

SEPTEMBER

The Family Engagement Planner



A Month-to-Month Guide Full of Ideas,
Templates, and Routines That Work



ParentSquare

Introduction: Why Family Engagement Matters



ParentSquare began with a simple, deeply held belief: **every family—no matter their schedule, language, or background—deserves to feel connected to their child’s school life.**

What started as a grassroots effort in just four local schools has since grown into a platform that supports over 20 million family-teacher connections across the country.

But along the way, I’ve learned something important: **technology alone isn’t enough.** True family engagement doesn’t happen by accident—it takes intention. It takes systems, routines, and a shared commitment to making families feel seen, heard, and valued.

That’s why I started this guide.

Whether you’re a district leader, a school administrator, or a teacher in the classroom, my hope is that this month-by-month roadmap helps you move beyond one-way updates—and into real, ongoing partnership with the families you serve.

And like ParentSquare itself, this is a **living guide**—built to evolve with your feedback, questions, and ideas.

Inside, you’ll find templates, tools, and practical ideas—but more than that, you’ll find heart. Because our goal isn’t just to communicate better. **It’s to build something better—together.**



Anu Vaid
Founder & President



Table of Contents

**SEPTEMBER: BUILDING ATTENDANCE HABITS EARLY
+ SUSTAINING CONNECTION & ROUTINES 4**

 September Checklist 5

 Spotlight: Planning Back-to-School Night 7

 Spotlight: Getting Ready for Parent-Teacher Conferences 8

 Where to Communicate What 9

 Data to Monitor 10

 Reflection Prompts 11

SEPTEMBER APPENDIX: SAMPLES & TOOLS 12

 Sample September Campaign: “Every Day Counts” 12

 Sample Messages & Posts 12

 District Post: Kickoff Message 12

 Teacher Post: Weekly Classroom Update 13

 Social Media Post 13

 Community Groups: Building Belonging Beyond the Classroom 14

 School-Wide & District-Wide 14

 Academic & Enrichment 14

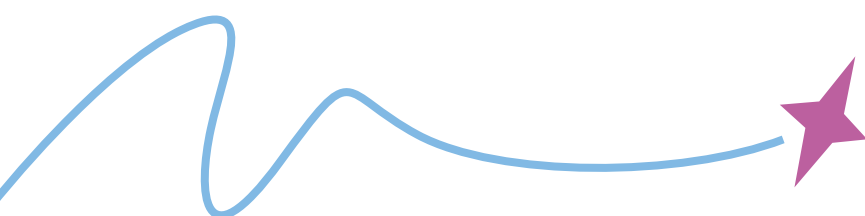
 Athletics & Activities 14

 Grade-Level & Classroom 15

 Parent & Caregiver Support 15

 Event & Volunteer Coordination 15

 Looking Ahead: From Daily Routines to Friday Night Lights 16



September: Building Attendance Habits Early + Sustaining Connection & Routines

September is all about **establishing rhythms**: daily attendance, weekly communications, and trusted routines between home and school. It's also **Attendance Awareness Month**, making it the ideal time to build habits that will impact student outcomes all year.

Your Goal for September

- Kick off attendance awareness
- Launch group and volunteer engagement
- Share classroom and extracurricular logistics
- Plan and announce back-to-school nights
- Celebrate early wins to sustain momentum
- Make sure families know how to communicate with teachers/schools
- Get ready for parent-teacher conferences

Note: Many of the tools and templates linked in this chapter are available to ParentSquare customers through our knowledge base. [Reach out here](#) to request a preview or learn more.



September Checklist

The September Checklist gives you quick, actionable steps to keep attendance high, strengthen family connections, and establish rhythms that will last all year. Use it as your month-at-a-glance guide for district, school, and classroom priorities.

Area	Key Actions	What customers say...
Attendance	□ Send district-wide message about Attendance Awareness Month □ Launch classroom or school attendance challenges - download our posters for your sites! □ Share family tips for healthy routines Stretch goals: □ Host a short “Attendance Pledge” assembly or video for students/families □ Partner with local businesses for attendance prizes (coffee, snacks, event tickets)	<i>“Make it personal and positive — celebrate staff and students often.”</i> – Mike Vuckovich, Superintendent at Windber Area SD, PA (1,200 students)
Groups & Volunteering	□ Promote opt-in Community Groups (PTA, athletics, celebrations) □ Run a volunteer drive with classroom or event support sign-ups □ Show teachers how to use ParentSquare to collect needed classroom supplies with sign-up lists	<i>“Groups have been incredibly useful — advisors, coaches, and parents rely on them.”</i> – Kim Nidy, Director of Technology at North Canton City, OH (4,400 students)

