

## CONFIGURING PARENT MODULE ALERTS

- I. Introduction to Parent Module Alerts
- II. Overall Procedure to Enable Parent Module Alerts
- III. Creating Email Templates in the Parent Module
- IV. Creating Parent Module “Notifications”
- V. Configuring Attendance Codes to Trigger Alerts
- VI. Enabling the Notification Daemon to Send Alerts

### I. Introduction to Parent Module Alerts

#### What is an Alert?

An Alert is an Email message that is sent to an email address entered by a parent/guardian via their Parent Access logon in order to inform the parent/guardian that some event has occurred. Right now Genesis supports only two kinds of Alerts:

- Daily Attendance – a message is sent if a student is not present
- Gradebook grade changes – a message is sent when a Gradebook Assignment grade is entered or updated.

Parents must themselves elect to receive Alerts by configuring their parent module logon account. Before parents are given the option to enable an Alert, the Alert must be configured in regular Genesis.

#### Update Alerts

Currently, there are two types of Alerts possible: Daily Attendance and Gradebook Assignment grade updates. Each *parent*, using the options on their [Parents→Setup](#) screen, decides whether to receive Alerts. To get the Alerts to appear as options on the [Parents→Setup](#) screen, you must first configure them using both “School Parameters” and the Parents module Email Templates.

#### How Alerts Work

Alerts must be defined and configured before they can be recognized and sent. There are 3 steps to creating and enabling Alerts:

1. Creating the Email Templates the Alerts trigger
2. Defining and configuring the Notifications
3. Set the triggers that actually cause Alerts to be sent. These are different for Daily Attendance and Gradebook grades Alerts:
  - a. For Gradebook Alerts, Turn on the “scheduler” process that sends the Notifications (i.e. the Alert email messages) to the parents.
  - b. For Daily Attendance Alerts, set the “Notifications” flags on the Attendance codes that are designed to trigger alerts (e.g. Absent Full Day).

Once they are configured, the two existing types of Parent notifications are triggered in different ways:

- Attendance Alerts are real time. When a change to a student's daily Attendance is made, both the old and the new Attendance codes are examined for the need to send an Alert.
- Gradebook grade changes are examined by a "Notification Daemon" that runs at specific, scheduled, times of the day. The Notification Daemon locates unsent Gradebook notifications and sends them. The Notification Daemon is configured on the [Core→Scheduler](#) screen only by the Genesis System Administrator.

## II. Overall Procedure to Enable Parent Module Alerts

Other School Based Display Settings		
School	Grade Type to Display (Non-Elementary Grading)	Notifications for Parents **
Genesis High School:	Weighted	<u>2</u>
Smith Road Middle School:	Weighted	<u>0</u>
East End Middle School:	Weighted	<u>0</u>
Ocean Middle School:	Weighted	<u>0</u>
Anthony Elementary School:	N/A	<u>0</u>
Kingston Elementary School:	N/A	<u>0</u>
Eisenhower Elementary School:	N/A	<u>0</u>
Washington Elementary School:	N/A	<u>0</u>
Jefferson Elementary School:	N/A	<u>0</u>
Lincoln Elementary School:	N/A	<u>0</u>

\*\* Notifications work in conjunction with parent created contacts in the Parent Module

Save

Figure 1 – Bottom-most controls on the [Parents→Setup→Settings](#) screen indicates how many types of Notification Alerts have been set up for each school

### Procedure to Create Email or Gradebook Alerts for the Parents Module

1. Go to the [Parents→Setup→Email Templates](#) screen.
2. Create one Email Template to be sent to a parent for each type of Alert you wish to create. See below. See **Section III** below.
3. Go to the [Parents→Setup→Settings](#) screen.
4. Locate the **Other School Based Display Settings** label below the [Report Card / Interim Display in Parents Module](#) section at the bottom of the screen.
5. Locate the entry for your school in the set of schools:

School	Grade Type to Display (Non-Elementary Grading)	Notifications for Parents **
Genesis High School:	Weighted	<u>2</u>

Note the number of notifications is a highlighted, underlined number, E.g. 2. This is a link to the [Setup→Schools→School Parameters→Notifications](#) screen for your school.

6. Click the highlighted number link to go to the Notifications screen. At the bottom of the Notifications screen you will find the “Add Notification” control:

<b>Add Notification:</b>	Grade Levels:	Email Template:	For Parents Module:
	All grades in school		<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
	Notification Type:	Description: (Display in Parents Module)	Sequence:
			30
			Add

- a. Select the **Grade Levels** you wish to define the Alert for. Options include selecting one grade level or specifying all grade levels.
- b. Select the **Email Template** to use for this Alert
- c. Specify whether or not to enable it (set “**For Parents**” to ‘Yes’)

- d. Select the **Notification Type**. There are currently two: Attendance and Gradebook grade changes. 

