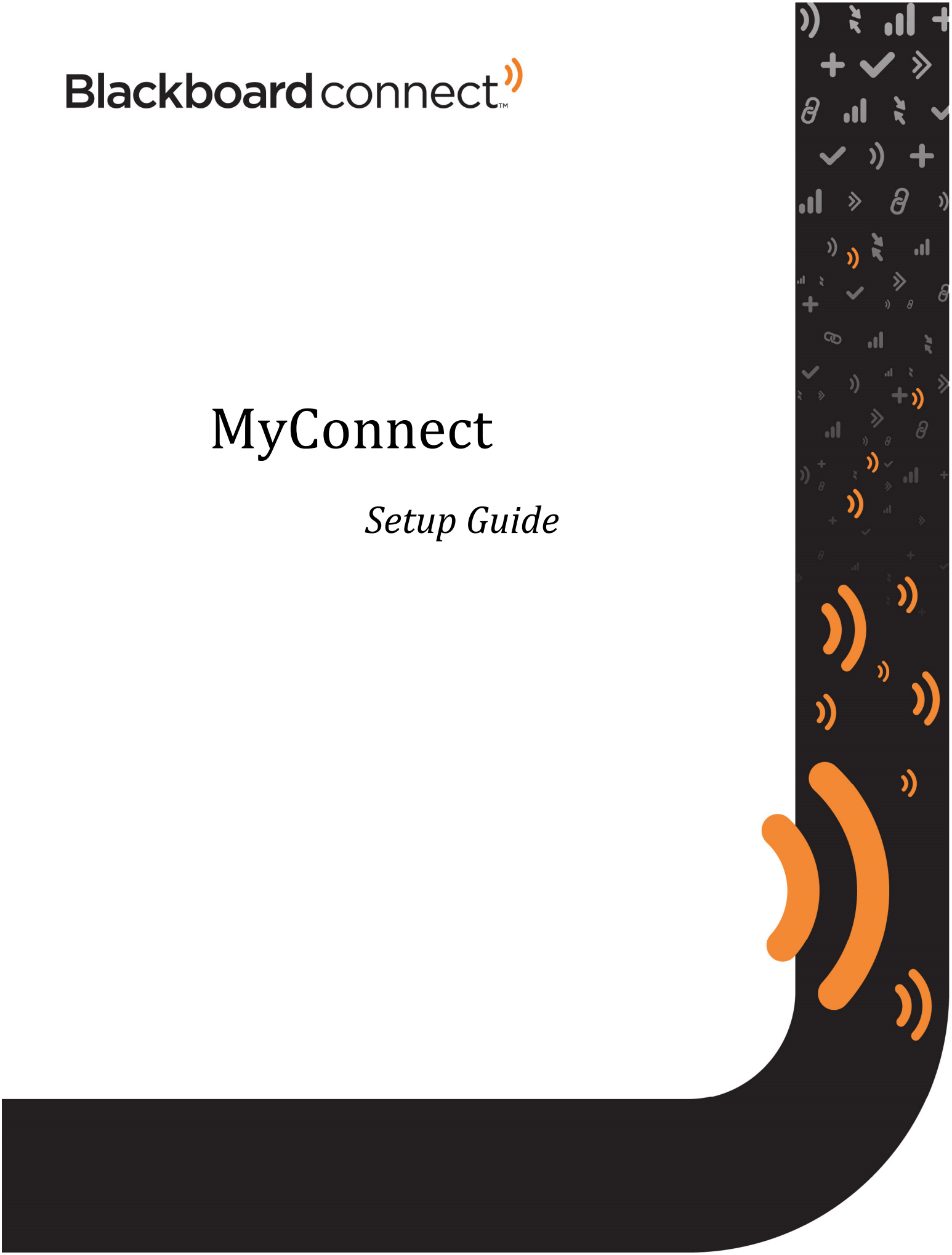
Blackboard connect™

MyConnect

Setup Guide



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Welcome to Blackboard MyConnect!

Blackboard MyConnect can help your institution expand your recipient base while giving your students, faculty, staff, and parents more control over the messages they want to receive.

Once your MyConnect Site is set up and activated, your recipients will be able to log in and manage their contact information. Any changes a recipient makes in MyConnect will not be overwritten when you import contact information into your Connect 5 account.

Other options MyConnect offers are:

Open and Closed Sites
Choose between opening your site to your community and restricting access to only those associated with your institution.

Customizable Appearance
Brand your MyConnect Site with your school colors and logo! Simply provide Client Care with your color specifications and an image, and we'll do the rest.

