



Los Alamos Public Schools

# District-Wide Website Standards

Drafted by Colin P. MacArthur  
March 12, 2007

Revised  
July, 2009

Sent to Website Team for Review  
August, 2009



## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 About and Purpose

Educational standards dictate what students should learn. Website standards, like educational standards, help us understand and meet the requirements of our customers. These website standards are best practices meant to help us attain our district-wide website mission, balancing the needs of both our customer groups and administrative stakeholders. Codifying these best practices reduces the district's reliance on person-specific knowledge, allowing both agility and flexibility in website maintenance. These standards were a result of research done during November and December 2006 as part of the implementation of a district-wide Website Content Management System.

### 1.2 Scope and Authority

These standards should be followed by every website maintained under the auspices of any Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS) school or organization activity. Although authorized by the Assistant Superintendent, the authority of these standards lies in the mutual agreement of all those maintaining LAPS' websites to adhere to certain best practices for continuous improvement. School board and other district-wide policy supersede this document. However, board and other district-wide regulations regarding websites should be included in these standards, so as to make them a sole reference for website-related policy.

### 1.3 Origin and Further Work

These standards are based on our stakeholders' needs and web industry best practices, researched during November and December 2006 as part of a district-wide content management system implementation. As with any best practices, these standards should be revised as often as better ways of attaining the websites' mission are discovered; the "Maintenance of Standards" section has been written with constant revision in mind.

### 1.4 Credits and References

Standards originally drafted by Colin MacArthur, Student Intern for Technology in Administration. Contributions by Calvin Loncaric, Student Intern Transitional Webmaster. References: *Homepage Usability* and *Designing Usable Websites* by Jakob Nielsen; *The Elements of User Centered Design* by Jesse Games Garret; *Information Architecture for the World Wide Web* and *The Web Style Guide*.

### 1.5 Definitions

**1.5.1** Customers are parents, students and LAPS staff who access the website.

1.5.2 Website contributors are any persons who contribute content to the website.



# Los Alamos Public Schools

---



## 1.6 Table of Contents

Section	1.0 Introduction .....	2
	1.1 About and Purpose.....	2
	1.2 Scope and Authority.....	2
	1.3 Origin and Further Work.....	2
	1.4 Credits and References.....	2
	1.5 Definitions.....	2
	1.6 Table of Contents.....	3
Section	2.0 Appropriate Content.....	4
	2.1 Student Names, Photographs and Work.....	4
	2.2 Personal Opinions .....	5
	2.3 Personal Contact Information.....	5
	2.4 Open Record .....	5
Section	3.0 Standards for Website Elements .....	6
	3.1 Navigation.....	6
	3.2 Pages.....	6
	3.3 Writing Style and Content .....	7
	3.4 Text Formatting .....	7
	3.5 Links.....	8
	3.6 Photos, Graphics and Animations .....	9
	3.7 Tables.....	9
	3.8 Search and Site Map .....	10
	3.9 Feedback Mechanisms.....	10
	3.10 Buttons, Drop-Down Menus and Other UI Widgets.....	11
	3.11 Pop-ups, Javascript, Flash and Other Advanced Browser Technologies .....	11
Section	4.0 Standards for Special Website Elements .....	12
	4.1 Homepages .....	12
	4.2 Staff Directories.....	12
	4.3 News Lists and Press Releases.....	13
	4.4 Portals, Community Tools and Password Protected Pages.....	13
	4.5 Email Newsletters .....	13
	4.6 Teacher Web Pages.....	13
	4.7 Data Gatherers/Forms.....	14
	4.8 Blogs, Forums and Other Discussion Tools .....	14
Section	5.0 Standards for Site-Wide Layout .....	15
Section	6.0 Standard for Website Maintenance .....	16
	6.1 Roles and Responsibilities.....	16
	6.2 Update Frequency .....	18
	6.3 Update Time.....	18
Section	7.0 Maintenance of Standards .....	19
	7.1 Structure .....	19
	7.1 Published Format .....	19
	7.3 Exceptions .....	19
	7.4 Revisions .....	19
	7.5 Initial Ratification of Standards .....	19
Attachments		
	A Basic Information Architecture for School and District Sites .....	21
	B High Priority Tasks Available from the Homepage.....	21
	C District-Wide Privacy Policy .....	22
	D Agreement to Adhere to Website Standards.....	25

## 2.0 Appropriate Content

Content on any LAPS website should be published in an effort to support the district's goals of student learning, efficient and effective operations and safety and security. As per board policy, the administrator at the site/campus where the website is primarily being maintained ultimately determines whether content is appropriate.

Examples of content that do not meet our websites' mission or vision:

- Obscene, pornographic, slanderous or other personally insulting statements.
- Information which endangers the safety or security of staff and students (including school maps and detailed safety plans).
- Information used for personal or commercial financial gain.

## 2.1 Student Names, Photographs and Work

From School Regulation 6145.3R "Publications, Website and Student Interaction with the Media"

e. It is clear there are significant advantages involved with allowing students to be identified on the internet. Therefore, student work, pictures and names may be posted on the website using the following guidelines:

- i. Student work or photographs posted on home pages or other high visibility areas of a website shall not be identified using the student's name without written administrative and parental permission.
- ii. Each site shall maintain a list of students whose parents have chosen for their child's name, picture and/or work not to be posted on the website. This list shall be reviewed for accuracy at the beginning of every school year. The site principal is responsible for ensuring the names, pictures and work of students who have "opted out" are not published on the website.