Daily Attendance
Gradebook Grades
  - e. Enter the **Description** – this is the text you wish to appear on the Parent Module Setup screen. E.g. “**Send me an email when my child’s Gradebook grades are updated**”.
  - f. Specify the **Sequence #** to place this Notification in the list of Notifications on this screen.
  - g. Click  to add this Notification to the list.
7. Add additional Notifications if you desire. These are specific to the selected school. See **Section IV** below.
  8. If Gradebook Alerts are being sent, make sure the Notification Daemon is scheduled to run. See **Section VI** below.
  9. If Attendance Alerts are configured, make sure that at least one Attendance Code has been modified to trigger Alerts. See **Section V** below.

### III. Creating Email Templates in the Parent Module

The screenshot shows the 'New Email Template' screen in the Genesis Student Information System. The interface includes a navigation menu at the top with options like 'Prev', 'Core', 'Admin', 'Gradebook', 'Conduct', 'Class Attendance', 'Elem. Grading', 'Parents', and 'Nurses'. Below the navigation, there are tabs for 'Users', 'Roles', 'Email Template', and 'Settings'. The 'Email Template' tab is active, and the 'New Template' sub-tab is selected. The main form area contains the following fields and checkboxes:

- \*Code: [Text Input]
- \*Description: [Text Input]
- Password Notification:
- \*Seq: [Text Input]
- \*Subject Line: [Text Input]
- \*Body Text: [Text Area]
- Attach Documents:

Two callout boxes are present: one pointing to the 'Attach Documents' checkbox with the text 'Note the "Attach Documents" checkbox.' and another pointing to the 'Password Notification' checkbox with the text 'Note the "Password Notification" checkbox.'

Figure 2 – The Parents→Setup→Email Templates→New Template screen

#### Create an Email Template

Each Template has five required fields:

1. **Code** – a unique code that will identify this template internally
2. **Description** – A description of the template that will make sense to administrative users (that is, those users who will have to send emails to parents).
3. **Sequence #** - This number controls the position of this template in the list of templates.
4. **Subject Line** – The Subject Line for the email that will be sent
5. **Body Text** – The text of the email message to be sent.

There are two additional fields, both checkboxes:

1. **Password Notification** – Check this checkbox if this is the message to send when a Parent Logon's password is changed. Only one email template can be designated as the "Password Notification" template.
2. **Attach Documents** – Check this button to attach documents to the template that will be sent when the email is sent.

#### Procedure to Create an Email Template

1. Click the "**New Template**" tab
2. Enter a unique **Code** for this template.
3. Enter a **Description** of the template
4. Enter a **Sequence** number to position this template in the list of templates.
5. Enter a **Subject** for the email that will be sent. Subject lines can contain "email macros" that will be expanded when the template is used to send emails. See below "Email Macros".
6. Enter the text of the **Body** of the Email. The **Body** of the Email can also contain "email macros" that will be expanded when the template is used to send emails. See below "Email Macros".
7. If this email is to be the default "new password" Email template, check the "**Password Notification**" checkbox.
8. If this email is to have documents attached to it, check the "**Attach Documents**" checkbox.

Click **Save** to create the Template. If you have checked the “**Attach Documents**” checkbox, you will next have the opportunity to attach documents to the Template. See below.

### **Email Macros**

Email Macros are fields which, if embedded in a Template, are expanded when the actual emails are generated using the Template. The full list of Email Macros is given in **Appendix A: Email Reference Guide**. Examples of Macros include:

**PARENT\_LAST\_NAME** – Parent’s last name

**PARENT\_FIRST\_NAME** – Parent’s first name

**PARENT\_PASSWORD** – Password for the parent’s Logon Id

Macros can be embedded in the text of the Email Template’s Subject line or Body by surrounding the Macro with “<” and “>”: <**PARENT\_LAST\_NAME**>

## IV. Creating Parent Module “Notifications”

### A. The Notifications Screen

The screenshot displays the 'Notifications' screen within the Genesis Student Information System. The interface is for 'Genesis Township Schools' and 'Genesis High School' for the school year '2007-08'. The main content area is titled 'School Parameters' and contains a table of notification settings. Below the table is an 'Add Notification' form.

