Classroom Website

Classroom websites can serve similar functions as handbooks, newsletters, and calendars. They can:

- Provide clear and helpful information
- Enable you to reach many families at once
- Help you ‘tell the same story’ to everyone
- Serve as reminders to busy families
- Be translated into other languages for parents whose first language is not English

They have some added advantages over hard copies.

- They are free.
- They can be easily modified on a regular basis.
- Photographs and videos are easily incorporated.
- Student projects and work can be easily displayed.

Because there is no limit to the amount of information that can be displayed, they are a good tool for helping families get an in-depth look at classroom teaching and learning. If you are interested in creating a website, this tool can help you get started. You can also type “classroom websites” into a search engine such as www.google.com and find many examples to give you ideas.

What’s your purpose? Classroom websites can serve many communication functions. Explore the two designs below, and talk about which functions appeal to you:

Sample #1:

**Welcome to Ms. Campbell’s 3rd grade Webpage!**

*Click on the links below to learn about our class:*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meet Ms. Campbell</th>
<th>Our Daily Schedule</th>
<th>Newsletters</th>
<th>Our 3rd Grade Curriculum</th>
<th>Our Photo Collection</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What About Homework?</td>
<td>Parents in the Classroom</td>
<td>Our Class Rules</td>
<td>Our Class Favorites</td>
<td>Field Trips We Love</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sample #2:

**Welcome…Room 201 is a Special Place for Learning…**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Tour</th>
<th>Daily Schedule</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Literacy</td>
<td>Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Studies</td>
<td>Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your Child’s Learning Styles</td>
<td>Supporting Learning at Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**What resources do I need?** Just from looking at the two sample website designs, it is apparent that there are no limits to the resources you can use. As a beginner, you may want to “start simple” and select a few types from the list below:

- Written materials (draw upon your classroom handbook, newsletter, calendars)
- Photographs
- Graphics
- Student Work
- Videotapes
- Websites

**What can I post on a website?** This is a good question! If you plan to include any material that relates specifically to your students or their work (e.g., photographs, work samples), you will need written permission from parents. Your school may already have a form you can use, or you can adapt the form below to your situation.

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**Making Connections: Our Classroom Website**

Dear Parents,

I am developing a classroom website to help us communicate better. Because I want to share our classroom experiences with you on the website, I would like your permission to include photographs and work samples from our classroom. Please fill in the form below and return it to school with your child by [date]. Once I get the site developed, I would love to get your suggestions for improving it!

Sincerely,
[your name]

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**Website Permission Form**

Student Name: _______________________  Your Name: _____________________

You may use the following on the classroom website:

___ Photographs of my child at school, in your classroom or on field trips

___ Samples of my child’s written work (without his/her name displayed)

Your Signature: _______________________________________

Student’s Signature: ___________________________________
What else is involved? There will be other decisions to make in designing and publishing your website:

- Choice of web design software
- How families without access to the internet will not be disadvantaged if they cannot access your website
- How frequently you want to update your website