

June 2016

Style and Design Guide

Developed by the Hillsboro School District Communications Department

Style and Design Guide

Contents

| | |
|-------------------------------------|----|
| Why Have a Style Guide? | 1 |
| Logo Usage..... | 2 |
| Font Usage..... | 4 |
| Color Usage | 6 |
| Photography | 8 |
| Design Considerations | 10 |
| Editorial Style | 14 |
| Getting Ready for Publication | 16 |

Why Have a Style Guide?

This corporate style guide applies to Hillsboro School District's public/external communications where district branding is used. A style and design guide is a set of standards and rules for the design and writing of documents, websites, signage, and any other communications. A style guide helps create uniformity to establish the organization's branding in everyone's eyes.

Why are standards important? Think of famous consumer brands. What would happen if the Starbucks logo, Target bullseye and McDonald's "golden arches" had their shapes or colors changed? The whole branding effort behind the logos is no longer effective. Even subtle differences could create confusion—is that really the reputable company you think it is? Knockoffs are particularly good at manipulating established associations. So, whether we realize it or not, branding and style are critical to corporate identity.

Standards help to ensure uniformity in style and formatting so that the corporate branding is readily identifiable and not diluted. Style guides help to maintain a consistent look so that the community and employees can immediately associate the brand and communications with whoever produced them. Take a look at a newspaper or magazine. Even though the content changes, they maintain a consistent style that enables you to identify which publication it is.

Editorial style is also important for consistency in writing text copy and in applying usage rules. In general, Hillsboro School District uses Associated Press style for external communications.

The following pages will provide you information on:

Corporate identity and style

- Logo usage
- Preferred fonts
- Primary and complementary (accent) colors
- Photography
- Design Considerations
- Templates

Editorial style

- Abbreviations
- Capitalization
- Lists
- Names and titles
- Numbers
- Punctuation
- Word usage

Getting ready for publication

- Planning
- Timing
- Preparing copy
- Communications development process



Logo Usage

Hillsboro School District's logos have evolved from a traditional "apple on books" design to one where the apple is outlined in a more stylized, modern look. This reflects the district's own progression beyond traditional offerings to 21st-century curriculum as well as the incorporation of modern technology in the classroom.

Current Logos

with and without
mission statement



Note that the mission statement is not recommended for use as part of the square logo; in most cases, it will be too small to read adequately and cramps the logo. To maintain the stylized appearance of the logo and readability of the mission, use the mission statement as a separate line nearby if you are using the square logo. Also, only the mission statement is translated to Spanish, not the district name. Do not dilute the brand identity by creating logo variations.

Proper and aesthetic use of the logo is very important in establishing HSD brand identity and maintaining a harmonious, clean look of the logo and your document. Here are some examples of wrong and right ways to use the HSD logos.

WRONG Usage



Do not use the color logo against a solid background color and/or if the background does not provide enough contrast with the logo

RIGHT Usage



Use the reverse logo against a solid background color. Size the logo so that there is enough contrast to show the logo clearly against the background color



WRONG Usage

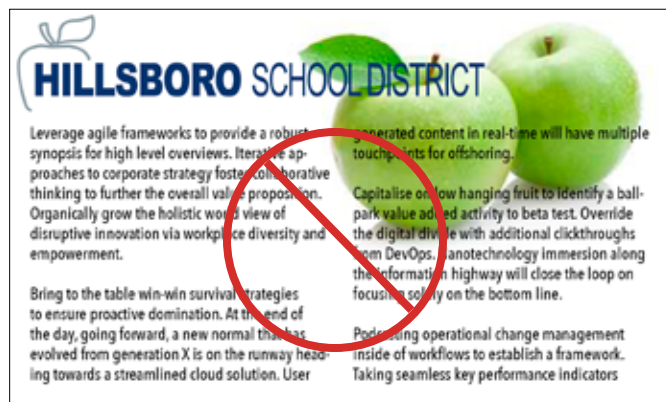
Do not size the logo so that it is too small to be clearly visible or if the mission text is unreadable. Depending on print quality, the apple also may disappear on the printed document as the color washes out.



Do not stretch or skew the logo. This happens if you do not “grab” a corner of the graphic box and press “shift” when resizing.



Do not cram too many elements, including the logo, on the page so there is no longer a balance with white/negative space.

**RIGHT Usage**

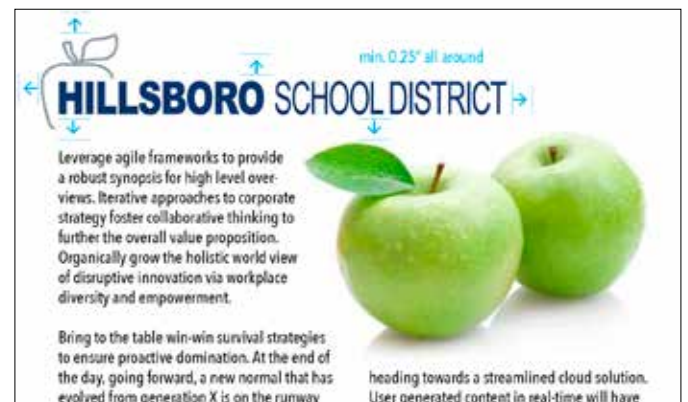
Size the logo at least:
square logo—approx. 0.75” square;
horizontal logo—2”W x 0.4”H;
horizontal logo with mission—
3”W x 0.7”H



Logo’s proportions stay the same when resized



Logo is aesthetically proportionate to the other elements on the page and has enough space around it (minimum 0.25 inches).



