Visual Identity &
BRANDBOOK

VERSION 1.1 - UPDATED MAY 09, 2014

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Note: Additional information on photography, e-newsletters, social media, video production, writing, contact information and other topics will be added to this book at a later date.

This document is published by the Communication and Public Relations Department with contributions from Community Education.

DISTRICT BANNERS
District-themed banners created in 2013-14
as part of Anoka-Hennepin's new branding.

INTRODUCTION
At the heart of Anoka-Hennepin Schools' identity is our logo and our tagline, "A future without limit." This is not only about our schools, but also about the staff, students, families and community members they serve.

The Visual Identity and Brand Book (brought to you by the Communication and Public Relations department) is designed to define the Anoka-Hennepin School District brand and help bring it to life through various communication outlets.

This book is intended to be a "one-stop shop" for website contacts (and eventually e-newsletter and social media contacts) on how to carry out their various communication tasks and stay "on-brand" with district messages and design. Eventually it'll become a resource for all internal stakeholders to understand the meaning of the Anoka-Hennepin brand.

Future updates will include information on the district's electronic guidelines, presentation templates, e-newsletters, social media guidelines and video guidelines.

The consistent use of these guidelines will bring a unified Anoka-Hennepin identity to both internal and external stakeholders, helping us achieve our goal of preparing students for life!

Let the Communication and Public Relations Department know if you have questions or comments about this book at: **branding@anoka.k12.mn.us**. General questions, comments or news tips can be directed to: **news@anoka.k12.mn.us**.

THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT

Anoka High School students (around the time of the district consolidation) look toward a future without limit.

BRIEF HISTORY OVERVIEW

The Anoka-Hennepin School District of today was born out of consolidation. In 1947 the Minnesota Legislature asked communities to elect "survey committees to study the programs, facilities and finances of school districts."

The committee found that area students were educated in small country schools scattered throughout the area, which were overcrowded and could offer only a limited education. In 1951, the committee concluded it was time to consolidate rural schools and recommended consolidating all or parts of 26 Anoka County districts and five Hennepin County districts, each with its own interesting history.

On April 8, 1952, the vote to consolidate was overwhelmingly positive, and the Anoka-Hennepin School District No. 220 was born. Later, in 1957 the legislature renumbered all districts in the state, and Anoka-Hennepin was assigned number 11.

Today, Anoka-Hennepin covers 172 square miles and has more than 240,000 residents in 13 municipalities in Anoka and Hennepin counties (about a 75/25 percent split between the two counties): Andover, Anoka, Blaine, Brooklyn Center, Brooklyn Park, Champlin, Coon Rapids, Dayton, Fridley, Ham Lake, Oak Grove, Nowthen and Ramsey.

Anoka-Hennepin is the largest school district in the state with 38,500 students, preK through 12, and approximately 6,000 educational and support staff. Our district has 24 elementary schools, six middle schools, five comprehensive high schools, one alternative high school, one online high school and a number of other educational sites in the community.

CHAPTER ONE:
BRAND MESSAGING
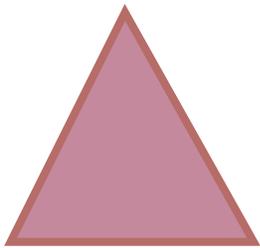
BRAND
perceived emotional
corporate image
as a whole.
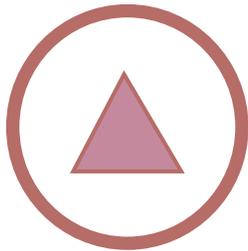
IDENTITY
visual aspects that
form part of the
overall brand.
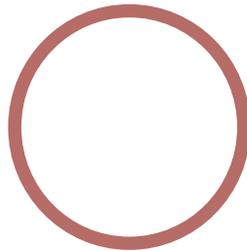
LOGO
identifies a business
in its simplest form
via the use of a
mark or icon.

WHAT IS A BRAND?

A brand is a collection of tangible and intangible attributes that resonate whenever the brand is experienced. The benefits of a brand can be emotional, (i.e. how it makes one feel) and rational (i.e., the tangible reward that one gets from it).

The Anoka-Hennepin brand is based and developed on the experiences that our students, parents, staff and community members have had with our teachers, administrators, custodians, secretaries and so many others; and the expectations they have about the school district in the future.

It's strengthened by the stories that our stakeholders tell their friends, neighbors, elected officials and members of the media; and it is the promise that we make and vow to keep through all of our interactions through words, actions and visuals.

BRAND CONSISTENCY IS IMPORTANT

Consistency with the messages that we send out to the public are a big part of building our brand. Whether it's a blog post, an advertisement, or even just an update on Twitter – we are communicating our brand. When those messages are positive, consistent and supportive, we are building our brand as an outstanding school district where students have a future without limit.

