



## Schools and CommuniShare:

The community of an elementary or secondary school (whether public or private) could be considered to include students, teachers, staff and parents. Schools tend to have an interest in maximizing available resources (since they are perpetually strapped for cash), and in building a strong sense of community. One particular challenge in community building is the involvement of parents. Parents may be motivated to contribute to the betterment of the school, but are often unavailable during school hours, too busy to get involved, or afraid that a small commitment will become too large for comfort. Being called by the Home and School Association to help with the bake sale is sometimes looked upon with dread. There are a number of ways in which CommuniShare can enhance both educational resources and community building efforts in schools...

- Students use CommuniShare as an opportunity for, and exercise in, self-expression.
- A plethora of additional knowledge and experience can be made available to both students and teachers for furthering their respective educational endeavors.
- Parents can make a meaningful and personal contribution to the betterment of the school under their own terms, and within their own comfort level. By establishing conditions under which they might be prepared to share their knowledge, skills and experience (e.g., perhaps they only want to respond to emails), parents can control the timing, level of commitment and manner in which they are willing to contribute to the school community. (And, of course, they can modify or delete their Entry(ies) at any time.)
- Teachers and staff are able to reveal additional aspects of their identities.
- CommuniShare offers all staffmembers—from janitor to principal—the opportunity to participate equally.
- Parents can also use CommuniShare to learn about and connect with one another, expanding their own social network and enhancing the school community at the same time.

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