

## PowerSchool Attendance Letter Creation

Attendance letters are mailed to parents when a student has exceeded a set number of absences and/or tardies in a school class (period). PowerSchool reports have the ability to list attendance totals by class room, but it is difficult to scan all the students for each school period. In place of a PowerSchool report, a screen is provided with several input parameters, identifying students with excessive absenteeism. The screen summarizes attendance points in a class period, within a school semester, for each attendance letter absentee criteria.

PowerSchool absentee reporting consists of:

- Attendance points are used to include a tardy as part of the attendance calculation. Several tardies can count toward one absence. For example: If four (4) tardies count for one (1) absence, then the attendance points for a tardy are set to 0.25.
- Student fields ABS\_LETTER\_MISD and ABS\_LETTERDATE\_MISD indicate the last attendance letter sent to the parents and the date the letter was sent.
- An online form lists all students in the school semester, reaching a defined set of attendance points.
- An online form is used to update the student attendance letter and attendance date.
- A PowerSchool report is run to create the attendance letters. The students printed in the attendance letters are selected by using the attendance letter date (ABS\_LETTERDATE\_MISD).
- The attendance letter refers to the student attendance letter number, changing the text in the letter according to the severity of the absenteeism.

The absence letter number and date is updated for each student. This process can be tedious and is not required to be done each day. The selection screen has a “last attendance date”, which is used to identify new attendance records added since the last review period. Only students with new attendance changes, made in the current review period, are necessary to update.

### Setup PowerSchool Attendance Points

Start Page > School Setup > Attendance Codes

Click on the name of the absence code to update code parameters.

Code	Description	Teachers Assign	Counts ADA	Presence	Sort
	Present	Yes	Yes	Present	1 <input type="button" value="v"/>
A	Absent	Yes	Yes	Absent	2 <input type="button" value="v"/>
T	Tardy	Yes	Yes	Present	3 <input type="button" value="v"/>
P	Parent Excused	Yes	Yes	Absent	4 <input type="button" value="v"/>
U	Unexcused		Yes	Absent	5 <input type="button" value="v"/>
S	School Excused	Yes	Yes	Present	6 <input type="button" value="v"/>
I	In School Suspension		Yes	Present	7 <input type="button" value="v"/>
O	Out of School Suspension		Yes	Absent	8 <input type="button" value="v"/>
X	Truant		Yes	Absent	9 <input type="button" value="v"/>
V	Vacation		Yes	Absent	10 <input type="button" value="v"/>
F	Field Trip		Yes	Present	11 <input type="button" value="v"/>
W	W test case	Yes		Present	30 <input type="button" value="v"/>

### Update the attendance points for absentee reporting

If the attendance points are a fraction, then insure the sum of fraction is greater or equal to one.  
Suggested list of values:

One absenteeism for every – tardies	Tardy absence points
1	1.000
2	0.500
3	0.334
4	0.250
5	0.200
6	0.167
7	0.143
8	0.125
9	0.112
10	0.100
11	0.091
12	0.084

Start Page > School Setup > Attendance Codes > Edit Attendance Code

Label	Value
Code	T
Description	Tardy
Presence Status	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Present <input type="radio"/> Absent
Code Categories	<input type="checkbox"/> Excused <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Tardy <input type="checkbox"/> Unexcused
Points	0.5
Teacher can assign	Yes
This attendance code earns ADA credit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
This attendance code counts towards membership	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Sort order for display	3

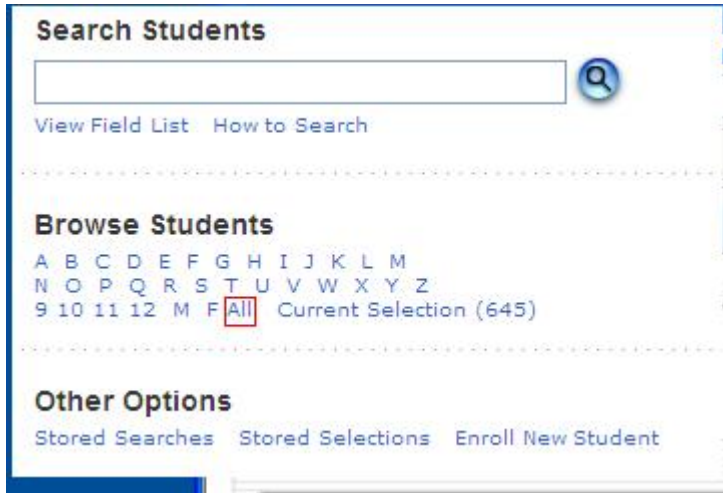
Note: The code you set up for 'Present' (usually just a blank) should be given a sort order of 1 and be listed first. This is necessary to allow PowerGrade to take attendance properly.

