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Before you start creating your teacher website in Google sites, think about the direction you want it to take. Great teacher pages don’t have to be complicated or extensive. There are many creative ways to provide lots of content without biting off more than you can chew (or more than you can update!). It may be smart to start small and grow as your time and interest allows.

Some questions to consider before diving in: Do you want to create a website that has more static information so that you don’t have to update it that often? Or, do you envision editing your website almost daily with homework and upcoming announcements? What information would be most useful for your students and their parents? How can your website help you guide instruction during the school day?

A teacher template website has been created to help you make a new site quickly and ensure that the same “look and feel” exist across the entire website.

The template design should not be altered in any way. All text, graphics, links and other content added by teachers should be placed in the editable content section of the template pages.
The activities throughout this handbook are conducted in Google Sites, using Internet Explorer 9. We have found that Google Sites operates best using Google Chrome or Internet Explorer 9 or above.

Before you log in to Google Sites for the first time, you must email Debbie Jackson at dejackson@pjschools.org. Debbie will send you a generic password. You will use this generic password to log in for the first time, but it is recommended that you change your password to something more secure.

1. Open up an Internet browser (we suggest using Google Chrome or Internet Explorer 9, but you can certainly use Safari, Firefox, etc.)
2. Type “http://sites.google.com/a/pjschools.org” in the Web address field at the top of the screen.
3. Type your first initial + your last name in the “Username” field. (This should be the same username that you use to log onto a Port Jervis computer)
4. In the “Password” field, type in the generic password given to you the first time you log in. Then, change your password to something more secure.
5. Click on the “Sign In” button.
6. Click on your site name to start editing. (If you’re logging in for the first time, you will not see any sites because you haven’t created one yet.)

When you’re done editing, don’t forget to log out! Click on the down arrow next to your username on the top right-hand side of the screen. Choose “Sign Out.”
Creating your website for the first time

1. To access the available website templates, click on the red “Create” button.

2. Click on the blue “Browse the gallery for more” link.

3. Choose the appropriate school template; Scroll down and click on the blue “Select” button.

4. Name your site. Then, rename the URL address to your first initial + last name (see below)

5. Click on the red “Create” button again at the top of the page.

Give your site a name, such as “Mrs. Smith’s 5th Grade Website” or “Mr. Smith’s Classroom Website”

Rename the URL address by typing over the default text. Rename it to be your first initial + your last name.
Getting to know your website

Working from a template ensures that the same “look and feel” exist across the entire site. Please note that you should never alter the template design and/or theme or horizontal navigation links across the top of the page.

To find all of your general site information (i.e., available templates, pages in your website, etc.), click on the “More” drop-down menu and choose “Manage site,” as shown at left.
Editing your website

When you click on your website link, it will automatically open your homepage. To edit your content area on the homepage, click on the pencil icon at the top right. The edit toolbar should appear. Notice that you can now click on text in the middle of the page to edit it. There are a series of styles already created for you. Simply type over the text styles to create new content. You can copy and paste these styles to create more content areas, or use the edit toolbar to change the font, size, color, etc.

Formatting text

A set of styles have been created to help you format the text on your Web pages quickly and easily. Please stick with the styles provided. Do not change the styles so that the site remains consistent. In edit mode, click on the “Format” drop-down menu to see the list of correct styles to use.

- The H2 style is used for the page title. Do not insert an image next to the H2 area.
- Choose “Normal paragraph text” for the body text.
- There are also two additional subheadings to choose from called H3 and H4.

Inserting objects

Through the “Edit Page” feature, you can also insert objects, such as images, Google Docs, videos or apps. First, click in the area on the page where you want to insert the object. (Do not insert any images in the “Welcome to Teacher page” H2 area.) Then, click on “Insert” and choose the object you wish to insert. The most common object to insert is an image.

Inserting an Image

1. Simply click on the “image” icon.
2. Click on the “Browse” button. Browse for the picture you want to insert. Click “Open.”
3. In the “alt text (optional) field, type a short description of the image, such as “Student reading.”
4. Click “Ok.”
5. If you need to change the size of the image, click on the “S,” “M” or “L” sizes. You can also align the picture left or right and wrap the text around the image.
6. Click blue “Save” button.
Creating new pages

When you’re on your homepage, or any other page within your website, simply click on the “new page” icon, as shown below.

Then, do the following:

1. Name your page.
2. Select the template you would like to use to create your page from the drop-down menu. Most of the time, you will want to select “Template 1 page.”
3. Under “Select a location” choose “Put page at the top level.”
4. Click the red “Create” button at the top of the screen.

