



ACCESSIBILITY **GUIDANCE** 2026-27



Los Angeles County
Office of Education

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INTRODUCTION

WHAT IS ADA TITLE II AND WHAT DOES IT MEAN FOR LOS ANGELES COUNTY?

Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) requires state and local government entities, including public school districts, to ensure that individuals with disabilities have equal access to programs, services and activities.

In April 2024, the U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) issued a Final Rule clarifying that:
Public entity websites and mobile applications must conform to WCAG 2.1 Level AA.

This includes the following:

- Public facing websites
- Internal websites / portals
- Digital course materials
- Learning management systems
- Mobile apps
- Digital forms
- Social media
- PDF documents
- Third-party content arranged with a public entity

COMPLIANCE DEADLINES

Public entities serving populations of 50,000 or more: April 24, 2026

Public entities serving populations under 50,000: April 24, 2027

Population is based on the public entity – not student enrollment.

EXCEPTIONS

There are some exceptions to this new web accessibility rule:

- **Archived web content** - older content that is kept only for reference, research or recordkeeping. These must be stored in a clearly identified archive section.
- **Preexisting conventional electronic documents** - older documents (like PDF's or Word files) that were created before the compliance deadline and are not actively still in use (for example: forms, applications or instructional materials).
- **Content posted by third parties (not under district control)** - if the district uses a vendor to provide services, that content is not exempt and the district is still responsible.
- **Individualized, password-protected content** - content that is specific to an individual and accessed through a login may be treated differently.
- **Preexisting social media posts** - social media content posted before the compliance deadline.

This does not remove the district's responsibility to provide accessible documents when requested.

For more details, read the [Summary of Exceptions on ada.gov's Fact Sheet](#)

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DIRECTION

FRAMEWORK

To support compliance with ADA Title II and WCAG 2.1 Level AA, the Los Angeles County Office of Education advises all school districts to take the following actions through our **A.C.C.E.S.S. Framework**:

- **ASSESS - Begin structured accessibility remediation.** Districts must begin identifying and addressing accessibility barriers within their digital content and services.
- **COMMUNICATE - Create and maintain a public digital accessibility webpage.** This page should demonstrate accessibility plans, good-faith efforts to improve and provide transparency to the public.
- **COLLECT - Establish a process for reporting and responding to accessibility barriers.** Provide an accessible method for submitting feedback (such as email or an online form) and ensure concerns are acknowledged promptly.
- **EDUCATE - Provide training to staff responsible for publishing digital content.** Districts should ensure that staff who publish digital content understand accessibility expectations.
- **SOLVE - Implement operational guidance contained in this manual.** Moving forward, districts should actively apply the practices outlined in this manual and incorporate them. Additionally, districts should solve accessibility barriers identified during reviews or reported by users.
- **SUSTAIN - Ensure new digital content is created with accessibility in mind from the beginning.** Accessibility should be treated as a continuous process, not as a one-time remediation project.

LOS ANGELES COUNTY DIRECTION

DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY TEAM

LACOE also endorses the designation or creation of a **Digital Accessibility Team** for all districts.

Because digital accessibility affects multiple areas of district operations, responsibility should not be assigned to a single individual. **A team-based approach** helps ensure accessibility is addressed across technology systems, public communications, instructional materials and administrative services.

Recommended team membership:

- **Information Technology (IT)** - responsible for website infrastructure, systems and technical remediation
- **Public Affairs and Communications** - responsible for website content, announcements and public-facing materials
- **Design (Graphic / Web / UX)** - responsible for ensuring visual design elements meet accessibility standards
- **Curriculum and Instruction** - responsible for instructional materials and classroom content provided to students
- **Instructional Technology** - responsible for digital learning platforms and educational tools
- **Student Services** - provides expertise regarding accessibility needs and assistive technology
- **Human Resources or Administrative Services** - responsible for internal documents, forms, and employee systems
- **Compliance or Legal (if available)** - supports alignment with ADA, Section 504 and Section 508

