The fundamentals of a school web site

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The fundamentals of a school web site

Abstract
This review of literature is geared towards the creator and viewer of a school web site. Many developers may or may not have the proper training, equipment or time to create a school web site. Presently, schools are creating web sites that may lack some of the key components addressed in this article. The focus of this review is based on Lamb's six phases of designing an effective school web page. The six phases in creating an educational web site include exploration, planning, designing, creating, revising, and maintaining. The primary functions of a school web site must not be overlooked. It is important to incorporate the students' accomplishments, calendars, school mission, and vision. By using the four fundamentals of web design (contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity), web sites can be enhanced by creating a more professional look for the viewer.

The presented information will support the fundamentals of constructing a school web site and examples will be provided. The site must be maintained so that students, parents, and faculty members are kept informed. If done correctly, the school web site can have its highest potential when designed for the students, parents, and faculty of the school.
The Fundamentals of a School Web Site

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Division of Educational Technology
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by Jabari Cain
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Abstract

This review of literature is geared towards the creator and viewer of a school web site. Many developers may or may not have the proper training, equipment or time to create a school web site. Presently, schools are creating web sites that may lack some of the key components addressed in this article. The focus of this review is based on Lamb’s six phases of designing an effective school web page. The six phases in creating an educational web site include exploration, planning, designing, creating, revising, and maintaining. The primary functions of a school web site must not be overlooked. It is important to incorporate the students’ accomplishments, calendars, school mission, and vision. By using the four fundamentals of web design (contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity), web sites can be enhanced by creating a more professional look for the viewer.

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Introduction

Project Description

The purpose of the McKinstry web site was to showcase the elementary school and its benefits. The project began in the fall of 2001 and ended in the spring of 2002. The site displays school information, schedules, educational links, staff email addresses and more. The site has received a tremendous amount of praise throughout the Waterloo district. The website's address is: http://mckinstry.waterloo.k12.ia.us

The entire project, based on Lamb's (2000) six phases of designing an effective school web page, was similar to the instructional design process identified by Dick and Carey (1996). This process has three major phases: analysis phase, design phase, and evaluation phase.

Table 1

The Relation Between the Lamb and Dick and Carey Models

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During the Analysis Phase, I focused on the staff and students of McKinstry Elementary School. It had been identified that there was a need for a school web site. I conducted a needs assessment to find out what staff wanted in their own school web site. I also asked for them to explore other web sites based on Lamb's exploration framework.
Participants were directed to explore other school websites to critique what different sites contained and to check for William's (1994) four principles of graphic design (contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity). I also included definitions based on Williams of contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity in the back of the needs assessment. During this phase, goals of the McKinstry web site were identified based on student and staff feedback. Goal identification is also a part of the analysis phase of instructional design. With the needs assessment intact, I analyzed the needs and progressed to the planning phase of web design. Design is the second phase of Dick and Carey's instructional design process. For the second phase, I utilized all the information from the staff needs assessment about what they wanted incorporated within the site. The last step of the instructional design process was the evaluation phase. I passed out an evaluation to the staff to find out if any revisions needed to be made to the school web site. Using the analyzed data, I used Lamb's revision process to evaluate the data and revise the website.

Rationale for Development

McKinstry Elementary School was in need of a school web site, which would further promote the elementary school. I received word from the administrative assistant and the principal that creating an informative school web site would be greatly appreciated by students, parents, and staff. I met with my advisor and verified that the project satisfied the division's requirements. Once I had approval, I began my research based on the requirements for designing effective web sites.

Purpose and Importance of Project

Lamb (2000) believes that the Internet has become a common tool for information and communication in schools. This project would help McKinstry promote the school's
mission/vision, and provide parent/staff/student information and schedules. With the research that I gathered, I felt as though it was important to create a school web site for McKinstry since they did not have one. The staff requested an informative site that provided school information.
Methodology

Literature Review

Introduction
This review of literature is geared towards the creator and viewer of a school web site. Many developers may or may not have the proper training, equipment or time to create a school web site. Presently, schools are creating web sites that may lack some of the key components addressed in this article. The research presented will support the fundamentals of constructing a school web site and examples will be provided.

The focus of this review is based on Lamb’s (1997) six phases of designing an effective school web page. The six phases in creating an educational website include exploration, planning, designing, creating, revising, and maintaining. Schrock (2000), suggests that promotion should also be included within the school web page process. Other authors are incorporated to strengthen all phases of web design besides Lamb.

Methodology

The sources used in this review came from several different areas. Information from online search engines such as ERIC documents and Infotrac within the University of Northern Iowa were used to provide research materials. The ERIC thesaurus was utilized to obtain more descriptors when conducting the search. Descriptors included; design requirements, schools, districts, web pages, and web sites. Web sites and books referred to by Dr. Zeitz of the University of Northern Iowa have also been incorporated. Consideration was given to reviews that were relevant to the user, educator, and student. Authors having similar experiences were utilized to bring more validity to the paper and research.
Analysis and Discussion

The following steps are based on Lamb’s (2000) six phases of designing an effective school web page. These steps include exploration, planning, designing, creating, revising, and maintaining. Additional authors expressing the same views as Lamb were included for complementary support.

Exploration. Lamb (2000) discusses the process of exploring different school web sites for good design examples. Investigating a variety of web sites gives the designer(s) background knowledge of what a school web site can accomplish. This investigation can help with the design layouts, ideas, school features, and more. Viewing different school web sites can help the designer(s) create an effective educational resource.

Walton High School in Marietta, Georgia, provides a unique and easy-to-use calendaring system and information that is implemented into their web page (Giles, 2000). High school teachers post homework, test schedules, and even project resources. With the school web site being a click away, parents and teachers have improved relationships. Through a new online community to provide round-the-clock access to a variety of school and non-school events, administrators and teachers have been able to save a tremendous amount of time and energy updating busy professional parents with constantly changing school events. This method of communication can improve relationships with parents and can increase the learning experience of students. Onlookers can easily view the school schedule, school activities, class assignments, and homework and can also include their child’s personal appointments. The Walton School High web site has saved the school time and money, while keeping the students, parents, and faculty better informed. In the fall of 1999, administrators searched for a solution to
increase communication among teachers and parents, while at the same time decreasing the paperwork. Principal of Walton High School, John Flatt, states:

In the past, it took a considerable amount of administrative time to write and distribute memos or newsletters to the students. Then, we never really knew if the announcement made it into the hands of the parents, or if it was left on the bus or in the child’s backpack . . . With 2,500 students and more than 4,500 parents, the school recognized a frustration level among teachers who could not easily communicate with parent and students on certain issues. Parents also expressed concern that they were not fully informed about how their children were doing in class and what was going on at the school. (Giles, 2000, p.20)

Beyond time and money being saved and parents becoming better informed, there are many more benefits of the Walton High School web site. These benefits include:

• Parents can notify the teacher of any special concerns or class issues
• Teachers can add links to download homework or project resources on the web site
• The site can notify parents of school closings and cancellations

Flatt also states that the responses from parents regarding the benefits of their well-designed web site were positive. He mentions that parents would much rather log onto the site and have an instantaneous answer than receive a busy signal or wait on hold for several minutes. There are many plans for the Walton High School web site including fundraising for additional school purchases. The web site has become a success because of the students, parents, and faculty of Walton High School.
The Clay County School District in Kansas also had success with their web site (Hines, 2000). Size and school population was the main reasons the district wanted a web site. The best way to reach students, parents and potentials was to create a district page. Parents can now check to see if their child’s schoolwork has been turned in or if their child attended a chemistry class. The site has only been used less than a year and parents are anxious to view their child’s test scores. The superintendent states the site has been an overwhelming success in the district. The parents have a password and login for each child. These procedures are so that none of the online information can be altered. If something does go wrong, the superintendent states the problem can be traced back to where it occurred. He also adds the online environment appears to be less threatening than one-to-one communication. Parents save trips to schools, save phone calls, and parents have a way to communicate [via e-mail] in a non-threatening fashion. Other benefits include:

- Students can check their homework when traveling or out sick
- Divorced parents with a distance relationship can view their child’s progress
- Lesson plans can be generated across the district from school to school

Within the Clay County School District, awareness is increasing about the web site with students, parents, and faculty being won over. Records are being accessed on an average of nine times a month per family. Teachers are doing away with traditional face-to-face meetings, replacing them instead with online meetings. With all this information intact, Clay County School District has benefited from utilizing their school web site (Hines, 2000).
McKenzie (2000) believes web sites can be useful information systems, if properly constructed. They can inform students, parents, and faculty of pertinent school information. He also points out that a school web site can help people discover valuable educational information with a minimum amount of wasted time and wandering.

