

TITLE: School Explorer Website and School Site Responsibilities to Maintain School Profiles

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ISSUER: Veronica Arreguin, Chief Strategy Officer
Derrick Chau, Senior Executive Director,
Strategy & Innovation

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ROUTING

Region Superintendents
Administrators of Instruction
Administrators of Operations
Directors
Parent and Community
Engagement Administrators
Principals
Assistant Principals
School Administrative
Assistants

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Reference Guide is to provide principals and regional administrators with the information and resources needed to maintain their school(s) profile information each school year in the new *School Explorer* website.

MAJOR CHANGES: This is a new reference guide that replaces MEM-050115.3, dated August 18, 2020, issued by the Office of School Design Options.

1. A new L.A. Unified *School Explorer* website and administrator dashboard will be available beginning, on or about, September 27, 2023 at <http://explore.lausd.net>.
2. The new *School Explorer* website and administrator dashboard replaces the School Search Tool and Content Management System and includes updated design and features.
3. Provides instructions for school principals and regional administrators to maintain school profiles and view metrics about how a school's profile is accessed in user searches conducted by the general community.

INSTRUCTIONS: The *School Explorer* was developed "to increase equity and access for all families" by providing a searchable directory of L.A. Unified schools. Parents/guardians, students, and other community members can use this website to search for district-operated schools and programs by address, school name, or keywords. New and continuing families can learn more about their neighborhood schools and find educational programs they are interested in attending.

A. School Explorer – Reviewing School Profiles

The new *School Explorer* website will be available to the public at <https://explore.lausd.net/> on, or around, September 27, 2023.

1. Each district-operated school site cost center has a school profile visible to the community in the L.A. Unified *School Explorer* with certain elements that must be maintained annually by the school principal. This includes comprehensive TK-12 schools, magnet centers, dual language education elementary cost centers, early childhood education centers, Options schools, and adult and career sites.
2. The profile page includes an editable “Get to Know Our School” message, photo(s), tour dates, social media addresses, and other pre-populated school information such as demographics, performance, and educational program information.
3. School administrators and staff should review their current school profile and become familiar with the functionality of the *School Explorer* website:
 - a. To ensure that each school profile page contains up-to-date messaging and attractive photos that accurately highlight key aspects of the school’s educational programs;
 - b. To support families with accessing the website, finding schools they may be interested in attending, and comparing the attributes of different L.A. Unified schools.

B. Maintaining the School Profiles

The *School Explorer* incorporates an administrator dashboard, *MyCMS*, within the [Principal Portal](#). This dashboard is used by school principals/designees and regional administrators to maintain some of the content visible in the school profile and view new metrics about when the school profile is viewed.

1. Principals/designees should review and update their school profile by the end of September of each school year in order to have updated information before the Choices application opens.
 - a. Profiles can be edited throughout the school year.
 - b. Any changes to a profile are not visible to the public until a regional administrator reviews the content and approves the changes.
2. Every school cost center must have a completed profile available in the *School Explorer*. Please refer to the job aids available within the

[Principal Portal](#) for more information about each of the school profile key elements.

- 1) School profile information is updated and approved in the *School Explorer's* administrator dashboard, *MyCMS*. To access *MyCMS*:
 - a. Go to the *School Explorer* website at <https://explore.lausd.net> and log in using the LAUSD Single Sign-On (SSO).
 - b. Alternatively, the “*School Explorer-MyCMS*” can also be accessed through the Principal Portal at <https://principalportal.lausd.net> (School Tools > School Explorer-MyCMS)
- 2) Permissions
 - a. Editor–Principals, Assistant Principals, and School Administrative Assistants are automatically granted a school profile ‘Editor’ role based on their current assignment.
 - b. Approvers–Regional Administrators of Operations and Instruction and Regional Directors are automatically granted an ‘Approver’ role for access to all assigned schools within their region based on the primary location file with their current assignments.
 - c. Designees: Principal Portal in Tools > User Manager can be used to assign other school staff as designees with ‘editor’ permissions to submit changes to a school profile.
- 3) The following elements of a school’s profile are required and can be updated at any time throughout the school year:
 - a. Get to Know Our School (GTKOS) message,
 - b. Photos (5 photos),
 - c. Tour dates and information,
 - d. Social media weblinks (Facebook, Instagram, and/or Twitter).
- 4) The first photo should be the front of the school, and any photos with children or staff should have a media release on file at the school.
- 5) Automated emails will be sent when changes are made to a school profile:
 - a. To the designated Approver whenever a school profile content change is submitted;
 - b. To the designated Editor whenever a change has been approved or rejected.

- 6) Translation of the GTKOS message into Spanish must be completed by any school staff that is able to translate and/or receives a bilingual stipend to perform such duties.
 - a. The “Get to Know Our School” message is the only element that needs to be translated into Spanish, manually, in order to ensure parents have access to a properly translated school message in Spanish.
 - b. Translation must be updated any time a change is submitted for approval.
- 7) Google Translate is integrated into the system for several other select languages. If the school does not have a qualified translator to update the translation, the previously manually entered Spanish translation must be deleted before submission.
- 8) The School Explorer also includes attributes that are pre-populated from several district data systems and cannot be edited by school or regional staff.
- 9) Principals with multiple cost centers can manage the visibility of some of these attributes at the other cost centers by using the School Attribute Validation/Confirmation tool that is also available in the Principal Portal “Quick Actions” menu.
- 10) Principals and regional directors can view the new “Insights” metrics in the *MyCMS* administrator dashboard for their assigned school(s).
 - a. Shows the number of times and the types of searches parents in their school community are conducting.
 - b. Can be used when considering the types of school features parents are looking for so that schools can develop new strategies for highlighting those offerings to prospective families.

RELATED RESOURCES:

Job aids and supporting documentation is available within the Principal Portal at <https://principalportal.lausd.net/CMS/Default.aspx>.

Strategic Enrollment and Program Planning strategies for attracting and retaining students can be accessed at <https://www.lausd.org/Page/18536>.

ATTACHMENTS: None**ASSISTANCE:**

If you have questions or need assistance with updating or approving school profiles, please contact Michael Kessler, Coordinator, Strategic Enrollment and Program Planning Office, at michael.kessler@lausd.net.