WHY THIS MATTERS

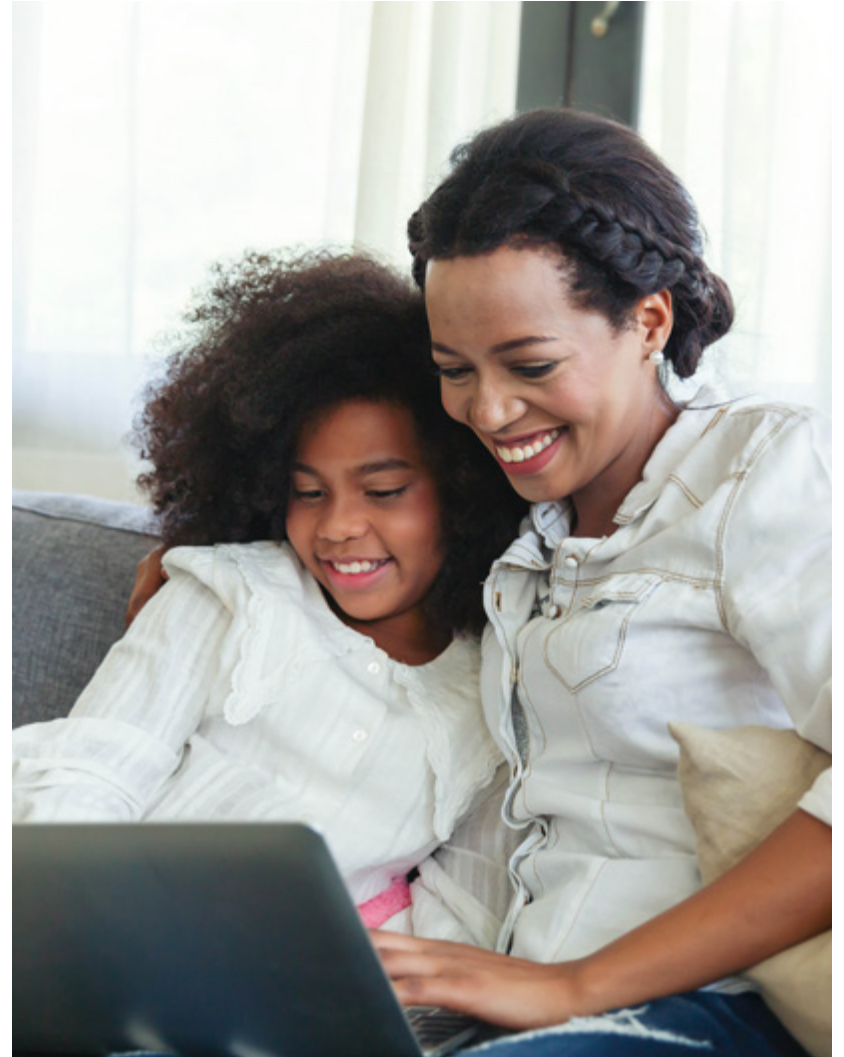
COMPLIANCE AND COMPASSION

Digital accessibility is about more than meeting legal requirements. It is about ensuring that every student, family member, staff member and community member can fully participate in the information and services provided by our schools.

We serve diverse communities with many individuals that rely on digital platforms to stay informed and engaged. When these resources are not accessible, people with disabilities may face barriers that prevent them from accessing important information or participating fully. Here are some examples of people that may be affected:

- A grandmother raising her grandson alone could not register for parent-teacher conference because the sign-up system required using a mouse and could not be navigated via keyboard only.
- A father with color blindness could not tell a school event had been canceled because the online calendar was using color alone to identify a schedule change.
- A staff member who manages a team of people who recently experienced nerve damage in both of their hands and lost the ability to use a mouse.
- A mother who is deaf missed an important update about school safety procedures because the district video announcement did not include captions.
- A student with dyslexia struggled to understand the class reading assignment because it was uploaded as a scanned image PDF that could not be read by text-to-speech tools.

Creating accessible digital content helps remove these barriers and ensures that all members of the community have **equitable access** to district resources.



WCAG

WHAT IS WCAG?

WCAG stands for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. It is the international standard for digital accessibility developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).

WCAG has three levels:

- Level A (minimum)
- Level AA (required standard under Title II)
- Level AAA (enhanced, not required)

Districts must meet Level AA – not just Level A.

Visit the [WCAG Overview page](#) for more information.

THE FOUR PRINCIPLES OF WCAG

All digital content must be:

- 1. Perceivable - Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.** This means that users must be able to perceive the information being presented (it can't be invisible to all of their senses).
- 2. Operable - User interface components and navigation must be operable.** This means that users must be able to operate the interface (the interface cannot require interaction that a user cannot perform)
- 3. Understandable - Information and the operation of user interface must be understandable.** This means that 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)
- 4. Robust - Content must be robust enough that it can be interpreted reliably by a wide variety of user agents, including assistive technologies.** This means that users must be able to access the content as technologies advance (as technologies and user agents evolve, the content should remain accessible)

If content fails one of these principles, it is not accessible.

Visit the [WCAG Introduction Page](#) to learn more about the four principles of WCAG.

GUIDANCE - INTRODUCTION

This guidance provides information to ensure that district and school websites are accessible to all users, including individuals with disabilities.

Our websites serve as a primary source of information for students, families, staff and community members. Information about enrollment, transportation, school events, board meetings and student services is often communicated through district and school websites. When this information is not accessible, individuals with disabilities may be unable to access important resources or participate fully in school activities.

Because district websites contain a wide variety of information (including text, images, documents, forms, videos and links), accessibility must be considered whenever new content is created or posted online.

ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS

At a minimum, district websites must:

1. Organize content using logical structure so information is presented in a clear order for all users
2. Use proper heading structure so screen readers can navigate content
3. Use descriptive hyperlinks that clearly indicate link destinations
4. Include alternative text (alt text) for meaningful images
5. Avoid posting image-only content that cannot be read by assistive technology
6. Meet required color contrast standards for readability
7. Do not rely on color alone to convey meaning
8. Provide captions for video content
9. Avoid automatically playing audio or video content
10. Use accessible tables when presenting data
11. Use properly labeled form fields
12. Provide clear and keyboard-accessible navigation with visible focus
13. Ensure linked documents (such as PDF's) are accessible
14. Ensure websites remain accessible on mobile devices and when text is enlarged
15. Ensure third-party tools and integrations used on district websites support accessibility

These practices help ensure that individuals using assistive technologies can access website content effectively.

The next sections will cover each of these accessibility standards in more detail. To delve even further into each requirement, each section will contain a hyperlink for more resources.

LOGICAL STRUCTURE

OVERVIEW

Organizing content using a logical structure ensures that information is presented in a clear and meaningful order for both visual users and individuals who rely on assistive technologies.

When content is not structured properly, users may experience:

- Information being read in the wrong order
- Difficulty understanding how content is organized
- Challenges locating important information
- Confusion when navigating between sections

A well-structured webpage helps all users quickly understand the purpose of the page and locate the information they need.