McKenzie (2000) lists four functions for establishing a school web site:

1. School web sites introduce visitors – its mission, its character, its look, its offerings to children, its stance on new technologies, and its overall spirit;
2. They point to excellent information on the larger Web – identifying the best resources the Web has to offer an educational family, those most likely to support curriculum, and the kinds of investigations likely to be undertaken by staff and students alike;
3. They offer an opportunity for the publishing of student work to both a local and global audience – whether that work be art, music, or writing;
4. They provide rich data locally collected on curriculum-related topics (such as local history), whether these collections take the form of data warehouses, virtual museums, or virtual libraries. (P.2)

McKenzie states that while some school sites accomplish all four functions, most accomplish two or three effectively. He also states school web sites are being used as an attraction for prospective parents and as a marketing strategy for potential students and parents. Conger and Mason (1998) share the same view about understanding the user: Most users are looking for information that fits with, or can be absorbed readily into, their existing world view. That means that in designing a web site, it is important to use an organizational scheme that matches users’ mental map as
closely as possible; information must be presented in such a way that makes intuitive sense to the user (p. 29)

Pertinent school information is key for the user, causing them to maintain interest in the site.

Valuable items such as calendars, menus, and schedules can be quickly accessed with a well maintained school web site. McKenzie (2000) suggests breaking down school curriculum into categories for each grade level. Giving a brief description under a hyperlink is also recommended before the viewer commits to the next page. Student publications can be impressive when shared on the World Wide Web (WWW) where anyone has the chance to view them. The author also discusses web sites becoming a vehicle to support studies such as virtual museums and libraries. The museums and libraries can be updated on the school web site so new students can add on to previous students' works. The previous functions discussed can bring about a powerful school web site for all to become better informed. Different school web sites around the world have been able accomplish all four goals with students, parents, and faculty expressing their appreciation (McKenzie, 2000).

By exploring other web projects, Lamb (1997) believes purposeful resources can be pulled from the Internet to benefit the creation of a school web site. The author suggests to, “Start your project by collecting web sites related to your topic or theme. What have other people done already? What links might be useful? Can you find puzzles, games, simulations, virtual field trips, or activities already posted” (p.151). With proper exploration, students and teachers can have a better knowledge and edge on how to create their own school web site.
Planning. Lamb's (1997) next step for creating an effective school web site is planning. She suggests breaking down the strengths and weaknesses of each individual site for the creator's benefit. The planning phase mentions the creation of committees involving:

- Students
- Teachers
- Library media specialists
- Parents

Defining the purpose of the web site, examining the audience, and establishing a web master are some of the tasks to consider during the planning phase.

Lindsay (1996) suggests proper planning is a must for the creator of a school web site to reach its fullest potential. "First, plan ahead and write a style sheet to define the who, what, and how of the pages" (p. 58). Sklar (2000) endorses the planning phase of creating a web site. "Examine closely what type of site you are building. Your objectives and your users' objectives-what you want the web site to accomplish and what your users want from your site-may differ" (p. 58). Schrock (2000) mentions documenting a bibliography with information for print materials, photographs, and oral interviews and including them in the web page. This information will be important for the researcher who may be using the web site at a later date. Taking advantage of community resources is also a must within the planning phase. Some of the best content-rich school web pages focus on local historical society's collections, such as the Veterans of Foreign Wars reminiscences, special museums, or organizations. Schrock also states that if you find a
web page design that your students want to emulate, view the source code to see how the pages were created.

Regardless if one or one thousand people are involved in the planning process of the web site, Lamb (1997) also believes in a pre-production plan. “This plan will serve as a guide for your entire project. When developing a pre-production plan, be sure to include all your ideas, resources, and activities. By creating a master list of options, you have many possibilities to explore” (p.170). With the planning process intact, the creator can now focus on the design process.

**Designing.** Lamb (1997) identifies the design phase as focusing on the content of the school web site and information to consider includes the history, mission, events, assignments, and vision. Beuselinck and Logan (2002) endorse that, “the vision statement should drive the contents of an educational web site” (p.13). They also suggest that the following should be displayed on each page of the web site:

- Links to the district page or school page
- Information creating any graphics or any other copyrighted materials used on the site
- An information page about the web site and its creation (p.14)

Beuselinck and Logan (2002) also believe an informative school web site should be an online reference for the district, schools, departments, classrooms, grade levels, and teams. They state that an “informative site/page can introduce and provide useful information about educational programs to parents, students, the community, and others” (p.15). Schrock (2000) states that if a content-rich school web page is created that
supports the curriculum, educators will come back again and again to visit the site and word will spread quickly.

Designing the web page can be fun, but time consuming as well, according to Lamb (1997). This is because the creator can spend a majority of their time organizing the content. “Organization is critical to the success of a web page. Create an overall plan for your project. You may organize it like a tree, web, table of contents, or organizational chart” (p.184). Providing the viewer with related school information that is organized helps establish a successful web page. Proper planning and organization also saves the designer time during the creation stage.

Creating. The fourth phase Lamb (1997) mentions is the creation stage, which focuses on the structure of the school web site. Using a computer application such as Inspiration helps visualize the web site’s folder, pages, and links. Lamb suggests viewing other school sites for a template to build the basis for determining the pages needed. Sklar (2000) agrees with the idea of creating an organizational visual before getting started with the web site. “Plan your site by creating a flowchart that shows the structure and logic behind the content presentation and navigation choices you offer” (p. 69). After providing a visual representation of the site, the creator(s) can then focus on the design layout.

Williams (1994) states the fundamentals of web design are based on the four principles: proximity, alignment, contrast, and repetition. By following the four principles, school web developers can establish a visually pleasing and informative site.

Proximity consists of grouping related items together on the page and keeping unrelated items separate. With the items brought together, the viewer knows what is
related and what is not. This way the viewer has visual clues and does not get confused with unrelated items. For example, the creator of the school web site is not going to separate related items. “By custom, we normally group information object type, importance to the individual, and so on. This means that skills would be listed together, as would all jobs and all educational degrees” (Conger & Mason, 1998, p. 97). This use of proximity will help decrease confusion on the viewer’s behalf and informational relationships will be clearly established.

Alignment presents a visual connection; while at the same time cleans up the school web site. When items are aligned on a page, the visual connection is strengthened for the viewer. For instance, the creator is not going to have paragraph one left aligned, paragraph two centered, and paragraph three right aligned. Conger and Mason say alignment should be consistent throughout the pages:

- Left alignment is the most common, with unaligned, or ragged, right margins.
- Center alignment is not recommended for large blocks of text because both sides (left and right) have raged edges, which makes it difficult to read...Right alignment has the strongest affect because we are not used to seeing it. (p. 97)

Williams (1994) suggests that people are used to centering documents and are sometimes afraid of a different style of alignment. Improper alignment can confuse the eye as well as the viewer, causing them to become less interested.

