

Content Management Plan for Kainalu Elementary School Website

[HTTP://WWW.KAINALU.ORG](http://www.kainalu.org)

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Table of Contents

Introduction	3
Institutional Setting	3
Partners and Competitors	3
Setting and Prioritizing Goals	.....	4
Content: Structure, Workflow, and Governance	.....	5
Offsite Content	.....	6
Onsite Content	.....	8
Possible Additional Content	.....	9
Measure	.....	10
Maintain	.....	11
Change Requests	.....	11
Maintenance Needs	.....	12
Conclusion	.....	12

Introduction

This report is a summary of the content management practices for Kainalu Elementary School's website in Kailua, HI and recommendations for future content management.

Institutional Setting

Kainalu Elementary School (KES), built on the grounds of a former racetrack, opened its doors to students in 1954 on the Windward side of O'ahu. Harold Kainalu Long Castle, at one time the largest land owner in Kailua, donated the 10 acres that is currently the school campus.

Today, KES instructs PreK-6 graders with an enrollment of approximately 450-500 students. Because of its proximity to Marine Corps Base Hawaii in Kaneohe, about 25% of KES students are from military families. As a result, student turnover rate is fairly high, with military families moving in and out of the area frequently.

KES's mission states that "Kainalu Elementary is a community that inspires all students to achieve their full potential, engage in collaboration, and develop critical thinking skills for college and career success" (<http://www.kainalu.org/mission--vision.html>).

Competitors and Partners

KES is one of eight public/charter elementary schools in the Kailua-Kalaheo complex. In order to retain the current numbers of faculty/staff, Kainalu must report an enrollment of about 480

students each year. Therefore, KES actively recruits and accepts students from families who apply for geographic exceptions (GEs) to attend the school.

KES is a Hawaii Department of Education (HIDOE) school. Many of the school's policies and procedures align with those required by HIDOE. The school employs a part-time librarian, who maintains the library online public access catalog (OPAC) and database subscriptions, which students and faculty access through the website. KES employs a Parent Community Network Coordinator (PCNC) whose facilitates communications between the home and school. The PCNC makes parents aware of school efforts, oversees volunteer activities at Kainalu, and is responsible for the Kainalu newsletter. The school has an active Parent Teacher Student Association (PTSA) organization that organizes fundraising events, sells school T-shirts, and recruits volunteers for school activities. The YMCA operates a before and after school care program (A+) on the Kainalu campus. Finally, the school contracts a variety of organizations to provide after school activities, such as: Kumon tutoring, Kidzart, martial arts instruction, music and language lessons.

Setting and Prioritizing Goals

The website enhances multiple school goals and objectives which have not been prioritized. The goals of KES that are relevant to the website are to:

- notify current faculty/staff/students/parents of upcoming events, cafeteria menu, policies and procedure;

- promote the school to incoming families, enticing them to register at KES instead of other local elementary schools;
- support current students with online learning tools (e.g. library OPAC, IXL, Achieve 3000, Star Reading, etc.);
- showcase the achievements and awards of faculty/staff and students;
- foster the relationship between the school and its partners;
- present KES as a technologically current institution.

Prioritizing these goals would be a necessary step to make sure that the most important content is reviewed and updated in a timely manner.

Content: Structure, Workflow, and Governance

The HIDOE does not have a published style guide for its schools' websites. Schools have autonomy to choose the structure and the content of their individual sites with little oversight from HIDOE. Ultimately, if the HIDOE were to deem certain content as inappropriate, then the school would have to remove the content from site. Most schools publish similar content while the scope and depth of content and services may vary. Federal law requires that the schools uphold FERPA guidelines; they may not publish any individually private and/or identifiable information about its employees or students without their consent.