School websites are encouraged to post pictures of students and their activities on the website. However, student safety is the first priority of the district; website contributors are encouraged to exercise caution in posting student work as well as to interpret Regulation 6145.3R as conservatively as possible.

## 2.2 Personal Opinions

LAPS recognizes that the publishing of personal opinions can enhance the educational process and help attain our mission and vision. In such cases, opinion should be published with the following disclaimer: The opinions published here are of their respective authors and do not necessarily represent official Los Alamos Public Schools policy or opinion.

## 2.3 Personal Contact Information

Board policy states that information of a personal nature regarding staff, students or parents may not be published on the website without written permission (to be kept on file in the main school office).

“Personal contact information” is any information regarding a specific person that cannot be described as one of the following:

- Name
- LAPS email address
- LAPS phone number
- Professional information (education, etc.) staff wish to publish about themselves

2.3.1 Students may not be personally contacted directly through online forms unless the form is used as part of a classroom or activity online discussion and viewing is limited to only staff and students within that discussion group.

2.3.2 A student’s home address, phone number, or e-mail address will not be published on a website. If replies to published student work are appropriate, the sponsoring teacher’s address should be the e-mail address displayed, not the student’s. This includes the use of student e-mail addresses supplied by the district or responsible staff member.

2.3.3 In accordance with the Children’s Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA) regulations, students under the age of 13 (12 and younger) cannot register for website accounts without expressed written permission. The current Permission to Publish forms do not encompass this and permission to register for online accounts must be granted separately.

## 2.4 Open Record

The State of New Mexico’s Open Meetings and Records Act classifies the website as public record. Any content posted on any LAPS website (be it in an authenticated or non-authenticated section) may be retrieved by a member of the public through an Open Records Request. With that in mind, any content posted to the website (authenticated or non-authenticated) should be appropriate for public viewing.



## 3.0 Standards for Website Elements

Navigation and essential content placement is defined in the LAPS District-wide Website Information Architecture document. The navigation and layout of all websites must comply with that document. The following best practices are for elements standard to all websites.

### 3.1 Navigation

Navigation is the structure through which users access pages.

3.1.1 All navigation schemes should:

- a) Use customer-focused language. Label sections and categories according to the value they hold for the customer, not according to what they do for the district/school.
- b) Be located in a highly noticeable place, preferably directly adjacent to the main content of the page.
- c) Be used consistently site-wide.
- d) Avoid being longer than one screen length.
- e) Be grouped so similar items are together.
- f) Avoid providing multiple site-wide navigation areas for the same type of pages.
- g) Use icons only if they help users to recognize a class of items immediately, such as new items, sale items, or video content.
- h) Label community or portal tools explaining who they are targeted at and what they do. Do not offer a generic "Community" link.

3.1.2 Navigation systems should provide access to the standard content defined in the District-wide Information Architecture.

### 3.2 Pages

Pages have a unique URL and contain standard items (such as text, photos, links and tables) as well as special features such as staff directories. Pages should comply with the following best practices:

3.2.1 Avoid creating pages longer than 2 screen lengths.

3.2.2 Avoid redundant content.

3.2.3 At the bottom of each page, include the date and time the page was last updated (using the date and time format specified in the Text Formatting standards)

3.2.4 The most critical page elements should be visible in the first screen of content without scrolling.

3.2.5 Include a title at the top of every page that matches its navigation label. The title should be formatted at the highest level possible within the header scheme.



3.2.6 Use the following format for window titles:

Short Site Name (e.g. LAPS or Chamisa) – Page Navigation Title

3.2.7 When mapping a page to assign a user-friendly URL, use the following format:

<http://www.laschools.net/schoolname/pagename> (e.g.

<http://www.laschools.net/lahs/academics>). When mapping a page on the main district site, use the following format: <http://www.laschools.net/pagename> (e.g.

<http://laschools.net/sciencefair>)

### 3.3 Writing Style/Content

Any copy published on the website should comply with the following best practices:

3.3.1 Avoid exclamation marks.

3.3.2 Avoid bulleted lists with single items.

3.3.3 Only use imperative language such as "Enter a City or ZIP Code" for mandatory tasks, or qualify the statement appropriately (e.g. To see the weather, enter a ZIP code).

3.3.4 Spell out abbreviations, initials, acronyms, and immediately follow them by the abbreviation in the first instance.

3.3.5 Write content and use terms that can be understood by the largest audience possible (i.e. not only LAPS staff).

3.3.6 Use a comma to separate numbers that have three or more digits.

3.3.7 Align decimal points when showing columns of numbers.

3.3.8 Use a maximum of two carriage returns to separate text.

3.3.9 Cite all sources used in an appropriate format.

### 3.4 Text Formatting

Any text appearing on the website should comply with the following best practices:

3.4.1 Use italics or bold only for selective emphasis.

3.4.2 Do not use all uppercase letters.

3.4.3 Do not use underlining for emphasis.

3.4.4 Use correct American capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

3.4.5 Capitalize every important word of headers.

3.4.6 Italicize (instead of underlining) the titles of books, movies and other major works.

3.4.7 Use text headers.

3.4.8 Use quotation marks to denote titles of poems, articles and other minor works.

3.4.9 Use consistent font, size, color, and style (bold, italics, underline) for similar web page elements (e.g. content, headings, navigation items) across the entire site.