Repetition duplicates some of the elements throughout the entire web site. Repetitive elements can include fonts, colors, borders, bullets, etc. The purpose of repetition is “to keep the pages simple so they are easy to use and navigate” (Lindsay, 1996, p. 58). A simple repetitive layout will allow the user easier navigation. Consistency
is a must throughout the web site and repetition is the element that establishes this concept. “Repeating a color cues users to similarity of information and design. When color changes, the user is cued in on a change” (Conger & Mason, 1998, p.101). Schrock (2000) also suggests that to keep your pages consistent (and make it easier on yourself and the user) create a master template to give each page a consistent look, feel, and navigation structure.

Contrast is the principle of making items that are the same, different. For instance, having a black background with white lettering is very effective. A black background with a dark color font can be impossible to see, so this should be avoided. Dark colors go well with light colors and vice-versa when dealing with contrast. Staker (2001) concurs that the continuing problematic trend in web page design characteristics includes contrast. “Web pages are being created that are difficult to read and understand because of the use of improper text and text size, distracting backgrounds, and color combinations that do not match” (p.1). With these four elements in mind, the creator of the web site will have the best chance to win over its viewer. A variety of people can play a role in the creation of a school web site. “Web page development is easy. Even primary age children can create their own web pages with very little instruction. . . . Rather than doing the HTML (HyperText Markup Language) programming, we use a web development tool” (Lamb, 1997, p.218). Web development tools include Adobe Pagemill, Microsoft Front Page, Claris Home Page and Macromedia Dreamweaver. Lamb insists that these tools are the easiest way to creating web pages because of WYSIWYG (what-you-see-is-what-you-get). She clarifies this concept by stating, “when you write, add links, create tables, or insert pictures they will appear on the screen just like the final web page” (p.218). With
any of the previously mentioned software, the creator(s) has the best chance of establishing the four principals of web design.

Revising. Once the web site has been posted, the revision stage takes place. Lamb (1997) suggests testing the web site on different computer platforms and web browsers. The author also believes it is best to test your web site on different audiences to meet common needs. Schrock (2000) also provides the researcher with more topics to consider when the school web site is published:

- Go easy on the graphics. Many schools now have high-speed connections, but you want teachers and students also to be able to use the site from their dial-up connections at home.

- Do a professional editing job. Check grammar and spelling and ensure all the links work.

- If you do not have access to a digital camera, have your regular photo film developed on a diskette or a CD-ROM. This eliminates the intermediary scanning stage.

- Find a good piece of image-editing software. These applications are important for decreasing the size and resolution of the pictures so they load more efficiently in the browser. This software also allows for the easy conversion of file formats to the required JPG, PNG and GIF formats for the web. Paintshop Pro and Adobe Photoshop are both affordable.

- Make sure your site includes information useful to others. Think about schools in different parts of the country and world, and what content would be helpful. (p.2)
Schrock (2000) believes that utilizing these steps can help the visual design, increase performance, and strengthen student/parent/faculty relations through access to relevant information.

With the given considerations at hand, Lamb (1997) discusses web site revisions. “If you want repeat visitors, your site must be updated frequently. Be sure to include the date of revisions and icons to indicate new information” (p.258). Revisions are always going to be necessary and this is why it is imperative to have an assigned person to maintain the web site.

**Maintaining.** Maintenance is the last of the six components Lamb suggests for creating a school web site. The author mentions considering the amount of support the web site will have over time. If support is limited, the creator may want to cut down on the pages that will need ongoing support. Lindsay (1996) reminds the creator to “keep the links up-to-date because nothing frustrates the user faster than dead links that go nowhere” (p. 58). Lamb (1997) also says to enlist the help of others (i.e. students, workers, volunteers) to maintain and promote the school web site for others to see.

Having a variety of people involved in the project, can help with maintaining the site. “In some cases, schools have hired outside consultants or found volunteer parents to develop their school web pages. In other cases the high school computer club is in charge of the school web site” (Lamb, 1997, p.157). Having a web site that is not maintained can be avoided by having more people involved or the site can be downsized.

**Promotion.** Even though promotion is not one of Lamb’s six phases of creating a web site, advertising is also important, says Schrock (2000). Once completed, Schrock suggests submitting the URL of your web page to major search engines and directories.
Posting a note to a listserv or newsgroup, such as NetHappenings or classroom Connect, will let educators know about your school web page. By doing this, the steps that were taken by the designer to create the site will not go unnoticed.

Beuselinck and Logan (2002) speak of the power of the Internet and that the intended primary and secondary audiences need to be aware of the web site. They state, “Share information about the site in the school or district using promotion such as newsletters, letters, announcements, in-service sessions, bulletin boards, bookmarks, business cards, and grand ‘opening’ event” (p.108). This will make sure that the steps taken in creating the web site do not go unrecognized by students, parents, faculty, and the community.

Conclusions and Recommendations

School web sites based on school promotion and the acceleration of the Internet are becoming more popular. Students, parents, and teachers are taking advantage of this new tool with the process of web design becoming easier over the years. There are many considerations that one must analyze, based on the available research. If the web design phases are followed, the creator has the potential to design a web site that keeps students, parents, and faculty up to date with important school information.

This review was focused on the Lamb’s six phases (exploration, planning, designing, creating, revising and maintaining) with the inclusion of Shrock’s (2000) promotion. With these seven steps in place, a school has the potential to create a professional looking and informative site. Other web sites on the Internet should be looked at as a reference for proper guidelines. Information needs to be properly
organized, maintained, and user-friendly at the same time. The primary functions of a school web site must not be overlooked. It is important to incorporate the students' accomplishments, calendars, school mission, and vision. By using the four fundamentals of web design (contrast, repetition, alignment, and proximity), web sites can be enhanced by creating a more professional look for the viewer. For example, some web sites lack the fundamentals by providing too much text, inconsistency, unappealing contrast, and lack of repetition, just to name a few. Teachers and students should evaluate the site throughout the year for any necessary revisions. The site must be maintained so that students, parents, and faculty members are kept informed. Cutting back on a large-scale school web site and increasing the people involved can help the maintenance process. If done correctly, the school web site can have its highest potential when designed for the students, parents, and faculty of the school.

**Development Procedures**

My development of the McKinstry web site began by researching selected topics based on Lamb (2000). I followed all of the steps as a guideline to help direct me to completing the web site (Exploration, Planning, Designing, Creating, Revising, and Maintaining). I also used the instructional design process (Dick & Carey, 1996) to analyze the needs assessment and guide the evaluation phase. This was one of the most important parts of the project given to the staff during the planning phase. With this information I was able to determine what the staff felt was needed on the site.

**Exploration**

Based on Lamb, I viewed different web sites on the Internet so I could have some background knowledge on what some other school web sites had accomplished. I found
excellent examples of design layouts, content areas, and school features. I also found some sites that demonstrated poor design skills and lack of important information. Some web sites that I viewed had included their mission, staff e-mails, classroom homepages, calendars, class assignments, lesson plans, sporting events and even classroom art.

**Figure 1. McKinstry Elementary School Mission Page**

McKinstry Elementary School

"Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars!"

Our Mission is our purpose as the Staff of McKinstry Elementary.

Our Mission is "to provide a quality education, where all students have appropriate opportunities to reach their fullest potential, to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a diverse society."

In Figure 1, I used a simple design layout for the school’s mission page. With the step of exploration, I was able to get ideas from other web sites and incorporate some ideas into mine.

**Planning**
In the planning phase, Lamb suggests breaking down the strengths and weaknesses of each individual's site for the creators benefit. With the help of the needs assessment, Lamb's framework, and my own personal judgment, I had guidance in creating the McKinstry school web site. I made reference to a selection of school web sites for my needs assessment for the staff as well.