Sending conflicting messages can confuse our customers and actually negate the time and money that we've already put into building our brand.
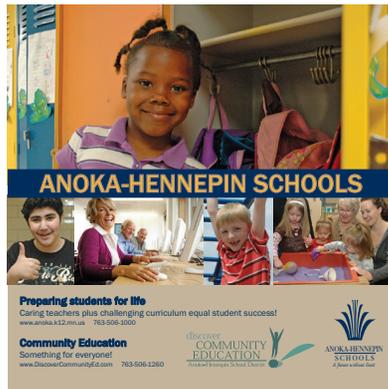
TAGLINE EXAMPLES

A future without limit (used with the district logo); *preparing students for life* (used on various district marketing materials).

OUR BRAND VALUES

- Respect
- Responsibility
- Appreciation of diveristy
- Integrity
- Compassion

OUR BRAND PERSONALITY

- Accountable
- Compassionate
- Intelligent
- Honest
- Innovative
- Fair
- Respectful
- Proud
- Successful
- Trustworthy
- Dedicated
- Responsive
- High-achieving
- Diverse
- Sensitive
- Friendly
- Collaborative
- Helpful
- Traditional
- Caring

MISSION AND VISION STATEMENT

A mission statement is a written declaration of an organization's purpose; it describes what the organization does now. A vision statement is a statement of what an organization intends to be in the future to best meet the needs of all its stakeholders.

Anoka-Hennepin's mission and vision statements were adopted by the School Board on Feb. 9, 2004:

Our primary mission is to effectively educate each of our students for success.

The vision of the district is to be a public school system of excellence, with high quality staff and programs and successful graduates.

CHAPTER TWO:
BRAND IMAGERY

Note: Information on school and department logos and color palettes will be added to this chapter at a later date.

EXAMPLE OF CONSISTENCY
This recent online ad series uses great photos of smiling students and consistent font and colors choices to display the district's message of "preparing students for life."

DESIGN CONSISTENCY IS IMPORTANT
The human mind constantly searches for patterns in everything that it sees, striving to find the unified picture as a whole. If the mind cannot find pattern in what it's seeking, it has a high tendency to look elsewhere. When creating design (whether it's a website, brochure or online ad), it's important to design in such a way that makes it easier, not harder for the mind to see the pattern.

Consistency with logos, fonts, icons and symbols help potential customers relate all the different messages they're seeing, and potentially what source they're coming from.

Consistency with imagery is just as important. The phrase, "a picture is worth a thousand words" is used for a reason – pictures can help convey ideas and feelings that can support the messages you're bringing across.

Websites with different colored backgrounds, fonts, colors, navigation buttons, etc. on every page can come across as unprofessional. Would you read a book that had a different font and size on every page? Probably not.

Every aspect of a organization's print and electronic communications should be presented with a uniform appearance and that is why consistency in design is so important.

LAMP OF LEARNING LOGO
The district logo used in the 1970s and 1980s featuring the "lamp of learning."

GRAY BAR LOGO
The district's gray horizontal bar logo used from about the mid-1990s through 2005.

MAP STYLE LOGO IMPOSTER
The district map-style logo, used occasionally for signs. This is sometimes mistaken for the official district logo.

WHAT'S IN A LOGO?
Our logo is the primary visual element to identify our school district. We want our stakeholders to identify with the positive experiences that they have with our staff, schools and programs each day. Consistency in design and imagery is a key factor in helping our stakeholders associate those positive experiences with the school district.

DISTRICT LOGO HISTORY
A brief history of Anoka-Hennepin logos since the 1970s - look how far we've come! The district is more than 60 years old, but we've actually had only a few logos.

Prior to the "Lamp of Learning" logo in the 1970s, the district didn't really have an official logo.

We've since dropped the "Independent School District 11" tag used in our previous logos, as most people don't know what it means to be an independent district and aren't familiar with district numberings.

In case you're curious though, the number 11 was assigned to Anoka-Hennepin in 1957 when the legislature renumbered all the districts in the state.

PRIMARY LOGO, BLACK/REVERSED
Use these color versions to the left whenever possible. Use these black or reversed versions when color printing is not available or to meet budgetary needs.

SECONDARY LOGO
If you're interested in using the horizontal version is a space-limited proejct, contact Communication and Public Relations.

ICON ONLY
Due to space and to avoid repeating the name, the district book icon is used by itself on the new website and app.

DISTRICT LOGO AND ELEMENTS
The current Anoka-Hennepin logo is the primary visual element to identify our school district. We want our stakeholders to identify with the positive experiences and encounters they have with our staff, schools and programs each day. Consistency in design and imagery is a key factor in helping our stakeholders associate those positive experiences with the school district.

The district logo consists of three core elements, which have been specially designed and created in proportion to one another:

1) The logotype - an open "book" icon that grows up and outward. The initial idea was that the district is an "open book" when it comes to accountabilty (some people see it and refer to it as a pineapple, a fountain or a sheaf of wheat).
2) The identifying words "Anoka-Hennepin Schools."
3) The tagline includes the phrase, "A future without limit."

