

# Harrisonburg City Public Schools

## Website Guidelines

Web pages are public documents welcoming the outside world to the individual classroom, school or school district, while at the same time linking students and staff to outside sources of information. Schools, classes, departments, staff members, teams, and clubs can post and maintain individual websites on the Harrisonburg City Public Schools web server which is monitored by the technology staff. In addition, web pages may be created for HCPS and hosted on outside servers. This document provides guidelines for the publishing of websites in both instances. HCPS has the discretion to deactivate non-compliant websites hosted on our server or remove the link to non-compliant websites hosted on outside servers.

Website: All pages of a school, classroom, staff member, department, team, or club.

Home Page: The initial page of a school, classroom, staff member, department, team, or club.

### Content

1. All content shall conform to school board policies, established school guidelines and copyright laws, and shall not violate federal, state or local laws. The technology director or designee shall be in charge of monitoring compliance and ensuring that the district web site does not contain unauthorized use of copyrighted material.
2. District, school, class, department, teacher, student, team, and club websites shall contain no reproduction of any material, such as logos, artwork, graphics, or clip art, without written permission from the copyright owner. No text, graphics, multimedia or copyrighted material from other websites will be used without the written permission of the copyright owner. Unless a website contains an explicit statement that graphics and text are in the public domain, content is considered copyrighted, and it is necessary to obtain permission. Only the copyright owner may provide permission. Staff or students engaged in producing web pages must submit documentation to technology director or designee and post a notice at the bottom of the web page for each use of copyrighted material. The notice should credit the original owner, state how/when permission was obtained, and include the URL of the original source, if applicable.
3. Be aware of the *Web Content Accessibility Guidelines* <http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/> and *Section 508* guidelines <http://www.section508.gov/>. These sites provide information for making pages accessible to all users, often through simple modifications such as the use of scalable text and alt tags for images.
4. All websites and links shall be academic, school, or department related.
5. Attention should be paid to the appearance of the page on various browsers, platforms, and screen sizes. Test on popular browsers (Internet Explorer, Safari, and Firefox) and operating systems (Windows and Mac).
6. Only organizations officially affiliated with HCPS (PTA's, Partners in Education) may publish websites on the district network. Other organizations or institutions, even though their purpose is educational, may not publish their site on the district network. Links and recognition to those outside sites (including business partners) may be included on district or school sites.
7. Blogging sites are changing constantly so they will need to be reviewed for appropriateness as class web pages. If blogs are used as class webpages, the webmaster must moderate comments, the navigation buttons (next blog, etc.) must be removed, and

- the blog must be monitored daily to ensure appropriate content.
8. Commercial designers of websites may be identified on the home page. The identification information may include the designer's name and e-mail address but should not include a link to the designer's commercial website.
  9. The home page of each website must contain the site name (school, class, department, staff member, team, club), a link to the school home page (or district home page), and the date when it was last updated.
  10. Websites may not contain commercial advertisements. In special circumstances, links to commercial websites may be allowed with permission from the technology staff.
  11. Avoid using page elements that require plug-ins that are not freely available on all major platforms. If a plug-in or helper application, such as Adobe Reader, is needed to view the site, a link to that download site may be used.
  12. Students may not post a **personal** web site on district servers. Web pages created as part of class requirements may be posted by a teacher only if they meet all guidelines.
  13. Webmasters should make a reasonable effort to ensure that posted information is kept up-to-date, that links to other sites are still active, and that content on the remote site is still appropriate. HCPS has discretion to deactivate out-of-date, non-compliant websites with notice.
  14. Correct grammar and spelling must be used.
  15. Whenever possible, documents that are posted on the website should be available in a format such as .pdf that is viewable on all major platforms without requiring proprietary software. Links to files, other than web pages, should identify file type (i.e., Word, PDF).
  16. Do not use "under construction" or "coming soon" pages.
  17. Large images, sound files, computer-specific fonts, and bright, hard-to-read backgrounds should be avoided or used sparingly. Select fonts such as Verdana or Times New Roman which are legible in all platforms and browsers. Consideration should be given to load time.
  18. Vertical scrolling should be avoided on the home page of a site. Pages should not require horizontal scrolling when viewed at 800 x 640 resolution.
  19. All web pages, once posted, are copyrighted; however, it is a good idea to include a blanket copyright statement (© 2006 HHS Debate Club).
  20. A disclaimer for links outside of the site should appear on the home page of the website:  
*As with all material found on the internet, teachers and parents should be very careful in allowing students to explore these sites unless direct supervision is provided.  
Harrisonburg City Schools is not responsible for the content of external sites linked from HCPS websites.*

## **Publishing of Student Information, Work, and Images**

Photographs, video clips, and depictions of student work add much interest and visual appeal to websites. They can help with understanding of activities and programs. Teachers should inform parents if they plan to post student photographs, video, audio, or work on their class pages.

