

How to update the "Resources for schools" page

Introduction

This guide covers the process for updating content on the “Resources for Schools” page on VA.gov. The content of the “Resources for schools” page is managed in the VA GitHub Repository.

What is a GitHub repository?

A GitHub repository (GitHub repo) is a collection of files that are organized into branches. There are Master branches and development branches.

Master branches

Master branches contain production-ready files that are ready for deployment or that have already been deployed. The “Resources for Schools” webpage leverages two Master branches: vets-website and vagov-content.

vets-website

The vets-website master branch contains 2 files that allow you to manage announcements and events (conferences, events, and webinars).

The editable files in the vets-website master branch are:

- announcements.json
<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vets-website/blob/master/src/applications/static-pages/school-resources/constants/announcements.json>
- events.json
<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vets-website/blob/master/src/applications/static-pages/school-resources/constants/events.json>

vagov-content

The vagov-content master branch contains a file that allows you to manage all main content on the “Resources for Schools” webpage, besides announcements and events.

The editable file in the vagov-content master branch is:

- “school-administrators.md”.

<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vagov-content/blob/master/pages/school-administrators.md>

Development Branches

Development branches store files that are being created and modified. Once the files in a development branch are ready to go live, they can be reviewed and merged into the master branch for deployment to the website.

Main Page

What is considered main page content?

The following static content on the “Resources for Schools” page is considered main page content and is editable on the “school-administrators.md” page:

- Page title
- Intro paragraph
- “On this page” links
- “Key resources for SCOs” links
- “Training and guides” content
- “Policies and procedures” content
- “Resources to support students” content
- Right Rail callouts
 - “SCO Handbook”
 - “Ask questions”
 - “Average processing times”
 - “Connect with us”

Note: Announcements and events are considered dynamic content, as they expire automatically, and are edited in separate json files. Instructions for editing announcements and event [are found below].

How do I update content and links on the main page?

To update content and links, follow these steps below:

- 1) In GitHub, navigate to the main content page for the “Resources for schools” section.

Page name: school-administrators.md
<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vagov-content/blob/master/pages/school-administrators.md>

Note: If you are just starting the edit, make sure you currently have the “Master” branch selected in the upper left corner of the page. If you are returning to finish an edit you previously started, be sure you have the correct branch selected in the upper left corner of the page.

department-of-veterans-affairs / vagov-content

Code Issues 1 Pull requests 34 Actions Projects 0 Wiki Security Insights

Branch: master vagov-content / pages / education / school-resources.md

elder-joseph Bah 19964 (#588) 2987b0b 21 hours ago

5 contributors

595 lines (578 sloc) | 33.4 KB

Raw Blame History

layout	template	title	display_title	heading	permalink
page-breadcrumbs.html	education-sco	Resources for schools			https://www.benefits.v

Edit this file

Figure # The school-administrators.md file with Master branch selected

- 2) Click the edit button in the upper right corner of the page and begin editing.



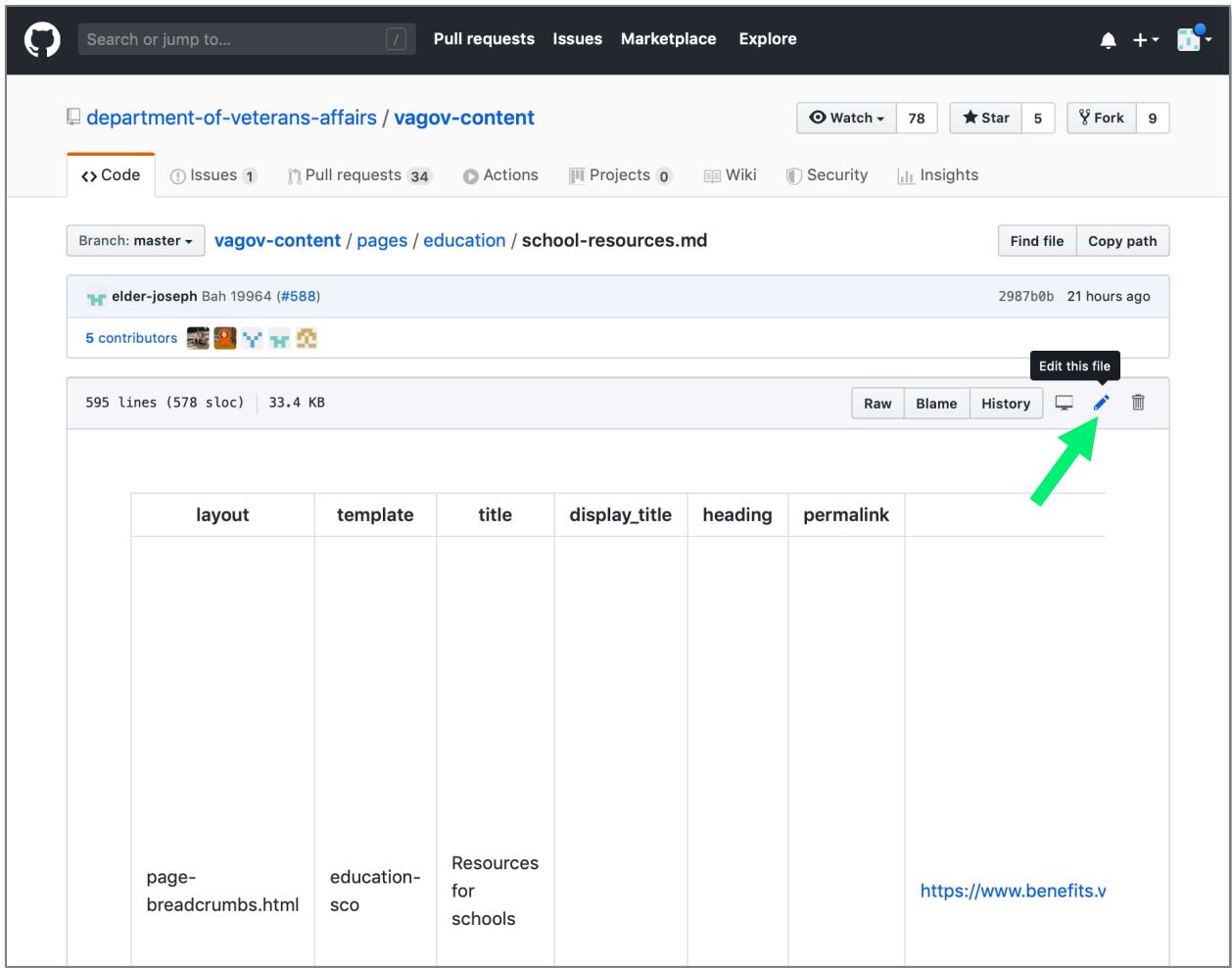


Figure # The school-administrators.md file with Edit button highlighted

Main content considerations

- Where possible, content should be categorized beneath meaningful sub-headings to ensure the content is easy to find.
- If there are more than 10 links beneath a sub-heading, consider whether an additional sub-heading is needed.
- When vital documents such as informational letters are moved from announcements to the main content of the page, the publication date (MM/DD/YYYY) can be added to the end of the link name.

Right rail considerations

- **“SCO Handbook” promo**
Be sure to update the “Revision number” and the “Last updated date” as new handbooks are posted, so users can check to be sure they are using the latest version.
- **“Ask questions” callout**

SCOs appreciate the existing resources and the prominence of the Submit a Question feature. This callout only needs editing if the links change.

- **“Average processing times” callout**

When updating the time, be sure to update the “Last updated date” so users can gauge the accuracy of the estimates.

- **“Connect with us” callout**

The content of this callout is expected to remain unchanged unless phone numbers or data changes.

- 3) After you've made the necessary edits, scroll to the bottom of the page and confirm that the 2nd radio button ("Create a new branch for this commit and start a pull request") is selected.

