earlier, because the message has already been posted and potentially viewed by students or guardians.

To edit a message:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:
   - To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click to highlight the message you wish to edit.

3. Click Edit.

4. Configure the Edit Class Message screen. For more information about the fields on this screen, see “Creating a New Message” (page 6).

5. Click Save.
Recalling Messages

Once you post a message, you can remove the message from Family and Student Access (so that it is no longer visible to students and guardians) by using the Recall option. You can then view the message in your Message Center, but it is no longer posted.

If you chose to send your message as an email, you can recall it if the email has not yet been sent. When you create an email in Message Center, the time the message is to be sent is defaulted to half an hour in the future. Therefore, if you do not change this time when you create the email, you have half an hour to recall the message so that the email is not sent.

| NOTE | You can’t recall messages that have been responded to, or emails that have already been sent. |

To recall a message:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:
   - To access the Message Center browse as a teacher, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an advisor, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center
   - To access the Message Center browse as an activity leader, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click to highlight the desired message.

3. Click Recall. The following message appears:
   “Are you sure you want to recall this message? The message will no longer appear in Family/Student Access.”

4. Click Yes.


**Un-Recalling Messages**

After you have recalled a message, it is no longer visible to students and guardians in Family and Student Access. The Recall button changes to Un-Recall. If you recall a message in error, you can make the message reappear by using the Un-Recall option.

To un-recall a message:

1. Depending on your role, follow one of the paths below:

   - To access the Message Center browse as a *teacher*, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Classes/Class Options/Message Center
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Gradebook/select Class/Other Access/Message Center

   - To access the Message Center browse as an *advisor*, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Advisor Access/My Students/Advisor Options/Message Center

   - To access the Message Center browse as an *activity leader*, go to:
     - Educator Access Plus/Teacher Access/My Activities/Message Center

2. Click to highlight the desired message.

3. Click Un-Recall. This option is *only* available for messages that have been recalled.
Understanding What Students and Guardians See

It’s helpful to understand what students and guardians see when communicating using Message Center. This section provides you with an overview of how your messages appear to students and guardians, how they can reply to messages that you have sent, and how they can create new messages.

You can post Message Center messages to the Home wall, the Calendar area, or both areas in Family and Student Access. Each area is explained in the sections below.

Home Wall Messages

Administration, Class, Activity, and Advisory Message Center messages all appear on the Home wall (Figure 13). By default, Message Center messages for all students in a family appear on a guardian’s Home wall in Family Access. Guardians can select specific children by clicking the down arrow next to All Students located in the header area.

Figure 13 - Message Center messages on the Family Access Home Wall
Each time you create a Message Center message, you can select whether guardians and students can respond to your messages. To allow guardians and students to respond to your Message Center message, select Allow parents to respond to this message and Allow students to respond to this message when you create the message. They can then respond by clicking the Reply link, as shown below (Figure 14).

![Family Access Home Wall message with the Reply link](image)

Figure 14 - Family Access Home Wall message with the Reply link
After the student or guardian composes their reply message, they must click the Post button (Figure 15) to send the reply.

Figure 15 - Message response from guardian that is ready to be posted
Your district can enable an option that allows students and guardians to initiate a message to you that is not directly associated with a class, advisory, or activity (Student Management\Families\FM Setup\CF\EC). When this option is enabled, a Post a message area appears at the top of their Home wall (Figure 16). They can create a message for a single teacher or advisor or for multiple teachers and or advisors. To view a list of teachers and advisors available to post a message to, the guardian and students must place their cursor in the To box. The staff names that are available for a guardian or student to select from are the student’s current year teachers, advisory, and activity leader.

After the guardians/students have finished their “initiated” message, they must click Post to send the message.
**Message Center Messages on Calendar**

You can select to post your Message Center message to the Calendar in Family and Student Access. When guardians and students click the Message Summary, the Message Details appear and they can view the entire message (Figure 17).

![Family Access Calendar with a Message Center message selected](Figure 17 - Family Access Calendar with a Message Center message selected)