I wanted the McKinstry staff to explore school web sites so they could have their own background knowledge in this area. In the needs assessment, the staff expressed different ideas about the pros and cons of some of the various school web sites. Information from the needs assessment identified the following needs from the McKinstry staff:

- The placement of school information
- Presenting a school calendars
- Displaying current news
- Newsletters for the classes
- Employment opportunities
- Digital images
- Clip Art
- Staff e-mails
- Teacher resource links
- A hyperlink to the Waterloo School District web site

Once the previous needs were analyzed, I inputted those listed above into the web site. Once the teachers evaluated the completed site, they were satisfied to see their needs implemented into their own school web site.
Lamb also suggests the creation of committees, examining the audience, and defining the purpose of the web site. The only suggestions that were applicable to my project were examining the audience and defining the purpose of the web site. I met with the McKinstry administration on the purpose and the examination of the audience for more guidance. Lamb also suggested developing a pre-production plan to serve as a guide for the entire project. I made a list of all my ideas, resources, and storyboards for a variety of different possibilities. The planning phase was extremely important because proper planning meant less time in the design phase.

**Designing**

Lamb suggests the design phase as focusing on the content of the school web site. One of the most important pieces of content was the McKinstry Parent/Student Handbook. This handbook had a wealth of information about the school that could definitely be used in the school site. I informed the secretary of my purpose and Fortunately, she had the Parent/Student Handbook in electronic format. I was able to copy and paste the information from the handbook into the school web site. A lot of the information had to be updated, so the administrative assistant and I reviewed the information. Once the principal approved the information, it was implemented in the site.

Information from the McKinstry Parent/Student Handbook that was incorporated into the site includes:

- McKinstry’s Mission and Vision
- Introduction of McKinstry
- Parent Involvement Opportunities
- Media Center/Parent Agreement
Lamb also mentioned organizing a web like chart for the benefit of your project. I wanted the web site to be organized so that during the creation stage time could be saved and the web site would look professional.

Creating

The fourth phase that I went through was creating the McKinstry Elementary School web site. Lamb recommends using an application, such as Inspiration, to help visualize the school web site. Instead of Inspiration, I used the option of the design layout with the web development tool named Macromedia Dreamweaver. This way I could visualize what pages were linked together, which links were broken, and the specific location of each page.

Figure 2. Website Design Layout
Figure 2 presents a snapshot of the design layout that breaks down my web site visually. I was able to see pages that were linked together and if any broken links were present.

Lamb recommends using a program based on the principle of WYSIWYG (what-you-see-is-what-you-get). I had the best chance of creating a web page based on this principle by using the application Macromedia DreamWeaver. The use of Dreamweaver made the creation phase easier and less time consuming. I knew exactly how all pages of the McKinstry web site were linked together.

I also referred to Williams (1994) and her fundamentals of graphic design: proximity, alignment, contrast and repetition. I did not want the viewer to be confused in any way or for any reason. The viewer might have been uninterested if the site became the least bit confusing. Williams’ fundamentals of design also had a tremendous impact on my project from beginning to end. Below are examples of how Williams’ fundamentals of design were utilized in the project.

With the rule of proximity, I grouped all the related items together so the viewer would not be confused. I placed all my buttons on the left side, school contact information as a footer, and the name of the school as a header. This way the viewer did
not have to bounce their eyes back and forth for related information. I also stressed the importance of the school name by increasing the font size.

**Figure 3. Visual Design Example**

Figure 3 demonstrates how I used visual design principles to stress the school name by increasing the font size to attract the viewer.

Throughout the McKinstry Elementary School web site, I made sure the colors, fonts and images remained the same for the sake of repetition. The school colors were blue and yellow with their mascot being the bald eagle. The buttons and the bald eagle remained in the same location throughout the site for repetition purposes. My font (Times New Roman) rarely changed as well.

With the principle of alignment, I made sure that all my buttons were aligned correctly, the same size, and that all items seemed to be in place. This goes for digital
images, buttons, and content. I did my best to stay consistent with left alignment throughout the site Williams mentioned staying away from center alignment because of its everyday usage.

Figure 4. Webpage Alignment Example

McKinstry Elementary School
"Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars!"

Current News

Important Message To McKinstry Parents

There is a strong link between good attendance and success in school. Tardies are also disruptive to the educational process in a classroom.

Effective October 29 (the beginning of the second 9 weeks), we will enforce the following TARDY policy:

EXCUSED tardies will be for medical (doctor's appointments), dental (dental appointments), or funeral attendance. You will need to bring an excuse from the doctor or dentist. If the doctor's appointment involves less than 1 1/2 hours, it will not be counted as a tardy.

Figure 4 presents an example of the use of left alignment throughout the site.

With the fourth fundamental of graphic design, contrast was utilized on all the pages with the background being white and the lettering being black. This is the strongest contrast since both colors are opposites with each other. I did not want the viewer straining their eyes to view the words. The background and text color stayed consistent throughout the site. The difference in font size with the school's title at the top of the page compared to the rest of the site's text size is also an example of the effective use of contrast.

Revising
Lamb’s revision stage came next once the McKinstry School web site was posted. I tested the site on different computers and made revisions as I saw fit. Using her recommendation, I viewed the web site on Internet Explorer and Netscape Navigator since a web site can be very different in those separate applications. Lamb also mentioned placing a revision date on the web site so viewers know the last time the site had been updated. I did this with the McKinstry web site, but I have not made any modification since I left the University of Northern Iowa.

**Maintaining**

The last step of Lamb’s six components that I considered was maintenance. This step involved the amount of support the web site would have over the course of time. I knew that my support was going to be limited, so I included as much critical school information as the school provided. I did this so that the school’s content did not have to be changed on a weekly basis.

**Promotion**

McKinstry Elementary School promoted the school web site by telling of its existence to the community at one of their annual technology club events. The parents were excited to see that the school finally had a school web site to refer to with many topics of interest. I have received numerous e-mails from companies to promote the web site through submission to different search engines and directories. All e-mails from different promotional companies have been referred to the principal.
The Project

The McKinstry web site was based on the six steps of Lamb (2000) with help from the Dick and Carey (1996) instructional design model. I used the six steps to guide the process of creating a school web site with help from the needs assessment and staff evaluations. All the information that was researched was incorporated into the McKinstry school web site. Basing the site on the research results helped the designer and viewer.

Williams (1994) fundamentals of graphic design (proximity, alignment, contrast, and repetition) were utilized throughout the site. The school colors (blue and yellow) were used consistently throughout the site for repetition purposes. Below is a snapshot of the introduction from the principal and the administrative assistant. The buttons and the

Figure 5. Graphic Design Principles Example

McKinstry
Elementary School
"Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars!"

* WELCOME to McKinstry Elementary School, where our students "Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars!"

* The purpose of this Parent-Student web site is to give an overview of School and District schedules, policies, and guidelines. We suggest all families read and discuss this site together.

Principal: Joe Leidig
Administrative Assistant: Lisa Holtby

Waukon School District Office Page
school icon (bald eagle) are aligned with each other. Black wording on a white background and differing font sizes were the used for contrast. The viewer would not have to wonder what some of the words were because of poor contrasting. You will also notice related information being placed together for the purpose of proximity. For example, McKinstry’s contact information in the right hand corner being grouped together and a hyperlink to the Waterloo School District’s web site in the lower left hand corner. In Figure 5, I utilized the school colors consistently throughout the site to make the site look more professional.

Figure 6. Staff Educational Resource Page

McKinstry Elementary School
"Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars!"

Student/Teacher Resources

Please click on any of the links below for student/teacher resources.

- Discovery.com
- Yahooligans
- Enchanted Learning
- Kids Zone
- Teacher.Net
- Sites for Teachers

Principal: Linda Hall
Administrative Assistant: Craig Sudds

McKinstry Elementary School
1410 Independence Avenue
Waterloo, Iowa 50703
Phone: (319) 291-4873
Fax: (319) 291-4844

Designed by: Linda Cain
Last Modified: 3-16-02
Following the staff's needs assessment, I knew that the staff educational resource to go outside of the school for a wealth of academic information. Below is an example of how I included links to Discovery.com, Yahooligans, Enchanted Learning, Kids Zone, and Teacher Net. This way, teachers could reference external information directly from their own school web site. Figure 6 presents educational resources for students, parents and teachers alike to use.

