# APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2016.** Please include this application form with electronic entry.

## PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: **Henrico County**

Program Title: **The Locker: Developing a School Intranet**

Program Category: **Information Technology**

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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## SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Name: **John A. Vithoulkas**

Title: **County Manager**

Signature:

**Short Overview**

Henrico County Public Schools (HCPS) did not have an intranet to meet the needs of its over 6,000 employees. There was plenty of online information available, but it was all housed at separate websites and not easily accessible by employees. The information was also inadequate and could only be accessed at work and not remotely. An outdated staff-development page was available for teachers through a public portal, but was outdated and no longer a usable resource to find information. *(See Appendix 1)* Additionally, since all information was accessible by the public, nothing secure could be uploaded to that site.

The time had arrived to build a staff-only intranet located on a secure server that could be used as a vehicle to connect the many resources needed by HCPS employees. We needed to pull all of our resources together, save paper, and work with a library of digital forms that could be downloaded and filled out electronically, as well as a location to place future staff resources. "The Locker," our new HCPS intranet, was born.

**The Problem/Challenge/Situation**

In 2014, HCPS found that it needed a one-stop shop for its more than 6,000 employees to have an easily accessible place to go for everything. We had an abundance of online information, but it was on many separate sites. Employees did not know which site to visit for help, or remember the URL even if they remembered the site name. There was no way to distribute secure information. Costly and inconvenient paper forms were used for almost all school-division transactions. We built a 21st century environment at Henrico Schools, and paper forms didn't fit. Teachers were overwhelmed with work, and difficult paperwork added to their stress. HCPS was in a transition period between

superintendents. Not only were workload and convenience concerns, but the school division sorely needed ways to build community.

Preliminary talks confirmed our suspicions: the project would be enormous and crossed multiple departments. There was no secure server to use. There were departments that had content on old websites that needed to be put on new, undeveloped sites. Other departments needed to create their own sites to connect to this new central site. There was a major need for professional development on how to create, structure and update WordPress blogs. More than 100 paper forms needed to be converted to a digital format.

**How the Program Was Carried Out**

In February 2014, the HCPS Department of Instructional Technology began to investigate a way to create a single place to gather all the resources teachers needed to succeed. The idea was presented to our K-12 committee to be sure there was buy-in across the school division. Four departments (Instructional technology, Operational Technology, Communications and Public Relations, and General Services) came together to make this site a reality. We agreed to create a new site on a secure intranet server and a front-end Web page that would connect our many resources and be a place for future development of staff resources.

Operational Technology researched the old intranet page to locate it and determine where it was hosted. They also investigated the cost of a new server and the licensing process for the Web application platform SharePoint, which would house the intranet. The project manager for the Operational Technology Department assisted in managing the processes and workflow of the project across all departments.

The Instructional Technology Department surveyed HCPS administrative and support departments at Central Office to determine if they already had a WordPress site, or if they wanted to create one. URLs of all sites were collected and the security level of each site identified. Central Office departments and specialists were polled to see who needed WordPress training. Each department worked individually with the Instructional Technology Department to create a plan to update old sites or create new ones. The resources on the old intranet and old staff development site were catalogued so they could be moved to the new site.

Human Resources became part of the project team after Dr. Kinlaw developed the Un-initiative program. One of the three time-saving proposals selected from the many employee submissions was a proposal to get rid of paper forms to save paper, money and time. Working together with the Instructional Technology, Operational Technology General Services departments, and the print shop, a plan was developed to convert all paper forms to fillable PDFs and post them on the new Intranet server. They were also instrumental in helping design a site that would include news and build community

Operational Technology purchased an SQL license and developed a new SharePoint server as a secure point of entry. A partition was created to house the new forms. A folder-based structure that would be easy for teachers to understand was developed.

General Services worked with HCPS' print shop to convert the paper forms to fillable PDFs. Because the print shop's workload would shrink when paper forms were discontinued, this provided a good opportunity to repurpose the duties of a staff position

to take charge of identifying and converting the necessary forms. The particular staff position that oversaw this work did such a good job that the employee was hired as a central office Technology Support Technician. The print shop position was no longer needed since all of the forms had been digitized; thus eliminating that salary.

Instructional Technology then trained personnel from departments that wanted to create a new website. They helped them decide on site content, how to structure the site for easy navigation and assisted with the site design. A team model was developed so that multiple people in each department knew how to create, manage and update sites. This provided built-in redundancy as well as ensuring collaboration within each department. All of the website URLs were collected and categorized.

