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

bit.ly/familyupdates

@KimPollishuke

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.

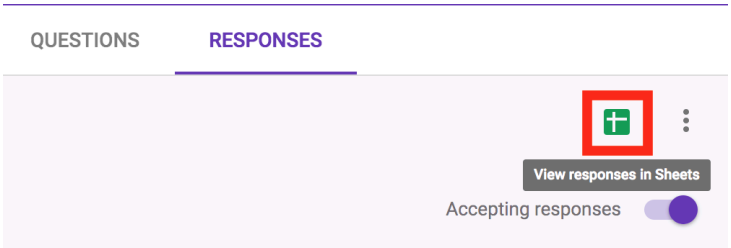
Part 2: Create the Google Form

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

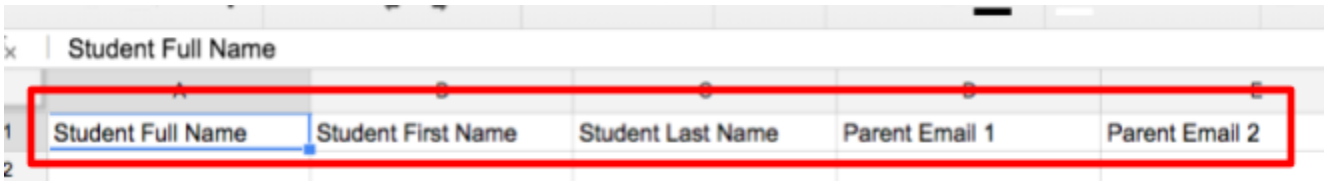
1. On the Responses tab, click the Sheet icon to view the responses.



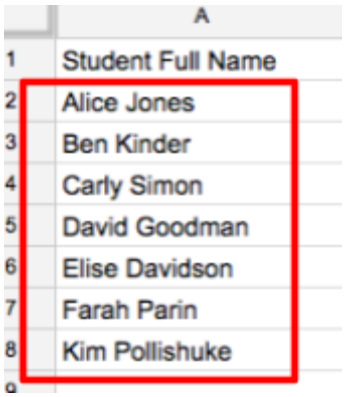
2. In the Form Responses tab, add in 3 additional columns:
   - Student First Name
   - Parent Email 1
   - Parent Email 2

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

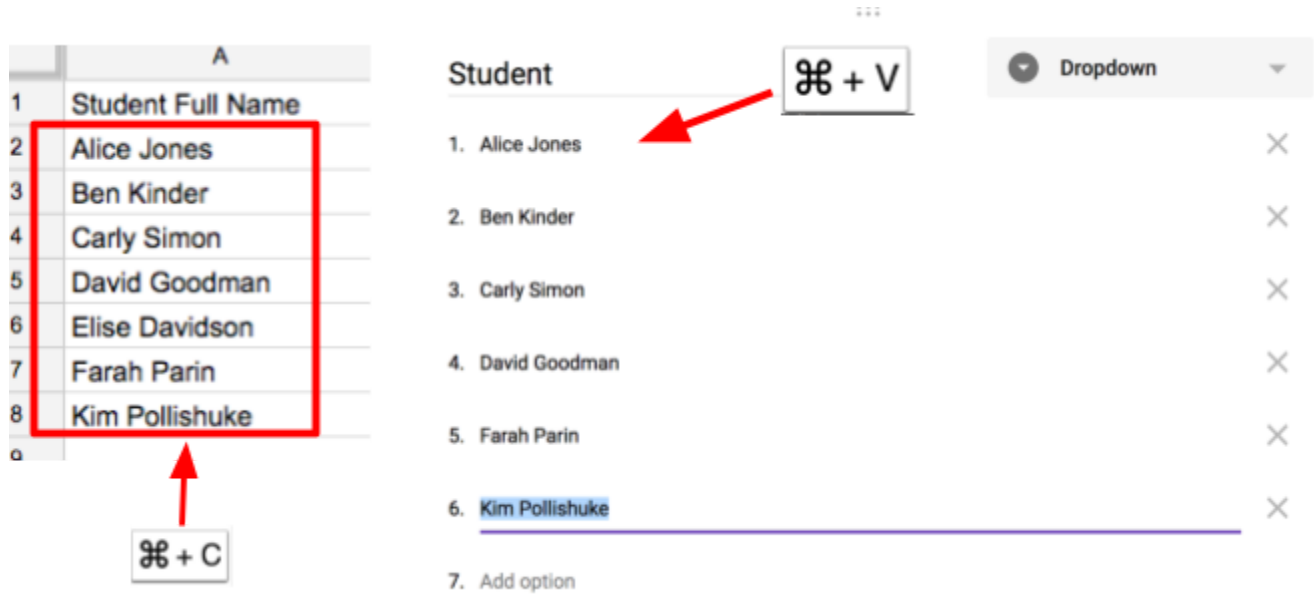
4. Use the following headers:
   - Student Full Name
   - Student First Name
   - Student Last Name
   - Parent Email 1
   - Parent Email 2



