

MMS Parent Portal Boosts Involvement

At Susquehanna Community School's Parent Night, Principal Mark Gerchman noticed something strange. Where were all the parents? Usually, during the school's Parent Night, which is held after each of the first three quarters of the school year, the school halls were filled with parents and students eagerly awaiting face time with each teacher. However, since implementing the MMS Parent Portal, attendance at the event was sparse.

Gerchman attributes the low turnout to the effectiveness of the MMS Parent Portal that his district recently implemented.

"Parent/teacher conferences used to be a big event in past years," said Gerchman, "but after the first semester of using Parent Portal, only 30 parents signed up. The school was a ghost town!"



With the MMS Parent Portal, parents enjoy convenient Internet access to real-time information about their children's progress in school, whenever they choose. They can easily see real-time grade averages, progress reports, homework, missing assignments, announcements, attendance, and discipline information.

"Ninety percent of the parents in our district of approximately one thousand students have an account and a password that they can use to access the system from home or from a public location, such as the local library," said Gerchman.

Improved communication is an important goal for Gerchman and his colleagues. They strive to make good use of technology to communicate with parents and students by using email and the district website. The MMS Parent Portal represents yet another avenue to communicate with a student's home.

"By using the Parent Portal, we provide secure self-service access to all stakeholders who need to be informed about a student's daily progress," said Gerchman. The real-time aspect of Parent Portal is so effective and self-correcting that the 'element of surprise' is eliminated and parent/teacher conferences are not nearly as necessary as they have been in the past."

Not only have parents reacted positively to the increased information, but the school has had a positive response, as well. Teachers are able to easily analyze which students have performed poorly on tests. Now, administrators and teachers immediately know which students need to make up assignments and which students may benefit from a little extra help. The school been able to initiate guided study periods and easily accessible homework help sessions, based on the information that Parent Portal has helped them to access.

Overall, the use of MMS Parent Portal has increased the school's ability to meet expectations for Adequate Yearly Progress because the teachers and the parents are more aware of the student's performance.

"If a school was considering implementing the MMS Parent Portal, I'd say it's a no-brainer!" said Gerchman.

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