Font Usage

Consistent use of fonts also upholds corporate identity. This especially applies to long passages of text in, for example, reports, brochures, and other standard communications. Flyers, posters and other quick attention-getting documents, where more creativity is desired and expected, have much more leeway in the use of fonts.

You will want to avoid using too many fonts. Keep your fonts to two font families, and use different font weights or styles within those families to provide variety. A decorative font may be added for accent pieces. These limits will help avoid the “ransom letter” look and keep your work product harmonious and readable.

The font families listed are selected as district standards because they are widely available to all users and across both PC and Mac platforms.



Sans Serif Fonts

Sans serif, or “without line,” means that the font does not have projecting features at the end of each letter stroke and usually has a fairly uniform stroke width. Sans serif fonts are typically used as headlines and subheads versus

body text in print documents. Although they also may be used in body text, long passages of sans serif text can be more difficult to read without having the serifs to assist the eye flowing across and down the text. Websites typically use sans serif fonts because the serifs don’t always render well on displays.

The Arial font family, with its different weights, is the district’s sans serif standard.

Serif Font

Serif fonts have projecting features or lines at the end of each letter stroke that help lead the eye to the next letters and lines. Stroke widths also may vary from thick to thin. These are best for long passages of text. Serif fonts also may be used as headlines and subheads. In general, serif fonts should be sized between 10 to 12 points for best readability in long passages of text.

The Times New Roman family is the district’s standard serif font family.

Arial

Regular: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Bold: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Italic: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Bold Italic: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J

Arial Narrow

Regular: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Bold: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Italic: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Bold Italic: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J

Arial Black

Regular: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J

Times New Roman

Regular: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Bold: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Italic: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J
Bold Italic: a b c d e f g h i j A B C D E F G H I J

Which is more readable?

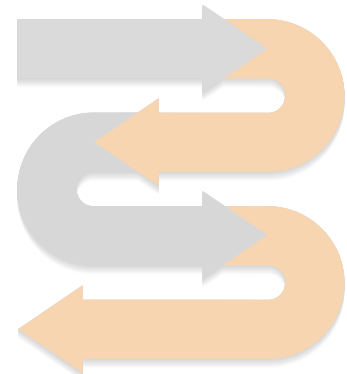
Sans Serif Headline:

**Summer
Lunch Program**

Serif Headline:

**Summer
Lunch Program**

Whether you use a sans serif or serif font for a headline is generally a matter of personal or artistic choice. However, readability is a primary consideration for long text passages. Compare these two passages:



Sans Serif Text:

Once again this year, the District Nutrition Services Department is providing free lunches to children throughout the community. This effort ensures children are receiving at least one free, nutritious meal per day through the summer. Click here for a list of local locations and times that lunches will be offered.

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was established to create a process for children to continue receiving nutritious meals when school is not in session. Free meals, that meet Federal nutrition guidelines, are provided to all children 18 years old and under at approved SFSP sites in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

Serif Text:

Once again this year, the District Nutrition Services Department is providing free lunches to children throughout the community. This effort ensures children are receiving at least one free, nutritious meal per day through the summer. Click here for a list of local locations and times that lunches will be offered.

The Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), supported by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, was established to create a process for children to continue receiving nutritious meals when school is not in session. Free meals, that meet Federal nutrition guidelines, are provided to all children 18 years old and under at approved SFSP sites in areas with significant concentrations of low-income children.

For most people, maintaining the flow of the eyes through long passages (especially more than two paragraphs) is more difficult with the sans serif text, even though it is the same font size and spacing as the serif text. The serifs help reduce eye fatigue in reading long passages.

Other Considerations

Decorative fonts can be unique and lovely, but they are not intended for more than one word or two. They are great for treating the eye to some accent pieces, but can be very difficult to read if used for longer text.

Scripting
can be hard to read as longer text
 limit your use of decorative fonts
 to just accent pieces

Leading (pronounced “leading”) is the amount of space, or “leads,” between lines of text, as measured between the baselines of the font. In standard word processing applications, this is typically defined as single-spaced and multiple-spaced lines. Desktop publishers and graphic artists will use “points,” or 1/72 of an inch, to define their leading. As a general rule, you will want to use at least single-spacing or leading that is two or more points larger than the type size for longer passages of text. The amount of leading actually used will depend on a combination of the type size and baseline, passage length, desired readability, artistic effect, etc.