5. In column A, input or paste in a list of your students’ full names.
*****Add your own name in at the end.**

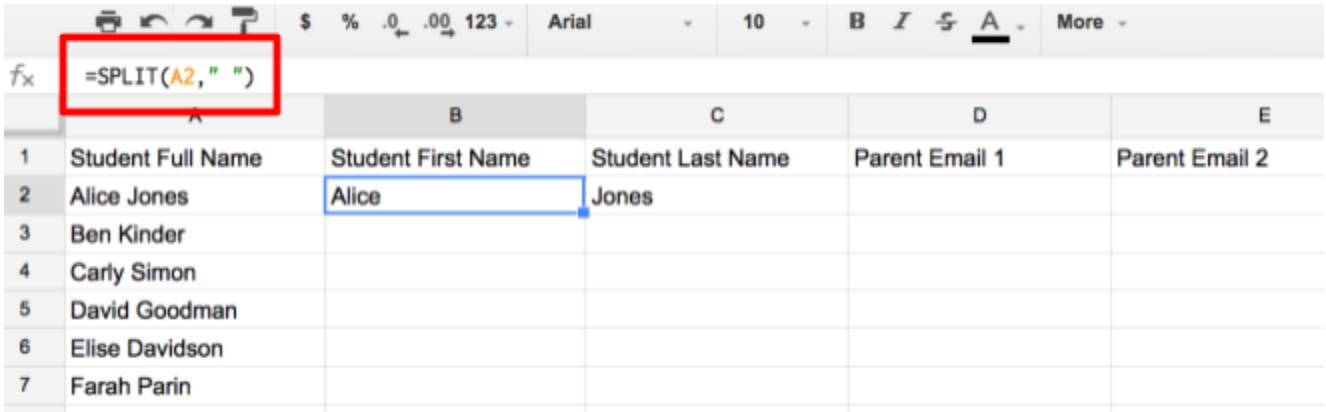


Copy the list of Student Full Names (without the header) and paste it back into the Google Form where the student names go. This will ensure that the names in the form are **identical** to the names in the spreadsheet.

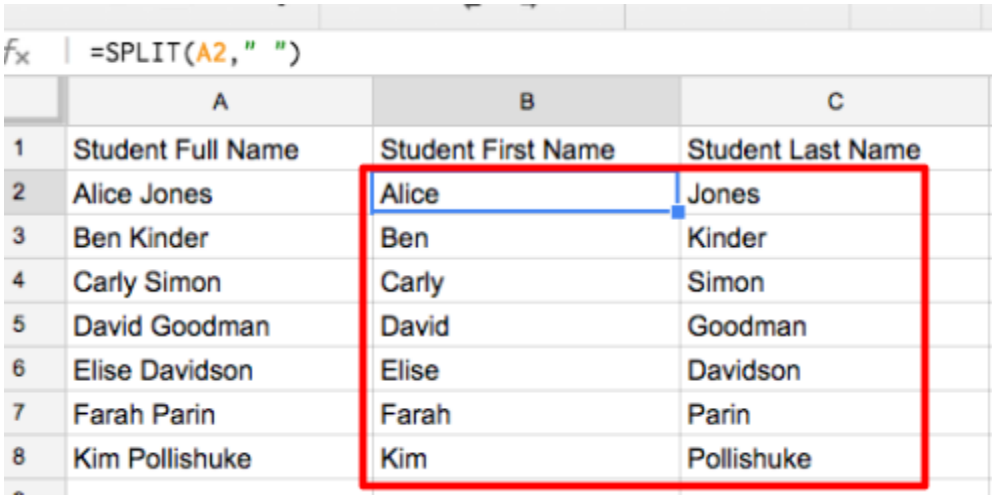


6. Back in the spreadsheet, in cell B2, use the following formula to split the full name into its two parts: =SPLIT(A2," ")

This will split the full name into first and last names.



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

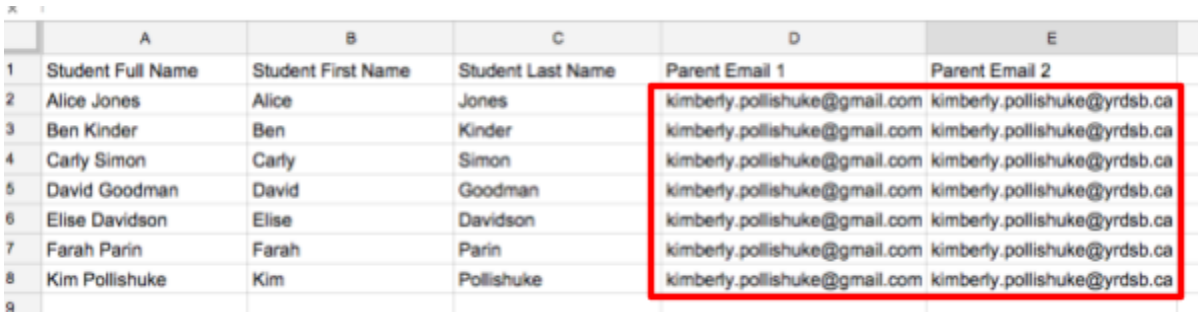


=SPLIT(A2," ")

	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

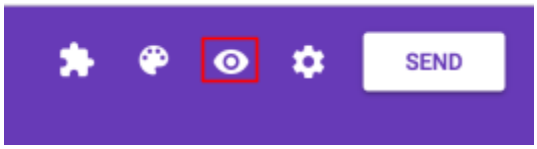
****This will be helpful later when you are preparing your automatic emails to parents.*

