

Information about submitting requests under the Maryland Public Information Act (MPIA)

Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is committed to openness and transparency, and this includes full compliance with the Maryland Public Information Act, Maryland State Government Article §§10-611, et seq. (MPIA).

The superintendent of schools is the official custodian of records under the law. However, the director of public information and web services is the superintendent's designee at MCPS and will be the one responding to most, if not all, MPIA requests.

SUBMITTING A REQUEST

MPIA requests should be submitted in writing and should indicate, as specifically as possible, what documents are being sought. The request should include the name, address and contact information for the requestor. Written requests under MPIA should be sent to:

Montgomery County Public Schools
Department of Public Information and Web Services
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 112
Rockville MD 20850

Requests can also be emailed to pio@mcpsmd.org or faxed to 301-279-3221. Requests emailed or faxed over the weekend or on holidays will not be received until the next business day.

RESPONDING TO A REQUEST

Under MPIA, the district generally has 30 days from the receipt of a request to respond. We do our best to respond as quickly as possible, but due to the number of MPIA requests we receive, we are not able to "expedite" requests for any group. In most cases, responses will be sent by mail although, on occasion, the response will be sent by email.

In an effort to fulfill a request, we may have questions or may need some clarification. Please make sure your telephone number and/or a valid email address are included in your request letter.

RECOVERING COSTS

Under Maryland law, Article §10-621, a government unit is allowed to recover the actual costs incurred to search, prepare and reproduce records for inspection after the first two hours. These costs will generally be incurred in two ways.

1. **Employee Costs for Fulfilling the Request:** The law allows a government agency to charge the hourly rate of the employee or employees who are doing the work to fulfill the request, after the first two hours, which are exempted.
2. **Duplication Costs:** The law also allows a government agency to recoup the cost of any copies made. MCPS will charge 15 cents per page for copies.

If employee time beyond two hours is required to fulfill a request, the requestor will be notified in writing of the estimated cost and asked whether the requestor wishes to proceed. If so, payment must be made in advance or work on the request will cease after two hours and will not resume until payment is received from the requestor. If, during the process of fulfilling a request, it becomes apparent it will take longer than had been estimated, work on the request will stop and we will notify the requestor of any additional costs, in writing. However, if fulfilling the request takes less time than estimated, the difference will be refunded to the requestor.

If a significant amount of copying is involved, the requestor will be notified that payment for duplication costs must be made in advance. In all other cases, the requestor will be notified of the duplication charges and the amount due in the response letter from MCPS. Payment in full for copies is expected to be made within 10 days. Checks should be made payable to:

Department of Public Information and Web Services
Montgomery County Public Schools
850 Hungerford Drive, Room 112
Rockville, MD. 20850

For more information on the Maryland Public Information Act, please visit the [Maryland State Attorney General's MPIA website](#).

For more information about MCPS procedures, please contact the Department of Public Information and Web Services at 301-279-3853 or pio@mcpsmd.org.

BEFORE YOU SEND AN MPIA REQUEST

The MCPS website contains a tremendous amount of information and, in some instances, the documents or data being sought under MPIA may be readily available online. In some cases, this information can be found simply by using the website's search function. Here are some links to sites that contain helpful information:

Board of Education Website: The agenda and minutes for every Board of Education (BOE) meeting from 1979 until the present are available on the Board of Education's website. In recent years, backup documentation and information packets are available through links on each meeting agenda.

- **Current year:** Agendas, minutes and videos (when available) for the current school year can be found here: <http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe/meetings/index.aspx#calendar>.
- **Previous years:** Archives of agendas, minutes and video (when available) for previous school years, dating back to 1979, can be found here: http://montgomeryschoolsmd.org/boe/meetings/minutes_agendas.shtm

Test scores and school performance: There are many places on the MCPS website and elsewhere that publish information about student performance, enrollment and demographics:

- **[Annual Report on the Strategic Plan](#)**: This report includes updates on more than 50 data points aligned to the five goals of the MCPS strategic plan, *Our Call to Action—Pursuit of Excellence*.
- **[MCPS Office of Shared Accountability Website](#)**: The Office of Shared Accountability regularly releases studies and data about the performance of MCPS and its schools. These in-depth reports contain a tremendous amount of data and analysis.
- **“At a Glance” Reports**: MCPS creates three “At a Glance” reports each year that are posted on our website:
 - **[Schools at a Glance](#)**: Demographic information and test data on each school.
 - **[School Safety and Security at a Glance](#)**: Safety reports and data on every school in the district.
 - **[Special Education at a Glance](#)**: Information and data about special education programs and performance at every school.
- **[The “School-o-Dex”](#)**: The MCPS schools site has links to an index page for every school in MCPS. By clicking on a school, you have quick access to demographic, academic and safety data about that school.
- **[Maryland Report Card](#)**: The Maryland State Department of Education maintains this site which includes state test performance, graduation rates, demographic information and other data for every school and district in Maryland. Much of this information can be downloaded from the website.