Area	Key Actions	What customers say...
Field Trips & Fees	- Use Forms & Pay to collect permissions and payments - Highlight upcoming field trips in newsletters and classroom posts. Post to your calendar - Use ParentSquare Pay to collect field trip fees, raise money with fundraisers, or even annual tech payments	<i>“The platform’s translation features are invaluable, ensuring no one’s left out. Coordinating volunteer signups, permissions for field trips, and setting up appointments has never been simpler.”</i> – David Paszkiewicz, Director of Communications and Outreach at La Canada Unified School District (4,000 students)
Parent Voice	- Send quick family surveys to establish a baseline. Ask what’s working and what’s missing - Share results and actions taken in newsletters or a thank-you post	<i>“We have observed significant increases in stakeholder engagement and satisfaction as evidenced by survey data.”</i> – Anthony Johnson, Chief Communications Officer at Montgomery County, TN (39,000 students)
Communication Cadence	- Reinforce “District Tuesdays” and “School Thursdays” - Encourage classroom-level weekly/biweekly posts	<i>“Be cautious about overcommunicating — target the right people with the right messages.”</i> – Susan Moore, Director of IT and Curriculum at Meriden School District, CT (8,600 students)



Spotlight: Planning Back-to-School Night

Back-to-School Night is more than an event—it’s a chance to build relationships that will sustain communication all year. Use these tips to make sure families leave feeling informed, welcomed, and ready to partner with you.

District	School	Teacher
□ Share all school dates in a single ParentSquare post or newsletter. □ Highlight child care, translation and accessibility options. □ Use Smart Sites to feature dates and locations on every school homepage.	□ Send a save-the-date + day-of reminder via ParentSquare. □ Create a “Welcome Table” group of volunteers to greet families and direct them to classrooms □ At the welcome table, provide ParentSquare assistance for app downloads (Posters and QR codes available here). High school students can help with this. □ Use a check-in form to update family contact info.	□ Schedule a post with your classroom agenda and any handouts so families can access them later. □ Highlight ways families can support learning at home. □ Post a thank-you message with event highlights/photos.



Spotlight: Getting Ready for Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-teacher conferences are one of the most important engagement moments of the year. Laying the groundwork now ensures smooth scheduling, stronger conversations, and higher attendance when conference season arrives.

District	School	Teacher
□ Post conference dates early to ParentSquare. □ Provide sign-up templates with translation built in. □ Train authorized staff on Secure Docs for sharing progress reports.	□ Create a conference sign-up post or form, organized by grade or teacher. □ Plan for child care, interpreters or bilingual volunteers. □ Remind staff to follow up with families who can't attend, or offer online meetings.	□ Draft a simple pre-conference survey to gather family input on student strengths, challenges, and questions. □ Prepare digital and printed student work samples in advance. □ Create a 1-1 DM with every parent where it's easy to reply at any time. This helps as a conversation starter, and you can share any pre-reading or resources.



Where to Communicate What

Knowing which message belongs in which channel keeps communications clear, timely, and targeted. This guide shows how to match your content with the right delivery method to reach families where they are.

Channel	Examples This Month	What customers say...
ParentSquare Posts	- Weekly classroom updates - Attendance tips and reminders Volunteer asks and RSVP forms - Celebrations of effort and improvement - Homework assignments and even answer keys or ways to help their student. Parents appreciate ways they can help their children succeed. - Photos are a great way to encourage parents to get the app as you need to be logged in to see them.	<i>“Families know ParentSquare is our official source for updates — that trust is invaluable.”</i> – Rose Pearson, Superintendent at Carrizo Springs CISD, TX (1,900 students)
ParentSquare Newsletters	- Upcoming events and field trips “Did you know?” ParentSquare features - Attendance goals and celebrations “Groups to Join” section with links	<i>“I love Studio Editor and have already started building templates for all my groups and clubs. What a great way to share info! It’s like social media for schools. I woke up and couldn’t wait to take a peek at who read my posts.”</i> – Jay McBride, Teacher At Osceola, FL (74,000 students)
Social Media	- Highlight kindness, attendance, or volunteerism - Share club/athletics photos and “Meet the Team” intros - Promote family engagement nights or conferences	<i>“I post to ParentSquare and social media at the same time to save time and ensure consistency.”</i> – Tyler Keefe, Digital Communications at Nampa School District, ID (13,400 students)

Channel	Examples This Month	What customers say...
School Website / Smart Sites	- Update calendars and contact info - Add links to ParentSquare help or group join pages - Post short explainer videos (ParentSquare tips, group overviews) - Promote attendance campaigns and conference timelines	<i>“With Smart Sites, we share newsletters across all school homepages — consistent and easy.”</i> – Lisa Jones, Communications Specialist at Oak Harbor School District, WA (5,400 students)

Data to Monitor

The right metrics help you see what’s working, where to adjust, and how your efforts are impacting attendance and engagement. Track these data points to measure progress and guide next steps.

