



A little less back-and-forth

A Little Help Moving Requests Forward | For school business managers and their teams

Useful words, when you need them.

You already spend plenty of time keeping people informed. These messages offer a starting point for the everyday replies that can take longer to write than they should: a missing detail, an update, or a change of plan.

BORROW THE WORDING THAT SOUNDS LIKE YOU

Copy a message into your usual email or request system. Replace the bracketed details, trim what you do not need, and keep your district's familiar terms. No new form or tracking system is needed.

Pages 2-3 | Ask once, keep people informed

Messages for missing information, an uncertain estimate, review status, and delays.

Page 4 | Handle changes and close the loop

Wording for a changed request and a confirmed outcome, including an option when a request cannot move forward.

Page 5 | Follow one request from start to review

A fictional classroom-materials request shows specific questions, a useful reply, and a clear status update.

Page 6 | Keep a few shorter replies handy

Brief follow-up, timing, and handoff messages you can adapt for everyday use.



A little more information

Two adaptable messages | Ask only for details that are still needed

01 | A FEW MISSING DETAILS

Subject: A quick question about [request / reference]

Hi [name],

Thanks for sending this over. To help with the next step, could you add [specific detail] and [specific detail] to [existing record / reply]? This will help us [brief reason]. If they are already recorded somewhere, a link is perfect.

If possible, could you send that by [date] so we can [next step]? If that timing is difficult, let me know and we can check the options.

02 | AN ESTIMATE THAT IS STILL TAKING SHAPE

Subject: Checking the estimate for [request / reference]

Hi [name],

I see [amount] listed for [item / activity]. Is that a planning estimate or based on a current quote? If you have one, please add the quote or source to [record]. It would also help to know whether [delivery / setup / ongoing costs, as relevant] are included.

If the cost is still unknown, that is useful to know too. We can note what needs checking before the request goes to [review step].

An optional softer opening

"I may have missed this in the notes - could you point me to ...?" works well when the information might already exist.



An update without a promise

Use a date you can meet for the next update, even when the outcome is not yet known

03 | READY FOR REVIEW

Subject: An update on [request / reference]

Hi [name],

We have the details needed for [next review step], and [request] is now with [reviewing role / team]. It is awaiting a decision; it has not yet been approved.

I will check back and update you by [date], even if the review is still underway. If the need or timing changes before then, please add a note to [record / contact route].

04 | A DELAY, WITH A NEXT STEP

Subject: A timing update for [request / reference]

Hi [name],

A quick update: [specific step] is taking longer than expected because [confirmed, shareable reason]. We do not yet have a confirmed [decision / completion] date.

[Role / team] is checking [next action]. I will update you by [date]. If this affects [event / service / deadline], please let me know the impact so we can check what options are available through our usual process.

WHEN THE REASON IS NOT YET CLEAR

Try: "I am still checking what is holding up this step and will update you by [date]." There is no need to guess or speak for another team.



When the plan changes

Keep the current version and the actual decision easy to find

05 | A CHANGE TO AN EXISTING REQUEST

Subject: Confirming the change to [request / reference]

Hi [name],

Thanks for the update. I have noted the proposed change from [original scope] to [revised scope]. Could you confirm [remaining question, if any] in [record]?

We will check how the change affects cost, timing, and any review needed. The revised request is not yet approved. I will update you by [date]; please use [record / version] for the latest details.

06 | A CONFIRMED OUTCOME

Subject: The latest decision on [request / reference]

Hi [name],

[Authorized role] confirmed [exact decision and scope] on [date]. The decision is recorded in [approved record].

The next step is [action], with [agreed owner]. [What the recipient needs to do, or "No further information is needed from you at this stage."] I will share [next update] by [date, if applicable]. Thanks for helping us pull the details together.

IF IT CANNOT MOVE FORWARD

Replace the decision line with: "[Authorized role] confirmed that this request cannot move forward [at this time / as submitted] because [confirmed reason]. [Available next step, if one exists]." Avoid implying an appeal, funding, or future approval is guaranteed.



One request, from unclear to ready

Fictional example | Names, reference, amounts, and dates are illustrative

THE STARTING POINT | REQUEST R-218

A department colleague writes: "We need more project supplies for the science activity next month. Around \$300. Can this be sorted?"

THE BUSINESS OFFICE REPLY | MONDAY, OCTOBER 5

"Thanks, Morgan. Could you add the item list and quantities, what is already available, and the date the supplies are needed to R-218? Is \$300 an estimate or based on a quote? A source link is fine. If you can send this by Wednesday, October 7, we can prepare it for Friday's review."

THE COLLEAGUE'S RESPONSE | WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7

"The activity is October 26; supplies are needed by October 22. We checked existing stock. R-218 now lists 12 additional reusable kits at \$20 each, plus \$18 delivery: \$258 total quoted. Quote Q-17 is attached. We have the other materials. These are the only additional costs shown in the quote."

THE STATUS UPDATE | THURSDAY, OCTOBER 8

"Thanks, Morgan. The item list, inventory note, and quote are now in R-218. The \$258 quoted total is ready for the next review; it is not spending approval. The business office will check the quote terms and applicable requirements as part of our normal process. I will update you after Friday's review, even if a decision is still pending."

What became clearer?

The need, quantity, existing stock, cost source, required date, current status, and next update. The review still decides whether and how the request can proceed.



A few shorter replies to keep handy

Copy these into your existing templates if they would save you time

A GENTLE FOLLOW-UP

Subject: Following up on [reference]

Hi [name], just checking whether you have had a chance to add [missing detail]. We need it for [next step]. If the request has changed or is no longer needed, a quick note is enough. Otherwise, would [date] work for an update?

WHEN THE NEEDED DATE IS GETTING CLOSE

Subject: Timing for [reference]

Hi [name], I see this is needed by [date]. Could you share what would be affected if it arrives later? We cannot confirm that timing yet, but the context will help [role / team] review the available options. I will update you by [date].

A HANDOFF TO A COLLEAGUE

Subject: Your contact for [reference]

Hi [name], [colleague / role] has agreed to take the next step on this request: [action]. The current notes are in [record], so you should not need to resend them. [Colleague / role] will update you by [agreed date].

Before sending, a quick personal touch

Replace every bracket. Check that the status is current, the owner has agreed, and the update date is realistic. Keep private details in your approved systems and link to the existing record where practical.

Original Commerce Street Cares message templates. Adapt to your district's process; these messages do not authorize purchases or replace required reviews or records.