The vertical logo with the district tagline is the primary version used. The secondary logo should only be used when space is very limited, such as software design (like the district app).

COLOR
The approved color is Anoka-Hennepin blue (PMS 648C, C:100, M:62, Y:0, K:54). Use the black/reversed version if you can't print in color. The logo should never be printed in another color.
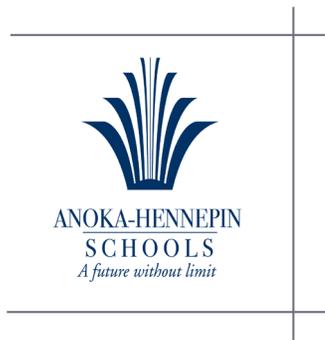
LOGO SIZE

CLEAR SPACE

INCORRECT LOGO USAGE

LOGO SIZE
The suggested size of the logo is between 1-3/8" by 1-1/8" and 2-3/8" and 2-1/6". This may be varied if necessary for specific applications. A good rule of thumb is that the text in the logo should always be readable.

CLEAR SPACE AND PLACEMENT
For maximum visibility and impact, it is important to retain a designated "clear space" around the logo. This area is designated as being equal to half the height of the "book pages" in the logo.

Preferred placement of the logo is centered at the bottom of the page or to the side.

INCORRECT LOGO USAGE
- Don't change the logo orientation.
- Don't add extraneous effects (emboss, lighting, etc.).
- Don't place on busy photos.
- Don't change the colors.
- Don't attempt to recreate.
- Don't scale unproportionately.
- Don't make alterations, additions or substitution to the words or colors.
- Don't sse as a repeated pattern, wallpaper, etc.

WHERE TO FIND THE LOGO
Find your building folder on your desktop that is named "YourSchoolNameServers" and look inside. Double click on DistrictWideData and follow this path: *StaffShare/ DistrictWideData/SecuredGroups/CommunicationPR/ PubInfo/District logo* (or on a **Mac:** Finder/Go/Connect to Server, **Windows:** Click on My Computer, select the U: drive mapping).

Anoka-Hennepin Blue
PMS 648 C
CMYK 100, 71, 9, 56
RGB 0, 46, 93
HEX #002e5d

Bengal Blue	Rebel Blue	Husky Gold	Cardinal Red	Tornado Maroon
PMS 300	**PMS 294**	**PMS 110**	**PMS 199**	**PMS 229**
CMYK 100, 62, 7, 1	CMYK 99, 50, 0, 0	CMYK 2, 22, 100, 8	CMYK 0, 100, 72, 0	CMYK 26, 100, 19, 61
RGB 0, 98, 165	RGB 0, 94, 184	RGB 218, 170, 0	RGB 213, 0, 50	RGB 103, 33, 70
HEX #0062a5	HEX #005eb8	HEX #daaa00	HEX #d50032	HEX #672146

PRIMARY DISTRICT COLOR PALETTE

Salmon	Goldilocks	Global Orange	Pumpkin Orange
PMS 7523 C	**PMS 143 C**	**PMS 1375 C**	**PMS 167 C**
CMYK 10, 67, 49, 23	CMYK 0, 32, 87, 0	CMYK 0, 45, 94, 0	CMYK 5, 77, 100, 15
RGB 171, 92, 87	RGB 241, 180, 52	RGB 255, 158, 27	RGB 190, 83, 28
HEX #ab5c57	HEX #f1b434	HEX #ff9e1b	HEX #be521c

Light Blue	Viking Purple	Mississippi Blue	Forest Green
PMS 298 C	**Pantone Purple**	**PMS 5473 C**	**PMS 555 C**
CMYK 67, 2, 0, 0	CMYK 40, 90, 0, 0	CMYK 86, 20, 32, 51	CMYK 80, 17, 76, 51
RGB 65, 182, 230	RGB 187, 41, 187	RGB 17, 94, 103	RGB 40, 114, 79
HEX #41b6e6	HEX #bb29bb	HEX #115e67	HEX #28724f

ACCENT DISTRICT COLOR PALETTE
*Colors outlined in red indicate web-only colors. Check with the Print Shop for available print color substitutions.

White	Crosswalk Clay	Beige	Chocolate
CMYK 0, 0, 0, 0	**PMS 7534 C**	**PMS 453 C**	**PMS 4725 C**
RGB 255, 255, 255	CMYK 5, 5, 15, 8	CMYK 6, 8, 35, 12	CMYK 13, 42, 43, 31
HEX #ffffff	RGB 209, 204, 189	RGB 207, ,196, 147	RGB 174, 138, 121
	HEX #d1ccbd	HEX #cfc493	HEX #ae8a79

Milk Chocolate	School Brick	Black	Cool Gray
PMS 7504 C	**PMS 7631 C**	**Neutral Black C**	**Cool Gray 9 C**
CMYK 17, 36, 52, 38	CMYK 29, 82, 50, 73	CMYK 63, 62, 59, 94	CMYK 30, 22, 17, 57
RGB 148, 121, 93	RGB 87, 45, 45	RGB 45, 41, 38	RGB 117, 120, 123
HEX #94795d	HEX #572d2d	HEX #2d2926	HEX #75787b

NEUTRAL DISTRICT COLOR PALETTE
*Colors outlined in red indicate web-only colors. Check with the Print Shop for available print color substitutions.