ID	School	Grade Level(s)	Notification Type	Email Template	Description (Display in Parents Module)	For Parents	Seq
1	2002	All grades in school	Daily Attendance	Attendance Alert	Alert me if my student is absent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	10
2	2002	All grades in school	Gradebook Grades	Gradebook Grades Ale...	Alert me when my child's Gradebook Grades have	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	20

At the bottom of the screen, there is an 'Add Notification' form with the following fields:

- Grade Levels: [All grades in school]
- Email Template: [Attendance Alert]
- For Parents Module:  Yes  No
- Notification Type: [Daily Attendance]
- Description: [Alert me if my student is absent]
- Sequence: [10]

A 'Save' button is located below the table, and an 'Add' button is located at the bottom right of the 'Add Notification' form.

Figure 3 – The [Setup→Schools→School Parameters→Notifications](#) Screen

A new [Setup→Schools→School Parameters→Notifications](#) screen has been added to Genesis to define the “notifications” for a School. The notification scheme may be used eventually for more than just sending Alerts to the Parent Module and this screen has been designed to accommodate a rich and varied set of notifications.

At the moment Parent Module Alerts are the only available type of notifications. The screen allows you flexibility to do the following:

- Create Gradebook and Daily Attendance Alerts that are unique to:
  - A school (This screen is defines the notifications only for a single school)
  - One grade within the school (Define Notifications for one grade or all grades)
- Modify Existing Notifications

## B. Create a Notification

### Procedure to Create Email or Gradebook Alerts for the Parents Module

1. Make sure the Email Templates for the Alerts you will create have already been created. See **Section III** above. Go to the **Parents→Setup→Email Templates** screen to view all the existing parent module Email templates.
2. Go to the **Parents→Setup→Settings** screen.
3. Locate the **Other School Based Display Settings** label below the **Report Card / Interim Display in Parents Module** section at the bottom of the screen.
4. Locate the entry for your school in the set of schools:

School	Grade Type to Display (Non-Elementary Grading)	Notifications for Parents **
Genesis High School:	Weighted	<u>2</u>

Note the number of notifications is a highlighted, underlined number, E.g. 2. This is a link to the **Setup→Schools→School Parameters→Notifications** screen for your school.


5. Click the highlighted number link to go to the Notifications screen. At the bottom of the Notifications screen you will find the “Add Notification” control:

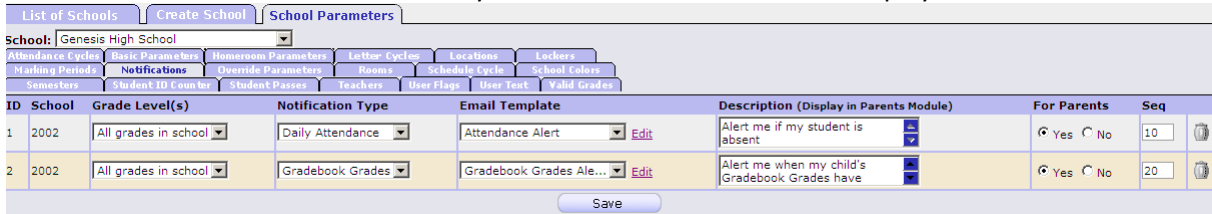
<b>Add Notification:</b>	Grade Levels:	Email Template:	For Parents Module:
	All grades in school		<input type="radio"/> Yes <input checked="" type="radio"/> No
	Notification Type:	Description: (Display in Parents Module)	Sequence:
			30
			<input type="button" value="Add"/>

- a. Select the **Grade Levels** you wish to define the Alert for. Options include selecting one grade level or specifying all grade levels.
  - b. Select the **Email Template** to use for this Alert
  - c. Specify whether or not to enable it (set “**For Parents**” to ‘Yes’)
  - d. Select the **Notification Type**. There are currently two: Attendance and Gradebook grade changes. **Daily Attendance**  
**Gradebook Grades**
  - e. Enter the **Description** – this is the text you wish to appear on the Parent Module Setup screen. E.g. “**Send me an email when my child’s Gradebook grades are updated**”.
  - f. Specify the **Sequence #** to sort this Notification in the list of Notifications on this screen.
  - g. Click  to add this Notification to the list.
6. Add additional Notifications if you desire. These are specific to the selected school.

