

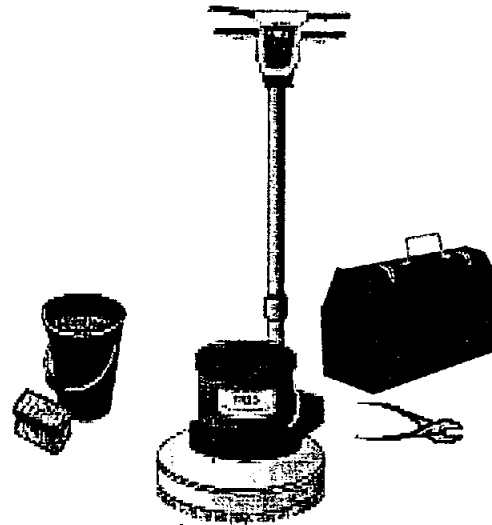


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Reading Public Schools

Review of Custodial and Maintenance Operations



Final Report

March, 1998

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March 4, 1998

Dr. Harry K. Harutunian, Superintendent
Reading Public Schools
82 Oakland Road
PO Box 180
Reading, Massachusetts 01867

Dear Dr. Harutunian:

KPMG Peat Marwick LLP (KPMG) is pleased to present the final report regarding our Review of the Reading Public Schools Custodial and Maintenance Operations. This report contains KPMG's findings and recommendations aimed at improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the Reading Public Schools' custodial and maintenance operations.

We have enjoyed the opportunity to be of service to the Reading Public Schools, and we appreciate the assistance and feedback that you and your staff have contributed to the project.

KPMG Peat Marwick



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Background

The Reading Public Schools (RPS) and the Town of Reading (the “Town”) currently share responsibility for custodial, maintenance, and grounds operations of 14 public buildings—including RPS’ seven schools, the Reading Fire Department (2 locations), the Reading Police Department, DPW garage, the Senior Center, Town Hall, and the Library. The School Department has primary responsibility for the interior custodial and maintenance functions, while the Town’s Department of Public Works (DPW) has primary responsibility for the exterior grounds and snow removal functions.

In August of 1997, the Reading Public Schools (RPS) engaged KPMG Peat Marwick LLP (KPMG) to conduct a review of the shared custodial, maintenance and grounds operations of the School Department and Town. The purpose of the study was to evaluate the current operations and make recommendations for improving overall efficiency. Accordingly, KPMG:

- Identified strengths and achievements of RPS’ current operations
- Provided a context of how RPS’ staffing assignments compared to peer and national averages through a benchmarking analysis
- Identified key issues and made recommendations aimed at improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of RPS’ custodial and maintenance operations

Methodology

To accomplish these tasks, KPMG:

- Interviewed selected administrative, custodial, maintenance and grounds personnel
- Surveyed every building administrator, as well as several other Town officials with respect to the facilities operations
- Conducted site visits of each facility, and performed a high level condition assessment of two school buildings
- Benchmarked RPS' custodial and maintenance function with peer school systems
- Reviewed "best practices" and industry benchmarks from KPMG's national benchmarking database
- Reviewed the Department's written policy and procedures, including employee position descriptions
- Assessed organizational structures, staffing, and workloads with respect to RPS' custodial and maintenance functions
- Evaluated the use and condition of equipment, including technology, computers, and other communication tools

In all phases of our work, KPMG found the RPS and Town staff to be extremely helpful, and we are grateful for their important contributions to our report.

KPMG Peat Marwick LLP is an internationally known independent consulting and accounting firm that has extensive experience conducting organizational staffing and program operation studies for school systems throughout the country. As a member of the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants (AICPA), our Firm is bound by a professional code of conduct to maintain independence and objectivity.

Overall Conclusions

Key findings and recommendations of the study include:

- **Organizational Structure, Staffing and Workload**
 - Custodial and maintenance functions are understaffed based on peer and national benchmarks. RPS should reassign custodial staff based on square footage to more evenly distribute the workload. In addition, RPS should increase staffing by three and one-half custodians, three full-time maintenance workers, one Assistant Director of Facilities, and one secretary/clerk.
 - RPS should create Lead Custodian positions at each school to supervise daily operations, as well as act as a key contact person for administrators.
 - Custodial staffing at the Town buildings is inappropriate, and KPMG's survey responses indicate that Department heads are generally dissatisfied with the building's cleanliness. RPS should consider having a private contractor provide custodial services at all of the Town's facilities.

