

Strengthening Parent Voice and Connection Through the Parent Ambassador Model

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Strengthening parent communication, engagement, and community connection



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Acknowledgements

This program was graciously shared by Nathalie Laredo, Director of Admissions and Family Engagement at Hebrew Academy in Montreal, as a promising practice for strengthening family engagement in CLC schools, offering a clear and practical example of how schools can improve communication with families while fostering a more connected and supportive community.

Purpose of the Tool

The Parent Ambassador model creates a simple but powerful family engagement tool, similar to a “telephone tree” in your school community. Schools can make sure that every family receives timely, relevant information while also creating a safe, healthy channel for questions and concerns to be heard early and addressed quickly.

This guide walks you step by step through how to set up, launch, and sustain a Parent Ambassador program based on a successful model used at Hebrew Academy, with practical tips, sample messages, and ideas you can adapt to your own context.

All elements can be adapted for your context - simply update the information to reflect the purpose and scope of this program implementation at your school.

In a CLC context, The Parent Ambassador model strengthens family engagement, communication, and trust without adding heavy workload for staff. It aligns well with the Community Development Agent (CDA)¹ role as a connector and supports broader CLC goals around inclusion, participation, and community connection.

¹ In this document, “Community Development Agent” (CDA) refers to any person or team carrying responsibility for FOR SUBMISSION implementing the CLC Action Plan, regardless of official title

Purpose and Scope of the Parent Ambassador Program

Primary goals

What it is:

- A structured way to share school and class information reliably
- A modern “telephone tree” using simple messaging tools
- A way for parents to help keep others informed
- A space for parents to raise general questions and concerns, with ambassadors channeling concerns to the right staff person (e.g., teacher, administrator, CDA, or family engagement lead).

Important boundaries

It is not:

- A complaint forum or debate space
- A replacement for school governance or formal complaint processes
- A space where parents solve conflicts or interpret policy



Roles and Responsibilities

Parent Ambassadors

Do:

- Forward ready-to-share messages from the school
- Answer simple logistical questions if information is already provided
- Acknowledge concerns and route them privately to the school point person
- Help maintain a respectful, focused chat culture

Do not:

- Debate policies or discipline decisions
- Take sides in conflicts
- Attempt to resolve systemic issues independently

School Point Person

(Example: Family Engagement Lead, administrator, or CDA)

- Receives concerns from ambassadors
- Decides next steps (follow-up, clarification, escalation)
- Supports ambassadors and reinforces boundaries

Program Coordinator

(Example: school point person, administrator or CDA)

- Sets up structure and onboarding ambassadors
- Organizes orientation and check-ins
- Monitors the pilot and documents learnings

Note: The program coordinator and school point person can be the same person.

Step-by-Step Implementation Guide

STEP 1

Clarify the program's goals and boundaries

Possible goals:

Suggested success indicators:

- Fewer “I never got that message” issues
- Better preparedness for trips, deadlines, and events
- Increased volunteering or parent participation
- Reduced negativity in parent group chats

STEP 2

Choose the Communication Tool

Review current available options and consider the following:

- Cost to download and use (ideally free to download and use, without ads)
- Can work on wifi - no data plan needed (more accessible)
- Something widely used by families and/or easy to learn
- Easy group creation and message forwarding
- Separate from social media feeds

Set clear expectations:

- Participation is optional
- Phone numbers are visible to group members
- No screenshots or sharing outside the group
- No student-specific or sensitive personal information

Note: Consider an alternative method for families without smartphones or data access

STEP 3

Design the Structure (Hub and Spokes)

1. Central Hub

- Members: School Point Person + Program Coordinator + all Ambassadors
- Purpose: Share ready-to-forward school messages
- Recommended naming: [School Name] Parent Ambassadors 2025–26

2. Class Chats

- Members: Ambassador(s) + all parents/guardians in the class
- Purpose: Forward information, answer simple logistics, surface concerns
- Recommended naming: Grade 4 – Class A (School Name)

STEP 4

Select and Invite Parent Ambassadors

How many:

Start with 1 ambassador per class (2 if class is large or bilingual needs exist)

Who to look for:

- Calm, respectful communicators
- Comfortable messaging groups
- Representative of the school's diversity
- Not necessarily the "usual volunteers"

Invitation script:

We're piloting a Parent Ambassador program to help families stay informed and included. The role is light—mainly forwarding school messages and routing questions. Would you be open to trying this for your class?

STEP 5

Prepare Class Contact Lists

Provide ambassadors with:

- Class list and parent contact numbers (as permitted by privacy rules)
- Instructions for creating and naming the class chat
- Guidance on adding new families as they arrive

If sharing numbers is not possible, use an opt-in sign-up approach.

