Blackboard® Recommended Practices for Teacher Sections

Elements of a Teacher Section

- Your Contact Information
- Welcome Message
- Your Biography and Pictures
- Classroom Rules and Policies
- Homework Assignments
- Course Information

- Handouts and Study Guides
- Calendar of Classroom Events
- Reading Lists
- Supply Lists
- Links to Student and Parent Resources
- Classroom News and Announcements

- Photos of Classroom Activities
- Classroom Learning Activities
- Online Quizzes using Forms and Surveys
- Classroom Blog
- Accomplishments, Awards and Recognition

Overall Recommendations

Text

- Use the Content App to enter text on a page.
- The Content App pulls styles from your website's template and provides you with a simple, clean editing experience.
- Use consistent size and color across all the pages in your section.
- Black is the preferred font color. Avoid red, green or yellow as people with color perception issues may have trouble seeing the text.
- Avoid using flashing or scrolling text as visitors may find it distracting and skip reading your page content.
- Design your pages with no or minimal scrolling. Break long pages into separate pages.
- Run Spell Check and correct any spelling errors.
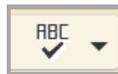
Copying and Pasting Content

- Use the Paste Plain Text icon when copying and pasting content.
- The Paste icon will retain some formatting of the text.

Files

- Use Portable Document Format (PDF) when posting files. If you post file types from specific software, visitors may not have an application to open those files.
- Use the Document Viewer App to display a file on your page.
- Use the File Library App to display multiple files.
- Use the Content App to add a link to a file.
- Be aware of your file size, large files take a long time to download.

Videos

- Use the Embed Code App to embed a video from YouTube or Vimeo on your page.
- If your district has the Premium Video App, you can upload videos from your computer.
- The Article Library, Assignments, Blog and Headlines & Features Apps allow you to attach videos to a record.
- Be aware of your file size, large videos take a long time to download.

Audio

- Use the Podcast App to share audio on your page.

Images

- Use the Insert Image Wizard to insert an image in the Full Editor.
- Use the Image App to add an image on a page.
- Use the Photo Gallery App to add multiple images to your page.
- Include meaningful Alt. Text for the image. Visitors see this text when they hover over an image and is read by screen reader applications.
- Recommended image sizes (100 pixels = 1 inch):
  - Keep images narrower than 500 pixels wide.
  - Accent Images: Keep image width and height between 25 to 100 pixels. Any accent image with a width greater that 150 pixels is resized to 150 pixels.
- Avoid animated images, use JPG and JPEG images.
- When resizing, it is best to go from a larger image to a smaller one. To avoid a grainy or *pixilated* image.
- Avoid background colors and images on pages. If background colors are used, maintain high contrast between background colors and font for improved readability.
- The default setting for the Gallery Width is 600 pixels.
- Check your district policies on posting student photos on the web.

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Overall Recommendations

© Copyright

Review your district policies for posting content and copyright rules. Give proper credit for content that is posted from other sites. Copyright infringement occurs when an individual inappropriately reproduces a work that is protected by a copyright. You should make a standard practice of requesting permission from the holder of the work if your use of the material has the potential of being considered an infringement.

About Teacher

- Use the About Teacher App on your first page for a neat and professional look.
- The About Teacher App allows you to enter the key information that students and parents want to know about you .

Ms. Anne Smith

Hello!

My name is Anne Smith. I have been teaching Mathematics at Happy Valley High School for 3 years.

Phone: 814-555-1222
Email: annesmith@schoolwires.com
Degrees and Certifications:
B.S. Education

Links

- Use the Insert Link Wizard to insert links to a web address, email address or to a page in your site.
- Use Link Library App to display multiple links.
- Verify that links to outside web pages are functioning, current and appropriate in nature.
- Links to outside web pages and files should open in a new window.

Assignments

- Use the Assignments App to post homework assignments.
- Use the option to post assignments to add assignments to a calendar in your section.

Blogs

- Use the Blog App to create your blog.
- Blog postings should include material that is relevant to curriculum or class discussion.
- Visitor Comments should require approval before being posted.

Calendar

- Use the Calendar App to add individual events, recurring events, import events from a .csv file and sync with Google Calendar.
- Calendar Categories allow you to color code your calendar events.

Announcements

- Use the Announcements App to share important information with your students and their families
- Ideal for broadcasting brief, short-term messages.

Tables

- Use the Table App to create tables within your content. Use it together with other apps. Try the Heading, Content, Image and Table Apps together on a page. This makes for a great starter page.
- To include an actual table within your text, add a link to a page with a Table App containing the table. Or, upload a document with the table or an image of the table to Files & Folders and then link to the document or insert the image.

Apps and Page Layout

- Use a Blank Page Page Type and customize it to suit your needs.
- Choose a page layout suitable for the apps and content you wish to display on the page.
- Visit the APPs Showroom to learn about all Schoolwires Apps.

Apps Options

- Activate the *Show the app name on my page* check box to displays it on the website.
- If available, use social media elements to enhance app content by including the options Community Editing, Commenting and Rating.
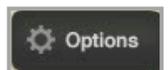
Website Help

- The How do I tab, located in Site Manager, is where you can find Articles, Video Tutorials and Additional Resources.
- The Share Help Center is where Administrators, Teachers, Editors and Visitors get help materials to meet their needs.
- Follow the Schoolwires Community Twitter Account for self-help materials for your website.
- If you encounter a problem when working with Schoolwires, advise your Site Webmaster.