\*Rules for assigning the single-letter code: The single-letter code should be a letter from A to Z, a digit from 0 to 9, or a blank (blank should be used to denote 'Present'). Do not use the same letter for two different attendance codes. Capitalization is not taken into account; thus "A" and "a" are equivalent.

### ***Beginning of Semester Initialization***

At the beginning of each school semester, blank out the ABS\_LETTER\_MISD and ABS\_LETTERDATE\_MISD student fields.

Select all the students in the school building.



Start Page > Special Functions > Group Functions > Student Field Value

Enter the Absence letter attribute and Absence letter date. Check the “Clear Field Value” option. Press submit to blank the absence reporting fields.

645 students are selected

Option	Value
Field To Change (Fields)	ABS_LETTER_MISD
New Field Value	clearfieldvalue
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear Field Value Insert * to use the current field value with the new field value.
Options	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not overwrite existing data.

WARNING: This change is irreversible.

645 students are selected

Option	Value
Field To Change (Fields)	<input type="text" value="ABS_LETTERDATE_MISD"/>
New Field Value	<input type="text" value="clearfieldvalue"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Clear Field Value Insert * to use the current field value with the new field value.
Options	<input type="checkbox"/> Do not overwrite existing data.

WARNING: This change is irreversible.

[Submit](#)

## Attendance Letter Selection Criteria

The school districts presently have several different options when printing attendance letters:

1. Choice of including tardies in the attendance calculation. This is determined by setting attendance points for the attendance codes in the tardy category. The input selection form provides a list of absence codes used in the selection criteria. The tardy codes can be ignored, or entered in the list of absence codes used in the summary.
2. The from and to date range, for the school semester, is an input parameter in the PowerSchool selection form.
3. Print only one letter per semester. The input form has the option of ignoring students who have a letter number previously mailed, providing the same functionality as only printing one letter per semester.
4. Print a letter as needed. This option prints a letter, in each class period, reaching the absence letter criteria. A new absence letter occurrence is determined by checking the last absence date is within the last reporting period.

## PowerSchool Attendance Report using Attendance Points

This report selection screen is run for each set of absence letters:

1. Absence letter 1
2. Absence letter 2
3. Absence letter 3
4. Credit Review Letter

For each letter, select the following input parameters:

- Select the valid absence codes used in your school for reporting purposes.
- The Start/End date should be the school semester.
- The Min/Max frequency is entered according to the letter number and absence criteria, determined by your school.
- PowerSchool meeting attendance is by classroom and/or period. PowerSchool daily attendance is only taken once a day. Please select “daily” or “meeting” attendance. Do not select both check boxes.
- If your school only prints one letter per semester, then enter the letter number for the selection. This will ignore students with a mailing previously sent, using the same letter number.
- If you print a letter as needed, then using the “last date >” will filter out any attendance periods that have not changed since the last review period. This may be used to determine if a new letter must be sent for an infraction in a different class period.

The input screen saves data input, except for the daily/meeting attendance check box.

Start Page > Attendance Points Report

### Daily/Period Attendance Report using Attendance Points

Attendance Code(s)	Start/End Date	Min/Max Frequency	Grade	Show Daily	Show Meeting
A F I O P S T U V W X	01/01/2000	4	All Grades	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	01/01/2010	12	Last date >=		
			01/01/2000		
	Attend letter not equal to	Tardy letter not equal to			
	X (Enter X to view all)	X (Enter X to view all)			
	Selected codes to look for (clear)				
	'A','F','I','O','P','S','T','U','V','X','X'				Student
Attendance Codes: Blank=Present   A=Absent   T=Tardy   P=Parent Excused   U=Unexcused   S=School Excused   I=In School Suspension   O=Out of School Suspension   X=Truant   V=Vacation   F=Field Trip   W=W test case					
					Submit

An output report is printed on the screen showing the

- Student name
- Grade level
- Class name
- Teacher name
- Last attendance record date
- Student absence and tardy letter number
- Sum of attendance points by period (course name).

Proper entry of the input selection parameter should only display the students with attendance points exceeding the input criteria.