ACTION STEPS

Content should be organized in a clear and predictable hierarchy. This means presenting information in a sequence that makes sense, starting with the most important information and moving into supporting details.

Well-structured content typically includes:

- A clear page title
- Major sections organized with headings
- Subsections grouped under appropriate headings
- Short paragraphs that focus on one topic
- Lists used for related items
- Tables used only for data, not layout

It is important that all pages on your website follow a similar structure, as this will make the user experience more accessible moving between pages.

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.3.1: Info and Relationships](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.3.2: Meaningful Sequence](#)

LOGICAL STRUCTURE

COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

(h1 Page Title)
2026–2027 School Enrollment

(h2 Section Heading)
Enrollment Requirements

(p - Body Copy)
Proof of residency
Immunization records
Student identification

To complete enrollment for the 2026–2027 school year, families must provide several required documents. These include proof of residency, current immunization records and student identification. Providing these documents during the enrollment process helps ensure that the district can verify eligibility and place students in the appropriate school.

(h2 Section Heading)
Enrollment Deadlines

(p - Body Copy)
Priority enrollment: March 15
Open enrollment: April 1

EXPLANATION

In the compliant example, the content follows a logical order and is organized into clear sections.

In the non-compliant example, there is large block of text as section headings, body copy in bold that is acting as a header for a section, and the content jumps between unrelated topics.

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

(h1 Page Title)
2026-2027 School Enrollment

(h2 Section Heading)
Enrollment Requirements - To complete enrollment for the 2026-2027 school year, families must provide several required documents.

(p - Body Copy)
These include proof of residency, current immunization records and student identification. Providing these documents during the enrollment process helps ensure that the district can verify eligibility and place students in the appropriate school.

(h2 Section Heading)
ANNOUNCEMENT: 2026-2027 Annual Bake Sale happening on campus on April 14!

(p - Body Copy)
Don't miss out and celebrate with the school community.

(p - Body Copy)
Enrollment deadlines: (in bold text)

(h2 Section Heading)
Priority enrollment: March 15
Open enrollment: April 1

HEADINGS

OVERVIEW

Headings help organize webpage content and allow users to quickly understand how information on a page is structured.

For individuals who use screen readers, headings play a critical role in navigation. Screen readers allow users to jump between headings to locate sections of a page quickly, similar to how a sighted user might visually scan a page.

When headings are used correctly, users can:

- Understand how content is organized
- Move quickly between sections of a page
- Locate important information more easily

When headings are not used properly, screen reader users may have difficulty navigating the page or understanding how information is organized.

ACTION STEPS

Webpages should follow a clear hierarchy of headings that reflects the structure of the content.

Headings should be used in order, beginning with the main page title and continuing through sections and subsections.

Typical heading structure includes:

- <h1> - Page title
- <h2> - Main sections of the page
- <h3> - Subsections within a section
- <h4> - Additional subsections when necessary

<p> - Body copy

Each heading level should represent a clear relationship between topics on the page.

- Use the heading tools provided in the website content editor or content management system (CMS)
- Do not skip heading levels (example: going from h1 to h3 without using h2)
- Do not use bold or large text as a substitute for headings
- Ensure headings accurately describe the content that follows

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.4.6: Headings and Labels](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.4.10: Section Headings](#)

HEADINGS

COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

<h1>2026–27 School Enrollment</h1>

<h2>Enrollment Requirements</h2>

<p>Students enrolling in the district must provide proof of residency, immunization records and student identification.</p>

<h2>Enrollment Deadlines</h2>

<p>Families should be aware of the district’s enrollment timeline to ensure students are placed appropriately.</p>

<h3>Priority Enrollment</h3>

<p>Priority enrollment begins March 15 and allows families to secure placement earlier in the process.</p>

<h3>Open Enrollment</h3>

<p>Open enrollment begins April 1 and remains available while space allows.</p>

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

<h1>2026–27 School Enrollment</h1>

<h4>Enrollment Requirements</h4>

<p>Students enrolling in the district must provide proof of residency, immunization records and student identification.</p>

<h2>2026-2027 Calendar</h2>

<p>Families should be aware of the district’s enrollment timeline to ensure students are placed appropriately.

Priority enrollment begins March 15 and allows families to secure placement earlier in the process.</p>

<h3>Open Enrollment</h3>

<p>Open enrollment begins April 1 and remains available while space allows.</p>

EXPLANATION

In the compliant example, headings clearly show how information is organized and how sections relate to one another.

In the non-compliant example, headings do not accurately describe the content that follows and heading levels are skipped.

HYPERLINKS

OVERVIEW

Hyperlinks allow users to navigate between webpages, documents and online services. For many users, links are the primary way they move through a website.

Individuals who use screen readers often navigate by jumping from link to link. Screen reader software can generate a list of all links on a page so users can quickly locate the information they need. If links are vague or unclear, users may not understand where a link will take them.

Descriptive hyperlinks help ensure that all users, including those using assistive technologies, can clearly understand the purpose of a link before selecting it.

If a hyperlink opens in a new tab or window, it is considered best practice to insert a warning after the hyperlink to communicate to users that they will be navigating to new content.

ACTION STEPS

A descriptive hyperlink clearly explains the destination or purpose of the link. Users should be able to understand where the link will go without needing additional context from surrounding text.

Descriptive links typically include the name of the resource, page or document being referenced.

