Open Administration for Schools 18

Starting a New Year

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Contents

Starting the New Year with Open Admin

This is an outline of the steps for starting a new school year with OA (Open Admin).

- **Set the School Year** with report card periods, and any tracks (groups of grades) if there are different report card periods for different grade levels (typical in a K-12 school). Add any days, M-F, school is closed.

- **Update the Staff** adding and removing staff members and updating their homerooms and grades (for homeroom teachers only). Subject teachers do not have grade or homeroom values. Update staff contact info, etc.

- **Update the Course Masters** by adding/editing/deleting the course offerings. Use the 'Reset' button to quickly change teachers and course starting, ending terms.

- **Promote Student Grades** The student records should be updated to change their grade field to the next grade.

- **Withdraw the Graduates** Withdraw students in grade 13 (or other grade not in your school) as a group using Mass Withdraw button on Start/End of Year (EOY) page. The password is 'tansi'.

- **Enrol/Withdraw Students** Update the student population using the Enrol/Withdraw buttons on the main page.

- **Update Student Homerooms** Reset all homerooms at once, using Homeroom reset button.

- **Print/Verify Grade/Homeroom Lists** Print class lists (PDF version) and pass to teachers to confirm students in each of the grades. Get teachers to write on the handout to indicate missing students or new students.

- **Update Attendance Configuration** Update any changes required in your attendance system. Attendance methods by grade (Subject/Course or Homeroom) and the number of attendance periods per day (PPD) for each grade may be changed. New Attendance reasons. These values may only be changed before attendance begins for the year.

- **Enrol Students in Courses** Once your student population is up to date, enrol students in courses using the 'Add' button in Course Enrollment section of the Report Card page.

- **Print Course Reports** Print and pass to teachers to get them to check and note changes required to the course enrollments. Following is a more detailed outline for each of the procedures above.

Setting the School Year

A **Term**, as defined by OA, is a period of time that has a reporting event at the end of it including report cards, possibly parent-teacher interviews. If you have 3 report cards per year, you have 3 terms.

A **Track**, as defined by OA, is a grade or group of grades that have different numbers of terms and/or term start and end dates than other grades in the school. For example, a K-12 school may have grades K-7 with 3 terms per year (ie. 3 report cards) while grades 8-12 have 4 terms per year split into 2 semesters. This school would then have 2 tracks with the lower grades in one track and the higher grade in another.

You define the school year with its term dates (and possibly multiple tracks) using the **Configure School Year** button on the Start/End of Year (EOY) page.

1. The first page shows the school year, school start and school end dates. The start date is the date that teachers start at the school. This is typically a few days before students arrive so teachers can have some organizational meetings, and prepare their rooms for teaching. The school end date is similar, being the last school day for teachers (typically). They normally have a couple of administration days at the school end for marking.

The number of terms is the largest number of terms for any particular track. If you have a K-12 school with 3 terms for elementary and 4 terms for high school, you would put in 4 as the max number of terms. The number of tracks is the number of grade groupings, as explained above.

2. The next screen/page allows you to set:

   - Short descriptors for each track. This could be something like 'Elem' for elementary grades, 'High' for high school, etc.
   - Next set the **Term Description** (ie. Term 1, Term 2, etc.) and the **Starting Date** for each term and track.

3. The final screen allows you to:

   - The **End Date** for the final term. This will typically be a day or so before the end of school date you set on the first page. This is because of teacher administration days for marking, etc at year end.
   - The **Grades in each Track**. This will set the grades that apply to each track so these grades all have the same start/end dates for each term.

Once you click **Save**, these values are saved in the database. The school year is now defined.

Check this, by using the **View** button, on the Start/End of Year page under Date Management. This will ensure that the *School Year, School Start and School End* are correctly defined. As well, the term start and end dates should be defined for each term and for each track.

Add School Closed Dates

This system assumes that school runs Monday to Friday from school start (defined above) to school end. Any holidays, inservices, etc. that a school is not in session (Mon-Fri) must be added as dates that school is closed. Do this with the **Add** button in the Date Section. You can enter multiple dates closed with the **Add** button.

For example, if the Christmas Holidays run from Thursday, December 22nd to Monday, January 2nd, you would have to put in dates for Thursday, Dec 22, Friday, Dec 23 then the following week (Dec 26 - Dec 30). One record for each day.

The **Description** field is used to describe that date, such as a couple of words about the nature of the inservice, etc.