Times New Roman
 10 pt type size
 12 pt leading

Times New Roman
 8 pt type size
 12 pt leading

Times New Roman
 10 pt type size
 18 pt leading

Times New Roman
 16 pt type size
 18 pt leading

Times New Roman
 10 pt type size
 6 pt leading

Times New Roman
 6 pt type size
 6 pt leading

Arial
 10 pt type size
 12 pt leading

Arial
 8 pt type size
 12 pt leading

Arial
 10 pt type size
 18 pt leading

Arial
 16 pt type size
 18 pt leading

Arial
 10 pt type size
 6 pt leading


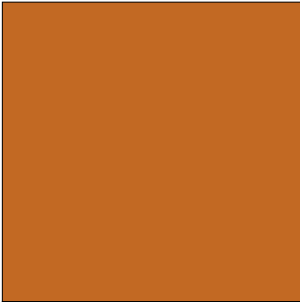
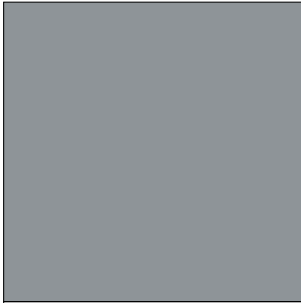
Arial
 6 pt type size
 6 pt leading

Color Usage




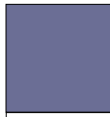
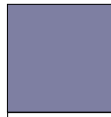

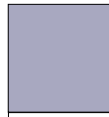
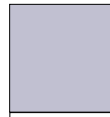

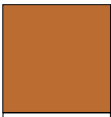
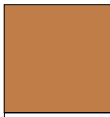
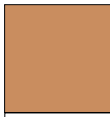
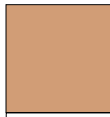
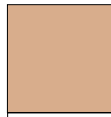
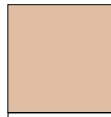
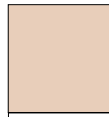
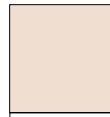










If colors are used in documents, the standard colors for the district include primary and complementary (accent) colors. Main design elements such as covers, headlines and subheads should stick to the primary color palette. Primary tints and complementary colors may be used to provide accents or differentiation, or as they fit within a cohesive, harmonious design.

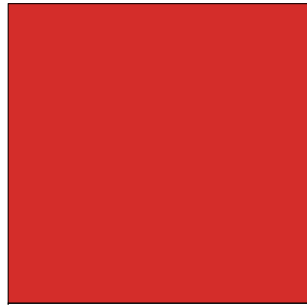
Formulas for each color are defined in CMYK (print output), RGB and Hex (displays) below. Note that colors may render slightly differently from actual colors on a display as well as between different displays. For printed documents, use Pantone or CMYK formulas to define colors; this helps to ensure the closest and most consistent rendering of the actual colors.

Primary HSD Colors

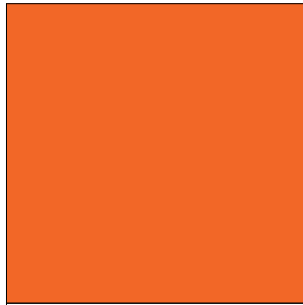
| | | |
|---|--|--|
|  |  |  |
| HSD Blue (<i>our traditional, legacy color</i>) Pantone: 288C CMYK: 100C 88M 27Y 19K RGB: R30 G55 B108 Hex: 001e63 | Copper (<i>representative of our earthy, agricultural history</i>) Pantone: 8942C CMYK: 13C 65M 100Y 12K RGB: R194 G105 B35 Hex: c26923 | Silver (<i>representative of our modern, technological future</i>) Pantone: 877C CMYK: 46C 34M 34Y 3K RGB: R142 G148 B152 Hex: 8e9498 |

Primary HSD Color Tones

| | | | | | | | | |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| HSD Blue 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Copper 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Silver 90% | 80% | 70% | 60% | 50% | 40% | 30% | 20% | 10% |

Complementary (Accent) Colors (for use with HSD Blue)**Red**

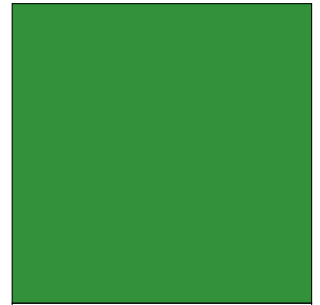
CMYK: 8C 96M 95Y 4K
RGB: R213 G45 B42
Hex: d52d2a

**Orange**

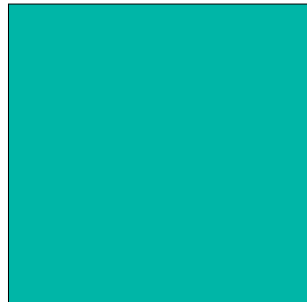
CMYK: 0C 74M 96Y 0K
RGB: R242 G103 B39
Hex: f26727

**Lime**

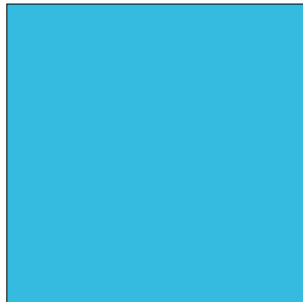
CMYK: 50C 0M 97Y 0K
RGB: R140 G198 B67
Hex: 8cc643

**Green**

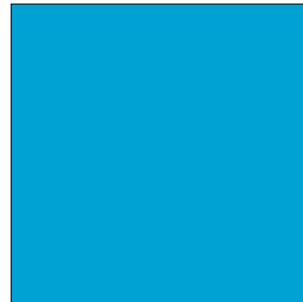
CMYK: 75C 5M 100Y 20K
RGB: R51 G145 B60
Hex: 33913c