- 3.4.10 Use a consistent heading scheme, always using top-level headings (e.g. Heading 1) before sub-headings (e.g. Heading 2).
- 3.4.11 Headings should be more prominent than content text.
- 3.4.12 Use this standard date and time format whenever possible:  
January 2, 2006 at 1:00 PM MST
- 3.4.13 Use this standard phone number format wherever possible:  
(505) 663-2222
- 3.4.14 Use this standard format for addresses wherever possible:  
Jane Doe  
District Website Coordinator  
Los Alamos Public Schools  
751 Trinity Drive  
Los Alamos NM 87544
- 3.4.15 Use this standard format for listing several contacts:  
Jane Doe, District Website Coordinator  
(505) 555-5555 / [j.doe@laschools.net](mailto:j.doe@laschools.net)

## 3.5 Links

Any page element which causes the browser to change from one page to another should comply with the following standards:

- 3.5.1 Underline and color all links to distinguish them from other content (with the possible exception of navigation links). Keep them as specific and as brief as possible.
- 3.5.2 Allow link colors to show visited and unvisited states.
- 3.5.3 Avoid generic instructions such as "Click Here" in a link name.
- 3.5.4 Avoid generic links, such as "More..." at the end of a list of items.
- 3.5.5 Avoid the words "Links" or "Navigation" to indicate links on the page.
- 3.5.6 Use the following format for denoting external and file links:  
For an external link with URL as title: <http://laschools.net>  
  
For an Adobe PDF: [Link](#) (PDF)  
For a Microsoft Word document: [Link](#) (DOC)  
For a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet: [Link](#) (Excel)  
For a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation: [Link](#) (PowerPoint)  
For other types of files, put extension in parentheses after link.



Mailing link in context: [Email Colin MacArthur](#)

Mailing link out of context: [Link](#) (Email)

- 3.5.7 Open external websites in a new window.
- 3.5.8 Only use Adobe PDF to post content which the user will want to print or utilizes complex formatting.
- 3.5.9 Avoid using documents which require commercial software to be read as the only downloadable source of any content.
- 3.5.10 Only upload and link to files whose names are all lowercase with no spaces or special characters.
- 3.5.11 When appropriate, make the names of LAPS staff members links to their email addresses.

## **3.6 Photos, Graphics and Animations**

Any page elements which display photos or other graphics should comply with the following best practices:

- 3.6.1 Use graphics and photos primarily to communicate content, not lay out pages.
- 3.6.2 Images imbedded in a page should not exceed 500 pixels in width and should retain their original aspect ratio.
- 3.6.3 All images should have alternate text specified.
- 3.6.4 Photos shall be used only when necessary and optimized to the lowest possible file size.
- 3.6.5 Label graphics and photos if their meaning is not clear from the context of the text they accompany.
- 3.6.6 Avoid watermarked graphics (background images with text on top of them).
- 3.6.7 Only use animated images to communicate content.
- 3.6.8 Avoid use of non-school/district logos.
- 3.6.9 Use image file names that are all lowercase with no spaces or special characters.
- 3.6.10 Refer to section 2.1 regarding where it is appropriate to post student photos and how students may be identified.

## **3.7 Tables**

Any information organized in tabular format (with columns and rows) should comply with the following best practices:

- 3.7.1 Use tables primarily to display information, not to lay out a page.
- 3.7.2 Bold, vertically and horizontally center text in the table header cells.
- 3.7.3 Provide a light 1 pixel border between all table cells.



# Los Alamos Public Schools

---

- 3.7.4 Each table cell must have at least five pixel padding.
- 3.7.5 If a table background color is used, it should contrast the table's text.
- 3.7.6 Align decimal points when showing columns of numbers.

## **3.8 Search and Site Map**

A site feature which allows users to textually search the website for content should comply with the following best practices:

- 3.8.1 Provide a basic search form and link to advanced search form in the header of every page.
- 3.8.2 Provide search input boxes that are wide enough for users to see and edit standard queries on the site.
- 3.8.3 Use a "Search" button to the right of the box instead of a heading to denote the search form.
- 3.8.4 Set the site-wide search form to automatically search the entire site.
- 3.8.5 Avoid offering a feature to "Search the Web" from the site's search function.
- 3.8.6 Provide a site-map listing all of the website's publicly available web pages.

## **3.9 Feedback Mechanisms**

A site feature which allows users to submit comments about the website to the webmaster should comply with the following standards:

- 3.9.1 Provide a link to a feedback mechanism in a prominent place on the homepage.
- 3.9.2 When submitting feedback, allow the user to provide:
  - a. Comments and suggestions for the website.
  - b. If he or she is: a LAPS parent, a prospective parent/student, a LAPS student, a LAPS staff member, interested in a job at LAPS, interested in a Bid/Proposal/RFP or other
  - c. His or her name
  - d. His or her email address and phone number if he or she wishes to receive a response.
- 3.9.3 Adjacent to the feedback form, include a brief statement explaining who will receive the feedback, what it will be used for, how soon a response should be expected and who the user should contact for immediate assistance. Also include a link to the district privacy policy (Attachment C).
- 3.9.4 When a user submits feedback, display a thank you message and how soon they should expect a response (if contact information was included).
- 3.9.5 If at all possible, reply to feedback within one business day.
- 3.9.6 If feedback is forwarded to another person, reply to the sender with the name and email of the person to whom it was forwarded.
- 3.9.7 Retain a copy of all website feedback from the current school year.



