

How to Create a Google Form that Emails Parents about their Child's Day

bit.ly/familyupdates

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Video Tutorial: bit.ly/updateswithformmulevideo

Basic tutorial on formMule: bit.ly/howtouseformmule

Part 1: Organization

1. Create a folder in your drive called “Family Updates” or something like that.

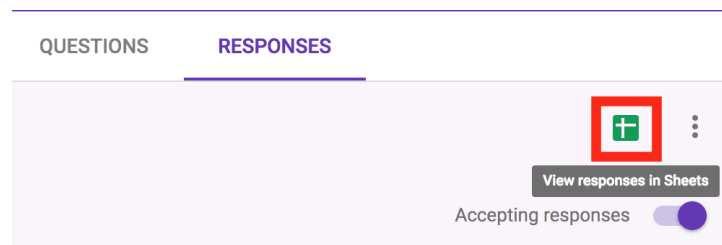
Part 2: Create the Google Form

1. Inside the “Family Updates” folder, create a [basic google form](#) to track the events of the day. [This is a sample](#) of what the form looks like. [Click here](#) to make a copy of the form.

Keep the live link to the form **private**. If students accidentally fill out the form, an email will be sent to a child's parent stating that homework hasn't been completed.

Part 3: Create the Spreadsheet

1. On the Responses tab, click the Sheet icon to view the responses.

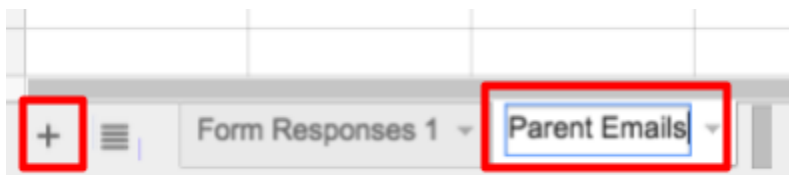


2. In the Form Responses tab, add in 3 additional columns:

- Student First Name
- Parent Email 1
- Parent Email 2

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1	Timestamp	When	Student	Description of Event/Incident	Additional Information	Student First Name	Parent Email 1	Parent Email 2
2								

3. Add another tab. Rename it “Parent Emails” or “Family Emails”.



4. Use the following headers:

- Student Full Name
- Student First Name
- Student Last Name
- Parent Email 1
- Parent Email 2

Student Full Name				
1	Student Full Name	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Parent Email 1
2				Parent Email 2

5. In column A, input or paste in a list of your students' full names.

*****Add your own name in at the end.**

	A
1	Student Full Name
2	Alice Jones
3	Ben Kinder
4	Carly Simon
5	David Goodman
6	Elise Davidson
7	Farah Parin
8	Kim Pollishuke

7. Drag the formula down to the rest of the empty cells for each student in the class.

fx | =SPLIT(A2, " ")

	A	B	C
1	Student Full Name	Student First Name	Student Last Name
2	Alice Jones	Alice	Jones
3	Ben Kinder	Ben	Kinder
4	Carly Simon	Carly	Simon
5	David Goodman	David	Goodman
6	Elise Davidson	Elise	Davidson
7	Farah Parin	Farah	Parin
8	Kim Pollishuke	Kim	Pollishuke

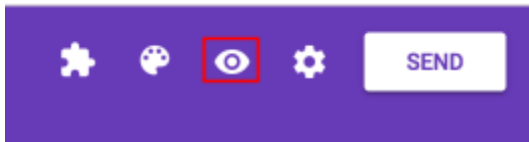
****This will be helpful later when you are preparing your automatic emails to parents.*

8. Fill in the parent email addresses for each student in the last two columns on this tab.

***For the sake of this exercise, I'm using my own email addresses.*

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Student Full Name	Student First Name	Student Last Name	Parent Email 1	Parent Email 2
2	Alice Jones	Alice	Jones	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca
3	Ben Kinder	Ben	Kinder	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca
4	Carly Simon	Carly	Simon	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca
5	David Goodman	David	Goodman	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca
6	Elise Davidson	Elise	Davidson	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca
7	Farah Parin	Farah	Parin	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca
8	Kim Pollishuke	Kim	Pollishuke	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca

9. Visit the live form and complete it once *for yourself*.



Update from your child's teacher

* Required

When

If you select other, put a comma after the time reference.