COLOR PALETTES
Color is a critical element in creating a memorable and lasting brand. Our colors are what gives us our personality. We've got school spirit, yes we do, we've got spirit with Anoka-Hennepin Blue!

Three official color palettes have been selected to connect the brand of our schools and our departments to each other and to the brand of the school district.

Can you guess which colors from each palette are used on the redesigned district website?

PRIMARY DISTRICT COLOR PALETTE
The primary palette consists of the Anoka-Hennepin Blue (what the district logo uses) and the primary colors of our five regular high schools. Most of our middle and elementary schools use the same or similar colors as their feeder high school.

ACCENT DISTRICT COLOR PALETTE
The accent palette consists of colors that have frequently been used in district-level publications over the years and are commonly used by a number of elementary and middle schools.

NEUTRAL DISTRICT COLOR PALETTE
The neutral palette consists of neutral colors that have frequently accompanied their accent palette counterparts in district-level publications.

PRINT: FRANKLIN GOTHIC
Is used in district-level publications, like this print ad.
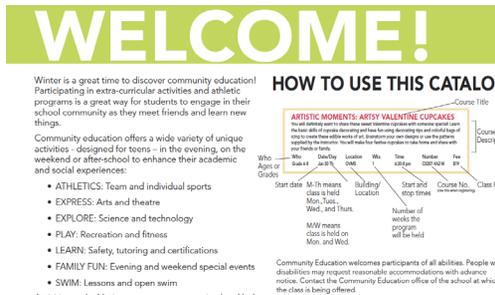
PRINT: AVENIR
Is used in Community Ed publications, like this catalog.

PRINT: GARAMOND
Is used in district-level publications and the district logo tagline (a future without limit).

TYPOGRAPHY IS IMPORTANT
Typography - the use and design of printed type - is an important element in strengthening our brand and in communicating a unified personality for the district. By using the same fonts, our stakeholders will begin to recognize official documents from the district and schools.

DISTRICT PRINT TYPOGRAPHY
Franklin Gothic
FS Franklin Gothic Regular, Italic and Bold are the district's official print fonts. Franklin Gothic and its related faces are realist sans-serif typefaces that have been used in many advertisements and newspaper headlines over the years. It was named in honor of a prolific American printer, Benjamin Franklin.

In print, we use FS Franklin Gothic Regular (12 pt.) as body copy font, FS Franklin Gothic Bold for headlines and FS Franklin Gothic Italics for subheads in district-level publications. The following fonts can be used if a user doesn't have Franklin Gothic installed on their computer.

Avenir
Avenir is a geometric, sans-serif typeface that shares similarities with Futura (more on next page). Avenir is frequently used in Community Education publications.

Adobe Garamond
Adobe Garamond's letterforms convey a sense of fluidity and consistency. It is used in the tagline of the district logo (see image) and is considered to be among the most legible and readable fonts for use in print applications.

ELECTRONIC: FUTURA
Is used in the site header of our revamped websites.
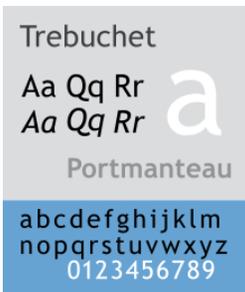
TREBUCHET
Is used as the main font in Backpack Online e-newsletter.

DISTRICT ELECTRONIC TYPOGRAPHY
Futura Bold and Medium (site headlines) and **Trebuchet MS Regular,** *Italic* **and Bold** (for all other copy) are the district's official electronic (website, e-newsletters) fonts/ typefaces.

Futura
Futura is a geometric sans-serif typeface based on geo-metric shapes (representative of visual elements of the Bauhaus design style of 1919–33). The Avenir font from page 13 shares similarities with Futura, which is why it was selected as one of the district's print fonts.

Trebuchet MS
Trebuchet MS is a more of a modern-day, sans-serif typeface. It's widely available on many machines and is generally thought of as being a good web font. It is used as the body text font on our revamped websites as well as the district e-newsletter Backpack Online.

ABBREVIATIONS

Blaine High School (BHS) is located at 12555 University Ave. NE, Blaine. The BHS mascot is a bengal.

ADDRESSES

Use:
Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Educational Service Center
2727 N. Ferry St.
Anoka, MN 55303

Instead of:
Anoka-Hennepin Schools
Educational Service Center
2727 North Ferry Street
Anoka, MN. 55303

SPELL IT OUT

In every use except addresses, spell out street names.

Use:
The school is on Ferry Street.

Instead of:
The school is on Ferry St.

When referencing a state in a sentence, spell it out or use the AP-style approved state abbreviation.