- **Management Practices and Technology**
 - Position descriptions are outdated and need to be revised to reflect the current job responsibilities of custodial, maintenance, and administrative staff.
 - RPS should develop cleaning guidelines and performance standards for custodians to improve efficiency, standardization and quality of services.
 - Performance evaluations are not routinely conducted for custodial or maintenance staff. Accordingly, RPS should ensure that annual performance evaluations are conducted for all staff. The use of "Survey Response Cards" and "Custodial Services Feedback Cards" should be incorporated into the performance evaluation process.

Overall Conclusions

• **Management Practices and Technology (Continued)**

- RPS should ensure that facility use fees cover both direct and indirect costs associated with the rental of school and Town facilities.
- The current work order system is inadequate. The use of “state-of-the-art” technology would permit prioritization of work requests, record usage and cost of parts and labor, allow work orders for preventative maintenance tasks to be generated automatically, etc.

• **Estimated Fiscal Impacts**

- Implementation of all the staffing recommendations will require an annual investment of \$277,100.
- KPMG has estimated that RPS can achieve an estimated annual savings of more than \$25,000 by increasing facility use fees to cover indirect costs.
- Most of the other recommendations contained in this report focus on improving the overall efficiency and effectiveness of current operations, and therefore it is likely that RPS will achieve significant savings in the future. However, these fiscal impacts have not been estimated.

Overview of Current Operations

RPS' Facilities Department is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all school facilities, as well as seven Town office buildings on a pilot basis. The major goal of RPS' custodial and maintenance functions is "to provide a safe, clean and comfortable environment for students, staff and those members of the community who make use of the Reading Public Schools facilities". RPS is expected to safeguard the public investment made in school and Town buildings by keeping all facilities in safe condition and in good repair through regular maintenance activities and capital projects.

Functional Components:

- ***Custodial Operations:*** Responsible for the routine cleaning, some snow removal, and upkeep of 12 public buildings¹. RPS also oversees a contract to provide cleaning services at the Town's Senior Center, Library, and Town Hall.
- ***Maintenance:*** Responsible for maintaining and repairing 14 School Department and Town facilities, including both preventive and responsive maintenance. In addition, this unit is responsible for making mail deliveries across the district and town office buildings. Caring for lawns, trees, shrubs, snow removal, and lining play fields is the responsibility of the Town's Public Works Department (DPW).
- ***Capital Maintenance/Improvement Projects:*** Responsible for developing and implementing long-term plans for maintenance and improvement projects, preparing annual funding requests, and monitoring maintenance/improvement contracts.

¹ Custodial services are not provided at the Town's two fire departments.

Overview of Current Operations

Workload and Program Information

- Custodial staff clean and maintain more than 712,600 square feet of school district building space, and more than 61,000 Town building space
- Receive approximately 240 maintenance work orders each month
- Daily mail deliveries made to all schools and town offices