IT-Free Hosting
MyConnect Sites are hosted on Blackboard Connect's servers so you don't have to allocate resources to keep the website up and running.

Setting up your MyConnect Site

Designing and branding the look and feel of your MyConnect Site is an important step. Not only does the design of your site create a consistent look and feel for your institution, it also helps your recipients know that they are logging into a trustworthy and recognizable website.

To help make selecting your customizations easier, Blackboard Connect provides a Site Design Form for you to download, complete, and email to Client Care.

The customization options allow you to:

- Choose a registration type.
- Create a partially customized URL for your site.
- Provide a banner image (optional).
- Set password expiration and strength preferences.
- Determine how many past messages your recipients will see when they log into the site.
- Pick background colors or images.
- Set a login and homepage layout.

This guide will review each available option that appears on the Site Design Form. If you need any assistance in completing this form, Client Care will be glad to help out!

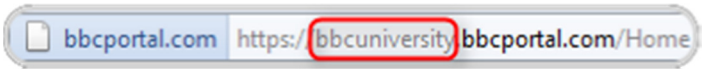
Site Information

The first section of the Site Design Form is to gather basic information regarding your new MyConnect Site. The required fields in this section will allow you to:

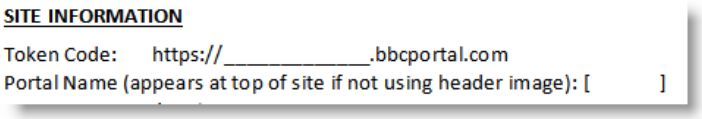
- Establish your token code (URL).
- Create a name for your Institution's MyConnect Site.
- Determine the site registration mode.

Token Code

The Token Code is required and will be used as part of your MyConnect Site's URL.



Usually it contains your institution's name or abbreviated name. It must be unique, and can only contain alphanumeric characters. Spaces and symbols are not permitted.



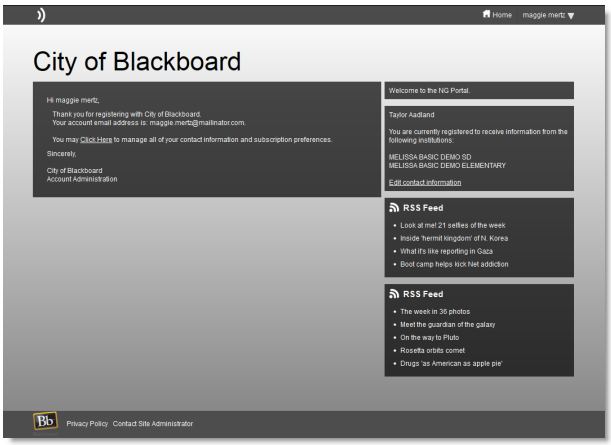
Site Name

This required field provides a name for your MyConnect Site. This will most likely be the name of your Institution. However, regardless of what you want the name of your site to be, it should be a name your recipients will be able to recognize and associate with your institution.

Your site name will appear at the top of all pages in your MyConnect Site (unless you decide to use a header image) and will be referenced throughout the MyConnect Site.

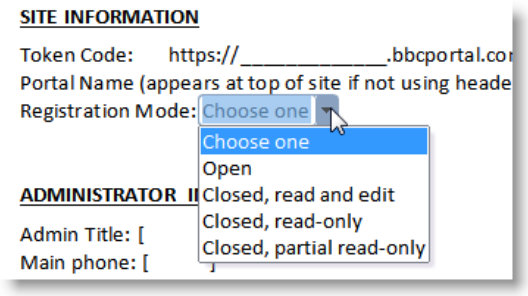
NOTE: The site name is a required field even if you opt to use a header image.

Site name (no image)



Choosing a Registration Mode (Site Type)

You can set up your site to be either "open" or "closed." If the site is closed, a user must associate themselves with someone in your Connect database. If the site is open, anyone can sign up to receive notifications, regardless of whether or not they are associated with someone in your Connect database.