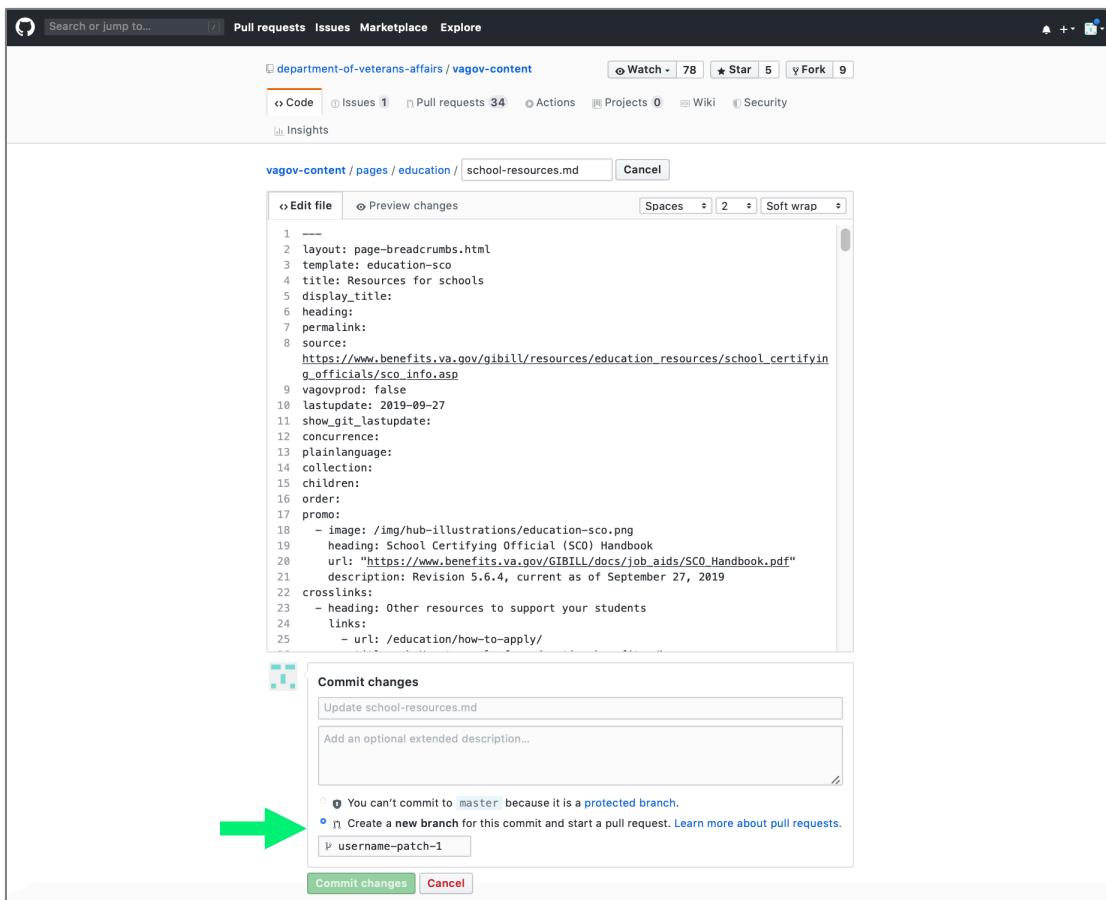


Figure # The school-administrators.md file with new branch option selected

- 4) In the branch name box above the green "Commit changes" button, use the auto-populated name, enter a custom name for the new development branch, or use an existing development branch, and then click the green "Commit Changes" to begin the process of initializing a draft pull request.

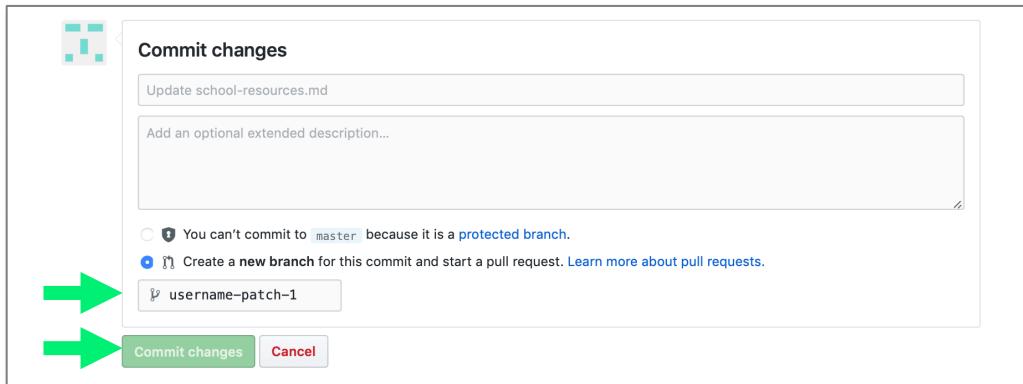


Figure # New branch name field and Commit changes button

The “Open a pull request” page appears. If your changes are complete, skip to step 9 to create a real pull request. Otherwise, continue to Step 5 to create a draft pull request.

- 5) Add a description of the proposed changes (i.e., added new form) and assign assignees if you’d like someone on your team to review the edit.

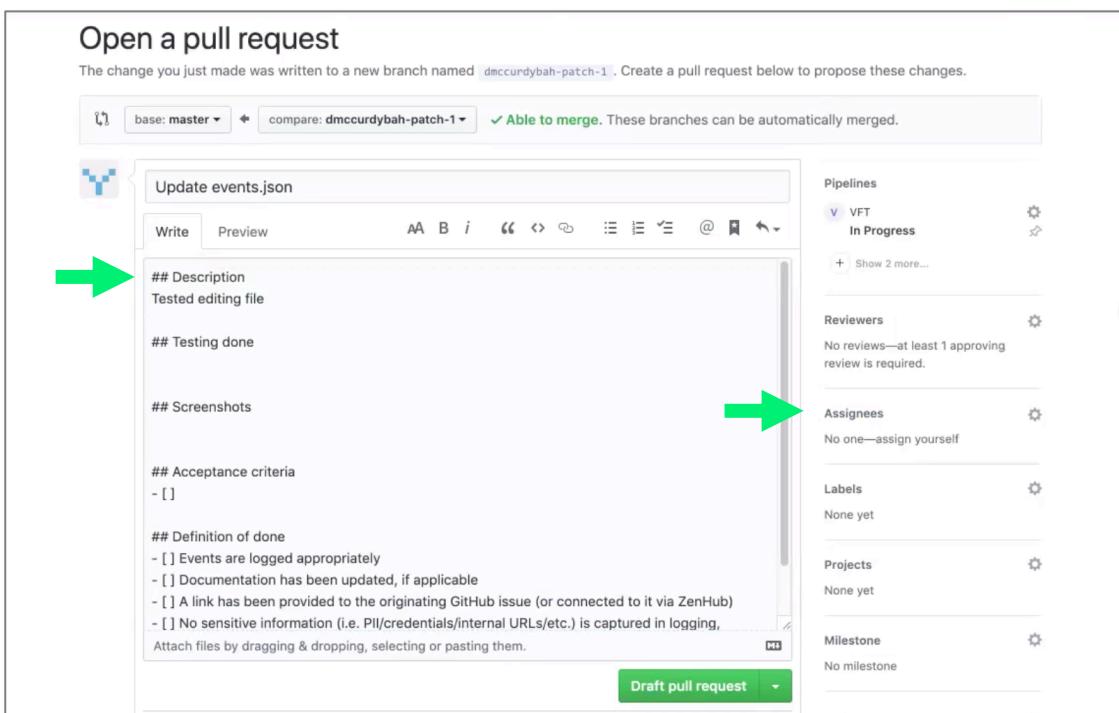


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 6) Be sure “Draft pull request” selected as the green button name in the lower right corner of the page.

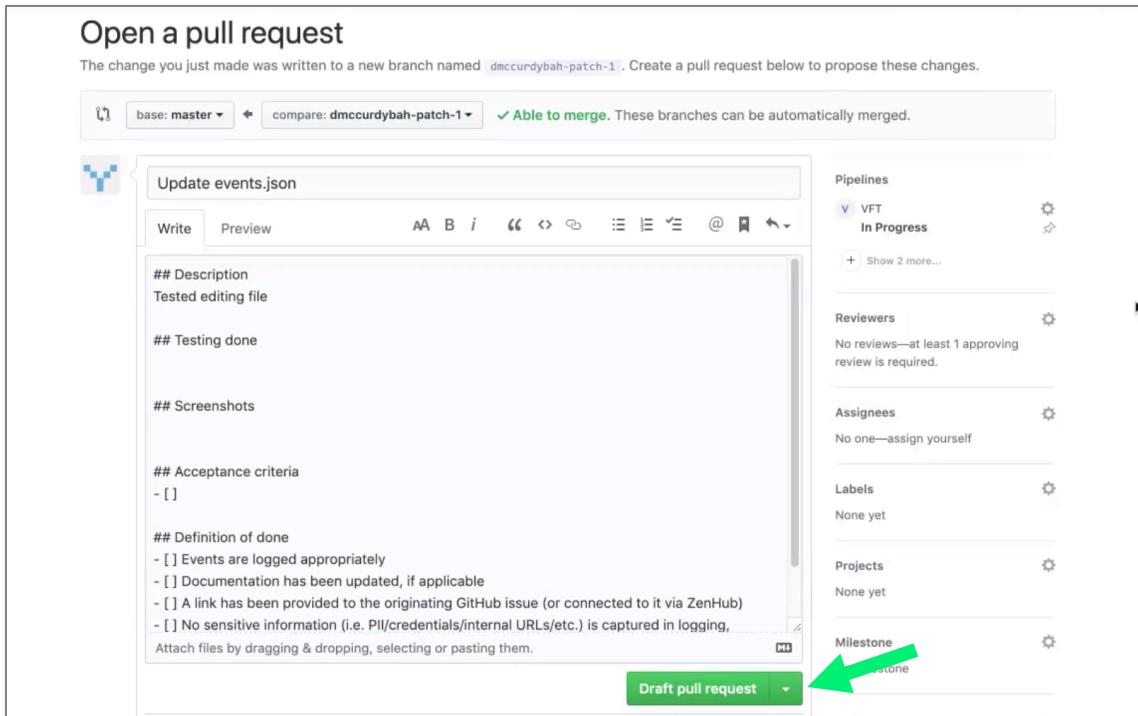
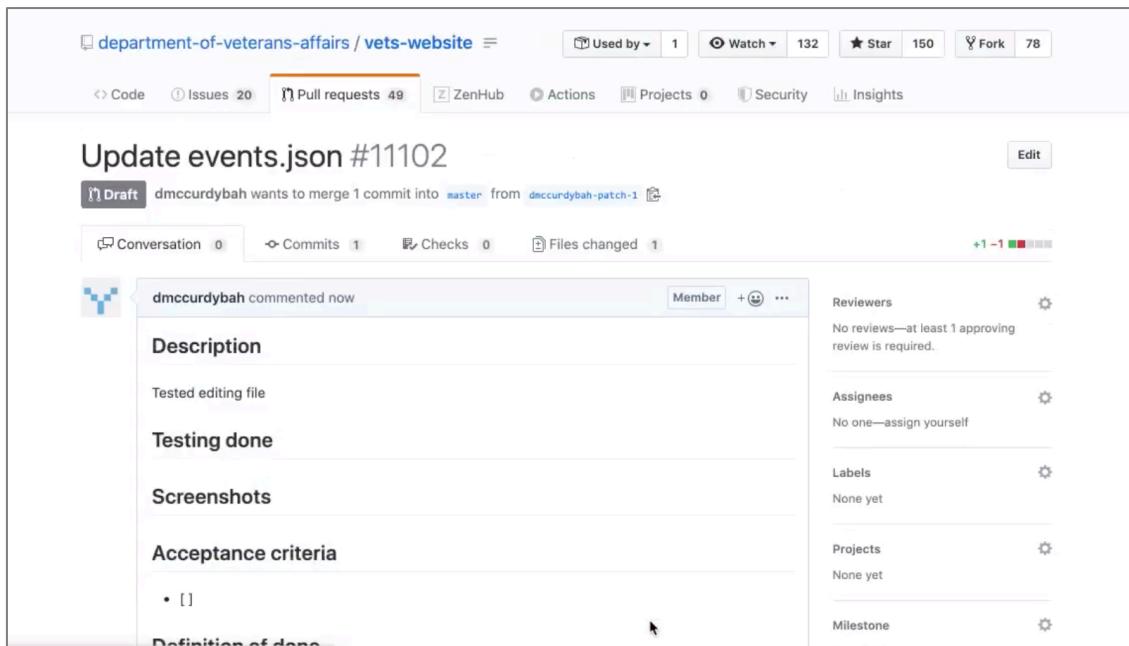


