



*Mansfield Independent School District*

# 2023 Web Style Guide

Campus Web Managers



Communications & Marketing  
*Web Services Division*  
817.299.6348 phone  
[www.mansfieldisd.org](http://www.mansfieldisd.org)

## INTRODUCTION

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Thank you for your willingness to work as your school's web manager. It is a critical role that further links the district to our students, parents, community and staff. Whether it's searching for contact information or learning more about your campus, many individuals will check a webpage before picking up a phone. Because of this increased reliance on the web as a source of information, it is important that all of our websites reinforce the district's brand, are updated on a regular basis and contain relevant information.

The following manual was developed to prepare you for the responsibilities of web manager by providing you with current web standards and best practices essential to maintaining successful and effective websites.

The Web Services Department encourages you to take pride in your campus website and ownership of its content. We will offer training, resources and other assistance to guide you along the way. By working together, we can drive visitor engagement and build a greater sense of campus continuity.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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Web Services is a division of the MISD Communications and Marketing Department. Web Services uses a content management system (CMS) as the official tool and platform for all of its webpages.

With the district and campus websites built within a CMS, maintaining a consistent look is easier to sustain and allows nearly anyone to assist with the edit of pages.

MISD Web Services:

- Provides and maintains online content for Mansfield ISD and designs and manages the structure of the district and campus websites.
- Supports campus websites and other web initiatives through the development of standards, guidelines, best practices and training.
- Maintains district webpages with the assistance of department designees.
- Supports PK-12 campus websites with updated district links and information as well as direct site updates on an as-needed basis. Campus Web Managers are responsible for the routine maintenance of campus websites and are paid an annual stipend for their work. *Note: Teacher webpages may be created using external website creation tools suggested by Digital Learning.*

## RESPONSIBILITIES

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Campus web managers are principal-appointed, full-time MISD employees that are responsible for the routine maintenance and upkeep of their school website. Web managers report to the school principal and are required to adhere to the district's style guidelines overseen by the Director of Web Services. Appointed individuals are paid an annual stipend for their work.

The MISD Web Services division provides training and supporting documents and may make brief audits of school websites. Each school principal is responsible for the content on his or her campus website and may ask to review work before it is published. However, in many cases, the principal will trust the judgment of the designated appointee.

### *Web Manager Responsibilities:*

- Create and manage content on a weekly basis for the school's website including, but not limited to, announcements, campus news, calendar events and helpful resources for students, parents and staff
- Collaborate with various personnel for site content updates
- Edit and proofread all content prior to posting it on the website
- Perform quality assurance checks on campus web pages (i.e. – broken links, accurate information, misspelled words, incorrect grammar, etc.)
- Maintain WCAG 2.0 Level AA conformance for all content (see "Web Accessibility" section)
- Attend training sessions provided by Web Services as required or needed. *Note: There is one required training session per year (during Professional Development Week) and two mandatory visits with the Director during the fall and spring.*

## WEB ACCESSIBILITY

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The Mansfield Independent School District is committed to providing a web presence that is accessible to as many users as possible, including individuals with disabilities.

Web accessibility means providing equal access for all. An accessible website is one that can be navigated and understood, regardless of disability. Making your website accessible means applying specific web development standards.

To ensure webpages are created and maintained to serve the largest possible audience, we are required by law to be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1998 (29 U.S.C. § 794 (d)).

Section 508 is an amendment to the U.S. Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that requires federal agencies to make their electronic and information technology accessible to people with disabilities. The portion of Section 508 which specifically relates to websites is under Subpart B, 1194.22.

In order for a federal agency to comply with Section 508, it must adhere to the sixteen provisions listed within the amendment - [https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-section-508-standards/section-508-standards#subpart\\_b](https://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/communications-and-it/about-the-section-508-standards/section-508-standards#subpart_b).

In addition, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 2.0) were created to give website developers and managers the technical guidelines needed to ensure that web content is accessible. Within WCAG 2.0, there are twelve guidelines that include testing criteria to determine the level of compliance on a website. Level A (minimum) are the most basic web accessibility features, Level AA (mid-range) deal with the biggest and most common barriers for disabled users and Level AAA (highest) indicates full compliance with all WCAG requirements. Level AAA is not required as a general policy because it is not possible to satisfy all success criteria in this level for some content.

### **WCAG 2.0 Guidelines**

To provide an online environment that is accessible to as many users as possible, Mansfield Independent School District will reference WCAG 2.0 guidelines as benchmarks to accessibility for all new and/or modified online content.

In applying specific web development standards, the following four principles (along with guidelines and success criteria) have been put into place to lay the foundation necessary for anyone to access and use web content.

1. Perceivable - Users must be able to perceive the information being presented (it can't be invisible to all of their senses)
  - Provide [text alternatives](#) for non-text content.
  - Provide **captions and other alternatives** for multimedia.
  - Create content that can be [presented in different ways](#), including by assistive technologies, without losing meaning.
  - Make it easier for users to [see and hear content](#).
2. Operable - Users must be able to operate the interface (the interface cannot require interaction that a user cannot perform)
  - Make all functionality available from a [keyboard](#).
  - Give users [enough time](#) to read and use content.
  - Do not use content that causes [seizures](#).
  - Help users [navigate and find content](#).
3. Understandable - Users must be able to understand the information as well as the operation of the user interface (the content or operation cannot be beyond their understanding)
  - Make text [readable and understandable](#).
  - Make content appear and operate in [predictable](#) ways.
  - Help users [avoid and correct mistakes](#).

4. Robust - Users must be able to access the content as technologies advance (as technology and user agents evolve, the content should remain accessible)
  - Maximize [compatibility](#) with current and future user tools.

More information can be obtained about web accessibility at WebAIM Introduction to Web Accessibility (<http://webaim.org/intro/>) and Web Accessibility Initiative (W3C) – Getting Started with Web Accessibility (<https://www.w3.org/WAI/gettingstarted/>).

## DOCUMENT ACCESSIBILITY

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Document accessibility refers to making any linked files on a website compliant by referencing WCAG 2.0 guidelines as benchmarks to accessibility.

There are an array of file types (Word documents, PowerPoint slideshows, Excel files, etc), but in most cases, all of these files are converted to a portable document file (PDF) before being placed on a website. This conversion ensures, regardless of the software installed on the user's device, the document will be able to be viewed.