## **3.10 Buttons, Drop-Down Menus and Other UI Widgets**

Any site feature which provides interactive functionality beyond a link should comply with the following best practices:

- 3.10.1 Use navigational drop down menus sparingly and only if it is clear what the drop-down contains, its items are self-explanatory and it is clear what will happen when an item is clicked on.
- 3.10.2 Only use buttons and UI widgets for interactive portions of the website.

## **3.11 Pop-ups, Javascript, Flash and Other Advanced Browser Technologies**

Any site feature which utilizes a browser language not solely used for the display of information should comply with the following best practices.

- 3.11.1 Avoid automatically appearing popup windows which may distract users from the content of the website.
- 3.11.2 Flash, sound, music and moving objects/animation should only be used to demonstrate knowledge of the technology (e.g. students taking a web development class wish to display their knowledge of adding music to a web site) or if it is absolutely necessary to display information. If not used for instructional purposes, flash, sound and moving objects/animation are both a distraction to the user and a waste of network resources.



## 4.0 Standards for Special Website Elements

### 4.1 Homepages

The first page the user sees when visiting the root URL of the website should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.1.1 Clearly designate one page per site as the official homepage. *Homepage Usability*
- 4.1.2 Emphasize the highest priority tasks so that users have a clear starting point on the homepage. Provide a link to your feedback mechanism in a prominent place on the homepage.
- 4.1.3 Provide easy access to anything that has been recently featured on the homepage. Include an "Other Recent Stories" link adjacent to any news items. Include a "More Events" link adjacent to any calendar events.
- 4.1.4 Offer users direct access to high-priority tasks or tools on the homepage.
  - a. Do not include tools unrelated to tasks users would like to do.
  - b. Do not provide tools that reproduce browser functionality, such as setting a page as the browser's default starting page.
- 4.1.5 Do not use splash pages, introduction pages, or animated introductions.
- 4.1.6 Do not literally welcome users to the homepage.
- 4.1.7 Exercise restraint in displaying awards won by the website or school/district.
- 4.1.8 Avoid automatically refreshing the homepage.
- 4.1.9 Make the title of the homepage the name of the school/district.
- 4.1.10 Avoid making the homepage more than one screen in length.
- 4.1.11 Avoid using multiple text entry boxes on the homepage, especially in the upper part of the page where people tend to look for the search feature.
- 4.1.12 If the homepage has areas that will provide customized information once something is known about the user, do not provide a generic version of the content to anonymous users - craft different content for that space.
- 4.1.13 Homepage announcements should be updated at least once per week while school is in session. Announcements should remain posted no longer than two weeks or for the duration of an event and should be removed within 24 hours upon the completion of an event.
- 4.1.14 Upcoming events from the website calendar that are fed into the homepage should display no more than two weeks in advance and no less than one week. If this causes the homepage to appear cluttered or difficult to read, the number of days displayed can be reduced.

### 4.2 Staff Directories

Any directory-like contact information should comply with the following best-practices:



- 4.2.1 Staff directories located on a public portion of the webpage may not contain personal contact information without permission.
- 4.2.2 If at all possible, format staff directory email addresses to prevent harvesting.
- 4.2.3 A mechanism should be provided for searching the staff directory.

## **4.3 News Lists and Press Releases**

Any list of time-sensitive information should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.3.1 Make headlines succinct, yet descriptive, to give maximum information in as few words as possible.
- 4.3.2 Write and edit specific summaries for press release and news stories that you feature on your homepage (don't just give the whole article.)
- 4.3.3 Link headlines to the full news story.
- 4.3.4 Unless the item is being updated frequently or has not been posted within the week, do not post an items date and time.

## **4.4 Portals, Community Tools and Password Protected Pages**

Any area of the website with restricted access should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.4.1 Target portal, community tools and password protected pages towards a specific constituent group (e.g. students or staff).
- 4.4.2 Publish information in a portal that you would not feel comfortable publishing in a local newspaper, but would feel comfortable publishing in a staff, student or parent newsletter within the appropriate portal, community or password protected pages.
- 4.4.3 Ensure that content that is of interest to a portal's constituent group, but does not have to be password protected, is published on an open section of the website and linked to from the portal.
- 4.4.4 Do not offer users features to customize the basic look and feel of the website.

## **4.5 Email Newsletters**

Any emails sent through a website interface, linking to a website or otherwise associated with the website should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.5.1 Limit number of times email newsletters may be sent out. (max 1 per day).