- ☐ Today,
- ☒ Yesterday,
- ☐ Other: _____

Student *

Kim Pollishuke ▾

Description of Event/Incident *

Start this description with a lowercase letter and end it with a period.

had a wonderful literacy class

Additional Information

Her notes were all organized and she participated in discussions.

SUBMIT

10. Return to your spreadsheet in the Form Responses 1 tab and the responses from the form will be collected in the cells.

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Timestamp	When	Student	Description of Event/Incident	Additional Information
2	1/26/2015 16:31:49	Today,	Kim Pollishuke	had a wonderful literacy class.	Her notes were all organized and she participated in discussions.
3					

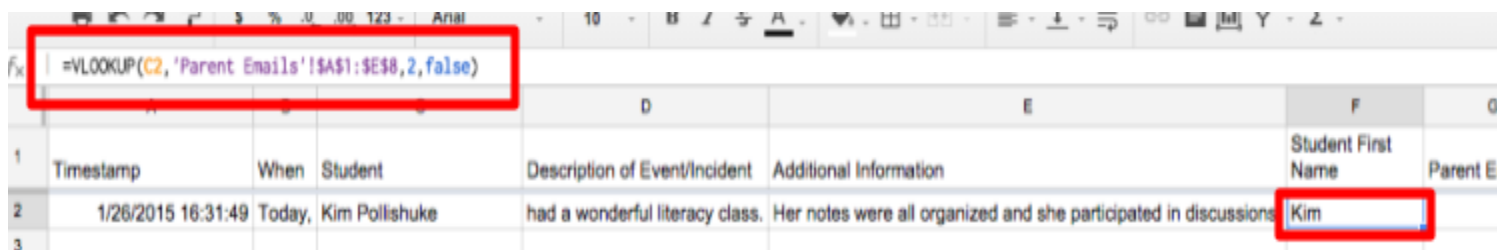
11. In cell F2 (Student First Name column), use the following formula:

=VLOOKUP(C2,'Parent Emails'!\$A\$1:\$E\$8,2,false)

NOTE: The number highlighted in yellow corresponds to the last row of email addresses on the Parent Emails sheet. If your last row is 30, make the number 30. If your last row is 100, make the number 100.

NOTE: The 2 near the end of the formula refers to the fact that the first names will be coming from the second column on that tab.

The first name of the student will appear in this column.



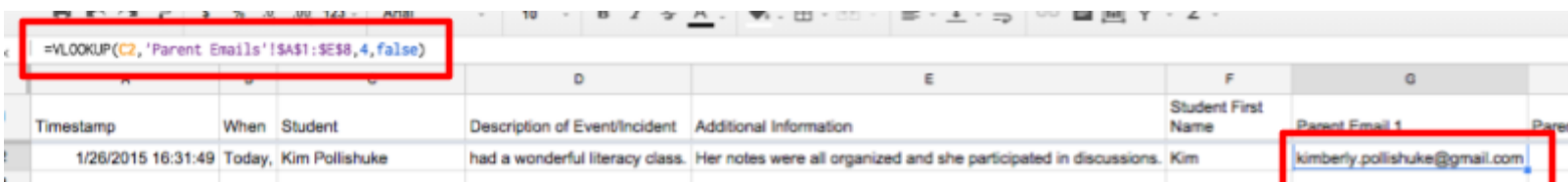
	Timestamp	When	Student	Description of Event/Incident	Additional Information	Student First Name	Parent Email 1
1							
2	1/26/2015 16:31:49	Today,	Kim Pollishuke	had a wonderful literacy class.	Her notes were all organized and she participated in discussions.	Kim	
3							

12. In cell G2 (Parent Email 1 column), use the following formula:

=VLOOKUP(C2,'Parent Emails'!\$A\$1:\$E\$8,4,false)

Shortcut: You can just copy and paste the formula from cell F2 into cell G2. You'll just have to make a few simple adjustments. Make sure the cell reference is still to C2. Switch the 2 to a 4 so that the formula pulls the email address from the fourth column in the other tab.

