

Using the Parent Portal

Pittsylvania County Schools

8/4/2011

Information Technology Department



Introduction

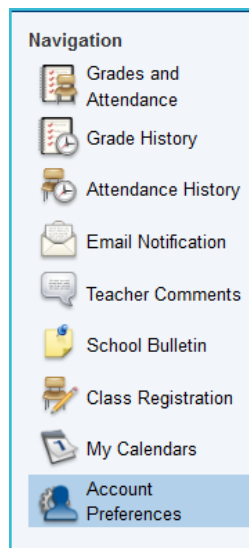
- The Parent Portal of our student information system, PowerSchool, provides access to up-to-date information concerning academic progress and attendance, as well as important school information.
- **NEW for 2010: Users MUST Create an Account. The information provided on the Parent Web Access letter can no longer be used to LOGIN to the Parent Portal. A student-specific login (username and password) is required to create an account to enter the Parent Portal.** Contact the office of your child's school and arrange to pick up your child's login. Be prepared to show proper identification and to sign for the letter at the school. School personnel will not give this information out over the phone.
- Each student enrolled in Pittsylvania County Schools has a specific "account access" username and password; therefore, you must obtain EACH child's account access information from his/her school in order to have access to all of your children (see next step).
- **If you have more than one child enrolled in Pittsylvania County Schools, you must obtain the account access information for at least one child to create an account.** Once the account has been created (using that child's information), you can login and add your other children IF you have their specific account access information (username and password). *See the steps under Account Preferences below for instructions.*

**NEW: Create a Single Sign-on Account to Access
Your Child's/Children's Information**

Follow these steps to create a single account login to access academic and attendance information about all of your children:

- Enter the Parent Portal by choosing the **Parents** link on the Pittsylvania County Schools' home page and selecting **parent portal**.
- Click the **Create Account** button.
- Enter your first and last name, email address, the user name you would like to use, and the password* you wish to use. **HINT: Write these down!** 😊
**Must be at least 6 characters in length.*
- Enter the child's first name as it appears on the Parent Web Access letter. Enter the Access ID (username) and the Access Password (password) **EXACTLY** as they appear on the letter – the login is case-sensitive. Select your relationship to the student from the menu.
- If this is your only child, click the **enter** button.
If you have more than one child enrolled in PCS, create the account with this child and enter your other children once in your account (*See the section on Account Preferences on page 3 for instructions.*)

Navigation Menu

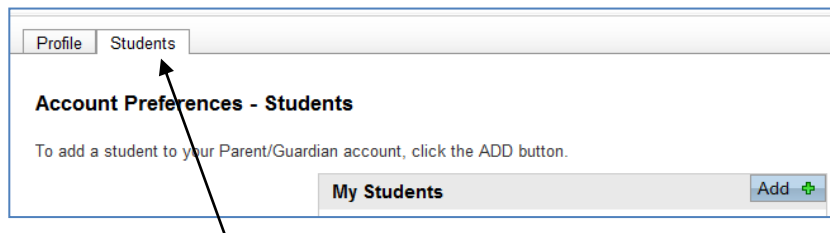


Notice the **Navigation Menu** along the right side of the page. This menu of icons appears on each screen. Use its **icons** to navigate through the portal and student **name tabs** to switch between children.

Account Preferences

The **Account Preferences** icon contains information specific to the account you have created. This is also where you add additional children to your account.

- **To add children**, follow these steps:
 - Obtain each child's Parent Web Access letter from the school.
 - Login to the Parent Portal using the account you created with one of your children.
 - Click on the **Account Preferences** icon.



- Click on the **Students tab** (upper left).
 - Click the **Add** button.
 - Enter the **child's first name** (as it appears on the letter), the **Access ID** (username), and the **Access password** (password) found on the web access letter. Choose your **relationship** to the child from the menu.
 - Click **submit**.
 - Repeat these steps to enter each of your children. Now, each child's first name will appear as a colored tab at the top of each screen in the parent portal. Use those tabs to switch between children to view information.
- To change the name, e-mail address, user name or password associated with your Parent/Guardian account, click on the **Account Preferences** icon.
 - Click the corresponding Edit button to make changes.
 - Click the Save button.

