

Montgomery County Public Schools
Department of Communications

Background

The Department of Communications is responsible for developing internal and external communications, supporting instruction, staff development, and business operations, and for coordinating parent/family outreach and community partnerships. The department includes five units: Electronic Graphics and Publishing, the Division of Family and Community Partnerships, Instructional Television, Public Information, and Web Services.

Develop Internal and External Communications

Two-way communication is implemented using web, print, video/TV, email, phone, and face-to-face interactions in multiple languages to 21,000 employees, 137,000 students, 97,000 families and almost one million county residents, with an emphasis on regular customer feedback.

- Publish weekly staff bulletin and job ads in print and web formats
- Administer the MCPS web with 199 school sites and 175 office sites
- Handle emergency communications via print, phone, email, web, and television
- Build and maintain searchable online staff directory
- Publish electronic and print parent newsletters in six languages
- Coordinate community forums, focus groups, and informational meetings
- Produce television programs and videos for parents in six languages on school system programs and resources
- Provide programming on two MCPS cable channels
- Administer foreign language mini web sites for parents in five languages
- Produce informational brochures and other multimedia resources, for parents, students and staff
- Cablecast and webcast closed captioned Board of Education meetings
- Cablecast monthly MCCPTA business meetings
- Administer Call Center in English and Spanish
- Respond to media inquiries and fulfill FOIA requests
- Conduct press conferences and provide support for elected officials' press events at schools

Support instruction, staff development, and business operations

The majority of the department's resources and services are deployed to support and facilitate instruction, staff development, and daily operations for all schools and offices.

- Produce classroom documents for teachers
- Print exams, study guides, course guides, daily planners, and literary magazines, and diplomas for students
- Publish online high school course bulletin, online High School Assessment prep course, and online academic resources for students
- Produce television programs to assist students in academic areas
- Produce videos to support staff development in the areas of literacy, math, reading strategies, grading and reporting, diversity, and assessments
- Train and support school/office webmasters and administrative secretaries
- Develop and support systems that enable schools and offices to stream video, administer online surveys, access email and e-pay stubs, register for professional development courses, access substitute calling system, accept resumes and access job vacancies
- Print manuals, materials, checklists, and booklets for personnel in building services, transportation, food services, pest management, safety and security

- Produce training videos on emergency preparedness, pre/post trip bus inspections, financial management, dispute mediation and asbestos abatement
- Provide support to schools for maintenance of cable casting equipment and studios

Coordinate parent/ family outreach and community partnerships

Strategic outreach to diverse families and collaboration with government, business, and community organizations provide direct support to schools, students and their families.

- Conduct parent education workshops in various languages with a focus on student achievement, math, reading, grading and reporting, preparing for parent-teacher conferences, High School Assessments, the special education process
- Conduct parent sessions at George B. Thomas Senior Learning Academy
- Assist schools with parent outreach and communication efforts
- Coordinate Study Circles program to assist schools with removing racial and ethnic barriers to parent engagement
- Coordinate Conquista Tus Sueños program for empowering Latino parents
- Advise parents and accompany them to EMT, IEP, mediation/due process, 504, and other school meetings
- Coordinate training for parent outreach staff in central office and in schools
- Collaborate with various parent and community organizations including MCCPTA, NAACP Parents Council, Linkages to Learning, Identity, Impact Silver Spring, Asian American Parent Advocacy Council, among others
- Conduct home visits and provide resources to families
- Recruit and train volunteers for schools and systemwide initiatives such as Title I summer program and Ruth Rales reading program for 2nd graders
- Establish community partnerships to support schools
- Maintain Connection Resource Bank for schools to tap outside speakers

Data at a Glance – The Department of Communications:

- Publishes a quarterly newsletter in six languages for 97,000 parents
- Receives 14 million page views on web sites for 199 schools and 175 offices; and one million PDF downloads a month
- Prepares 55 million pages of classroom documents which saves instructional staff 22,000 hours of duplication efforts
- Handles 1,400 inquiries to the Call Center each month and fulfills 100 Freedom of Information Act requests each year
- Recruits and trains 400 volunteers to support Title 1 schools in summer programs
- Collaborates with schools to engage more than 10,000 parents annually in learning about the school system and ways to help their children
- Assists schools with the annual coordination and training of 30,000 volunteers who support school and PTA efforts
- Prints more than 340,000 exams and study guides, 32,000 instructional guides, and 10,000 diplomas
- Trains and supports 1,000 school and office webmasters
- Provide editorial support to 568 administrative secretaries, resource teachers, and media specialists
- Assists 2,400 students each year with questions posed on Homework Hotline television program
- Responds to 150-200 media inquiries each month and conducts 10-12 press conferences each year
- Prints more than 5 million administrative and regulatory forms annually