

Web Site Content Guidelines

I. Purpose

The Hamilton County Schools website (<http://www.hcde.org>) has been established as a dynamic forum to provide the community with information regarding Hamilton County Schools. It serves as a communication vehicle to publicize the goals, accomplishments, activities, and services of each school within our district. Intended audiences include: students, parents, employees, prospective employees, and the community at large. All content contained on the web site is consistent with the educational aims of the District.

II. Student Safeguards

The name of a student will not be published in conjunction with a picture or recording of that student on any Hamilton County Schools website if their parent or legal guardian has expressly requested, they be excluded from such activity. There will be a record of this in the school's main office.

Personal information about students will not be published unless written consent is provided by their parent or legal guardian.

Student work may be published on a Hamilton County Schools website with expressed written consent of their parent or legal guardian under the following guidelines:

All student work published must pertain to a class project, course, or other school-related activity.

Web page documentation may not include any information which indicates the exact physical location of a student at a given time in the future.

No student e-mail addresses should be published on a Hamilton County Schools website.

Filenames for web pages and images should be checked to ensure that students' names do not appear in the name. (e.g., johndoe.gif) Personal web pages for students are not permitted as part of Hamilton County Schools websites. Links to personal student web pages from Hamilton County Schools websites are likewise not permitted.

III. Content Guidelines

All web pages must comply with all state, federal, and international laws concerning copyright, intellectual property, and use of telecommunications.

The content of Hamilton County schools' and the district web pages must adhere to the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.0](#) which defines how to make Web content more accessible to people with disabilities. Accessibility involves a wide range of disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, speech, cognitive, language, learning, and neurological disabilities. Although these guidelines cover a wide range of issues, they are not able to address the needs of people with all types, degrees, and combinations of disability. These guidelines also make Web content more usable by older individuals with changing abilities due to aging and often improve usability for users in general.

The content of Hamilton County schools' and the district web pages must be consistent with the educational aims of the Hamilton County Board of Education and its policies and regulations. All subject matter should relate to curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, general school-related information that is appropriate and of interest to others, or information that relates to schools within the District.

It shall be the responsibility of the school principal to be aware of and approve all content on their school's web pages. Content should be updated on a regular basis. Updates should be approved by the principal.

All web pages should be free of spelling and grammatical errors.

All external links included on web pages must be evaluated and monitored for appropriate educational content. The following disclaimer should appear on every web page that contains external links: "Neither _____ School nor Hamilton County Schools is responsible for questionable or controversial content that may be found through links external to this site."

External links should be periodically checked to ensure validity and appropriate content. Common courtesy, but not law, dictates that webmasters of externally-linked sites be notified of use of such links.

School web pages should not serve as community bulletin boards. A link to the city or community web page is suggested to reference community events.

At minimum, a school website should contain the following information: school name, address, telephone number, school hours, grades taught, principal's name, an e-mail address for the principal and/or the principal's designee, identification as a Hamilton County school, a link to the school webmaster's e-mail address, dress code / uniform requirements, the parent / student handbook, school supply lists and school fees. There must also be a link to the MyPaymentsPlus system as well as Online Registration and the Anonymous QuickTip form, within the schools QuickLink section.

Web pages should not contain links to unfinished pages. "Under construction" is not a professional way to create a web page.

Pages should be structured for clarity, readability, and ease of navigation.

Guidelines for Staff Directory / Teacher pages:

The minimum requirements for all teacher profiles are as follows:

A professional or professional looking headshot photo. This should look like the photo taken at your school by Lifetouch or other commercial school photography company. Contact information, short introductory BIO, grades / classes taught. A list of any specific supplies needed. Within the profile page, there is a field to add the URL of the teacher's web page. This can be the pages provided by your school webmaster or to an approved external website such as Google Classroom, Edmodo, Classroom Dojo, etc.

Please use a Document Container page for any Word documents, PDFs, etc. and then link to these documents from any other pages you wish to access these from.

To keep your page consistent with the template chosen by your school's administration, do not apply any third-party templates even if they are available through our website vendor.

There can be no commercial activity or advertisements on or linked to from your website without written approval from the Superintendent of Schools.

Folder, web page and file names must not contain spaces. Red Bank.jpg is incorrect, red_bank.jpg is correct.

Limit or omit the use of animated .gifs on your website. Since these can put certain users at risk of having a seizure, it is best to eliminate them all together.

Do not include a picture of text such as an event brochure unless it is accompanied by the actual text as well. Pictures cannot be read by assistive technology, i.e. screen readers.

IV. Helpful Hints:

It is customary to use an underline to emphasize a point or idea in a written document. This is a bad practice when creating a web page as users expect words with an underline to be a hyperlink on the web page. Use bold or italics attributes for emphasis instead.

“[Click here](#) to view or dress code” preceding a web link is also bad form. It is much better practice to type something like: “We invite you to view our [dress code](#).” This allows the users eyes to immediately scan for the content they are seeking.

When creating a hyperlink to a document such as a .pdf or to an external website, be sure to have the hyperlink open in a new window so that the user will stay on your web page while viewing this information. All WYSIWYG editors allow you to create this type of hyperlink.

Bulleted lists of links are fine if there are two or three. Any more than this and it is advisable to embed the links in a paragraph of text which better explains what the links are for.

Custom domain names can be purchased and pointed to your website. This is handled by the company that you purchase the domain from not Hamilton County Schools. Many of these services offer a control panel that will allow you to configure this yourself. There will be a cost involved.

For a complete list of best practices, current trends and technologies, Internet standards and an exhaustive library of tutorials, please visit w3schools.com.