Using the steps developed by Lamb in my final project helped benefit the project as well as myself. Many pieces of information that I gathered through research were utilized in the final project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

I learned a lot from this process of creating a school web site from the beginning until the end. Most of the lessons learned came from the classroom with hands-on projects and interaction with various people. Creating a web site is not an easy process and can consume a lot of your time. By following Lamb’s steps, I had an excellent reference for creating a school web site.

Lamb suggested exploring various school web sites for design examples. I was able to get a feel for other school sites and focused on their strengths and weaknesses. Some examples of strengths included ideas ranging from school news, classroom homepages, classroom art, and even lesson plans. Some sites displayed weaknesses such as poor design elements and out-dated information. Using Lamb’s (1997) suggestion of breaking down the pros and cons of other school web sites helped me plan to reach my site’s highest potential. If you spend more time planning the project, you will spend less time tearing the web site apart. The creation process was not easy all the time, but with
patience and consistency, anything is possible. Lamb recommended using an application that would help visualize the site, that is a reason I chose Macromedia Dreamweaver. This application gives you the option of viewing the structure of the web site, which helped me visualize the web site. With help from my advisor, professors and the McKinstry staff I was able to make the best out of the web site. Lamb also recommended after posting the web site to make revisions. I viewed the web site on different computers using Netscape as well as Internet Explorer. Once I viewed the web site with numerous browsers, I made adjustments where necessary.

I will always remember this project because of the information that was gained during the spring semester of 2002. The time that was spent helped me evolve into an accomplished web site designer and shall always be cherished. All the knowledge that I have learned from this specific process will definitely be used in the future when developing a school web site.

During this graduate research project, I found myself discovering a great deal by way of listening, learning, applying, and evaluating. Many pieces of information that I learned from class and the six components of Lamb played an integral part in the McKinstry Elementary School project. Overall, four major recommendations come to mind; reviewing the six phases of Lamb, understanding your motivation, applying the lessons learned in your classes, and keeping your advisor informed.

I would recommend to any one doing a project similar to mine to review the six steps of Lamb (Exploration, Planning, Designing, Creating, Revising, and Maintaining. These steps provide an excellent basis for creating a school web site. By following these steps, the creator will have a better knowledge of the fundamentals of a school web site.
This graduate project was a task that was not only a project for the school, but also a project for myself. If my enthusiasm for this project was low, I would not have been motivated to complete the site. If I did not have any enthusiasm for this project, it would have been reflected in the web site. I looked forward to applying the information that I learned from tutorials, class, and even experimentation. I spent hours in different applications including Macromedia Dreamweaver, Adobe Photoshop, and Microsoft FrontPage, applying and evaluating all the information that I learned. If I were to do this project again, I would have spent more time experimenting with the chosen applications. I would have also read more tutorials so that less of my time would have been wasted figuring things out. Based on what others have said, the resulting site is well organized, informative, and very professional.

It is important to make sure that your advisor is aware of which step of the graduate process that you are on. I made sure that I stayed in contact with my advisor to make sure that I was not missing any steps. We would constantly go back and forth on the proper guidelines and corrections that needed to be made. She did an excellent job of making sure that I was on task by phone calls and e-mailing. I would also recommend finishing your project and paper during the school year to take advantage of the close proximity of your resources.

Much of the information that I needed to complete this web page came from class and research. I really enjoyed the classes that had a hands-on approach to software that could be used for educational purposes. One of my most valuable endeavors at the University of Northern Iowa was my final project. I say this because I was able to incorporate my imagination into the creation phase. The professors and fellow students
were always impressed with my projects because they knew that a lot of quality time was spent on their development.

Each of these recommendations is extremely important to complete a research project similar to this one. Always do a project that you are excited about doing, make sure you are in good standings with you advisor, and get the most out of the classes that you have taken. Overall, this project took a lot of time, but worth the experience.
References


Appendix A
Daily Journal
January 21st, 2002

An assistant principal (Craig Saddler) at McKinstry Elementary School introduces the graduate project to myself. Upon confirmation from my advisor if the project would suffice, she approved. Craig and I made a decision that he would pick me up on Fridays in the morning to carry me over to the McKinstry Elementary School. I would stay until 8:00am until 12:00pm. This way I could be in close contact with the staff, school content, and capture images for the web page. I also made sure with the principal Loleta Hall that my project was approved. She recommended that I check with the school secretary to get a list of the students that hadn’t brought in a school media consent form. The school had not had a previous school web page and she gladly accepted.

January 25th, 2002

Before anything could be created, I had to assess the needs of the school in terms of their personal school web page. I went over the needs assessment with my advisor, which gave me the overall revised version. The needs assessment was handed out to the administration, staff, and the technology team. Some of the needs of the school web page from the McKinstry staff included:

- Staff information
- Homework page
- Music and sound
- Teacher e-mail addresses
- Video lessons
I also asked the staff during the assessment phase to evaluate some other school web sites and use those as a reference as well. At the same time I was gathering my own information for my research paper, I was also implementing suggestions from the credible sources (books, articles, websites).

**February 1st, 2002**

Gathering information for the needs assessment really helped me establish a vision of what the staff wanted. I acquired the e-mail addresses for the staff, school colors/mascot, looked over some of the staff content, and made sure that the school schedule was correct. Most of the tasks that were asked were possible with time and patience. I knew that there were some pieces of software that I needed to learn for me to be satisfied with the school site including Microsoft FrontPage and Adobe Photoshop.

**February 8th and 15th, 2002**

One obstacle that I knew I had to face was a program by the name of Adobe Photoshop. To make the web site more visually appealing, I would have to learn some of the basics to this software. This program was also brought up by many of the authors that I had gained research from. I never took a course focusing on Adobe Photoshop, so instead I purchased a book by the name of “PhotoShop in the Classroom”. This book gave me lessons for me to complete and learn at the same time. I took this knowledge to McKinstry and spent some more time learning about the program including, layering, rollover buttons, selecting objects, among other crucial tasks.

**February 22nd, 2002**

I used Microsoft FrontPage in the past for several different pages and decided to do the same. I was also familiar with the interface, navigation, tools, and potential of the
application. I told the assistant principal of my decision and he approved. This day at McKinstry involved reacquainting myself to the program sense I would be utilizing in the near future. I had the manual to go along with the program and many of my questions were answered. Once, I didn’t understand why an image was not showing up when I went to preview. Reason being was because the file was misplaced and this was fixed by placing the picture in the correct folder.

March 1st, 2002

I asked the school secretary if she had an electronic copy of the school’s 2002 manual. This would make it much easier for me to include important dates, staff roster, school schedule, etc. If not, I would have to import the information manually, which would consume much of my time. The secretary said that she had some information, but not all. I transferred the content from ClarisWorks and copied the information into Microsoft FrontPage.

March 8th, 2002

Not Available - On this date I participated at the National Association for Laboratory Schools conference in San Juan, Puerto Rico.

March 15th, 2002

In my Principles of Publication course, our instructor introduced the class to a different web editor by the name of Macromedia Dreamweaver. She kept on saying “W.Y.S.I.W.Y.G.”, which stood for “what you see is what you get”. She informed us that we would be using this web editor for our final project of creating a web page. I had an important decision to make regarding the use of Microsoft FrontPage or Macromedia Dreamweaver. I spent time in the class getting a feel for the program and it was very
similar to Microsoft FrontPage. I weighed my pros and cons and eventually decided to convert all the information from FrontPage into Dreamweaver. In Dreamweaver, the navigation was easy to use and it would not take any time at all for me to import the information that was currently in FrontPage.

March 22\textsuperscript{nd}, 2002

I spent this day going over my storyboards of the project and how the pages would be connected together. I knew that I was not going to be at McKinstry in the future to implement any changes to the web site, so the administration and I agreed to make the site more informational than anything else. This would decrease the amount of times the site would have to be updated. Plus I placed a modification date in the corner for the visitors to know the last time the site was updated.