**Teal**

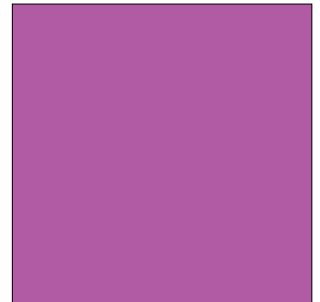
CMYK: 76C 1M 43Y 0K
RGB: R0 G181 B167
Hex: 00b5a7

**Aqua**

CMYK: 60C 0M 14Y 25K
RGB: R53 G187 B224
Hex: 35bbe0

**Medium Blue**

CMYK: 74C 8M 0Y 10K
RGB: R0 G162 B212
Hex: 00a2d4

**Violet**

CMYK: 32C 77M 0Y 0K
RGB: R176 G91 B93
Hex: b05b5d

Photography

Many factors determine the quality of photos including sharpness, contrast, exposure, and resolution. The quality of photos needed depends on the ultimate size of the photo and how the final document will be produced. This is where the starting resolution is particularly important. Always start off with the best quality photos that you need for your project; even photo editing can only do so much with poor-quality images. You can always downsize a photo for your needs.

NEVER use an image from the web, unless you have rights to that image and you can get the file with the appropriate resolution needed for final artwork.

All photos are made up of pixels, short for picture elements, or the small “dots” of color that combine to create the image. The higher the number of pixels, the better the projected resolution. Photos for online display will not require as high a resolution as photos for work

that will be output to a high-quality printer. A screen grab at 72 pixels per inch (ppi) looks just fine online, but will look blurry or pixelated if enlarged and printed to paper, where photos of at least 200 ppi may be required for the best quality output.

A 4x6-inch photo at 300 ppi will have 1200x1800 pixels (2 Mp). If blown up to twice the size, the effective resolution becomes halved to 150 ppi (the number of pixels won't change, but blurring occurs as the pixels will be spread out more across the larger area). A high-quality camera can typically produce at least a 2592x3872-pixel (10 Mp) photo—for a 4x6-inch image, this is over 600 ppi. These high-resolution photos are more suitable for printed documents and can be enlarged to some extent for use in posters without looking too blurred or pixelated.

Illustrating the Effects of Pixelation

The first photo on the right has a starting ppi of 90. You already can see some blurring and pixelation (where the pixels appear more prominently), even at this small size. This photo as it is currently sized may be barely usable for high-quality printing; photo editing would be required to improve it.

However, although photo editing applications allow you to convert a low-resolution (i.e., 72 ppi) image to a higher-resolution (i.e., 300 ppi) image, the results still may not produce good enlargements. The photo editing tool is merely replicating the pixels it has available to fill in the requested density.

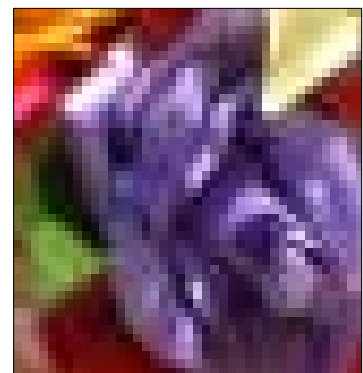


The larger photo below is the same as the first photo, but it has been enlarged to twice the original size (200 percent); it has an effective resolution of 45 ppi. Pixelation is clearly evident.

The third photo on the far right has been enlarged to 400 percent of the original (now 23 ppi) and has been cropped to focus on the purple flower. You can definitely see the pixelation and raggedness of the image.



You may want to purposely create pixelation for artistic effect, but you generally want to avoid using and enlarging images with low ppi, especially in high-quality printed documents.



Composition and Context

Do your photos grab a viewer's eye? Do they "tell" a story? The best photos not only draw in the viewer, but they also hold the viewer's interest beyond a cursory scan. They typically have a primary subject, some context for quickly understanding what is happening within the photo, and additional detail that provides more of the story. They connect with the viewer and somehow move them with emotion—i.e., pride, joy, sadness, love, or anger—or just simple curiosity.

Candid and closely-cropped shots usually achieve more of these goals than the usual, staged group or posed individual shots. This is not to say that these latter images don't have their purpose, but they don't usually trigger the same connections with your viewers. You want to draw them in to your story, not keep them at arm's length as mere observers.

Large Group Shots

Although the tendency is to try to get every participant into a staged frontal shot to promote the group or its activity, does your shot provide context and the story you want to tell? Does a different angle give the viewer more context and perspective about what the group is doing? Take a look at the two photos below. Which is the more interesting shot for the viewer? Also, with group shots, if the goal is to showcase all the participants, is



your final image size going to be large enough to allow the viewer to discern all the faces in the group?

Effects of Cropping

Now take a look at the photos above. Pieces of the same photo tell a story, but which image is more likely to grab the viewer's eye first? Which image will they scan further to get more of the story, i.e., how is the crowd reacting to the activity in the photo? How much to crop a photo depends on: the story you want to tell; how deeply you want to draw in your viewer to the story and the people or things that are part of it; and whether the quality and resolution allow good enlargement.

Grab the Viewer's Attention

There are no clear and easy paths to good photography beyond practice and gaining a discerning eye. Most of the time, it comes down to artistic and personal preferences. Regardless, your goal is to grab the viewer. Start off with an attention-getting image that fits your document's purpose and the story you want to tell.