The **Day In Cycle** field is used to indicate whether this date is included as a date in a rotating schedule such as a 5 day or 6 day cycle or not. Normally when the school year is designed, inservice days do not count as days in the cycle. If a Thursday is an inservice day with no students, and the day before (Wednesday) was Day 2, then Friday will be a Day 3. However, if a school sets a professional development day later, after a division wide schedule is already set, then the Thursday PD would have a Y for Day in Cycle value. This would mean that Wedneday is Day 2, and Friday is now Day 4. Thursday was Day 3, even though no students came. This is done in order to stay in sync with a division wide schedule. If there is no division wide schedule, then all dates can be safely left at N (No), the default.

Update the Staff

Staff Management is on the EOY (Start/End of Year) page.

You use Add or Edit/Delete to make changes/add a single staff member. You can use the Reset button to make changes to a single field of all staff members at the same time. You can also use the View button for a quick overview of staff and the Report button to generate staff reports.

Important fields include:

- The **userid** is a single word to identify that person (ie. rich, dougd) and must be unique within all staff records. Once set, it cannot be changed during the school year since this ID is used for attendance and all courses, etc.

- The **password** is single phrase (with no spaces) which is not a dictionary word. (fastrust, bigtree) It can be letters or numbers based on a phrase or sentence (All Cows Eat Grass - aceg). The system has a password policy (set by the installer) in terms of the maximum and minimum length a password must be as well as the use of capital letters and symbols. The system will suggest a password, which you may override with your own (but you must pass the password policy for it to be accepted when saving the staff member information. The userid and password are used by the staff member (normally a teacher) to enter attendance and assessments, print reports, etc. on the teacher admin site and are required.

- For homeroom teachers **only** the **homeroom** field can be up to 8 characters long and matches the homeroom field in some of the student records. If more than one teacher teaches the same homeroom (ie. job sharing) then one record should be entered for each teacher with the same homeroom value in this field. Both of these names will then show up on the report card.

- The **Grade** field is used to store the grade (or grades in case of a split room) of the students in the homeroom. If the teacher teaches a multi-graded classroom (ie. a split) then the homeroom field would have a single homeroom value such as '5/6' for a grade 5 and grade 6 split; both grade 5's and 6's in the same room). However, there should be two grades entered; one for 5 and one for 6. For example, Mr. Fine, teaches a 5/6 split in a homeroom called *fine5/6*. He should have a homeroom field that has fine5/6 and both a 5 and a 6 in the grade field separated by spaces (5 6). The basic idea is that for all students in the school there will be at least one teacher that has a homeroom matching a student (in an elementary school). This is not necessarily the case in high schools and middle schools with subject specialists who are linked to their students by **course enrollments, not homeroom**. In elementary schools we can match teachers to students by their matching homeroom fields. The combination of homeroom and grade allows us to break these students into groups for reporting, attendance, etc. For high school teachers and subject specialists, **they will not have any values in homeroom or grade**, unless they have a homeroom also. Course enrollments will link these teachers to particular student groups.

- The **Position** field describes that person's job/role in the school. You may pull down additional positions for administrators who are also classroom teachers, etc. If a necessary

job description is missing for some staff members, it can be added by editing to the position variable in the schoolrole section of the configuration. This position information is used by the shared IEP (Special Ed) system when building teams for special ed students, as well as teacher site access, etc.

- The **Does Attendance** field is used by the teacher attendance checking script to make sure that this staff member will be entering attendance daily. If the attendance is done by the office, or attendance is only done weekly, or it is the teacher's responsibility and the office doesn't care, etc. this field may be ignored and left blank.

- The **Address** fields are used to store staff address information, if required. Other emergency contact information and vehicle and driver information is also available. The staff table also has additional contact information for international schools for permanent teacher contact information in his/her home country including phone and email information. This is not included by default in distributed staff templates, but can easily be added. See the section on Customization.

- The **Teaching Certificate** is used by Saskatchewan schools to record the teacher's certificate number, if she/he is submitting marks to Saskatchewan Education via the SDS system (built into this software). Otherwise, this field may be ignored. There are 8 certification fields in the staff table and may be used for a variety of purposes.

- The **Email** fields are the personal and work email addresses for that teacher.

Update the Course Masters

On the report card page in the Course Masters section, use the Reset button to quickly make changes to all courses. This will display all courses and allow you to change the teacher and the starting and ending term. Location may be added/changed if you need to be able to search for their location with student/staff search. The soritng order can be changed at the top of the page.

You can use the New Course or Edit/Delete buttons to make changes to a single course. Here are the important fields in the course masters.

- The course code may be a 4 digit Sask Education code you can get by clicking the *View Course Codes* link beside the Course Code entry. It should not be too long and cannot contain any spaces or hyphens. It may contain numbers and characters, so that if a course code is not used, a short descriptive text phrase may be used (ie. SocDev3 - for Social Development Grade 3). This is a **much better solution** than just using some random numbers.

