



PowerTeacher Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is PowerTeacher?

A: PowerTeacher is a tool that helps teachers to easily manage daily classroom activities such as taking attendance, entering grades, communicating with students and parents, posting assignment details, and much more. With PowerTeacher these activities can be performed from any networked computer, at anytime. This allows more time and attention to be focused on any teacher's primary aim—teaching the students. PowerTeacher is fully integrated with the PowerSchool Premier student information system and as such, allows an educator to take advantage of expanded access to critical student performance for the students that they teach.

Benefits of PowerTeacher are:

- Revolutionary interface
- Web-based not constrained to browser navigation
- Complete integration
- Progressive grading options
- School-to-Home collaboration
- And more!

For more information, please see the PowerTeacher Benefits document posted on the Support Site.

Q: How does PowerTeacher compare to PowerGrade?

A: PowerTeacher is being introduced with most of the capabilities familiar to PowerGrade users. However, PowerTeacher provides a much more intuitive user interface coupled with new features such as access to prior term historical information, the ability to easily create and manage student groups, a convenient auto-fill feature, and the option to copy and paste assignments from previous courses. PowerTeacher will continue to provide exciting new features for classroom management as subsequent versions are made available to customers.

PowerTeacher is fully web-based. Consequently, teachers are able to access their gradebook and classroom tools from any networked computer. IT staff are freed from the obligation of installing and maintaining client-based software on teacher workstations.

For more information about PowerTeacher functionality versus PowerGrade, please refer to the Migration document on the Support Site or contact your Account Executive.

Q: Why did Pearson School Systems decide to introduce PowerTeacher?

A: Pearson School Systems, a thought-leader in the education technology marketplace, is defining the next-generation web gradebook that enables teachers to manage their classroom at the individual student level. This release represents the first step of Pearson's vision in next-generation classroom tools.

Q: Is PowerTeacher fully integrated with PowerSchool Premier?

A: Yes. PowerTeacher, which includes web gradebook, is a core component of the award-winning student information system, PowerSchool Premier. This integration allows real-time information updates between administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Data collected via PowerTeacher is automatically stored centrally and securely, so there is no need for multiple data entry efforts. Relatedly and when appropriate, information entered in the student information system can be made available to teachers using PowerTeacher displays and reports.

Q: How can our district get the new PowerTeacher gradebook?

A: Complete PowerTeacher functionality, including web gradebook, will be provided to all PowerSchool Premier customers at no additional cost. Premier customers will have the option to enable this functionality as they deploy the new version appropriate to their unique school and district needs.

Check the Systems Requirement document to make sure your district is prepared to use PowerTeacher.

Q: Can I access my PowerTeacher gradebook without an Internet connection?

A: PowerTeacher is 100% web-based. In order to store data, PowerTeacher requires the connection to update in the database. If offline capabilities are critical for certain teachers, we recommend they continue to use PowerGrade.

Q: Do I need a web browser to use PowerTeacher? If so, what browsers are compatible with PowerTeacher?

A: Yes. A web browser is required to use PowerTeacher. PowerTeacher is compatible with any browser that supports Java 1.4.2 or later, such as Safari 2.0.x, Firefox 2.0.x, Internet Explorer 6.

Q: Does PowerTeacher support standards?

A: Yes. PowerTeacher continues to allow teachers to enter final-standards scores. Consequently, it is possible to generate a full range of standards-based report cards in PowerSchool Premier. Future releases of PowerTeacher will include enhanced gradebook functionality that supports the linkage between standards and individual assignments.

In future releases of PowerTeacher, gradebook functionality will be developed to include the linkage of standard to individual assignments.

Q: What are the benefits in using PowerTeacher for my gradebook?

