



EDITORIAL, GRAPHICS & PUBLISHING SERVICES  
DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS  
MONTGOMERY COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

### **INNOVATION SUMMARY: Editorial Help Desk**

*Development and maintenance of a resource for school and central services support staff involved in generating correspondence and other documents with various MCPS stakeholders.*

**PROBLEM:** With 211 schools and many central services departments, the number of MCPS employees who write correspondence, evaluations, and other documents lies in the hundreds; and the breadth of that work is formidable. Grammar and writing-style standards were inconsistent, which adversely affected the perception of MCPS as a credible organization of educators.

**PROPOSED SOLUTION:** The best solution to serve this universal need is to develop and execute a strategic plan to do the following:

- Develop event and training opportunities to share information on grammar and style best practices with groups of employees.
- Make available the reference tools that employees need to do their jobs better.
- Provide a system to address individual inquiries on grammar and word usage and editorial issues.

**TECHNICAL CHALLENGES:** The main challenge is how to have a significant effect on hundreds of employees; also, how best to let employees know that helpful resources are available to them.

**APPLIED INNOVATION:** The following innovative tools are being applied to affect a large audience of users:

1. We have developed an authority website with branded resources, including the following:
  - Tip of the Month and special-topic forum
  - Interactive versions of the *Correspondence Manual*, the *Editorial Stylebook*, and *MCPS Acronyms*
  - Helpful links for writers and other helpful resources
2. We host an occasional event to bring the community of users together to share and learn from speakers, invited to share their expertise and encourage the participants.
3. We update and provide the *MCPS Correspondence Manual*, *MCPS Acronyms*, and the *MCPS Editorial Stylebook* for staff development classes, and for individual use.

**RESULTS:** In FY 2003, when the Editorial Help Desk started, we responded to 49 phone and email inquiries for the fiscal year. The website has more than 8,000 visits in FY 2026.