NOTE: The 4 near the end of the formula refers to the fact that the parent emails will be coming from the fourth column on that tab.



	Timestamp	When	Student	Description of Event/Incident	Additional Information	Student First Name	Parent Email 1
1							
2	1/26/2015 16:31:49	Today,	Kim Pollishuke	had a wonderful literacy class.	Her notes were all organized and she participated in discussions.	Kim	kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com

13. In cell H2 (Parent Email 2 column), use the following formula:

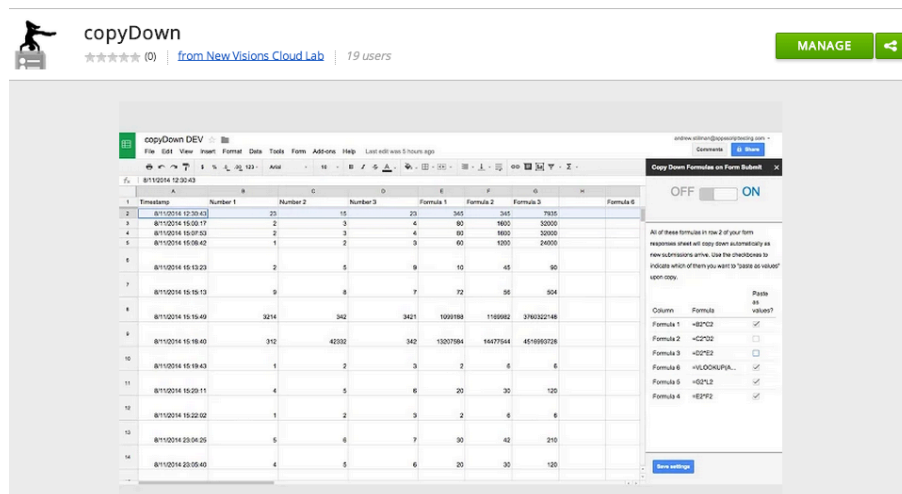
=VLOOKUP(C2,'Parent Emails'!\$A\$1:\$E\$8,5,false)

Shortcut: You can just copy and paste the formula from cell F2 into cell G2. You'll just have to make a few simple adjustments. Make sure the cell reference is still to C2. Switch the 2 to a 5 so that the formula pulls the email address from the fourth column in the other tab.

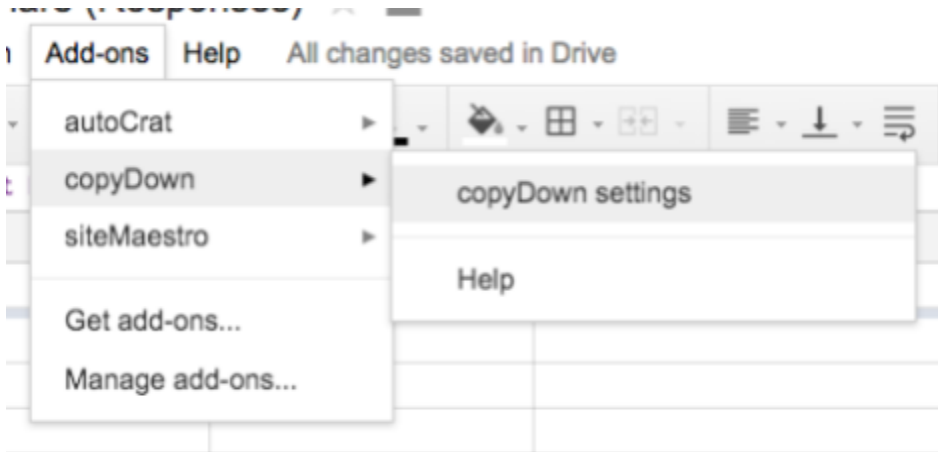
NOTE: The 5 near the end of the formula refers to the fact that the parent emails will be coming from the fifth column on that tab.

