



Mecklenburg County Public Schools

Technology and Career Education
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Ernie Conner, Director

To: MCPS School Board, Administrators, Teachers, and Staff
From: Ernie Conner, Director of Technology and Career Education
Subject: Introducing New Email and Google Applications for 2008-2009
Date: June 2, 2008

Introducing our new E-mail:

MeckMail

MCPS E-mail service will not be available from June 16th – June 30th. We will be migrating to a new email system. We are excited about the new system and look forward to making it available to you as soon as possible. Details on the new system are outlined in this letter.

During this scheduled down time, we will migrate your existing emails to your new account. We will start with 12 month administrators and employees first and finish with 10 month employees. **I suggest that you review your current email account before 8:00 a.m. on June 16th and delete any emails that you do not want migrated over to the new system.** This will expedite our process and allow you to begin the new school year with a new account that still includes your emails from your existing account. Emails that you have sorted in individual folders will be migrated to your new account in labeled folders.

I realize that many employees access and use their school email account during the summer. **I plan to email all current email users a user name and password for their new email account before the last day of school.** You will be able to access the new system on June 30th by going to our website, clicking on the email link located at the top of the page, and then entering your new user name and password. Please keep in mind we will be testing and making changes to the email system throughout the summer, to make sure it is ready for the beginning of the 2008-2009 school year.

Changes and Implementation

- Your email address will change from meck.k12.va.us to mcpsweb.org. For example, my email will change from econner@meck.k12.va.us to econner@mcpsweb.org.

- Email from your old email address account will be forwarded to your new email address for a yet undetermined period of time during the 2008-2009 school year. This will allow you to notify contacts and others that may send you email.
- Our new email will be provided by Google. We have obtained a free education account that will be hosted on their servers. Everyone will have a Google account that is managed by us with our own domain (mcpsweb.org).
- **The Technology Resource Teachers will provide training to staff on how to access your new account and how to use its features during the pre-school staff development days.**
- **Training will be available for 12 month administrators and employees during the week of June 30th and by appointment.**

How does this change impact you and our school division?

- The Google email is **free** and has the capacity to hold thousands of users. It would cost over \$8550 to update our Microsoft Exchange email to the new version for our 681 users. There would be additional cost to add more users to our system.
- The Google email eliminates our on - site servers, maintenance and support expenses. Google has professional staff that offers a 99.9% service level agreement (SLA) for Google mail uptime, and 24/7 phone support.
- Google has a professional spam and virus filtering system. Users worldwide can report spam to the company. Users will see a significant improvement in spam filtering with the new email system. We will no longer need our spam filter and incur an annual support contract expense.
- This email system has powerful mail search tools. With Google mail, the power of Google search is available for your inbox. You can find saved messages instantly, even if you don't keep your mail organized.
- Google mail has an integrated instant messaging feature. See who is online and instant message with them in real-time, right within the mail browser window. Chat conversations are saved and searchable, just like email conversations.
- Increased storage. Storage of email will be handled off site, making managing larger files easier.

Other Google services available with this package:

In addition to the new E-mail system, each user will have access to several additional services. **Technology Resource Teachers will provide training on these services during the 2008-2009 school year.** Below are the services available and a short description:

Google Docs: Users can create documents, spreadsheets and presentations and collaborate with each other in real-time right inside a web browser window. Google Docs makes creating and collaborating on documents, spreadsheets, and presentations simple. Not only can you create and edit your own docs, but you can also have multiple people view or edit together. With Google Docs, you don't have to manage multiple versions of the same attachment from different people. You always control who has access, whether it's just yourself, your team, or the entire school division. You can even publish docs to the world. Google Docs is available from anywhere that has an Internet connection. Another great feature is that you can export your documents in many different formats such as Microsoft Office, Open Office, and PDF. You can also upload existing documents from these programs.

Google Calendar: Users can organize their schedules and share events, meetings and entire calendars with others. You can also publish calendars and events on the web.

Google Start Page: A central place for you to preview your inboxes and calendars, access your essential content, and search the web. This service includes some really cool gadgets!

Google Sites: Google Sites is the easiest way to make information accessible to people who need quick, up-to-date access. People can work together on a Site to add file attachments, information from other Google applications (like Google Docs, Google Calendar, YouTube and Picasa), and new free-form content. Creating a site together is as easy as editing a document, and you always control who has access, whether it's just yourself, your team, or the entire school division. You can even publish sites to the world. The Google Sites web application is accessible from any internet connected computer.

A great place to learn about the amazing functionality of the Google Apps suite is their online help center at the link below.

<http://www.google.com/support/a/users/?hl=en>