



# Menlo Park City School District

## World Wide Web Guidelines

These guidelines have been developed to assist schools in taking advantage of the most appropriate use of the World Wide Web while ensuring student safety.

### A Rationale for Linking Classrooms to the Internet

- Bring real-world relevance  
Telecommunications expand the curriculum by bringing the real world into the classroom. Students and teachers can establish interactive connections with anyone or any source, making learning more relevant to their lives, interests, and concerns.
- Provide students with an effective model of lifelong learning  
When students research vast arrays of information, apply credibility tests to assess what they find, and learn telecommunication techniques, they develop skills of selecting, summarizing, and synthesizing information that they can rely on for the rest of their lives.
- Bolster social, communication, and critical thinking skills  
Students can enhance their communication, social, and collaborative skills as they interact and learn with other classrooms. They also use their critical thinking skills when they collaboratively solve problems and perform analyses via telecommunications.
- Meet standards for inquiry-based learning  
Telecommunications can powerfully enhance inquiry-based learning by enabling teachers and students to join ongoing projects or develop their own.
- Increase the authenticity of the learning environment  
Teachers increase the authenticity of the learning environment when they provide their students access to historical archives, eyewitness reports, and virtual museums.
- Find role models for students  
By electronically bringing professionals, scholars, explorers, educators, writers, poets, and scientists into classrooms, teachers expose students to positive role models.

### Design and Maintenance Elements for a Website

*Simple is good. Clarity is better.*

Schools are not required to have a World Wide Web site. Schools that choose to do so must follow these guidelines.

When designing a World Wide Web site, take into account the purpose of the site, focusing on the user. For a school, that purpose will include (but not be limited by):

- Communication with students and family, such as:
  - Introductory letter from principal
  - A calendar of school functions
  - A statement of Internet policies
  - A link to the district home page
  - Classroom letter to parents, updated periodically to communicate what is occurring in a particular class
  - Listing of homework assignments for a given class
  - Links to sites which relate to subjects currently being studied
  - A means for response and interaction with staff
- Communication with local community, such as:
  - Statement of school philosophy
  - Location and community served
  - Pictures of campus
  - Method of interacting with school staff
- Communication with the world, such as:
  - Collaboration with other schools, educational institutions, etc., including a statement of curricula served (this would best be supported by communications with appropriate listservers)
  - A place for schools to respond (preferably a link to E-mail)
  - A place to publish results of collaboration

### **Basic Rules**

The content of all homepages (school, classroom, and school sponsored organizations) must be approved by the principal. The actual development of the homepage may involve staff, students, community volunteers, or a combination of groups.

The district technology specialist and the principal (or designee) should be designated to access the servers, maintain the information in a timely manner, and check websites for broken links. The district will provide training for the designated people.

Individual classrooms may have homepages if the teachers of the participating classrooms take the responsibility of updating and maintaining the information. Though students may actively assist in the maintenance of the homepage, the classroom teacher is responsible and will evaluate the information to be included on the homepage before it is submitted for approval to the principal.

School sponsored organizations, including school clubs and PTAs, may have homepages. The content of these pages must be approved by the school principal. It is the responsibility of the organization to update and maintain the information. The homepage of any school sponsored organization must reside on the district server.

No students shall have homepages through the school or district sites.

Individual or group pictures of students or students and staff participating in school activities may not appear on school or classroom web sites without parent/guardian permission in writing. The distribution of personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, age, class schedules, etc.) about students may not be included in web pages. Posted student work may be identified by the student's first name with written parent permission.

Names and work phone numbers of staff members are public information and may be published on school/district web pages.

Communication with parents is a district priority. Many tools are available for communicating with parents and peers, including telephones, E-mail, written messages, etc. District sponsored E-mail addresses may be part of school/district web pages at a staff member's discretion. Pictures of individual administrators and staff members may be used with permission of the individual(s).

When a school has a partnership it wants to recognize, the recognition will be in the form of a credit or recognition. The recognition may not be included on the homepage of the individual classrooms. Advertisements are not permitted and there will be no links of connectivity or opportunities to E-mail the partner from the school or district site.

## **Design Tips**

### *Graphics*

- Limit the number of graphics on a page as they slow download time
- Place thumbnail sketches on your homepage
- Interlace graphics to help the viewer see the graphics faster

### *Hypertext Links*

- Consider creating your homepage as a simple menu page that links to data pages
- Place a "Welcome to the <School name> Home Page" at the top of your homepage so users have something to view while waiting for graphics to download
- Place a link back to the home page on all data pages
- Place a comments/suggestions link on all pages; construct both a "mail to" and a forms E-mail CGI for flexibility

### *Naming Conventions*

- Consider naming homepage "default.html" to allow user to simply type a "/" at the end of the URL string to access the school homepage
- No spaces for filenames as some Webserver software does not recognize them

### *Suggested Homepage Menu*

- School Information
- Curriculum
- Calendar
- PTA
- School Site Council
- Staff
- Internet Search Engines
- Educational Resources
- “What’s New?” Button to take the user browsing the site past the static information to the newest information
- School E-mail and US mail address as well as contact names and institutional affiliations on major menu pages

### *Organization*

- Keep all school websites in the district server
- Organize school websites in folders
- Keep image files in one graphics folder and share that folder throughout the district; folder must contain a READ ME file explaining how to view these graphics together with all the necessary graphic applications
- Inside school website folders, use different folders for:
  - General Information
  - Teacher’s html files
- When linking to other WWW locations:
  - strip away time-wasting top levels
  - provide addresses which take users directly to information
  - include a brief annotation explaining what can be found at the site
  - check out the links that your referenced site links to information
- Include appropriate copyright notices on every page
- Intellectual and artistic production is still covered by copyright as long as a notice is posted; when copying is permitted, explicit permission must be clearly stated on the homepage
- Establish parameters for format, type fonts, and graphics
- Establish a browser standard; deviations from the standard may produce viewing differences

\*We gratefully acknowledge the prior work of the Cupertino Union School District as a starting point in preparing this document.



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## Web Page Guidelines

Using the district's guidelines (available at all school offices), teachers and students may design their own web pages, sharing their writing and classroom activities with the Internet community.

1. Parental permission must be obtained before uploading any student names, pictures, or written work. (See **Web Site Parent Permission Form**.)
2. All school web site addresses (URL's) must be registered with the school principal.
3. As indicated on the **Web Site Parent Permission Form**, students will have the option of using an alias, and no surnames will be used.
4. Teachers are responsible for screening student work to eliminate personal information such as home addresses, phone numbers, or the names of other students. Students must be cautioned against revealing this information as well.

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## Web Site Parent Permission Form

Your child has the opportunity to publish his or her work on the Internet via the school web site. Publishing on the Internet is an exciting way to share ideas with other Internet users, both in our own community and around the world.

Please indicate below the level of participation you desire for your child, and return this form to your child's teacher.

- My child's writing may be shared on the school's web site.
- My child's picture may appear on the school's web site.
- My child's first name may appear on the school's web site. (Surnames will not be used.)
- My child will use the following alias instead of his/her first name: \_\_\_\_\_
- I do not wish my child to participate on the school web site.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian Name (Print)