A:

Features	Benefits
Revolutionary user interface	Designed by teachers for teachers – so its intuitive and natural for the teacher's role in the classroom
Advanced formative, summative and diagnostic grading options	Assignments can be weighted and evaluated based on the specific type of assessment being made
Score Inspector for quick marking: late, collected, exempt, and student comments	Teachers can easily enter new scores, flags and comments in the fastest manner possible

Comment log	Enter personalized or standard (from the comment bank) comments for individual students or the entire class
Student groups	Allows full management of differing groupings with each class
Links to teaching utilities	Manage the communication of student grades
Robust communication tools	Enhances teacher, student and parent communication
Universal access	Web-based system teachers and IT staff can access anytime, anywhere

Q: Does PowerTeacher work with other Pearson Student Information Systems such as Chancery SMS and SASI?

A: At this time, the PowerTeacher only works with PowerSchool Premier SIS.

Migration, Implementation, and Set Up Questions

Q: Does the PowerTeacher gradebook require a district-wide deployment, or can it be deployed more selectively (per school, per teacher)? Can PowerTeacher be used in conjunction with PowerGrade?

A: In fact, the PowerTeacher gradebook can be enabled on an individual teacher basis. If some teachers require PowerGrade and others prefer PowerTeacher for their gradebook needs, the data will not be disrupted. A teacher cannot use PowerGrade and PowerTeacher simultaneously.

Q: What happens when a teacher tries to use both PowerTeacher's gradebook and PowerGrade?

A: In order to maintain data integrity, the system will not accept data from PowerGrade if the teacher is using the PowerTeacher gradebook.

It is important to note, if your school or district begins the school year with PowerTeacher, your teachers will not have access to PowerGrade. If you begin the school year on PowerGrade and switch to PowerTeacher mid-year, PowerGrade can be used in offline mode, but the data will not be sent to the server when connected.

Q: Are there additional system requirements for the PowerTeacher gradebook?

A: Please see the PowerTeacher System Requirements document located on the Support Site or contact your Sales Representative for information.

Q: Will my district require additional hardware to run the new gradebook?

A: Please contact your sales representative for more details.

Q: Can you restore an individual teacher data from the day before?

A: Yes. With PowerSchool Premier, all teacher data is stored centrally and can be accessed via ODBC. Every teacher data will now become part of your regular backup and recovery process. There is no special function to restore a specific teacher.

Q: How much training is required to use PowerTeacher?

A: Pearson offers one class, broken into six modules, in the traditional training environment (instructor-class) or as a self-paced online course. Pearson spent over 18 months gathering feedback from teachers and education technology thought leaders to develop the most intuitive gradebook in the K-12 market. We are confident that your staff will require only one class to fully understand the nature, navigation, and features of PowerTeacher.

Classroom Reports and Administration Questions

Q: Is it possible to push reports from Administration to PowerTeacher?

A: Yes. Administrators can push any reports, customize the pages, and track additional information throughout PowerTeacher.

Q: Will any of the Administrative gradebook reports in PowerSchool change?

A: No. All existing reports will reflect any data that is entered into PowerTeacher. A new report called Class Attendance Audit has been added to PowerTeacher.

Q: Can Administrators enter a 'View Only' mode of teachers' gradebooks, rather than running a report?

A: The administrator will continue to have access to all teacher gradebooks, including both PowerTeacher and PowerGrade, through the use of the Teacher Gradebooks report. If an administrator needs to make a change to a specific teacher's data, the administrator can reset the password, do troubleshooting, and ask the teacher to reset their password.

Q: Does PowerTeacher provide tools for teachers to create their own reports?

A: Yes. Teachers can run reports in PowerTeacher without the need to save specialized templates. Pearson has also created templates in the gradebook that can easily be customized. To simplify the set up for various reports, PowerTeacher offers seven (7) report types for teachers with the option of saving various iterations if needed.

Q: Are teachers able to take attendance in PowerTeacher?

A: Yes.

Q: Can teachers view historical attendance information in PowerTeacher?

A: Yes. PowerTeacher includes a Class Attendance Audit that provides a matrix view of historical attendance for the entire class or all classes and a full attendance history of individual students.

Q: Is it possible to run a report in PowerTeacher for a single student?

A: Yes. The gradebook allows teachers to run a single student report by selecting one or more students in the Groups area. If a student is not in a group, a quick and easy way to report on a single student is to create a group of everyone in the class.