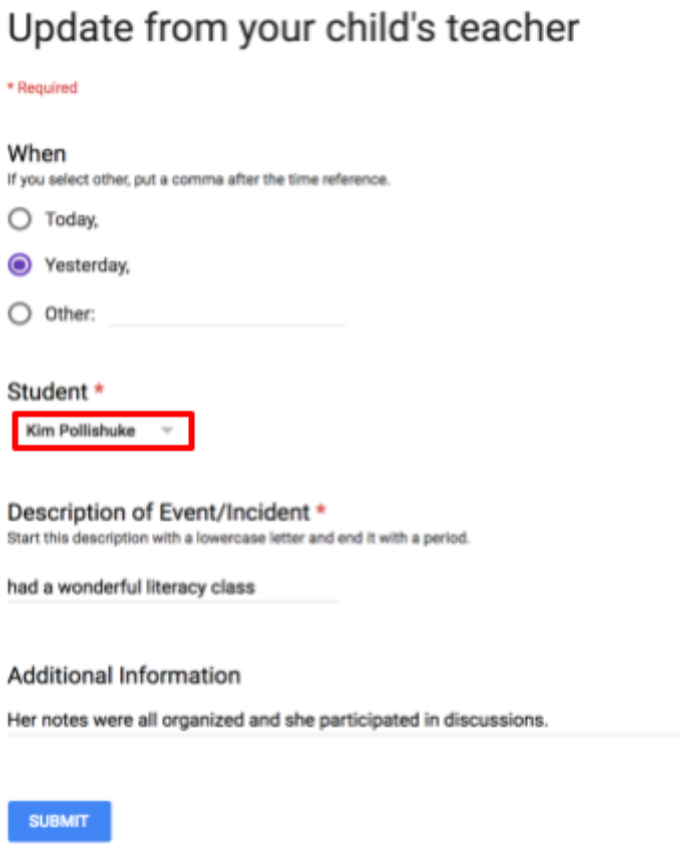
8. Fill in the parent email addresses for each student in the last two columns on this tab.
***For the sake of this exercise, I'm using my own email addresses.*



	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***.





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.

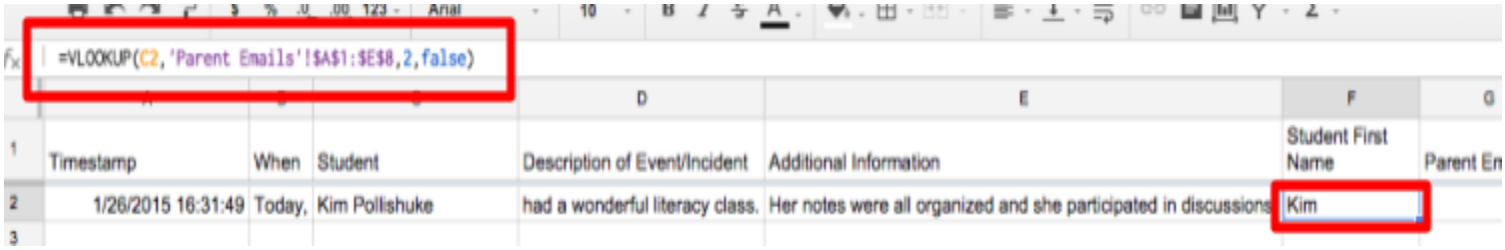
11. In cell F2 (Student First Name column), use the following formula:

=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.

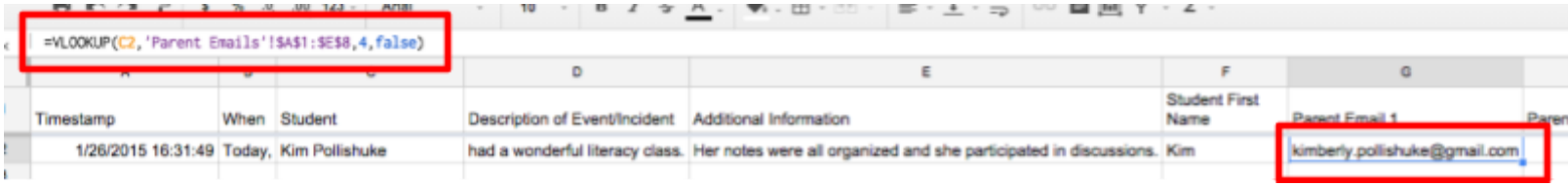


12. In cell G2 (Parent Email 1 column), use the following formula:

=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.