Part 4: CopyDown Add-on

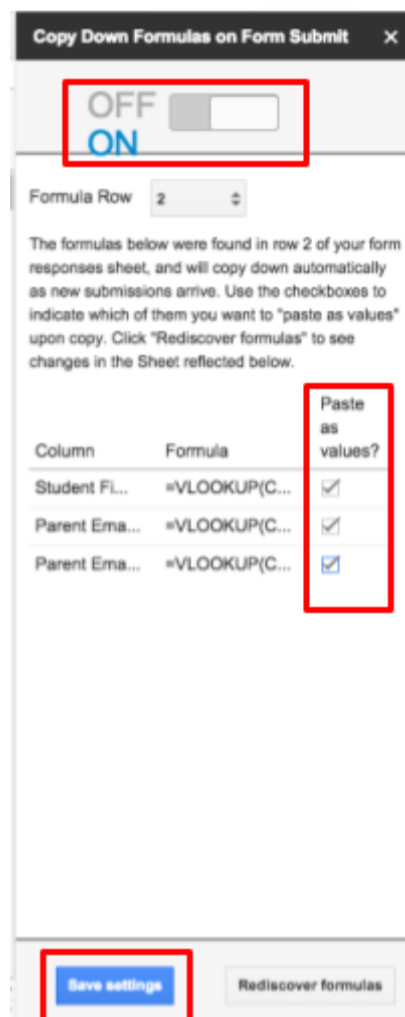
1. In your spreadsheet, go into the Add-on menu and search for “copydown” and add it. You will be asked to authorize it.



2. Run the script from the Add-on gallery.

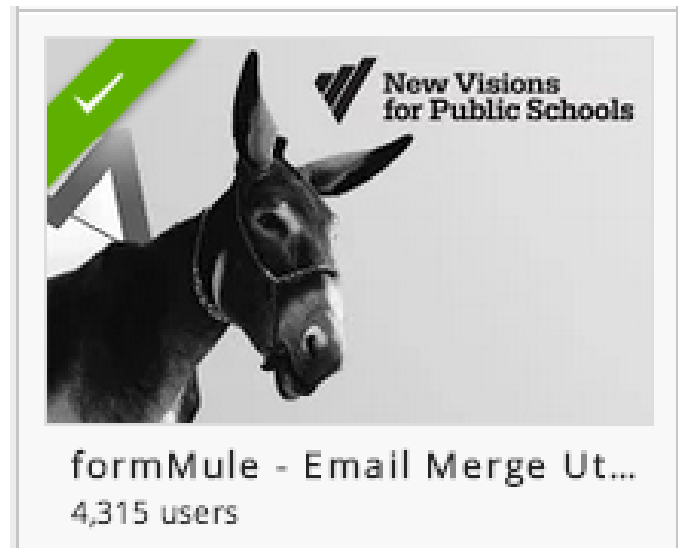


3. A window pops up on the side. Slide the dial to ON and check the boxes beside the three formulas you need to automatically pull down. Click Save. Close the sidebar box.