STEP 6

Host an Ambassador Orientation (30–45 minutes)

Explain:

- Purpose and boundaries of the role
- Message frequency and formatting
- Chat norms ("good vibes, logistics-focused")
- Escalation pathway for concerns
- Time expectations

Helpful copy-and-paste responses:

- "Thanks for raising this—I'll pass it along to the school so they can follow up."
- "Let's keep this chat for class information. Feel free to message me/[the appropriate person] privately with concerns."

STEP 7

Launch the Chats

1. Create the central Ambassador Hub and send a welcome message
2. Ambassadors create their class chats and post a short introduction
3. Decide whether to announce the program school-wide via newsletter



STEP 8

Set Message Flow and Frequency

Best practices:

- Bundle updates when possible
- Avoid multiple posts per day
- Use clear labels: [Action Needed] [Reminder] [Info] [Volunteer]

Ready-to-forward template:

- What this is about
- Who it's for
- Deadline or date
- Link or attachment
- School contact

STEP 9

How to Handle Escalation and Response

When a concern appears:

1. Ambassador acknowledges briefly in the chat
2. Ambassador messages the School Point Person privately with a short summary
3. School decides on follow-up (parent contact, clarification, escalation)

STEP 10

Recognize and Appreciate Ambassadors

Examples:

- Newsletter thank-you
- Coffee or appreciation gathering
- Certificate or small token

STEP 11

Monitor and Adjust

- Hold a short check-in after 3–4 weeks
- Gather informal feedback from ambassadors, parents, and staff
- Track simple indicators (message volume, escalations, participation)

Treat the first year as a pilot, and make any necessary adjustments to the startup guide and templates as needed.

Parent Ambassador Program Starter Kit

Purpose

To strengthen communication between school and families by ensuring all parents receive clear, timely, and consistent information, while building stronger school-community connections.

This supports:

- **Educational Success** (better-prepared students)
- **Community Vitality** (sense of belonging)
- **Institutional Completeness** (stronger family-school connections)

Structure

- One **Parent Ambassador per class**
- One **School Point Person** (e.g., CDA, admin, or staff)
- Optional **Ambassador Hub** (monthly or informal check-ins)

Roles

Parent Ambassador

- Shares key school/class information
- Keeps communication clear and respectful
- Redirects concerns (does not solve them) forwarding

School Point Person

- Supports ambassadors
- Clarifies messaging
- Handles escalations

Parents

- Stay informed
- Ask questions appropriately
- Respect group norms

Recruiting Ambassadors: Invitation Script

Hi everyone,

We're looking for one volunteer parent from this class to act as a Parent Ambassador.

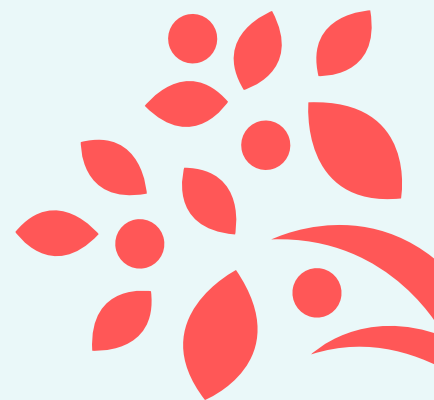
This role helps make sure all families:

Receive important updates
Stay informed about events and reminders
Feel more connected to the school

This is a communications role, not a leadership or decision-making position, and is open to anyone who is interested in helping us share information with families of students in this class.

If you're interested, please reply here or message me directly.

Thank you for helping strengthen our school community!



Message Templates for Ambassadors

TOPIC	TEMPLATE / SCRIPT
Parent Intro Script	Hello everyone, I'm [Name], your Parent Ambassador for this class. This group is here to: • Share reminders and important updates • Help everyone stay informed • Support a positive class community This is not a space for complaints or urgent issues. If something comes up, I can help direct you to the right person. Looking forward to working together this year!
Chat Guidelines	Group Guidelines • Keep messages clear and relevant • Be respectful and constructive • No sharing of student-specific or sensitive information • Avoid negative or critical discussions in the group • Use private messages or school channels for concerns • No screenshots or forwarding messages outside the group
Ready-to-Forward Message from the school	Hi everyone, Just sharing a quick update from the school: [Insert message] If you have questions, feel free to reach out. For anything specific or sensitive, please contact the school directly. Thanks!
Opt-Out Option	Hi, If you prefer not to be part of this group, no problem at all. You will still receive important school information through regular channels. Just let me know and I'll remove you.