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

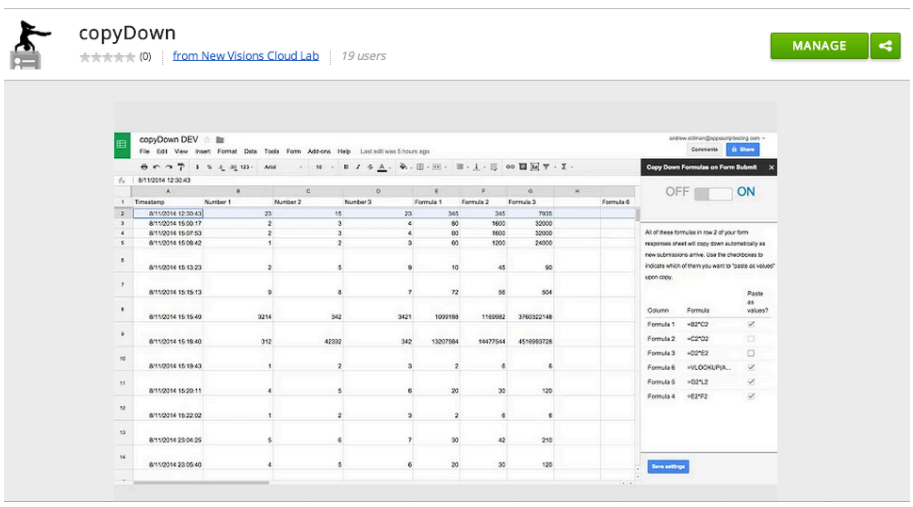
=VLOOKUP(C2,'Parent Emails'!$A$1:$E$8,5,false)

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.

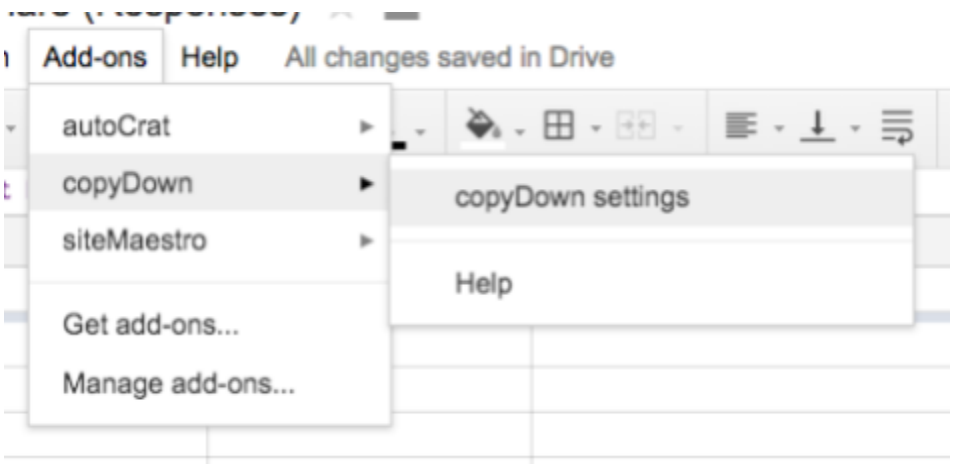
NOTE: The 5 near the end of the formula refers to the fact that the parent emails will be coming from the fifth column on that tab.

Part 4: CopyDown Add-on

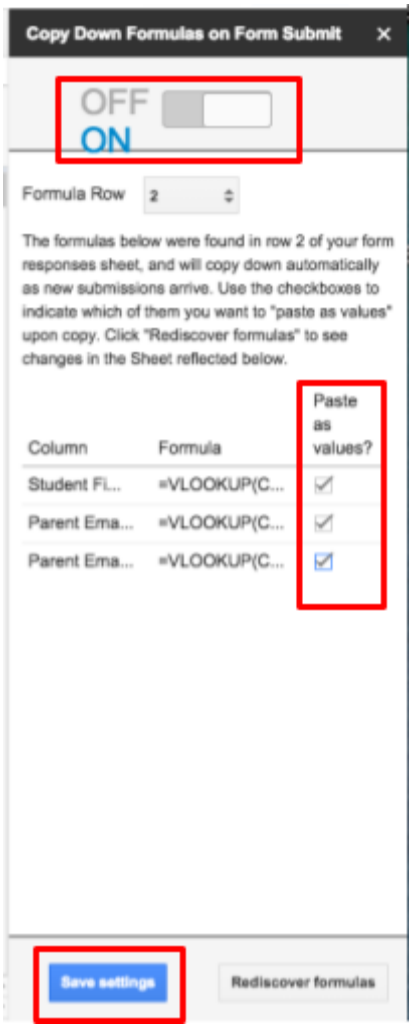
1. In your spreadsheet, go into the Add-on menu and search for "copydown" and add it. You will be asked to authorize it.



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

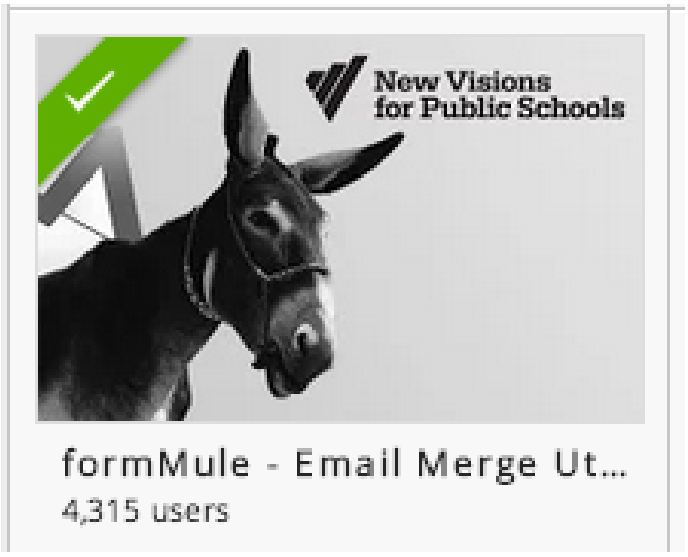


3. A window pops up on the side. Slide the dial to ON and check the boxes beside the three formulas you need to automatically pull down. Click Save. Close the sidebar box.