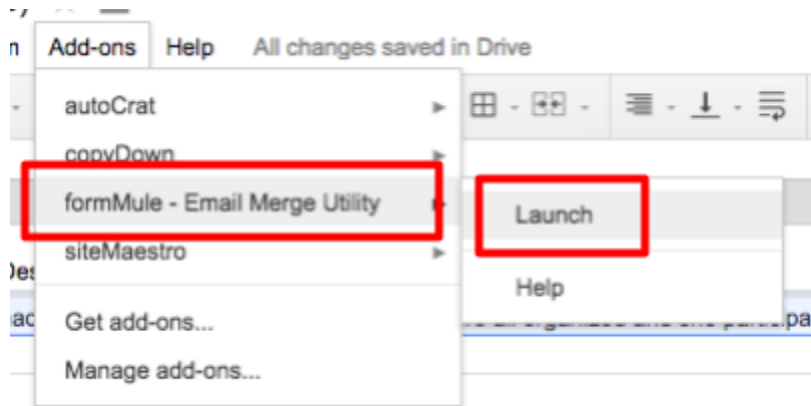


Part 5: FormMule Add-on

1. Go back into the Add-ons gallery. Search for FormMule and add it. You will be asked to authorize it.



2. Go into the Add-ons list. Select FormMule and click Launch.



3. Make sure to select the Form Responses 1 sheet.

- If you'd like the email to be sent automatically, slide the Form trigger to the right.
- If you want to run it manually, leave it in the Off position.
- Select the tab on the bottom right to move to the next screen.

formMule - Email merge utility

Choose source data and set merge type

Select the sheet that contains your email addresses and merge source data

▼ Select sheet

Form Responses 1

Form trigger	Time trigger
Off <input type="checkbox"/> Send on form submit	Off <input type="checkbox"/> Send on a timer

With no triggers set, the formMule Email Merge Utility can still be configured to send bulk, merged emails manually using multiple templates and send conditions.

Next: Templates and send conditions

4. You can name the Email template or leave it as the default "Template 1".

**I name my template: Email Update from Ms. Pollishuke.

- Click Save and then Next.

formMule - Email merge utility

Set # of email template(s) and send conditions

How many unique email templates do you want to use?

1

Send conditions can be NULL, NOT NULL or a number or text value. No quotation marks needed.

Email template	Send Condition
Template 1	--Send for all rows

Back

Save template settings

Next: Edit templates

5. Make sure your cursor is in the “To” box and then click on Parent Email 1 on the right side under the “Add merge tags” column.

- The merge tag will appear in the email box.

Build / preview templates

The screenshot shows an email template builder interface. At the top, there are buttons for 'Template 1', 'Saved', 'Edit', 'Preview this', and 'Preview and send all'. The main area is divided into two sections. The left section contains fields for 'To:', 'CC:', 'BCC:', 'Reply-to:', 'Subject:', 'Body:', and 'Lang:'. The 'To:' field is highlighted with a red box and contains the merge tag '<<Parent Email 1>>'. The right section is titled 'Add merge tags' and contains a list of tags: 'Timestamp', 'When', 'Student', 'Description of...', 'Additional Inf...', 'Student First ...', 'Parent Email 1', 'Parent Email 2', 'Formula Copy D..', 'Current Date', and 'Live Form Url'. The 'Parent Email 1' tag is highlighted with a red box.

6. Click on the merge tag “Parent Email 2”.

- Make sure the two merge tags in the Email boxes are separated by commas.

7. Add in a subject for the email.

**I like to use: An update from Ms. Pollishuke about <<Student First Name>>

8. Create the body of the text as follows:

To the parents or guardians of <<Student First Name>>,

<<When>> <<Student First Name>> <<Description of Event/Incident>>

<<Additional Information>>

<i>Feel free to contact me via phone or email.</i>

Thank you,
Ms. Pollishuke

Specific things to note:

- When you select a merge tag, it will first appear like this: Student First Name: <<Student First Name>>
 - You need to delete the first part and leave just the <<Student First Name>>
- There have been instances when after you select the merge tags, they appear at the top of the body box rather than where your cursor is.
 - If this happens, simply cut and paste the merge tag where you'd like it
- Ensure that there is a space in between merge tags
- You can use HTML to add some variety to the body of the email
 - adding in <i> and </i> to either end of "Feel free to contact me via phone or email." will make it appear in italics

9. Click on “Preview this” to see what the email looks like. If it isn’t exactly what you want, click “Edit” and revise the body. If it looks right, click “Preview and send all”.

Build / preview templates

Template 1

⌵

Saved

Edit

Preview this

Preview and send all

To: *

kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca,
kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com

CC:

BCC:

Reply-to:

Subject: *

An update from Ms. Pollishuke about Kim

Body:

HTML

friendly!

To the parents or guardians of Kim,

Today, Kim had a wonderful literacy class.