1. It is the teacher's responsibility to make sure that the parent has not opted out of relevant portions of the non-participation document before posting student information, work, or images. See *Notice of Technology Usage by Students*.
2. A student's full name, address, parent name, phone number, or other personal information CANNOT be posted on any web page.
3. Only the first name or the first name and initial of last name of the student may be associated with posted work. The teacher will need to retain a list of their students who do not have permission to have their work posted.
4. Student photos should illustrate group activities. Captions CANNOT identify the students by name. Avoid using identifiable pictures of an individual student except in certain circumstances such as those events that are publicly attended or reported (for example, recognizing the winners of a spelling bee or track meet). Students must not be identified by name in audio or video clips.
5. Published documents shall NOT include the child's full name (see #3), home address, phone number, or the full names of other family members.

## **Links**

An advantage of the internet is the ability to guide users to related sites. Webmasters are encouraged to use links within the following guidelines:

1. Links may not conflict with any HCPS rules and regulations.
2. Links to potentially offensive sites are not permitted.
3. The division technology staff shall be the final judge of what is offensive or inappropriate and may remove inappropriate links without notice.
4. E-mail links are permitted only to district or staff e-mail addresses. Links to student e-mail addresses or non-HCPS email addresses are not allowed.
5. It is the responsibility of the website owner to periodically verify links.

## **Uploading Websites**

1. A well-organized web space will facilitate updating and maintaining the website. Folders may be used for images and related pages.
2. The home page of a school, classroom, club, department, or team should be named *default* or *index* (lower-case). This file should reside at the root level of the web space allotted for the school, class, department, team, or club.
3. File names should be lowercase and one-word with either the .htm, .html, or .shtml extension.
4. Images should have one of the following extensions: .gif, .jpg, or .png. Images should be resized prior to being posted on the website (size should be no larger than 640 x 480). Photo editing software such as Microsoft Photo Editor or Graphic Converter should be used since resizing with the webpage editor does not change the size of the file. Websites cannot take advantage of a resolution higher than 72 dpi.
5. All staff members have been allotted web space. Departments, teams, and clubs may request space from the technology staff.
6. Websites of HCPS schools, classrooms, departments, staff members, teams, or clubs that do not reside on the HCPS web server may be linked from an existing HCPS website with approval by the technology staff providing they adhere to the guidelines presented in this document.
7. Directions for creating and uploading staff webpages are available on the Technology Page of the HCPS website.

## Harrisonburg City Public Schools Checklist for Web Pages

*This checklist may be used to help ensure that webpages meet the requirements of the Web Page Guidelines. It does not need to be turned in.*

- \_\_\_ 1. Content conforms to school board policies, established school guidelines and copyright laws as well as local, state, and federal laws.
- \_\_\_ 2. Website has been viewed with different computers using various browsers, such as Internet Explorer, Safari, and Firefox; all links have been checked and images display properly.
- \_\_\_ 3. Homepage, named index or default, contains the site name, a link to the school home page, the date it was last updated, and a copyright notice (optional).
- \_\_\_ 4. Correct grammar and spelling is used.
- \_\_\_ 5. No “under construction” or “coming soon” pages or images are used.
- \_\_\_ 6. All fonts are legible in popular platforms and browsers.
- \_\_\_ 7. Disclaimer for links outside of the site are included on the homepage; no potentially offensive links or links to sites promoting commercial, political, or religious interests.
- \_\_\_ 8. No student personal information (i.e., full name, address, phone number, parent names) is posted.
- \_\_\_ 9. No students with published work, audio, video, or photographs have submitted a non-participation form.
- \_\_\_ 10. Images are in the .jpg, .gif, or .png format with a resolution of 72 dpi, and have been appropriately resized; all graphics are copyright free.
- \_\_\_ 11. Time-sensitive content will be updated as needed.
- \_\_\_ 12. A notice is posted at the bottom of the web page for each use of copyright material that credits the original creator and states how/when permission was granted. The notice should also contain the URL of the original source, if applicable.
- \_\_\_ 13. First page (index page) must contain a blurb about the class (what you teach) and contact information.
- \_\_\_ 14. Meet the teacher page lists qualifications and interests. (optional)
- \_\_\_ 15. Schedule is posted.
- \_\_\_ 16. Homework or units of study are posted.
- \_\_\_ 17. Calendar or events page includes project due dates, tests, field trips, special events, etc.
- \_\_\_ 18. Links page includes links to portaportals, resources used for class, e-textbooks, pacing guides, SOL released tests, curriculum framework, SOLs specific to content taught.