Grades & Attendance Tab

- The **Grades & Attendance** screen is the main page of the portal. You can view your child's class schedule, grades, and attendance for the current year from this page.
- Here, grading periods, or marking periods, are displayed as M₁, M₂, and M₃, meaning that the school year is currently in the third marking period. Additional grading term codes such as S₁ are used to indicate semesters, particularly in the high schools.
- Any text that appears blue is a **hyperlink** to additional information.
- *Teacher names are hyperlinks; however, clicking on the teacher name attempts to launch Outlook as the vehicle by which to send the email. If Outlook has not been configured on the machine, any email sent this way will not reach the teacher. Email must be sent to the teacher through the parent's own email client.*

Grades

- **Letter grades are hyperlinks.** Click on a grade to view additional information about the grade.
- The linked page, **Class Score Detail**, shows assignments given and their respective scores. Teachers may also add symbols (shown in the legend at the bottom of the page).
- If an assignment name or grade appears as a hyperlink, the teacher has added additional information. Click on the hyperlink to view the detailed information.
- *It is important to note that teachers may assign more weight to some grades such as quizzes and tests, affecting the way in which the assignment grades average. If you did not receive a grading policy from your child's teacher and the teacher has not posted this information for you to view through the portal, you may wish to contact him or her to request this information*

Attendance

- Attendance for the current marking period appears to the right of the schedule.
- Gray bars to the left of the class schedule indicate that the class is not in session during the current marking period. These may or may not be visible, depending on the term the school has chosen to display.
- Click on any blue numeral for details about the number of absences or tardies.
- Notice the attendance codes at the bottom of the attendance detail screen.
- Attendance totals for both the current marking period and the year to date appear below the student's schedule. View details in the same way.
- Attendance for students attending Pittsylvania County Schools is calculated on a daily basis. Although it is not mandatory, some teachers choose to mark meeting, or period, attendance. Viewing this data if available can reveal trends in absences and tardies at certain times of the day.

Show Dropped Classes Link

- Click on **Show Dropped Classes** to view grades for any classes the student has dropped, including those dropped due to a school transfer within the division.

Standards Grades Tab

- Click on the **Standards Grades** tab to the right of the Grades and Attendance tab to view any standards-based grades.
- Currently, only students in grades K – 5 have standards-based grades.

Grades History & Attendance History Icons

- Click on the **Grades History** icon to view the final averages for completed marking periods.
- Click the average itself for more detail.
- Click the **Attendance History** icon to view detailed meeting attendance for the current marking period.

Email Notification*

- If you prefer to have information emailed to you on a regular basis, click on the **Email Notification** button to register your email.
- Choose what you wish to have sent and how often you wish to receive it.
- Schools are not using fee balances this year. If they choose to do so next year or if Pittsylvania County uses the Power Lunch component of PowerSchool, you will be able to request balance alerts.
- Enter your full email address in the text field. Enter additional email addresses if desired, separating them with commas.

**At present, the email component of the portal is not working seamlessly with the mail server in PowerSchool. If you do not receive emails, please login to view your student's progress instead.*

School Bulletin

- The School Bulletin is updated at the school and includes important dates, meetings, and other information the school administration deems relevant to parents.
- Click on the **School Bulletin** icon to read this information.

Class Registration

- Use this icon to register for classes and to view classes for which your student has registered once this option is made available.

Teacher Comments & Calendar

- Teacher comments cannot be viewed through this icon of the portal. Teachers may choose to enter comments concerning assignments or grades. If so, the assignment name or letter grade will appear as a blue hyperlink.
- Our schools do not use an online event calendar.

Help

- Click on the question mark beneath the Navigation Menu in the upper right of any screen to view screen-specific help.

Printing Portal Information

- Click on the printer icon beneath the Navigation Menu to print the information on that particular screen.

Logging Out of the Parent Portal

- When you have finished viewing your child's information, click the logout button.

Knowledge is Power...Stay Informed!



Works Cited

Images: <http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/images/>