Use:
Anoka, Minn.

Instead of:
Instead of: Anoka, MN.

Use:
The Minnesota Department of Education.

Instead of:
The MN Dept. of Education.

CONTENT FORMATTING

Writing style and usage
The school district will follow the Associated Press (AP) style when writing and proofing content for brochures, websites, news releases, handbook and guidebook and other official documents

AP style is standardly used in newspapers, magazines, news websites, and more. The AP styleguide is published and updated annually to reflect changes in writing style and new guidelines. The styleguide is organized by subjects/topics versus alphabetical order (like a dictionary).

Abbreviations and acronyms: Spell out acronyms on first reference. Use the acronym after referencing it in parenthesis only after the full title is spelled out.

Addresses [postal]: Use the abbreviations when listing a mailing address on an envelope, for example. All abbreviations should be followed by a period unless abbreviating a state. For example, *NW.*

Addresses [email]: Email addresses should be listed using all lowercase letters. For example, use: *dennis.carlson@anoka.k12.mn.us instead of: Dennis.Carlson@anoka.k12.mn.us*.

Addresses [web]: Web addresses should be listed using all lowercase letters.

For example, use: *www.discovercommunityed.com instead of: www.DiscoverCommunityEd.com.*

NO SUBSCRIPT

Do not use subscript after numbers.

Use:	Instead of:
114th Ln.	114*th* Ln.

AGES

Use:	Instead of:
Classes are for children ages three through five.	Classes are for children ages 3 – 5.
Children ages 10 and up may participate in the field trip.	Children ages ten and up may participate in the field trip.

DISTRICTWIDE

Use:	Instead of:
Districtwide classes and activities will be posted on the community education website.	District-wide classes and activities will be posted on the community education website.

Ages: Numbers one through nine should be spelled out. Numbers higher than 10 should be referenced by numeric digits.

College and professional degrees: Spell out bachelor's, master's or doctorate when referring to someone possessing the degree. Abbreviations may be used following a comma when listing after a person's name.

Commonly questioned terms: The following terms should be hyphenated:
• All-day
• Half-day
• One-on-one
• One-of-a-kind
• School-age
• 24-hour notice

The following terms should not be hyphenated:
• Child care
• Babysitting
• Self defense
• Coed

Dates: Abbreviate the following months: January (Jan.), February (Feb.) August (Aug.), September (Sept.), October (Oct.), November (Nov.) and December (Dec.) when used with a date. For example, *Sept. 1, 2014.*

Districtwide: Use as one word. Do not hyphenate. When used in the middle of a sentence, the word should not be capitalized. The word district should not be capitalized unless it is used with the district name.

GRADES

Use:	Instead of:
Kindergarten students or kindergartener	Kindergartner
First-grade or grade one	1st grade
10th grade	Tenth-grade

PHONE NUMBERS

Use:	Instead of:
Phone number: 763-506-1200	Phone: (763) 506-1200
Phone: 763-506-1200	Phone #: (763) 506-1200
	Phone No.: (763) 506-1200

TIMES

Use:	Instead of:
Noon to 3:30 p.m.	12:00 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
1 to 3 p.m.	1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
10 a.m. to 3:30 p.m.	10:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Grades: Numbers one through nine should be spelled out. Numbers higher than 10 should be referenced by numeric digits. Do not use subscript after numbers.

Phone numbers: Use hyphens to separate sections of phone numbers. Parenthesis are not recognized by mobile devices and smart phones. The "#" symbol is now recognized as a hash tag for searchable phases on the Internet. The word "phone number" should be spelled out whenever possible. When it is not possible, do not abbreviate the word "number."

School year: Use the full year number when referencing one school year. Only the first year needs to be referenced by the full number when referring to a range of years. For example: *She will attend kindergarten in the 2014-15 school year.*

Seasons: The names of seasons should remain in lowercase letters unless referencing a proper title. For example: *He previously taught art in the fall of 2007.*

Technology terms: The following technology terms are common questions. Appropriate usage is listed below:
- website
- online
- email
- Internet – always capitalized
- iPad/iPhone – proper name
- HTML – always capitalized

Times: Use periods when abbreviating morning or afternoon/evening. 12:00 should be referenced as noon or midnight. Avoid posting times ending in zeros. If an event both begins and ends in the same time frame, it is only necessary to use "a.m." or "p.m." on the last reference.

CHAPTER THREE:
WEBSITE GUIDELINES

WE'VE GOT THE LOOK

A mock-up of the revamped district home page, set to launch in August 2014. Schools will employ the same template look with their individual school colors and logo.

WEBSITE PURPOSE AND GOALS

The primary purpose of district and school websites is to inform current and prospective families (our target audience) of what we do and what we offer. The launch of the redesigned district and school websites in August 2014 will mark the third time we've redesigned the website.

Communication and Public Relations centrally controls the district, department and school websites. Our primary goal is to provide an up-to-date, well-designed online presence (including websites, e-newsletters, social medial, etc.) for the district and schools to use as a source of information and a powerful marketing tool.