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 7) Click the “Draft pull request” button. Submitting a draft pull request will create a preview content instance where you can review your changes.



- 8) Repeat steps 1-7 as needed to refine the content. Once you are satisfied with the content, click the “Commit Changes” button, to create a real pull request. The “Open a pull request” page will appear.

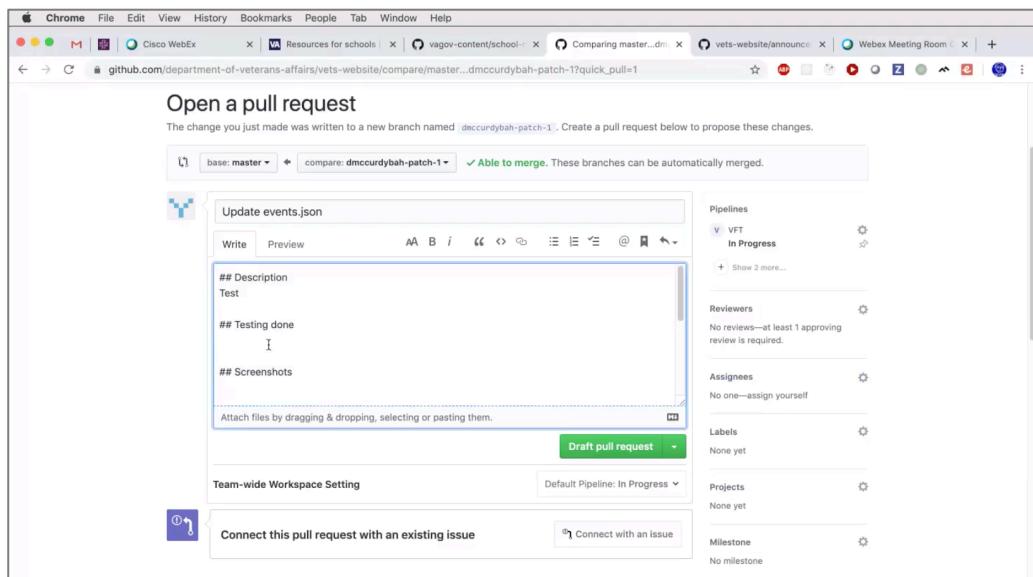


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 9) Enter a description of the change you'll be submitting for review and click the arrow to the right of the green “Create pull request” button in the lower right corner of the page to select “Create Pull Request” rather “Draft Pull Request”. The pull request automatically flags the file for review by the review team.

Note: The review and approval process may take a day or so, so planning ahead will ensure that time-sensitive announcements appear on the site in a timely manner.

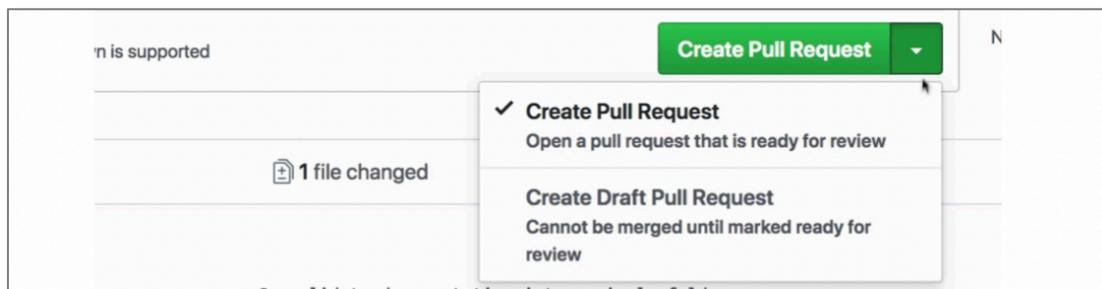


Figure #Select “Create Pull Request”

- 10) Address any recommendations suggested by reviewers.
- 11) Once your edits have been reviewed and approved, the page will be merged into the Master branch and deployed to the website during the daily deployment. Daily deployments are pushed to production at 3PM ET and will be visible on the site shortly after that time.

Announcements

What content appears in the “Latest announcements from VA” section?

The Announcements section of the "Resources for Students" page on VA.gov provides updates such as the publication of a new version of the School Certifying Official Handbook, the release of newly revised forms, and news related to legislation.

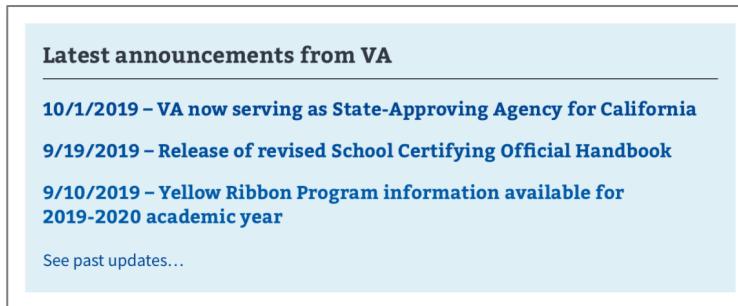


Figure 2 “Latest announcements from VA”

Each announcement, and its supporting content, will also be entered and displayed in the Announcements section of the Education landing page on benefits.va.gov. This is where users can see the full text of current and past announcements.

Note: The “announcement” of events and webinars should be entered as events and will appear in the “Upcoming events” area

How do I add an announcement?

To add a new announcement, follow the steps below:

- 1) In GitHub, navigate to the announcements page.

File name: “announcements.json”
<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vets-website/blob/master/src/applications/static-pages/school-resources/constants/announcements.json>).

Note: If you are just starting the edit, make sure you currently have the “Master” branch selected in the upper left corner of the page. If you are returning to finish editing a page you already started editing, be sure you have the correct branch selected in the upper left corner of the page.

A screenshot of a Mac OS X desktop showing a browser window for GitHub. The URL is github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vets-website. The page shows the 'Code' tab selected for the file 'announcements.json'. A green arrow points to the 'Branch: master' dropdown menu. The commit details show a pull request by 'dmccurdybah' titled 'SCO Anoucements (#11068)' made 21 hours ago. The code editor displays the JSON content:

```
1  [
2    {
3      "name": "VA now serving as State-Approving Agency for California",
4      "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/conferences_and_events.as",
5      "date": "2019-11-01",
6      "displayStartDate": "2019-10-01"
7    },
8    {
9      "name": "Release of revised School Certifying Official Handbook",
10     "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/conferences_and_events.as",
11     "date": "2019-11-03",
12     "displayStartDate": "2019-10-01"
13   },
14   {
15     "name": "Yellow Ribbon Program information available for 2019-2020 academic year",
16     "location": "Online",
17     "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifying_officials/conferences_and_events.as",
18     "date": "2019-11-02",
19     "displayStartDate": "2019-10-01"
20   }
21 ]
```

Figure # The announcements.json file with Master branch selected

- 2) Click the edit button in the upper right corner of the page to open the page for editing.