In general, though, PDFs on a website aren't great practice for a whole slew of reasons — they are not automatically screen-reader friendly (non-ADA compliant), they are not mobile-friendly (require users to pinch and zoom) and they can cause slow load times (especially larger PDF files). However, some websites are filled with document links.

### ***Minimizing the need for creating accessible documents***

Before you add your next document as a link on a website, ask yourself — *Can this same information be posted as webpage content?* If the answer is yes, then take your content and transfer the information onto the webpage.

In most cases, PDFs can easily be turned into website content which creates a better user experience. Use the web editor to format your content accordingly for easy viewing and scanning.

If you would like to provide a printable version of your document after transferring the contents to webpage copy, you can now upload the file without having to make it accessible. When the full contents of the document were added as webpage content, you created an accessible environment for users with disabilities. Therefore, you can now use the document link as an added feature or visual aid without having to make it accessible under WCAG 2.0 guidelines.

### ***Tools for making documents accessible***

If you need to use a document link AND the full contents of the document will not be added onto the webpage, it should be made accessible by referencing WCAG 2.0 guidelines as benchmarks.

For example, if you have a field trip form that requires users to fill out sections and/or add signatures, then convert this document to a PDF that can be downloaded and printed when a web-based form cannot be used. In this instance, you will need to follow guidelines for making the document compliant.

There is no known tool that will automatically make a document compliant, but you can use accessibility features within [Acrobat Pro](#) and [Microsoft](#) programs to make your documents accessible. Adobe Acrobat software indicates the problems with a document through an accessibility checker. The end user is then responsible for reviewing, identifying and fixing any issues with the document.

It is important to keep in mind that accessibility not only refers to fixing type, headings and color contrast. There are other things that must be taken into consideration. Things that computer-generated software cannot do on its own.

The Texas Department of Health and Human Resources has a great checklist for ensuring PDFs are compliant under the latest standards at <https://www.hhs.gov/web/section-508/making-files-accessible/checklist/pdf/index.html>. Please review this list, in addition to using the accessibility features within the programs you use, to make your document compliant to the maximum extent possible before it is added to your website.

## VIDEO ACCESSIBILITY

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Multimedia should be produced and delivered in ways that ensure that all members of our audience can access their content.

Mansfield ISD will reference WCAG 2.0 as benchmarks to accessibility by captioning (all video), transcribing (all audio files and district-level video) and delivering our multimedia in an accessible media format.

### ***Captions & Transcripts***

Captions are on-screen text of audio content synchronized with a video so that persons with hearing impairments can view the sounds being presented as the video plays. Primarily intended for those who cannot hear the audio, captioning can also be helpful for those who can hear audio content and those who may not be fluent in the spoken language.

Captions on all MISD video should be synchronized (appear at approximately the same time that audio would be available), equivalent (equal to that of the spoken word) and accessible (attainable and readily available to those who need it).

Transcripts are downloadable text files of web audio or video that captures all the spoken word along with additional descriptions, explanations or comments, like laughter or who is speaking. Transcripts allow anyone that cannot access content from the multimedia file, due to accessibility or technical issues, to read a text transcript instead.

Transcripts have a wide variety of uses. Users can quickly scan or search multimedia content without having to listen or watch an entire audio or video file and deaf/blind users can download transcripts for conversion to braille.

Transcripts will be included with all district-level video and any audio-only files.

### ***Producing accessible multimedia files***

The district primarily uses YouTube for hosting videos. YouTube auto generates captions using a few different formats. The auto-generated captions are not always 100% accurate and must be manually corrected in order to meet ADA compliancy.

For all *non-live* multimedia, captions will be provided upon posting and transcripts (district-level video only) will be made available within 24 hours of posting. Non-live *audio files* shall include transcripts upon posting to the website. For all *live* multimedia, captions (for video) and transcripts (audio and district-level video) will be provided within 72 hours of the live recording.

## THIRD-PARTY CONTENT

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Mansfield ISD uses a variety of third-party vendors to provide content on the website. While MISD has no immediate control over the functional components of these websites, if necessary, MISD will encourage accessibility, introduce suppliers to accessibility solutions, and, if possible, migrate content to accessible MISD-controlled websites.

If issues are reported and/or uncovered through our digital accessibility platform, MISD will take measures to alert the third party of the issue and seek remediation. The district may also decide to seek services from comparable vendors with established accessibility processes on par with those adopted and maintained by the district.

## REPORTING INACCESSIBILITY

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In the event constituents need to address or report an item that does not accommodate individuals with disabilities, reports should be made through the OCR-approved, online web accessibility form found on every page of the website. MISD will actively seek to provide an accessible replacement of said item or an equally effective alternative.

A District employee, student/parent or member of the public may file a formal grievance under Section 504 and Title II related to accessibility of the District website in accordance with [District Policy DGBA \(LOCAL\)](#), [District Policy FNG \(LOCAL\)](#), and [District Policy GF \(LOCAL\)](#).

## APPROPRIATE CONTENT & COPYRIGHT ISSUES

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Mansfield ISD is a public entity; therefore, web managers must be careful to avoid including inappropriate content on their pages. Appropriate links are those that are relevant to the subject matter and enhance the users' experience.

MISD web servers are for educational use only. Site content should provide information and promote only district and campus-endorsed activities as outlined in the [MISD Acceptable Use Policy](#).

If you are ever concerned about whether or not something is appropriate, it is a good idea to consult with your principal and/or MISD Web Services before making a post.

### **Political Lobbying**

The use of a webpage for political lobbying activities is prohibited. Engaging in political fundraising or other political activities is also prohibited. Webpages must not contain political or lobbying messages.

## **Objectionable or Abusive Material**

Webpages may not include access to or contain any objectionable, obscene, defamatory, abusive, profane, sexually-oriented, threatening, harassing, offensive or illegal material.

## **Copyright Issues**

The purpose of copyright (Title 17, U.S. Code) is to protect the right of authors to control the reproduction of their work. Permission must be obtained from the owner of any work that exists in a tangible medium that can be reproduced, including (but not limited to) photos, video, slide presentations, images of art, audio recordings and material found on the Internet.

The following guidelines apply to written content images and links published or intended for publication on the Mansfield ISD website.

- All copyrighted material requires written permission to be republished or must be used in accordance with the fair use code as provided in copyright law.
- Credit lines and bylines must be used for all copyrighted material where appropriate. If no guidelines are provided for credit lines, a standard credit line should be used (i.e., Courtesy John Doe).