TOPIC	TEMPLATE / SCRIPT
Negativity Handling	Hi everyone, Let's keep this space focused on helpful information and updates. If there are concerns, it's best to share them privately so they can be addressed properly. Thanks for helping keep this group positive and useful.
Privacy Expectations	Quick reminder: To protect everyone's privacy: • Please don't share screenshots • Avoid posting anything about individual students • Keep discussions general and respectful Thank you!
Non-Smartphone Families	Hi, If you know a family who may not have access to this chat, please let me know. We'll make sure they receive the same information through another format.
Ambassador Away / Coverage	Hi everyone, I'll be unavailable from [date] to [date]. During that time, [Name] will share any important updates. Thanks!



Parent FAQ

What is a Parent Ambassador?

A Parent Ambassador is a volunteer parent from your child's class who helps share important school and class information so no one misses updates.

What kind of messages will I see in the class chat?

Mostly short, practical information like reminders, deadlines, field trips, special events, and volunteer opportunities.

Is this a space to raise concerns or complaints?

You're welcome to raise concerns, but the goal is to keep the group chat calm and helpful. If you have a concern, the Parent Ambassador can pass it privately to the school so it's handled appropriately.

Do I have to participate?

No. Participation is optional. If you prefer not to be in the chat, the school will continue to share key information through regular channels.

Will everyone see my phone number?

Yes. Group chats show participants' phone numbers. Please only join if you're comfortable with that.

What about privacy?

Please don't share screenshots or forward messages outside the group. Student-specific or sensitive information should never be posted in the chat.

What if I don't have WhatsApp or a smartphone?

The school will make sure important information is also shared in another way (email, paper, or phone).

Who do I contact if there's an issue?

You can message the Parent Ambassador privately, or contact the school directly using the usual channels.

Why is the school doing this?

Because when communication is clear and timely, families feel less stressed, children are better prepared, and the school community feels more connected.

Teacher FAQ

Why are we using Parent Ambassadors?

To reduce missed messages, limit confusion, and keep parent communication calm and organized—without increasing teacher workload.

Will I be expected to monitor parent chats?

No. Teachers are not expected to be part of class parent chats or to monitor them.

What if a concern about my class comes up?

Concerns are routed privately by the Parent Ambassador to the school's designated point person, who decides next steps and involves you if needed.

Does this replace direct communication with parents?

No. Teachers should continue using established channels (email, meetings, platforms) for academic or student-specific communication.

What kinds of messages go through ambassadors?

Logistics, reminders, events, and general class or school information—not individual student issues.

What if misinformation spreads in a chat?

The school point person can clarify information through the Ambassador Hub so a clear message is shared back to families.

Will this increase expectations on teachers to respond faster?

No. One goal of the model is to protect teacher time by routing concerns appropriately and avoiding group-chat escalation.

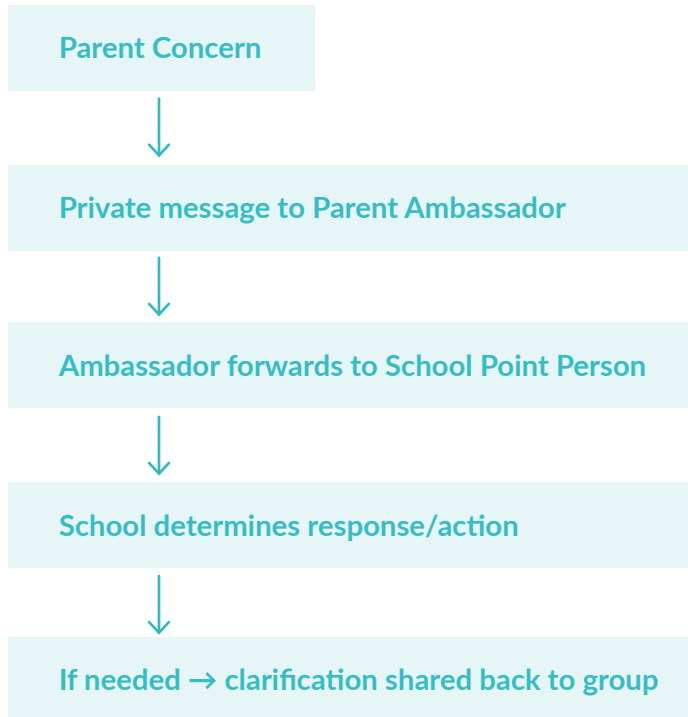
How does this help classrooms?

Better-informed families mean fewer last-minute issues, more prepared students, and a more positive home-school relationship.

Who supports the ambassadors?

The Program Coordinator and school leadership provide guidance, boundaries, and backup so teachers are not put in uncomfortable positions.

Escalation Pathway: What to Do



Important constraint: Ambassadors do NOT interpret or resolve issues, they simply act as a communication bridge between the school and the families

Note: You can edit this to reflect the decisions made at your school. so teachers are not put in uncomfortable positions.

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