COLORADO HB 21-1110

Digital Accessibility

Progress over perfection · Clear communication · Equal access

Kallie Cooper, Chief of Communications

Mon 17 AUG 2026

Overview: What is HB21-1110?

Civil Rights

Makes it a state civil-rights violation for a public entity (including schools) to exclude people with disabilities from services or information because digital content is inaccessible.

Applies to Us

Covers state and local government, public k–12 schools, and universities. Digital content the school creates and shares must be usable by everyone.

Standard Required

Content should meet WCAG 2.1 Level AA. Progress, alternate formats, and reasonable accommodations also satisfy compliance under the rules.

Accessibility is about *people*.

Access

All students, families, and staff deserve the same information and services without barriers.

Compliance Risk

Failure to provide accessible digital content can lead to discrimination claims.

Simple Habits

You don’t need to become an accessibility expert. A few everyday choices make a big difference. The goal is progress, not perfection.

Why PDFs are often *not* accessible

Common Issues

- Scanned or image-only PDFs have no real text — screen readers can't read them.
- Missing tags and reading order confuse assistive technology.
- Poor contrast, complex tables, and decorative lines break navigation.
- PDFs are designed for print, not for screens or flexible reading.

Better Defaults

- Put the content in the body of an email or a web page whenever possible.
- If a document is needed, start with a well-structured Word or Google Doc.
- Only use PDFs when printing or formal layout truly requires it — and then ask for help making them accessible.
- Offer an alternate format when someone asks.

AI-Generated Images and flyers are *not accessible*

Image-based content (including most AI-created flyers and graphics) creates the same barriers as inaccessible PDFs.

- Screen readers cannot extract words from a picture of a flyer. The content is invisible to anyone who cannot see the image.
- Decorative designs often fail contrast requirements, making text hard or impossible to read for many users.
- Users who need larger text or different layouts cannot adapt an image. It stays fixed and unusable.

What to do instead

Share the same information as plain text in an email or document. Use the image only as a visual supplement, never as the only source.

Prefer *in-text communication* via email

Screen readers work

Text in the email body is readable by assistive technology right away — no extra files or conversions needed.

Works on any device

Parents and staff can open the message on a phone, tablet, or computer without special software.

Faster and clearer

People see the content immediately. No “please open the attachment” friction or missed information.

What you can do today

- **Write in the email body**
  - Put announcements, updates, and instructions directly in the message. Avoid relying on PDF or image attachments.
- **Avoid image-only flyers**
  - Do not use AI-generated or designed flyers as the only way to share information. Always provide the text separately.
- **Use clear structure**
  - Headings, short paragraphs, and bullet lists help everyone — and work better with screen readers.

What you can do today

- **Start accessible**
  - Create new documents in Word with headings and lists. It’s easier than fixing later.
- **Ask when unsure**
  - Reach out to the communications or IT team.

Sample statement:

“Please see attached document for details. If you or your student experience any accessibility issues, please let me know and I’m happy to provide an alternative format.”

Key Takeaways

- HB 21-1110 requires public entities, including schools, to provide accessible digital content.
- PDFs and AI-generated images/flyers are frequently inaccessible by default — prefer plain text.
- Putting content in the body of an email is one of the simplest, most effective habits.
- Never rely on an image or flyer as the only source of information — always provide text.
- Progress and reasonable accommodations count. You don’t have to fix everything overnight.
- When in doubt, make the message clear and offer another way for people to get the information.

libertycommon.org | @LibertyCommonSchool

Contact me:

kcooper@libertycommon.org

Kallie Cooper, Chief of Communications

Mon 17 AUG 2026