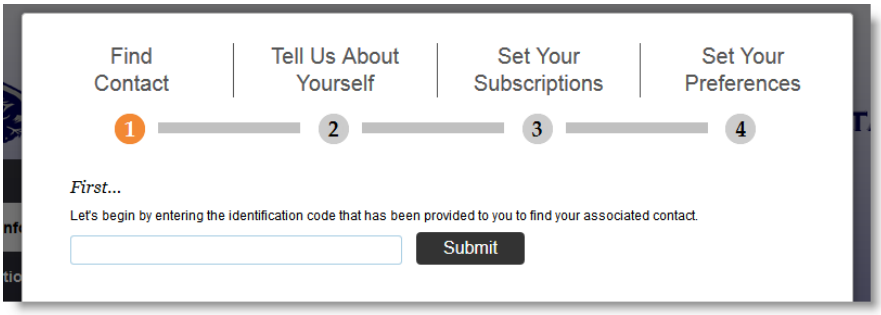
Open Sites

Select **Open** to allow anyone from inside or outside your community to create an account and opt into receiving your messages. Open MyConnect Sites allow your recipients to add up to 10 phones, 10 emails, and 10 text numbers, edit or delete them at any time, and view and edit preferences so they can manage their information at their convenience.

Closed Sites

A **Closed** Site only allows contacts associated with your institution to subscribe to messages and set preferences for how they receive those messages. There are three types of Closed MyConnect Sites: **view and edit, read-only, and partial read-only.**

Regardless of which type of Closed Site it is, once a user creates their account and logs in for the first time, they will be asked to provide the identification code for a contact.



This identification code is the Reference Code in a Recipient's contact record in Connect 5 (usually a student or employee ID).

If you are implementing the K-12 Central app, you must choose one of the Closed types if you want parents to be able to receive push notifications that pertain specifically to their students.

If you decide to offer a Closed MyConnect Site, you will need to choose between the three types.

1. **Closed, view and edit:** Lets users view, add, edit, and delete phone numbers, text numbers, and email addresses. Note that any changes they make are not reflected in the Recipients tab of Connect 5. The MyConnect Admin can look up a specific MyConnect user, or run the Portal Contact User report, to view the contact information each user has entered.

2. **Closed, read-only:** Lets users view their phone numbers, text numbers, and email addresses, but they are all "locked"--they cannot add new ones, edit existing ones, or delete anything. To make changes, they must contact the institution. The institution then makes the change in their database. When a new import occurs, the corrected contact information is uploaded, and the MyConnect user is notified to log in, confirm the changes are correct, and update their preferences.

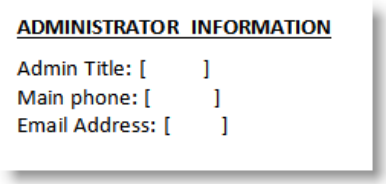
3. **Closed, partial read-only:** Lets users view their phone numbers, text numbers, and email addresses, but they can only edit or delete ones that are "unlocked." The MyConnect Admin decides which contact points to lock down. For instance, perhaps the institution wants the home phone to be locked, so users cannot change it without contacting the site. But they want users to be able to make updates to other contact points. If the user needs to remove or edit a locked number or email, they must contact the institution, and the updates occur as described above in the read-only option.

Switching site types

- An Open MyConnect Site cannot be switched to Closed.
- A Closed MyConnect Site cannot be switched to Open.
- A View and Edit Site can be switched to a Read-Only or Partial Read-Only.
- A Read-Only or Partial Read-Only Site cannot be switched to View and Edit.

Administrator Information

The **Administrator Information** section consists of three required fields that list the contact information for your institution's designated MyConnect administrator.



Admin Title

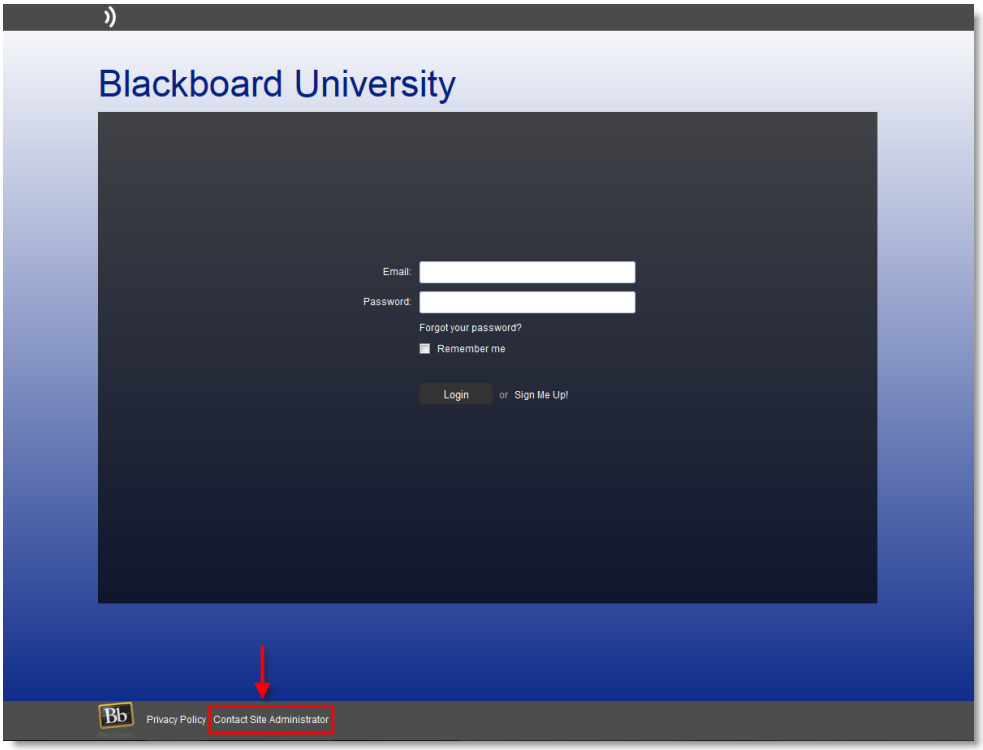
Provide the title of the person who will be administering your MyConnect Site.

