

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

PUBLICATIONS DEPARTMENT

STYLE GUIDE FOR PUBLICATIONS

3/09



CLEVELAND
METROPOLITAN
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Vision to Victory

INTRODUCTION

This guide attempts to define, explain and illustrate rules for only the most common situations encountered by writers of District communications. It will not address all situations. The writer frequently will have to judge which usage is most appropriate depending on the audience, the medium (e.g., print, electronic, face-to-face) and the context and goals of the intended message.

With few exceptions, such as for official news releases that utilize a unique style, these rules should be applied to all District communications, including letters and correspondence, fliers, posters, program materials, advertisements, websites, broadcast/cable scripts and visuals, newsletters and other publications.

The District's External Affairs Division maintains this guide and makes periodic updates as rules form or change. Questions, suggestions and comments are welcome and may be directed to 858-6513 or kathleen.shields@cmsdnet.net.

STYLE DIFFERENCES BY TYPE OF PUBLICATION

Certain rules in this guide vary according to the audience and publication. For instance, the internal newsletter Inside District News, because it prints on only two pages, uses a condensed style or smaller to accommodate as much copy as possible. As an example, school names appearing in IDN are shortened to just the proper name (e.g., Benjamin Franklin) and the descriptor (e.g., PreK-8 or K-8 school) is omitted, unless necessary for clarity. The external publication, CMSD Connect on the other hand, is 4-8 pages in length and permits running the full names of schools and a generally more expansive copywriting style.

To emphasize where special circumstances exist between Inside District News and CMSD Connect, the following system is used: Examples for internal publications appear with **(I)** both before and after the text; examples for external publications appear with **(E)** both before and after the text. See below:

[Examples]

(I) When writing for internal publications, such as Inside District News, use only the proper name of the school – leave out other descriptors. **(I)**

(E) In external publications, such as CMSD Connect, include descriptors (e.g. K-8 School, High School) after the proper name of the school on first reference. **(E)**

TERMS AND NAMES

1. The "District":

1.1. On first reference in **external** publications, use the term "the Cleveland Metropolitan School District." On subsequent references, refer to this system of schools as "the District." Always capitalize the word "District" when referring to the Cleveland schools.

(E) Example: *The Cleveland Metropolitan School District has 114 schools. More than 50,000 students attend district schools.* **(E)**

1.2. It is not necessary to use the full and complete title in internal publications. The "District" or "CMSD" is well understood and will suffice for internal audiences.

2. The "Board of Education":

2.1. On initial use, write out "Board of Education." Subsequently, refer to this entity as "the Board," capitalizing the first letter. Do not use the initials "BOE."

2.2. Members of the board should be referred to as "board members." It is not necessary to capitalize the first letter of either word (unless referring specifically to the Board as an entity, in which case the word is capitalized).

3. School names:

3.1. Refer to the District's official facilities/principals directory for the full and correct name of individual District schools. Call 858-6513 for information on the availability of this document.

3.2. When writing for *Inside District News* (IDN), use only the proper name of the school – leave out other descriptors, such as "PreK-8 school," "K-8 school," etc. Also, boldface the school name on the first instance of its use.

(I) Example: Students from Benjamin Franklin raised funds for their garden program. **(I)**

3.3. In external publications, such as CMSD Connect, include descriptors (e.g., K-8 school, high school) after the proper name of the school on first reference only. It is not necessary to typeset the full name in boldface or italics.

(E) Example: *Many of the neighborhood's children attend Mary B. Martin K-8 School.* **(E)**

3.4. Do not refer to K-8 schools as elementary schools when using their full and complete names.

(I) and **(E)** Example: *Clara E. Westropp Elementary School serves students on Cleveland's West Side.*

4. Italicization of publication names:

4.1. CMSD Connect is monthly publication distributed externally.

Write out the full name on first instance and the initials CMSD C on subsequent references. Always italicize the full name and initials.

4.2. Inside District News is a monthly newsletter distributed internally. Write out the full name on first reference and the initials IDN on subsequent references. Always italicize the full name and initials.

5. Common District usages:

5.1. The District goal statement should always be written as follows:

The primary goal of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District is to become a premier district in the United States of America.

Do not use quotes around this statement. The goal state should appear on all letterhead at the bottom and on all external publications.

5.2. Website: Use the word "website" when referring to a page or pages of the World Wide Web. It is not necessary to capitalize the term. Do not use the terms "Web site" or "web site."

5.3. Internet: Capitalize this word.

5.4. Intranet: Do not capitalize this word.

5.5. Online: Do not hyphenate this word.

5.6. Email: Write this word as "email" whether using as a noun or a verb. Do not capitalize or hyphenate.

BASIC PUNCTUATION AND GRAMMAR

6. Spacing after punctuation:

6.1. Use two spaces after periods and colons.

Example: *Dr. Eugene T.W. Sanders is CEO of the District. Pamela E. Smith is Chief of Staff.*

6.2. Use one space after commas and semi-colons.

6.3. Use one space before and after en dashes within sentences.

Example: *Various members of each school community – students, teachers, parents, staff and principals – were involved in the community forums on the Master Facilities Plan status.*

7. Commas:

7.1. When listing a series of items or actions, do not use a comma before the final item in the series, that is, before the "and" or "or."