## **Fair Use Exceptions**

Fair use is a legal doctrine that promotes freedom of expression by permitting the unlicensed use of copyright-protected works in certain circumstances. [Section 107 of the Copyright Act](#) provides the statutory framework for determining whether something is a fair use and identifies certain types of uses—such as criticism, comment, news reporting, teaching, scholarship and research—as examples of activities that may qualify as fair use. Section 107 calls for consideration of the following four factors in evaluating a question of fair use. Not all four points must be satisfied, but the factors favoring fair use must outweigh the factors favoring obtaining permission.

1. *Purpose and character of the use, including whether the use is of a commercial nature or is for nonprofit educational purposes* - Courts look at how the party claiming fair use is using the copyrighted work, and are more likely to find that nonprofit educational and noncommercial uses are fair. This does not mean, however, that all nonprofit education and noncommercial uses are fair and all commercial uses are not fair; instead, courts will balance the purpose and character of the use against the other factors below. Additionally, “transformative” uses are more likely to be considered fair. Transformative uses are those that add something new, with a further purpose or different character, and do not substitute for the original use of the work.
2. *Nature of the copyrighted work* - This factor analyzes the degree to which the work that was used relates to copyright’s purpose of encouraging creative expression. Thus, using a more creative or imaginative work (such as a novel, movie or song) is less likely to support a claim of a fair use than using a factual work (such as a technical article or news item). In addition, use of an unpublished work is less likely to be considered fair.
3. *Amount and substantiality of the portion used in relation to the copyrighted work as a whole* - Under this factor, courts look at both the quantity and quality of the copyrighted material that was used. If the use includes a large portion of the copyrighted work, fair use is less likely to be found; if the use employs only a small amount of copyrighted material, fair use is more likely. That said, some courts have found use of an entire work to be fair under certain circumstances. And in other contexts, using even a small amount of a copyrighted work was determined not to be fair because the selection was an important part—or the

“heart”—of the work.

4. *Effect of the use upon the potential market for or value of the copyrighted work* - Here, courts review whether, and to what extent, the unlicensed use harms the existing or future market for the copyright owner’s original work. In assessing this factor, courts consider whether the use is hurting the current market for the original work (for example, by displacing sales of the original) and/or whether the use could cause substantial harm if it were to become widespread.

The ease with which we are able to access information via the Internet, duplicate and then disseminate that information makes it easy to inadvertently violate copyright law. Be careful to consider the following before using someone else’s work:

- Who owns the work?
- Do I have/need permission to use this work? Can I use this work under the Fair Use provision?
- What limitations/restrictions are there on using this work?

## COMMERCIAL & EXTERNAL LINKS

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Commercial and external links are only allowed in compliance with the Mansfield ISD Policy. Links must comply with [Board Policy GKB \(LOCAL\)](#), which states:

### PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

School facilities shall not be used to advertise, promote, sell tickets, or collect funds for any nonschool-related purpose without prior approval of the Superintendent or designee.

### ADVERTISING

For purposes of this policy, “advertising” shall mean a communication designed to attract attention or patronage by the public or school community and communicated through means under the control of the District in exchange for consideration to the District.

“Advertising” does not include public recognition of donors or sponsors who have made contributions, financial or otherwise, to the District or school support organizations.

Advertising shall be accepted solely for the purpose of generating revenue for the District and not for the purpose of establishing a forum for communication. The District shall retain final editorial authority to accept or reject submitted advertisements in a manner consistent with the First Amendment. The District shall retain the authority to determine the size and location of any advertising. The District shall also reserve the right to reject advertising that is inconsistent with federal or state law, Board policy, District or campus regulations, or curriculum, as well as any content the District determines has a reasonable likelihood of exposing the District to controversy, litigation, or disruption.

Acceptance of advertising shall not constitute District approval or endorsement of any product, service, organization, or issue referenced in the advertising, nor shall acceptance of advertising from a vendor determine whether the District will purchase goods or services from the vendor through the District’s formal procurement process.

All other commercials, commercial transactions or advertisements are prohibited on school sites.

Curriculum-based educational links, including commercial links, should be allowed as approved by the principal or department director.

Parent Teacher Associations (PTA), Parent Teacher Organizations (PTO) and booster clubs will be allowed to link external websites to campus sites. Any submission created by a non-district employee must be submitted to the

Web Services Director and/or campus principal for approval. The submission can be on portable media (CD, portable disk drive) or as a URL (Website address) sent via e-mail for review. A disclaimer must accompany each of these links explaining that MISD is not responsible for the content of the site.

Links may be removed at the District's discretion if material fails to meet the guidelines outlined in this document and will be reinstated once the external site is updated and sent for review and receives approval.

## WRITING FOR THE WEB

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Writing for the web is very different from writing for print. Users want to find what they are looking for as quickly and easily as possible. With that in mind, content has to be the heart of and most important part of your website. Include and arrange your material in ways that best suit your audience and will reinforce your site's credibility.

- Good web writing should be concise, clear and written for how people search for information.
  - Users don't read; they SCAN.
  - Cut unnecessary words from your content. Longer sentences are usually common because the writer uses several words where one (or none) will do.
  - Write in an inverted pyramid style, with the most important information in the first few sentences.
- Grab and go - Visitors come to websites to satisfy goals, to do tasks and to get answers to questions.
  - Give people only what they need.
  - A good mantra for the web is less is more.
- Readability – Make sure your pages are easy to read. Facilitate scanning with subheads, bullet points, lists and captions.
  - Visitors won't know what great content you have if they can't read it.
  - Some factors to consider are font size and color, website background, white space and alignment of text. Style sheets have been created to help with this and enforce consistency across sites.
- Good web writing is like a conversation. Write in active voice MOST of the time.
  - Active sentences help people grab information quickly and easily.
  - Sentences in active voice show ownership and tell readers what to do.
    - *Active Voice:*
      - The school board made the decision March 20.
      - The customer must fill out the form.
    - *Passive Voice:*
      - The form must be filled out by the customer.
      - The decision was made March 20.
- Use words that your visitors use. Don't try to sound impressive by using big words.
  - Define jargon for users (Ex. - Skyward vs. Student Information System)
  - Write out acronyms (Ex. - ELL vs. English Language Learner)
- Avoid spelling errors and always proofread your work.
  - Typographical and spelling errors weaken your credibility and send people away from your site.

