What is Website Accessibility?

Accessibility is the word used to describe whether a website can be used by people of all abilities and disabilities. When sites are correctly designed, developed and edited, all users have equal access to information and functionality.

Editor Tips for Creating Accessible Content

Images and Videos

Add alternative text to every uploaded image. Make your alt text brief but as descriptive as possible. Do not use images that contain text. Screen readers are unable to read text inside of images. Add closed captioning to all videos posted on your site. Many video hosting services like *YouTube* or *Ensemble* offer closed captioning options, which help videos accessible.

Text Headers

Use a Header instead of simply making the text larger. Headings allow screen readers to skim the structure of a page and navigate to or skip over sections. Provide logical heading structure. E.g: H2 should follow h1, H2 or H3 should follow H2, H3 or H4 should follow H3 and so on.

Underlined Text

Do not underline text in your pages. Screen readers often mistake underlined text for a hyperlink.

Titles to Links

Make sure your link text is descriptive. Instead of your link text reading "click here for Board of Education meeting notes", it should read, "click here for Board of Education meeting notes". Notice how the actual link text is more descriptive.

PDF Documents, Widgets, Plug-ins and 3rd Party Tools

Make sure any documents, widgets (social media feeds), plug-ins and 3rd party tools (calendars, surveys) uploaded, linked or displayed on the website are accessible before adding them.

Background Colors and Patterns

The best scenario for screen readers is to read black text on a white background. All color combinations with a good amount of contrast is okay.

Readability

Aim for a website readability level of grade 8 or lower. Use simple words, contractions and try to keep sentences short in length.

Tables

Use the table app for tabular data. Users of screen readers can navigate through data tables one cell at a time, and they will hear the column and row headers spoken to them. Do not use tables for a display structure.

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