Main Phone Number

Include a main contact phone number for the MyConnect Site Administrator.

Email

Provide an email address for the MyConnect administrator. This email address will be used when one of your Recipients clicks the **Contact Site Administrator** link on the bottom of your MyConnect Site's page.

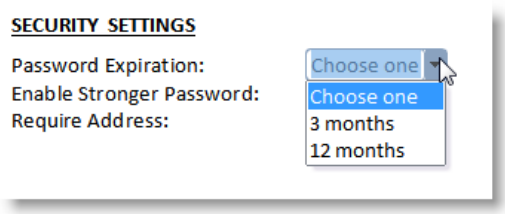


Security Settings

MyConnect offers security options for password expiration frequency and password strength. In addition, you can require users to provide a street address if you wish.

Password Expiration

Passwords can expire either every 3 months, or every 12 months. After initial setup, the MyConnect user would be required to pick a new password either every 3 months or every year.



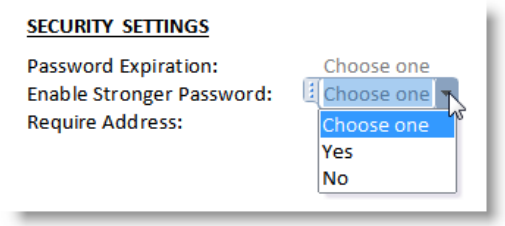
Password Strength

The standard password requirements are:

- At least 8 characters
- At least one capital letter and one lower case letter
- At least one number

If you want to require a stronger password, select Yes for "enable stronger password." Then it will need to contain:

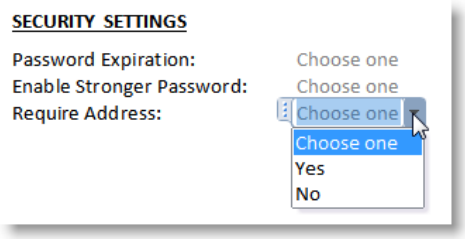
- At least 10 characters
- Characters from at least 3 of the following 4 types:
  - Lower case letters
  - Upper case letters
  - Numbers 0-9
  - Symbols



Require address

If set to Yes, users will be required to enter a street address when registering. This will allow you to select recipients based on their location. (Note: The mapping feature must be enabled for your Connect 5 account in order to select recipients in this fashion.)

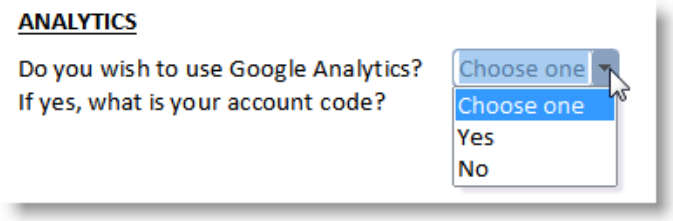
- K12 and Higher Ed: Recommended setting is No
- Cities and government agencies: Recommended setting is Yes



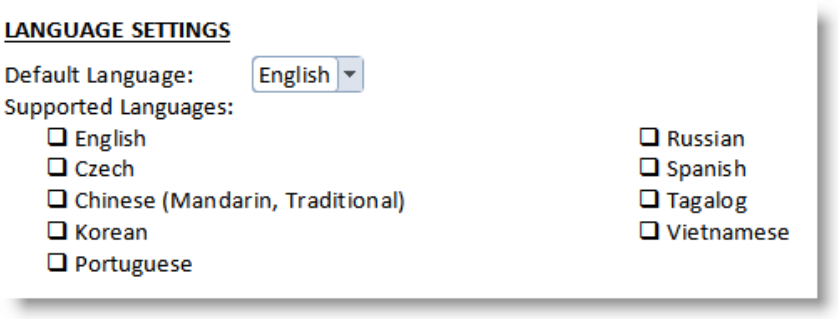
Analytics

Blackboard gives you the option to pair your MyConnect Site to a **Google Analytics** account if you wish to track your site usage and traffic.