- The section may be used to separate different offerings of the same course with different teachers and/or different terms. For example, two sections of grade 10 science. Use numbers like 1, 2, 3. Or they could be the same as the semester, to make it easier to know which semester they are offered in.

For elementary schools, the section may be used to separate two homerooms in the same grade by using values such as 2A and 2B (or 2RICH, 2BRIN) for the two grade 2 classrooms. This is will make it easier to add course enrollments for those homerooms, since the course enrollment script will allow filtering by those section values.

Otherwise, leave it at 1.

- Description and short description (for reports). Make sure it contains enough info, such as 'Math 8', 'ELA 8' to make sense on reports.

- Grade - the grade that the course is designed for. It is not necessarily the grade the course if offered to, but it must be the grade the curriculum is for.

- Start Term / End Term - The terms that the course starts and ends in.

- Teacher - the teacher of the course.

- Exam Mix - For Grade 12 courses with departmental exams, set the mix to blended. Otherwise leave blank or set to 'School'.

- Objectives - leave blank unless you have specific objectives (typical in lower grade levels). Typically the first objective is used to store the course mark for each term. If you have multiple objectives, when teachers are entering assessments for report cards, values may be added for each objective.

Promote Student Grades

The students may have their grade field updated using the Grade button on Start/End of Year (EOY) page in the Reset Student Field section. It has a promote option at the top (as well as a demote option in case you make a mistake). This will allow you to reset all of the grade fields for all current student records at one time. Clicking the 'Update Records' will update the grade in all student records.

This will also make the grade 12 (or your highest grade) go to the next grade, which is not present in your school. You can then withdraw them as a group, outlined below.

Withdraw the Graduates

On the Start/End of Year (EOY) page, under the **Archive/Delete** section, you use the Mass Withdraw button to withdraw your graduates at one time. It is password protected, to make sure no one without authority can change grades. The other options are part of normal student withdrawal.

Enrol/Withdraw Students

On the main page, click on the Enrol or Withdraw buttons in the **Student Enrollment / Withdrawal** section. You will have to enter the enrollment or withdrawal reasons, as part of the process. This will enable you get get the student population up to date.

Update Student Homerooms

On EOY page, under Reset Student Fields, click on Homeroom. Update the homerooms for all students and click on **Update Homerooms**. This will change the homeroom field for all students. The teachers' homerooms and grades must be updated first for this to work correctly.

Print/Verify Grade/Homeroom Lists

On the main page click on the Student Rosters section bar to open that section (if not open). Then click on the Classlist button. On the starting page, click on Continue to generate a PDF report of all grades/homerooms. Print and pass out to teachers to verify the data.

Attendance Configuration

The attendance periods per day (number of times attendance is taken) is setup on a 'per grade' basis. This should be set for each grade. This can only be set before attendance starts at the beginning of the year. The attendance reasons can also be changed to support attendance reporting.

Course Enrollment

Students are enrolled in courses using the **Add Enrollments** button on the Report card page, under Course Enrollment.

The top section on the first page is used to select students. Either select the homeroom from the pulldown or enter the grade. If more than one grade is desired, separate them with spaces. Unselect the 'Check Next Page' button if you want to add course enrollments for only a single/few students (ie. new students).

The bottom section is used to select the courses. Typically, we select courses by their grade, although if adding a single course it's name may be used. As well, you may select by start/end term also.

If only selecting a single course or very few, unselect the checkbox for **Next Page Checked** so that all courses are not checked on the next page.

If entering courses where there is more than one homeroom for a grade, you can filter courses in the same grade, by using their section code. If all courses for room A end in A (ie. 2A for grade 2 classroom, and 2B for the other grade 2 classroom), then you can use a value in the **Filter by Section** box, to only show the 2A or 2B courses alone. This can also be a space separated list of sections, if subject specialists have different section codes for example.

On the second page you select the courses and students to be enrolled. Select or Unselect students on the left. Select or Unselect courses on the right.

The third page allows specific students to be enrolled in specific courses. If a student is a pullout for a particular course, you can unselect them here.

Once done, you will have course enrollment records for **each** student for **each** course for **each** term (or reporting period).

Print Course reports

On the main page, under Student Rosters, click on the Course List button to print out course lists. Pass to teachers to verify that course enrollment has been done correctly. You are now ready to begin.

Attendance may be entered and reports printed. Student reports of various kinds may be printed. New students may be enrolled and others withdrawn. Discipline information may be entered, etc.