

## Web Site Content Guidelines

### I. Purpose

The Hamilton County Schools' web site (<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 our District.

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### II. Student Safeguards

The name of a student will not be published in conjunction with a picture of that student on any Hamilton County Schools' web site. Likewise, personal information about students will not be published. You may however, publish this information including a student's likeness along with their name, provided you have obtained a [release](#) from the child's parent or legal guardian.

Student work may be published on a Hamilton County Schools' web site with express written consent of the parent or guardian under the following guidelines:

Authors of electronically published work may be identified only by name.

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 physical location of a student at a given time.

**No student e-mail addresses should be given on the web site.**

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' web sites. Links to personal student web pages from Hamilton County Schools' web sites are likewise not permitted.

### **III. General Guidelines**

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

The content of school and District web pages must be consistent with the educational aims of the Hamilton County School 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 this District.

It shall be the responsibility of the school principal to approve all content on the school's web pages. Content should be updated on a regular basis with the revised date posted on the web site. Updates should be approved by the principal in writing.

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

All external links included on web pages must be evaluated 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 found through links external to this site."

External links should be periodically checked to ensure validity and 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.

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### **IV. Technical Specifications**

Do NOT include photographs of students with any information that identifies them. (Unless you have written permission from their parents or legal guardians to do so.)

There can be no commercial activity or advertisements on or linked to from your web site.

Your page file names must end in .htm or .html and they cannot contain any spaces or capital letters. Red Bank.htm is not all right, red-bank.htm is.

All images must be in .gif or .jpg format. Save clipart in .gif format, photographs as .jpg.

You can create a web page with any web creation program or text editor you choose. The following are our favorites:

Dialect will be used for web pages requiring a template and which will be hosted for free on <http://www.hcde.org>

Adobe Dreamweaver , text edit, NotePad or any WYSIWYG (What You See Is What You Get) editor capable of saving to HTML format.

Create your page for a 800 pixel wide screen. If a site won't load in under 8 seconds, much of the audience is lost. Images are the biggest offenders. You make an image small by making it no larger than 200 pixels wide and reducing the number of colors used. Many image editors such as "Adobe PhotoShop" a "save for the web" feature that will allow you to view different image resolutions so you can choose intelligently between a practical download speed and aesthetics.

NOTE: As more and more households are connecting to the Internet via a broadband connection, the above recommendations are less and less the "standard."

The opening school web page (home page) should contain the following information: school name, address, telephone number, and fax number; school hours; grade structure; approximate enrollment; principal's name; an e-mail address for the principal and/or the principal's designee; identification as a Hamilton County School; date of last modification; a link to the school's webmaster's e-mail address; and a link to return to the appropriate point in the District web page.

In developing web pages, consideration should be given to loading time on a 56K modem connection. Large graphics and some animations contribute to increased loading time. Again, as more and more households are connecting to the Internet via a broadband connection, the above recommendations are less and less the "standard."

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.

## V. 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. 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.

Custom domain names can be purchased and pointed to your web site. This is handled by the company that you purchase the domain from. Many of these services offer a control panel that will allow you to configure this yourself.

Limit or omit the use of animated .gifs on your web site. These can put certain users at risk of having a seizure. It is best to eliminate them all together.

Be sure to provide alt text for images as these are used for assistive technologies for the visually impaired.

For a complete list of best practices, current trends and technologies, Internet standards and an exhaustive library of tutorials, please visit [w3schools.com](http://w3schools.com).