

Administrative Procedure 145

145 - SCHOOL WEBSITE STANDARDS

Background

Each school is responsible for creating and maintaining a school website on the Wild Rose School Division corporate web server. The purpose of having a school website is to communicate vital up to date information to our parents, staff, students and community members; promote and celebrate the school and school community; provide an alternate method for parents and community members to get school forms (eg. registration forms) and reports; provide a method to access school and staff contact information; and provide information on programs and programming at each of our schools.

Beliefs

Wild Rose School Division believes that the creation and use of school websites for the purposes of communication and celebration is a vital component to the communication strategy of the school and the school division. We believe that all stakeholders will access this information on a regular basis if the information is kept current, relevant, and if the school website is professional, accessible, and functional.

School sites that do not meet the minimum requirements and the specific standards will not be published on the internet.

Standards

Each schools website must:

1. **Maintain a Professional Look** – As a representative of Wild Rose School Division each schools website is a reflection of the school and school division as a whole. To be published on the WRSD web server the website must maintain a professional look and feel. Creative design within that professional look is certainly encouraged.
2. **Be Accessible to all our Stakeholders** – The school must ensure that the school website is not only accessible to stakeholders with high speed internet but also to our stakeholders that have dial up access. Website pages must have a quick load time so that stakeholders with slower computers and dial-up access do not leave the site in frustration.
3. **Be Branded with the Schools Name, Logo and School Motto as well as the School Division Logo and Motto** - To ensure that visitors to each of the school websites know that they are still on the schools website when navigating through the links each page of the website will have the schools name and logo and motto as well as the school divisions logo branded on the page.
4. **Contain a Simple Navigation Structure** – To ensure that visitors to the site are able to navigate quickly and easily each page of the schools website will have a common navigation structure that is similar on each page.
5. **Be Updated on a Regular Basis** – Keeping information current on the schools website is critical to encourage continued visits by parents and community members. The website will be updated weekly at a minimum.

Minimum School Web Design

Home page

- School name, address (include Canada in the address), postal code, telephone and fax number
- School logo and motto, WRSD logo and motto
- Featured news section
- Featured links section
- Navigation links to other pages

About Our School page

- School name, address (include Canada in the address), postal code, telephone and fax number
- School logo and motto, WRSD logo and motto
- Navigation links to other pages
- The schools Vision and Mission statements as well as any other relevant history of the school or school community

Contacts page

- School name, address (include Canada in the address), postal code, telephone and fax number
- School logo and motto, WRSD logo and motto
- Phone and fax information as well as email contact information for staff
- Navigation links to other pages

News page

- School name, address (include Canada in the address), postal code, telephone and fax number
- School logo and motto, WRSD logo and motto
- Navigation links to other pages
- Information on things that are happening in the school, dates of upcoming events, important announcements

School Calendar

- School name, address (include Canada in the address), postal code, telephone and fax number
- School logo and motto, WRSD logo and motto
- Navigation links to other pages
- A link to the WRSD school calendar or a PDF file of the WRSD school calendar

Other Pages

- Other additional pages on a school website are at the school's discretion and should only be developed if there is a specific need identified and if the pages can be properly maintained and updated.
- Other pages that should be considered:
 - Programs, Grades or Courses offered page
 - School Policy, reports and forms page
 - Athletic Pages
 - Photo gallery or Tour of the school

Proper Web Design

Do's

- Keep the website simple and to the point. In the case of school websites less is better. If the website is too big it becomes too hard to update on a regular basis, navigation becomes cumbersome, and visitors will not be able to find information quickly.
- Plan the navigation structure carefully.
- Maintain a specific font style throughout the site.
- Use the colors of the school to enhance the look of the site.
- Graphics should be compressed in size to increase load times.
- Use consistent terminology throughout the website.
- Have page titles that clearly explain what the page is about.
- Downloadable forms will be in PDF format.
- Have a Featured News section on the home page to highlight important school news or events. This will allow parents to get relevant information about the happenings at the school without having to search for it.
- Have a Featured Link section on your home page. These links allow parents to quickly find and link to important information that you are trying to communicate.
- Update the site weekly at a minimum, and refer people to the site for information.
- Highlight student work but do not post any personal information about any of the students. Use the student's first name and grade only.
- Test the school's site for load times, navigation, and dead links.
- Use links to other pages but ensure that these links are relevant to the school and school division.

Don'ts

- Do not over build the site with too many pages.
- Animated graphics distracts from the content of the website and should not be used.
- Do not make a page graphic intensive. It will slow the loading time of the page.
- Do not use a multitude of colors on a page as it distracts from the information on the page.
- Do not use frames as they are outdated and are not used in webpage design any longer.
- Avoid using java scripting unless it provides a serious benefit to the page.
- Do not post pictures of or provide any personal information about any of the students on your website.
- Do not use too many outside links as these become hard to maintain and if the site that's being linked to no longer exists your site will be filled with dead links.
- Do not include under construction pages. If the page is not complete do not include the pages in the school's webpage navigation structure.