Within KES, the principal has ultimate control and responsibility for the content of the site. However, she typically abdicates this control to the technology coordinator. Normally, the

technology coordinator decides what content to update and at what time. New or updated content can be submitted as a word document to the technology coordinator in person or via email. The technology coordinator performs minimal editing to the content before publishing. The files are maintained by the technology coordinator and stored on his school computer. An additional copy of content is kept in the school office, in the event of turnover of the technology coordinator position. There is no cohesive guidance on message, voice, or tone for the different types of content that are associated with the KES website. There are no standards in place for formatting of text, images, or video files.

The school delivers content through multiple channels. Much of that content is connected to the website in some way. A brief summary of the types of content, the workflow, and the governance of the content related to the website follows.

Offsite Content

- HIDEOE intranet with staff resources, including an email client (Lotus Notes), and a weekly bulletin (published by the school administrative staff). Content comes from state, district, and KES faculty/staff. The intranet is available only to faculty/staff.
- Google Apps for Education faculty/staff/student accounts are an internal method of communication. The apps can be accessed through the KES website. Teachers and students can add content. Supervision and enforcement of acceptable use is inconsistent. There is redundancy of information between the HIDEOE email client and the Google Apps Gmail accounts.

- An unofficial Facebook page is open for anyone to read or post content on. It was created by a parent on the PTSA. The site is loosely monitored by a few parents (who are also PTSA members) and the PCNC.
- Kainalu PTSA created and maintains its own website and sends out a weekly email (containing current event reminders and requests for volunteers) to subscribers. Parents or staff can submit content requests to PTSA via email or in person. While the principal does not have direct control over the content of the PTSA site, she could sever the links between the school site and the PTSA site should a problem arise.
- Thursday folders are sent home weekly with forms and notices for parents. These forms should be available digitally on the school website but updating is inconsistent. Thursday folder content is created by various contributors: teachers, room parents, administration, PTSA, external organizations (e.g. Scholastic Book Fair), HODOE. There is little governance about what types of materials can go into Thursday folders. Usually, the administrative staff will briefly review the materials and give them to the classroom teacher, but sometimes the content goes to the classroom teacher directly.
- Student-run daily morning newscasts inform faculty/staff/students about school news. Anyone can submit content to the morning news team. This content is reviewed, edited, and selected for broadcasts by the news team faculty advisors. The technology coordinator is one of the advisors, so at times he publishes some of the news content to the website.

Onsite Content

The current website was designed with a Weebly template and contains mostly static information. The layout and aesthetics of the website were updated in 2016 but much of the content remains unchanged. The old content was essentially copied and pasted into the new design. The current primary content for the website includes:

- Institutional information (e.g. alma mater, mission, vision, history): static content produced by students and faculty/staff as an enrichment project 11 years ago. The mission and vision were highly edited and endorsed by the entire faculty/staff.
- Faculty/staff index: this page has been blank for 5 years. If it is going to be utilized, it should be updated annually or as staff changes. If not, it should be deleted.
- School policies and procedures: student handbook, registration information, bell schedule, school supply lists, student clubs and teams, etc.
- Calendar and Cafeteria menu: this content changes at least monthly. The menu is created by the cafeteria manager and published by SASA as a Google doc. Calendar content is constantly changing and different versions of the calendar are relevant to different users.
- Thursday folder handouts (see Offline Content above): not all Thursday content is submitted to the school secretary for uploading and she does not have a set schedule to upload files, therefore, there are gaps in information.
- Online learning materials/School library OPAC: there are multiple online learning resources, some subscription based and some free. Multiple sites have third party content over which the school has no control. Students use many of these programs under the supervision of their teacher, other programs are recommended for after-school use.

Teachers, administrators, or the curriculum coordinator decide which learning tools are used by each grade level or classroom.