You will automatically be in edit mode on the page that you just created.

If you need to revert to an old version of a page after you’ve hit “save,” simply click on the “More” drop-down menu and choose “Revision History.” A list of the page versions will appear with the date and time last edited. Click on “Revert to this version” link. You can also compare two revisions at a time by selecting one version and clicking the “Compare two versions” link.

If you want to preview your work in an Internet browser, click on the “More” drop-down menu at the top-right, and choose “Preview page as viewer.”
Adding a page to your navigation bar

1. Click on the page you want to add to the navigation bar.
2. Click on the “More” drop-down menu and choose “Page settings.”
3. Enter a short description of the page in the “Page Description” field (e.g., Mrs. Smith’s classroom photos).
4. Under “Show this page in the sidebar” area, choose which navigation you would like the page on (“My site links” is technically main navigation).

Once you add a page to the sidebar navigation, you can simply click on the link in the sidebar to easily browse to the page for future page editing (instead of having to go to the “Manage site” feature).

Editing your sidebar

Every teacher site has a sidebar automatically set on the left-hand side of the page. You can choose to delete the sidebar navigation because you only want a homepage.

To edit your sidebar, choose “Edit site layout” under the “More” drop-down menu (shown at right).

Choose “Edit site layout” to change your sidebar (i.e., the order of your sidebar items, to delete the stay connected photo item, etc.).

At this point, you can organize your sidebar items by moving them up or down, add a URL address or page, etc.

Choose “Page settings” to add your page to the sidebar.

Do not edit the “Header,” “Horizontal navigation” or “Custom footer” areas. Please edit the “Sidebar” navigation only.
Creating hyperlinks

A hyperlink can link to another (external) website, to an existing Web page or file within your website, or to an e-mail address. The process for creating each of these items is basically the same.

1. First, make sure you’re in edit mode on the page you want to create a hyperlink on.
2. Highlight the word(s) you want to hyperlink.
3. Click on the hyperlink icon (it looks like a little chain link), as shown below.

If you want to hyperlink to a page that you created, make sure the “Sites page” text is red, and click on the page that you want to link to. Click on the red “OK” button.

If you want to hyperlink to an external website, click on the “Web address” text so that it displays in red, and then type the full URL address in the “Link to this URL” field. Click on the red “OK” button.

*If you’re linking to an external website, check the “Open this link in a new window box.”

Want to remove a hyperlink? Simply double-click on the link and choose “Remove.”
Using Google Gadgets

Google Gadgets are dynamic web content that can be embedded on your Web pages. Some of the most common gadgets are Google Calendar, Google Maps and RSS news feeds.

In your website template there are a couple sample Google gadgets (shown below) that you can choose to use. If you decide not to use them, you can simply remove them. There are many Google Gadgets available to explore, if you choose to do so.

The sidebar is comprised of multiple gadgets

Text gadgets can be used to create content inside a box easily. You can choose to add photos inside the box, change the size of the box, etc.

The announcements gadget acts much like a blog. You can create new posts on the announcements page and they will automatically be added to your teacher homepage. This gadget is geared for teachers who plan to update their website more frequently.

File Cabinet page

Google also has a File Cabinet feature that allows you to upload and manage documents from your hard drive onto your site and organize them into folders. This can be used to organize common documents, such as PDFs, in one place.

You can create as many file cabinet pages as you like within your site. That means that in addition to having folders in your file cabinets, you could also have separate pages for different purposes - a file cabinet page for one class’s resources, and a separate file cabinet page for another.

To create a new file cabinet page, follow these steps:
Click the “New page” icon; Name your page; Under the template drop-down menu, click the ‘File Cabinet’ page type; Choose a location for your page; Click red “Create” button.
Getting linked to the Port Jervis website

When you think your teacher site is ready to be linked from the Port Jervis website, follow the steps below:

1. Click on the “More” menu and choose, “Manage site.”
2. Click on “Sharing and Permissions” on the left-hand side of the page.
3. Under “Who has access,” click on the blue “Change” link, as shown below.

4. Choose the first option, “Public on the web.” Then, click the green “Save” button.
5. Your website URL address should automatically be highlighted (as shown below). Right-click on the Web address and choose “Copy.”

6. Go to your school email account and paste the link into a new email. Send the email to Debbie Jackson at dejackson@pjschools.org immediately. She will then add your new Google Sites link to the Port Jervis website. Please note that until you send the link to Debbie Jackson, your website is not properly launched.

The Port Jervis Google sites templates are property of the district. Please do not share your website link with others until your website is properly vetted and linked on the district website.