Best practices include:

- Using link text that clearly describes the destination
- Avoiding vague phrases such as “click here” or “read more”
- Keeping link text concise but descriptive
- Indicating when a link opens a document such as a PDF
- Ensuring links are visually distinguishable from surrounding text (bold, underlined, differing color)

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.4.4: Link Purpose In Context](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.4.9: Link Purpose \(Link Only\)](#)

HYPERLINKS

COMPLIANT EXAMPLES

(For the purposes of this example, link examples are in bold but are not clickable)

Download the Board Meeting Agenda (PDF)

View the Transportation Schedule (warning: opens in new tab)

Submit the Online Enrollment Form

Review the District Wellness Policy

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLES

(For the purposes of this example, link examples are in bold but are not clickable)

Click here

To find more details, **read more**

More information through this link!

This link takes you to the District Wellness Policy

EXPLANATION

In the compliant examples, clear information is provided about what the user will access after selecting or clicking on the hyperlink.

In the non-compliant examples, hyperlinks are vaguely worded and do not specify what the user will access after selecting or clicking on them.

IMAGES - ALTERNATIVE TEXT

OVERVIEW

Alternative text, often called “alt text,” is a short written description added to an image that explains the content or purpose of the image.

Individuals who are blind or have low vision often use screen readers to access website content. Screen readers cannot interpret images visually, so they rely on alt text to describe what the image represents.

Providing alt text ensures that users who cannot see the image can still understand the information or meaning that the image conveys.

Without alt text, important information may be completely inaccessible to users who rely on assistive technologies.

ACTION STEPS

All meaningful images in a webpage need to have proper alternative text. Otherwise, they need to be marked as “decorative” so screen readers will skip through them.

Alt text should describe the meaning or purpose of an image within the context of the webpage.

Good alt text:

- Briefly describes what the image shows
- Communicates the information the image provides
- Helps users understand why the image is included

Alt text does not need to describe every visual detail. Instead, it should focus on the important information the image conveys.

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.1.1: Non-text Content](#)

IMAGES - ALTERNATIVE TEXT

COMPLIANT EXAMPLES



Dependent on the context of the page:

(Page related to teacher student dynamic)

A teacher looks over a student's work as they write in a notebook

(Page related to proper classroom materials)

A student writes with a ballpoint pen in their notebook while teacher supervises

EXPLANATION

In the compliant examples, the alternative text helps users understand the content and purpose of the image as it relates to the page or document.

In the non-compliant examples, alternative text is vaguely worded and do not specify any content or purpose related to page or document.

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLES



Classroom scene

Teacher and student

Girl writing

A day in a 5th grade class

IMAGES - ALTERNATIVE TEXT

DECORATIVE IMAGES

Some images are used only for visual design and do not provide meaningful information.

Examples may include:

- Decorative background graphics
- Dividers or icons used purely for styling
- Repeated design elements

These images should use empty alt text (alt="") so screen readers skip them rather than announcing unnecessary content.

IMAGES CONTAINING TEXT

Avoid posting images that contain important text information, such as flyers or announcements.

Text within an image cannot be read by screen readers and may also be difficult to read for users who need to enlarge text.

Instead of uploading an image-only asset:

- Provide the information as regular webpage text
- Include the same information in the page content
- Ensure the information can be read by assistive technology

If an image containing text **must** be used, the alt text should include the important information shown in the image.

IMAGE ONLY CONTENT

OVERVIEW

Image-only content refers to images that contain important information presented as text within the image itself. Examples include flyers, announcements, schedules or forms that are uploaded as pictures instead of readable text.

Assistive technologies such as screen readers cannot interpret text that is embedded within an image. As a result, users who rely on these technologies may be unable to access the information contained in the image.

Image-only content can also create barriers for users who need to enlarge text, adjust color settings or use text-to-speech tools.

Providing information as readable text ensures that all users, including those using assistive technologies, can access the same information.

ACTION STEPS

Whenever possible, important information should be posted as readable webpage text rather than embedded in an image.

For example:

Instead of uploading an event flyer as an image, post the information directly on the webpage.

If an image containing text must be posted, the same information should also be provided in text on the page.

For example, if a flyer image is included on a webpage, the page should also contain a written description of the event details.

In addition, the image should include alternative text (alt text) that summarizes the purpose of the image.

- Post important information as readable webpage text whenever possible
- Avoid uploading flyers or announcements as images only
- Ensure information in graphics is also available as text on the page
- Add alt text to images that contain meaningful content
- Use accessible document formats when sharing detailed materials

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.1.1: Non-text Content](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.5: Images of Text](#)

IMAGE ONLY CONTENT

COMPLIANT EXAMPLES

Superintendent's Collaborative

HOME / EVENTS / [SUPERINTENDENT'S COLLABORATIVE](#)



The flyer features the logos of the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Greater Los Angeles Education Foundation. The text on the flyer reads: '2025 Superintendents' Professional Collaborative Conference', 'Bridging Policy and Practice: Shaping Education Through Leadership, Legislation and Partnership', and 'Friday, October 3'.

Event Details

2025 Superintendent's Professional Collaborative Conference

Bridging Policy and Practice: Shaping Education through Leadership, Legislation and Partnership

Friday, October 3

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLES

Superintendent's Collaborative

HOME / EVENTS / [SUPERINTENDENT'S COLLABORATIVE](#)



The flyer features the logos of the Los Angeles County Office of Education and the Greater Los Angeles Education Foundation. The text on the flyer reads: '2025 Superintendents' Professional Collaborative Conference', 'Bridging Policy and Practice: Shaping Education Through Leadership, Legislation and Partnership', and 'Friday, October 3'.

EXPLANATION

In the compliant example, all of the details in the image are present on the webpage as readable webpage text. Even though the event details are present on the webpage, the image continues to have alt text: Superintendents' Professional Collaborative Conference flyer.