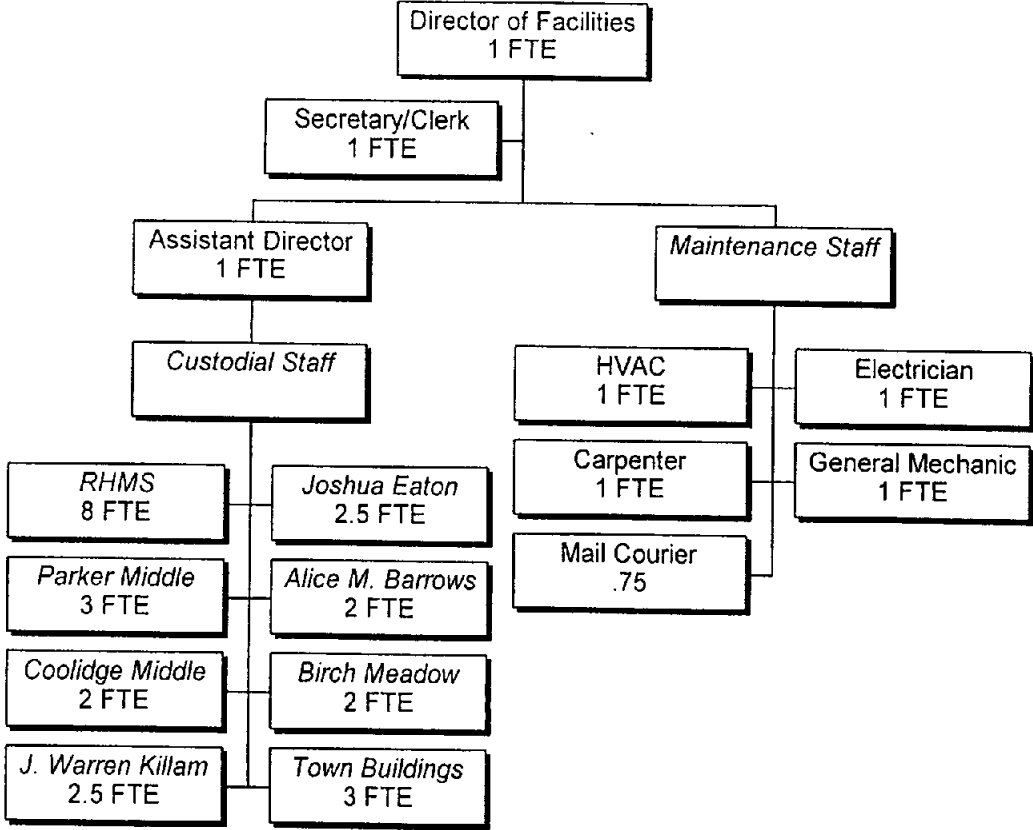
Staffing and Budget

- FY 1998 budget of \$1,932,353 for the school buildings and \$361,879² for the Town buildings
- 32.75 FTE:
 - 1 Director of Facilities
 - 1 Secretary/Clerk
 - 1 Assistant Director of Facilities
 - 25 Custodians (3 FTE are on the Town's budget)
 - 4 Maintenance Staff
 - .75 Mail Courier

² This amount includes contracted custodial services.

Overview of Current Operations

Current Organization Structure



Accomplishments

Throughout the course of our study, KPMG found that RPS has many strengths and achievements for which it should be proud. Notably:

- There is extensive coordination and cooperation between the School Department and the Town—an unusual situation for many municipalities.
- RPS has increased the budget for custodial and maintenance services by five percent over the past three years; it has a projected increase of 21 percent between 1997 and the proposed FY 1999 budget.
- RPS recently procured new vehicles for maintenance staff.
- Sixty-nine percent of custodians are staffed during the nighttime, which is consistent with KPMG's best practice standards.
- KPMG's survey responses indicated that the custodians and maintenance workers are responsive and hardworking.

Customer Survey Responses

As part of this study, KPMG surveyed 17 school principals, administrators and Town officials, to gather their input and assess their overall satisfaction with RPS' custodial, maintenance and repair services, and the Town's grounds, exterior and snow removal services. The following five pages summarize the results of our survey analysis.

Interior Cleaning Services

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, what overall score would you give the interior cleanliness of the building?” — **Average score: 6.0**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, please rate the responsiveness of the cleaning staff located at your building” — **Average score: 6.8**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, please rate the responsiveness of the cleaning administrative and/or supervisor staff” — **Average score: 6.8**

Customer Survey Responses

Interior Cleaning Services (Continued)

“What are your greatest satisfactions, that is, what does the interior cleaning function do especially well?”