- Read your content out loud. If you hesitate, stumble or have to take too many breaths in one sentence, rewrite!
  - Use dictionaries, handbooks and a style guide. Don't mislead, misinform or annoy your visitors by misspelling words or using words incorrectly.
  - Run the spell checker, but don't rely on it.
  - Ask a colleague to review your work before publishing it live.
- Keep pages updated. Setup a regular maintenance schedule for updating, maintaining and archiving your content.
  - When possible, add additional content to a new page vs. linking to a PDF.
    - Research shows that website visitors prefer to read HTML pages over PDF.
    - If you are distributing material that you expect people to print, PDF may be the way to go.
    - In some cases, the best solution is to offer both PDF and HTML versions of your web information.

## HELPFUL DESIGN ELEMENTS

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- Use space effectively. Too little space can make information very difficult to skim. Too much space can mislead people about whether the page is finished.
- Keep paragraphs short; break text into small chunks. On the web, a one-sentence paragraph is fine.
- Turn sentences into more visual forms, like lists and tables.
- Visitors are searching the web on smaller devices; mainly mobile phones. Panel design is very common with responsive websites because visitors have become accustomed to scrolling.
  - Though "above the fold" is no longer a rule of thumb for web copy, it is still important to properly organize your content and keep as much of it as you can visible on the page without having to scroll.
  - When possible, keep content to two screens (1 – ½ printed pages). If you exceed, have a good reason and make it easy to scan and navigate.
- Avoid writing in ALL CAPS. Use all capitals for a single word or short phrases in specific circumstances where people expect it.
  - Use normal sentences for important information. If you put an entire paragraph in capital letters to make people pay attention, you will most likely achieve the opposite.
- Don't underline anything but links. Most people assume anything that is underlined is a link, no matter what color it is.
- Use italics sparingly. Italics work as a light form of emphasis and to show a book title. Don't use italics for headings and entire paragraphs.

- Provide good contrast between text and backgrounds. Keep the background clear so that text is readable. You defeat your purpose if you make the page hard to see and text hard to read.
- Use the stylesheet provided for all content on your webpages, not your own fonts and styles. This will help maintain a consistent look and feel across all pages of the website and will be enforced to ensure we maintain WCAG 2.0 Level AA compliance for web accessibility.

## USING LISTS AND TABLES

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A great way to write web content that is easy to read and scan without losing essential meaning is to use list and tables.

### Bulleted Lists

- Use lists to make information easy to grab. If you want to tell people about several items, set them out as a list instead of a paragraph.
- Keep most lists short.
  - Short list (5-10 items) is necessary for unfamiliar information.
  - Long lists may be okay with familiar information. (Ex. – An alphabetical listing of the 50 states.)

### Numbered Lists

- Use numbered lists for instructions. Instructions imply sequence.
- Turn paragraphs into steps where possible.
- Don't number list items if they are not steps. People might get confused.

### Tables

- Tables should only be used for tabular content; not for layout purposes.
- Use tables when you have numbers to compare.
- Keep tables simple. Two-column tables fit easily on a web page.
- Format tables so that people focus on the information and not the lines.
  - *Don't* put thick lines between columns or between the rows in a table.
  - *Don't* center text.
  - *Do* make the lines between columns lighter than the lines between rows.
  - *Do* eliminate lines altogether and use shading on alternate rows.

## IMAGES AND GRAPHICS

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Photos and graphics are an excellent way to manage your content, add visual interest to pages and clarify concepts. They should also reflect the district's diverse community and provide an accurate representation of the district, school or program.

When photos are submitted that are of poor quality, use the situation as a teaching opportunity. Communicate your concern or reluctance about the submitted material (i.e. - acknowledging a photo is out of focus; a subject is too far away) and ask for additional photos or several options when photos are submitted.

While great graphics will enhance a page, they will not make up for poor content. Remember, the focus of your web page should be your content, so use and select your images wisely.

- GIF, PNG and JPEG are the most common formats for web graphics.
  - JPEGs work better for photos.
  - GIFs and PNGs are great for graphics.
- Obtain permission to post a photo before uploading it to your campus website. For the safety of all Mansfield ISD students, do NOT publish:
  - Personal contact information, including home address, phone number.
  - Student's photo and name *if permission has been withheld* by a parent or guardian. This information is obtained during registration and can be accessed in Skyward by your school PEIMS/Data Clerk. Request a copy of all students who opt-out of photos.
- Avoid the use of clip art that looks like caricatures or cartoons. They tend to detract from your credibility.
- Do not use animated images or blinking text.
  - Movement is eye-catching and distracts the visitor from their ultimate goal – searching for information.
  - It could have adverse effects on people with disabilities.
- Use animation only to help explain the content. Animation should support and clarify content, not distract or annoy.
- Don't use so much space for pictures that critical content gets shoved down or aside.
- Add alternative text to every photo. The alt attribute provides alternative information for an image if a user cannot view it due to a slow connection, an error in the source code or if the user requires the use of a screen reader.
- Always be aware of the size of your files and the amount of time it takes to load the page.

## LINKS

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Navigation is critical within a website. Links should be checked on a regular basis to ensure they are accurate and still work.

- Pages with external links should include the following (or similar) disclaimer:

*Mansfield ISD is not responsible for the content on external sites or servers.*

- Make the link meaningful – Not just [Click here](#).

- Embedded links in the body of the text should describe what it links to, rather than something non-descriptive. (For example, you should say, “contact us” rather than “click here”.)
  - [Click here](#) is not necessary. Most web users today assume that something that looks like a link is a link.
  - Links like [More](#) are not enough and give no clue about what will come up if we click on them.
- When referring to an external link, you should list the name of the site, page or link, rather than the full URL.
    - For example in the sentence, “Our [district website](#) is the ‘public face’ of the school district...” the word district website links to <http://www.mansfieldisd.org>.
  - Don’t make NEW program and product names into links by themselves.
    - Cute or made-up program names (Ex. PERKS) that are known only by the people in your organization could be meaningless to visitors.
    - Start with a descriptive link that is meaningful for site visitors followed in parentheses by your name. Ex. – MISD Employee Discount Program (PERKS).

## FONTS AND HEADINGS

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Within your website, the font type, size and all other text formats are applied from a style sheet. This creates consistency throughout all the sections of the website allowing you to concentrate on the content rather than being concerned about the presentation.

- Do not use multiple fonts on your pages. The font face determined by the style sheet is the default font for all webpages.
- Headings improve the look of your pages and allow visitors to scan for relevant information. Break up your text with headings; start by outlining your content.
- Keep to no more than two levels of headings below the page title. You have less room to work with than on paper, so you can’t have as deep a hierarchy.