To achieve this, we will work to provide a better support system for schools and central departments, as well as a consistent web-editing model at each school.

DISTRICT WEBSITE MANAGEMENT TEAM

The district website management team is comprised of Kay Villella (assistant director of communications and public relations), Courtney Markuson (communication specialist) and Tom Skoglund (technology facilitator), who monitor district, school and department content to ensure they are up-to-date and meets brand and style guidelines, make sure school and department website contacts carry out their responsibilities, assist website contacts with questions, maintain relationship with website content management system vendor, routinely provide professional development opportunities to contacts, and more.

ELEMENTARY [BY SCHOOL]

- Kelly Wierman, Adams
- Christopher Vanjoske, Andover
- Denise Schnabel, CBPA
- Nathan Elliott, Crooked Lake
- Trevor Marshall, Dayton
- Jon Mares, Eisenhower
- Vanessa Wood, Evergreen Park
- Luke Amundson, Franklin
- Marie Martineau, Hamilton
- Deb Brock, Hoover
- Michelle Schreck, Jefferson
- Gary Luke, Johnsville
- Amy Quinn, Lincoln
- Paul Schrempp, Madison
- Sara Carlson, McKinley
- Michelle Peterson, Mississippi
- Paula McCusker, Monroe
- Christopher Reed, Morris Bye
- Marilyn Rota, Oxbow Creek
- Jody Anderson, Ramsey
- Paul Dudley, Rum River
- Morgan Hewitt, Sand Creek
- Nathan Elliott, University Avenue
- Justin Bushard, Wilson

SECONDARY [BY SCHOOL]

- Michelle Olsen, AndHS
- Doug Birch, AHS
- Lee Alberts, AMSA
- Deb Maaske, BHS
- Jim Ruid, CPHS
- Ryan Green, CRMS
- Jackie Oakes, CRHS
- John Borene, Crossroads
- Bich Nguyen, JMS
- Chuck Addison, NMS
- Lisa Cole, OMS
- William Powell, RMS
- Kathy Vaughn-Coello, STEP

SPECIAL PROGRAMS

- Susan Kane, Bridges
- Melinda Pazen, ECSE
- Char Romanowski, ESCE
- Gina Uebel, Transition Plus
- Tom Amundson, RTLC
- Nicole Hayes, RTLC

SCHOOL WEBSITE CONTACTS

The school website contacts are the chief point of communication between the schools and district on website issues. They take responsibility for the timeliness and accuracy of the content displayed as well as adherence to the district's brand and style guidelines and template structure. The district's website management team will monitor school websites and work with identified contacts if they have questions or concerns about a particular site.

The website contact may choose to complete all website edits on their own or share duties with other staff members assuming they have principal permission. The website contact is required to take part in monthly trainings.

Roles and responsibilities
1. Monitor any content on the school's website to ensure it's up-to-date.
2. Adhere to the brand and style guidelines provided by Communication and Public Relations.
3. Adhere to the template structure, most specifically the design and navigation.
4. Monitor staff members that help edit the school's website to make certain they're also following responsibilities one through three.
5. Assist teachers and other building staff with creating a website presence for their classroom/subject area. It may be as simple as helping them create a landing page with a biography, contact information and daily schedule. Provide professional development opportunities to this group as needed.

STEP ONE

Login help:
Contact 763-506-HELP (4357) for login assistance.

System functionality help:
Click the Schoolwires "How Do I" tab at the top right in the site Manager view to examine documents, video and other help materials.

STEP TWO

Contact your building's web contact or power users for additional website help.

STEP THREE

Still have unanswered questions? Contact Tom Skoglund for system functionality questions or Courtney Markuson for design and content questions.

Tom Skoglund
Technology facilitator
tom.skoglund@anoka.k12.mn.us
763-506-7819

Courtney Markuson
Communication specialist
courtney.markuson@anoka.k12.mn.us
763-506-1110

Roles and responsibilities continued
6. Refer staff members with unanswered questions to appropriate district staff (login help line or district website team).
7. Stay up-to-date with trainings and changes surrounding the website (Schoolwires updates, etc.).

SUPPORT STRUCTURE

Having trouble logging into Schoolwires? Contact the district's help line for assistance at 763-506-HELP (4357).

For system functionality questions, first check the "How Do I" tab in Schoolwires. If the materials aren't supportive or relevant, ask for help from your school's website contact or a designated "power user" if the website contact isn't available. This assisting staff member will forward questions to the district website team if needed (Tom Skoglund and/or Courtney Markuson).

BEST PRACTICES EXPLAINED

To achieve our goals, we use best practices, which are a defined set of standard practices known to be effective. Use of best practices can enhance an organization's credibility and professionalism. Best practices can also evolve to become better as improvements emerge.