Design Considerations

There are infinite choices for designing your documents, considering the combinations of layout, color, graphics, and, don't forget, "negative" or "white" space (areas that do not contain any graphics or text). Your goal is to find the combination of all these elements that: (1) produces an attractive, cohesive, balanced design; (2) is pleasant to look at; and (3) provides readability. Here are some options for you to consider and some basic examples to illustrate different layouts.

Cohesion and Composition

Whatever your creative style may be, be sure your design elements reflect your purpose and message as well as the audience you are reaching. Graphics, including colors, images, infographics or illustrations, should match the tenor of the message and text. You obviously would not want cartoony images for a serious subject. If you are marketing a specific program/initiative, establish uniformity across all the documents with a consistent layout, graphics, messaging, and writing style.

Basic Layout

Placement of graphics and text elements should be balanced with negative space. Cramming too many elements together makes your document more difficult to look at and/or read. In most cases, less is more, especially where text is concerned. Avoid the tendency to include every bit of text in promotional publications; instead, invite the readers to contact you for the detailed information. In longer reports, consider breaking up text into callouts or text boxes to highlight key quotes or points, or by adding infographics. Balancing large and small elements can create a more interesting look.

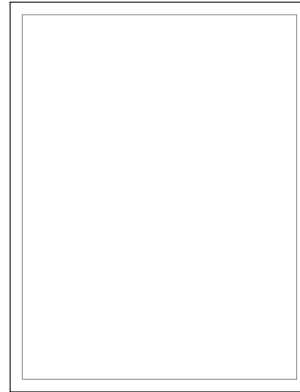
For facing pages (i.e., pages that are adjacent to each other in a double-sided, multiple-page document), you also will want to balance elements across both pages.

Required Elements

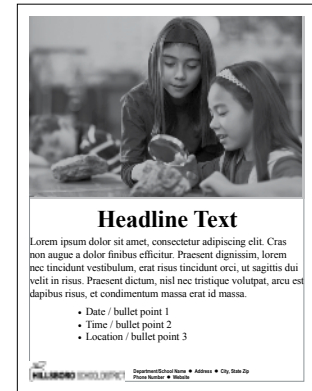
Always place the HSD logo (with or without mission) on your primary page(s). Primary pages include: a one-page document; at least the first page of a multiple-page document; and the cover (front and back) pages and inside title page of a booklet. Your department or school name, address, phone number and website also should be listed on one of these pages.

For longer documents, the title of the document and page number are nice to have as headers or footers on the inside pages to allow the reader to keep track.

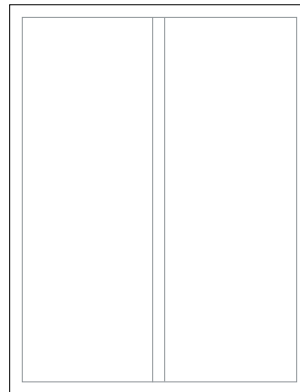
One-Column Layout



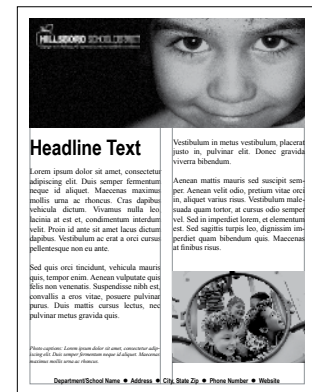
One-Column Example



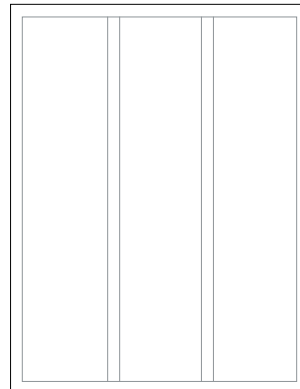
Two-Column Layout



Two-Column Example



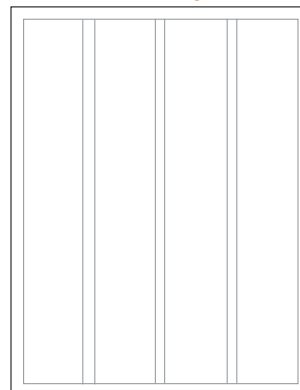
Three-Column Layout



Three-Column Example



Four-Column Layout



Four-Column Example



Number of Columns

Columns are the basis of an orderly grid for placing text and graphics on a page. This order not only provides harmony, but is easier to implement and follow than documents without a grid. Graphic elements also can run across columns for some variety, but text and graphics should be aligned proportionately within your columns/grid.

How many columns do you need? That depends on your document and page size—one column is fine for short text, in brochure panels, or when using large photos/graphics, but additional columns help break up longer text in multi-page documents to make them more readable and provide more flexible layout for your other elements. Maintain balance and cohesion so the reader's eye follows along the intended flow of your design.

Use of Color

Think first about whether your document truly needs color. Perhaps you only need color for the cover pages. Grayscale documents (printed with only black ink in varying shades or tints) can be just as well-designed and eye-catching as color documents and are certainly less expensive to print, especially for long reports. Contrast, using graphics as well as negative space, will be the primary consideration with grayscale documents.