If you would like to use your institution's Google Analytics account, select Yes from the drop down and provide the Account Code in the field provided.



Language Settings



Setting the default language

Select a default language for your MyConnect Site using the default language drop down in the Site Design Form. Most clients will want to set the default as English.

Supported Languages

In addition to your site's default language, you can also select supported languages. This will allow users to "localize" the web site and view standard sections of it in their selected language. The languages you select on the Site Design Form will be displayed at the bottom of the MyConnect Site.

If you select any supported languages besides English, you will need to provide content for the Login Page and Home Page in those languages.

Note: Connect 5 messages displayed in MyConnect will not be automatically translated by selecting a language at the bottom of the page. Rather, your contacts will be able to select their preferred language for messages during the registration process. If message content is created in their preferred language, they will receive it. Otherwise, they will receive the message in English.

Look & Feel

The Look and Feel section of the Design Form allows you to specify your site's colors or indicate whether you would like to use images instead of colors and header text.

LOOK & FEEL

All colors should be specified using an HTML color code. If using a header and/or background image, please attach the graphics file(s) when submitting this form.

Header
Use Header Image: Choose one
Header Font Color (if not using header image): [ ]

Background
Top Background Color: [ ]
Bottom Background Color: [ ]
Use Background Image: Choose one

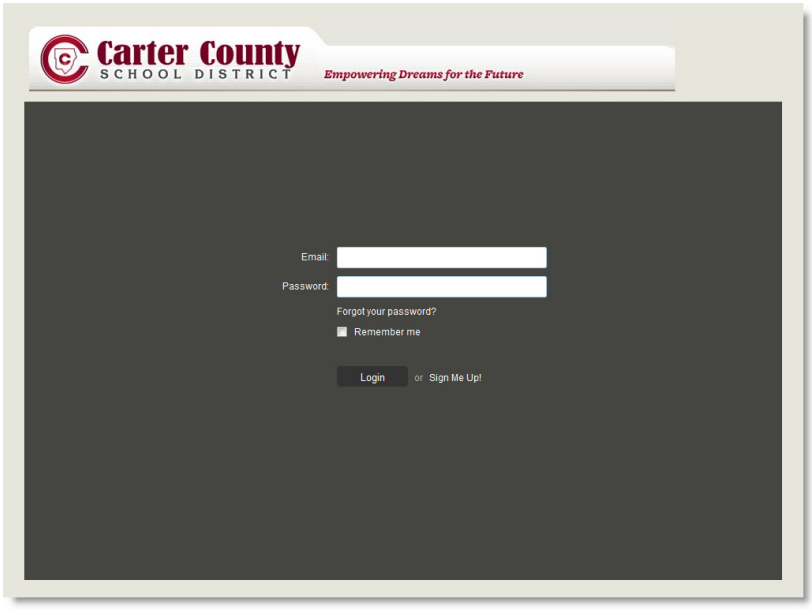
Header Image

Use the drop down on the Design Form to indicate whether you want to use a header image (such as a logo, banner, or other graphic) to be displayed on your MyConnect Site, instead of the site name.

Please make sure to include your image when you email this form back to Client Care. Your image must:

- Be a JPG, PNG, or GIF file
- Have maximum dimensions of 960 pixels wide by 100 pixels high
- Be no larger than 45kb.