4.5.2 Explain the benefits and frequency of publications before asking them for their email address.

## **4.6 Teacher Web Pages**

Any portion of the website maintained by a staff member for primarily instructional purposes should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.6.1 Teacher web pages should be accessible by visiting the "Teacher Pages" channel on each site.
- 4.6.2 Each person is allotted .5 MB for a site. (The site lead can designate exceptions to this rule)
- 4.6.3 File/folder names should not contain spaces or characters such as #, &, \*, etc., and should be lower case.
- 4.6.4 Pages must be updated or reviewed at least once per semester and once at the beginning of each new school year. Time-sensitive content should be updated frequently.
- 4.6.5 Pages must have a link to their school home page.
- 4.6.6 The authorized teacher who is publishing the final Web page(s) for herself or himself, or for a student, will edit and test the page(s) for accuracy of links, and check for compliance with standards outlined in this document.
- 4.6.7 The use of external tools to maintain a website is permissible but discouraged when a similar tool is provided by the district.
  - a. Staff should contact their webmaster for guidance and clarification of policy before using an external website tool.
  - b. When utilizing an external website tool, LAPS staff must still adhere to all applicable board policies and these standards, especially with regards to online discussions, posting student information, and appropriate content (i.e sections 2.0 and 4.8)

## **4.7 Data Gatherers/Forms**

Any files accessible from the root URL of a website should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.7.1 Only use imperative language such as "Enter a City or ZIP Code" for mandatory tasks, or qualify the statement appropriately.
- 4.7.2 Explain the benefits and frequency of publications before asking them for their email address.
- 4.7.3 Before presenting users a form to submit, explain the purpose of the form, the benefit to the user and the privacy/confidentiality of data submitted.



## 4.8 Blogs, Forums and Other Discussion Tools

Any webpage which allows users to submit information to be published in a collaborative format should comply with the following best practices:

- 4.8.1 Blogs, forums and other discussion tools should be used to foster discussion among users about a specific topic. Authentication and moderation should be used to a level which ensures compliance with these standards (especially sections 2.0 Appropriate Content, 2.1 Students' Names, Photographs, and Work, 2.3 Personal Contact Information, and the following recommendations of etiquette) while allowing productive discussion between users. When deciding whether to moderate or authenticate a discussion tool, the creator should consider the people who are likely to use their tool, any controversy surrounding the topic and the purpose of the discussion.
- 4.8.2 The creator of a forum, blog or other discussion tool is responsible for moderating the discussion in accordance with these standards. Moderating a blog or forum can either be done formally by using the moderate feature of the blog or informally where the creator reviews all posts, and addresses the author of those that do not meet the best practices outlined in this document. The creator should notify the site administrator and webmaster before creating a discussion tool.
- 4.8.3 Contact information (email address or phone number) for the forum's moderator should be posted in a noticeable place on every page of the discussion.
- 4.8.4 Staff members must always be the responsible moderator for a discussion tool. Students should never be the designated moderators.
- 4.8.5 Users of online discussions should adhere to the following rules of etiquette:
  - a) Be courteous.
  - b) Respect differences of opinion. Explain your opinion and your perspective thoroughly. Respond to others respectfully, responding to their ideas, not personality.
  - c) If another user is behaving badly, notify the discussion tool's moderator. To promote the development of a respectful discussion environment, respond to bad behavior factually without engaging in a "flame war."
  - d) Avoid posting a topic which has already been posted. Similarly, if a forum is categorized, post to the appropriate category.
  - e) Avoid posting the names or contact information of other students.
- 4.8.6 School sponsored blogs, forums and other discussion tools should never be used for the purpose of unrestricted social networking and general discussion.
- 4.8.7 School websites should not link directly to blogs, forums or other discussion tools used primarily for unrestricted social networking and general discussion unless for instructional purposes related to a specific classroom topic.

## 4.9 Website Calendar Event Management

School calendars should be maintained as defined in Attachment C – Website Calendar Event Management. All webmasters should use the separate Website Calendar Checklist to ensure consistent and timely posting of essential content.

## 4.10 Online Resources

All school websites should comply with the following guidelines for posting on-line resources:

4.10.1 Each site homepage must link to the district’s online Resource Database.

4.10.2 Each site homepage must provide, in a consistent location, links to school specific pages or sections that provide audience based resources for staff, students, and parents.

4.10.3 School audience based resource sections or pages should also provide links to the district’s online Resource Database and also link to the appropriate district audience based resource page.

## 4.11 Student Managed Sections

Allowing students to manage their own website sections is encouraged as a means of teaching technology in the classroom. Students may maintain their own classroom website sections with the following conditions:

a) Staff are never to disclose their personal login information. Students are to be assigned their own accounts with separate editing privileges.

Students are not allowed to edit a staff member’s website section nor can they be assigned editing privileges to any public areas of the website. Exceptions to this can only be made in the case of paid student interns employed specifically to assist in website maintenance.

b) Staff must notify their school or site administration and webmaster before allowing students to edit a website section.

c) All contributions by a student must first be approved by a responsible staff member.

d) If using a district provided website tool, staff must first attend a basic website training session before allowing students to manage their own sections.

e) All website standards and policies apply to student managed sections with the possible exception of layout standards (Section 3.0 Standards for Website Elements). It is the



responsibility of the sponsoring staff member to notify students of applicable policies and ensure compliance.

f) Before editing, students must already have on file at the school a parent signed and approved Permission to Publish form for the current school year, a signed Technology Use Agreement and, must sign Attachment B. Agreement to Adhere to Website Standards.

## 4.12 Volunteer Managed Website Sections

Allowing volunteers to manage certain website sections can be very beneficial. Volunteers are allowed to assist in the maintenance of websites with the following conditions:

- a) Volunteers must review and sign all applicable district volunteer documents and adhere to any district volunteer policies.
- b) Volunteers must review the website standards and must sign Attachment B. Agreement to Adhere to Website Standards.
- c) The appropriate site or school administration must first approve the volunteer and accepts full responsibility for any content posted by the volunteer.
- d) The volunteer is assigned his or her own login account with editing privileges.
- e) The volunteer must never disclose his or her login information and must never allow another to edit the website in his or her place as this will be grounds for immediate removal of editing privileges.
- f) Volunteers are not allowed to edit the homepage of a site except through the use of a content routing approval process by which the school administration or designee approves the content before it is posted.
- g) Volunteers must be trained by the District Website Coordinator before being allowed to edit.