Be judicious with your use of color. Too much can be a jumble; many designs can be effectively done with one color and/or combining it with black. And, if you do design in color, but end up printing to grayscale, do test prints to see how the colors translate to grayscale. Sometimes colors will print too light, wash out, or not seem to print at all in grayscale.

Bleeds

With bleeds, graphics appear to continue past the edge of the paper. Bleeds can provide a more professional look to your document by eliminating white margins around the page that cut off your graphics. This is accomplished by laying out graphics to about 1/4-inch beyond the actual document size, printing the document with the bleeds to a larger-size paper, then cutting through the bleed area to your desired, finished document size, as shown by the arrows in this example from the three-column layout. Due to extra cutting time and cost, you need to weigh these against the design benefits of applying bleeds.



Margins

The three-column example also shows a wider “inside” margin, where text is indented a bit further into the page to create additional negative space and balance. Margins can be an important design consideration, especially for documents where bindings cut into the margin, such as stapled reports and spiral-bound booklets.

Text Wraps

Wraps are placed around images for text to flow around (versus going over or behind the image), with enough white space to help offset the text from the image. Most of the time, these wraps are uniformly rectangular around the images.



For images with no (or transparent) backgrounds, you will want to consider applying wraps that outline the actual edges of the image (such as these apples above; also see flows around the bottom images in the three- and four-column examples). Used appropriately, these outlined wraps provide a more interesting layout than if the text flowed around a rectangular block.



Flyers/Posters

Flyers and posters are considered one-page advertisements that provide the most opportunity for creativity and variety of layouts. If they

are part of the marketing for a program/initiative, such as the examples shown above, be sure they are consistent with each other and with the other documents being produced for that campaign. Text is kept to a minimum; exceptions are flyers or posters intended to pass on critical information about a particular topic.

Cover Pages

Front and back covers of longer documents are important for conveying the most basic information about the contents and setting the tone for the report. At minimum, the front cover should have: HSD logo, title of report, and publication date (month, year). A sub-title also may be useful. The back cover should have the authoring department/school's contact information. Please see the following illustrations for basic cover page layouts.

Cover Page Example 1

Example 1 is a very basic color front and back cover page template without bleeds, and folded in half (represented by the dotted lines). Margins are one half-inch.

On the front cover, note that: (1) the title block is in HSD blue, about one-third the size of the page; (2) an accent color line lies above the title block (this accent color could be used throughout your document as well); and (3) a silver color block, with the publication date, is placed above the accent line. The HSD logo appears in the top right corner (use the reverse logo against dark backgrounds). Text and logo are aligned with each other.

On the back cover, the logo is repeated above the department/school contact information. An option is to add a very brief summary or list of key points on the back cover, using information and/or images from the document.



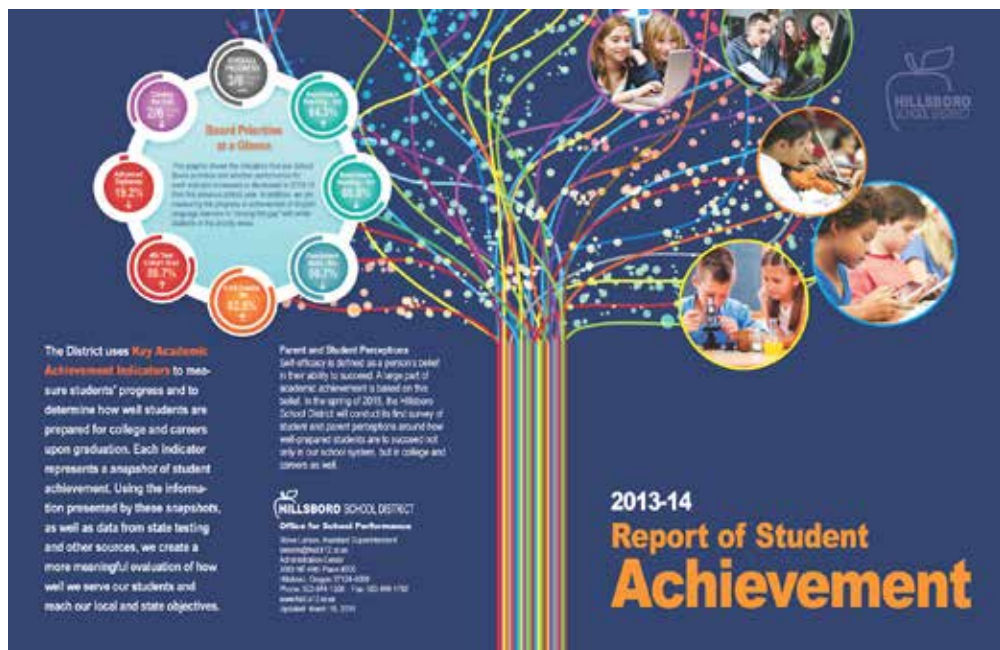
Cover Page Example 1 will be available as a template file in Word, Publisher and InDesign formats, along with other templates, on the Communications Department Google shared documents site.

Cover Page Example 2

Example 2 is an image of an existing publication that shows bleeds extending to the edges of the page and graphics across the fold for continuity. The square logo in the top right corner has been “faded” so as not to visually conflict with the rest of the graphics.

