

## **7540.02 - WEB-PAGE GUIDELINES AND ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

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WEB-PAGE GUIDELINES AND ACCESSIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

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These guidelines apply to all District-related web pages, whether created by schools, departments, staff, students, or other persons. The Superintendent or his/her designee retains final editorial authority over all content placed on the District's website and has the right to remove pages or links from any such web page based upon his/her determination of inappropriate content.

District websites are intended to serve as instructional, communication, and public relations tools. The web pages aim to provide timely, supportive and educational information to the students, staff, and the community. District websites are created to provide easy access to a wide variety of rich media and educational resources that directly support student achievement, professional development, and organizational effectiveness.

### **Use of Student Names, Pictures, Original Work, and E-mail Addresses**

The District may use photographs of students, names of students, student directory information, and original work by students on websites unless the student's parent has notified the District in writing of their desire to have their child excluded from such recognition efforts. Typically, such notice occurs at the beginning of each school year through an "opt out" form available on the website and from individual

schools. When content includes a photograph or information relating to a student, the Board will abide by the provisions of Policy 8330 - Student Records.

### **Compliance with State and Federal Law**

All content included on web pages must comply with State and Federal law (e.g. copyright laws, Children's Internet Protection Act, Americans With Disabilities Act, Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA)). Nothing in these guidelines shall prevent the District from linking the Board's web site to 1) recognized news/media outlets (e.g., local newspapers' web sites, local television stations' web sites) or 2) to web sites that are developed and hosted by outside commercial vendors pursuant to a contract with the Board. The Board recognizes that such third party web sites may not contain age-appropriate advertisements that are consistent with the requirements of Policy 9700.01, AG 9700B, and State and Federal law.

### **Prohibited Uses**

Under no circumstances may a District web page or web page created by staff for professional or educational purposes be used for commercial purposes, advertising, political lobbying, or to provide financial gains for any individual. Included in this prohibition is the fact that these web pages may not:

- A. include statements or other items that support or oppose a candidate for public office; the investigation, prosecution, or recall of a public official; or passage of a tax levy or bond issue;
- B. link to a website of another organization if the other website includes such a message; or
- C. communicate information that supports or opposes any labor organization or any action by, on behalf of, or against any labor organization;
- D. include defamatory, libelous, or obscene matter;
- E. promote alcoholic beverages, cigarettes or other tobacco products, or any illegal product, service, or activity;
- F. promote illegal discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, disability, age or ancestry.

Additionally, no web pages may contain obscene, profane, vulgar, sexually explicit, defamatory, culturally insensitive, harassing or abusive language or images, or be utilized to intimidate or bully another person.

Under no circumstances is a staff member-created web page/site, including personal web pages/sites, to be used to post student progress reports, grades, and personally identifiable information. The Board maintains its own student information system, which employees are required to use for the purpose of conveying grades, achievement records, and progress information to students and/or parents. Web sites that are created for official District purposes and that are posted on the Internet by students and/or staff members shall not be password protected or otherwise contain restricted access features, whereby only employees, student(s), or other limited groups of people can access the site. Community members, parents, employees, staff, students, and other web site users will generally be given full access to the sites created pursuant to this policy.

### **Content for the District's Website(s)**

All subject matter on web pages must relate to curriculum, instruction, school-authorized activities, supporting student safety, growth and learning, or public information of interest to others.

Pages should reflect an understanding that both internal and external audiences will be viewing the information.

### **Website/Page Evaluation**

Before releasing or publishing a website/page, its creator shall conduct a website/page evaluation to confirm that it meets the following criteria: age appropriate (appealing and readable); appropriate content (relevant, accurate, complete, objective, current, clear and concise, informative, appropriate, links working); free of intellectual property issues (sources cited; sponsoring organization identified [i.e. class, school, activity]; featured students have not been "opted out" by parents; and format reflecting current website design standards (including accessibility guidelines outlined below, navigation, searchable, functional/useable, download speed, pages dated as to creation/updated).

### **Accessibility Guidelines**

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 generally require that a board of education provide qualified individuals with disabilities equal access to its programs, services, or activities, unless doing so fundamentally changes the nature of its programs, services, or activities, or if it would impose an undue burden on the District.

