Frequently Asked Questions about PowerSchool

Q. How does one get a PowerSchool Parent Portal username and password?

A. Contact the school office.

Q. Do I need a separate login for each of my children?

A. No, you will receive Student Access Keys for each child and instructions on how to link each child's account information to your user name and password.

Q. How many times can I log in incorrectly?

A. If you try to sign in three times incorrectly, you will be locked out of the PowerSchool Parent Portal and will have to contact your child's school office during school hours to have your account unlocked.

Q. I try to log on to the site, but I keep getting an error message "login has expired" or "cannot access site". What is wrong?

A. All browsers are not created equal, and some refuse to give up what they have in their cache. In Internet Explorer, make sure pages are set to update "always" (under Tools-->Internet Options). If that doesn't work, empty your cache.

Q. When I go to the log on page, the password fills in with dots all the way across. Why?

A. What is happening is that the computer is remembering the password but not giving clues to how long it is. Apparently, someone clicked "yes" to remember password and PowerSchool Parent Portal does not like it. So now you will need to clear the password.

Follow the steps below to clear the password.

Open Internet Explorer

Click on Tools-->Internet Options

Under Browsing history, click on Delete

Select Passwords and Form data and delete both.

Access

Q. When can I access the PowerSchool Parent Portal?

A. The PowerSchool Parent Portal will be available to registered parent(s)/guardian(s) 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Q. Is this system secure?

A. Yes, the system requires a Student Access Key for each child. The Student Access Key, username, and password must be kept confidential by parents.

Q. Can other people see my child's grades?

A. As long as YOU protect your password, only you and school district employees associated with your child will be able to see your child's grades.

Q. Can I access the PowerSchool Parent Portal from anywhere?

A. Yes, you can access the PowerSchool Parent Portal from any computer with Internet access.

Q. My husband/wife and I are separated/divorced or we want our own logins; can we get another parent username and password for our child's account?

A. Yes, PowerSchool allows for multiple parent accounts to be created per child. Therefore, both parents can have their own username and password that is linked with the Student's Access Key.

Q. Do I need a new username and password each year if my child is returning?

A. No, all login information will remain active as long as your child is a student at the school.

Q. What if I do not have a computer at home or do not have access to the Internet?

A. The Public Library has computers that you can use to access the PowerSchool Parent Portal.

Q What kind of computer equipment do I need to view PowerSchool Parent Portal?

A. Almost any computer with an Internet connection can access PowerSchool Parent Portal. It is recommended that you use a newer Internet browser.

General

Q. What is PowerSchool?

A. PowerSchool is the student information system that the Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools uses to manage information such as grades, attendance, demographics, courses, etc. Since PowerSchool is web-based, some of this information can easily, but safely be shared with parents and students.

Q. What is the PowerSchool Parent Portal?

A. The PowerSchool Parent Portal is a feature of the PowerSchool Student Information System that provides parents/guardians immediate access to grades, assignments and attendance records in an effort to facilitate and improve communication between home and school.

Q. What can I see on PowerSchool Parent Portal site?

A. Parents can access the following information: grades for current classes, attendance for the past two weeks or the whole term, teachers comments and various reports via email.

Q. Whom should I contact if I have a question?

A. Grades for class assignments during the current semester: Talk with your child first. If you still have questions, you may call your child's teacher or email him/her. General attendance questions should be directed to your school's main office. If you wish to disable your access to PowerSchool Parent Portal, contact the school office and they can disable your account.

Q. What do I do if I forgot my login information or I feel my account has been compromised?

A. Click on the "Having trouble logging in?" link on the Portal Login Screen or contact your child's school office as soon as possible to make arrangements to pick up the new login information at the school office. Please bring a photo identification at this time. This protocol is established for the safety/security of the student records.

Q. Can I print what I see?

A. Yes, use the print icon at the bottom of most pages.

Q. Do I need to logout of PowerSchool Parent Portal?

A. Yes, when you are finished, please logout or shutdown your computer. This way no one will be able to access your child's private information.

Q. I am not getting emails from PowerSchool. How come?

A. There could be multiple reasons for this:

Did you sign-up for Email Notifications on the Email Notifications page? Please double check the email address you entered because if one character (letter/number/space) is off, you won't receive emails.

Does your email program have a spam blocker that could be blocking the messages? If so, you will want to add the email address powerschool@arlingtondiocese.org to the list of "allowed" email addresses so PowerSchool emails can get through.

Did you check your email's BULK or SPAM folder? Check to see if the messages are going there and choose to mark them as NOT SPAM. You will have to consult your email's help menu or manual to learn how to do this as it is different for every email program.