March 29\textsuperscript{th}, 2002

This day was spent transferring information from Microsoft FrontPage into Macromedia Dreamweaver. I also used a lot of the time going over the Macromedia Dreamweaver tutorial and implementing my new knowledge into the site. I learned more about the toolbars that I would need more than others including placing pictures, manipulating fonts, inserting tables, and more. I spent a lot of time getting confused and experimenting, which was all apart of the project.

April 5\textsuperscript{th} and 12\textsuperscript{th}, 2002

I knew that the semester was coming to an end, so I needed to take the next two weeks and think of any information that I missed out on. The site looked very nice because of the contrast, repetition, alignment and design strategies learned from my Principles of Publication class. Information from my research paper carried over into my overall
project. Links were included to student/teacher resources, design elements implemented, important information shared, contact information applied, and more. I finished those two weeks up with some images, clip art, and discussion with Mr. Saddler about any changes that needed to be made. He added corrections to his title, text sizes, and e-mail changes.

April 19th, 2002

This day has been spent finishing up on the navigation of the pages to make sure the web page was consistent and there were no broken links. All of the pages worked properly with all the links being active. The staff listing and school calendar had to be updated. I also spent some time contacting the Waterloo School District to find out if they had a link to a calendar that would always be active. This way the McKinstry calendar would always be accurate when clicked. No such link was available, so the site ended with 2002.

April 26th, 2002

I concluded my project on my last day with people from the needs assessment and the administrative staff reviewing the school web page. They were very pleased with the layout, accurate information, images, links and more. I learned a wealth of information from my needs assessment, the staff of McKinstry, and several different software applications. This project will be used as a reference when dealing with school web page analysis, design and evaluation.
Appendix B
McKinstry School Information
McKinstry Elementary
Parent-Student Handbook
2000/2001
# Table of Contents

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<td>McKinstry School Spirit</td>
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Welcome to McKinstry Elementary School, where our students “Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars!”

The purpose of this Parent-Student handbook is to give an overview of School and District schedules, policies, and guidelines. We suggest all families read and discuss this guide together.

Our Commitment to Education:

McKinstry Elementary school provides a learning environment for over 500 preschool through 5th grade students.

Our educational staff promotes a curriculum that is developmentally appropriate for your child(ren) to meet academic success.

In addition to teaching to varied learning styles, learning will take place in an environment that is multicultural and gender fair!  

Parent Involvement Opportunities:
* Read this handbook with your child(ren).
* Attend Open Houses and Student performances.
* Attend Parent/Teacher conferences.
* Read the monthly School Newsletter.
* Serve on the school Site Council.
* Join the PTO (Parent-Teacher Organization).
* Volunteer when you can.
* Ask, if you have any questions by calling 291-4873.
* Attend Parenting Activities: Informational meetings, Make and Takes, Field Trips, etc.
Our Foundations

Mission

Our Mission is our purpose as the Staff of McKinstry Elementary.

Our Mission is “to provide a quality education, where all students have appropriate opportunities to reach their fullest potential, to become lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a diverse society.”

Beliefs

Our Beliefs are the foundation of our school.

- We believe parents and guardians are the child’s first and most important teachers.
- We believe that all children can learn, achieve, and succeed.
- We believe children learn best when they have appropriate opportunities for success.
- We believe our school should teach the skills necessary to enable students to be lifelong learners and responsible citizens in a diverse society.
- We believe that the school must provide a safe and orderly environment for all.
- We believe our school must have involvement of parents, guardians, and community in order to effectively meet the needs of the total child.
- We believe that all students have the responsibility to learn to their fullest potential.

Desired Learner Outcomes

Desired Learner Outcomes are what we believe a student should “look like” upon leaving the 5th grade at McKinstry Elementary.

- The student will value education as a key to a quality life.
- The student will communicate effectively through reading, writing, listening, and speaking.
- The student will demonstrate problem solving strategies and higher order thinking skills.
- The student will display cooperative strategies and responsible behaviors through positive interaction with others.
- The student will show an appreciation of those who have different backgrounds, capabilities, experiences, and interests.
- The student will develop an appreciation for art, music, literature, dance, drama, recreation, and other cultural pursuits.
- The student will develop pride in work and a feeling of self worth.
Our Vision was written with input from students, parents, and staff. Our Vision is "our dream" of what McKinstry should be . . .

At McKinstry, we envision our school as having:

**Open Communication**

- Between and among staff, student and parent
- Accepting our differences
- Feeling of trust

**A Nurturing Environment**

- Committed and caring staff and families
- Safe, secure and clean building
- ALL are respected

**High Expectations for Learning**

- ALL learn
- Quality instruction, assessment and performance
- Students are excited about learning

**Unlimited Resources**

- Well equipped facility
- Trained staff
- Innovative uses of technology

"Together, these components will provide optimal opportunities for our children to develop the tools for success!"
## School Information

**School Hours**

- 8:20-8:40 A.M. Breakfast and Student Arrival (entering through front doors)
- 8:40 A.M. Students picked up from the Rec Room by classroom teacher
- 8:50 A.M. All classes begin
- 2:15 P.M. **Dismissal every Wednesday**
- 3:35 P.M. All classes dismissed (Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday)

All students arriving at school after 8:50 a.m. will be counted tardy and will need to stop by the office before going to class. Students arriving after 10:30 a.m. will be counted absent for one-half day.

### Staff Information

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<th>Contact Person</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Contact Person</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Ms. Loleta Hall</td>
<td>Third Grade</td>
<td>Mrs. L. Evans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Assistant</td>
<td>Mrs. Phillips</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Metz</td>
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<tr>
<td>Secretary to the Principal</td>
<td>Mrs. Craghead</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Richardson</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Secretary</td>
<td>Ms. Nichols</td>
<td>Fourth Grade</td>
<td>Mrs. Vogel</td>
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<tr>
<td>School Engineer</td>
<td>Mr. Hunter</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Custodian (Head)</td>
<td>Mr. Hagedorn</td>
<td>Fifth Grade</td>
<td>Mr. Einertson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Custodians</td>
<td>Mr. Cole</td>
<td>Special Needs</td>
<td>Mrs. Barnford (pm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing Assistant</td>
<td>Ms. Russell</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mr. Burke</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lunch Associate Associates</td>
<td>Mr. Samardzic</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Hanson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates</td>
<td>Mrs. Maine</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Phillips (am)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associates (Special Needs)</td>
<td>Miss Peggy</td>
<td>Art Teacher</td>
<td>Mrs. Colflesh</td>
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<td>Band</td>
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<td>Music Teacher</td>
<td>Mrs. Janssen</td>
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<td>Ms. Kroells</td>
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<td>Ms. Steggall</td>
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<td>Reading Teachers</td>
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<td>Counselor (K-3)</td>
<td>Mrs. Tapper</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Spencer</td>
<td>Counselor (4th &amp; 5th)</td>
<td>Mrs. Johnson</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Mrs. Stefaniach</td>
<td>ELF Teacher</td>
<td>Mrs. Watson</td>
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<td>First Touch Pre-School</td>
<td>Mrs. Echeverria</td>
<td>First Touch Associate</td>
<td>Mrs. Northey</td>
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<td>Ms. Kimpston</td>
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<td>Mrs. DeKoster</td>
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<td>Mrs. Gottschalk</td>
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<td>Mrs. Wehrle</td>
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<td>Mrs. Brownlow</td>
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Page 5
Appropriate School Behavior

* At McKinstry, we have in place the Responsibility Training Program, which encourages children to act responsibly and make good choices. Following are some of the components.

* The “4” parts to RTP are:
  - **Academic Excellence**: teachers meeting the needs of students
  - **Philosophy**: school Pledge and rules
  - **Positive Recognition**: rewards and celebrations given to responsible students in addition to classroom privileges
  - **Time To Think**: when students aren’t choosing to act responsibly (details below)

**Time to Think**

Ω **Level I**
Student is directed to Time To Think (TTT) place in the classroom.