Metric	Key Actions	What customers say...
Contactability Status & App Downloads	Reach and inclusion	<i>“Parents are opening the messages and reading them, which we weren’t able to track before. When we first started rolling out ParentSquare, contactability was around 70%. Now, we’re sitting at 100%.”</i> – Brad Perkins, Director of Public Safety and Public Relations at Dover Area School District, PA (3,200 students)
Group Membership Growth	Engagement in interest-based communities	<i>“Community groups have been a game changer — even for residents without kids in school.”</i> – Sondra Whalen, Director of Student Programs and Communications at Sherrill City School District, NY (1,800 students)
Teacher Posts + DM Usage (school dashboards / district dashboards)	Are all teachers utilizing direct connection with families?	<i>“With DMs, I engage more freely with parents and receive more responses than I did with emails. I am very excited about the new read recipients update that has been rolled out for Direct Messages, as this will help to increase our communication reach.”</i> – Abigail Bedard, teacher, Worcester, MA (24,350, students)

Metric	Key Actions	What customers say...
Attendance Trends	Measure campaign impact to better student outcomes	<i>“When our child welfare and attendance clerks log into the Attendance Plus dashboard, they can see right away which families need intervention. Having the attendance information and data in one place has been a huge help for them.”</i> – Michelle Ryan, Lead Data Integrity Specialist, South Whittier SD, CA (2,250 students)
% of families attending back-to-school nights	Gauge event success and engagement	<i>“Parents love this night—it’s the Super Bowl of family engagement. Big turnout, big energy, and the perfect way to start the year strong.”</i> – Your Name, Your District (lots of engaged families)

Reflection Prompts

- Have I set the tone for improved attendance this year?
- Did we launch Community Groups effectively?
- Are volunteers being welcomed and utilized?
- Are classroom posts helping families feel informed?
- Is there consistency across schools and teachers?

Closing Wisdom:

“Join all the ParentSquare trainings you can — there’s always a new way to engage families.”

– Sondra Whalen, Director of Student Programs and Communications at Sherrill City School District, NY (1,800 students)

September Appendix: Samples & Tools

Sample September Campaign: “Every Day Counts”

Run a 3-week attendance campaign featuring:

- **School-wide goal:** 95%+ attendance
- **Onsite poster:** Use these [Canva templates](#) to promote in schools
- **Classroom shout-outs:** Highest weekly attendance
- **Incentive idea:** Prize drawing for perfect attendance
- **Message rhythm:**
 - ▶ Week 1: District kickoff + family tip sheet
 - ▶ Week 2: Teacher posts with class updates
 - ▶ Week 3: Celebration photos + post to social

Sample Messages & Posts

District Post: Kickoff Message

Subject: September is Attendance Awareness Month

Body:

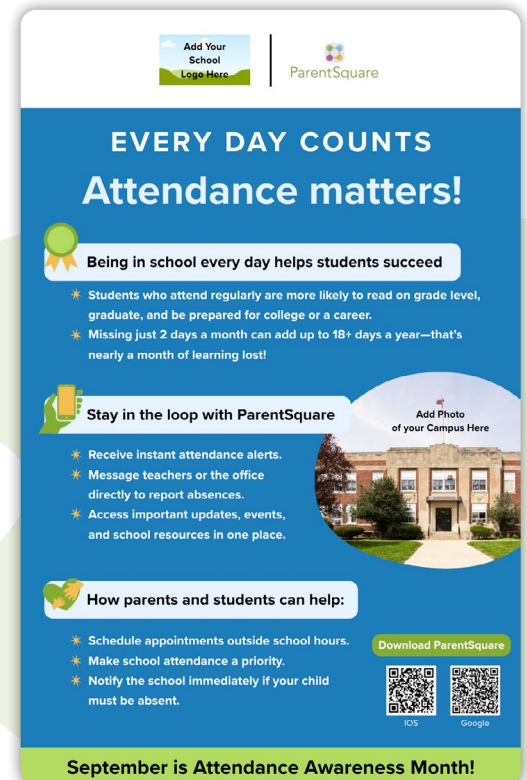
Welcome to a new month of learning and growing!
September is Attendance Awareness Month, and we’re working together to help every student build great habits.

Coming to school every day—even in the first few weeks—helps students stay on track academically, socially, and emotionally.

