

# HCPSS Family Portal

*Empowering Parents As Partners in Education*

## 1) What is the HCPSS Family Portal?

The HCPSS Family Portal is an online tool that allows you to monitor your child's progress in school. It gives you instant access to your child's grades and other information anytime and anywhere you have Internet access. For the 2011-2012 school year, the Family Portal will be available to parents/guardians of all middle and high school students. Elementary schools are scheduled to come online in 2012-2013.

As a parent/guardian, you can:

- View the most current information about your student's academic performance such as grades and quarterly averages.
- See student schedules.
- Access daily and class attendance information.
- Review family information, such as emergency contacts.
- Request optional automatic notification of attendance and grades.

The system was developed and tested with great care to ensure that student information is kept confidential and that only you, and authorized school personnel, can view your child's information.

In the near future, you will be able to:

- View one parent account for multiple student records.
- Review your contact information and submit changes online.
- Submit course requests online.
- Register for summer school online.

## 2) How often is student information updated?

In general, the following guidelines apply:

- School attendance is updated daily.
- Grades for tests and projects are to be posted within three weeks following the due date. If this 3-week guideline will not be met, the teacher will notify both students and parents.

Additionally...

- Teachers will review major assignment grades with students before they are posted.
- You are asked to talk to your child about a grade prior to contacting the classroom teacher.
- Teachers will do their best to respond to emails from parents within two school days.
- You can only view, not edit, your child's profile information. If you find that it is incorrect, notify your child's school.

## 3) How do I activate my HCPSS Family Portal account?

In order to access the HCPSS Family Portal for the first time, you will first need to verify your identity and the identity of the students for whom you will have access.

1. Open a Web browser to connect to the Internet.
2. Enter [www.hcpss.org](http://www.hcpss.org), look in the right column and click on **HCPSS Family Portal**.



3. Click on Activate Account Now.
4. Agree to the terms of use.
5. Start entering your information beginning with your name and address to verify your identity under New Account Activation.
6. Enter the student ID number and date of birth of each student in your family. (The student ID number can be found on the latest report card or class schedule.)
7. If the information entered is verified, your login and temporary password will be displayed on the screen. You may print this information for later use or you may continue to log on to the portal. Keep this information in a secure and accessible place for future reference.
8. For the 2011-2012 school year, you will receive separate login information for each child you have enrolled in the HCPSS. During the course of the year, your school will work with you to consolidate your accounts to create one account that allows access to information on all of your children at the same time.

## 4) How do I log in?

You can log in to the HCPSS Family Portal from any computer that connects to the Internet. You can access the system from anywhere – your home or your office.

1. Open a Web browser to connect to the Internet.
2. Enter [www.hcpss.org](http://www.hcpss.org), look in the right column and click on **HCPSS Family Portal**.



3. Enter your the **Login ID** and **Password** you received when you activated your account.
4. When prompted, create a permanent password. Enter your temporary password in the **Current Password** field and create a **New Password** of at least eight (8) characters. Confirm your new password and click **OK**.

A screenshot of a web form with a red error message box overlaid. The error message says "Your password has expired. Please create a new one." with an "OK" button. Below the error message are three input fields labeled "Current Password", "New Password", and "Confirm New Password". At the bottom of the form are "OK" and "Cancel" buttons.

Once you have logged in successfully, you will see your personal Family Portal page.

## 5) How do I update my information?

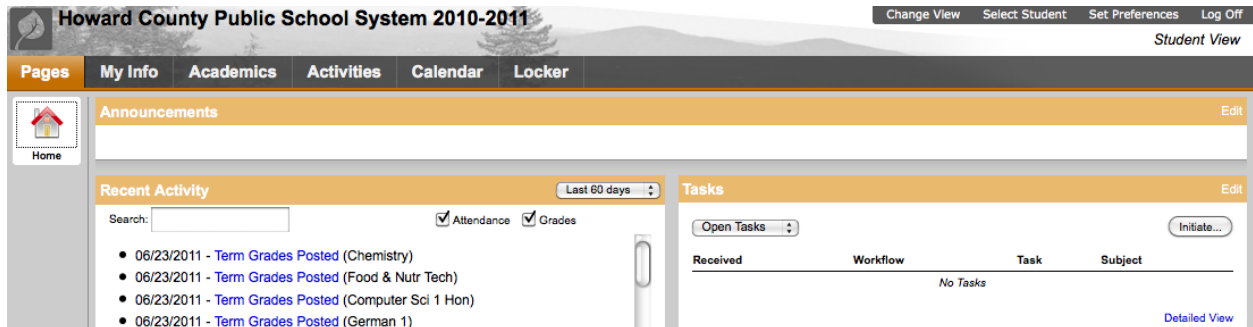
The first time you log in to the HCPSS Family Portal, you should update your security information. This allows you to request a temporary password should you forget your password.