Ω **Level II**
Student is sent to another supervised area outside the classroom to develop a Behavior Improvement Plan.

Ω **Level III**
Student is sent to the TTT Room to develop a Behavior Improvement Plan. Note is sent home that must be returned the next day.

Ω **Level IV**
Student goes to the office and is sent home for remaining day time-out by the Principal. Student returns to school after a required parent conference to develop a plan of improvement with teacher/counselor.

* **Zero Tolerance**: Certain behaviors are dealt with strongly and quickly and they result in serious consequences. These include sexual harassment, fighting (regardless of who started it), threatening to harm someone, and possessing any dangerous item or weapon. Parents will be contacted immediately. Please advise your child that such behaviors are serious and may result in suspension or expulsion.
Attendance, Tardies, and Truancy

* Your child should be in school every day and on time, unless there is a family emergency, illness, dental or medical appointment.

* Attendance and punctuality are crucial for your child(ren) to receive the most of their school experience, to develop habits of punctuality, self-discipline, and responsibility, and to keep disruption of the educational environment to a minimum.

* Children who are not in school during school hours without permission from the principal (excluding emergencies as listed above) or children who leave school without permission, are TRUANT and will be referred to the appropriate authorities.

* If picking up a student early from class, please stop at the office first to sign out your child. This procedure is necessary to prevent children from leaving the building with unauthorized persons. Students will not be dismissed without parents signing them out in the office.

* Please call the school office at 291-4873 by 8:50 A.M. when your child will be absent or tardy from school. If you cannot call to report an absence, a note must be sent upon your child's return which explains the reason for the absence. After 3 tardies, your child will receive a detention of 30 minutes.

* If your child is at a doctor's appointment for less than 1 1/2 hours, it will not be counted as an absence or tardy. An excuse from the doctor must be presented.

Bad Weather

* If school will start late, is canceled due to bad weather, or is dismissed early, the announcement will be aired on all local radio and television stations, including the school channel on Cable 7. In the fall, we send home a pink emergency card requesting where your child is to go in the event of early dismissal. IT IS EXTREMELY IMPORTANT that we have this information. Your child should know where to go if there is such a dismissal.

* If a severe storm comes during a school day, students will not be dismissed until it is safe for them to go home. Parents should wait until the danger is over before picking up students.
Bike Safety

* Students in grades 1 - 5 are allowed to ride bicycles to school with parental permission. Bikes are not to be ridden on the playground. They are to be ridden on the street, to the bike rack, and parked and locked until leaving school in the afternoon. The school assumes no responsibility for damaged or stolen bicycles at school.

Change in Address/Telephone Number/Emergency Contact

* Please contact the school immediately with a change in address, telephone number, or emergency contact. If your telephone service is disconnected, we must have a telephone number of someone who can contact you immediately. Please do not list yourself as an emergency contact!

Dress for Success

* There is no official dress code for the Waterloo Community Schools; however, we believe that students feel better about themselves and have a sense of pride when their clothing is clean and neat. (For assistance, please contact our Family Support Worker.)

* Please expect a call from the school to provide other clothing if your child is wearing clothing that could be considered "questionable" (the wearing of it disrupts the orderly environment of the school).

* During winter weather, it is recommended that your child wear boots and have a pair of shoes for indoors.

Health Issues

* It is important that all students have their immunizations up to date.

* Those students on prescribed medication require an adult to bring medication to school. According to District Policy, students should not be transporting medication. Those students on prescribed medication will receive their medication at the prescribed time, from the Health Associate, School Nurse, or other trained school personnel. The school will notify parents with a note regarding medication refills. If your child needs to take over-the-counter medication, please contact our Health Associate at 291-4873.

* Fresh air throughout the seasons is important for health and learning. For this reason, we will allow parents to request no more than one day for staying in for recess, without a doctor's excuse.
Media in School

As a public entity, the Waterloo Community School District promotes an open-door philosophy that includes welcoming the news media to visit schools. To assist in this process, parents who do not want their students to be interviewed or photographed/videotaped at anytime, or for any reason, at school should contact the school office in writing within 3 days of enrollment, so this fact can be recorded.

Play Equipment From Home

* Children are not to bring toys or sports equipment from home, including hand-held electronic toys (i.e. Giga Pets, etc). Pokemon cards should not be brought to school. The school supplies sufficient equipment for the children’s use.

School Fees? YES!

Kindergarten - $10.00*
Grades 1 - 5 - $15.00*

*Unless a fee waiver is signed and approved
Student Meal Program

* Breakfast 8:20 - 8:40 A.M * Lunch

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Extra Milk $ .35

“Pop” is not allowed in the cafeteria during meals. Please do not send or allow your child to bring “pop” to school unless it is a special occasion, authorized by the teacher.

Free and Reduced Application Tips:

1. Everyone must have a new application on file by September 25, 2000.
2. If a new application is not on file, your child must bring money for breakfast and lunch beginning October 2, 2000.
3. Your child will be charged the full price for meals if a current complete application is not on file.
4. If you have not filed an application before, your child must pay for meals until approval of the application. The USDA does not allow us to give free or reduced meals without an application on file.
5. Students who have not filed an application before will be processed first.
6. If you want free or reduced fees, you must sign the fee waiver form.
7. Fill out one application for your family. Please make sure all of your children are listed including high school students even if they will not be eating meals.

Meal Payment Tips:

1. You will receive notification when your student has a low meal balance.
2. There are no meal charges at high school. There is one meal charge at middle schools. There are 3 meal charges at elementary schools.
Meal Payment Tips, Continued

3. If your child has more charges than allowed by the charge policy and you have not made a payment, your child will receive a peanut butter sandwich and milk. Please keep current with your payments to prevent this from happening.

4. We encourage payment by the week or month by check made out to the Waterloo Schools Meals Program that when deposited is your receipt of payment. If an error is made you can verify payment more easily.

5. Breakfast and lunch are available at all school sites in the Waterloo Community School District.

Support Services

* We understand the fact that your child’s success in school is affected by what is happening emotionally, physically, and socially in their lives. To help us address the “whole child” and family needs, if necessary, we have several support services in our school:

Family Support Program - Identified Families are connected to community resources and assisted with other issues.

Guidance Program - School counselor provides classroom guidance, small group and individual counseling.

Special Education - Children with special learning needs are identified and provided needed services to address those needs.

Success Street - On site health services are available to all students who are signed up by parents.

Please call our school at 291-4873 for more information.

Withdrawals

* Please inform the teacher and the school office three days before withdrawing your child(ren). This will allow for the appropriate “paper work” to be completed and a smoother transition for you and your child(ren).
McKinstry Pledge

I am special and one of a kind.
I feel good about myself and what I try.
I **RESPECT** myself and others.
I am responsible for keeping McKinstry a **SAFE** place.
I am responsible for **LISTENING** and learning.
I will always do my best and strive for **EXCELLENCE**.
I am a proud member of McKinstry Elementary School.

School Colors: Blue and Yellow-Gold

School Mascot: Eagle

School Motto: Soar with the Eagles and Shine with the Stars

School Pride Song:

*We’re the greatest school of all here in Waterloo.
M-c-K-i-n-s-t-r-y!*  
We work hard and we play fair and we’re in harmony.
M-c-K-i-n-s-t-r-y!  
Chorus:
McKinstry School (repeat)
McKinstry School (repeat)
Forever let us hold our heads up high (high, high, high)
Come along and sing our song.
Sing it loud and clear.
M-c-K-i-n-s-t-r-y!  
McKinstry!
Success Street represents one of the largest community collaboration efforts in a long time. Success Street is unique to Waterloo in that it is a system rather than a program. It is primarily a collaboration of 26 local health and human service providers who have agreed to bring their services directly into the schools where they can be accessed more easily by students and families. With Success Street acting as the coordinator, all involved agencies can deliver their services to more youth in a more effective system designed specifically to meet the needs of students and the community.