Sample of header image

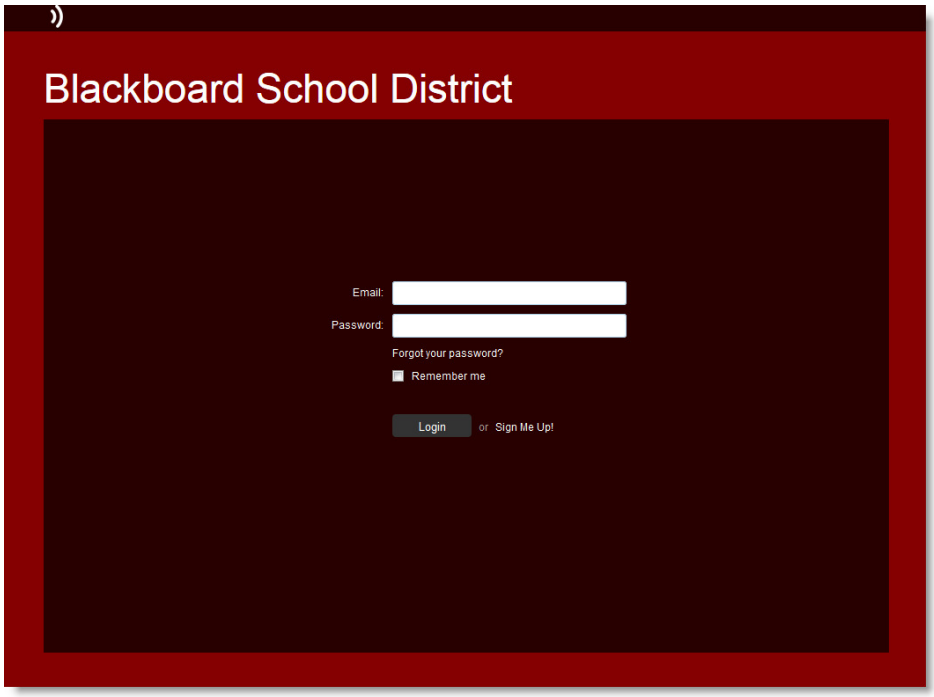


Header Font Color

If not providing a header image, please provide your desired HTML color code in the field provided. The color you designate in this field will be applied to your site name at the top of your MyConnect Site.

If you do not know the HTML color code for the color you would like to use, please view this website for information on how to obtain this value.

Header font color shown in white (#FFFFFF)



Background Colors

You can choose to have one solid color or two colors that will create a horizontal gradient on your page (one color on top blending in to the second color on the bottom).

This website (http://html-color-codes.info/) will provide you with more information on HTML color codes.

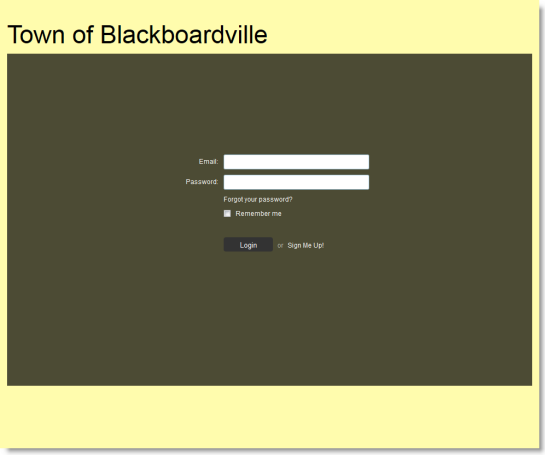
Choosing a two-color gradient for your background

If you would like to use a two-color gradient, provide the HTML color codes for each color in the appropriate fields on the Design Form. The color code provided in the Top Background Color will appear at the top and blend with the Bottom Background Color.

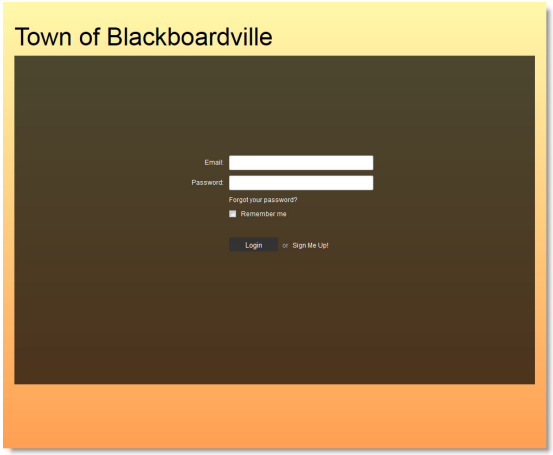
Choosing a single color for your background

If you would rather use only one background color, simply enter the same HTML code for the top and bottom background color fields.

One-color background



Two-color background



Background Image

You can also use an image for your background by selecting Yes where it asks on the Site Design Form.

THIS DOES NOT REPLACE THE BACKGROUND COLOR CODES! If you plan on using an image, we recommend selecting background colors that compliment your image.