## 5.0 Site-Wide Layout

These standards pertain to site-wide look and feel not defined above.

- 5.1 Use a website layout sized no larger than 800 pixels or 100%.
- 5.2 Use a consistent layout for all site pages that includes the following elements:
- 5.3 A header showing the site name and logo at a reasonable size and in a noticeable location. Include a search form (see Search standards). Link the logo and site name to the homepage.
- 5.4 A footer including a link to the district-wide privacy policy (Attachment C) and an additional entirely textual form of the navigation menus.
- 5.5 Choose a consistent color scheme for high contrast between text and its background.
- 5.6 Use dark colored fonts for content text and heading schemes.



# Los Alamos Public Schools

---

- 5.7 Use a light background color for context text and headings.
- 5.8 Do not credit search engines, design firms, browser companies or technology behind the scenes in a prominent place in the website.
- 5.9 Do not use frames.
- 5.10 Do not use autoplaying music.
- 5.11 Make every effort to use standards compliant markup language to ensure maximum browser compatibility.

## **6.0 Standards for Website Maintenance**

### **6.1 Roles and Responsibilities**

The maintenance of LAPS websites is a decentralized and collaborative effort. With that in mind, the following roles should be assigned to appropriate staff.

#### **6.1.1 District Technology Coordinator**

Corresponding Job: Technology Coordinator or designee

Responsibilities:

- Support site website leaders in their responsibilities. Ensure they are conducting their responsibilities in accordance with these standards.
- Implement, oversee and ensure quality of systems supporting the website.
- Oversee maintenance of website standards in accordance with Section 7 of this document.
- Manage website systems access for site website leaders.
- Sign Attachment E, indicating willingness to adhere to these standards.
- Ensure all site website leads sign Attachment E. Keep all signed Attachment Es for site website leads.
- Establish district-wide privacy policy in accordance with regulation 6145.3R.

Website Systems Access: Complete administrative access to all websites

#### **6.1.1b District Website Coordinator**

Corresponding Job: Designee of District Technology Coordinator

Responsibilities:

- Develop and maintain the district website and district-wide web presence as the designee of the Technology Coordinator.
- Develop and deliver Schoolwires CMS training for LAPS staff.
- Maintain and update the District-wide Website Standards document
- Develop an action plan and continuous improvement process for the district's website implementation.
- Sign Attachment E, indicating willingness to adhere to these standards.
- Website Systems Access: Complete administrative access to all websites

#### **6.1.2 Site Webmaster**

Corresponding Job: Webmaster or designee

Responsibilities:

District-Wide Website Standards  
Created - March, 2007  
Last Revised – July, 2009



- Support teachers and specific content area contributors in their responsibilities. Ensure they are conducting their responsibilities in accordance with these standards.
- Maintain portions of website not updated by Teachers or Content Area Specific Website Contributors in accordance with standards.
- Manage website systems access for teachers and content-specific contributors.
- Sign Attachment E, indicating willingness to adhere to these standards.
- Ensure Site Teachers and Content Area Specific Contributors sign Attachment E. Keep all signed Attachment Es for staff maintaining site.
- Keep all written permissions associated with site content.

Website Systems Access: Complete administrative access to site for which lead is responsible.

### **6.1.3 Administrators**

Corresponding Job: All school principals, assistant principals, or their designees

Responsibilities:

- ◆ Provide content to webmasters.
- ◆ Ensure that staff are conducting their website responsibilities in accordance with these standards and other applicable district policies.
- ◆ Request from parents and maintain permission to publish student information.

### **6.1.3 Teachers**

Corresponding Job: Every classroom teacher or their designee

Responsibilities:

- Maintain portion of website designated for content related to their classroom instruction in accordance with these standards. Maintain other portions of website (in accordance with these standards) by agreement with the site website lead.
- Sign Attachment E, indicating willingness to adhere to these standards.

Website Systems Access: Complete access to content for which teacher is responsible.

### **6.1.4 Content Area Specific Website Contributors**

Corresponding Job: Designated staff members

Responsibilities:

- Maintain portions of website designated by agreement with site website lead in accordance with these standards.
- Sign Attachment E, indicating willingness to adhere to these standards.

Website Systems Access: Complete access to content for which content area website is responsible.



## **6.1.5 Students**

Responsibilities:

- Assist in maintaining portions of website in accordance with these standards as designated by teachers or content area specific contributors.
- Sign Attachment E, indicating willingness to adhere to these standards.

Website System Access: Access to portions of website responsible for maintaining, but mandatory review by LAPS staff member before changes go online.

## **6.2 Update Frequency**

### **6.2.1 Entire Website**

The entire website should be checked and maintained for accuracy at least 2 weeks before the beginning of every school year. It should also be prepared for summer (all information labeled as relevant to the current school year removed or relabeled so as to be relevant to the next school year).

### **6.2.2 Homepages**

Site homepages should be updated at least once per week.