### Page Title

### Heading Level 1

### Heading Level 2

### Paragraph

- Use heading levels strictly for headings on your page. Headings should never be used to enlarge normalized text on your website. If text needs to stand out on a page, use bold or italics. If text needs to be enlarged for user preference, the visitor can [manually increase and decrease text size within the browser](#).

## DOCUMENT FILE NAMING

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Just like paper files, electronic files need to be well-organized and labeled correctly so that they are easily identifiable and accessible. Efficient management of electronic records begins with accurate file naming. The following file-naming convention incorporates best practices in electronic records management:

- Do not use the following special characters in a file name:

! " # % & ' \* + , ; < > = ? @ [ ] ^ ` { } |

These characters are used frequently in an electronic environment, but may result in an error when using it as file name on the web.

- Use dashes and underscores instead of periods and spaces. Periods already have a specific function in a file name, which is to tell the computer program where the file-name extension begins. Every space in a file name is translated to "%20" in a web address.
  - *Example:* "MISD Web Style Guide.pdf" will become "MISD%20Web%20Style%20Guide.pdf" [WRONG] in the link address when spaces are used. Use dashes or underscores instead, "MISD-Web-Style-Guide.pdf" [CORRECT].
- File names can be a combination of upper and lower case or all lower case. The use of a combination of upper and lower case may eliminate the need to use dashes and underscores.
  - *Example:* "MISD Web Style Guide.pdf" [WRONG] could be "MISDWebStyleGuide.pdf" [CORRECT] when spaces are removed between the words.
- Generally, about 25 characters is a sufficient length to capture enough descriptive information for naming a record.
- When including dates, use consistent formatting. Develop a standard naming convention to be used and keep it consistent.
  - *Example:* NewsletterSept17.pdf, NewsletterNov17, NewsletterJan18.pdf
- Keep it uniform. The most important rule of file-naming is to be consistent.

## WEB ACCESSIBILITY BEST PRACTICES

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Here's a few rules to remember when working with web content and making information accessible for all. By no means is this an exhaustive list, but it should address some of the more common mistakes.

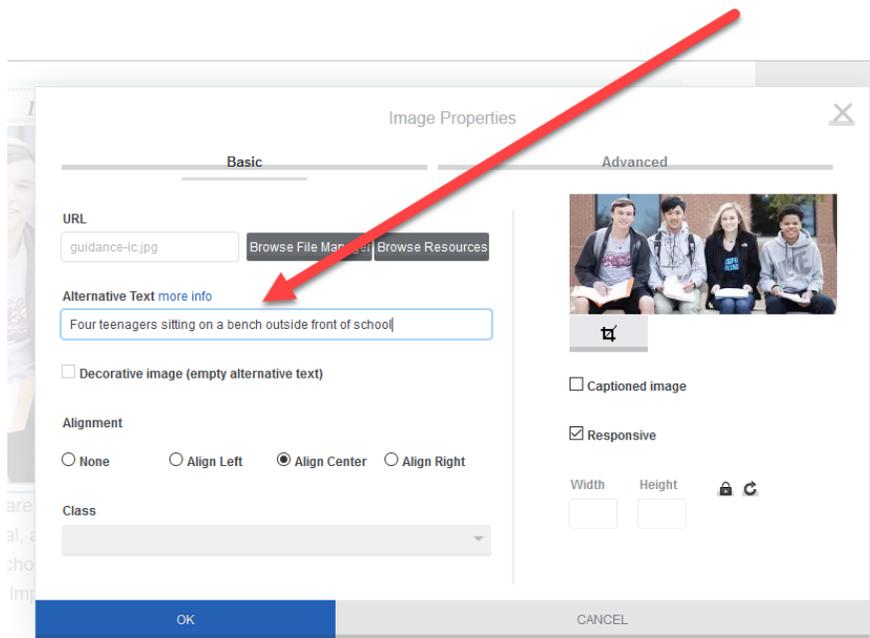
1. Add ALT Text to Images
2. Use Paste as Plain Text
3. Save Headings for True Headings
4. Create Less PDFs, More Actual Content
5. Make Links Descriptive
6. Provide Captions and Transcripts for Videos

## 1. Add ALT Text to Images

Alternative text (ALT Text) provides a way for screen reader technology to "read" non-text information within your webpage. Every image on your website needs to have ALT text, unless it is decorative.

Decorative images are images added for "looks" that do not convey meaningful information. If your webpage contains images or markings that only add visual interest, you do not need to add an image description.

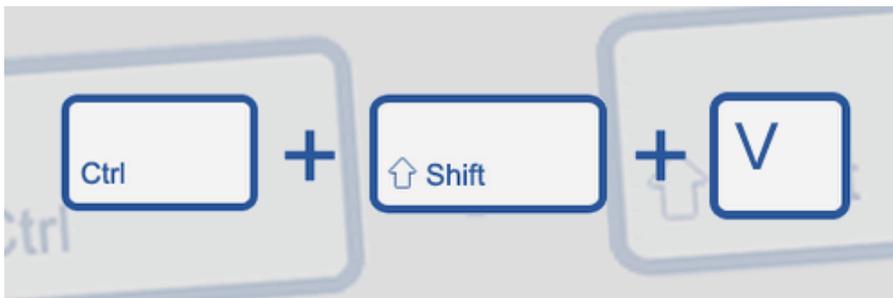
Keep in mind, adding alternative text is really a matter of personal interpretation. Because of this, it is one of the easiest accessibility principles to learn but one of the hardest to master.



## 2. Use Paste as Plain Text

Use the stylesheet provided on your website, not your own fonts. In order to accomplish this, you must ALWAYS use "Paste as Plain Text" (CTRL+SHIFT+V) prior to pasting text from other sources to your website.

If the text keeps its formatting, it is NOT in plain text mode. Delete it and paste the text again using the keyboard combination CTRL+SHIFT+V. The shift key is replaced with the ALT key for Macintosh computers.

