



SUBMISSION FORM

All submission forms must include the following information. Separate submission forms must be turned in for each eligible program. **Deadline: July 1, 2021.** Please include this submission form with the electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).


PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: County of Henrico
Program Title: HCPS University
Program Category: Organizational Developmental

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Program Overview

The Henrico County Public Schools University (HCPS U) platform was designed to meet the ongoing and individualized professional learning needs of staff throughout the school division. In an effort to support both on-demand and collaborative learning opportunities, HCPS U provides a myriad of synchronous and asynchronous workshops led by teacher and school division leaders.

With a shift in the teaching and learning landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic, additional on-demand professional learning opportunities continue to be developed and provide educators with robust, high-quality training, in a safe and meaningful way. The HCPS U project organized thousands of professional learning hours and efficiently and effectively supported more than 6,000 professionals during what will certainly be seen as one of the most challenging years in American public education.

Problem/Challenge/Situation Faced by Locality

As Henrico County Public Schools sought to meet the demands of the rapidly changing educational landscape at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the greatest challenges presented was the need for widespread, coordinated and comprehensive professional learning. While the school division has a robust tradition of diverse and well executed professional development for employees, HCPS' Division of Learning was presented with a challenge: how to support more than 4,000 teachers and 8,000 employees while shifting to 100% remote learning in the fall of 2020. While our teachers and students engaged in remote learning from March to June in 2020, it was quickly assessed that what was occurring was "crisis teaching," where teachers, leaders, students and families simply sought to effectively navigate the new logistics of remote learning. For the 2020-21 school year, the school division needed an innovative way to

easily organize, coordinate and clearly communicate the more than 200 hours of additional personalized professional learning sessions that would be offered over the summer to its employee groups. In addition, division personnel working with our employees as adult learners had to meet the same challenges of its preK-12 educators: how can specialists, coaches and other leaders offer summer training in an entirely remote environment for the first time ever?

How Program Fulfilled Awards Criteria

The 2020-21 school year did not just present instructional challenges to classroom teachers working with adolescent students — it also created major obstacles for those tasked with training adult professionals. On one hand, the need for more training on novel and newly important skills was higher than ever. On the other, the ability to conduct these training sessions in a traditional, in-person professional development setting was no longer possible. To meet these needs, Henrico Schools collaborated across departments to provide high quality training, in a safe and meaningful way, during a global pandemic. In addition, the training paid special consideration to newly developed models of high quality distance instruction and a focus on diversity, equity, inclusion and cultural responsiveness during the summer's deep and ongoing national conversations of equity and oppression in America (topics very important to the local teachers, students and the Henrico community). This project is worthy of recognition, as it organized thousands of hours of professional learning and efficiently and effectively supported more than 6,000 professionals during what will certainly be seen as one of the most difficult years in American public education. As a zero-cost program, it can be replicated by school systems and other governmental agencies providing ongoing professional learning for its staff.

How Program Was Carried Out

While the school division has always provided a diverse suite of professional learning sessions during summers, they were generally coordinated within specific teams or interest groups and made available as needed or required for employees. With the school division's shift toward online learning, HCPS needed to (1) create and expand new offerings to help educators thrive in distance learning environments and (2) devise a centralized, comprehensive and easy-to-use hub to help teachers find and navigate the best training for them. To meet these goals, the school division created HCPS U, an entirely online professional development campus allowing HCPS to coordinate and align more than 40 personalized professional learning pathways. The project was designed to support Henrico educators meet the needs of students in 2020-21 with a special focus on preparation for remote learning.

The first step in this process was to provide a clear vision and requirements for HCPS U to all content creators and to support the specialists, coaches and teachers with training on how to effectively create and manage professional learning in online environments. The Department of Professional Learning created a two-hour asynchronous learning course in the school division's learning management system, Schoology, so content creators could learn how to design online professional learning courses and how all courses would be advertised and delivered within HCPS U. More than 100 content creators completed this course in April through June of 2020, representing over 200 hours of professional development on this topic alone.

At the same time, two departments — Professional Learning and Leadership, and Teaching Learning and Innovation — collaborated with the division's in-house graphic design and operational technology teams to create a central website that would be the delivery platform for HCPS U. The teams created an easy-to-use, visually appealing and simple site that leveraged collaborative documents and our learning management system. Employees could easily see what

professional learning pathways were available to them and when courses needed to be completed, and what options they had in terms of learning (for example, synchronous meetings vs. asynchronous courses).