### **6.2.3 Time-Sensitive Information**

Any information which is obviously time sensitive (such as a list of upcoming events) should be updated at least once per week.

### **6.2.4 Teacher Web Pages**

Teacher homepages should be checked and maintained for accuracy at least 1 week before the beginning of every school year and the beginning of school after winter break. They should also be prepared for summer (all information either removed or labeled as relevant to the next school year). Homework information should be updated frequently.

### **6.2.5 Blogs and Discussions**

Blogs should be updated at least once a month. Inactive discussion posts should be deleted at least once per month.

## **6.3 Update Time**

Webmasters should refer to the separate Interim Website Priority Guide and Website Calendar Checklist to prioritize website requests and maintenance responsibilities.

### **6.3.1 Minor Changes**

Minor changes to the website should be made at the time of the day the website is least used (as determined by website statistics)

### **6.3.2 Major Changes**

Major changes (those which may interrupt user experience) should be made during holidays or other times of low website usage.



## **7.0 Maintenance of Standards**

### **7.1 Structure**

Given the length of this document, its modularity is important. This document and its standards should be written so as to make sense when taken out of context. For instance standard 2.1.1 should make sense without reference to the standards surrounding it, or to its sectional description. Sections should also be modular, allowing a website editor to understand their responsibilities by reading only the sections which clearly apply to them. It is expected that most content editors will have to read the "Standard Elements" section, but should not have to read the "Homepage" section if they are not maintaining the homepage. Likewise, a teacher who is not maintaining a blog should not have to read the "Blogs, Forums and Other Discussion Tools" standards.

### **7.2 Published Format**

This document should be available in its entirety in a printable format on every website it governs. Adjacent to it should be a method by which a website user can submit comments or suggestions to the District Website Coordinator.

### **7.3 Exceptions**

Official exceptions to these standards can be made in writing by the District Website Coordinator. Repeated exceptions to a given standard should prompt consideration for revision.

### **7.4 Revisions**

The District Website Coordinator should create a list of possible revisions based on website feedback, statistics, industry standards (and other comments in the continuous improvement cycle) he/she receives and present it to the Website Team by June 15<sup>th</sup> of each year. The website team should meet by August 1<sup>st</sup> of each year to agree on modifications. Site administrators and site webmasters should share a summary these revisions with other website contributors at their schools by September 1st, collect feedback, and present proposed modifications to the District Website Coordinator by September 15th. After sending the compiled proposed modifications to the Website Team for review, the website team will meet by October 15<sup>th</sup> to agree on modifications. However, after consulting the Website Team, the District Website Coordinator may make modifications to the standards at any time of the year.

### **7.5 Initial Ratification of These Standards**

These standards will govern all websites to which they apply after

- a) having been authorized by the District Technology Coordinator.
- b) having been authorized by the Assistant Superintendent
- c) Attachment B having been signed by a majority of those currently updating LAPS websites.

District-Wide Website Standards

Created - March, 2007

Last Revised – July, 2009



# Los Alamos Public Schools

---



## **Attachments**

- A) District-Wide Privacy Policy
- B) Agreement to Adhere to Website Standards
- C) Website Calendar Event Management



# Los Alamos Public Schools

---

## **District-Wide Website Privacy Policy**

*(Website Standards Attachment A)*

Los Alamos Public Schools (LAPS) maintains websites to enhance communication between school administrators, staff, parents, students and community members. This website is designed and maintained with your privacy in mind. This document, our privacy policy, describes what information we collect from our website's visitors and how it is used.

### **Management of the LAPS Website**

The management of LAPS websites is a decentralized effort, undertaken by district technology staff, site technology staff and teachers. However, Los Alamos Public Schools Policy 6145.3R states that the school principal is ultimately responsible for the content of the website.

### **Website Statistics**

Like most websites, LAPS collects statistical data from visitors to its website. The purpose of this data is to help improve our website and tailor it to fit the needs of our users. We do not use this information to track individual users or maintain individual profiles. Our statistics gathering systems do not allow us to discern the user of a computer, but only the computer's Internet or "IP" address. Information that is gathered and analyzed for statistical purposes includes but is not limited to:

- Date and time of your visit to our website
- Pages that you visited
- The web address (URL) of the link you followed to reach our site
- The domain of your Internet service provider, e. g. aol.com
- The type and version of your web browser, e. g. Netscape 4.1
- The operating system of your computer, e. g. Mac OS

### **Gathering of Personal Information (Including E-mail Addresses)**

LAPS uses feedback forms and surveys to gather information, comments and suggestions from website users. The use of these interactive tools is totally voluntary and is not necessary to access any portion of our website. The information that these forms submit to us includes:

- Name
- Email address
- User type (parent, staff member, etc.)

These forms also usually contain a text box that is used to send comments or other information. Although we treat information we collect as confidential, it is not encrypted for transmission through the Internet. The data collected in these forms could be intercepted and easily read; therefore, we do not recommend transmission of confidential or personal information through these forms.

### **Use of Personal Information (Including E-mail Addresses)**

Information submitted to us is managed and archived by the person/department/school site that it concerns. This department may share the information collected with other departments or entities (including third party web site technical support providers).

We will only use information submitted through these forms to respond to your comments; however, most submitted information is public record and could be made available to others if requested under the New Mexico Inspection of Public Records Act. Student medical or discipline records, for example, are not available for public inspection.