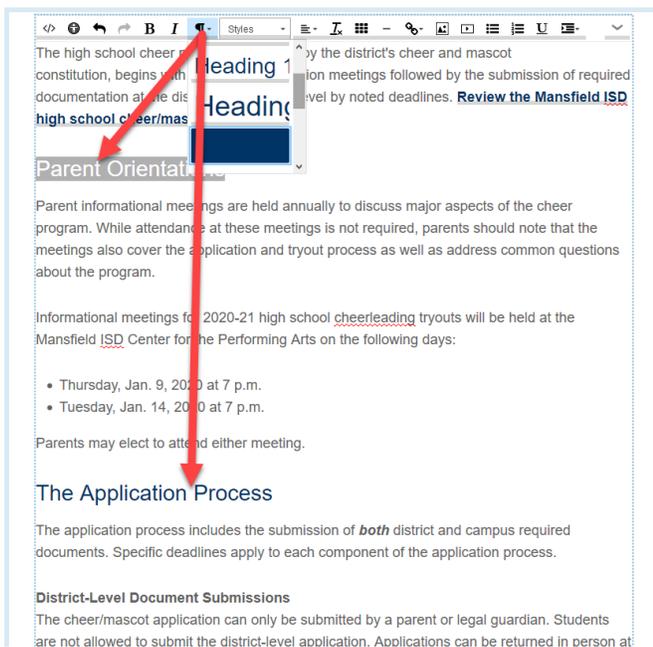


### 3. Save Headings for True Headings

Do not use headings for *anything except* true heading levels. Paragraph text should be used for most content. If you want to provide emphasis, use bold and italics, but sparingly. Remember users scan, then read content. Use bullet points and small paragraphs to structure content and only add additional headings for lists or to introduce changes in content. Creating an outline may help.

*Why?* If all content is enlarged using heading levels, screen reading technology will interpret everything on the page as a heading. Our pages are equipped with text size options in which users can enlarge or reduce font sizes for accessibility.

## High School Cheerleading



### 4. Create Less PDFs, More Actual Content

In general, though, PDFs on a website aren't great practice for a whole slew of reasons — they are not automatically screen-reader friendly (non-ADA compliant), they are not mobile-friendly (require users to pinch and zoom) and they can cause slow load times (especially larger PDF files). However, some websites are filled with document links.

Before you convert your next document to PDF, consider whether the same information can be posted directly on a webpage. In most cases, PDFs can easily be turned into website content which creates a better user experience. Use the web editor to format your content accordingly for easy viewing and scanning.

If you need to use a PDF, it should be made accessible by referencing the WCAG 2.0 guidelines described under the document accessibility section. Use the [PDF Accessibility Basics quick reference guide](http://bit.ly/AccessiblePDFs) (<http://bit.ly/AccessiblePDFs>) to get started.

## 5. Make Links Descriptive

Embedded links in the body of your content should describe what it links to, rather than something non-descriptive like “click here”.

*Why?* They are problems for screen readers which makes them non-ADA compliant or inaccessible for people with disabilities. Non-descriptive links like “click here” and “more” give no clue about what will come up if we click on them. Additionally, most web users assume that something that looks like a link is a link thus making “click here” unnecessary.

Rule of thumb — The words “click here” are usually followed by words like “to” or “for” – Use the words after that instead. For example, instead of “Click here to view the school supply list” simply put “View the school supply list” AND make the entire statement a link.



### Announcements

**Back to School 2017** - School starts Wednesday, August 16. For an overview of back-to-school information for Mansfield ISD students, [visit the Back to School 2017 webpage](#).

**Colors for Caring Mondays** - Mansfield ISD is encouraging the community to wear a color that represents a cancer that affected the life of a loved one. [Get the 2017-18 Colors for Caring Mondays schedule](#).

**Mansfield School & Family Magazine** - Get news and highlights from across the district in our quarterly magazine. [Check out the latest issue](#).

An **Attendance Zone Review** for Mansfield ISD elementary schools was conducted March 2016 in response to the annual demographic report. [Get additional information, including the board approved 2017-18 elementary attendance zone map](#).

## 6. Provide Captions & Scripts for Videos

Video accessibility is the ability for a person with a disability to understand and use an online video.

Captions, on-screen text of audio content, are required for all videos prior to being posted online. Transcripts, downloadable text files of web audio or video, will be provided for any audio-only files as well as all district-level videos.

The most popular caption files are .SRT files, text files that are used along with video data. SRT stands for SubRip Subtitle File. These files hold video subtitle information like the start and end timecode of the text and the sequential number of subtitles. Caption files can also be downloaded and used for any social media uploads.

**For additional help with captioning your videos, contact Sergio Almendariz, Multimedia and Marketing Coordinator, at 817-299-6347.**

When creating captions for video files, the following two options are recommended:

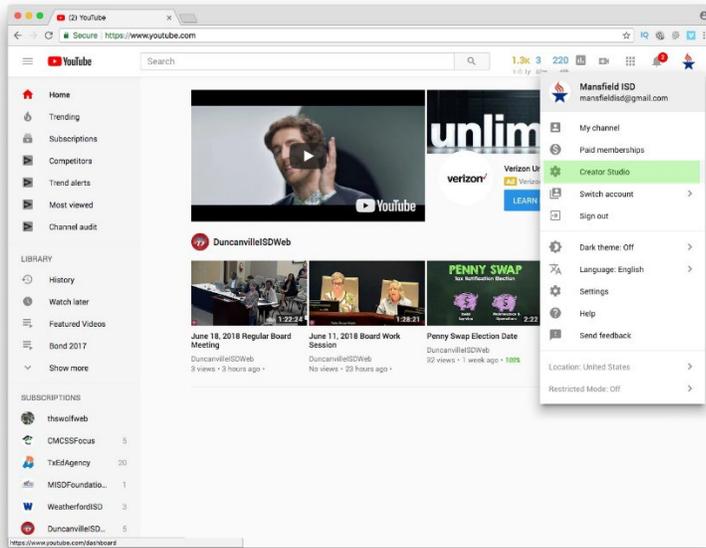
1. YouTube - Your district Google account can be used to access and begin using the YouTube channel.