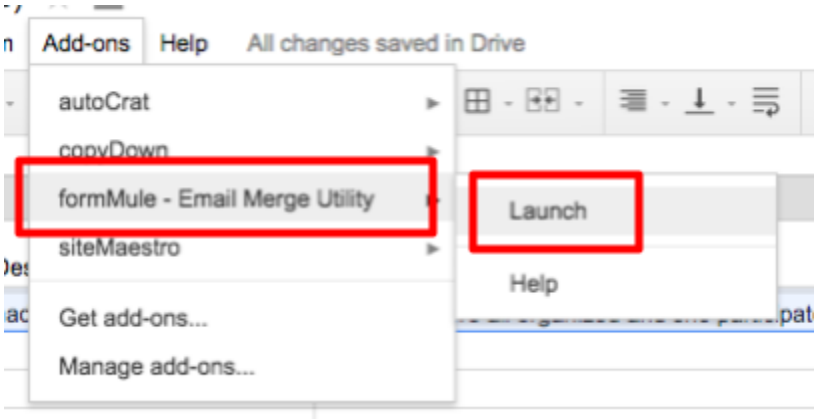


Part 5: FormMule Add-on

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

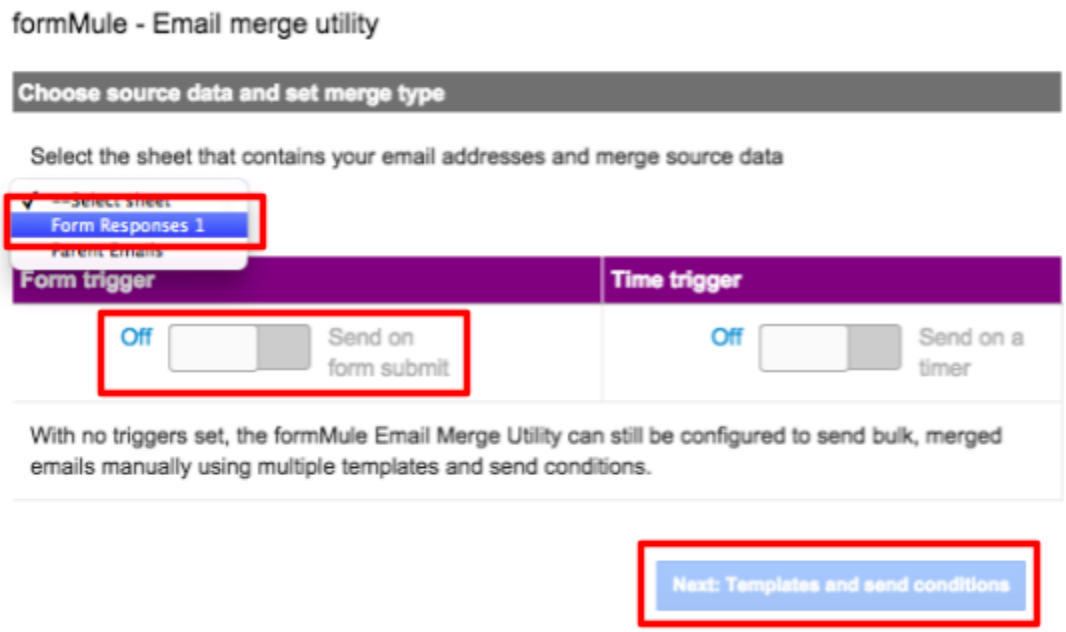


2. Go into the Add-ons list. Select FormMule and click Launch.



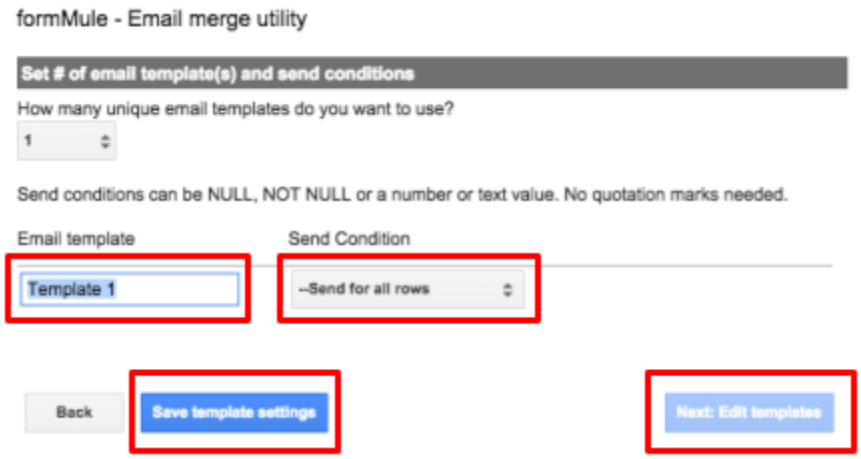
3. Make sure to select the Form Responses 1 sheet.

- 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.