	Student	Grade	Class	Teacher	Last date	Abs ltr	Tdy ltr	Attend Pts
1	Adams, Corby	10	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	Schmidt, Andrew G	11/24/2009			7.5
2	Adams, Corby	10	Computer OS (CS3000.1)	Sullivan, Henrique J	11/12/2009			4.5
3	Ahlberg, Emmy	10	Chemistry 1 (SCI2000.1)	Sheen, Brian T	11/13/2009			4
4	Ahlberg, Emmy	10	Home Repair (LS1000.3)	Schmidt, Andrew G	10/15/2009			6
5	Aikinson, Andy G	12	French 2 (LFR2000.3)	Kyser, Kenneth	11/6/2009			5
6	Allred, Alfred P	10	Concert Choir (MUS1000.1)	Berndt, Gordie E	11/25/2009			8
7	Allred, Alfred P	10	Keyboarding (CS1000.1)	Kook, Steve M	11/18/2009			4.5
8	Allred, Alfred P	10	Phys Ed 10 (PE10.1)	Maxedon, Kerry	11/3/2009			7
9	Allred, Christopher N	11	English 2 (ENG2000.3)	Mantezimbe, Yoruba	12/10/2009			7
10	Almanza, Harold	11	Chemistry 1 (SCI2000.2)	Dombek, Bartolomeu E	11/12/2009			6

### Special note when using the “as needed” option

It is very difficult in PowerSchool to maintain the letters sent by course period for each student. Eight (8) or nine (9) period numbers are required to maintain, with the last letter number on the attendance update form. If a new absence is reported within the review period, the attendance letter could already have been sent in a prior review period. When reviewing the absence history, determine if the absence code was reported earlier, on the reporting limit; otherwise, the letter will be sent twice to the parent. One clue will be the letter number will already be set for the student, indicating at least one letter was already sent for one of the reporting periods.

The special absence reporting programs will maintain a file of student letter numbers by period, avoiding this problem in the near future.








**Click on the student attendance points to update the letter number and date**

Clicking on the student attendance points will display a pop up form to update the letter number and attendance date. The form displays the student records, using the selection criteria to calculate the attendance points.

**Note:** please insure you enter a full 8 digit date with leading zeros. PowerSchool does not perform date formatting very well. Example: 06/07/2009 will make selecting the students for the absent report much easier.

Press the submit button to change the letter number and date. The close button may be used to return to the report without updating the student data.

**Attendance for Adams, Corby**     

Adams, Corby 1U 4 AGHS1

	Letter	Letter date (mm/dd/yyyy)
Absence	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Tardy	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	Date	Class	Day	Period	Code	Points
1	6/26/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
2	6/30/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	I	.5
3	7/2/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
4	7/6/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
5	7/8/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
6	7/10/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
7	7/14/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
8	7/16/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
9	8/3/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
10	9/14/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
11	9/16/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
12	10/27/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
13	10/29/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
14	11/2/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5
15	11/24/2009	Home Repair (LS1000.9)	A	4	T	.5

Attendance Codes:  
 =Present | A=Absent | T=Tardy | P=Parent Excused | U=Unexcused | S=School Excused | I=In School Suspension | O=Out of School Suspension | X=Truant | V=Vacation | F=Field Trip | W=W test case

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### ***Suggested input form for entering absence criteria***

The following is an example input form for a school that sends one letter per semester:

1. Letter 1, four (4) or more attendance points
2. Letter 2, eight (8) or more attendance points
3. Letter 3, eleven (11) or more attendance points
4. Credit review on
  - a. 11 or more unexcused absences or
  - b. 12 or more a excused or unexcused absences
  - c. 11 or more tardies (tardy is equal to .5 attendance points)

<b>Letter#</b>	<b>Attendance codes</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>End</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Grade</b>	<b>Meeting /Daily</b>	<b>Attend letter &lt;&gt;</b>
1	ALL	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	4	7.9	All	Meet	1
2	ALL	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	8	10.9	All	Meet	2
3	ALL	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	11	11.9	All	Meet	3
<b>4</b>	<b>U</b>	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	11	999	All	Meet	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>U,A</b>	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	12	999	All	Meet	<b>4</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>T</b>	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	5.5	999	All	Meet	<b>4</b>

The following is an example input form for a school that sends a letter for each class period infraction. The last date the process was done (review date) was on 10/1/2009. The last date is set to the next day 10/2/2009.

5. Letter 1, four (4) or more attendance points
6. Letter 2, eight (8) or more attendance points
7. Letter 3, eleven (11) or more attendance points
8. Credit review on
  - a. 11 or more unexcused absences or
  - b. 12 or more a excused or unexcused absences
  - c. 11 or more tardies (tardy is equal to .5 attendance points)

Letter#	Attendance codes	Start	End	Min	Max	Grade	Meeting /Daily	Attend letter <>	Last date >=
1	ALL	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	4	7.9	All	Meet	X	10/2/2009
2	ALL	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	8	10.9	All	Meet	X	10/2/2009
3	ALL	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	11	11.9	All	Meet	X	10/2/2009
4	U	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	11	999	All	Meet	X	10/2/2009
4	U,A	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	12	999	All	Meet	X	10/2/2009
4	T	09/01/2009	12/31/2009	5.5	999	All	Meet	X	10/2/2009

**Input form for my school building**

1. Identify the absence codes to use for your school building.
2. Remember to enter the start and end date for the school semester the absence letters are printed.
3. Calculate the minimum and maximum number of attendance points for your letters.
4. All grades should normally be used.
5. If your school is a high school, then meeting attendance is most likely used. Daily attendance for elementary school and middle schools would be the most common.
6. If your school only prints one letter per semester, then use the attendance letter not equal options.
7. If your school prints a letter for each occurrence, then use the last review date to identify changes since the last review date.