-OR-

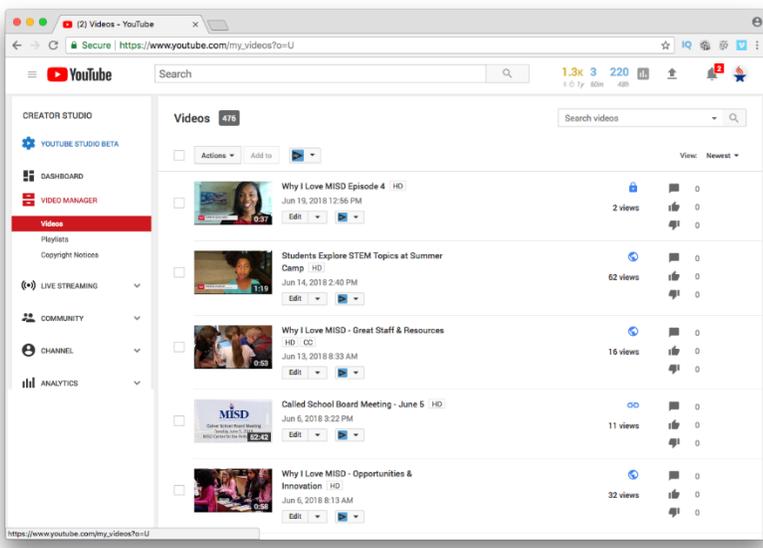
2. Outsource – If you are unable to do-it-yourself, we recommend [Rev.com](https://www.rev.com) as an alternative. Rev charges \$1 per minute of video to caption files in any platform.

## Editing Captions via YouTube Creator Studio

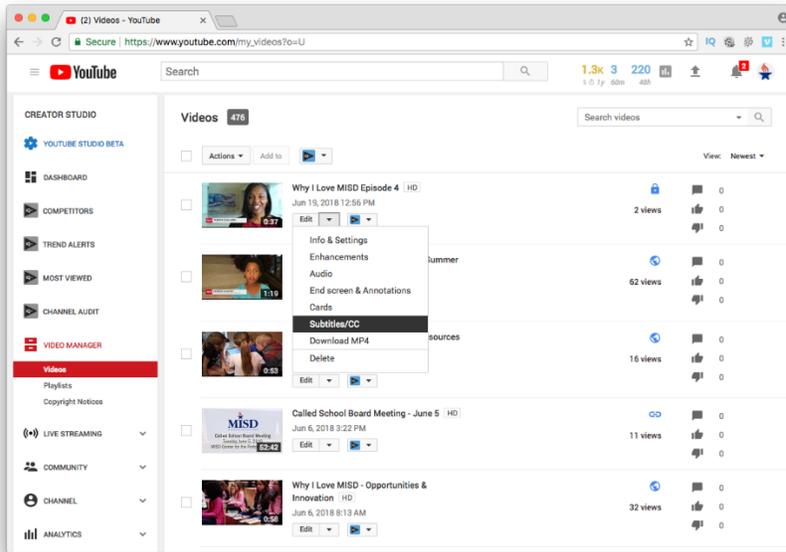
1. Sign in to YouTube and go to Creator Studio



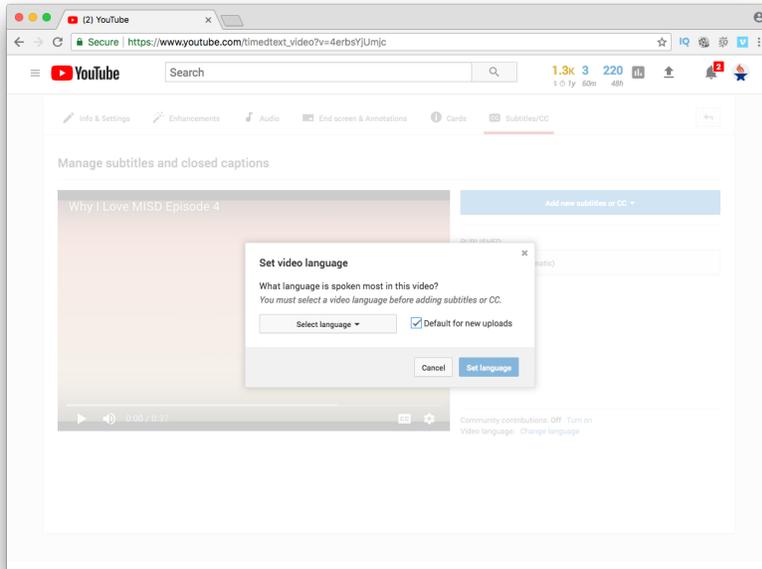
2. Select Video Manager -> Videos



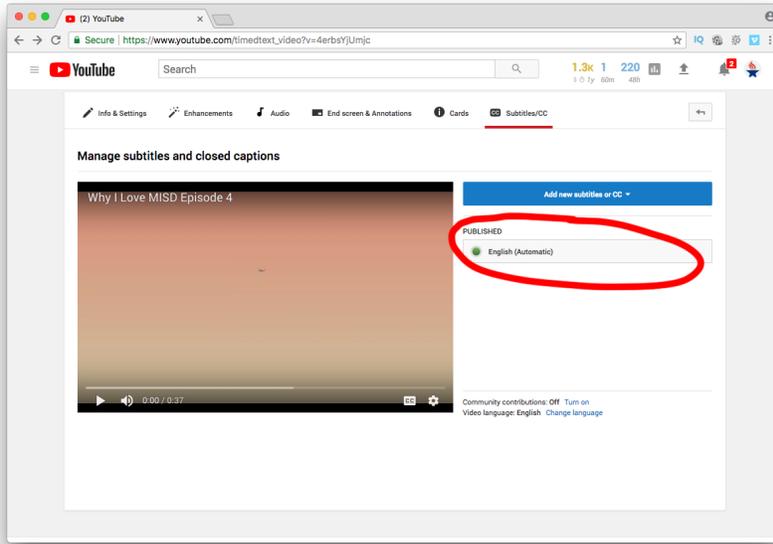
3. Click Drop Down Menu next to “Edit” for the video you want to add captions too. Select “Subtitles/CC”.



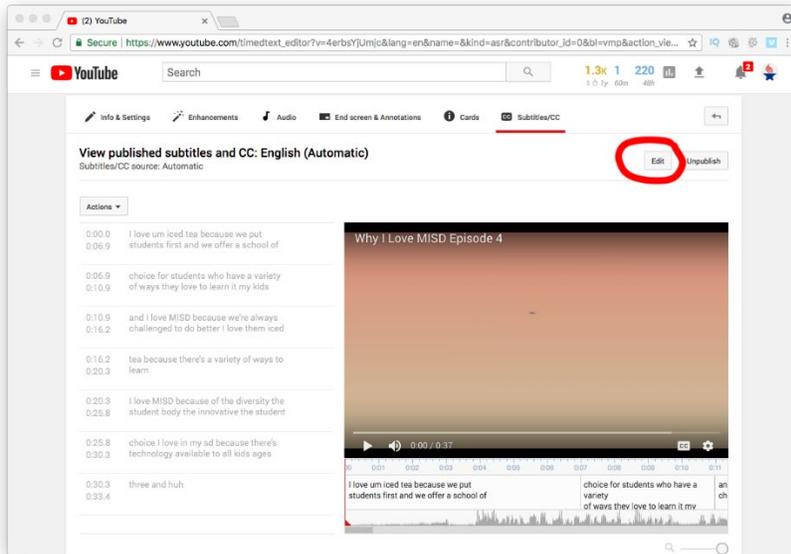
4. If you haven't selected a default language for your videos, do so now by selecting “English” and check the “Default for new uploads” box.