Q. I replied to the PowerSchool auto-email with a question, but have not received a response. Why?

A. The PowerSchool auto-generated email is created and sent by the PowerSchool server, not by an individual. The server will not reply to your email sent to that address. If you have questions about your child's progress, please direct those questions directly to the faculty member.

Q. When I click on the teacher's name to email the teacher, my email program doesn't work correctly or does not open.

A. Unfortunately, this is not a problem we can help you with since everyone's email programs are different. Your email program needs to be setup correctly on your computer. You may want

to view the HELP area or menu for your email program or contact your Internet Service Provider for further assistance.

Q. I can't login to the parent or student portal. I put in my username and password and click submit. After clicking submit, the page reloads to a blank username and password line and does not login. Help?

A. PowerSchool uses "cookies" and this means your internet security is set too high, probably to the highest level of security, which blocks cookies. Depending on your browser, you will need to find the Internet Security area and turn it down a level or two so cookies are accepted. You can find out more information about this by going to your web browser's help menu and doing a search on "cookies" or "internet security."

Expectations

Q. Do all teachers post grade and attendance information to the PowerSchool Parent Portal server?

A. Yes. Grades will be posted by the teacher. Remember, the teacher's grade book is a "snapshot in time" and not necessarily an accurate reflection of the student's overall progress or performance. Similarly, the student's grade average may change depending on the weight or value of graded work. Some teachers may choose to simply post an updated current average every couple of weeks while others will be posting individual assignments with due dates and descriptions.

Q. How often can we expect grades to be updated?

A. Teachers need time to grade projects, assignments and tests. Each day teachers are expected to have new material and lesson plans ready for class. With that in mind, teachers do need time to get the assignments graded. Please be patient because there are many factors that determine how soon a teacher can assess and return assignments. Essays and research papers take longer to grade than a quiz.

Q. I know that teachers sometimes weight different categories of grades. How does this affect how a grade is calculated?

A. Each teacher has his or her own grading system. Some teachers calculate grades by total points while others weight the grades according to assignment categories (homework, quizzes, tests,etc.). Our teachers inform all of their students at the beginning of the course what their

expectations and grading policy will be. To understand a specific grade calculation, please contact the teacher.

Q. How often can we expect attendance to be updated?

A. Attendance is updated daily. Unexcused absences may take a few extra days to be updated (changed to "excused") depending on the number of absences, promptness of the parent excuse note and/or day of the week.

Q. Why are the grades changing dramatically in the beginning of a term?

A. In the beginning of each term, you may see zeros or wild shifts in the class average of your child. When there are only one or two assignments in the gradebook, a low or high score can make a dramatic change in the overall grade average. The gradebook instantly recalculates the overall grade as every assignment is entered.

Q. How quickly and often can I expect a teacher to respond to my emails?

A. Teacher email addresses are posted in PowerSchool. You may communicate with the teacher through your personal email or by phone. If you choose to use email, realize that due to the nature of the job, most teachers have little time to respond to email during the school day. Do not expect an immediate response to email messages. For more detailed information, you should schedule a conference with your child's teacher. When sending email to a teacher, it is advisable to use an email address with a valid-sounding name. A teacher who receives a message from jellybean1289@hotmail.com might very well ignore the message, thinking that it was probably junk mail or spam. It is also important to include the name of your child in the subject line.

Q. Why is it that sometimes the information I see is not accurate?

A. The Diocese of Arlington Office of Catholic Schools has provided this system as a convenience. Grades and other information provided by this system are not official records and may or may not be accurate. Neither this institution nor PowerSchool accepts any responsibility for information provided by this system and/or for any damages resulting from information provided by this system. For official grades and student records contact your school. We are working with our faculty to achieve consistency. Please be patient as we are developing this program to be the best it can be.

Problems

Q. What do I do if I am unable to connect to the PowerSchool Parent Portal?

A. First, check to ensure that your Internet service is working properly.

   Next, validate that you are using the correct id, password and URL (http://sis.dvrhs.org)

   If you are still unable to connect, contact your child's school office during school hours for additional help.

Q. Whom should I call if I have a question?

A. Please use the table below to decide whom to contact for various types of questions.

Question Topic	Person to Contact
Grades for class assignments during the current semester	Your student's teachers. Teachers' email contact info is available on the PowerSchool website at the main student screen.
Attendance in a specific class on a specific day or general attendance questions	School Office
Forgot password or need to change email address	School Office

Q. Do students and parents see the same screens/comments?

A. When students and parents access the PowerSchool server, they see the same information with one exception; parents have the ability to enter their email address and to request automatic progress reports via email. Also parent can request changes to student demographics from the Demographics Changes icon in the portal.

Q. Why does it take a long time for PowerSchool to load in my web browser?

A. The speed at which your web browser can display a specific website depends on the speed of your own internet connection. Naturally, if you are using dial-up, it will be slower than using DSL or cable modem.