Representative comments include:

- *Custodial staff does an excellent job when instructed to do so; they are very responsive to requests.*
- *Although short-handed, I have better quality custodians this year—they are very cooperative and willing.*
- *What they are able to clean is done fairly well. Both custodians are friendly and will do the best they can in any situation.*
- *The custodians have pride in all their work.*
- *We have begun to turn the corner—some new faces and attitudes. Floors were stripped, washed, and waxed for the first time in years this summer.*
- *Public areas are well maintained.*

“What are your biggest concerns in the area of interior cleaning?” Representative comments include:

- *Lack of attention to detail. I feel we need better trained staff and more of it!*
- *Lack of consistency in the day/evening crews.*
- *[Custodians] are understaffed and underequipped.*
- *Only the basics are done. Jobs are half done.*
- *Areas are not thoroughly cleaned. Extra effort is not taken to address the obvious (e.g., cobwebs behind doors, dirt and wax buildup in corners, etc.). Lack of staff, training, and accountability contribute to the above.*

Customer Survey Responses

Maintenance and Repair Services

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, how well do you think the building is maintained?” — **Average score: 5.5**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, please rate the responsiveness of the maintenance staff” — **Average score: 6.9**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, please rate the responsiveness of the central administrative and/or supervisor staff of maintenance” — **Average score: 7.3**

“Who in your building is responsible for reporting maintenance or repair issues?” — **Responses varied by building, but included principals, custodians, teachers, the Director of Facilities, and the Superintendent.**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, how well does the maintenance/repair reporting system work?” — **Average score: 5.1**

Customer Survey Responses

Maintenance and Repair Services (Continued)

“What are your greatest satisfactions, that is, what does the interior cleaning function do especially well?”

Representative comments include:

- *The present staff of school maintenance are hardworking, conscientious and very pleasant. They do their best—there just aren't enough people to do routine maintenance. I suggest custodians be trained to do maintenance functions.*
- *Safety items are addressed quickly.*
- *Responsiveness of maintenance staff. Working relation of supervisory staff in the School Department with municipal offices. The desire to make the maintenance consolidation work is there.*
- *Versatility—willing to try most things.*

“What are your biggest concerns in the area of interior cleaning?” Representative comments include:

- *Long wait for work orders to be completed; Completing the orders but not notifying anyone.*
- *Lack of timely response to requests to have things fixed. Emergencies are responded to, but several requests (work orders) are often necessary before some things get done.*
- *Too much to get done with staff and budget. Building has need for major renovations. It effects the "climate for learning".*
- *The Town is losing qualified trades people. I believe it is related to pay scale. Need to pay trades people a satisfactory/competitive pay—not as a custodian.*
- *Washing, waxing, vacuuming of floors and rugs is inconsistent.*

Customer Survey Responses

Grounds, Exteriors and Snow Removal Services

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, how well do you think the building’s grounds and exterior are maintained?” — **Average score: 6.2**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, please rate the responsiveness of the grounds staff” — **Average score: 6.1**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, please rate the responsiveness of the central administrative and/or supervisor staff of grounds maintenance” — **Average score: 6.2**

“On a scale of 1 to 10, with 10 being best, how effective is the snow removal function?” — **Average score: 7.7**

Customer Survey Responses

Grounds, Exteriors and Snow Removal Services (Continued)

“What are your greatest satisfactions, that is, what does this function do especially well?” Representative comments include:

- *Usually very responsive.*
- *Good snow cleaning; Good plowing; Lawn gets mowed regularly.*
- *Garden club very helpful; DPW has been great; Things are much better than years ago.*
- *Snow and ice safety.*
- *Due to parents and PTO efforts, many flowers have been planted over the years. PTO sponsors spring clean-up in the fall.*

“What are your biggest concerns of grounds, maintenance and snow removal?” Representative comments include:

- *Requests for work to be done go for weeks unanswered.*
- *Safety issues with leaves are major concern in the fall. Town does not pick up on any regular basis. Snow removal is limited to paths in front and poor plowing in rear of school.*
- *The grounds maintenance still is very unresponsive; Weeds in beds and patio; poor picnic table in patio; The lawn does get mowed; Should contract out this service.*
- *Lack of funding - volunteers do a lot of work. Neighborhood concerns are a complex piece of this; snow removal in crisis situations; understaffed.*
- *Limited view of grounds care—usually just keep grass cut. We should invest more in treatment and beautification.*

Building Condition Assessment

As part of our review, KPMG conducted site visits at each the seven public schools and the seven Town buildings. In addition, KPMG conducted high-level assessments at two schools—Coolidge Middle School and Birch Meadow Elementary—in order to observe and confirm the level of cleanliness and general condition of the facilities. The results of our observations are as follows:

