

CASE STUDY

Poinciana High School Uses Remind to Increase Attendance

POINCIANA HIGH SCHOOL is a four-year public school serving 1,800 students in Osceola County, Florida. In 2013, Michael Meechin spearheaded a new initiative transitioning Poinciana's Student Services Department from their clunky content management system onto Remind. Since this change, students in the pilot group have improved their attendance by 60%.

Complex Obstacles

Prior to Remind, Poinciana's Student Services Department was using traditional tools to communicate with students: email, phone calls, and a popular content management system (CMS). When Michael Meechin joined as Assistant Principal in 2013, his goal was to empower the Student Services Department to improve attendance among a pilot group of chronically absent students.

Michael soon discovered two primary obstacles. First, Poinciana was a Title I school, and many students' parents worked at least two jobs. This meant parents weren't always home in the morning to help students wake up, catch a bus at 5:45, and make it to school by 7:15.

Second, feedback from Poinciana's Student Services Department revealed that their traditional communication tools were not effective; students didn't check email regularly, and individualized phone calls were time-consuming and usually went straight to voicemail. Additionally, their CMS was implemented at the district level, making it difficult to use for personalized, one-to-one communication.

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I could use our content management system to connect with students, but bottom line: it's not as user-friendly as Remind.” — Michael Meechin

It became clear to Michael that their communication tools were not designed for today's students, who check their phones constantly but are unlikely to answer calls from numbers they don't recognize. Facing demoralization from his team, who were working long hours with few results, Michael began searching for a better solution.

An Innovative Solution

Michael had experience using Remind at three previous high schools and in many different positions: classroom teacher, college counselor, and testing coordinator. Shortly after joining Poinciana as Assistant Principal, he read a [blog post](#) about a high school near Chicago that used Remind to decrease truancy by 20%. He was inspired to implement a similar system at his school and expand his “no excuses” mindset to student attendance.

When Michael decided that the Student Services Department was going to adopt Remind as a communications tool, it was easy to get his staff on board. Where traditional content management systems rely on an array of different features that are difficult to learn, Remind is designed to help schools get started quickly and keep them focused on communication without changing their existing workflows.

Building Positive Relationships with Students

Michael and his team knew their goal was to get students moving in the morning, but they wanted to go beyond a standard wake-up call. “We’re in the business of building kids up,” he says. “So we decided to send inspirational messages.” These messages included motivational quotes, invitations to grab a snack in the cafeteria, or requests to check in face to face — anything that conveyed how excited the Poinciana staff was to see them that day.

One immediate benefit was the amount of time saved by using the [Schedule](#) feature. “The beauty of Remind is that we can schedule messages in advance so they go out each day,” Michael says. “Our attendance support coach writes and schedules all of the messages for the week on Mondays or Fridays, whatever works best for her workflow.” Additionally, Remind gives students the option of receiving messages by text or smartphone notification, allowing Michael’s team to reach all students with a mobile device — not just those with a smartphone.



When kids fall down, we pick them up and keep it moving. That's just how we operate.” — Michael Meechin

Messages that Improve Attendance

Now Principal at Poinciana, Michael has seen attendance for the pilot group of students increase by 60% since implementing Remind in the Student Services Department. He’s also seen relationships between students and staff improve, a result of using personalized communication on a regular basis. “The students we work with enjoy receiving these messages,” he says. “They could just unenroll, but they don’t.”

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