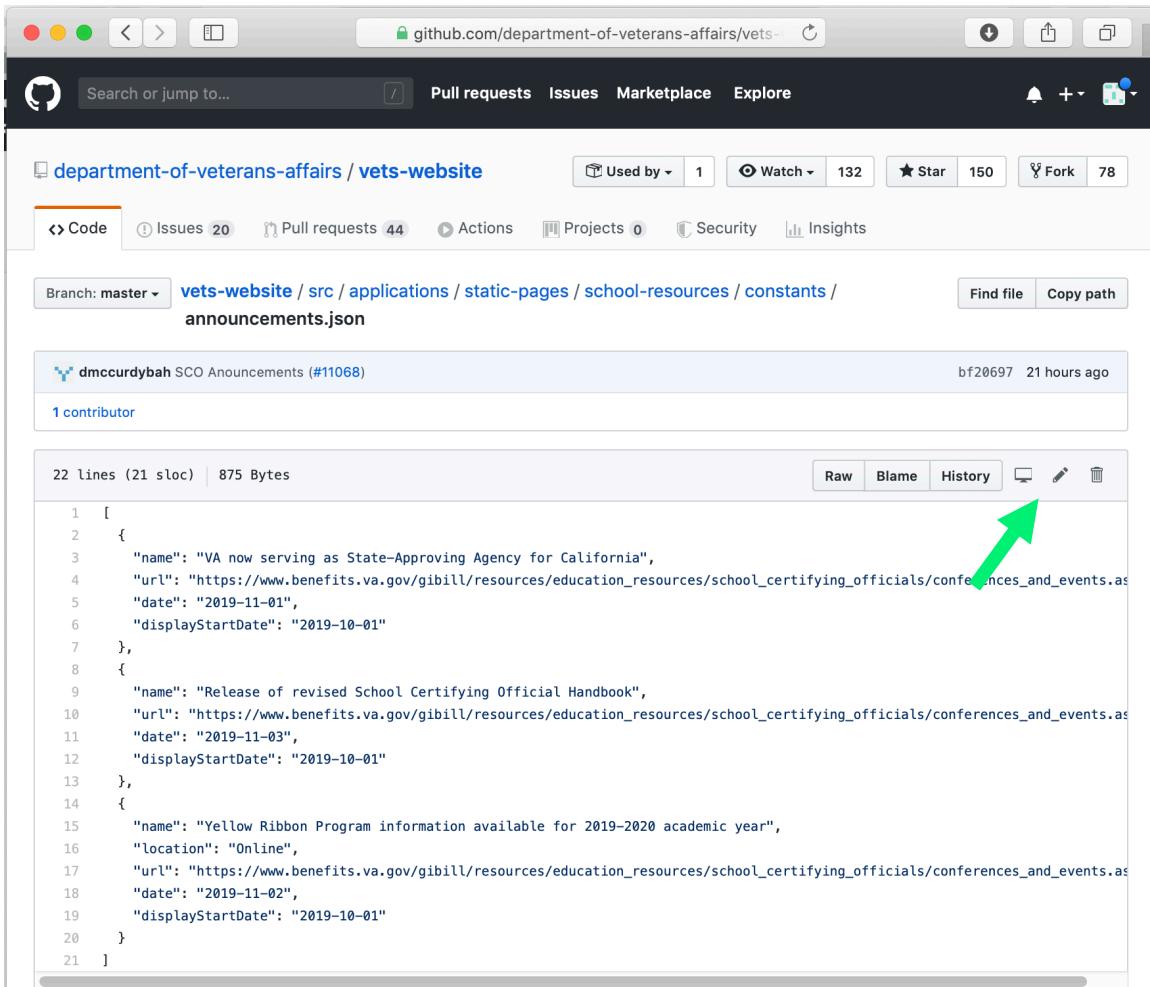


Figure # “Announcements.json” file with edit button highlighted

Each section of code represents an announcement. Figure # above includes 3 announcements. The portions highlighted in yellow below are editable. By copying, pasting and editing a block of code, you will be able to create a new announcement.

```
{
  "name": "Yellow Ribbon Program information available for 2019-2020
academic year",
  "location": "Online",
  "url":
"https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certify
ngOfficials/conferences_and_events.asp",
  "date": "2019-11-02",
  "displayStartDate": "2019-10-01"
  "displayEndDate": "2019-11-01"
}
```

- 3) Add a comma after the last “}” in the file to separate it from the new announcement you are about to add. You do not need to add a comma after the “}” at the end of all announcements.
- 4) Copy one of the existing announcements, including all texts between the brackets { }, and paste it after the comma you just added at the end of the file .

Note: Deleting content after it's expired will reduce clutter and make the page easier to maintain.
- 5) Edit the values that are highlighted in yellow. As you edit the information, follow the helpful hints below.

Name (required)

To ensure proper display, announcements should be capped at 120 characters. The date of the announcement is separate content element, so there is no need to include it in the name.

URL

Include the full URL without spaces even if it is long and wraps to the next line.

Ex: "<http://www....>"

Date (required)

Enter the date (MM/DD/YYYY) that will appear as the announcement's publication date. Include dashes as separators and leading zeros, as necessary.

Ex: 2019/12/04

DisplayStartDate (required)

Enter the date (MM/DD/YYYY) the announcement should display on the site. Include dashes as separators and leading zeros, as necessary.

Ex: 2010/12/05

DisplayEndDate

Enter the date (MM/DD/YYYY) the announcement should expire. This is the last day the announcement will display on the site. The default displayEndDate is 30 days past the displayStartDate, however you can edit the date as needed. Include dashes as separators and leading zeros, as necessary.

Ex: 2019/12/05

9/19/2019—Release of revised School Certifying Official Handbook

Figure 2 “Example of an announcement

- 6) After you've made the necessary edits, scroll to the bottom of the page and confirm that the 2nd radio button (“Create a new branch for this commit and start a pull request”) is selected.

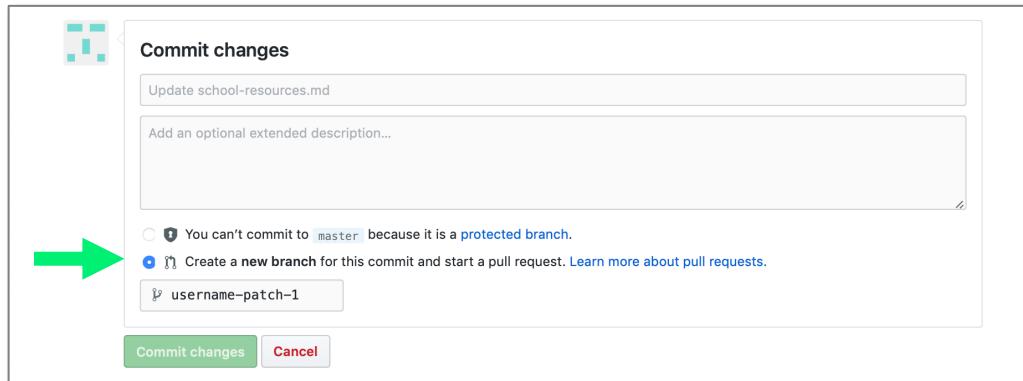


Figure # The create new branch option

- 7) In the branch name box above the green “Commit changes” button, use the auto-populated name, enter a custom name for the new development branch, or use an existing development branch, and then click the green “Commit Changes” to begin the process of initializing a draft pull request.

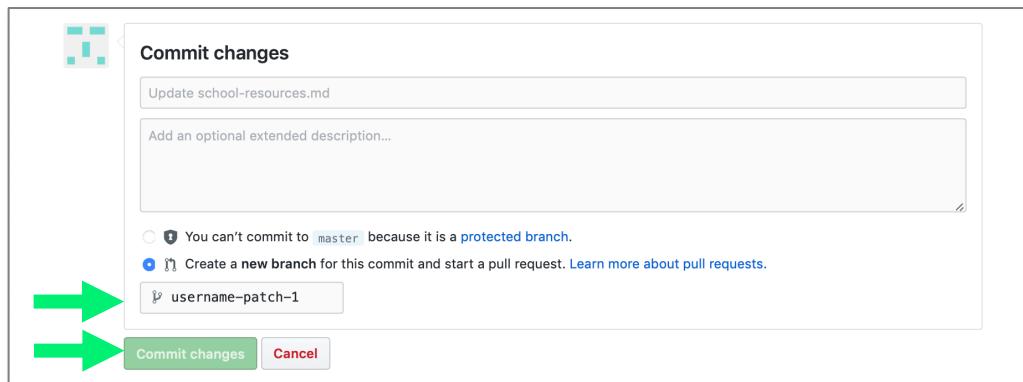


Figure # The new branch name field and Commit changes button

The “Open a pull request” page appears. If your changes are complete, skip to step 11 to create a real pull request. Otherwise, continue to Step 8 to create a draft pull request.

- 8) Add a description of the proposed changes (i.e., added new form) and assign assignees if you'd like someone on your team to review the edit.

