

Educational Technology Department
and
Office of Community Relations



Saint Paul Public Schools *Best Practices* *Web Publishing Guidelines*

SPPS Best Practices: Web Publishing Guidelines

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Section 1: Introduction

We are pleased to present to you our Web Publishing Guidelines created for the redesigned Saint Paul Public School (SPPS) website. The revised website reflects many of the ideas outlined in the school district's *Strategic Plan for Continued Excellence*. Although the existing SPPS website was comparable in scope and quality to those of other major public school districts elsewhere in the country, we knew we could do better. From improving the consistency of design and navigation to reducing the number of broken links, we set out to make the site more graceful and useful than ever before.

The new SPPS website is a lot like the people and groups that make up the Saint Paul Public Schools. By providing useful and relevant information, it helps students, families and community members connect with each other in ways that further the district's public education and community service goals. As an enabling technology, the site is not a destination itself, but a means for people to find their way.

Perhaps the most far-reaching change will only be visible from within. Website templates along with this *Guide*, regularly scheduled classes and online tutorials will help schools and departments create and revise their own sites more easily. The templates provide built-in parameters for consistent design and navigation that continue to use the UrbanPlanet Content Management System (CMS). We have kept the requirements of site users foremost throughout the planning and execution of this project. Students and families, teachers and staff, and the community at large look to the district for information they both need and want. We are proud to present the new SPPS website and hope you use these guidelines as a tool when designing or updating you website.

Educational Technology Department, and
Office of Community Relations

Section 2: Responsibilities

Educational Technology Department Responsibilities

Technical Maintenance

The district will provide a website and layout template for all Saint Paul Public Schools (SPPS) schools and departments.

Servers

The district will provide server space for all schools and departments. Please contact George Adams george.adams@spps.org or at (651) 603-4891 for information.

Training

Training is available from the district for using the UrbanPlanet content editing tool. Please check the workshops on <http://pdexpress.spps.org> for upcoming training sessions. On-site training can be arranged for by filling out the form at http://uphelp.spps.org/Onsite_Training.html or contacting the email addresses listed on that web page. In addition, online tutorials are available at www.uphelp.spps.org.

School Responsibilities

Content Responsibility

Content on a school website is the responsibility of the school principal. Decisions on quality, content or design ultimately depend on the principal's judgment.

The school Webmaster and the school principal are responsible for ensuring that content placed on the school website complies with [Saint Paul Public Schools Procedure 520.00 Information Technology Usage Procedure](#), available at

<http://boe.spps.org/Proceduremanual.html>. The Webmaster and principal will also work together to ensure that the website's tone and message are consistent with the school's mission, goals and values, as well as those of Saint Paul Public Schools.

The Urban Planet tool has three access levels:

1. **Super User** (webmaster)
2. **Publisher** (teacher)
3. **Modifier** (student)

Super Users can make any change to the website and set up new users.

Publishers have the authority to post, or make content "live," on the website. **Modifiers** can add content, but it does not become live until a Publisher authorizes it.

Selecting a Webmaster

The school Webmaster will be responsible for responding to inquiries from users and updating and maintaining content. This person will also be responsible for issuing user names and passwords for additional staff who have authority to post content on the school website.

Site Maintenance

Update website content often to provide current and dynamic news, photos, video and information for visitors. Check web pages for spelling and grammar before posting. Regularly check the entire site for missing or inactive links.

Student Involvement

Students should be set up in the Urban Planet Access page as “Modifiers.” As “Modifiers,” they are allowed to post materials to the web server, but they are not published “live” on the site until a teacher or other authorized person with “Publisher” access has reviewed it and authorized it as acceptable material to publish to the website.

Links to Outside Sites

SPPS is NOT responsible for the content or privacy practices of other websites. Links to other websites from the SPPS website are provided for the convenience of users; these links do not constitute endorsements.

Department or Program Responsibilities

Content Responsibility

Content on a department or program website is the responsibility of the department director or program manager. Decisions on the quality, content or design ultimately depend on the judgment of the department director.

The webmaster and department director are responsible for ensuring that content placed on the school district website complies with [Saint Paul Public Schools Procedure 520.00 Information Technology Usage Procedure](#), available at <http://boe.spps.org/Proceduremanual.html>. The webmaster and director will also work together to ensure that the website’s tone and message are consistent with the department’s mission, goals and values, as well as those of Saint Paul Public Schools. A best practiced guide and other resources are available at - http://connect.spps.org/Information_Technology_Policies.html

Selecting a Webmaster

The webmaster will be responsible for responding to user inquiries, for updating and maintaining content, and for issuing usernames and passwords for additional staff with authority to post on the school website.

The department webmaster must be a member of the department staff. The webmaster should also have experience or training using the Urban Planet tool. Urban Planet training is available. Please check the workshops on <http://pdexpress.spps.org> for upcoming training sessions. On-site training can be arranged for by filling out the form at http://uphelp.spps.org/Onsite_Training.html or contacting the email addresses listed on that web page.