HSD blue remains the primary color background of the cover, establishing uniformity with all other HSD documents. Other colors are from the accent color palette.

This type of a publication does require more advanced layout skills and customized graphics. Communications staff is available to assist you with developing a specialized publication and/or template (see “Getting Ready for Publication” section).



Cover Page Example 2 is a custom design developed by the Communications Department for the Office of School Performance. The full document may be found under the Academics/Student Achievement menu of the district website or at: <http://bit.ly/1Esu7Cm>

Brochures

Brochures can come in various sizes and folds. Letter and other sizes of paper typically can be folded in half (bifold, two panels on each side) or in thirds (trifold, three panels on each side). Larger sizes have more flexibility with folds and layouts.

Depending on artistic and production goals, you can deviate from the traditional folds, but know that these may create more difficulty or require some customization in print production. Typically, there is one layout column per panel, although this grid can be adjusted for

additional creativity (as long as your layout stays clean and harmonious).

The front panel of the brochure should have the HSD logo and brochure title. The back panel should have the publication date and the authoring department/school's contact information. Please see the following illustrations for basic brochure templates.

Template files in Word, Publisher and InDesign file formats will be available on the Communications Department web page.

Basic Trifold Brochure Example



Concertina Trifold (or Z-Fold) Brochure Example (English on one side, Spanish on the other)



Editorial Style

AP

Consistent design also includes consistent style of writing and usage. For our publications, we have generally adopted the Associated Press style, the gold standard for news and public relations writing. AP style is different from academic writing styles (i.e., MLA and APA) in many respects. Primarily, AP style provides the principles for a concise, journalistic versus research-based approach, with universal guidelines for grammar, spelling, punctuation, language usage, etc.

General articles are conveyed in a top-down style, where the main points of a story are first, with substantiating details in subsequent paragraphs. This contrasts with the typical academic paper that uses a structure of an introduction, supporting paragraphs and conclusion.

Articles are written to immediately convey the “who, what, when, where and how” in the first paragraph; if this is all a reader sees, they still get the gist of the story. The target audience is usually the non-academic public that is diverse in demographics, educational level and interests—and who may not read beyond that first paragraph. Language also may need to be made suitable for middle school level of reading

Our marketing and promotional materials continue to use AP style within the generally informative or persuasive writing methods.

Here are the top ten style elements that need to be consistently used in our publications. For more information on AP style, visit www.apstylebook.com.

Top Ten Style Points

NOTE: italics are applied only to distinguish the examples used; italics are not typically used in AP style. Italics, like symbols or special characters, do not always transmit consistently or correctly on all computer systems.

Spaces After Periods

Use only **one space** after a period. With modern typography, there is no longer a need to have two spaces after a period to separate sentences (a relic of printing press and typewriter days). In fact, two spaces can interrupt the visual flow between sentences.

Commas/Semi-Colons

Unlike other styles’ rules, commas are **not** placed before the conjunction in a simple series: *Big Bird, Elmo, Bert and Ernie; red, white and blue*. Do use commas before the conjunction in a longer series (typically four or more items). Use semi-colons instead of commas for more complex series or where commas are already used in items within the series: *Also attending were John Smith, the representative from the*

gym; Judy Jones, the central administrator; and Nancy Johnson, the site director.

Numbers

In general, numbers under 10 are spelled out, i.e., one, two and three. Always spell out numbers used at the beginning of a sentence. Within a sentence, use arabic numerals for numbers 10 and over. Exceptions are dimensions, ages and percentages (use numerals only). *There were 42 children at the play, comprising 5 percent of the total audience. Twenty-three students were under 8 years old.*

Apostrophes

Be sure to distinguish between apostrophes used for plurals and those for possessives!

- For plural nouns, do **not** use an apostrophe or use plurals incorrectly:
Wrong: *the girl’s have books, puppy’s are cute*
Right: *the girls have books, puppies are cute*
- For singular nouns, use ’s to indicate possession: *the tall girl’s book, the puppy’s food.*

- For plural nouns ending in s, add only an apostrophe: *the girls' books, puppies' food*.
- Do not use 's for plurals of numbers, or multiple letter combinations: the 2000s, ABCs.

Dates

Do not use st, nd, rd or th with days in dates. Use arabic numerals for days. A comma is not needed when using just the month and year. Months are abbreviated when used with a day, except for March, April, May, June and July. For example: *July 2013; December 2014; July 18, 2013; Dec. 12, 2014; Dec. 12*. Use an apostrophe only in front of an abbreviated decade: *the 1980s, the '80s*.

Times

Use a colon to separate minutes, but do not use minutes for an exact hour of time: *2:30 a.m., 2 p.m.* Use noon or midnight for those specific times. Use periods for a.m. and p.m. When referring to a time span, use a dash between the times: *2-5 p.m., 10 a.m.-2 p.m.*

Acronyms

On first use of a term in the body text, spell out all the words. Subsequent uses then can utilize the acronym associated with those words. For example: *Science, technology, engineering and mathematics programs are growing in the district. After-school STEM activities are especially popular*. Note that STEM does not appear in parentheses after the first, spelled-out reference. There is no need to add acronyms in parentheses after the term if the acronym is not going to be used later in the article. Acronyms are not spelled out in headlines.