By June 15, the HCPS U site was running and was being populated with a wide variety of courses. The next step was to create a clear advertising plan. Especially when teachers were navigating an all-remote environment, the problem of how to clearly communicate the new plan — and do it remotely — was a very real obstacle. Again, the Division of Learning partnered with in-house experts. A two-minute commercial for HCPS U was created and sent to all employees and new hires, explaining how to use the virtual campus and what it offers.

On June 28, HCPS U launched. It outlined all required professional learning and included a wide variety of choice-based professional learning courses. Employees could search the online course catalog by their position (e.g., fourth grade teacher, high school science teacher, middle school administrator, elementary school social worker) and would receive a custom course schedule delineating “required,” “recommended” and “optional” professional learning.

Overall, HCPS U houses well over 1,000 hours of professional learning options for teachers and includes personalized pathways for 45 specific employee groups. All courses can be accessed on the site and link to either synchronous training meetings hosted via Microsoft Teams or online synchronous/asynchronous training courses managed on Schoology.

A notable inclusion on the HCPS U platform during the summer of 2020 was the Online Educator’s Workshop, a model course to help guide division-level professional learning and training. The Online Educator’s Workshop is an original asynchronous course, facilitated live by a team of

specialists and coaches. Its goal is to help classroom teachers develop the knowledge and skills to teach in fully remote environments. Over the summer, more than 2,800 Henrico educators completed the course and, upon completion, strongly agreed that the workshop was “a very effective training that will help me be a better online educator.” (scale: 1= strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree; 4.3 average response)

Other optional courses included an original Ensuring Equity Series supporting teachers in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in the online environment. The CHAMPS Classroom Management Course focusing on best practices for classroom management with new considerations for remote learning. The My Schoology Classroom parts 1 and 2 focused on the effective use of instructional technology and engaging instructional delivery during remote learning. The Exceptional Education Series outlining the best methods to work with learners with exceptional education needs during the unique 2020-21 school year.

In May and June of 2020, national and worldwide conversations about equity were at the forefront of the minds of our employees, students and families. During this time, the HCPS Office of Equity, Diversity and Opportunity worked with instructional coaches to create the Ensuring Equity Series that served as one of the central offerings of HCPS U in its first year. This series included five original online modules that focused on topics from courageous conversations about equity and race to analyzing the impact of poverty on equal educational opportunities and a variety of other research-based and supported themes within diversity, equity and inclusion. The initial HCPS U content creator training included activities and checklists that helped the course designers consider the division’s CREM model, adopt a common language across the division in relation to CREM and support it within all courses — whether it be technology-focused training sessions, classroom management discussions or subject-specific professional learning. Every course asks

creators to consider and show evidence of its incorporation of the CREM model to advance diversity, equity and inclusion in the division.

Financing and Staffing

This program was conducted, out of necessity to budget cuts, at zero cost to the taxpayers. It was run and managed by personnel already employed by the division, and the coordination of efforts related to summer professional learning obligations. This resulted in less time spent by each individual replicating work promoting and managing their own professional learning for various target groups of employees.

One of the most laudable aspects of the HCPS U initiative is it was a zero-cost program. All the work was completed by salaried employees and in fact, the new format not only streamlined the work of more than 100 individuals delivering professional learning, but the high level of coordination also allowed content-creators to, in general, spend less time posting, advertising and hosting their own professional development sessions.

Program Results

A variety of outcomes and data points indicate the HCPS U program was a resounding success: *Overall use and participation:* Though the school division is unable to extract individual usage data on the site, it can track enrollment in courses via Schoology. Every division educator (teacher, administrator, counselor, librarian, social worker, school psychologists, etc.) completed at least three courses using HCPS U. This was a huge success both in proving the ease of use of the site and the ability of the division to offer massive online professional learning for the first time. More than 6,000 employees participated in summer online professional learning, at a bare minimum of three hours each and a mean participation rate of eight hours per employee. The

division estimates a total of 48,000 hours of professional learning occurring through HCPS U over the summer, and for the first time, all of this learning was organized through a central hub and conducted entirely remotely.

Feedback from participants: While no single survey existed for every HCPS U course, as they all were created by different course creators, looking at the feedback from some of the most popular courses reveals that employees found the HCPS U courses to be valuable and meaningful. For example, of the 2,800 teachers who took the Online Educator’s Workshop (one of the hallmark courses in HCPS U for 2020), 89% of participants ranked the course as “helpful or very helpful.” Ninety-one percent indicated that “This course was a good use of my time.” and 94% believed “This course was high-quality professional learning.” The Ensuring Equity Series saw over 92% of participants indicating it was high quality and a good use of their time.