Site Maintenance

Update website content often to provide current and dynamic news, photos, video and information for visitors. Check web pages for spelling and grammar before posting. Regularly check the entire site for missing or inactive links.

Links to Outside Sites

SPPS is NOT responsible for the content or privacy practices of other websites. Links to other websites from the SPPS website are provided for the convenience of users; these links do not constitute endorsements.

**Note: In the case of the main district site, including SPPS.org home, the Community Relations Department is responsible for monitoring, updating and maintaining the site.*

Section 3: Templates

A template is the framework that determines where elements are located on web pages. It sets parameters for site navigation and content. Some parts of your template will be editable; others are locked in place. The purpose of using a template for all SPPS websites is to ensure a consistent SPPS organizational appearance and usability.

SPPS Logo Usage

As Part of the SPPS Template

SPPS district logo placement is predetermined by your provided template and should not move. The logo will link to the district homepage, www.spps.org.

A SPPS district identifier will be in the utility bar of every school page. The icon will link to the district homepage, www.spps.org.

Additional guidelines on the use of the SPPS logo can be found at www.spps.org/sppslogos.

Use of Department or School Logos

Department logos may be displayed in the top only position in the right sidebar or the banner of school websites.

Utility Bars

Department Utility Bar

You will see a utility bar at the top of the SPPS template. The choices in this utility bar are accessible from a drop-down menu.

These tabbed categories are subject to change, but initially include:

- District About Us
- School Locator
- Directories
- Calendars
- Contact Us
- Site Map
- Search

Changes can only be made by the SPPS District Webmaster.

School Utility Bar

A narrow utility bar will be added across the top of all K-12 sites, containing an SPPS icon and tagline. This identifies all schools in a uniform way as SPPS schools, and provides a link to the school's home page for content.

Headers

Department Header

All departments will use a header template provided by Saint Paul Public Schools. The department name will appear in the header, as well as departmental photos,

which will be chosen and posted by the department. Logos and taglines are not to be posted in the header, but may be posted elsewhere on the site.

There will be a link to the district homepage above the left navigation bar, at the start of the cookie trail.

School Header

Schools may use a header of their choice. The header will be located below the utility bar provided by SPPS.

Footers

Required Information

All website footers will include the following information, automatically added as part of the SPPS template:

- SPPS district contact information, including Contact Us link
- SPPS Equal Opportunity/Non-discrimination Policy language

Additional Information Required for Schools and Departments:

All departments and schools must include contact information above the district information in the footer.

Left-side Navigation

All department sites set up their own categories for left-side navigation. Please refer to Section 4 of this document for naming and categories.

Right Sidebar

Use of the right sidebar is optional and not recommended for navigation. Please refer to Section 4 of this document for additional recommendations.

Fonts and Color Palette

Departments/Schools

Standard web fonts are Arial and Helvetica. All district and department sites are encouraged to use these fonts.

Departments will be able to choose from a list of colors for their header bars and accents throughout their sites.

Section 4: Content Guidelines

Scope of Content

Consistent with SPPS Mission, Standards and Policies

All web content should relate to approved school or district business, curriculum, instruction, school/district sponsored activities, or provide the community with information about the mission of the school or district. All SPPS websites must comply with the district Acceptable Use Procedures and Policies pertaining to information technology ([Procedure Document 520.00](#) and [Policy Document 520.00](#) available at <http://boe.spps.org>).

Compliance with Federal, State and Local Laws

All SPPS websites must comply with federal, state and local laws.

Copyright Information

Use of copyrighted works (content copyrighted by third party)

You may be able to use some copyrighted information under [Fair Use Guidelines](#) from the U.S. Copyright Office. For basic information on the use of copyrighted work, see <http://www.copyright.gov/help/faq>.

Copyrighting of Original Staff or Student Work

Any and all information created by a staff member and posted on any SPPS website becomes the property of Saint Paul Public Schools.

Required Content Checklist

All sites must contain the following information:

Contact Us, which includes:

- Mailing address, including city, state, zip and phone number with area code
- Director or principal with e-mail address and phone number
- Webmaster with e-mail address and phone number
- Staff directory
- Link to SPPS District Office contact information

Sitemap

Calendars (a customizable calendar template will be provided to you by SPPS)

News items/Announcements

Philosophy/mission

All schools, departments and programs that have their own site must include the following pages with these shortcut URLs:

Home: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/home.html

Contact Us: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/contactus.html

School address and general phone number

School principal with e-mail address and phone number

School webmaster with e-mail address and phone number

Staff directory

Link to SPPS District Office contact information
About Us: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/aboutus.html
Sitemap: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/sitemap.html
Search: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/search.html (this will search the school site)
Calendar: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/calendar.html
News: Schoolname(programname).spps.org/news.html

Translation

Where appropriate, have pages translated by the District Translation Department. Information is available at <http://translationservices.spps.org>.

Navigation and Naming Guidelines

Structure

Before building or reorganizing a site, make a plan. List and sort your categories in a comprehensive way.