1. In the top right corner of the page, click **Set Preferences**.
2. Click the **Security** tab.
3. Enter your **Primary email**.
4. Select a **Security question**.
5. Enter your **Security answer**.
6. Enter and **Confirm answer**.
7. Click **OK**. You will return to your Family Portal page.

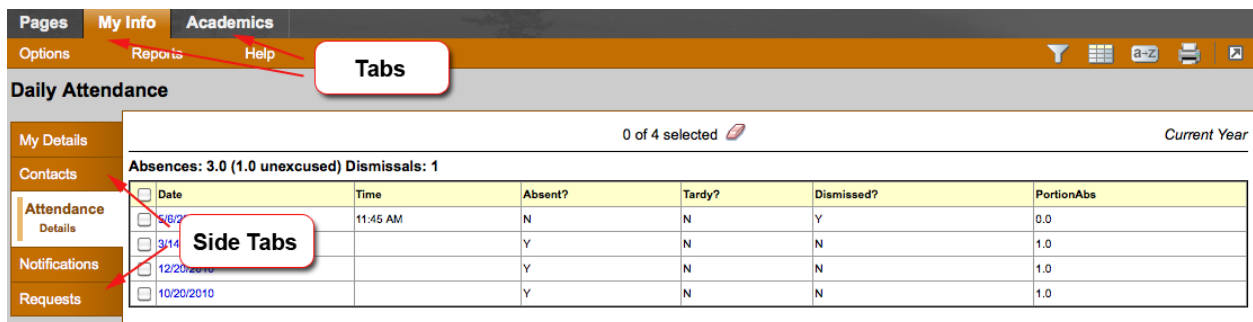
A screenshot of the "Security" tab in the Family Portal. The "Primary email" field is filled with "family\_portal@hcpss.org". The "Security question" dropdown menu is open, showing a list of questions such as "What are the last 4 digits of your SSN?", "What city did your father grow up in?", and "Who is your favorite actor, musician, or artist?". The "Security answer" and "Confirm answer" fields are empty. "OK" and "Cancel" buttons are at the bottom.

## 6) How do I use the Family Portal?

Your Family Portal page shows recent activity and the latest updates. You can choose to view activity for the current day, the last 7 days, last 30 days, or last 60 days.



On your portal page, you will find three tabs labeled **Pages**, **My Info**, and **Academics** in the banner across the top of the page.



After you select a Tab from the top of the page, related Side Tabs will appear on the left side to reveal detailed information:

### **The Pages Tab:**

- Announcements from your school.
- Recent activity regarding your child's grades and attendance.

### **The My Info Tab:**

- Profile information, address and ethnicity.
- Contact names and phone numbers.
- Daily attendance.
- Schedule.
- Subscriptions to email notifications.

### **The Academics Tab:**

- Current schedule.
- Grades.
- Assignments.
- Class attendance.

## 7) How do I register to receive email notifications?

You can register to receive email notifications whenever any attendance is recorded for your child or when your child receives an assignment grade below a threshold that you define.

1. Click the **My Info** tab.
2. Click the **Notifications** side tab.
3. Select the checkbox next to your email address.
4. Select the checkboxes for the notifications you want to receive.
5. If you select to receive notifications about Grades, enter the appropriate **Grade Threshold**.
6. Please note that this system does not replace **HCPSS News**. You will still need to subscribe to the HCPSS News e-mail notification system to receive information from your child's school. Subscribe to HCPSS News by visiting [www.hcpsnews.com](http://www.hcpsnews.com).