Example: *There are 88 Pre-K/K-8 schools and 20 high schools in the District.*

8. Dashes and hyphens:

8.1. When separating clauses within or at the end of a sentence, use the en dash (–) instead of the em dash (—) or a double dash (--). Avoid using double dashes.

Example: *The District's many different levels and formats of schools – PreK-8, K-8 and high school – serve children from pre-kindergarten through age 18.*

8.2. Use hyphens (a single dash) in compound words.

Example: *The single-gender academies are the newest addition to the family of District schools.*

8.3. Do not compound adjective phrases that contain an adverb.

Example: *Presently, there are four single-gender PreK-3 academies in the District.*

9. Quotes and quotation marks:

9.1. Only use single quotation marks in headlines.

Example: *District to Share Components of the 'Humanware/Hardware' Audit*

9.2. In regular body copy, use double quotation marks unless there is a quotation or figure of speech found inside of a quote.

Example: *CEO Dr. Eugene T.W. Sanders' pledge to equip all high schools with metal detectors, met the goal set in the "Hardware" component of audit. Dr. Sanders says, "We are committed to ensuring that all of our students will learn in schools that safe and secure."*

9.3. Punctuation – such as a comma, period, question mark or exclamation mark – is placed inside of quotation marks.

Example: *The District will work to efficiently to implement all aspects of the "Humanware and Hardware" audit.*

10. Bullet points:

10.1. Do not use punctuation after a bulleted item or phrase, such as commas, semicolons or periods unless the phrase is a complete sentence. Capitalize the first letter of the first word of each item.

Correct

Types of Cleveland
Schools:
• PreK-8
• K-8
• High
• Schools of Innovation

Correct

The Top Three Reasons
Students Selected Their College:
• School has a strong major/
department in a desired field of study.
• School offers good financial aid.
• Student likes the location.

Incorrect

After-School Programs
at XYZ School:
• 21st Century Learning;
• high steppers;
• extended Day Tutoring; and
• Boys/Girls Clubs.

11. Capitalization in headlines:

11.1. Capitalize all words in headlines, except for articles (e.g., the), conjunctions (e.g., and) and prepositions less than five letters long (e.g., for).

Example: *District to Complete Segment 5 Schools of the Master Facilities Plan*

11.2. Capitalize a preposition less than five letters long in a headline only if it starts the title or a clause.

Example: *To School and Back: The Story of the District's Transportation Services*

11.3. Capitalize adverbs. Pay special attention to words that resemble prepositions but do not form a prepositional phrase and are used as adverbs.

Example: *District Proficiency Scores Shoot Up; School Shows Off New Programs*

12. Contractions:

12.1. Contractions are acceptable in internal communications, including Inside District News.

(I) Example: *There's a good chance the school's basketball team will win state this year. (I)*

12.2. Contractions are not acceptable in external communications, such as CMSD Connect, unless they are in a column (e.g., a message from the CEO) or a letter format.

13. Numbers vs. numerals:

13.1. Spell out numbers between 0-9.

Example: *Today, 10 buses serve the school, up from nine buses transporting students last year.*

13.2. Spell out grade levels.

Example: *The family has one student in fifth grade and one in twelfth grade.*

14. Publications:

14.1. Capitalize and italicize the names of all publications.

14.2. The District publications Inside District News and CMSD Connect should be capitalized and italicized. The full names may be shortened to their initials on subsequent references. Italicize the shortened form.

Example: *Inside District News is published monthly. A 4-6 page publication, IDN is distributed directly to District employees through the email system.*

DISTRICT STYLE AND USAGE

15. The District nameplate:

15.1. When producing major, multi-page external District publications, include a "nameplate" that contains basic information on the District, its leadership and the goal statement.

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District
1380 East Sixth Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1667
Dr. Eugene T.W. Sanders, Chief Executive Officer
Robert Heard, Sr., Board Chair
216-574-8000
216-574-8186 (Fax)
www.cmsdnet.net

The primary goal of the Cleveland Metropolitan School District is to become a premier school district in the United States of America.

15.2. It will not always be possible to include a complete version of the nameplate. At a minimum, the writer and/or designer of an external publication should attempt to include the following information:

The Cleveland Metropolitan School District
1380 East Sixth Street
Cleveland, Ohio 44114-1667
Dr. Eugene T.W. Sanders, Chief Executive Officer
216-574-8000
216-574-8186 (Fax)
www.cmsdnet.net

15.3. Do not use the District's Lakeside facility address on official, external publications.

16. Legal disclaimer:

16.1. All external publications must include the following equal employment disclaimer, without modification:
The Cleveland Board of Education does not discriminate in educational programs, activities or employment on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability.