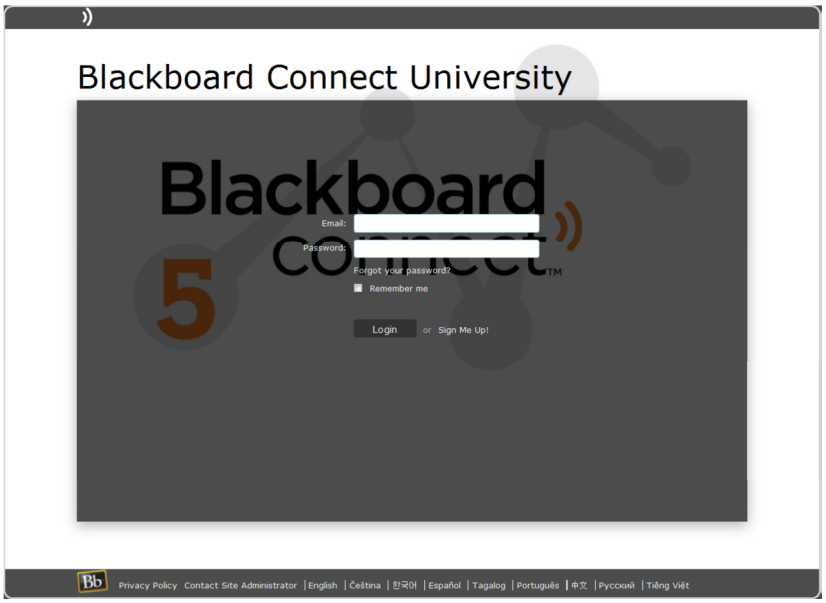
Your background image must:

- Be a JPG, PNG, or GIF file.
- Be no larger than 1920 pixels wide by 1600 pixels high.
- Be no larger than 500kb.

NOTE: For best results, a 1920 x 1600 pixel image is recommended.

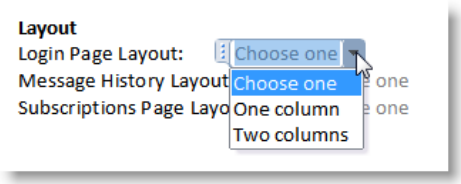
Your image will be placed in the background of your MyConnect Site.

The shaded overlay in which the login fields appear cannot be removed or customized.



Page Layouts

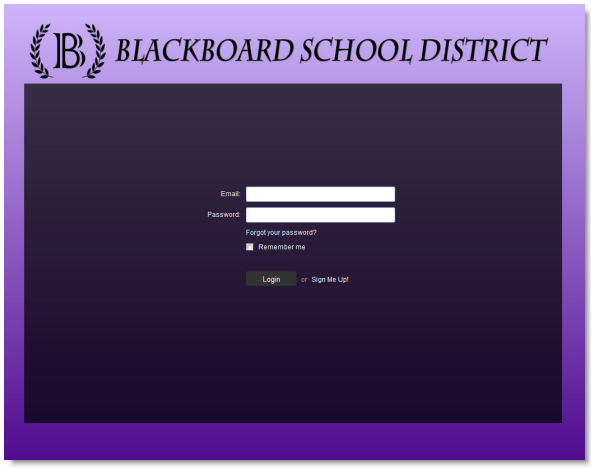
Page layouts allow you to specify how your home page and login screens will appear to your MyConnect users.



Login Page Layout

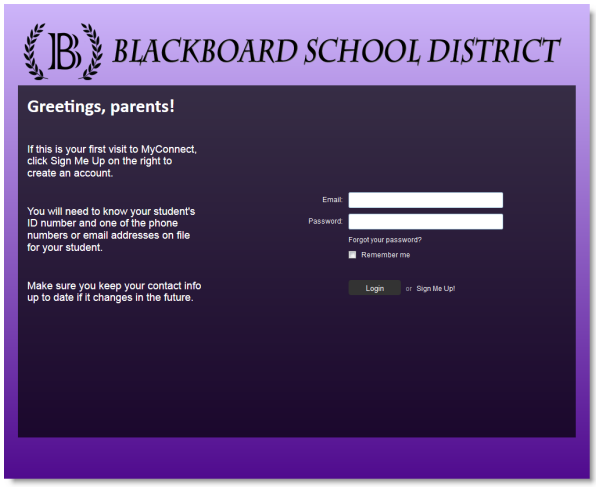
One Column Layout

The one column layout will position the login fields in the center of the screen, and no other text can be presented to the user.



Two Column Layout

The two column layout will justify the login fields to the right, allowing room on the left for you to include a welcome message or a set of instructions.



If you chose the two column layout for your login page, you can provide the content in the **Login Page** section of the Site Design Form.