Howard County Public School System 2010-2011

Pages My Info Academics

Options Reports Help

Notifications

My Details

Contacts

Attendance

Notifications

Requests

### Subscriptions for Email Notifications

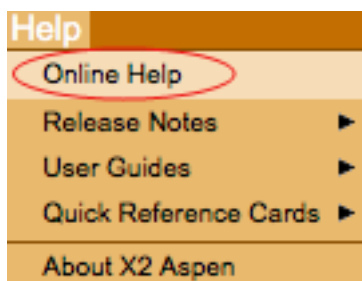
@hcpss.org

Subscribe	Name	Description
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Attendance	This subscription will notify you of any attendance entry for this student.
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Grades	This subscription will notify you when any grades below a specified threshold are entered for this student. Grades are scaled as a percent from 0 to 100. If a student receives a class assignment or test grade that is below the specified threshold, a notification will be sent to your email address.  In the space below, please enter a grade threshold to use for determining what grades to report. This should be a number from 0 to 100. For example, an entry of 75 would trigger a notification for any grade entered that scaled below 75%.  Grade Threshold <input type="text" value="75"/>

## 8) What if I need more help with the Family Portal?

The portal is easy to navigate. The data is secure and read-only. Feel free to explore. If you have a question about how to do something, go to the **Help** menu for the following options:

- **Online Help:** Click to open online help, then click **Using the Family Portal**. A table of contents, index, and search feature make it easy to find the information you need.



- **User Guides:** Click to open, download, and print a PDF version of **Using the Family Portal**.
- If you still have questions, contact your school's main office.

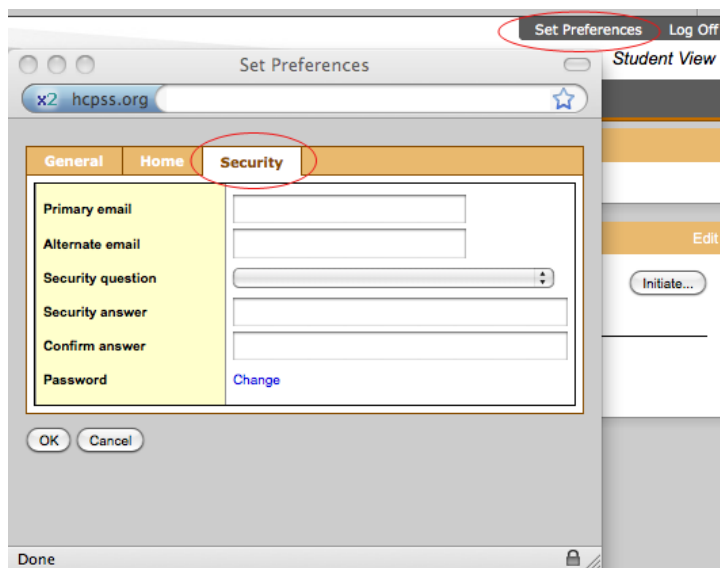
## 9) What if I forget my Login ID or password?

If you forget your Login ID, follow the steps required to activate your HCPSS Family Portal account (see #3 above). Follow steps 1-8 and you will be provided with your Login ID. Please note that if you have already activated your account, the temporary password will no longer be valid. If you also forgot your password, follow the directions below after obtaining your login ID.

If you forget your password, click on the **I forgot my password** link on the HCPSS Family Portal login page. You will be prompted to enter your login ID and your email address. Your password will be reset, and the temporary password will be emailed to you.

## 10) How do I change my password or email address?

After you login, click **Set Preferences** in the upper-right corner of the screen. Click the **Security** tab to edit your email, select and answer a security question, and change your password.



The screenshot shows a web browser window titled "Set Preferences" with the URL "x2 hcpss.org". In the top right corner, there are two buttons: "Set Preferences" (circled in red) and "Log Off". Below the browser window, the "Set Preferences" page is displayed. It has three tabs: "General", "Home", and "Security" (circled in red). The "Security" tab is active and contains the following fields:

- Primary email:
- Alternate email:
- Security question:
- Security answer:
- Confirm answer:
- Password:  [Change](#)

At the bottom left of the "Set Preferences" window are "OK" and "Cancel" buttons. On the right side of the page, there is a sidebar with a "Student View" header, an "Edit" button, and an "Initiate..." button. The bottom of the browser window shows "Done" and a lock icon.