Continued use: Another measure of success has come from an unintended benefit of the HCPS U platform. Principals in the division have begun to use HCPS U as a place to provide orientation for new hires, instructional aides and even substitute teachers in a timely and responsive way. To quote one elementary principal “HCPS U is a lifesaver and I hope we continue to use this program. Not only did it help my teachers this summer immensely, especially with regard to preparing them for online learning, it also allows me to support struggling teachers or midyear hires by having a place they can go and build skills and get feedback without having to leave the building to attend workshops.”

Brief Summary

At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, one of the challenges presented was the need for widespread, coordinated and comprehensive professional learning. HCPS’ Division of Learning

was presented with the challenge of providing virtual professional support to more than 4,000 teachers and 8,000 employees.

One of the most critical needs was in relation to preparation for what was anticipated to be a virtual or primarily remote start to the 2020-21 school year. Comprehensive and division-wide professional learning was needed to ensure that all teachers had the knowledge and skills needed to lead remote instruction. Additionally, the school division needed an innovative way to easily organize, coordinate and clearly communicate the more than 200 hours of additional personalized professional learning sessions that would be offered over the summer to its employee groups.

The Henrico County Public Schools University (HCPS U) platform was designed to meet the ongoing and individualized professional learning needs of staff throughout the school division. HCPS U is an entirely online professional development campus allowing HCPS to coordinate and align more than 40 personalized professional learning pathways. HCPS U provides a myriad of synchronous and asynchronous workshops led by teacher and school division leaders.

More than 6,000 employees participated in summer online professional learning, at a minimum of three hours each and a mean participation rate of eight hours per employee. The division estimates a total of 48,000 hours of professional learning occurring through HCPS U over the summer, and for the first time, all of this learning was organized through a central hub and conducted entirely remotely.

With a shift in the teaching and learning landscape during the COVID-19 pandemic, additional on-demand professional learning opportunities continue to be developed and provide educators with robust, high-quality training, in a safe and meaningful way. Post-pandemic, it is anticipated that

HCPS U will continue to provide a valuable platform for the continuing learning needs of all HCPS employees.

HCPS University Supplemental Materials

- [HCPS U Site](#)
- [Elementary Learning Pathways](#)
- [Third Grade Teacher Pathway](#) (Pictured below as an example.)

3rd Grade Teachers

Teachers: [Click here](#) for a checklist to track your completed professional learning.

REQUIRED PROFESSIONAL LEARNING			
Title and Short Description	Dates	Format	Course Code
My Schoology Classroom - Part 1 <small>This course provides all Henrico teachers with the Schoology essentials necessary for teaching and learning in the hybrid and parallel learning environments. Part 1 covers the basics of your Schoology environment.</small>	<u>Available:</u> by August 4 <u>Complete by:</u> September 4	Asynchronous Schoology <small>How to join a course in Schoology</small>	Course Access Code: 75ZC-TMN2-Q4NHM
My Schoology Classroom - Part 2 <small>This course provides all Henrico teachers with the Schoology essentials necessary for teaching and learning in the hybrid and parallel learning environments. Part 2 supports teachers with accessing their curriculum in Schoology and using that curriculum to design, deliver, and assess learning.</small>	<u>Available:</u> August 20 <u>Complete by:</u> September 4	Asynchronous Schoology <small>How to join a course in Schoology</small>	Elementary 69W8-QBQW-95W5R
Henrico Performance Matters <small>This Schoology Course hosts the online professional learning modules for Henrico teachers supporting grades 2-12 core content on Performance Matters. The modules provide an introduction and exposure to the new system.</small>	<u>Available:</u> Now <u>Complete by:</u> October 1	Schoology	Course Access Code: 3TPX-887H-PJJZC
Assessing Reading - Virtually (60 min). <small>This course explains how we will assess reading virtually this fall and provides directions for using our virtual assessment tools.</small>	<u>Available:</u> Now <u>Complete by:</u> September 14	asynchronous Schoology	Course Access Code: Z6GX-CR5M-XW8Q6
Digital Resource Courses			
Dreambox (75 min.) <u>Available:</u> Now <u>Complete by:</u> September 14	Schoology Course Code: PSNN-82PF-3RD94		
Discovery Techbook (90 min) <u>Available:</u> by Aug. 3 <u>Complete by:</u> September 21	*some modules will have sign up information for synchronous training in ERO. Please go to the folder for the specific resource for more information.		
Lexia (30 min) <u>Available:</u> by Aug. 3 <u>Complete by:</u> September 14			
Newsela (60 min) <u>Available:</u> Now <u>Complete by:</u> September 21			