Coolidge Middle School

- The Coolidge Middle School building is 37 years old, and is in adequate condition considering its age (37 years). The main hallways and common areas appear reasonably clean, though the fixtures are older. The common areas show signs of age, wear, and tear, but are basically acceptable. The overall appearance in terms of cleanliness is fair to poor.
- There are a number of areas in which additional time and effort could improve conditions. For example, the floor is discolored in places, and the doors that lead outside from the library are worn away from the outside near the bottom leading to occasional leakage. In bathrooms, there is a small amount of graffiti on surfaces that could be painted over, and the mirrors are not as clean as they should be. The bathroom fixtures are functional and the stalls are in working order. The aesthetics, however, are poor. In the industrial tech room, some of the light fixtures are older, yellowing and cracked. There are cobwebs in the exposed ceiling beams, and some cobwebs in the corner near a filing cabinet. Each evening, the trash is emptied from every room, but only half of the classrooms are routinely swept. Most of the lockers are in workable condition.
- In terms of maintenance, the fixtures are old and suffer from a variety of related failures. For example, there have been a number of leaky faucets which, being low on the maintenance priority list, were leaky for a period of months. Almost all of the maintenance work is reactive rather than preventative, and as the building ages more and more problems with the heating and ventilation system should be expected.

Building Condition Assessment

Birch Meadow Elementary School

- The Birch Meadow Elementary School is, with the exception of some temporary classrooms and some new additions, over 30 years old. As with several other school buildings, while the common room areas and main hallways were fairly clean, the classroom users were generally less than satisfied with the frequency and thoroughness of the cleanings. Part of this is attributable to a significant increase in burden on the cleaning staff. In 1987, the school housed 370 students, and by 1997 enrollment had increased to 604. In addition, the use of portable classrooms increased the square footage custodians were required to clean.
- The lack of resources translated into a fair to poor level of cleanliness. No major health or safety problems were in immediate evidence, and the common areas and main walkways appeared to be cleaned regularly. An inspection of the classrooms revealed that hard to reach areas, such as corners, behind desks, or behind moveable electronic equipment, had an accumulation of dust, debris, and dirt. While the floors appeared to be swept, it was evident that they had not been mopped, buffed, or waxed recently. Scuff marks and general lack of shine were common.

Benchmarks

An integral component of this study was to compare RPS' custodial and maintenance program with other similar school systems. The primary focus in KPMG's benchmarking analysis was to use peer comparisons to provide a context and evaluate the relative appropriateness of RPS' staffing and expenditure levels. The following school systems were originally selected by RPS as comparable school systems:

- Franklin
- Holliston
- Marshfield
- Milford
- North Andover
- Randolph
- Shrewsbury
- Stoughton
- Tewksbury

KPMG developed and mailed survey questionnaires to each of the peer school systems, and conducted numerous follow-up telephone interviews to solicit responses and ensure that the data received was both accurate and comparable. KPMG received sufficient data from five of the nine school systems surveyed.

Benchmarks

The table below summarizes general district information for the peer school systems that responded to KPMG's survey.

| School District | Number of Schools | FY 1996-97 Student Enrollment | FY 1996-97 Per Pupil Expenditures | FY 1996-97 Teachers Compensation | FY 1996-97 Student Drop-out Rate | FY 1997-98 Total Custodial/Maintenance FTE |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Reading | 7 | 4,028 | \$4,816 | \$46,789 | 1.3% | 29.5 |
| Franklin | 9 | 4,547 | \$3,889 | \$36,994 | 2.2% | 31 |
| Holliston | 5 | 3,035 | \$4,756 | \$36,264 | 0.4% | 4* |
| Marshfield | 7 | 4,254 | \$4,414 | \$43,333 | 1.3% | 22.5** |
| Milford | 6 | 3,920 | \$4,819 | \$37,996 | 2.0% | 28.5 |
| N. Andover | 8 | 3,896 | \$4,867 | \$42,992 | 3.2% | 26 |

Source: Massachusetts State Department of Education, 1996 School District Profiles; 1996 School District Budgets; and KPMG telephone interviews

