

Creating Your Class Webpage

Having a webpage to many is like rocket science and to others is as easy as typing on a word document. Regardless of where you stand on the issue, a website can be used as an effective tool in the classroom. This document will give you some resources to put together a classroom website using Schoolwires that meets the needs of parents, students and teachers.

Brainstorm

Take some time and brainstorm. You may want to do this with members of your department, fellow teachers or Team members. Collaborating with others will make the process easier and lend continuity to your finished product.

- ***Who is your audience?***
- ***What are the goals of this website?***
- ***What elements would you like to have on your website?***

Who is your audience?

Parents and students are the primary audience. Keep the audience's needs in mind when putting together your site and determining how users will navigate your site. Think of the information you are most asked for for parents. Putting this information online will save all parties time. How about students? Will putting handouts and worksheets online save you time when students are absent? If you are not sure what to include, then just ask parents and students what they would find useful.

What are the goals of this website?

What would you like to see change as a result of having this site? There can be many reasons, but here are a few examples:

Allow 24/7 access to class resources.

Reduce paper, increase organization.

Create active learning opportunities online.

More effective parent communication.

Differentiate instruction

Deciding on what you want to use on your class website can be rather challenging. What do I include? What can I do with Schoolwires? I do not know how to use Schoolwires?

The following resources will be helpful to you in this process:

Schoolwires Menu: Details some of the common functions of Schoolwires, links to training materials and application ideas for your own classroom.

Defining Your Class on the Web: Shows the varying degrees of websites you can create depending on your needs.

What elements would you like to have on your website?

You now have an idea of direction for your site. Now it is time to decide what elements, you want on your site. Create a list of elements you want to include in your website. This includes images, content, links, documents and page information. Here are just a few examples of elements:

Examples of Website Elements			
Textbook	Learning Resources	Topics/Week 1	Activities
Student Work	Photos	Events	Calendar
Class Documents	Course Descriptions	Forms/Documents	Tutorials
Videos	Newsletter	Webquests	Biographical

If you know what you want, then identifying the steps to learn how to use Schoolwires will be much easier and the whole process will go much quicker.

Here are a couple of tips to remember:

- **Keep it simple** – A website is a place for the exchange of information. It does not need to be flashy, or complex. Keeping it simple will make it more manageable.
- **Be realistic**- In the beginning, posting a quote of the day sounds like a great idea, but will this be the first thing to go when classes begin. Set manageable goals.
- **It is a process**- If you are waiting to learn everything about technology before you use it in your class, you will be waiting a long time. Identify the things that meet your goals, and master those steps. Do not feel the need to use every “bell and whistle”. (See Tip 1)
- **Talk to others**- Some of the best professional development for a teacher is just talking to each other. Look at other teacher pages, find ideas, and ask them.

If you need any help with Schoolwires or classroom ideas please feel free to contact your building’s Technology Integrator for additional support.