Names

First and last names are used when first mentioning a person in an article. For subsequent

references, only the last name is used, without courtesy or personal titles. Only use titles or first names in subsequent references when they are needed to distinguish persons with the same last name. *John Smith went to his first baseball game last night. Smith caught the winning home run ball in the stands. Judy and George Jones sat next to Smith, who gallantly gave the ball to Mrs. Jones as her memento of the evening.*

Capitalization: Personal Titles

Generally, capitalize formal titles when they appear before a person's name, but use lower-case titles if they are informal, appear without a person's name or are set off before a name by commas. Also, use lower-case adjectives that designate the status of a title. If a title is long, place it after the person's name, or set it off with commas before the person's name. Examples: *President Obama; Sen. Wyden; Jeff Merkley, a senator from Oregon; the senior senator from Oregon, Ron Wyden; former President George W. Bush; Homeland Security Secretary Jeh Johnson; Jeh Johnson, the secretary of homeland security.*

Quotation Marks

Headlines use only single quotes; body text uses double quotes (except for quoted text within another quotation, in which case you would use single quotes). Use quotation marks around: people's actual statements; titles for books, plays, movies and other works of art (but not magazines or newspapers); and certain descriptive terms. Examples: use quotes around *"Gone with the Wind," "Star Wars,"* but not *The Oregonian* newspaper.

Getting Ready for Publication

Planning

Prior to starting your own print project, ask yourself the following questions and determine whether or not the Communications Department needs to be involved. If any of the answers are in the “Consult Communications” column, then please contact Jane Siguenza at x2761.

- Who is your audience and how will the publication be distributed?
- Does your project integrate with the district’s strategic plan, key messages or long-term initiatives?
- Is your project a stand-alone printed piece?
- Can your project be accomplished using the available templates?
- Do you need artwork or graphics?
- Do you need photographs?
- Will you need editing of the text?

Can do yourself

Publication is internal to your school, feeder or department

No

Yes

Yes—consult Communications only as needed to use the templates

No

No—don’t need them or already have what you need

No

Consult Communications

District- or community-wide

Yes

No—involves advertising, media relations, other publications, or the district website

No—requires custom layout

Yes

Yes—would like photos from Communications’ archive or need staff to take photos

Yes

Other things you will want to consider in your planning:

- What are the goals for your publication?
- How do you want the audience to respond to or act on your publication?
- How many copies do you need?
- What is your budget for the publication?
- When does it need to reach your audience?

Timing

A new, basic project or revisions to existing publications can take two to four weeks to produce, from concept to drafts (including review and feedback) to printing. Larger projects can take four to eight weeks. Also take into account the amount of time for distributing or mailing as needed.

Set your printing deadline accordingly and back-track other milestones for developing the publication based on that deadline. Be sure to leave ample time for multiple drafts and/or project complexity, especially if new graphics or photos need to be developed.

Keep in mind that Communications staff may have several large projects going at the same time, but we will accommodate an urgent project as much as time allows. Immediate turnaround is rarely possible—only if it is a high district priority—so it is **your** responsibility to plan accordingly.

Preparing Copy

Here are some guidelines for preparing the copy, or the text, of your publication:

- Write to the level of your audience and make your publication readable. Our general rule for our community-wide publications is to write to the level of a middle-school reader.
- Use active versus passive voice: *Everyone enjoyed the presentation*; not *The presentation was enjoyed by everyone*.
- Use informal, personal language like “you,” “we” and “our” as appropriate, to better engage and connect with your readers. Use *You are invited to our special event* versus *The public is invited to the district’s event*.
- Highlight the strengths or main points of whatever you are promoting. Include supporting information as needed, but not excessive detail.
- Organize your text into manageable sections. Make it **look** readable, not just **be** readable. Visuals attract!
- If an action or response is required of your reader, be sure to tell them so. Provide or direct them to the means of action, as needed, such as contact information, reply card, form, etc.

Communications Development Process

If Communications is developing your publication(s), the development process will go more smoothly if you:

- Inform us of your timeline. We will refine this with you as needed, subject to other priorities.
- Submit your draft in a text or Word document and send it via email.
- Do not use any formatting. We will adjust formatting based on the goals of the publication and edit for readability, punctuation and grammar.
- Attach any photographs you want in the document in high-resolution (300 dpi minimum) files. Do not embed these photos in e-mails.
- Provide any graphics in vector EPS formats or high-resolution JPG or PNG formats.
- If infographics are needed, provide the data or data source of the information. If there are more than five or six rows of data, a Word or Excel file would be best to minimize errors in transcription.
- Make yourself available for reviewing drafts, concepts, proofs, etc. and responding promptly.
- You are responsible for proofreading and approving the final publication before translation to Spanish and going to print.
- Communications will arrange for Spanish translation and laying out the Spanish document as needed.
- Communications will provide you with the final PDFs for printing.
- Communications will post the final PDFs to the district website as needed, with introductory/summary text as needed for the web page.

Contact Jane Siguenza in the Communications

Department at x2761 or siguenzj@hsd.k12.or.us

if you have an upcoming project or have questions.



Communications Department

3083 NE 49th Place, AC-201

Hillsboro, OR 97124

503.844.1500

www.hsd.k12.or.us/Departments/Communications.aspx

06.01.2016