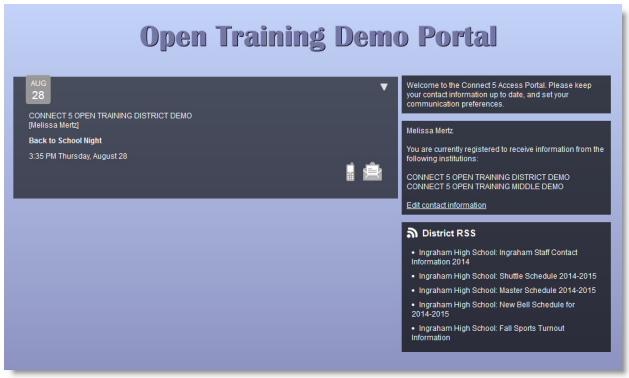
Home Page Layout

Once your recipients successfully log into MyConnect, they will be presented with the site's home page.

One of the main features of MyConnect is the ability for users to hear and read the most recent phone, email, and text messages that have been sent to them. In the layout section of the Site Design form, yYou can choose **where** the messages display.

Below are examples of the message history displaying on the left side and the right side.

Left side message history

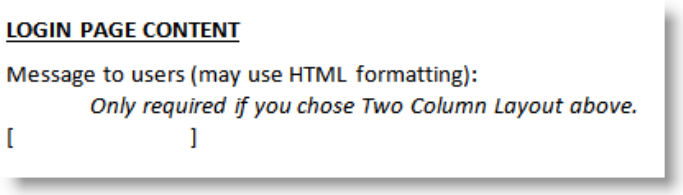


Right side message history

Content

Login Page Content

If you chose a two column layout for the login page, enter your desired message to users in the field provided on the Site Design Form. You may use HTML formatting to adjust font size, color, and properties such as bold and italics.


LOGIN PAGE CONTENT

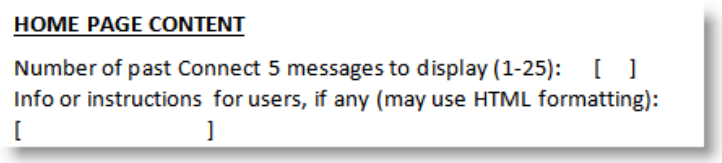
Message to users (may use HTML formatting):
Only required if you chose Two Column Layout above.
[ ]

Home Page Content

In addition to specifying where past messages display for users, you may also choose how many to display: as few as one past message, or as many as 25 past messages.

There is also a section on the home page where you can communicate information to users such as whom to contact for assistance, the importance of keeping contact information up to date, or any specific directions you may want to provide.

Enter your desired content in the field provided on the Site Design Form. Again, HTML formatting is allowed.


HOME PAGE CONTENT

Number of past Connect 5 messages to display (1-25): [ ]
Info or instructions for users, if any (may use HTML formatting):
[ ]

RSS Feeds

If desired, you can have RSS feeds display on your MyConnect home page. On the Site Design Form, specify the following for each feed:

- Name or title of the RSS feed
- RSS feed URL
- How many RSS items you would like the recipient's homepage to display (1-8)

Appendix

FAQ's

If a MyConnect user changes a phone number or email in their account, will it be reverted to the original when a data file is imported into Connect 5?

The contact information displayed in the Recipients tab of Connect 5 will always reflect what was in your import file. However, if the contact has a blue man icon next to it, this indicates there is a MyConnect user associated with that contact. As a result, the contact info in MyConnect takes precedence over all contact information in Connect 5. Changing a number via import or via manual edit in Connect 5 will have no impact on how that contact receives their messages.

Who can access and use my MyConnect Site?

Anyone can create a MyConnect account. If you create an Open Site, anyone can subscribe to receive your messages. If you have a Closed Site, then only individuals with a Reference Code can associate themselves to a contact already in your database. The association process is required in order to subscribe to any messages.

How long does it take to activate a MyConnect Site?

Client Care can create a MyConnect Site in just a few minutes. However, due to the multiple options for design, layout, and functionality, the decision-making process can take a little more time. To expedite this process, we have provided a Design Form for you to indicate the options and features you would like to enable in your site.

Can I have more than one site?

Yes! In fact, many clients opt to have both a Closed Site for associated contacts, and an Open Site for the general community. For more information on using multiple sites, please contact Client Care.

HTML Color Codes

Use the following website: http://html-color-codes.info/ to find the HTML color codes for the colors you would like to use.

Contacting Client Care

If you have any questions regarding the information in this guide, you can contact us 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Phone Support: ***1-866-360-2155***

Email Support: ***connectsupport@blackboard.com***