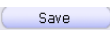

### C. Modify a Notification

**Procedure to View and/or Update Existing Attendance or Gradebook Parent Alerts for a School**

1. Go to the [Setup→Schools→List Schools](#) screen. Click on the  parameters icon for the school whose notifications you wish to view or update.
2. Click on the [Notifications](#) tab to bring up the [Setup→Schools→School Parameters→Notifications](#) screen.
3. The list of Notifications currently defined for the School will be displayed:



ID	School	Grade Level(s)	Notification Type	Email Template	Description (Display in Parents Module)	For Parents	Seq
1	2002	All grades in school	Daily Attendance	Attendance Alert	Alert me if my student is absent	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	10
2	2002	All grades in school	Gradebook Grades	Gradebook Grades Ale...	Alert me when my child's Gradebook Grades have	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes <input type="radio"/> No	20

4. To update any of the existing Notifications, make your desired updates to any of the fields click the  button. Fields include:
  - a. **Grade Levels** – an Alert can apply to one or all grade levels.
  - b. **Notification Type** – There are two: Daily Attendance and Gradebook grades.
  - c. **Email Template** – Locate and maintain the Email templates on the [Parents→Setup→Email Templates](#) screen.
  - d. **Description** – Prompt that appears on the [Parents→Setup](#) screen
  - e. **For Parents** – Switch to turn this Alert on or off. **Yes/ No.**
  - f. **Sequence #** – This number simply sorts the notification in the list on this screen.
5. To delete a Notification (instead of updating it), click the corresponding delete trashcan .

## V. Configuring Attendance Codes to Trigger Alerts

The screenshot shows the 'Modify Attendance Code' screen. The 'Notification Scheme' section is highlighted with a yellow callout box containing the text: "The two 'Notification Scheme' flag fields define whether this Attendance Code will trigger Alerts to Parents." The two checkboxes in this section are both checked.

Figure 4- The [Attendance→Codes→Modify Attendance Code](#) Screen identifying the “Notification Scheme” fields

### Configure Daily Attendance Codes to Trigger Alerts

Alerts are triggered when an individual student’s Daily Attendance status is changed either to or from a flagged Attendance Code. Each Attendance code has two separate flags, one controls what happens when a student’s Daily Attendance is changed to the Code and the other controls what happens when a student’s Daily Attendance is changed from the Code to any other code.

### Procedure to Configure Notification Flags on Daily Attendance Codes

1. Go to the [Attendance→Codes](#) screen.
2. Locate a code you wish to update and click on the “Edit” icon corresponding to it. This brings up the [Attendance→Codes→Modify Code](#) screen.
3. Locate the “Notification Scheme” checkboxes on this screen:

Notification Scheme:  Send notification email when attendance is changed to this attendance code  
 Send notification email when attendance is changed from this attendance code

Check the checkboxes as desired. The top checkbox causes an Alert to be sent when a student’s Daily Attendance code is changed **to** this code. The bottom checkbox causes an Alert to be sent when a student’s Daily Attendance code is changed **from** this code.

4. Click  to store the changes.

## VI. Enabling the Notification Daemon to Send Alerts

The “Notification Daemon” is necessary to send Gradebook Alerts.

### Configure the Email Notification Daemon

In computer language, a “daemon” is a program that runs automatically in the background to perform certain tasks over and over again. In the case of Email Alerts, the “notification daemon” determines if grades have been updated and sends the specified emails to the parents.

By default, the “notification daemon” is not enabled and Gradebook alerts are not detected and thus not sent. To turn the daemon on and run it one or more times a day, you must be a system administrator. Follow the procedure below.

### Procedure to Enable and Set Run Times for the Email Notification Daemon

1. Go to the [Core→Scheduler](#) screen.
2. Locate the line for the “Notification Daemon”:

500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Notification Daemon	Used to grab unprocessed notifications and email them to parents/users	*	*	*	8,15,19	00
-----	-------------------------------------	---------------------	--	---	---	---	---------	----

3. Check the “enable” checkbox to turn on the Notification Daemon.
4. If desired, change the hours at which the Daemon runs. By default, it is configured to run at:
  - **8am** (to capture changes made during the night)
  - **3pm** (to capture changes made during the day)
  - **7pm** (to capture changes made in the late afternoon).

The list of hours is found in the second text field from the right. Hours are in 24-hour format (0-23 rather than 1-12a/pm). If you wish to change the minute of the hour at which the daemon will run, replace the 00 in the rightmost text field with a 2-digit number between 00 and 59. This specifies the minute of the hour the daemon will run. The default (“00”) is “on the hour”.

5. Click  to store the changes and enable the daemon.

### Procedure to Disable the Email Notification Daemon

1. Go to the [Core→Scheduler](#) screen.
2. Locate the line for the “Notification Daemon”:

500	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Notification Daemon	Used to grab unprocessed notifications and email them to parents/users	*	*	*	8,15,19	00
-----	-------------------------------------	---------------------	--	---	---	---	---------	----

3. **Uncheck** the “enable” checkbox to turn on the Notification Daemon.
4. Click  to store the changes and enable the daemon. You do NOT need to remove the run times. Disabling the daemon is sufficient.