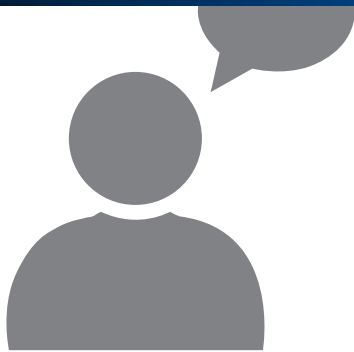




## Family and student online portal enhances district's communication



**Pekin Community High School District 303 | Pekin, Illinois**  
**Enrollment: 2,024 | Implemented: 2022**

Efficient communication with stakeholders is important for districts – especially engagement among teachers, staff, parents and students. Pekin Community High School District 303 (PCHS) knew it faced challenges and had encountered difficulties distributing class information and keeping parents up-to-date on their student's academic performance.

Amy Hubner, the district's assistant principal for operations, described how parents and students did not have a quick option for checking grades or work completion. Issues also developed when it came time to distribute semester grades and class schedules to students.

At PCHS, it was commonplace for hard copies of schedules to be distributed in hallways at the beginning of each semester, causing unnecessary congestion within the school. The burdensome delivery process for report cards consisted of printing, folding and sealing difficulties, as well as high postage costs.

"Another obvious issue that we faced was knowing whether or not the paper grade report actually made it to a student's home for their parents to see," Hubner added. The district needed a foolproof method to deliver grades and important class information to parents, and enhance communication among staff, teachers, students and families. After making the transition to Skyward's Family and Student Access, staff members saw an immediate impact on communication and engagement within the district community.

"I think the overall impact of Family and Student Access has been very positive," Hubner said. "Both parents and students have shared that they love the easy access and, most recently, the online grade reports."

Hubner explained that implementing Family and Student Access was key for enhanced communication within the district's families. The family portal allows parents and students to quickly view grades and attendance, and contact teachers through email options within the application.

Heidi Cooper, business office clerk, and Fred Vogt, registrar, agree that the family portal is central for students and their families. Vogt said parents can now immediately access information, and Cooper explained how parents are able to stay more involved in their child's education by proactively addressing concerns.

**“I would absolutely recommend Family and Student Access to other districts.”**

**”**

"Say they started out in a course with a great grade and then all of the sudden it starts slipping downward," she proposed. "[Parents]

then can ask the student, see what the issue might be, and get in contact with the teacher."

According to the district, Family and Student Access has been well received by students and families. Cooper said at least 50 to 60 percent of parents and families have logged in at least once during the school year. As the district goes paperless, she predicts the percentage will continue to increase.

With the family portal solution, the district is able to quickly make grade reports and schedules accessible to students and parents. Hubner stated that teachers use the application to send grade updates on a regular basis to students' parents. She added that students are also more proactive in their own education by checking Student Access for their most current grades.

Mathematics teacher Samantha Bledsoe described how the use of Family and Student Access has allowed parents and students to initiate conversation with educators "just by making a few clicks."

# SKYWARD®

## Success Story

"I have noticed that there has been an increase in communication between myself and parents," she said. "They will contact me if they see something concerning with their student's grades."

"Also, students are more aware of where their grades are because they can go online and check their grades," Bledsoe added. "I will have students coming to me and saying that they noticed they had a missing assignment and ask if they are still able to make it up. They are taking more of an initiative."

Naomi, a PCHS student, provided her viewpoint on the portal. She said she uses Student Access "between one and three times every day." The platform allows her to see assignments, the grade she received, class averages, and any comments teachers may have given. Naomi also stated that the application is very easy to use, which makes checking grades and navigating the portal a breeze.

"I would absolutely encourage any school district to take advantage of Skyward's Family and Student Access," Naomi said. "Skyward helps me stay organized and contributes to my overall success in school."

As PCHS students, parents, teachers and staff can attest, a comprehensive family portal solution enhances communication and increases engagement in the learning process. Hubner and the district community appreciate the online application and look forward to making further communication strides across the district.

"I would absolutely recommend Family and Student Access to other districts," Hubner said. "It has provided us with multiple useful tools, and we continue to explore additional ways we can fully utilize it in our building."

“*I think the overall impact of Family and Student Access has been very positive.*”



To learn more about how Skyward can help you and your staff be the driving force behind a more productive, collaborative, and successful environment, visit [www.skyward.com](http://www.skyward.com) or contact an industry specialist today at 800-236-7274.