Communications and Public Relations played a significant role in helping us determine content for the site and understanding the difference between content posted on the intranet – an employee-only site – and the Henrico Schools public website. The county Web developer built a landing page that would be used to aggregate all the content. They also developed the concept using a locker to give the site a theme and organization.

The entire team collaborated throughout the project to work through details, ensuring usability for all staff members. Every detail, from concept to design to the final product was a true collaborative effort among multiple departments. The final product was debuted at the HCPS annual Leadership Academy in August 2015. *(See Appendix 1)*

Logging into the new HCPS intranet and using the dropdown menus now provides employees with access to more than 20 separate sites as well as additional resources such as re-licensure information, access to webmail, and access to the student information system. *(see Appendix 1)*

Employees can find the new library of fillable PDF forms at the site. *(See Appendix 1)* Teachers use their credentials to log in. The forms portion of the site continues to grow and currently contains more than 100 forms, organized by department, adding employee convenience and saving trees. Instead of tracking down the correct person to request paper forms for facilities use or medical leave, employees simply download the PDF from the form library, fill it in, sign it and then email or send a paper form to the correct department. Please refer to the Timeline in the supplemental section as this provided our project schedule to follow to ensure we hit our targets along the way.

The following technologies were used in the creation of this project:

- Google Apps for Education
  - Google Docs (word processing)
  - Google Sheets (spreadsheets)
  - Google forms (used to collect information from specialists)
- Software
  - Sharepoint
  - Adobe Acrobat
  - Dreamweaver- html creation. editing software
- Active Directory
- SQL server database

- WordPress blogs (http://blogs.henrico.k12.va.us - an internal WordPress blog server set up to provide blogs for all teachers and students

- WAN

- Internet

- laptop computers

**Financing and Staffing Cost**

For the most part, HCPS was able to use existing resource. The only major expense was a $10,000 SQL server license. The primary cost to the county was in terms of staff-hours. The Operational Technology Department spent more than 175 hours securing and preparing the new server, setting up the forms environment and setting up WordPress to host the landing page. The Instructional Technology Department spent more than 250 hours providing WordPress professional development to HCPS departments, supporting the creation of new sites, aggregating content and URLs and adding content to the landing page. The Communications and Public Relations Department spent more than 175 hours conceptualizing, designing and creating the landing page. The General Services and Human Resources departments spent more than 100 hours converting forms to fillable PDFs and uploading them to the secure server. In sum, six departments collaborated for more than 700 hours to make our new intranet a reality.

**Program Results**

This exciting project was finally in place for the 2015-16 school year. After years of challenges to replace the old staff development site, we made it work through the unifying efforts of four departments.

HCPS staff members have expressed their excitement about having a functional and intuitive Intranet. The Locker has provided a much-needed resource that is easy to use, convenient and powerful. Having one easy-to-reach place to go for all-things-Henrico made finding staff resources a breeze. Among the reasons teachers visit the Locker often are: for the latest news; to find departmental sites; to get paperwork for re-licensure; to access webmail; and to discover opportunities for professional development. We are investigating the feasibility of making the site accessible to employees outside of school facilities as our next steps. This would differentiate access based on active directory roles. We look forward to developing this site into an even more powerful tool for staff resources and for building community among staff members.

Timeline:

The concept for a site that would replace the old staff development website and aggregate resources for our school staff began in 2012. After several years of working with others to determine what type of resource would be viable, we began our project in February 2014.

Spring 2014: After receiving approval from division leadership, the Instructional Technology, Operational Technology and Communications and Public Relations departments met to discuss the possibility of creating a page that would collect websites used by teachers. URLs of sites were collected, server and software costs estimated, and processes and staff-hours determined for the project.

Fall 2104: Un-Initiative announced by Dr. Patrick Kinlaw. One of the winning projects was to replace paper forms with online fillable PDFs.

Fall 2104 to summer 2015: Instructional Technology Department worked with other HCPS departments to update their websites and create new ones. Training and assistance was provided to these departments. A deadline for site completion is set for July 31, 2015.

Winter 2015 to spring 2015: The Human Resources and General Services departments joined the project to find a solution to move paper forms online. The Operational Technology Department employed SharePoint on a server and set the forms structure.

Winter 2015 to spring 2015: The General Services Department worked with an office assistant from the HCPS print shop to determine which forms need to be created as PDFs. The employee created all forms.