Her notes were all organized and she participated in discussions.

Thank you,
Ms. Pollishuke

Lang:

▼ Row: 1 ▲

Data source:

Form Responses 1

Send all rows

Sent status:

Not yet sent

10. Another preview box will appear for one final check. If it appears correct, select “Send now”. If you find errors, select “Edit template(s)”.

Preview and send all

Number of emails formMule will attempt to send: 1

Remaining daily send quota: 100

Template name	Template 1
Row in source sheet	2
To	kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca, kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com
Subject	An update from Ms. Pollishuke about Kim
Body	<p>To the parents or guardians of Kim,</p> <p>Today, Kim had a wonderful literacy class.</p> <p>Her notes were all organized and she participated in discussions.</p> <p>Thank you, Ms. Pollishuke</p>

Send now

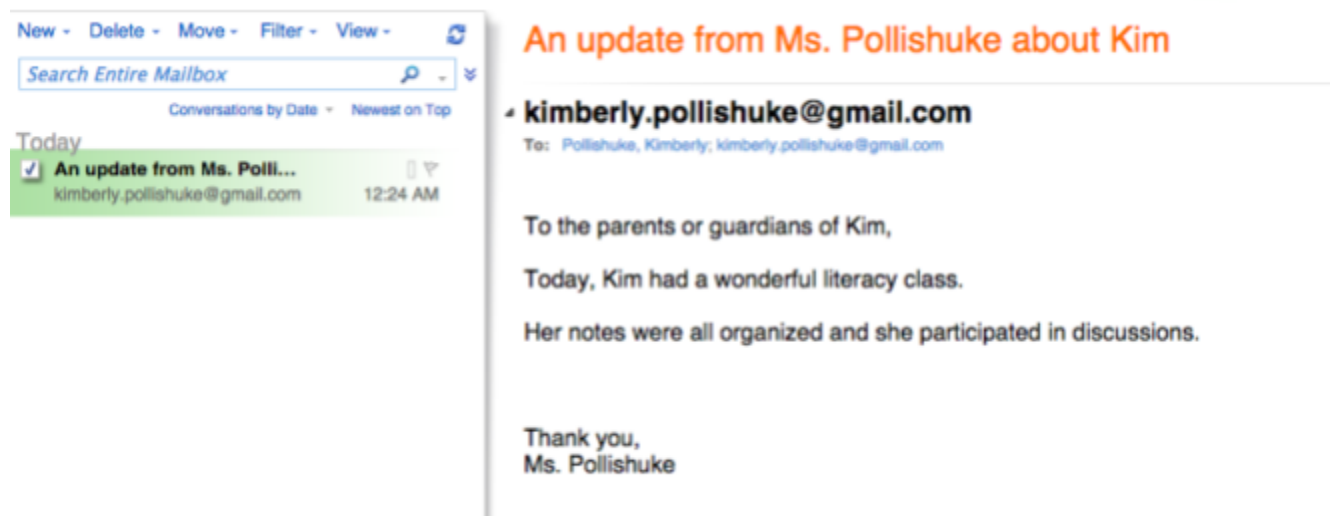
Edit template(s)

Cancel

11. When the script has run, you will see the following confirmation in the spreadsheet.

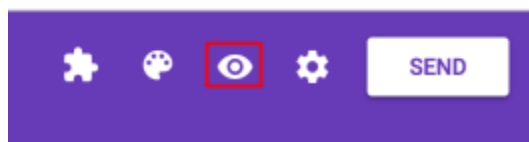
Formula Copy Down Status	Template 1 - Send Status
sb.ca Master formula row. Do not sort.	1/27/2015 0:24:35, email sent to kimberly.pollishuke@yrdsb.ca, kimberly.pollishuke@gmail.com

12. Check your inbox(es) for the received email.



13. Return to the live form and fill it out again for yourself.

- If everything has been set up correctly, it will automatically run the script and you will receive the email.



- If you did not turn on the automatic trigger, you'll need to go into the spreadsheet, launch the FormMule Add-on and run the script manually.