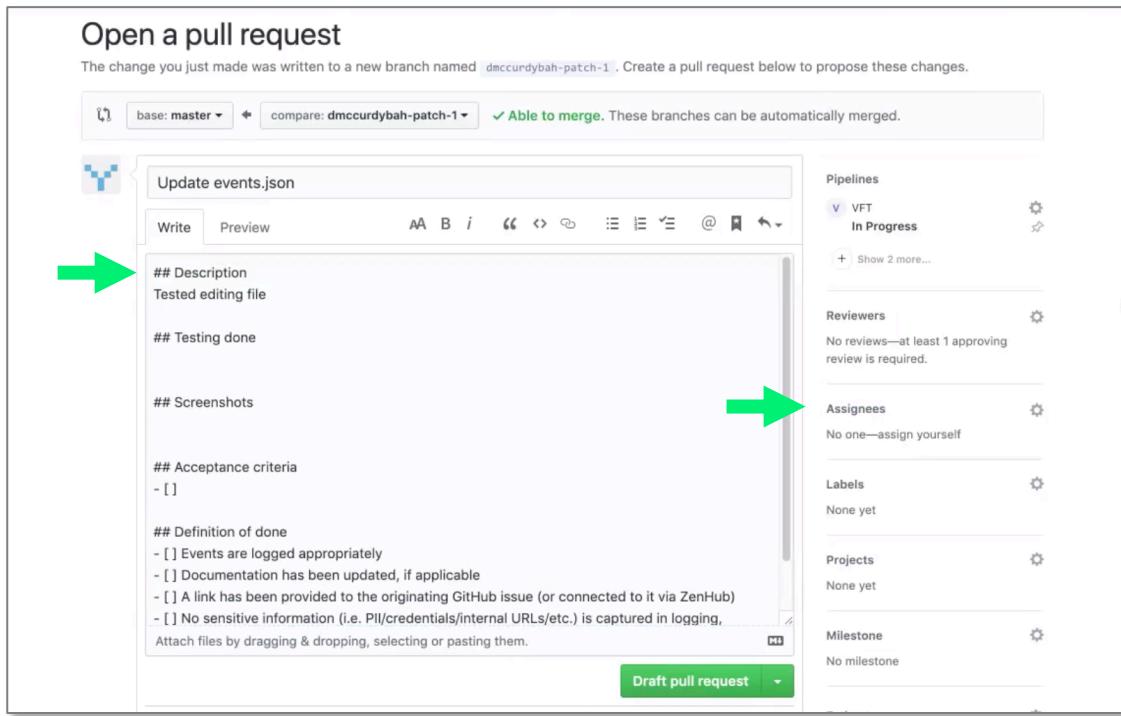


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 9) Be sure “Draft pull request” selected as the green button name in the lower right corner of the page.

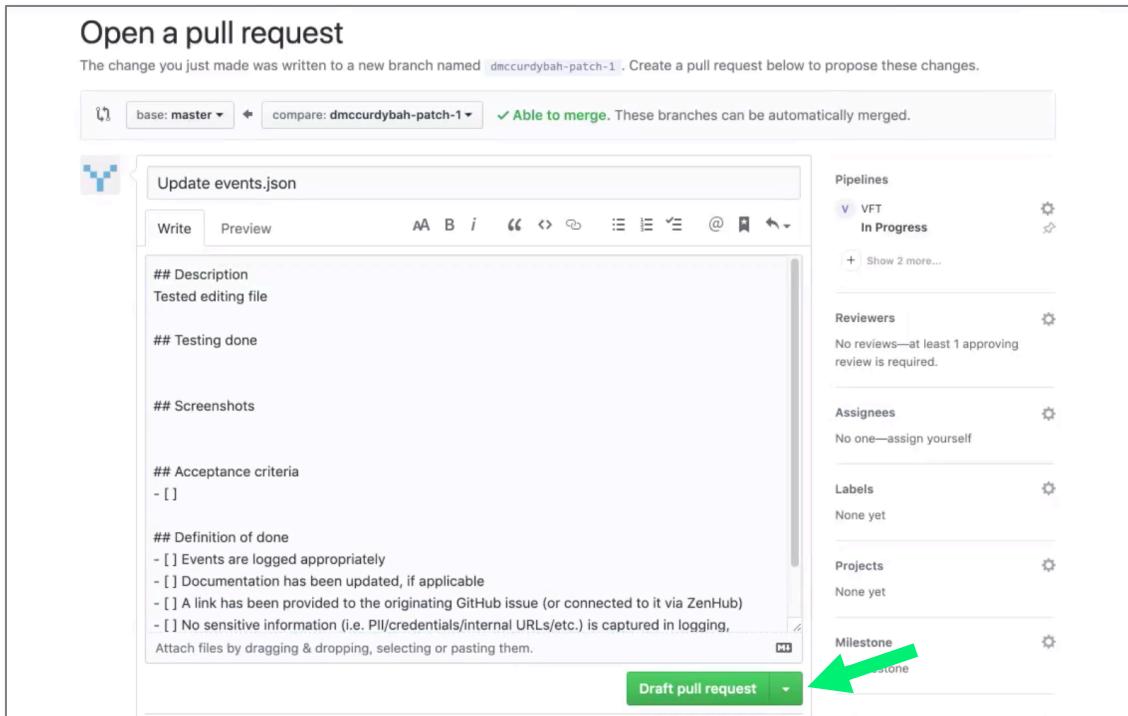
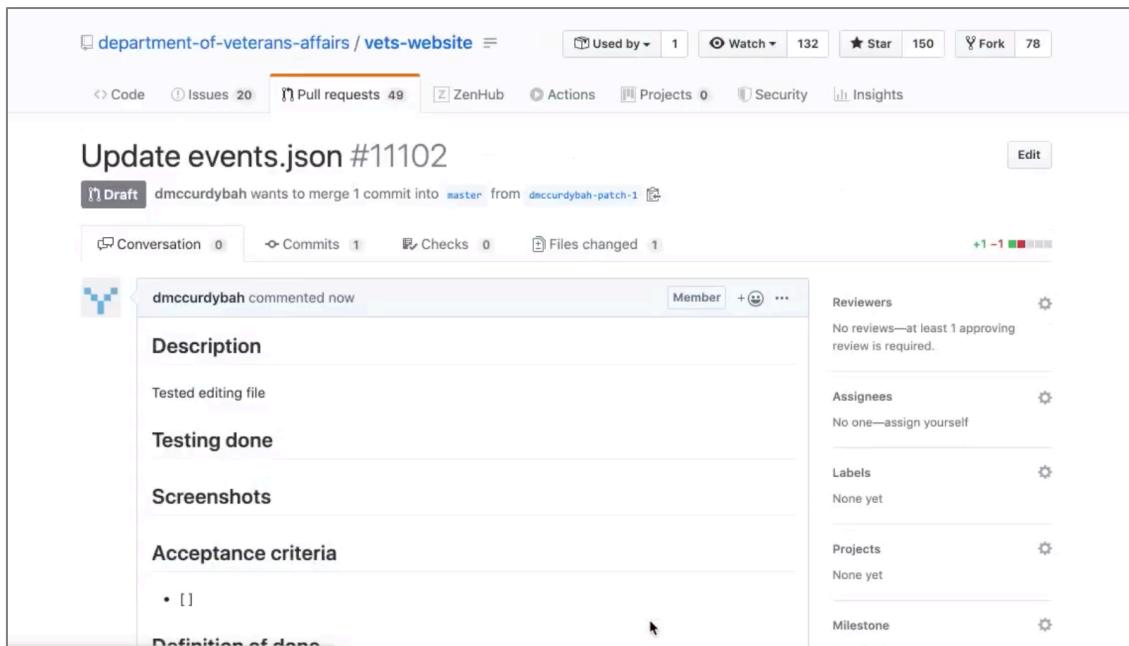


Figure # Enter description of changes

- Click the “Draft pull request” button. Submitting a draft pull request will create a preview content instance where you can review your changes.



- 11) Repeat steps 1-10 as needed to refine the content. Once you are satisfied with the content, click the “Commit Changes” button, to create a real pull request. The “Open a pull request” page will appear.

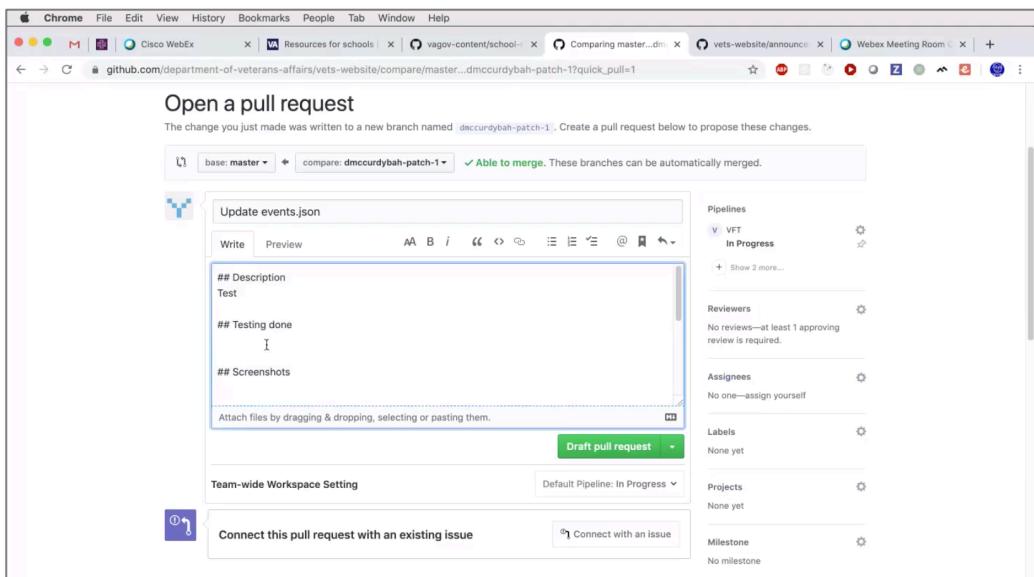


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 12) Enter a description of the change you'll be submitting for review and click the arrow to the right of the green “Create pull request” button in the lower right corner of the page to select “Create Pull Request” rather than “Draft Pull Request”. The pull request automatically flags the file for review by the review team.

Note: The review and approval process may take a day or so, so planning ahead will ensure that time-sensitive announcements appear on the site in a timely manner.