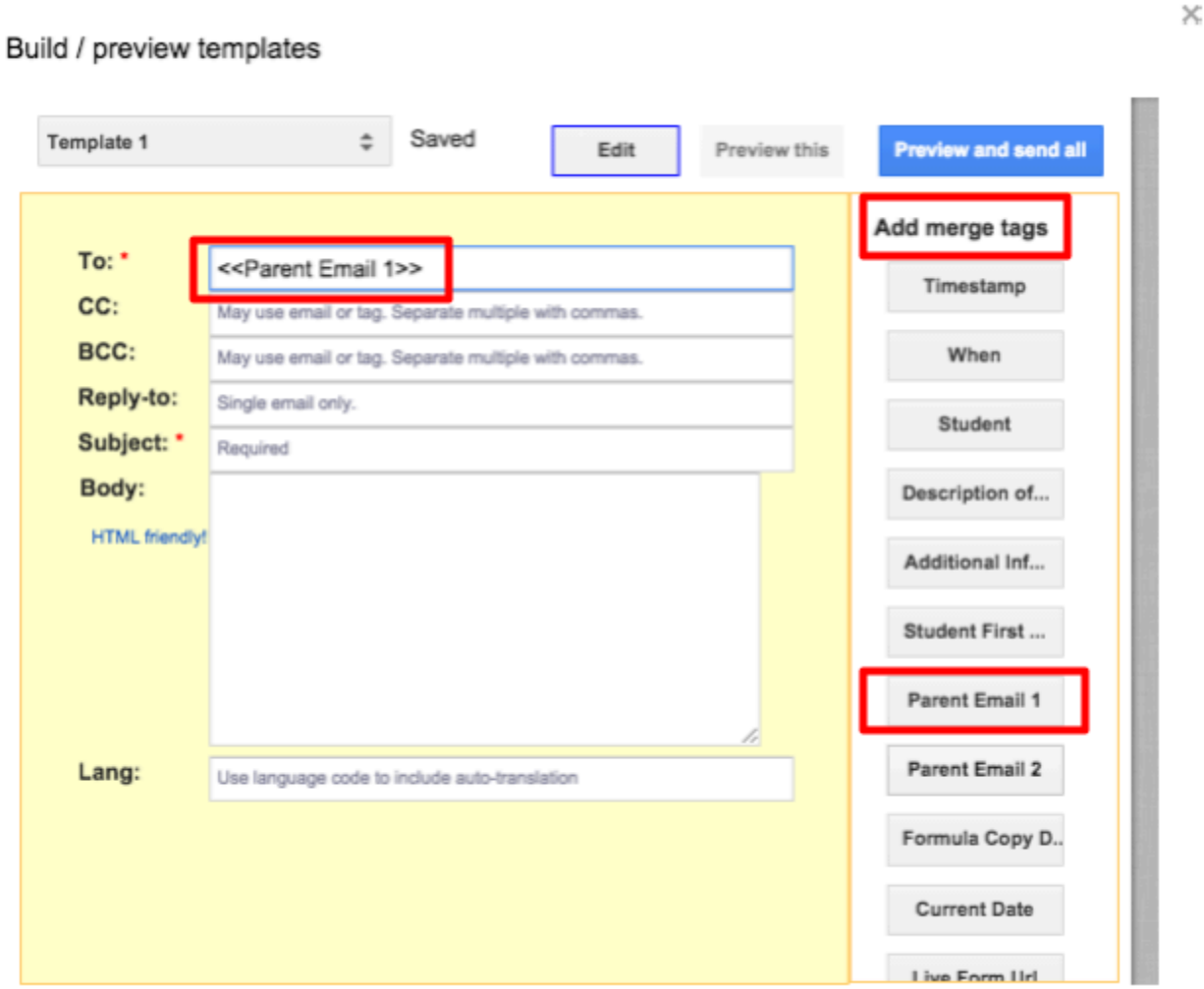
4. You can name the Email template or leave it as the default "Template 1".
**I name my template: Email Update from Ms. Pollishuke.

- Click Save and then Next.



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.