17. Capitalization of academic subject areas:

17.1. Always capitalize language names.

Example: *The high school offers numerous language classes including French, Spanish, Italian and, of course, English.*

17.2. Do not capitalize other subject-matter areas.

Example: *In the student's eighth grade year, she will take courses in science, social studies, history, English, creative writing and mathematics.*

18. Tense in quotations:

18.1. In internal and external publications, quote sources in the present tense, not the past tense.

Example: *"The District continues on its pursuit of achieving Continuous Improvement status, thanks to the efforts of students, parents, teachers and staff," states CEO Dr. Eugene T.W. Sanders.*

19. Titles and references:

19.1. When first mentioning an individual, write the person's full name and title. It is not necessary to use a middle initial unless it is needed for reasons of clarity or is a preference of that person.

19.2. Only capitalize a title if it precedes the name (e.g., Chief of Staff Pamela E. Smith manages academic administrative staff of the District.). It is not necessary to capitalize a title that follows a name (e.g., Pamela E. Smith, the District's chief of staff, is responsible managing the academic administrative staff.).

19.3. On subsequent references to an adult, use just the last name without the title of Ms., Mrs. or Mr. Use professional, religious or military titles when appropriate, including Dr., Rev. and ranks (e.g., Capt.).

19.4. On subsequent references to a child or a student not yet graduated from high school, use the individual's first name instead of the last name. Warning: **Never publish a Cleveland student's name or picture in any internal or external communication without the written permission of a parent.**

20. Dates:

20.1. Write dates as numerals with ordinal endings. In Inside District News, superscript the ordinal endings.

Example: *The Harvest Festival is scheduled for September 20th.*

20.2. For a range of time involving dates, use the ordinal ending on both dates.

Example: *From March 4th-8th, the school will raise money for disaster relief.*

20.3. In CMSD Connect and other external publications, it is not necessary to superscript ordinal endings.

20.4. Do not include the year, unless it is necessary for clarity.

Example: *Tournament semifinals will take place in December, with finalists to be named in January 2003.*

20.5. If describing a date occurring in the preceding calendar week or earlier, do not include the day of the week unless it is necessary for clarity.

Example: *The installation of new dry wall in the music room lasted six weeks, beginning on November 14th.*

20.6. Conversely, if describing a date within the past calendar week, include the day of the week but not the date.

Example: *On Wednesday afternoon, the school celebrated the debate club's state championship at an assembly.*

20.7. It is common to include ranges of years in District communications (e.g., the 2008-09 school year). For the second, more recent date of any range, it is not necessary to include the millennium and century number (e.g., the "19" of "1998") unless the range bridges the millennium (e.g., 1996-2004).

Example: *At its last meeting, the Board approved a budget for the 2008-09 fiscal year.*

21. Times:

21.1. When describing timeframes, observe these rules

21.1.1. Hyphenate times without a space.

Example: *The student performance will take place from 10:45-11:30 a.m.*

21.1.2. Drop the minutes if the time is at the top of the hour.

Example: *The seminar ran from 9-11:30 a.m.*

21.1.3. Drop the a.m. or p.m. reference from the "start" time if the timeframe does not cross the noon or midnight hour.

Example: *The track meet will probably run from 1:30-4:30 p.m.*

21.1.4. Include both a.m. and p.m. for timeframes crossing the noon or midnight hour.

Example: *The school day is from 8 a.m.-2:20 p.m.*

21.2. The initials a.m. and p.m. use periods and are not capitalized.

22. Phone numbers:

22.1. Do not omit the 216 area code from phone numbers. The audiences of District publications are in other area codes in addition to the 216 area code.

22.2. When using area codes, separate the area code with a hyphen from the rest of the number (i.e., do not use parentheses).

Example: 216-574-8000 or 440-379-8903

23. TV and radio station names:

23.1. In external publications, follow these rules:

23.1.1. For radio stations, write the call letters, then the station number and frequency.

(E) Example: WMJI 105.7 FM **(E)**

23.1.2. For broadcast television stations, write the call letters, the descriptor "TV," then the station number.

(E) Example: WEWS TV 5 **(E)**

23.1.3. For cable channel stations, write the carrier name, the descriptor "cable," and then the station number.

(E) Example: Time Warner Cable **(E)**

23.2. In internal publications, when referencing a local television broadcaster, omit the call letters.

(I) Example: The program will air on TV 8. **(I)**

GRAPHIC IDENTITY

24. District logo:

24.1. The District has an official logo, which should appear on all external print and electronic communications. The District logo is formatted in a stacked version as well as a side version.

24.2. There are specific rules on the use, placement, coloring and sizing of the logo. When using the logo, please do not stretch the image to fit the space on your document or publication. For more information on the logo, please refer to the District website on the Publications link in the "About Us" section.

25. District colors:

25.1. Please adhere to the official District colors and font style listed below. The District logo is also available in black. (Logo Font – Minion pro; Tagline font – Myriad)

Color	R	G	B	PMS
Yellow	255	210	0	123
Green	194	205	35	390
Orange	249	157	49	716
Blue	0	164	228	2995

26. Assistance from the External Affairs Division:

Artwork for specialty items (button, banners, etc.)	3 weeks
Fliers and posters	2 weeks
Camera-ready ads for publication	3 weeks
Certificates	2 weeks
Brochures/programs booklets	4 weeks
Photography	2 weeks
Videography	8 weeks
IVR Messaging	1 week