



DEPARTMENT OF MATERIALS MANAGEMENT
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

INNOVATION SUMMARY: *Copy-Plus*

*Implementation of a centralized production and delivery service available to teachers
for the ordering of classroom instructional documents*

Revised March 2020

PROBLEM: In 2007 MCEA identified a problem; teachers were spending too much time making copies of instructional documents, impeding their time available to prepare for classroom instruction. An initial proposal from the association included the addition of a part-time employee in each school with the exclusive duty of operating the school's high-volume copier machine. OCOO considered this approach to be very costly and also suspect in its potential effectiveness. An alternative solution was needed.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Rather than increase the in-school capacity to produce instructional documents, implement a central production service and delivery system that would allow teachers to submit their instructional document masters and files to a place where they would be printed, packaged, labeled and delivered back to the teachers in a timely fashion. Doing so would allow efficiencies of scale to be leveraged, improve quality standards, and significantly reduce the problem.

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES: With 200 school sites and 11,000 teachers, the amount of job order pick-ups, printing, packaging and package deliveries would be formidable. Historically, MCPS schools have produced an average of 3,200 pages of instructional documents per student each year. With 141,000 students, the potential demand for service could overwhelm production and delivery schedules, cause major delays, and lead to a loss of teachers' confidence in the viability of the service.

APPLIED INNOVATION: Using the FileMaker Pro application, MCPS developed a custom work-order processing system that allows job requests from teachers to be logged, prepared for production, distributed to the various production areas, and labeled with barcode technology for delivery tracking. The system is web-based, and allows real-time database queries and management reporting of service usage by school, and even individual teacher.

MCPS developed a Web-to-print ordering system for documents commonly used by teachers. Rather than submitting a master or an email attachment of a document file, teachers now browse a list of documents, select a quantity, and place their order all online without the need for hardcopy form or email attachments. Within a calendar week, documents are delivered directly to the teacher.

MCPS delivery Team modified their PonyMail program—historically designed for correspondence distribution prior to the proliferation of electronic messaging—and put in place a package delivery system capable of handling 3,800 individual boxes in a 20-day delivery system each month. This was done with little to no increase in resources, but rather process modification, training, barcode scanning and delivery tracking, and overall labor diligence.

RESULTS: Studies indicate that a teacher requires one hour to prepare 2,500 copies of instructional documents. In FY2013, teachers submitted nearly a third of their overall instructional document printing requirements to Copy-Plus (148 million pages), which represents 59,200 hours of teacher time.

UPDATE: In FY 2019, teachers submitted 515,425 jobs to Copy-Plus.