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>>

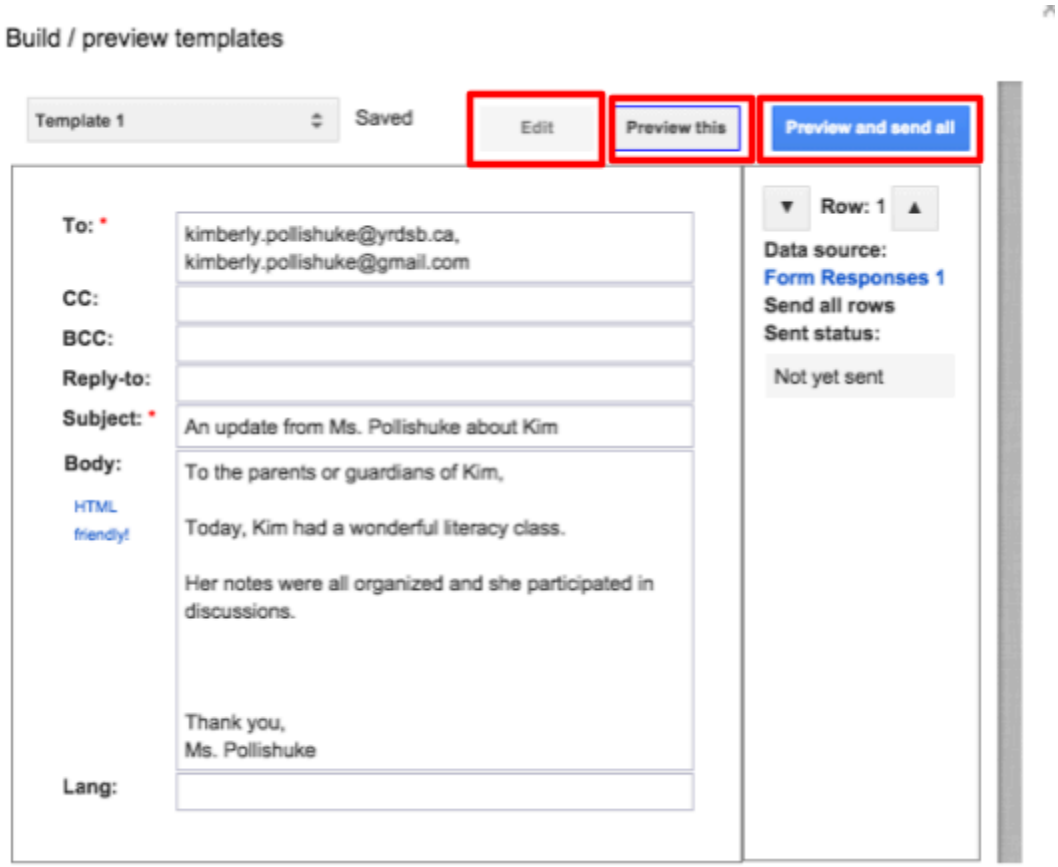
Feel free to contact me via phone or email.

Thank you,
Ms. Pollishuke

Specific things to note:

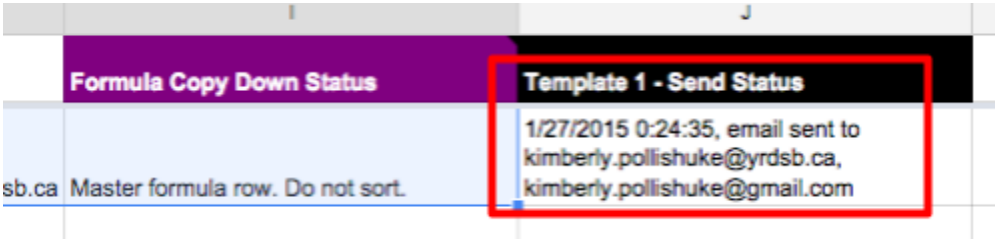
- When you select a merge tag, it will first appear like this: Student First Name: <<Student First Name>>
    - You need to delete the first part and leave just the <<Student First Name>>
- There have been instances when after you select the merge tags, they appear at the top of the body box rather than 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 and 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”.

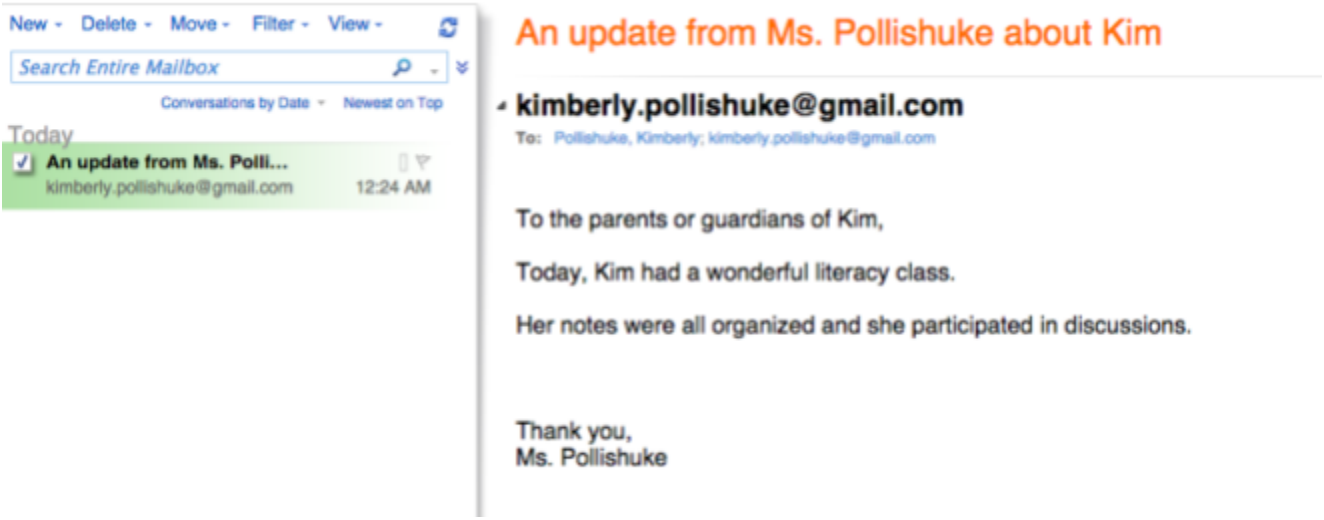


10. Another preview box will appear for one final check. If it appears correct, select “Send now”. If you find errors, select “Edit template(s)”.