Avoid placing too many navigational options on the home page; instead, choose category names that are inclusive enough to lead users to other pages. Be sure the categories used to sort your information are clear and concise—one line if possible. Avoid wrapping text in navigation lists.

Left-Side Navigation on Departmental Sites

Left-side navigation will show a user's path under the banner of your site. Links embedded in body copy are a good way of leading users deeper into your site without creating an undue number of left-side navigation choices.

Flyout menus help users jump past section lead pages, going deeper into the navigation. If there is important general information on your section lead page you want to emphasize, include an Overview button on your flyout menu that takes the user to your lead page.

Right Sidebars

Do not create navigation menus in the right sidebar of your page. You may use this space to place your department or school logo, and list contact information. This is also an appropriate space for links, special announcements, surveys, news items, and polls.

Site Map

It is important to have a clear and easy to read site map for your school or department site. This will help you organize your site, and your users will appreciate this navigation option.

Site Expansion

Set up your site with the possibility of expansion in mind. Think ahead; it will save time and energy later.

Note: Be sure to use the correct section type when creating a new page. Changing the data type of an existing page requires recreating the entire page.

Community

Consider your reader's point of view as you create and post articles and photos. Keep your tone friendly; if you use abbreviations or acronyms, explain them. Your readers will not have the same knowledge you do. Include links to other resources you feel will add depth or perspective. Be a positive voice and an advocate for SPPS (Saint Paul Public Schools). We have an excellent school district; help tell that story.

Outside Links

SPPS cannot responsible for the content or privacy practices of other websites. However, when providing links to outside websites, the websites should be consistent with our mission, goals, and values.

Forbidden Content

Content expressly forbidden includes personal home pages created by staff, students, or web pages of organizations not directly affiliated with the district. Web pages that promote or encourage illegal or immoral activities, contain language offensive to others, profanity, obscene comments, sexually explicit material or expressions of bigotry, racism or hate, or links to web pages that lead users directly to any other page that in any way promotes these activities, are not permitted and will be removed. Additional guidelines for [Saint Paul Public Schools Procedure 520.00; Information Technology Usage Procedure](#) are available at <http://boe.spps.org/Proceduremanual.html>

Section 5: Graphics, Audio and Video

File Size Recommendations

For graphics files, the recommended specifications are as follows:

File types: .gif, jpg, png (png images should be checked with various browsers to make sure they display correctly)

Dimensions not to exceed: 640 x 480 pixels

For audio files, the recommended specifications are as follows:

File types: mp3, mov, m4v mp4, wav.

File size not to exceed: 100 mg

For video files, the recommended specifications are as follows:

File types: mov, avi, wmv.

File size not to exceed: 200 mg but much much smaller is better.

Dimensions no to exceed 320 x 240 pixels

Video sharing sites (e.g. YouTube, Yahoo! Video, etc.)

Although placing videos on video sharing sites will reduce demand on district servers, these sites are generally not accessible from within the schools. Further, its own linking features may feature inappropriate content next to videos created by students. For now, the use of video sharing sites is not recommended. The Educational Technology Department will provide updates as the district increases its server capacity, or as other external sites become available that are better suited for use by Saint Paul Public Schools.

Alternate Text Tags

Each graphic item must also carry an alternate text tag for web users who are unable to view graphics.

The UrbanPlanet tool has the following Alternate Text field associated with every uploaded image. Filling out this field will create the alternate text.

Alternate Text:

If images are added by hand using HTML in you will need to add alt="the alternative text for the image" in the HTML tag.

Note: Though not normally displayed on your website, the names and tag information of photos and other graphics can be searched and read online. Treat names and tags as viewable content. If the user is visually impaired or if the user has set their preference to not display images these tags will show in the browser.

Section 6: Student and Staff Protection

Student Protection Policy

No student information such as last name, home address, phone number, or date of birth will be published on Saint Paul Public Schools web pages. All student information posted on the web must conform to district, state and federal guidelines pertaining to student data privacy. The names and contents of files that are accessible through the website can also be found by search engines; the Student Protection Policy applies to these items as well.

Decisions on publishing student pictures (video or still) and audio clips are based on the supervising teacher's judgment. The teacher must first ensure that the parent or guardian has completed the proper media releases. Documents, pictures, or movies should include only the first name of the student. When posting pictures of students on the web, be sure that the name of the picture or its tag data does not include the child's last name. Published e-mail addresses shall be restricted to staff only. No student work shall be published without the permission of the student and the student's parent or guardian.

Permission forms for use of name, student work, photos, and video are located at http://www.spps.org/media_permissions

Staff Protection

Personal Information Guidelines

Please refer to the Guidelines for Acceptable Use of Information Technology by Employees at http://connect.spps.org/Usage_Procedures.html.

Section 7: Support

Contact the Webmaster listed on the bottom of every SPPS web site for information about a specific web page. On-line training material for Urban Planet is available at www.uphelp.spps.org.

In addition, Urban Planet training classes are regularly scheduled through the district's Department of Technology. Visit <http://pdexpress.spps.org/> for a complete listing of training opportunities