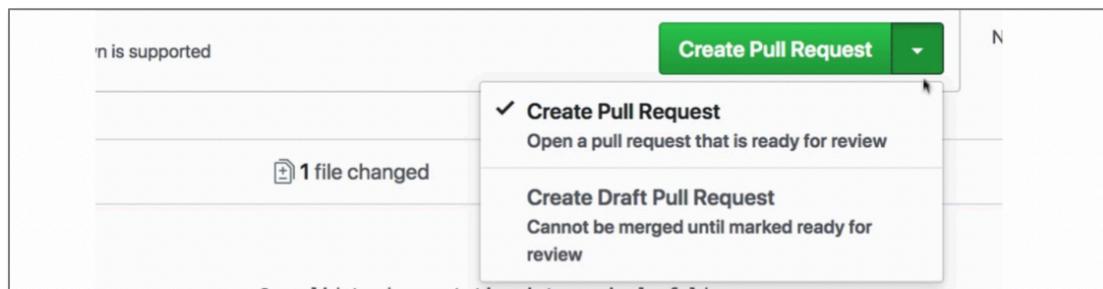


Figure # Select “Create Pull Request”

13) Address any recommendations suggested by reviewers.

Once your edits have been reviewed and approved, the page will be merged into the Master branch and deployed to the website during the daily deployment. Daily deployments are pushed to production at 3PM ET and will be visible on the site shortly after that time.

When do announcements expire?

Announcements will be displayed between their displayStartDate and displayEndDate. The date you enter will determine when the event rolls off the display on the "Resources for Schools" page. The Event will continue to display in the Information section of the Education landing page on benefits.va.gov page.

Events

What content appears in the “Upcoming events” section?

The Upcoming Events section of the “Resources for schools” page promotes upcoming conferences, events, and training webinars that are applicable to SCOs and school administrators.

Upcoming events

[Arizona Veterans Program Association-2019 Fall Mini-Conference >](#)
November 1, 2019 — Mesa, AZ

[Oklahoma Veterans Education Specialists Association \(OVESA\) Fall Conference >](#)
November 4–6, 2019 — Stillwater, OK

[VBA Education Service 1st Quarterly Webinar >](#)
December 19 & 20, 2019 — Online

See full list of [Conferences and Events](#) | [Training Webinars](#)

Figure # “Upcoming events” on the “Resources for schools” page

These events are also entered and displayed on the Events and Conferences, and Webinars pages on benefits.va.gov.

How do I add an event?

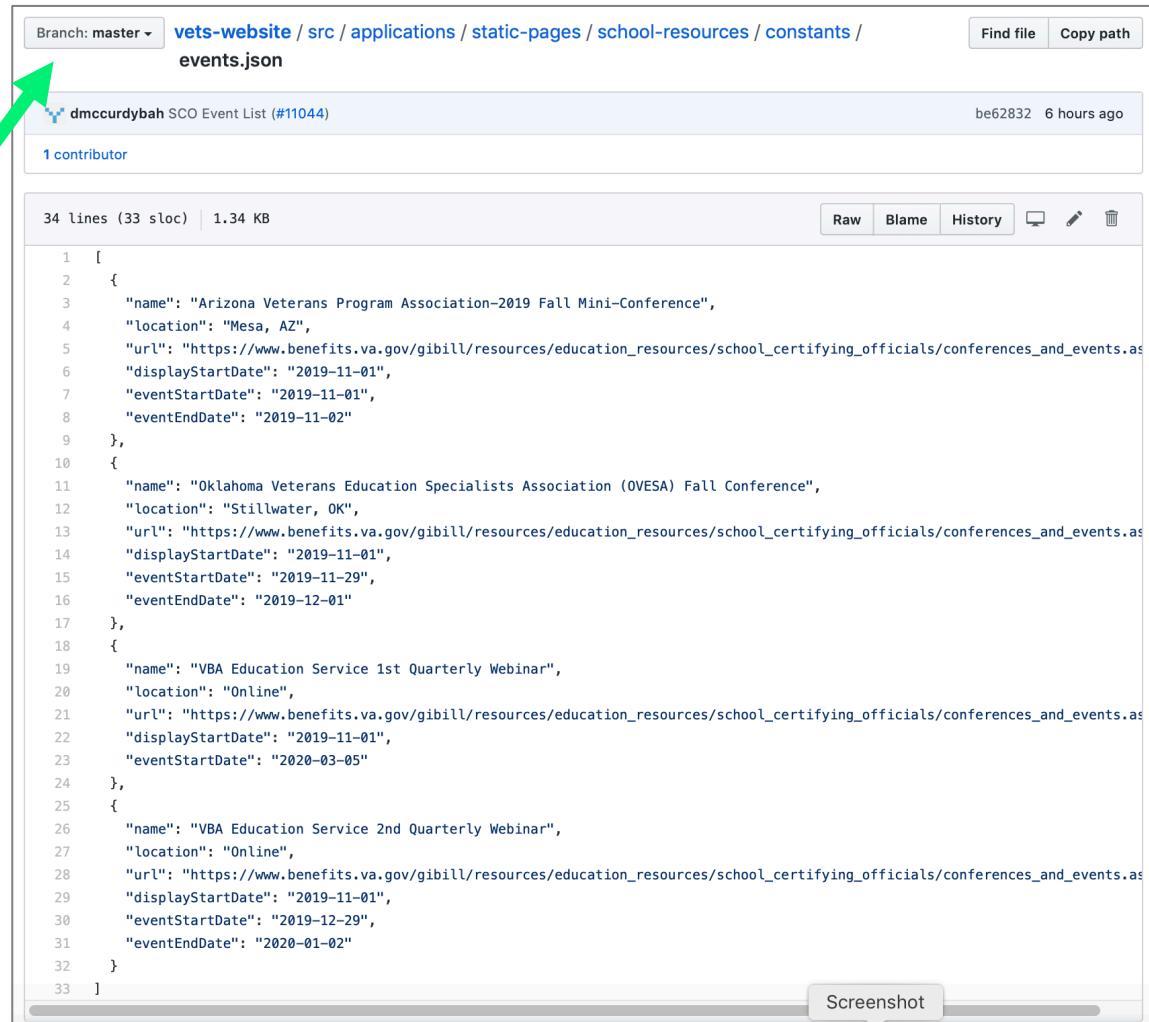
To add a new event to the Resources for Schools page, follow the steps below:

- 1) In GitHub, navigate to the events page.

File Name: “events.json”

<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/vets-website/blob/master/src/applications/static-pages/school-resources/constants/events.json>).

Note: If you are just starting the edit, make sure you currently have the “Master” branch selected in the upper left corner of the page. If you are returning to finish editing a page you already started editing, be sure you have the correct branch selected in the upper left corner of the page.



Branch: master ▾ [vets-website](#) / [src](#) / [applications](#) / [static-pages](#) / [school-resources](#) / [constants](#) / [events.json](#)

dmccurdybah SCO Event List (#11044) be62832 6 hours ago

1 contributor

34 lines (33 sloc) | 1.34 KB

```
1 [  
2 {  
3   "name": "Arizona Veterans Program Association-2019 Fall Mini-Conference",  
4   "location": "Mesa, AZ",  
5   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.as  
6   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",  
7   "eventStartDate": "2019-11-01",  
8   "eventEndDate": "2019-11-02"  
9 },  
10 {  
11   "name": "Oklahoma Veterans Education Specialists Association (OVESA) Fall Conference",  
12   "location": "Stillwater, OK",  
13   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.as  
14   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",  
15   "eventStartDate": "2019-11-29",  
16   "eventEndDate": "2019-12-01"  
17 },  
18 {  
19   "name": "VBA Education Service 1st Quarterly Webinar",  
20   "location": "Online",  
21   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.as  
22   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",  
23   "eventStartDate": "2020-03-05"  
24 },  
25 {  
26   "name": "VBA Education Service 2nd Quarterly Webinar",  
27   "location": "Online",  
28   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.as  
29   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",  
30   "eventStartDate": "2019-12-29",  
31   "eventEndDate": "2020-01-02"  
32 }  
33 ]
```

Screenshot

Figure # “Events.json” file with Master branch selected

- 2) Click the edit button in the upper right corner of the page to open the page for editing.





Branch: master [vets-website](#) / [src](#) / [applications](#) / [static-pages](#) / [school-resources](#) / [constants](#) / [events.json](#)

[Find file](#) [Copy path](#)

dmccurdybah SCO Event List (#11044) be62832 6 hours ago

1 contributor

34 lines (33 sloc) | 1.34 KB

Raw Blame History

```

1 [
2 {
3   "name": "Arizona Veterans Program Association-2019 Fall Mini-Conference",
4   "location": "Mesa, AZ",
5   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.asp",
6   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",
7   "eventStartDate": "2019-11-01",
8   "eventEndDate": "2019-11-02"
9 },
10 {
11   "name": "Oklahoma Veterans Education Specialists Association (OVESA) Fall Conference",
12   "location": "Stillwater, OK",
13   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.asp",
14   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",
15   "eventStartDate": "2019-11-29",
16   "eventEndDate": "2019-12-01"
17 },
18 {
19   "name": "VBA Education Service 1st Quarterly Webinar",
20   "location": "Online",
21   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.asp",
22   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",
23   "eventStartDate": "2020-03-05"
24 },
25 {
26   "name": "VBA Education Service 2nd Quarterly Webinar",
27   "location": "Online",
28   "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.asp",
29   "displayStartDate": "2019-11-01",
30   "eventStartDate": "2019-12-29",
31   "eventEndDate": "2020-01-02"
32 }
33 ]

```

Screenshot

Figure # “Events.json” file with Edit button highlighted

Each section of code represents an event. Figure # above includes 4 events. The portions that are highlighted in yellow below are editable. By copying, pasting and editing a block of code, you will be able to create a new event.

```
{
  "name": "Arizona Veterans Program Association-2010 Fall Mini-Conference",
  "location": "Mesa, AZ",
  "url": "https://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/resources/education_resources/school_certifyingOfficials/conferences_and_events.asp",
  "displayStartDate": "2010-11-01",
  "eventStartDate": "2010-11-01",
  "eventEndDate": "2010-11-02"
},
```

- 3) Add a comma after the last "}" in the file, so you can separate previous events from the new event you are about to add.