As a result, our content will be more reader-friendly and our websites will be easier to navigate.
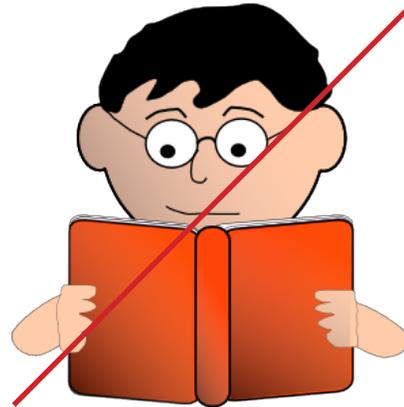
USING REAL PHOTOS

On the left is a photo of a real student at one of our elementary schools. On the right is generic clip art.
A real photo of an actual student just looks better!
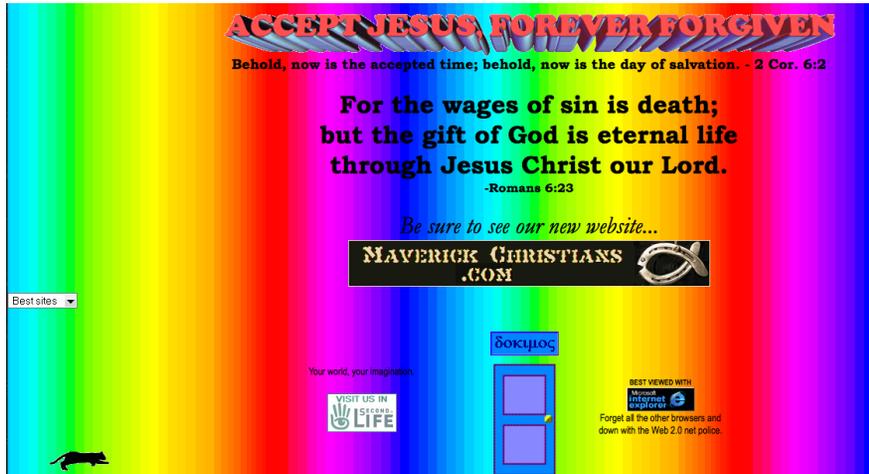
WHEN WEBSITES GET OUT OF CONTROL

This particular website has a flashing rainbow background (which is enough to give you motion sickness). It also has an animated GIF at the bottom of the page (a cat of some variety).

BEST PRACTICES: THE BASICS

- Use **bold** to emphasize text - don't <u>underline</u> or color.
- The easiest text to read is black text on a white background.
- Avoid using italics, which can be difficult to read.
- Use general email addresses, phone numbers or titles whenever possible (as it helps reduce the possibility of missed email if someone is out on vacation or leaves the position).
- Whenever possible, list offices or roles and voice using individuals' names (use: the director of widgets oversees...instead of Director of widgets, John Doe, oversees...).

BEST PRACTICES: GRAPHICS, PHOTOS

What you should not be using on your school's site
The use of flashing/blinking text, animations, clip art, copyrighted materials (that aren't ours) is prohibited on district and school websites. Flashing anything is distracting, annoying and may prompt a visitor to leave the site prematurely. Additionally, animated graphics may not load on mobile devices in a timely manner.

Graphics should be used to inform or illustrate an idea (avoid using photos or clip art to decorate a page). Faces generate emotion. If schools are interested in adding a visual element to an article or page text, they should use real photographs of our students or a custom-made icon created by our Print Shop.

Communication and Public Relations is in the process of setting up an online photo archive that will include candid photos from Lifetouch, our photography vendor.
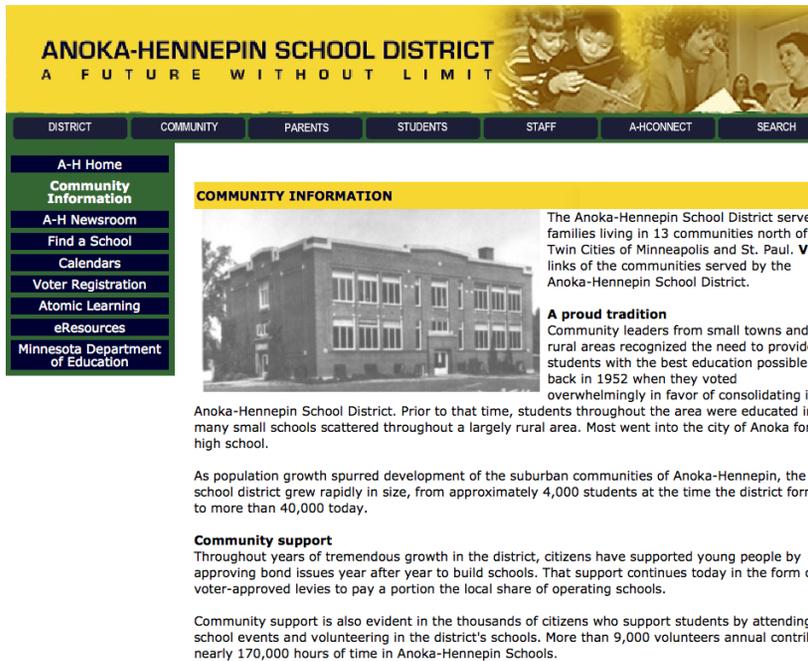
CONTENT EXAMPLE
The district's community information page.