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

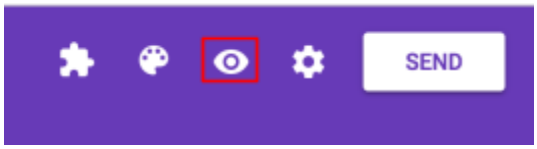


12. Check your inbox(es) for the received email.



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

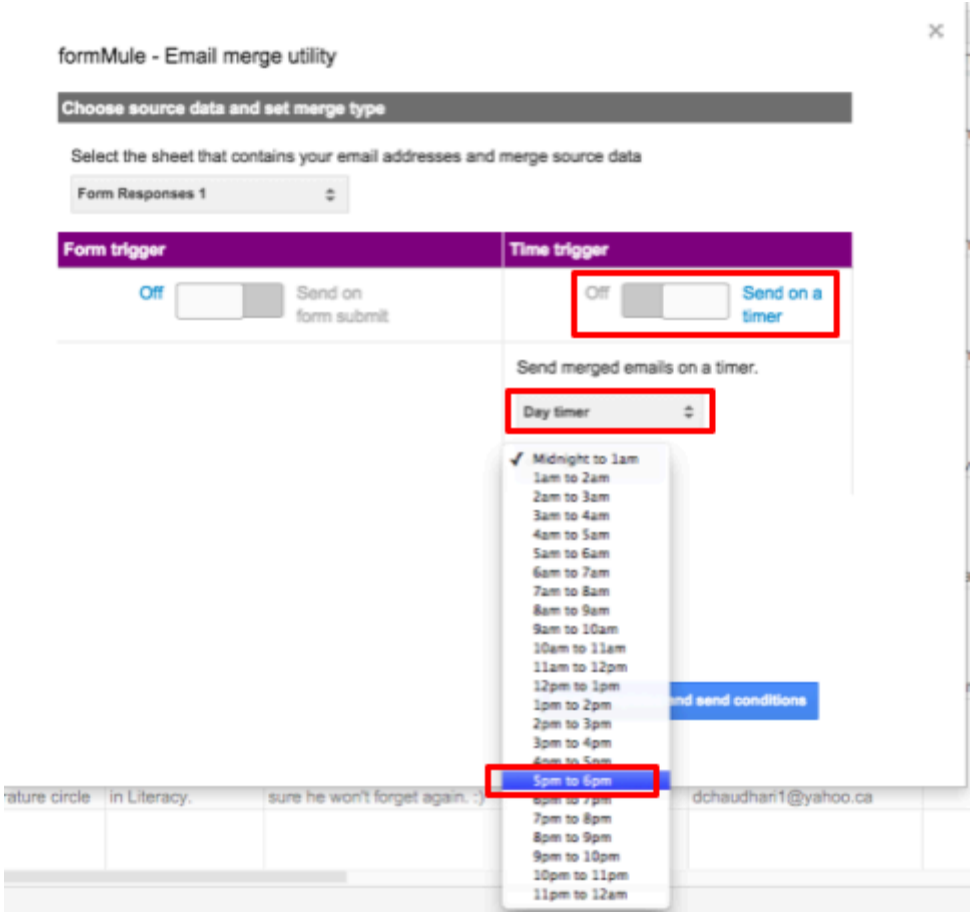
- If everything has been set up correctly, it will automatically run the script and you will receive the email.



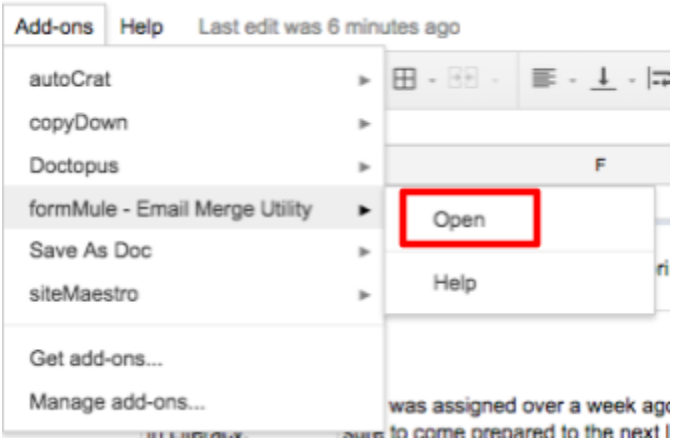
- If you did not turn on the automatic trigger, you'll need to go into the spreadsheet, launch the FormMule Add-on and run the script manually.

***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.

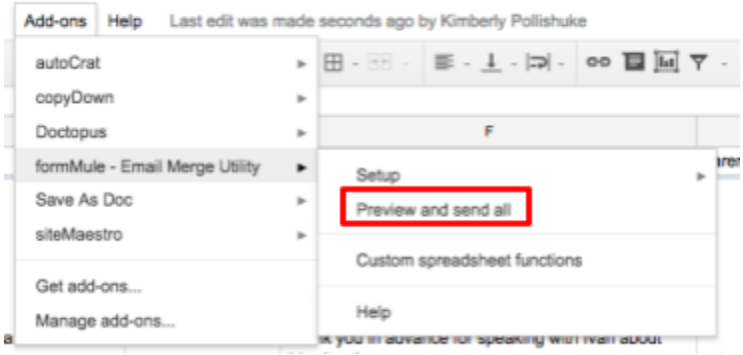


NOTE: The next time you open the spreadsheet and start formMule, the option box will look like this:



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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