Teacher Tools

Q: What is a 'Set' in Student Groups?

A: A set is a way to divide the class into one or more related groups.

For example: A teacher might need to separate their class into four project teams. The set would be named "Project Teams" and each of the groups would be one of the four project teams, such as "Project Team A", "Project Team B", "Project Team C", and "Project Team D".

Other examples include: A teacher would divide the class into Special Education and General or break a class into multiple levels such as French 4 and 5 in same section.

Q: When creating Student Groups in PowerTeacher, can a student be in more than one group?

A: Students can be in one group per set. A teacher can create as many sets as needed for their class and can drag and drop students from one group to another.

Q: Are teachers able to associate assignments en masse to multiple sections?

A: Yes. This functionality in PowerTeacher is offered in a more robust manner. Rather than limit teachers with hard section associations, the gradebook allows the teacher an easy check box feature to associate assignments to a particular or multiple sections.

Q: Is a teacher's comment bank included in PowerTeacher?

A: Yes. PowerTeacher includes a comment bank where teachers are able to enter standardized or personalized comments quickly and easily.

Q: What options are available to teachers entering comments?

A: Teachers are able to enter student specific comments for individual assignments and final grade comments for every reporting period. Comments entered with a final grade appear in the Teachers Comments screen. PowerTeacher now offers a record for every reporting term comment.

Q: Can a teacher include Private Comments for their own information?

A: At this time, Private Comments are not available to teachers.

Q: Can teachers grade assignments using check marks in PowerTeacher?

A: Check marks in PowerTeacher signify that an assignment has been "collected" but not scored. Currently, there is not a score associated with a collected check mark; however, many teachers use this tool for assignments that need to be verified for completion. Parents will be able to see that the assignment has been received by the teacher.

Q: Do teachers have the capability to see the date ranges associated with the Final Grade Setup?

A: Yes. This is all available in the PowerTeacher gradebook, under the “Grade Setup” area.

Q: If a score is not published, does it weigh into a final grade?

A: Yes. Even if a score is not published, it will count toward the final grade unless the assignment or student has been marked “Exempt” for the final grade. Parents/students will see the message “Scores not yet published”, giving the parent an indication scores are on the way. PowerTeacher gives teachers control over when assignments will be available for parents and students to view.

Q: Are teachers able to “Mass Fill Assignment Scores” for either a section or a selected group of students?

A: Yes. Teachers can fill assignment scores for the entire class or unrecorded student scores. PowerTeacher also gives teachers a more robust “fill scores” option that allows teachers to mark assignments collected/late/exempt and enter grades and comments on performance for individual and/or multiple students.

Q: Does PowerTeacher allow teachers to “keep” assignments from the past and apply them to new or future sections?

A: Yes. Using the Copy Assignment feature in PowerTeacher, teachers can copy assignments from past sections and use them in current or future sections so they won’t lose historical assignments or class information.

Q: Do teachers have the ability to copy assignments from one section to another in the gradebook?

A: Yes. Teachers can paste and copy assignments from current or past sections using the Copy Assignment feature.

Q: Does PowerTeacher include a seating chart?

A: Seating charts are not available in the current version of PowerTeacher, but will be included in a subsequent update. If seating charts are critical for certain teachers, we recommend they continue to use PowerGrade until this functionality is available in PowerTeacher.

Q: Will teachers still be able to access student information two weeks before the class begins with PowerTeacher?

A: Teachers can access their student information when it the district makes it available. There is no arbitrary cut-off.

Q: Is there going to be an attendance summary grid similar to that in PowerGrade?

A: Yes. The full attendance history for every student is available in PowerTeacher.

Q: Are teachers able to change attendance outside the two-week timeframe?

A: Yes. Teachers can take and change attendance forward and back as designated by the district. This feature was available in PowerGrade and has been increased to a 45-day maximum in PowerTeacher.

Q: Is a teacher who teaches at more than one school able to access all his or her classes with a single login/single session of the PowerTeacher gradebook?

A: At this time, a teacher who teaches at more than one school within a district will require separate logins for each school.