The District designates the Superintendent or his/her designee to serve as Web Accessibility Coordinator in implementing accessibility standards, and will provide that individual with sufficient resources and authority to coordinate and implement web accessibility as outlined in this policy. The Web Accessibility Coordinator shall

be the Director of Public Relations, 90 N. East St., Pickerington, OH 43147; phone: 614-833-2110; email: [accessibility\\_coordinator@plsd.us](mailto:accessibility_coordinator@plsd.us).

The District will strive, to the extent technologically and economically feasible, to make its websites as accessible as possible, based on the guidelines below. Individuals responsible for designing, developing and producing web pages are expected to take reasonable steps to follow these guidelines to create websites that allow non-English speakers and persons with visual, auditory, and physical disabilities to access the information and content on the District's website.

Accessible, as used in this policy, means that a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner, with substantially equivalent ease of use. A person with a disability must be able to obtain the information as fully, equally, and independently as a person without a disability. Although this might not result in identical ease of use compared to that of persons without disabilities, it still must ensure equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and equal treatment in the use of such technology. (This definition language is from the federal Office of Civil Rights.)

For guidance in determining whether online content is accessible, the District will consult the technical standards identified as Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 developed by the Web Accessibility Initiative (WIA) or comparable standards.

The District will take reasonable measures to ensure all online content and information provided by or developed by third parties (e.g., vendors, video-sharing websites, other open sources) that the District chooses to make available on its website provides equal opportunity to the educational benefits and opportunities afforded by the technology and the equal treatment of such technology.

The District will provide appropriate training related to website accessibility for any staff members responsible for creating or distributing information with online content on District web pages. This training must include the roles and responsibilities related to ensuring that web design, content, online documents, and online multimedia content are accessible. Such training must occur before any staff is authorized to place content on the District website. The training will be facilitated, in whole or in part, by an individual with sufficient knowledge, skill, and experience to understand and employ the technical standards adopted by the District. At least annually thereafter, District staff members who have received initial training will receive updated information/instruction by qualified personnel, which could include self-education through online sources, to ensure they have the updated knowledge necessary to ensure the District's online content remains accessible.

The District's Web Accessibility Coordinator will ensure an accessibility audit is performed periodically to ensure its online content is accessible, using the WCAG 2.0 technical standards as a guideline. All problems identified through these audits will be documented, evaluated, and, as necessary, remediated within a reasonable period of time.

The District website shall include notice that students, prospective students, employees, guests, and visitors may file a formal complaint of violations of the technical standards used by the District as accessibility guidelines through its existing Section 504 and Title II grievance procedure, and/or contact the Web Accessibility Coordinator with any accessibility concerns.

## **Disclaimers**

Links to the following disclaimers shall be utilized as appropriate on the District's Web pages:

Information on this site is believed to be accurate but is not guaranteed. Pickerington Schools disclaims any liability for any errors or omissions.

District web pages may contain links to web sites not administrated by the district or one of its schools, departments, or programs. The District is not responsible or liable for the content of these linked sites and pages.

Student Developed Web Pages: "All web pages created by students and student organizations on the District's computer system will be subject to treatment as School-sponsored publications. As such, the District reserves the right to exercise editorial control over such publications in accordance with Policy 5722 – School-Sponsored Publications and Productions."

Domain Name and Copyright: "The District has registered its domain name(s) for the purpose of exclusive Internet identification. The District asserts copyright, trademark and/or other intellectual property rights in its domain name, district identification, district logo, and all content on the District's website(s). All rights are reserved. Outside parties, including parents, patrons, or outside organizations may not use District and/or school domain names in connection with the publication of web content. Under no circumstances shall any party use District and/or school domain names to promote political issues, causes or candidates."

General Disclaimer: "Information provided on the website carries no express or implied warranties as to accuracy, timeliness, or appropriateness for a particular purpose; in addition, the Board disclaims owner responsibility for content errors, omissions or infringing material, and disclaims owner liability for damages associated with user reliance on information provided at the site."

Events: "Visitors rely on information on the website at their own risk. Times and dates are subject to change and spectators or audiences are strongly encouraged to contact the school for the most recent schedule."

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