BEST PRACTICES: WEB READING
Web readers don't read much of the content
Average users read 20 to 28 percent of the text. Scanning text is extremely common, even for high-literacy users.

Readers do scroll down a web page to scan and find the information they need; within reason. In the past, the convention was that most readers didn't scroll below the first screen, however that rule of thumb has changed over the years.

• Minimize the number of clicks someone has to perform to get at the content they want.
• Organize and condense as much as possible.
• No more than three scrolls.
• Make your text scannable with formatting.
• Keep headlines businesslike and to the point.
• Use of "Welcome…" is appropriate on a sites' main home page but then it loses its purpose.
• Post contact information at the top of your web page rather than burying it in the body of your web page content.
• Break up dense content with paragraph breaks (maximum of four to five sentences per paragraph).
• Use short and informative subheadings to easily find the information.
• Highlight keywords by bolding or hypertext links; do not underline words for emphasis.
• Consider using bulleted lists.
• Left-align all text to maximize page space and to be reader-friendly.

CONTENT EXAMPLE
Communication and Public Relations' department page.

BEST PRACTICES: WEB READING
**Avoid redundant, outdated and trivial (ROT) content**
- Ask yourself, is this page really necessary? Should it exist?
- Do not duplicate information that is already on another page: link to it.
- Avoid relative dates like: two years ago, now, new, in the next six months, shortly; these are relative time frames that become meaningless over time; instead use specific dates like in 2007.

BEST PRACTICES: WEB WRITING
Writing meaningful content
- One idea per paragraph (users will skip over any additional ideas if they are not caught by the first few words in the paragraph).
- Be concise: shorter sentences, words and paragraphs; use half the word count (or less) than conventional writing.
- Use simple words; avoid jargon.
- Only the first letter of the first word should be capitalized unless the proper name or title of a program, department or school is listed.
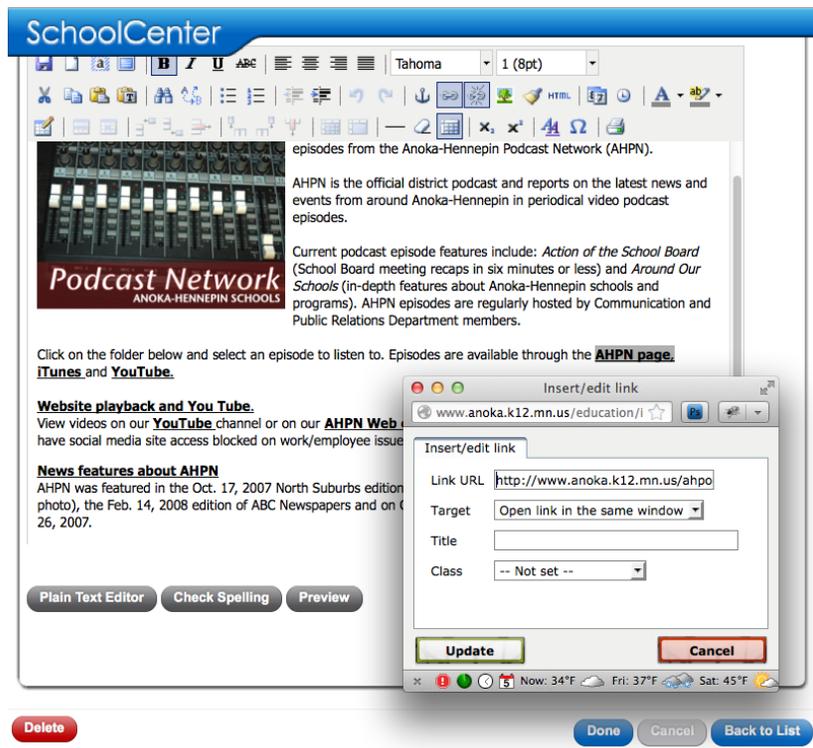
PROPER LINKING EXAMPLE
This example shows the proper way to link and target.

BEST PRACTICES: LINKING BASICS

Proper way to link
Links should be created within the sentence and not as a prompt to the reader. Be sure to bold your link text.
• Use: **Learn more** about our new program.
• Instead of: To learn about the program, **click here**.

"Open in same window" versus "Open in new window"
• Select "Open in Same Window" when the page you are linking to is within the district or a school website.
• Select "Open in New Window" when the link you provide is an external link outside of the district.

Linking documents
• Link to documents originating from the district.
• Do not download the document and then re-post it on your site.
• When future updates are made, those changes will be reflected in your version of the document.

Type of file extension to upload
Only upload documents in PDF format. Users may not have the software that the file was originally created in (like Microsoft Word or PowerPoint).