Success Streets are currently in 26 schools in the Waterloo, Cedar Falls area. The three main sites are located at West High School, Logan Middle School and Expo High School. The remaining Success Streets are clustered around those primary schools.

The services that are currently offered to students and families at Success Street are:

- Health Services
- Department of Human Services
- Mental Health Services
- Substance Abuse Services
- Employment Specialist Services
- Family Development
- Recreation Services
- Juvenile Court Services
- Pregnancy and Parenting Services
- Pregnancy Prevention Counseling
- Mentoring Services
- Tutoring Services
- Social Workers
- STD testing and referral
- Adventure Therapy

Success Street is available to any student during any time of the year. Feel free to call Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM to make an appointment for any of the above services. Most services are free and available to any student. Some evenings available.

Success Street at West High 291-2665
Success Street at Logan Middle 291-2674
Success Street at Expo 291-2458

If you have any questions or comments, please stop by Success Street and visit with any of the staff.
Appendix C
Needs Assessment
To the faculty of McKinstry Elementary School,

My name is Jabari Cain and I am currently a graduate student at the University of Northern Iowa majoring in Educational Technology. This semester I am conducting research on the fundamentals of a school web page and your input is very important to the success of this project. The information that I receive from the attached needs assessment will provide necessary data for my final project/McKinstry Elementary School web site. School web sites have many benefits for students, parents, faculty, and the community alike. The information you provide will help make the published McKinstry Elementary School web page more useful.

Please view the school web pages listed below to familiarize yourself with other school web sites.

- Warren School District: http://www.warren.k12.in.us
- Southfield Public Schools: http://www.southfield.k12.mi.us
- McKinstry Elementary School: http://mckinstry.waterloo.k12.ia.us

Your information will be used to create a useful site for McKinstry Elementary School. In order to create an effective school web site, your valuable input is needed. If you have any questions regarding the survey, please contact me at 222-5394. All needs assessment can be left in Mr. Saddler's mailbox within the main office.

Sincerely,

Jabari Cain
3800 Jennings Dr. 114 D
Cedar Falls, IA 50613
Alignment: Lining up images, words, and paragraphs to establish a visual connection.

Proximity: Grouping related items together and keeping unrelated items separate.

Contrast: Using opposite colors to make sure backgrounds and words complement each other.

Repetition: Repeating elements throughout the site including fonts, colors, borders, bullets, etc.
The Fundamentals of a School Web Page
Jabari Cain
The University of Northern Iowa

Your Name: Sample Name
Position: Principal

1. What are three primary reasons why you view a school web site? Please rank your listings in order based on the importance of a good web site design.
   1. To see what programs schools offer
   2. To see if any uniqueness exist in school
   3. To get an idea of staff expectations

2. What features do you find useful in other school web pages that can be incorporated in the McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? Please rank your answers based on importance.
   1. Link to e-mail of each staff person
   2.
   3.

Please explore the following web site below to address the following questions if you have not already done so.
- McKinstry Elementary School: http://mckinstry.waterloo.k12.ia.us
1. What improvements would you like to see made on the McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? Please rank your answers in order based on importance.

2. Are there any changes that need to be made to the web site regarding alignment, proximity, contrast, and repetition? Why or why not? (Four principles are defined on the last page).

3. Do you feel any information has been left out on the present McKinstry Elementary School site? For example, should there be sections for students, teachers, parents, and community?

4. On a scale of one to ten (ten being the highest), how would you rank the navigation of the present McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? How can the navigation be changed, if any, to become user-friendlier?

5. Are there any external links, for example Yahooligans, which you would like to see incorporated in the web site for educational purposes?
6. Do you have any web design skills to help benefit continued maintenance of the school web site? Some of the necessary skills include planning, creating, and maintaining the school site.

Please use the back of this document for any additional space. Thanks again for your contributions to my research project/paper and the McKinstry Elementary School web page.
The Fundamentals of a School Web Page
Jabari Cain
The University of Northern Iowa

Your Name: Sara Bamford
Position: 5th grade teacher

1. What are three primary reasons why you view a school web site? Please rank your listings in order based on the importance of a good web site design.
   1. Curiosity / interest / Staff / employment opportunities
   2. School information / environment
   3. Calendar / current news

2. What features do you find useful in other school web pages that can be incorporated in the McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? Please rank your answers based on importance.
   1. Teacher email addresses
   2. Classroom news / newsletter
   3. Video lesson

Please explore the following web site below to address the following questions if you have not already done so.
   • McKinstry Elementary School: http://mckinstry.waterloo.k12.ia.us
1. What improvements would you like to see made on the McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? Please rank your answers in order based on importance.

1. A classroom newsletter, because it shows that technology is also important to us, as parents/students online.

2. Are there any changes that need to be made to the web site regarding alignment, proximity, contrast, and repetition? Why or why not? (Four principles are defined on the last page).

   No, I was very impressed with it and really like the flag/eagle.

3. Do you feel any information has been left out on the present McKinstry Elementary School site? For example, should there be sections for students, teachers, parents, and community?

   Teacher email addresses. You can only email principal and vice.

4. On a scale of one to ten (ten being the highest), how would you rank the navigation of the present McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? How can the navigation be changed, if any, to become user-friendlier?

   9 - I really like the web-site very much.

5. Are there any external links, for example Yahoo!igans, which you would like to see incorporated in the web site for educational purposes? A great site!

   A website to help parents with their...
6. Do you have any web design skills to help benefit continued maintenance of the school web site? Some of the necessary skills include planning, creating, and maintaining the school site.  

Please use the back of this document for any additional space. Thanks again for your contributions to my research project/paper and the McKinstry Elementary School web page.
The Fundamentals of a School Web Page
Jabari Cain
The University of Northern Iowa

Your Name:

Position:

1. What are three primary reasons why you view a school web site? Please rank your listings in order based on the importance of a good web site design.

1. To learn more about the school I may have an interest in.

2. I like creativity and seeing pictures of a school without necessarily having to be there.

3. To keep a school up-to-date in this information society.

2. What features do you find useful in other school web pages that can be incorporated in the McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? Please rank you answers based on importance.

1. I don’t think the other websites that you have listed or I’ve found on my own so far even compares to this one. Maybe some music or sound effects would be nice.

Please explore the following web site below to address the following questions if you have not already done so.

- McKinstry Elementary School: http://mckinstry.waterloo.k12.ia.us
1. What improvements would you like to see made on the McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? Please rank your answers in order based on importance.

   Under the Parent opportunities—maybe showing actual parent participation—maybe a picture of parent at the carnival. Parent volunteer of the month or year.

2. This is a great web site—until you’ve finished it’s hard to answer this question.

3. Maybe just some site where start with the "blinking"

2. Are there any changes that need to be made to the web site regarding alignment, proximity, contrast, and repetition? Why or why not? (Four principles are defined on the last page).

3. Do you feel any information has been left out on the present McKinstry Elementary School site? For example, should there be sections for students, teachers, parents, and community?

   Maybe announcements when someone from the community comes, maybe lunch menu, maybe parents that have comments about the children's McKinstry.

4. On a scale of one to ten (ten being the highest), how would you rank the navigation of the present McKinstry Elementary School web site and why? How can the navigation be changed, if any, to become user-friendly?

   10—unreviewed, others in our own district I think it's great and single.

5. Are there any external links, for example Yahooligans, which you would like to see incorporated in the web site for educational purposes?

   I'd rather not. I went to a school website and they were Yahooligans—yet there's something about it.
6. Do you have any web design skills to help benefit continued maintenance of the school web site? Some of the necessary skills include planning, creating, and maintaining the school site. I don't think so - I'm learning little by little and I'm amazed at every step of the way.

Please use the back of this document for any additional space. Thanks again for your contributions to my research project/paper and the McKinstry Elementary School web page.