In the non-compliant examples, the image stands alone without any readable webpage text.

COLOR CONTRAST

OVERVIEW

Color contrast refers to the difference in brightness between text and the background behind it. Adequate contrast ensures that text and visual elements are easy to read for all users.

Many individuals with low vision, color blindness or other visual impairments rely on sufficient contrast to distinguish text from the background. If contrast is too low, text may appear faint or blend into the background, making it difficult or impossible to read.

Meeting required color contrast standards helps ensure that website content is readable and accessible for a wide range of users.

ACTION STEPS

To meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA requirements:

- Normal text must have a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1
- Large text must have a contrast ratio of at least 3:1

Large text is generally defined as:

- 18-point font or larger, or
- 14-point bold font or larger

These contrast standards apply to text placed on colored backgrounds, images, buttons and other visual elements.

- Use dark text on light backgrounds whenever possible
- Avoid light gray text on white backgrounds
- Avoid placing text directly on complex images or patterns
- Ensure buttons, links and navigation elements have clear contrast
- Test color combinations using a contrast checking tool (please see: Resources page)

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.3: Contrast \(Minimum\)](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.11: Non-text Contrast](#)

COLOR CONTRAST

COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

Enrollment Requirements

HOME / 2026-2027 INFORMATION / **ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Priority Enrollment

Priority enrollment begins March 15 and allows families to secure placement earlier in the process.

ACCESSIBILITY DOCUMENT

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

Enrollment Requirements

HOME / 2026-2027 INFORMATION / **ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENTS**

Priority Enrollment

Priority enrollment begins March 15 and allows families to secure placement earlier in the process.

ACCESSIBILITY DOCUMENT

EXPLANATION

In the compliant example, all color combinations pass the color contrast ratio required by WCAG 2.1 Level AA.

In the non-compliant examples, color combinations do not pass the color contrast ratio. Though these color combinations look visually appealing, such as light gray on white or light red on dark red, they can be difficult to read, especially for users with low vision.

COLOR TO CONVEY MEANING

OVERVIEW

Some users cannot distinguish certain colors due to color blindness or low vision. When information is communicated only through color, these users may not be able to understand the meaning of the content.

To ensure accessibility, color should never be the only method used to communicate information.

Users should be able to understand the meaning of the content even if they cannot perceive color differences.

ACTION STEPS

To make information accessible, color should always be combined with another indicator such as text, symbols or labels.

- Avoid using color as the only indicator of meaning
- Use text labels, icons or patterns along with color
- Ensure charts and graphs include labels or legends
- Ensure form errors are not identified by color only and include written instructions for the errors

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.1: Use of Color](#)

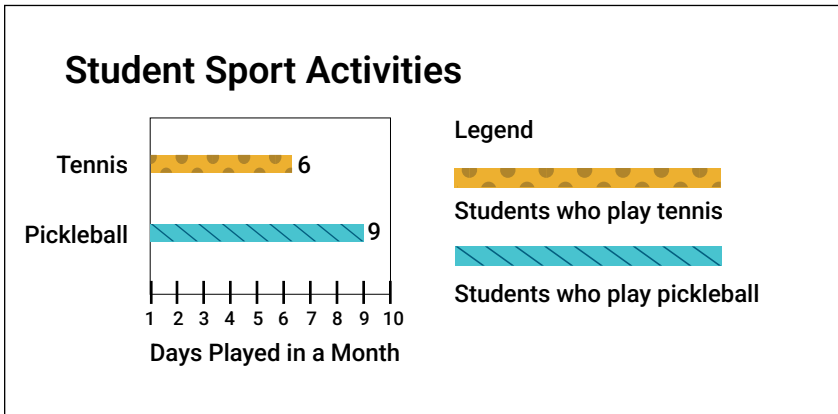
COLOR TO CONVEY MEANING

COMPLIANT EXAMPLES

Session Survey

Were all of your questions answered during the session?

YES **NO**

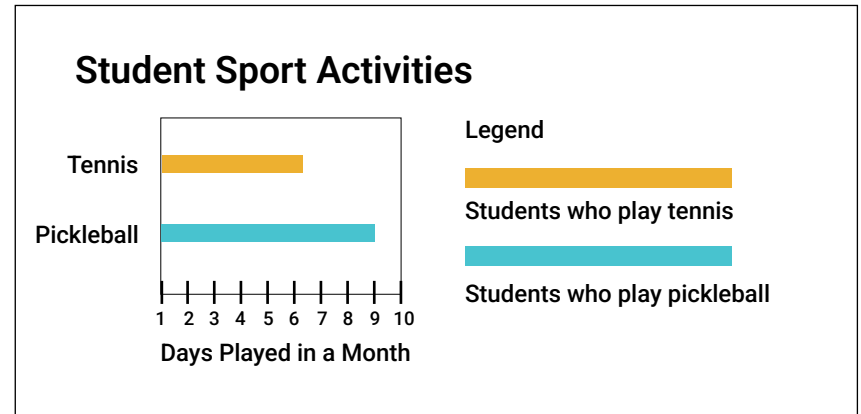


NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLES

Session Survey

Were all of your questions answered during the session?

X **X**



EXPLANATION

Buttons:

In the compliant example, the buttons are marked by text that refers to the positive and negative response.

In the non-compliant example, the buttons are marked by color only.

Graph:

In the compliant example, each bar is marked by color, labeled appropriately, separated by pattern and includes a legend.

In the non-compliant example, the bar graph is marked by color only. Though there is a legend, a user with low vision will have a difficult time differentiating the information.