Note: After the last event there should be no comma.

- 4) Copy one of the existing events, including all texts between the brackets { }, and paste it after the comma you just added at the end of the file.

Note: Deleting content after it's expired will reduce clutter and make the page easier to maintain.

- 5) Edit the values that are highlighted in yellow. As you edit the information, follow the helpful hints below.

Name (required)

To ensure proper display, the event name should be 156 characters or less.

URL (required)

Ensure that there are no spaces in the URL.

Location (required)

For physical events, enter the "City" and "State abbreviation" separated with a comma.

For webinars, enter "Online".

EventStartDate (required)

Enter the start date of the event (MM/DD/YYYY). Include dashes as separators and leading zeros, as necessary.

Ex: 2010/12/05

EventEndDate (optional)

Enter the last date of the event (MM/DD/YYYY). An end date is only needed for events that span multiple days. Include dashes as separators and leading zeros, as necessary.

Ex: 2010/12/05

DisplayStartDate (required)

Enter the date (MM/DD/YYYY) that you would like the event to display on the site. Include dashes as separators and leading zeros, as necessary.

Ex: 2010/12/05

The event will automatically expire on the day after the event.

Example of a physical event

Oklahoma Veterans Education Specialists Association (OVESA) Fall Conference >
November 4–6, 2019 — Stillwater, OK

Figure # Example of a physical event

Example of an online webinar

VBA Education Service 1st Quarterly Webinar >
December 20, 2019 – Online

Figure # “Example of an online webinar”

- 6) After you've made the necessary edits, scroll to the bottom of the page and confirm that the 2nd radio button ("Create a new branch for this commit and start a pull request") is selected.

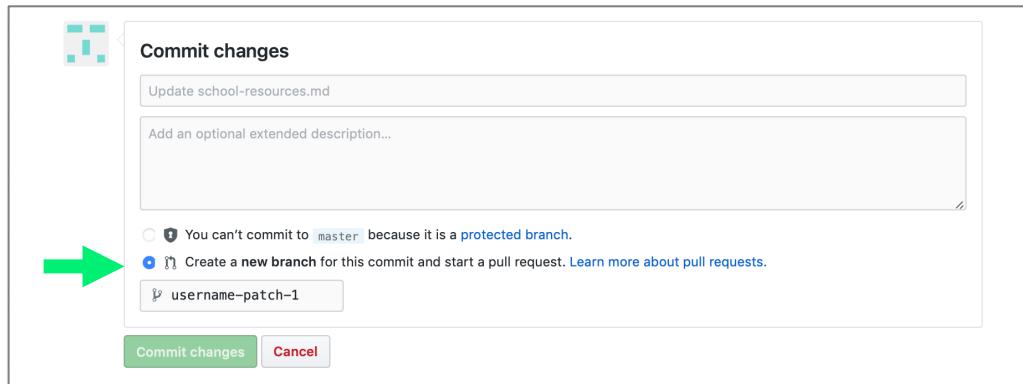


Figure # The Create new branch option selected

- 7) In the branch name box above the green "Commit changes" button, use the auto-populated name, enter a custom name for the new development branch, or use an existing development branch, and then click the green "Commit Changes" to begin the process of initializing a draft pull request.

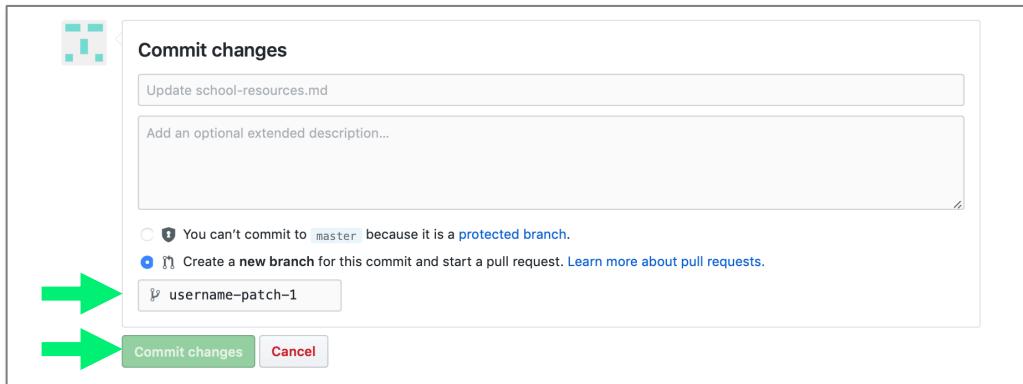


Figure # The branch name field and Commit changes button highlighted

The “Open a pull request” page appears. If your changes are complete, skip to step 11 to create a real pull request. Otherwise, continue to Step 8 to create a draft pull request.

- 8) Add a description of the proposed changes (i.e., added new form) and assign assignees if you’d like someone on your team to review the edit.

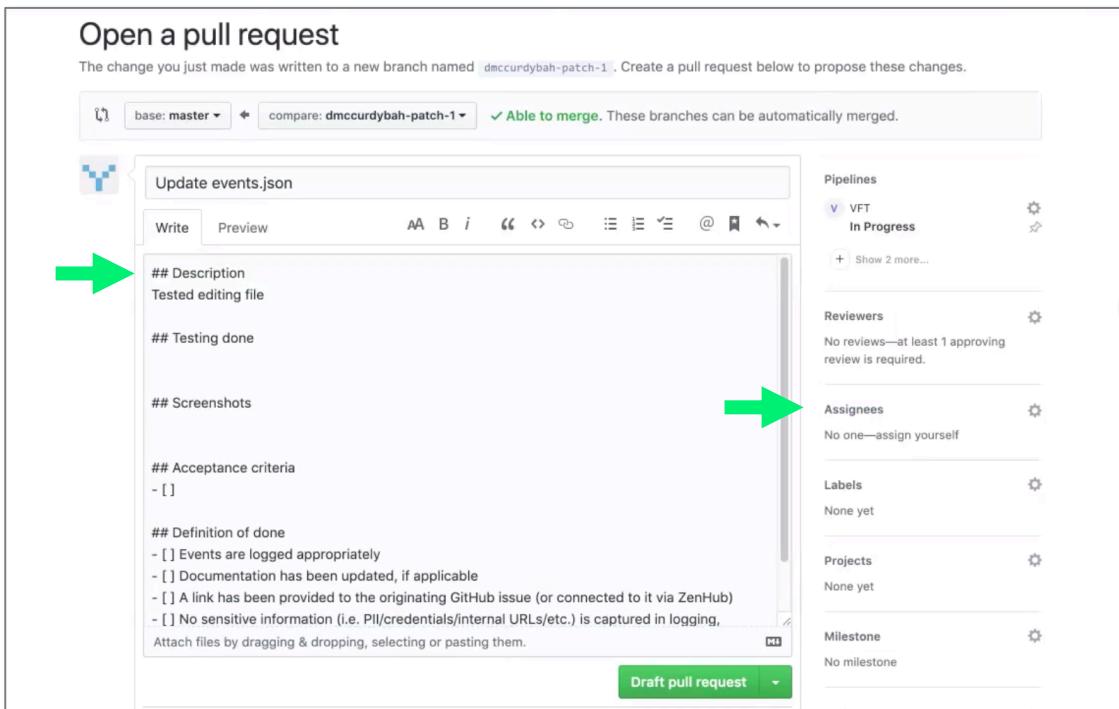


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 9) Be sure “Draft pull request” selected as the green button name in the lower right corner of the page.