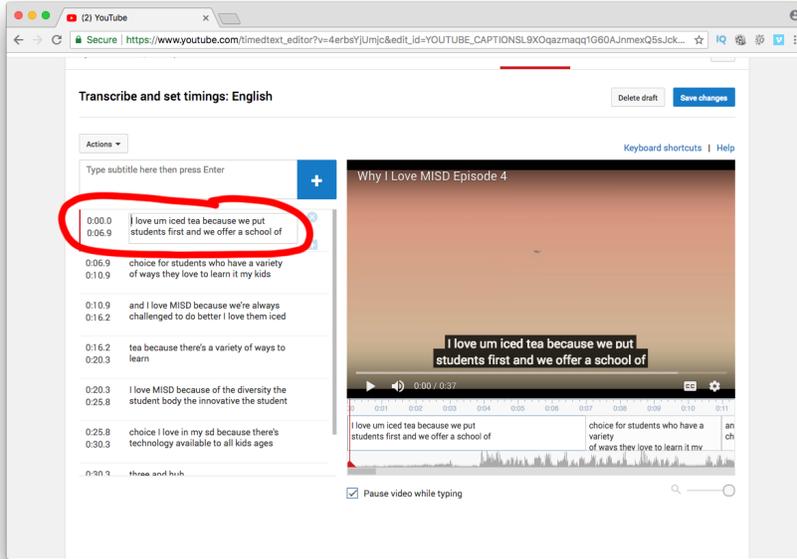
5. Click on "English (Automatic)"



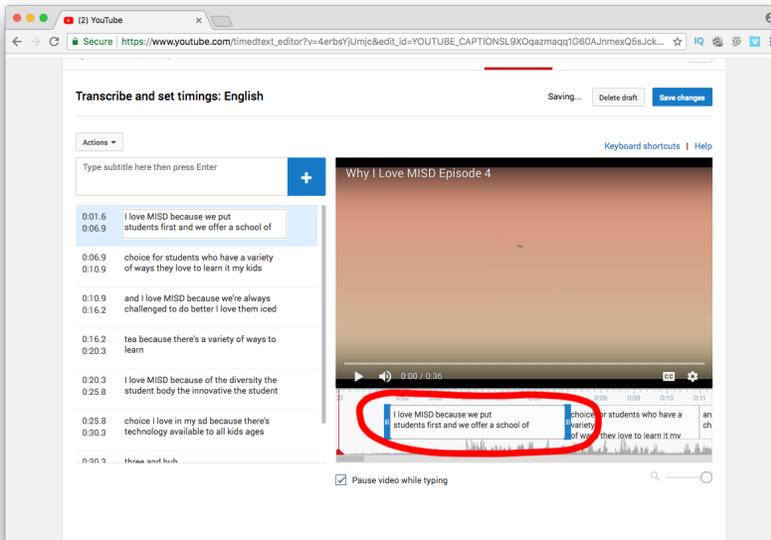
6. Click Edit



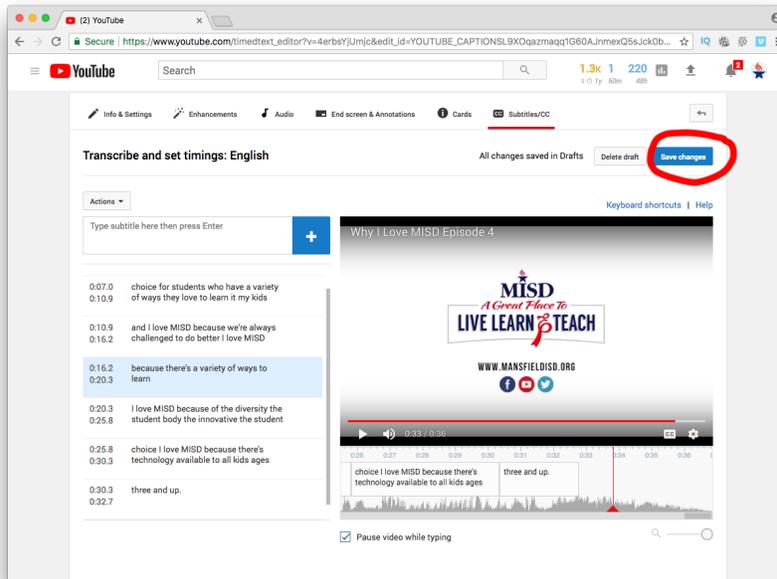
7. Correct the text in boxes...in this example, "MISD" came across as "um iced tea". So select "um iced tea" and change it to "MISD".



8. To extend the timings of the captions, drag the boxes on the right...



9. Once finished, click "Save Changes".



10. You're all done! YouTube takes you to a screen with two choices - the automatic version and the English version that you edited.

### **To Download Caption Files (for use with social media uploads):**

1. Go to your Video Manager.
2. Next to the video you want to edit captions for, click Edit > Subtitles and CC.
3. Select the caption track you want to download.
4. Click the Actions drop-down menu
5. Click the captions file format you need. We suggest SRT.
6. Your browser will download a file containing the captions track.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

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This is your school's opportunity to inform the public and share the good news about how your campus is making a positive impact on children and education.

Make your position known to everyone at your school. Send a staff email about your new role. Explain your guidelines for posting and how you wish to receive content. Point individuals to the website through your internal communications like school intercom announcements and principal newsletters. Utilize peers to help you edit and proofread your content before publishing it live to your website. Collaborate with your principal for additional ideas.

As always, Web Services is available to assist. For training or assistance with web-related issues, contact:

Alicia Alford  
Director of Web Services  
817-299-6348  
[AliciaAlford@misdmail.org](mailto:AliciaAlford@misdmail.org)