VIDEOS - CAPTIONS

OVERVIEW

Captions provide a written representation of the spoken dialogue and important sounds in a video. They allow individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing to access the same information presented in video content.

Captions can also benefit many other users, including:

- Individuals watching videos in noisy environments
- Individuals who prefer reading along with spoken content
- Individuals whose first language is not English
- Individuals with certain learning disabilities

Providing captions helps ensure that video content is accessible to all members of the community. Captions should be provided for any video content shared online, including:

- Announcements or informational videos
- Board meeting recordings
- Instructional videos or lessons
- Event recordings
- Promotional or informational media

ACTION STEPS

Captions should represent the meaningful audio content of the video. This typically includes:

- Spoken dialogue
- Identification of speakers when necessary
- Important sound effects or background sounds that contribute to understanding the content

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.2.2: Captions \(Prerecorded\)](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.2.4: Captions \(Live\)](#)

VIDEOS - CAPTIONS

AUTOMATIC CAPTIONS

Some video platforms automatically generate captions. While these tools can be helpful, automatic captions are often inaccurate and should be reviewed and corrected before publishing.

Similar to alternative text, understanding the context of the video in relation to the message trying to be communicated is key to creating great captions. Districts should ensure that captions are reviewed for accuracy whenever automatic captioning is used.

VIDEO TRANSCRIPTS

In addition to captions, districts are **encouraged** to provide video transcripts when possible.

A transcript is a written document that includes the spoken dialogue and relevant sounds from a video in text form. Unlike captions, transcripts are provided as a separate block of text or downloadable document rather than appearing within the video.

Though not required to meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance for videos, transcripts provide several accessibility benefits. They allow users to:

- Read the content of a video without watching it
- Quickly locate specific information discussed in the video
- Use text-to-speech tools or screen readers to access the content
- Translate the content into another language more easily

AUDIO ONLY CONTENT

In comparison, transcripts for audio only content are **required** to meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA compliance.

Audio-only content, such as podcasts or recorded announcements, should include a written transcript so that users who are deaf or hard of hearing can access the information. This can be provided as a separate block of text or downloadable document in the same page that the audio only content appears in.

AUTO-PLAYING CONTENT

OVERVIEW

Automatically playing audio or video can create accessibility barriers for many users. When media begins playing without the user's action, it may interfere with assistive technologies such as screen readers or make it difficult for users to control their browsing experience.

Auto-playing media can also create challenges for users who:

- Have cognitive or attention-related disabilities
- Are sensitive to sudden sounds or motion
- Are using shared or quiet environments where audio cannot be played
- Need additional time to process webpage content

Providing users with control over media playback helps ensure a more accessible and user-friendly experience.

ACTION STEPS

To ensure media content is accessible, districts should:

- Avoid setting audio or video to play automatically when a page loads
- Provide clear play and pause controls for all media
- Ensure users can stop or pause media easily
- Allow users to control the volume of audio or video content including mute function
- Ensure media controls are accessible to keyboard users

AUTO-MOVING CONTENT (NON VIDEO / AUDIO)

A homepage carousel or banner slider that automatically switches slides is considered moving/auto-updating content, not strictly auto-playing media like audio/video. However, it is covered by WCAG requirements related to movement, timing and user control.

An automatically rotating carousel is generally acceptable only if users have control:

- A Pause/Play button
- Next and Previous controls
- Keyboard accessibility
- Enough time for users to read the content
- No automatic rotation that cannot be stopped

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.2.2: Pause, Stop, Hide](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.2: Audio Control](#)

TABLES

OVERVIEW

Tables are commonly used on district websites to present structured information such as schedules, calendars, transportation routes or meeting dates. When tables are created correctly, they help organize data in a way that is easy to read and understand.

However, if tables are not structured properly, users who rely on assistive technologies such as screen readers may not be able to interpret the information correctly. Screen readers rely on table structure to determine how rows and columns relate to one another.

Accessible tables help ensure that all users can understand the relationships between the data being presented.

ACTION STEPS

Tables should only be used to present structured data that is organized into rows and columns. Tables should not be used to control page layout or visual design. Using tables for layout can create confusion for screen readers and make content difficult to interpret.

To ensure tables are accessible, districts should:

- Use tables only for presenting data
- Include a header row that clearly labels each column
- Keep tables simple and easy to read
- Avoid merging or splitting cells
- Ensure the table structure reflects the relationship between the data
- Provide descriptive headings or captions when appropriate

PROPER TABLE CODING

Accessible tables require more than visual formatting. Behind the scenes, tables must be coded so assistive technologies can correctly understand the relationships between rows, columns and headers.

Screen readers rely on table coding to announce the column or row header associated with each data cell. This helps users understand how the information is organized as they move through the table.

For example, when a screen reader user moves to a cell in a table, the screen reader may announce both the column heading and the cell value. Without proper coding, the data may be read without context.