Letter#	Attend codes	Start	End	Min	Max	Grade	Meetin g/Daily	Attend letter <>	Last date >=
1									
2									
3									
<b>Unexcused</b>									
<b>Total</b>									
<b>Or Tardies</b>									

### ***Printing the absence letter***

Select all the students for the initial selection.

**Search Students**

  
[View Field List](#) [How to Search](#)

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**Browse Students**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
9 10 11 12 M F **All** Current Selection (645)

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**Other Options**

[Stored Searches](#) [Stored Selections](#) [Enroll New Student](#)

From all the students, select students with the current absence letter date. Enter the date as an eight (8) digit number.

**Search Students**

  
[View Field List](#) [How to Search](#)

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**Browse Students**

A B C D E F G H I J K L M  
N O P Q R S T U V W X Y Z  
9 10 11 12 M F All Current Selection (645)

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**Other Options**

[Stored Searches](#) [Stored Selections](#) [Enroll New Student](#)

**For the selected student(s) print the absence report.**

Start page > Special Functions > Group Functions > Print Reports

Choose the absence report created for your school building.  
Verify the “courses enrolled during current term” option is set. Click on submit.

Option	Value
Which report would you like to print?	AbsLetter
For which students?	Adams, Corby <input checked="" type="radio"/> All records in a single batch. <input type="radio"/> Print only the first 2 records. <input type="radio"/> All records in batches of records.
In what order?	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Alphabetical <input type="radio"/> By grade, then alphabetical <input type="radio"/> By period 1 class, as of this date: 8/10/2009 (takes extra time)
If printing student schedules, use...	<input checked="" type="radio"/> courses enrolled during current term <input type="radio"/> enrollment as of 8/10/2009
If printing fee list, only include transactions conducted during... (may be overridden in report setup)	Current School Year to
Watermark Text	
Watermark Mode	Overlay
When to print	ASAP

Submit

An absence letter is printed for your school building. The report may be changed to meet your particular school requirements. The decode statement is used in the report to change the letter text, depending on the letter number. The decode statement has a limit to the number of characters it will insert per letter.

An example decode statement is used to change the text in the letter:

```
^(decode;^(ABS_LETTER_MISD);1;one (1) unexcused absence;2;two (2) unexcused absences;3;four (4) excused absences;4;unexcused absence subsequent to four (4) or more excused absences;5;eight (8) excused absences)
```

The decode statement consist of:

1. The decode statement ^(decode, followed by a semicolon.
2. The value to translate from, or in the example the letter number ^(ABS\_LETTER\_MISD), followed by a semicolon.
3. The first value to decode, followed by a semicolon (1 is the letter number one).
4. The related text for letter one, followed by a semicolon.
5. The second value to decode followed by a semicolon, etc.
6. The related text for the letter number etc.
7. The end of the decode statement has a closing right parenthesis “”).

PowerSchool has an unknown limit on the text entered for each “decode” statement. Please limit the substitution text to one or two sentences. A paragraph can be built using multiple “decode” statements.

Apple Grove High School 1

August 10, 2009

To the parents of:  
Corby Adams  
4658 Norway Dr  
Jackson, MS 39206

Re: Student attendance for Corby in grade 10

As of 06/09/2009, Corby has received four (4) attendance points in a class. Please be advised your student is in jeopardy of losing credit for His class.

Term	Period	Course	Absent	Tardy	Points
S1	1	Open Study	0	1	0.5
09-10	1	World History	0	1	0.5
S1	2	Pre-Calculus	0	1	0.5
S1	3	Computer OS	3	3	4.5
S1	3	Phys Ed 10	1	0	1
S1	4	Home Repair	0	15	7.5
09-10	4	English I	2	5	4.5

Attendance is one of the essential components in determining whether a student has earned credit in their classes. A student could be passing a class academically but still lose credit due to excessive absenteeism. Please refer to Apple Grove High School 1 Student Code of Conduct book for further information on this policy. The total number of absences, unexcused and excused added together, is used to determine whether a student will lose credit in a class.

If your student reaches eight (8) total absences (unexcused plus excused) in any class(es), a second letter will be sent home as a reminder that credit will be lost upon the eleventh (11) absence.

Please review the above attendance record with your child. If you have any questions, feel free to call the Attendance Office.

8.50 x 11.00 in

Done Unknown Zone