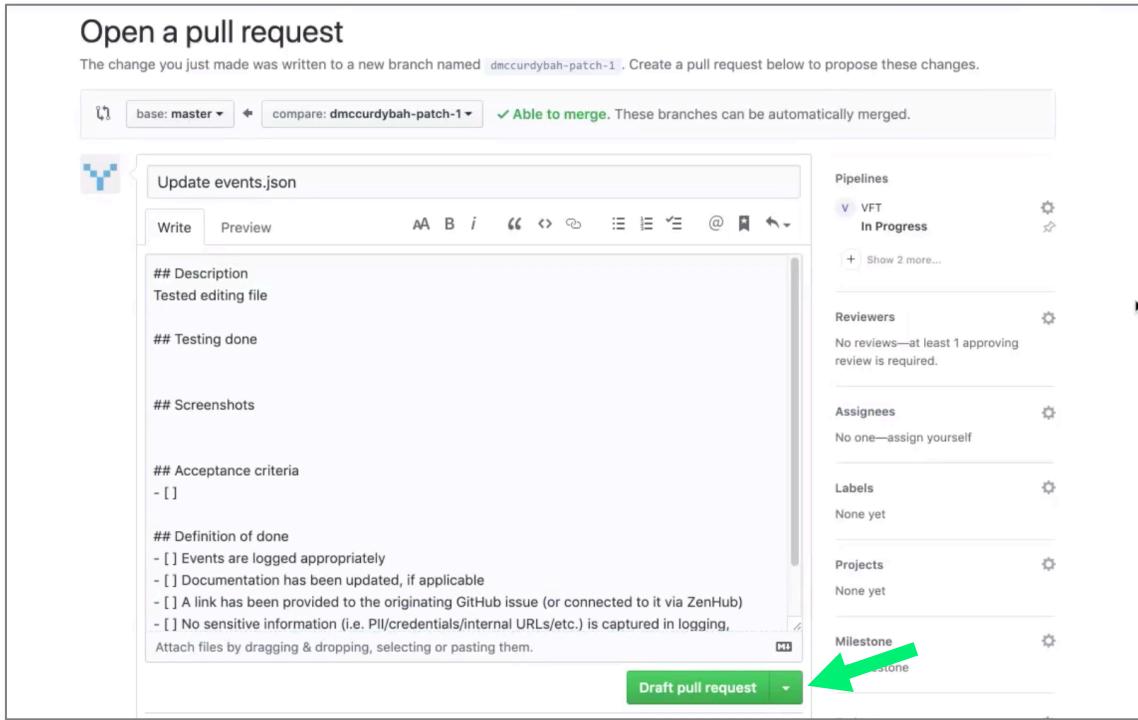
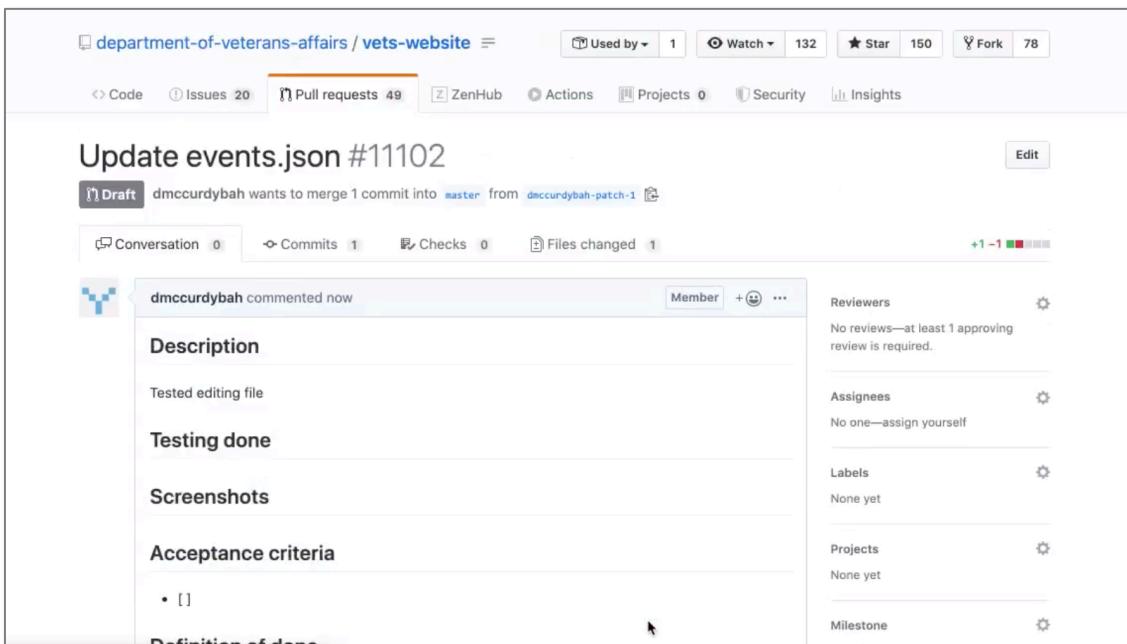


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 10) Click the “Draft pull request” button. Submitting a draft pull request will create a preview content instance where you can review your changes.



- 11) Repeat steps 1-10 as needed to refine the content. Once you are satisfied with the content, click the “Commit Changes” button, to create a real pull request. The “Open a pull request” page will appear.

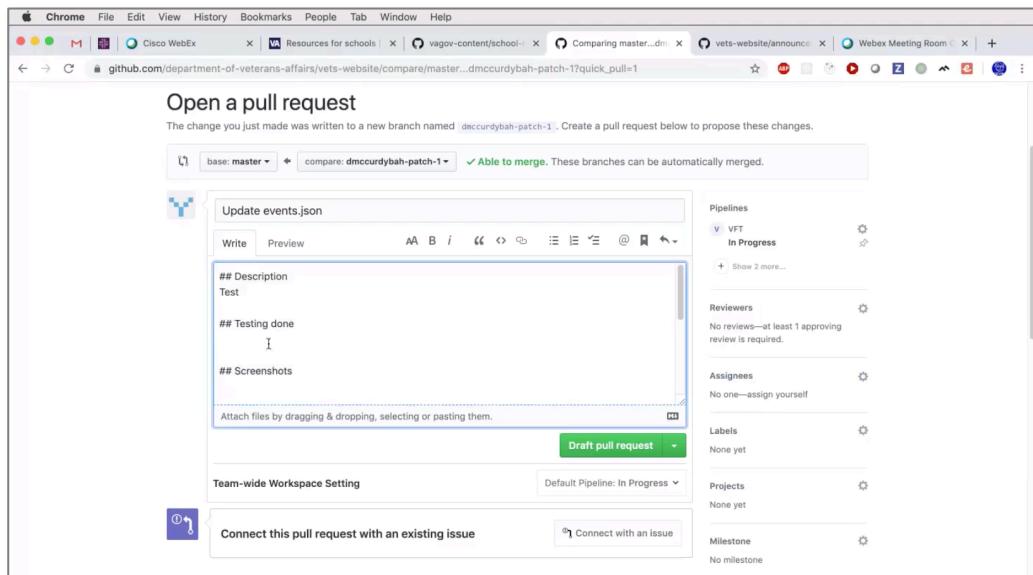


Figure # Enter description of changes

- 12) Enter a description of the change you'll be submitting for review and click the arrow to the right of the green “Create pull request” button in the lower right corner of the page to select “Create Pull Request” rather than “Draft Pull Request”. The pull request automatically flags the file for review by the review team.

Note: The review and approval process may take a day or so, so planning ahead will ensure that time-sensitive announcements appear on the site in a timely manner.

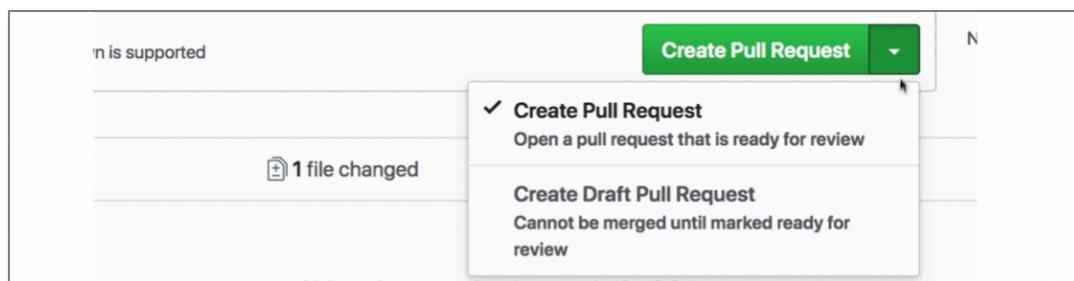


Figure # Select “Create Pull Request”

- 13) Address any recommendations suggested by reviewers.

Once your edits have been reviewed and approved, the page will be merged into the Master branch and deployed to the website during the daily deployment. Daily deployments are pushed to production at 3PM ET and will be visible on the site shortly after that time.

When do events expire?

Events expire and are removed from the “Resources for Schools” page one day after the eventEndDate. If an event is postponed or cancelled, the event can be modified or removed from the events.json file.

Useful Resources

The following guides may be useful for creating content in the VA.gov style.

Resources for Schools Page Content Strategy Guide

The Resources for Schools page Content Strategy Guide (<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/products/office-administration/vba/sco-migration/design/content/content-strategy.md>) provides background information on the components that appear on the Resources for Schools page.

Content writing and plain language best practices

The VA.gov Content writing and plain language best practices page (<https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/platform/content/content-best-practices.md>) provides links to the content styleguide and design styleguide.

VA.gov content styleguide

The VA.gov content styleguide (<https://design.va.gov/content-style-guide/>) helps to ensure that all content on VA.gov is written in the same voice.

VA.gov design system styleguide

The VA.gov design system styleguide (<https://design.va.gov/documentation/>) provides design guidelines and code to help you quickly create trustworthy, accessible, and consistent digital services

VA.gov GitHub content process

The VA.gov GitHub content process guide (https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/master/platform/content/GitHub_content_process.pdf) explains how to edit content on GitHub.

VA.gov PR process and code review guidelines

The PR process and code review guidelines (https://github.com/department-of-veterans-affairs/va.gov-team/blob/a33e322c34798b6bbd863eeceb888c0420114c2c/platform/engineering/code_review_guidelines.md) provides additional guidance on the PR process and code review process