

ACCESSIBILITY OVERVIEW

What is *web accessibility*?

Web accessibility means that websites, tools, and technologies are designed and developed so that people with disabilities can use them. All visitors should be able to perceive, understand, navigate, interact with, and contribute to the web.


Web accessibility also benefits people *without* disabilities, for example:

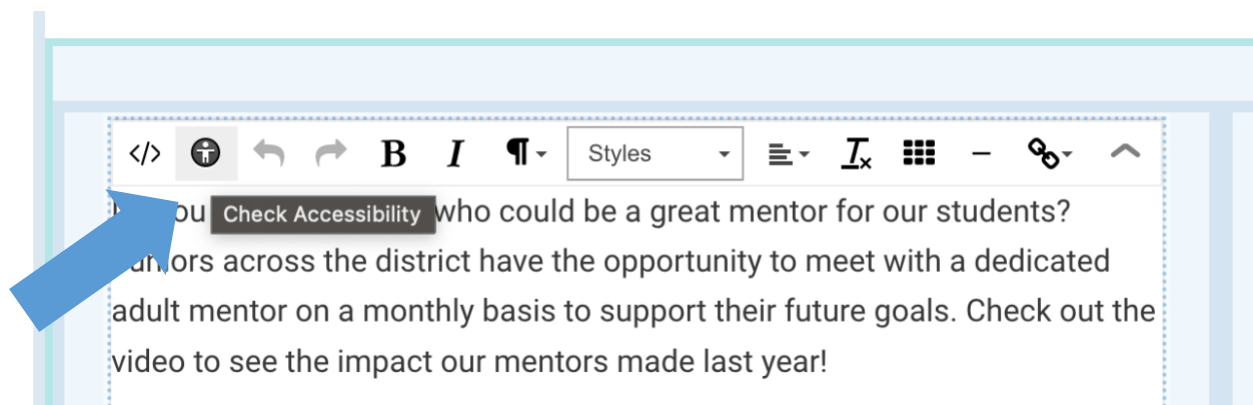
- people using mobile phones, smart watches, smart TVs, and other devices with small screens, different input modes, etc.
- older people with changing abilities due to ageing
- people with “temporary disabilities” such as a broken arm or lost glasses
- people with “situational limitations” such as in bright sunlight or in an environment where they cannot listen to audio
- people using a slow Internet connection, or who have limited or expensive bandwidth

– Web Accessibility Initiative (w3.org)

Our new website has a simple, built-in tool to help you ensure your pages are accessible:

IN CONTENT BOXES: ACCESSIBILITY HELPER

When working in a Content element, use this symbol  to run an automated check. This will notify you of any issues detected and help you fix them. If there are no issues, a pop-up will inform you that you are good to go.



Other important practices include:

ALTERNATIVE TEXT ON ALL IMAGES


All images and graphics should have alternative text. This is simply a description of what is showing in the event that a visitor cannot view the image. Alternative text helps users with poor internet connections or certain security settings and users with low vision, including those utilizing a screen reader.

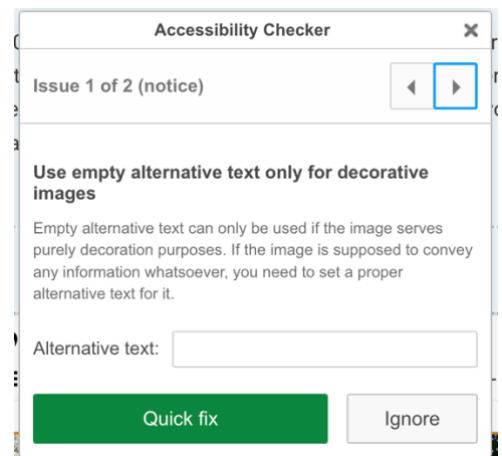
For example, if the intended photo of students at Maple Woods did not load, a reader of our district newsletter sees this:

group photo of Early College Academy students at MCC orientation

Good alternative text has a few qualities:

- *Descriptive, but not overly detailed*
- *Simple, clear language*
- *Focused on the characteristics that are relevant to the topic being discussed*
- *Ensures the viewer is not missing anything by not being able to see the image*

You can use the Accessibility Checker tool  to double-check that you have alternative text. If you do not, you will be prompted to type.



WHAT TO AVOID

In general, certain practices frequently cause accessibility issues. Avoid at all costs:

- Scanned PDFs
- Images with important information shown in text that is not also spelled out in the alternative text
- Low-contrast color combinations (light blue on white, purple on black, etc.)
- Very large files
- Videos without captions
- Nondescript links such as "[click here](#)" or "[link](#)" – instead, describe what the link leads to ("[baseball team roster](#)" or "[family fun night flyer](#)")