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.3.1: Info and Relationships](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.3.2: Meaningful Sequence](#)

TABLES

COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

Date	Event	Location
March 12	Science Night	Lincoln Elementary
April 5	Board Meeting	District Office

```
<table>
<caption>Upcoming District Events</caption>
<thead>
<tr>
<th scope="col">Date</th>
<th scope="col">Event</th>
<th scope="col">Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 12</td>
<td>Science Night</td>
<td>Lincoln Elementary Gym</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April 5</td>
<td>Board Meeting</td>
<td>District Office Board Room</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

EXPLANATION

In the compliant example, there is a header row that clearly labels each column, the table is simple and easy to read. The table is coded properly to be read by a screen reader (see example code).

In the non-compliant example, there is no header row that clearly labels each column. The table is not simple and easy to read -large amount of text is present in some cells and there is no consistency between cells (for example, the date shows Month and Day as words on column 1 and shows Month/Day/Year on column 2 as numbers)

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

Date	Event	Location
March 12	Science Night Bring your curiosity and join us for a night of fun under the stars!	Lincoln Elementary
4/5/2026	Board Meeting	District Office on 4/5/2026 County Office on 5/5/2026

FORMS

OVERVIEW

Online forms are commonly used on district websites for activities such as enrollment, volunteer registration, contact requests and event sign-ups. For forms to be accessible, each form field must include a clear and properly associated label.

Users who rely on screen readers depend on these labels to understand what information should be entered into each field. When form fields are not labeled correctly, assistive technologies may not be able to identify the purpose of the field, making it difficult or impossible for users to complete the form.

Properly labeled form fields ensure that all users can understand and interact with online forms.

ACTION STEPS

To ensure forms are accessible, districts should:

- Provide a visible label for every form field (place the labels outside of the form field, as screen readers can miss text if they are only inside)
- Ensure labels clearly describe the requested information
- Use proper coding to associate labels with form fields
- Identify required fields clearly
- Provide clear instructions when forms contain multiple steps
- Ensure forms can be completed using a keyboard
- Provide clear error messages when information is missing or incorrect

CLEAR ERROR MESSAGES

When users submit a form with missing or incorrect information, the form should provide clear error messages that explain what needs to be corrected.

Error messages are especially important for users who rely on screen readers or keyboard navigation. If error messages are not presented clearly, users may not understand why a form submission failed or how to fix the problem.

Error messages should:

- Clearly explain what information is missing or incorrect
- Identify which field needs attention
- Provide guidance on how to correct the issue
- Be easy to locate on the page

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 3.3.2: Labels or Instructions](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 3.3.1: Error Identification](#)

FORMS

COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

Session Survey

Required fields are in red and marked with a *

Name

Email

Comment*

*** Please correct the following errors:**

A comment is required

NON-COMPLIANT EXAMPLE

Session Survey

Name

Email

Comment*

*** The form cannot be sent:**

Please fix your error and try again

EXPLANATION

In the compliant example, visible labels are provided next to each form field. Required fields are clearly marked in multiple ways (through clear instructions, color identifier and asterisk). Error messages when the form fields are not entered correctly clearly identify the error(s).

In the non-compliant example, the labels are within the form field as 50% transparent text. There are also no clear instructions and error message is vague.

KEYBOARD NAVIGATION

OVERVIEW

Website navigation allows users to move between pages and locate the information they need. Clear and accessible navigation helps ensure that all users, including individuals with disabilities, can easily explore and interact with district websites.

Many individuals cannot use a mouse and instead rely on keyboard navigation to access web content. Others may use assistive technologies such as screen readers that depend on predictable navigation structures. If website navigation cannot be accessed using a keyboard or is difficult to understand, users may be unable to locate important information such as school announcements, enrollment forms or district policies.

ACTION STEPS

Keyboard navigation allows users to interact with a website using keys on a keyboard rather than a mouse.

Common keyboard controls include:

- Tab – Moves forward through interactive elements such as links and buttons
- Shift + Tab – Moves backward through interactive elements
- Enter – Activates links or buttons
- Spacebar – Activates certain controls such as checkboxes

All interactive elements on a website (including menus, buttons, links, form fields) should be accessible using these keyboard controls.

VISIBLE FOCUS INDICATORS

When navigating a webpage using a keyboard, users should be able to clearly see which element is currently selected.

A focus indicator is a visible highlight or outline that shows where the keyboard cursor is on the page. Without a visible focus indicator, keyboard users may not know where they are on the page or which link will activate when they press Enter.

Accessible websites ensure that focus indicators are clearly visible and easy to follow as users move through the page.

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.1.1: Keyboard](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 2.4.7: Focus Visible](#)

MOBILE - ENLARGED TEXT

OVERVIEW

Many users access district websites using mobile phones, tablets or other small-screen devices. Others may increase the size of text in their browser or device settings to make content easier to read.

Individuals with low vision, visual impairments or reading disabilities often rely on text enlargement to comfortably view website content. If a webpage does not adjust properly when text is enlarged or viewed on a smaller screen, the content may become difficult or impossible to read.

Users may enlarge text in several ways, including:

- Increasing text size in their browser settings
- Using zoom controls in the browser
- Adjusting accessibility settings on their device
- Using assistive technology that magnifies screen content

Ensuring websites remain usable on mobile devices and when text is enlarged helps make district information accessible to a wider range of users.

ACTION STEPS

Accessible websites should use **responsive design**, which allows webpage content to automatically adjust to different screen sizes.

Responsive design ensures that:

- Text remains readable on smaller screens
- Images and content adjust to fit the screen
- Navigation menus remain usable
- Users can zoom in on content without losing functionality

Most modern website platforms support responsive design, but content should still be tested to ensure it displays correctly.

Relevant links:

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.4: Resize Text](#)

[WCAG Success Criterion 1.4.10: Reflow](#)

LINKED DOCUMENTS

OVERVIEW

District websites often provide important information through downloadable documents such as PDFs, Word documents (Microsoft, Google Docs) or presentation files (PowerPoint).

