



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 October 2013

PROBLEM: In 2007, MCEA identified a problem—teachers were spending too much time making copies of instructional documents, impeding their time needed 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 suspected 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 to the teachers in a timely fashion. Doing so would allow efficiencies of scale to be leveraged and quality standards to be improved, significantly reducing the problem.

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES: With 200 school sites and 11,000 teachers, the amount of job order pick-ups, printing, packaging, and package deliveries required would be formidable. Historically, MCPS schools have produced an average of 3,200 pages of instructional documents per student each year. With more than 150,000 students, the potential demand for service could overwhelm production and delivery schedules, cause major delays, and lead to a loss of teacher confidence in the viability of the service.

APPLIED INNOVATION: Using FileMaker Pro, 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 available online and allows real-time queries and management reporting of service usage by school and by individual teacher.

MCPS developed a web-to-print ordering system for documents commonly used by teachers. Rather than submitting a master or an e-mail attachment of a document file, teachers now browse a list of documents, select a quantity, then place their order online, with no need for a hard copy or e-mail attachments. Documents are delivered directly to the teacher within a calendar week.

The MCPS delivery team modified their Pony Mail program to create 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 diligent labor.

RESULTS: Studies indicate that a teacher requires one hour to prepare 2,500 copies of instructional documents. In FY 2013, teachers submitted nearly a third of their instructional document printing requirements (148 million pages) to Copy-Plus, representing 59,200 teacher hours put to better use.