

## Lopez, Liliana L

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**From:** Lopez, Liliana L  
**Sent:** Friday, February 6, 2026 4:21 PM  
**To:** Lopez, Liliana L  
**Subject:** FW: MCPS Response: Weather Event Coordination

### Liliana López

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**Subject:** MCPS Response: Weather Event Coordination

Dear Council President and Councilmembers,

We are writing to clarify the communication, roles and coordination that occurred during the recent winter weather event. **MCPS had ongoing engagement with MCDOT while at the same time carrying out our primary responsibility to clear school campuses with limited emergency personnel for safe student access.**

### Agency Roles and Responsibilities

From the outset, there is a longstanding understanding of roles:

- Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) is responsible for county roads, streets, intersections, sidewalks, and curb cuts. In our communications we regularly recognized MCDOT's efforts and the role they play in getting the county streets and roads ready for vehicular traffic.
- Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) is responsible for preparing school campuses, ensuring schools are ready to safely support students and staff.

**MCPS relied on this clear division of responsibility. Our focus remained on school readiness and student safety, while road conditions and remediation appropriately remained within the county's purview.**

**It is important to correct the record on several points:**

- MCPS did communicate with MCDOT during the week to inquire about or address conditions that were preventing schools from opening safely.
- Midweek, MCPS communicated via phone conversations what we were seeing and what those conditions would mean for buses, walkers, and drivers.
- The perception that MCDOT reached out to MCPS earlier to coordinate school reopening needs and that MCPS did not respond is **not accurate**.

***Should MCPS have provided a list of uncleared streets earlier? That's not our job!***

- **MCPS' focus remained on clearing school sites.** In our Thursday message regarding school closure Friday, we reported that 30% of our school sites were ready, leaving the remainder, 70% not yet ready. We were still cleaning up our campuses.
- MCPS does not have the staff capacity to review all streets in our more than 1200 bus routes (13,000 bus stops) during a major weather event.
- MCPS checked road condition checks as possible in the course of our work, documenting issues with roads, intersections, sidewalks, and curb cuts. MCPS emergency personnel are limited in number and ***focused on school sites***.
- MCPS also has long provided the county with GIS data on bus stops, which is intended to support county decision-making related to school access and operations. This information is updated annually and provided to MCDOT annually.

### **Pedestrian Safety**

- Sidewalk clearing is a major factor in our ability to safely open schools.
- The County Government extended enforcement of sidewalk clearing until Monday, February 2.
- Over 20% of students across the county walk to school. Especially in light of the recent tragic pedestrian collisions in Montgomery County, we know the Council and County Government share our concern about ensuring students have safe routes to school.

### **Timeline of Interagency Communication and Coordination**

#### **Monday, January 26**

Adnan Mamoon, Chief Division of MCPS Operations, received an initial outreach from Richard Dorsey (Chief, Division of Highway Services), Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT). A brief phone conversation occurred.

At that time, MCPS did not yet have sufficient information to provide specific operational needs, as school site cleanup and condition assessments were still underway.

#### **Wednesday, January 28**

MCDOT (Dorsey) reached out again to MCPS (Mamoon) to inquire about MCPS's needs. MCPS communicated that internal site cleanup was ongoing. During this conversation, MCPS provided contact information for its transportation operations staff (Jamie Duffy, MCPS Maintenance and Operations Manager) to facilitate coordination on contractor support for school-site cleanup.

**Friday, January 30**

MCPS (Duffy) and MCDOT (Dorsey) continued to coordinate contractor support for school site clean-up.

**Saturday, January 31**

MCPS (Duffy) reported to MCDOT (Dorsey) a specific road condition concern affecting access to a high school campus. That location was addressed and cleared over the weekend.

**Sunday, February 1**

MCPS (Mamoon) requested guidance from MCDOT (Dorsey) regarding the appropriate recipient for a consolidated list of roadway and access concerns identified through MCPS assessments. Later that afternoon, MCPS (Mamoon) transmitted a documented list of concerns to MCDOT (Conklin). MCDOT acknowledged receipt and indicated that crews were continuing to make progress.

**Sunday, February 1**

MCPS (Duffy) reported to MCDOT (Dorsey) continued coordination efforts for contractors to support school site cleanup.

**Monday, February 2**

MCPS (Mamoon) provided MCDOT (Conklin) with an updated list of concerns, along with separate communications detailing individual site-specific issues reported by schools. MCDOT acknowledged receipt of these communications.

**Monday, February 2 and Ongoing**

MCPS (Duffy) has remained in active communication with MCDOT, continuing to share concerns and complaints received from schools regarding road conditions, sidewalks, and access affecting school operations and transportation.

**Additionally**

MCPS Chief, Division of Emergency Management and School Safety, Marcus Jones participated in the four Montgomery County Emergency Management Zoom calls that were convened by the County concerning preparation for and immediate response to the storm, Friday, Jan. 23, through Monday, Jan. 26.

MCPS operates 211 schools across a county with more than 5,200 miles of roads. Reopening schools safely requires that every community, not just some, can reliably and safely support buses, walkers, and drivers.

Essie McGuire  
MCPS Chief of Staff