If these documents are not accessible, individuals who rely on assistive technologies such as screen readers may not be able to read or understand the information they contain.

Providing accessible documents ensures that all users, including individuals with disabilities, have equal access to district information and services.

ACTION STEPS

Many of the same requirements for digital webpages present in this guidance document translate to linked documents in order to make them accessible.

Accessible documents typically contain:

- Proper heading structure that organizes the document into sections
- A logical reading order that follows the intended flow of the document
- Readable text rather than scanned or screenshot images of text
- Alternative text (alt text) for images or graphics
- Sufficient color contrast
- Accessible tables and lists with clear structure

HTML-FIRST APPROACH

Based on the way they are created, linked documents such as PDF's, Word documents and Presentation files can be made accessible.

However, districts should **prioritize** publishing information directly on webpages whenever possible. Webpage content is generally more accessible and easier to navigate than downloadable documents.

When documents must be provided for download, they should be created or remediated to ensure they meet accessibility standards before being posted online. Scanned image-based PDFs or Word documents should be avoided.

If the information is meant to be read online, it should usually be posted as a webpage instead of a PDF.

THIRD PARTY INTEGRATION

OVERVIEW

Many district websites rely on third-party tools and services to provide important information and services. These tools may include features such as event calendars, payment systems, learning platforms, registration forms or interactive maps.

While these tools may be provided by external vendors, they are still part of the district's digital services. If a third-party tool is not accessible, users with disabilities may be unable to access the information or complete important tasks.

Districts **remain responsible** for ensuring that all digital services available through their websites are accessible, including those provided by vendors.

EVALUATING VENDOR ACCESSIBILITY

Before implementing a third-party tool on a district website, districts should review the vendor's accessibility information.

Many vendors provide documentation describing how their products support accessibility standards. This information may include an accessibility statement or a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT).

Reviewing this information helps districts understand whether a product meets accessibility standards and identify any known accessibility limitations.

- Review vendor accessibility documentation before implementing a tool
- Ask vendors about support for WCAG accessibility standards
- Test third-party tools for keyboard navigation and screen reader compatibility
- Provide accessible alternatives when a tool cannot be made fully accessible
- Monitor third-party integrations to ensure they continue to function accessibly

The costs and time for remediating completed ICT (Information and Communication Technology) products to meet accessibility standards can be much greater than including accessibility conformance early in development.

SOCIAL MEDIA

OVERVIEW

School districts frequently use social media platforms to share announcements, event information, emergency updates and community messages. While social media can be an effective way to communicate with the community, these platforms must also be accessible to individuals with disabilities.

Users with disabilities may rely on screen readers, captions, text enlargement or other assistive technologies to access social media content. If posts are not created with accessibility in mind, important information may not be accessible to all users.

Ensuring social media accessibility helps districts communicate important information clearly and inclusively with the entire community.

ACTION STEPS

These are the requirements to create accessible social media posts:

- Images should contain alternative text
- Videos should contain accurate captions
- Important information should be placed in the text / caption of the social media post
- Hashtags should not be difficult for screen readers to interpret
- Ensure links included in posts lead to accessible webpages
- Avoid posting image-only content without accompanying text

HASHTAGS

Hashtags are a unique case for accessibility, as screen readers can sometimes have difficulty interpreting them word per word if they are written without capitalization.

To improve readability, districts should write hashtags in CamelCase, which capitalize the first letter of each word.

Accessible: #SchoolScienceFair

Not Accessible: #schoolsciencefair

RESOURCES

[Fact Sheet: New Rule on the Accessibility of Web Content and Mobile Apps Provided by State and Local Governments \(ADA\)](#)

This page outlines the ADA Title II web accessibility requirements, including the expectation that public entity websites and mobile applications meet WCAG accessibility standards.

[WCAG 2 Overview \(W3C\)](#)

This page introduces the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) international standard, including WCAG 2.0, WCAG 2.1, and WCAG 2.2. WCAG documents explain how to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities.

ACCESSIBILITY CHECKERS

Accessibility checkers are tools that help identify common accessibility issues on digital content. Districts are encouraged to use accessibility checkers as part of their regular content review process, while also following the accessibility guidance provided in this manual.

[WAVE Web Accessibility Evaluation Tool](#)

A free browser-based suite of tools developed by WebAIM that evaluates web content for accessibility issues.

[Colour Contrast Analyser \(CCA\)](#)

A free desktop application (PC, Mac) used to determine the legibility of text and the contrast of visual elements against WCAG 2.1 accessibility standards.

[WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)

A free browser based color contrast checker considered to be an excellent alternative to CCA.

[World Wide Web Consortium - Web Accessibility Initiative Easy Checks](#)

A set of free browser-based tools designed to assess the accessibility of webpages. Rather than providing a comprehensive evaluation, these tools are great for a “first review” at identifying common accessibility issues.

TRAINING TOOLS

Accessibility checkers are tools that help identify common accessibility issues on digital content. Districts are encouraged to use accessibility checkers as part of their regular content review process, while also following the accessibility guidance provided in this manual.

[Department of Homeland Security - Section 508 Trainings](#)

Recommended: Trusted Tester Process and Certification Program, Authoring Section 508 Compliant Documents Program

Free training course and certification programs that provide training on how to design, develop and publish digital content to meet federal accessibility standards.

[World Wide Web Consortium - Digital Accessibility Foundations Course](#)

Free, self-paced program covering core concepts of web accessibility based on WCAG standards.

[Digital.gov - Accessibility For Teams](#)

A guide to incorporating accessibility into product development teams.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Gen AI was used to create this content. It has been reviewed and edited by a LACOE staff member.

Note: Examples are not indicative of actual usage, and have been created just to illustrate certain accessibility requirements for visual purposes only.

For questions, please contact:

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