

This document is intended to provide guidance to teachers as they develop courses in Canvas. District Essentials are expectations for teachers to follow to ensure consistency throughout the district. District considerations are items the district would like teachers to be aware of as they develop Canvas content. School considerations are items schools may wish to discuss in order to provide additional consistency within their school.

* provides the rationale for behind the item on the list.

** web presence requirements in teacher CBA.

Home Page provides visual representation of course; a brief course description or introduction; clear instructions for students (e.g., where to begin) and quick and easy navigation to current content.

District Essentials

- Your home page should include:
 - name of the course (text, text with banner, banner with course name)
 - teacher name and contact info (email/phone) **
 - Prominently located link to a page on how to navigate my course which should include Information on course textbook
- Also include quick access to tools used in your course (e.g. textbook, tech tools, and other high traffic items such as modules, meeting links) **The parent mobile app does not display the course navigation.*

School Considerations

- School specific global navigation (eg: logo/colors)
- School specific buttons or images
- Teacher bio pages with more details and personalization

Course Navigation is clear and consistent (unused items are hidden). [Canvas Guide - Navigation Links](#)


District Essentials

- Alphabetized navigation
- Visible Items in ALL courses include:
 - Announcements
 - Grades
 - Modules and/or Assignments. If using modules, place newest module at the top. **
 - Syllabus and/or Classroom or Program Expectations. Syllabus needs to include where students can access the course gradebook (Canvas or Skyward) **
- People must remain hidden; unless specifically used for groups. **Student privacy: class lists should not be made available to students.*
- Link to School Resources specific to building
 - The School Resource page will be developed by Ed Tech/School Leadership. Teacher is asked to include it in their course navigation. The resource page will include links to:
 - [Canvas 101 for Students](#), [Canvas 101 for Parents](#) and Tech Support
 - School website
 - School specific links (e.g. Skyward, school website, counseling, etc.)
 - [Course accessibility statement](#) (see link for samples)

School Considerations

- School-based or course-based decisions
- Expectations around the use of Syllabus or Classroom Expectations

Course Content and Accessibility: [Canvas Guide - General Accessibility Design Guidelines](#)
District Considerations (21/22 SY)
District Essentials (22/23 SY)

- Copyright law is followed. Course breaks no copyright considerations. [Canvas Guide - Copyright Resources](#)
- Familiarize yourself with and use the Canvas Accessibility checker to understand how  individuals are able to access information on your page. Make the recommended changes to your content based on the feedback. The accessibility checker will look for and identify areas on Canvas pages that may prevent others from accessing your content.

Canvas accessibility checker will flag a variety of style choices that make it difficult for others to access. Below is an explanation of styles/features most accessible by all individuals:

Vision impairment

- High contrast color schemes should be used when appropriate and checked with the accessibility checker. **Students with color blindness are not able to see light text on a light background.*
- Images added to the course need to include Alt Text which describes the image. For example, an image used as a button to access the textbook, alt text for the image may read “textbook.” Screen readers would read this as “Link graphic Textbook” **Students with vision impairment use text-based screen readers which are not able to translate an image into words.*
- Hyperlink text incorporates the hyperlink destination/purpose. Avoid raw URLs, e.g., <https://www.canvaslms.com> and include words and phrases to provide context for screen-readers. Example: use “[Canvas Guide](#)” with the text *Canvas Guide* linked to the URL rather than pasting the raw URL. Screen reader reads every word or character in order, so a link that spells out the full URL will sound like h t t p colon slash slash etc before getting to any helpful information. ** Screen reader users can pull up a list of links for quick navigation that will not say the words immediately preceding the link. Use key words at the beginning of your links that are meaningful out of context to make navigation more efficient and effective.* More on [WebAim - Introduction to Links and Hypertext](#).
- Tables are used appropriately and are accessible. [WebAim - Creating Accessible Tables](#)

Hearing impairment

- Audio materials (mp3, wav, etc.) are accompanied by a transcript and videos / screencasts are closed-captioned. [Canvas Guide - Create Caption Files](#). **Students with hearing impairment need the transcript.*

School Considerations

- Course card** provides visual representation of the subject by adding an image in Course Settings. [Canvas Guide - Add Image to Course Card](#)
- Use school images and/or color themes (for Canvas border or pages). Color choice should maintain high contrast for accessibility purposes. [More information on color choice and contrast](#).
- Create school images/icons for all staff to use to provide consistency across staff Canvas courses.