Occasionally, we will send important email notifications to parents, students and staff using a mass-mailing manager. The email addresses used for these mailings are collected through a designated form on the website (not comments submitted through the feedback form) or information collected when your student registers for school.

If you wish to "opt-out" of these e-mail communications, please contact the Los Alamos Public Schools Assistant Superintendent's at (505) 663-2228 office using the information provided below.

### **Links to Other Sites**

We are not responsible for the maintenance or content of external sites. We do not knowingly link to sites with unregulated chat rooms, bulletin boards, or to sites containing or linking to personal information or inappropriate content. If you find that we have inadvertently linked to a site of a questionable nature, please contact the LAPS Director of Technology at (505) 663-2204.

### **Soliciting Information From Children**

In compliance with the Children's Online Privacy Act, our website only collects information from children under the age of 13 with prior parental permission. If you believe that solicitation of information from children without parental permission is being done under the pretense of a LAPS official activity, please contact the LAPS Director of Technology at (505) 663-2204.

## **Website Security**

Our websites do not collect confidential personal information such as social security numbers or credit card numbers. Therefore, our web server is not equipped to handle secure transactions at this time. If you believe that confidential personal information is being collected under the pretense of a LAPS official activity, please contact the LAPS Technology Coordinator at (505) 663-2204.

## **Contact Information**

As our websites evolve, our privacy policy may change. We will note any change on our homepage. If you have any additional questions about the LAPS privacy policy, contact the LAPS Technology Coordinator at (505) 663-2204.



## **Website Calendar Event Management**

*(Website Standards Attachment C)*

### **I. Purpose**

The purpose of this document is to outline a policy that will streamline the process of adding important district-wide events to the website calendar(s), define events that will appear on all calendars, determine a origination calendar for important events that will not appear on all calendars, and assign posting responsibilities for these events.

### **II. Validating the Need for Improvement:**

In August 2007, district-wide calendar events considered important to everyone were cascaded or “pushed-down” to all the calendars. It was found that this clutters the school sub-site calendars as well as the teacher classroom calendars making them ineffective as school specific or classroom specific communication tools. In addition, events not relevant to a particular school appeared on the school’s calendar and “Upcoming Events” section on the home page. Feedback gathered from both principals and our on-line feedback form indicated that a policy needed to be created to limit the number of events pushed-down from the district calendar.

Because our cascading options are limited within the Website Content Management System (WCMS), we cannot choose specific calendars on which to post events originating from the district calendar. An event can only be pushed-down to appear on all calendars. Therefore, our policy must focus on placing the responsibility for posting some important events back on the individual schools. However, these events must still be managed consistently district-wide to ensure effective communication with our stakeholders.

### **III. District-Wide “Mandatory” Events**

A “Mandatory” event is one that originates on the district calendar and is “pushed-down” to ALL other calendars.

***Rule for Making a Calendar Event Mandatory:***

The event must be relevant to the entire LAPS community including students, parents, and staff at every school. The event must be approved by the superintendent's office before being pushed-down.

These events originate at the District Calendar and will be pushed-down to all calendars. The Website Coordinator will post these.

- Board meetings
- District wide holidays
- Teacher in-services
- District-wide Homecoming dismissal
- Homecoming Parade
- District-wide elections (e.g. referendum, board member elections, etc.)
- Beginning of the year staff reporting days
- Beginning of the year New Teacher Workshops
- School beginning & start dates
- Elementary Parent/Teacher Conferences
- Early dismissals

## **IV. Open House Dates**

Open House dates will originate on the individual school calendars and will be pushed-up to the District calendar. Sub-site directors (school webmasters) are responsible for posting these as soon as they are available, ensuring proper category label assignment, and requesting event posting to the district calendar.

## **V. Board Events**

Board meetings, executive sessions, special sessions and notices will originate on the District Calendar will be pushed-down to all calendars. The Superintendent's office will normally post these or the district Website Coordinator will post them when requested.

## **VI. District Committee Meetings**

Committees that consist primarily of parents or other community members will appear on and originate from the District Calendar. They will not be pushed- down to all calendars. The district Site-Director will post these.

- District Parent Council Meetings

## **VII. Site Council Meetings**

These events will originate from the schools' main calendars. They will not be pushed-up to the District Calendar. Each school Sub-site Director (school webmaster) is responsible for posting these on their school calendar and for requesting posting to the District Calendar.

## **VIII. Student Testing & Assessment**

Testing windows will originate on the District Calendar and will be restricted to staff viewing only. Specific school testing dates and times will originate on school calendars. Each school Sub-site Director (school webmaster) is responsible for posting these on their schools calendar.

## **IX. Internal Staff Events**

### ***District-wide Staff Events***

Important staff events will originate on the District Calendar and will be restricted to staff viewing only. These will not appear on the open Main District Calendar unless they are also of interest to parents or students (e.g. Curriculum Committee meetings).

- Staff Development Events (e.g. ACE Training, Dossier Training)
- ATM Meetings



- Counselors Meetings
- Grade Level Meetings

### ***Site-Specific Staff Events***

1) Each school/site (including the district office) can choose to post staff events on the main school calendar but limit the viewing so that only staff can view them when signed in. This could include the following:

- Department meetings
- Department chair meetings
- Classified staff meetings
- Continuous School Improvement (CSI) meetings

Whenever applicable, site-specific staff events open to any staff member at the district should be “pushed-up” to the district calendar.