***I usually run it manually for the first few times just to make sure it works. Once I'm comfortable with how it runs, I go back into the set-up and turn on the automatic triggers.

***You could also go back to the first screen and set up a timed trigger so that it runs the email merge at the same time every evening or every few hours. There are a variety of options.

The screenshot shows the 'formMule - Email merge utility' interface. At the top, there's a section 'Choose source data and set merge type' with a dropdown menu set to 'Form Responses 1'. Below this, there are two main sections: 'Form trigger' and 'Time trigger'. The 'Form trigger' section has a toggle switch set to 'Off' and the text 'Send on form submit'. The 'Time trigger' section has a toggle switch set to 'Off' and the text 'Send on a timer'. Below the 'Time trigger' section, there's a dropdown menu labeled 'Day timer' with a list of time intervals. The '5pm to 6pm' interval is selected and highlighted with a red box. A blue button labeled 'Send merged emails on a timer' is visible to the right of the dropdown menu. The background shows a spreadsheet with columns for 'nature circle', 'in Literacy', and 'sure he won't forget again'.

Form trigger	Time trigger
Off <input type="checkbox"/> Send on form submit	Off <input type="checkbox"/> Send on a timer

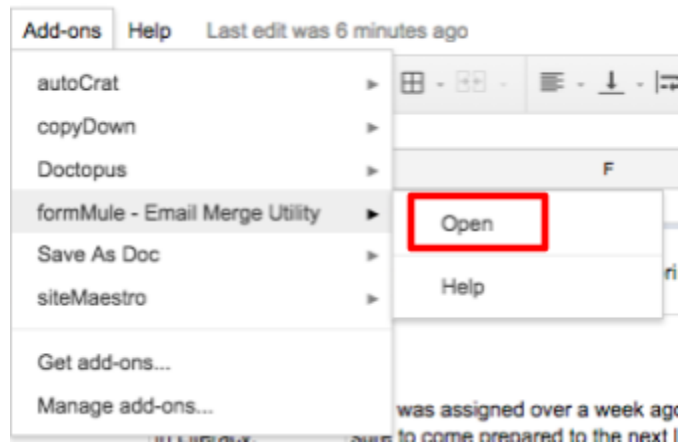
Send merged emails on a timer.

Day timer ☐

- ✓ Midnight to 1am
- 1am to 2am
- 2am to 3am
- 3am to 4am
- 4am to 5am
- 5am to 6am
- 6am to 7am
- 7am to 8am
- 8am to 9am
- 9am to 10am
- 10am to 11am
- 11am to 12pm
- 12pm to 1pm
- 1pm to 2pm
- 2pm to 3pm
- 3pm to 4pm
- 4pm to 5pm
- 5pm to 6pm
- 6pm to 7pm
- 7pm to 8pm
- 8pm to 9pm
- 9pm to 10pm
- 10pm to 11pm
- 11pm to 12am

Send merged emails on a timer.

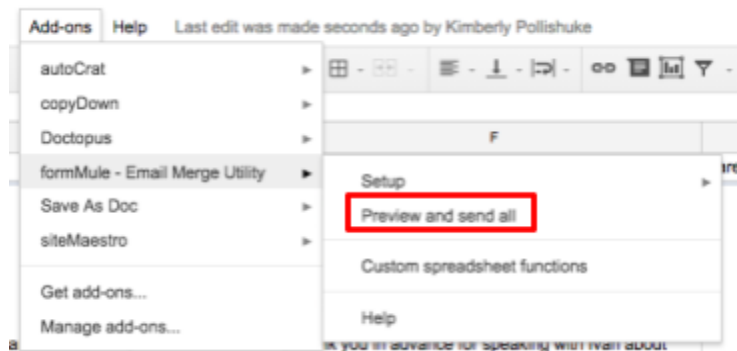
NOTE: The next time you open the spreadsheet and start formMule, the option box will look like this:



It will go back to the first stage of the setup process. If you don't intend on changing anything, just close this box.



Open the menu again and the options you are looking for will appear.



That's it! You made it!



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