- External links to the school's PTSA site, local community organizations, resources for parents, and military resources for active duty families: These links have been chosen by the PCNC or the administration and do not need to be reviewed or updated frequently.
- Photos and videos: submitted by students, teachers, and parents and published by the technology coordinator. They are rarely updated but should be refreshed periodically to help increase website traffic (see Possible Additional Content below)

Possible Additional Content

Because workflow and governance of the website are inconsistent from year to year, additional new content or content review is unlikely at this time. However, there are possible gaps in content and services that would better serve the user groups:

- Updated faculty/staff index
- Homework/grading system, (e.g. Jupiter grades) so that students and parents can see assignments and current student grades
- Online lunch payment system
- Urgent message section on the home page (e.g. school closings or special events)
- Restructured hierarchy; first-level organized by user type (e.g. Parents, Students, New Family Information, Faculty/Staff) and second-level organized by classroom with each teacher selecting online learning resources that are applicable to their students
- Digital copies of the most recent brochure and newsletters

- Prominent web presence of the school's supporters and partners (e.g. school library, PCNC, A+ program)
- Official social media presence (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.)

Measure

The school has never done a qualitative or quantitative audit on the website. Staff and parents were informally asked via email or in person what they wanted from the KES website. The response was "a newer look," so the main purpose behind the recent "redesign" was to update aesthetics and make only minor content changes. The site would benefit from a comprehensive audit, so that KES can decide what content needs to be created, revised, kept, or deleted/archived. Since the site is very small, it would not be difficult to analyze content quantitatively (ID #, title/topic, URL, format, source, metadata, traffic usage, last update) and qualitatively (typos, incorrect/outdated information, broken links etc.). The school could collect quantitative analytics that are offered by Weebly (# site visitors, pages visited, search terms used to find the site, and which websites referred traffic to the site) or the Google analytic tools that are compatible with Weebly sites. Another critical metric that should be generated is the time spent by the technology coordinator, SASA, and school secretary, and other staff on website maintenance so that future time/resources could be allocated to properly maintain the site.

At present, there is no formal process for assessing how effectively the website addresses its target audiences' needs. KES could conduct usability testing for its newly launched site with specifically designed scenarios to see if the user groups are able to find the content and perform

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08/05/2016
LIS 694 Summer
Instructor: Dr. Richardson
Assignment: Content Management Plan

the actions which the school intends. In addition to a usability study, an annual survey could be given to the four user groups: Administration/Faculty/Staff; New Families; Students; and Parents. Depending on the group surveyed, some or all of the following information should be determined: what features/content of the website they use, what features/content do they anticipate using, what features/content should be added, how easy the site is to navigate, whether they use the site outside of school, what devices they use to access site, whether or not they feel the site is supporting KES's goals and mission, how well the site helped them find out information about the school, to what extent did the website/content affect their decision to send their child to KES.

Maintain

The school would benefit from a scheduled plan to review/create/update/archive website content. Neglected content reflects poorly on KES and discourages site visitors to return to the site.

Change Requests

Currently, requests for review/create/update/archive are made to the technology coordinator. These are made informally, via email or in person to the technology coordinator. On the website, there are contact phone numbers and an email contact form by which comments or questions could be submitted. The technology coordinator or school secretary review the emails as they come in. Unreported triggers to review/changes could be turnover in faculty/staff, new school year, updated policies, etc.

Maintenance Needs

Most the website content is static and therefore does not need frequent updates. Furthermore, there is no one person in charge of updating content nor is time set aside for that work to be completed. Rather than an editorial calendar, it may be more beneficial to assign one or two people the following workflow schedule:

- **Daily:** emergency announcements
- **Weekly:** non-emergency announcements, calendar changes, Thursday folder google doc
- **Monthly:** cafeteria menu (google doc), photos
- **Semester:** major upcoming events on school calendar, newscast or video samples
- **Annually:** school supply lists, handbook, new registration forms, faculty roster, school highlights, test scores

Conclusion

The administration/faculty/staff at KES realize that a well-designed, well-functioning website can help the school communicate its messages to the Kainalu Ohana. In order to achieve this, the next step for KES would be to formulate a cohesive content strategy. The strategy would include: prioritizing the school's goals, identifying user needs, auditing existing content, measuring content effectiveness, and allocating the time/resources/staff to shape and nurture its content. The recommendations in this report will make the journey toward a sound content management plan purposeful and achievable.