Winter 2015 to spring 2015: The Communications and Public Relations Department created a landing page for the new intranet. The URL http://team/henricoschools.us was selected based on the locker theme (this cannot be accessed outside of Henrico Schools facilities and must be accessed by Ethernet or the staff wireless network.

Summer 2015: Finishing touches were put on the locker, new resources were added and the new site was advertised to all leadership staff members at the August leadership meeting.

Fall 2015: New intranet announced to all schools via a convocation video.

Plans for site additional site upgrades:

- Add ability to access intranet from home

- Add ability to limit some content by active directory roles; for example, limit access to the principal's blog to principals. This would automate a process that is currently done manually by adding users to the site.
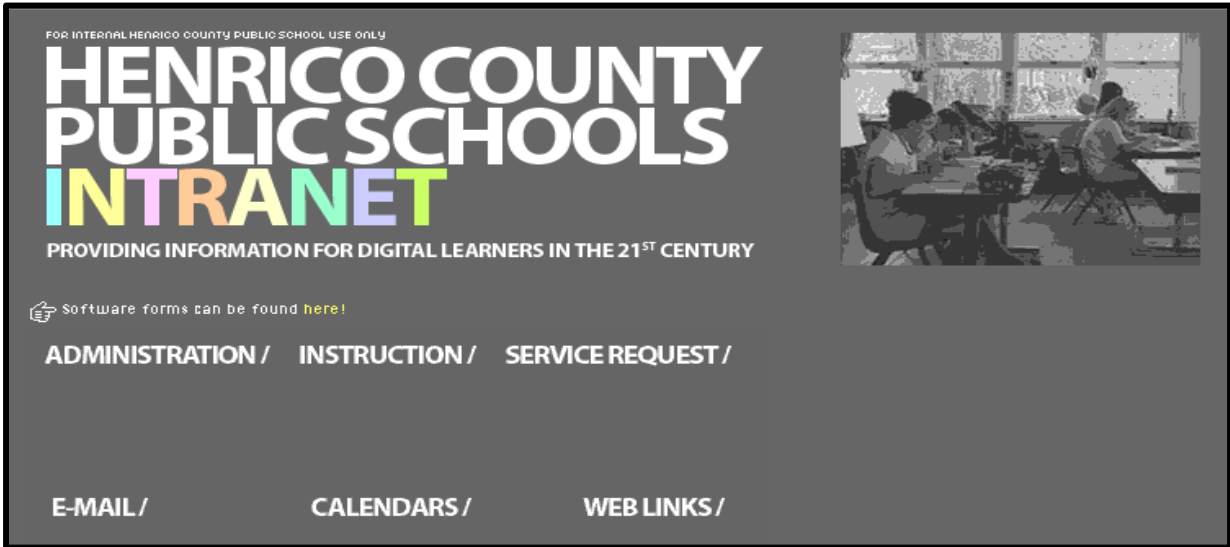
**Brief Summary**

HCPS personnel have been clamoring for a secure, easily accessible location that would draw all of resources together in one spot. Through the cooperation of four HCPS departments and the participation of more than twenty other departments and content areas, HCPS now has an organized, succinct, one-stop shop that all users can go to for all Henrico Information. It gives us the ability to post documentation that should only be available internally as well as a place to build community and relationships. It is a vital resource in a large school system where good communication is paramount. We have been able to take advantage of our rich, technology environment to provide a very low cost solution to this problem. It took a lot of planning and cooperation between departments to accomplish this goal but the result is valuable asset to all 6000+ HCPS personnel.

**Supplemental Materials**

**Appendix 1:**

**Old Intranet**

**Old Staff Development Site**

## Forms Library



HCPS Forms Library

Current View  ···  Find a file

| ✓ | Name | Version | Modified |
|---|------|---------|----------|
| | Art Information | 1.0 | October 9, 2015 |
| | Construction and Maintenance | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Exceptional Education | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Federal Programs | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Finance | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | General Services | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Gifted | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Health Services | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Human Resources | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Instruction | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Instructional Technology | 1.0 | October 12, 2015 |
| | Operations | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | PreK-Grade 5 Field Trip Forms | 1.0 | September 1, 2015 |
| | Professional Development | 1.0 | October 2, 2015 |
| | Records Management | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |
| | Secondary Field Trip Forms | 1.0 | September 9, 2015 |
| | Social Work Services | 1.0 | January 14 |
| | Transportation | 1.0 | June 8, 2015 |

**New Intranet Site**



**Examples of navigation**