You can help by:

- Setting a morning routine
- Avoid scheduling appointments during school hours
- Help your child find one thing to look forward to each day, so school feels like a place they belong

Let’s work together—every day counts!



Teacher Post: Weekly Classroom Update

Subject: This Week in [Class Name]!

Body:

Hi Families!

Here's what we're working on this week:

- 📖 Reading: Main Idea & Details
- 🧮 Math: Place Value
- 🎨 Art: Family Portraits

✅ **Reminders:**

- Field trip forms due Friday (check your ParentSquare feed)
- Our class is part of the Attendance Challenge!
- Thanks to the [Volunteer Name] who helped organize supplies!

Looking forward to another great week!



Pro Tip:

"Include a playful element — I hide a stuffed animal in each classroom photo to spark conversations."

— Lisa Debo, First Grade Teacher at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, NC (144,000 students)

Social Media Post

🏆 Shout-out to Ms. Lopez's 2nd grade class for 100% attendance this week! Let's keep the momentum going.

💬 What helps your family get out the door on time? Share your morning routine tips below 🕒👉

#EveryDayCounts #AttendanceMatters #ParentSquareFamilies

Community Groups: Building Belonging Beyond the Classroom

Community Groups on ParentSquare are a powerful way to keep families connected, informed, and engaged all year long. Whether it's a club, a volunteer team, or a support network, groups give parents, caregivers, and staff a dedicated space to share updates, coordinate events, and celebrate successes.

This month, as you focus on building attendance habits and sustaining routines, consider creating or promoting groups that help families feel welcomed, informed, and part of the school community from day one. Use the ideas below to spark inspiration—then tailor them to your school's unique culture and needs.

School-Wide & District-Wide

- **Attendance Champions** – Share tips, challenges, and celebrate perfect attendance classes.
- **New Families Welcome Group** – Provide resources, introductions, and Q&A for families new to the district.
- **Parent Ambassadors / PTA** – Parents who help recruit volunteers, share updates, and act as peer points of contact.
- **Family Resource Hub** – Central spot for community services, food banks, and after-school programs.

Academic & Enrichment

- **STEM & Robotics Club** – Updates, sign-ups, competition info.
- **Arts & Music Boosters** – Share rehearsal schedules, showcase performances, recruit help.
- **Reading Buddies** – Organize reading volunteer schedules and share literacy resources.
- **Mathletes & Academic Competitions** – Event reminders, results, and study tips.

Athletics & Activities

- **Athletic Booster Club** – Coordinate volunteers for concessions, post schedules, and celebrate wins.
- **Team-Specific Groups** (e.g., JV Soccer, Varsity Basketball) – Rosters, travel details, and practice updates.
- **Performing Arts** – Drama club, school musical, dance team communications.
- **Outdoor Education** – Field trip updates, camping gear lists, and parent chaperone sign-ups.

Grade-Level & Classroom

- **Kindergarten Families** – Share milestone celebrations, readiness tips, and early learning resources.
- **Senior Class of 2026** – Graduation planning, cap & gown ordering, senior trip details.
- **Middle School Families** – Focus on transitions, study habits, and extracurricular opportunities.

Parent & Caregiver Support

- **Homework Help** – Share strategies, tutoring resources, and online tools.
- **Special Education Family Network** – Provide resources, events, and peer support for parents of students with IEPs/504s.
- **English Learner Families** – Share translated resources, tips, and events in multiple languages.

Event & Volunteer Coordination

- **Back-to-School Night Volunteers** – Coordinate set-up, greeters, and refreshments.
- **Field Trip Chaperones** – Collect permissions, collect fees, post itineraries, and share photos.
- **Community Celebrations & Fairs** – Promote and recruit help for seasonal events.
- **School Garden Crew** – Organize planting days, watering schedules, and harvest celebrations.



Looking Ahead: From Daily Routines to Friday Night Lights

September is about finding the rhythm—establishing consistent attendance, building communication habits, and ensuring every family feels connected. The systems you’ve put in place this month—whether it’s weekly classroom updates, group engagement, or attendance challenges—are the foundation for everything that follows.

In October, we’ll take that strong base and expand it beyond the classroom. Sports seasons, arts performances, and club activities will be in full swing, offering powerful opportunities to deepen engagement through shared experiences. You’ll see how ParentSquare can become the “team app” for your coaches, advisors, and sponsors—streamlining updates, sign-ups, payments, and celebrations, while making families feel like part of the action.

From attendance to athletics, your community connection will keep growing—one routine, one event, and one proud moment at a time.



Have Questions or Ideas?

Please submit to support@parentsquare.com with the subject: **Family Engagement Guide Question/Idea**. Thanks.

