



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

INNOVATION SUMMARY: *TeamWorks*

*Implementation of an in-house copier repair and maintenance service
for the copiers located in MCPS schools*

PROBLEM: In 2010, a five-year lease/purchase and maintenance contract for the 294 high-volume copiers located in MCPS schools was nearing the end of its term. The copiers, which initially functioned effectively, were deteriorating at an alarming rate. The vendor was responding to an average of 67 service calls every school day. Their position was that the copiers had been operated at very high levels for nearly five years, but required replacement at the end of the contract. Entering into a new contract would include a five-year purchase schedule for new machines or a significantly higher maintenance rate (based on copier meter readings). A more sustainable, effective, and efficient solution was required.

PROPOSED SOLUTION: Rather than trade in the current copier fleet and enter into a new multiyear purchase and maintenance contract, MCPS would exercise its contractual right to purchase the copiers for \$1 each and start its own in-house copier repair service program using supporting services employees.

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES: The copiers were relatively old by industry standards and very well worn. To increase the life of the copiers would require significant refurbishment, preventive maintenance, as well as ongoing repair service for machine breakdowns that were happening more than 60 times every school day. In addition, it was no longer practical to repair some of the copiers. Replacing some copiers with new technology, while continuing to service older models, would require extensive parts inventories to sustain two types of copiers and the associated maintenance capabilities.

APPLIED INNOVATION: Copiers are now replaced on a five-year revolving cycle, with nearly identical used (but newer) copiers, purchased from various distributors on an ongoing basis. A total of 60 replacement copiers are installed each year. The retired copiers are carefully stripped of many component parts, which are reused for ongoing repairs. Parts are inventoried and tracked using FileMaker Pro.

The team of five copier technicians and three assistants work with a designated school-based partner in every school. These 275 school-based employees receive a stipend for their efforts in assisting with the care of the high-volume copier in their schools.

MCPS purchased low-emission vehicles, which hold a mini parts inventory. These vehicles are driven by the copier technicians as they travel to the schools every day. The vehicles include GPS tracking, which allow a central dispatcher to effectively schedule each technician's next service call location.

RESULTS: School office administrators were surveyed at the end of the first year of the program's implementation, 90 percent reported that their copier operations had improved significantly. Total program costs in FY 2010 were below the cost of the commercial contract that had been in place. In FY 2026, program costs remain well below the Maryland state contract for large copiers.