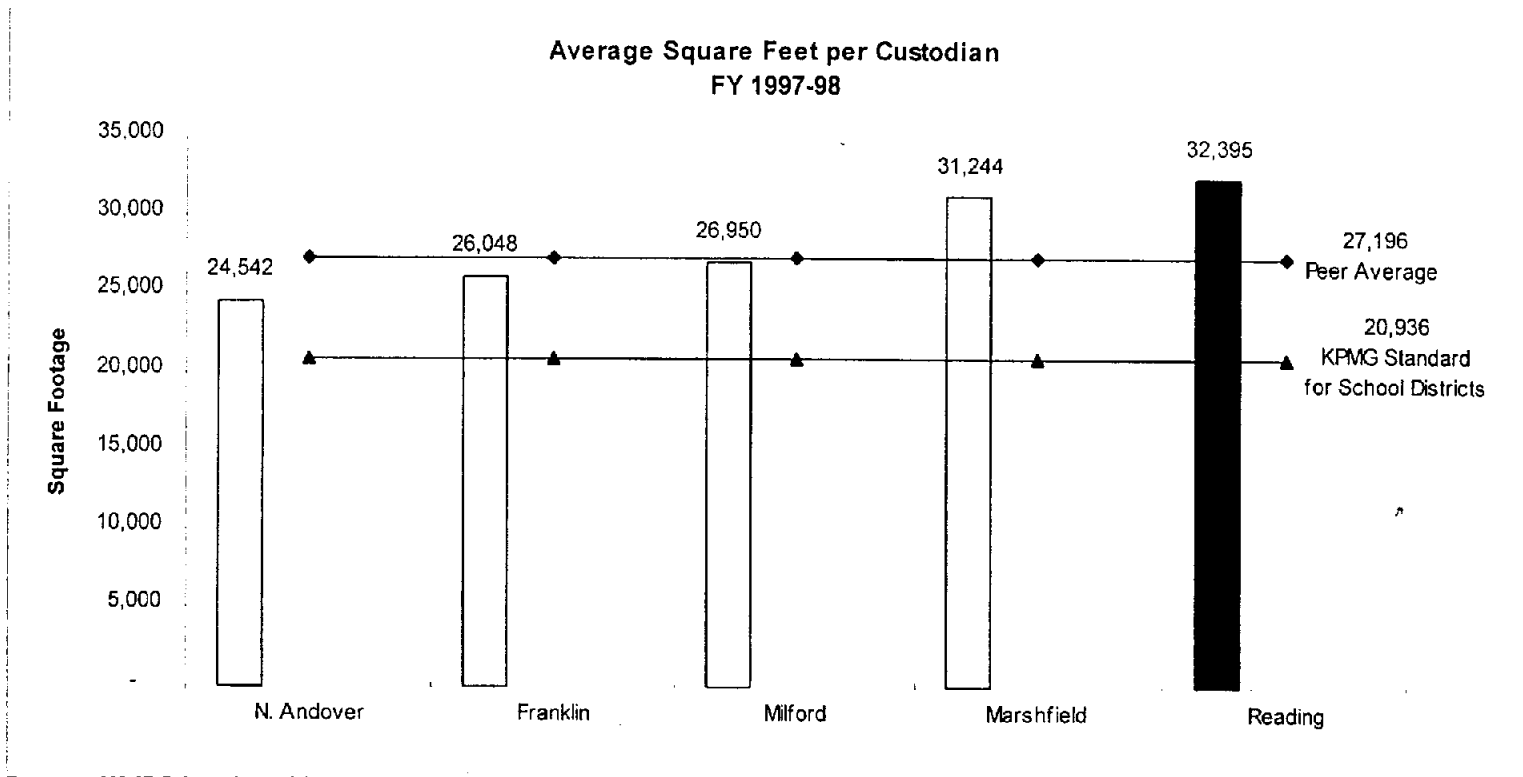
* Holliston contracts out custodial services; FTE listed represent maintenance staff.

** Marshfield represents custodial staff only.

When necessary, we supplemented this data with other school district and national data from our KPMG benchmarking database. We also used data from the Education Research Service and national industry associations. The results of our benchmarking analysis are provided throughout the remainder of the report.

Benchmarks

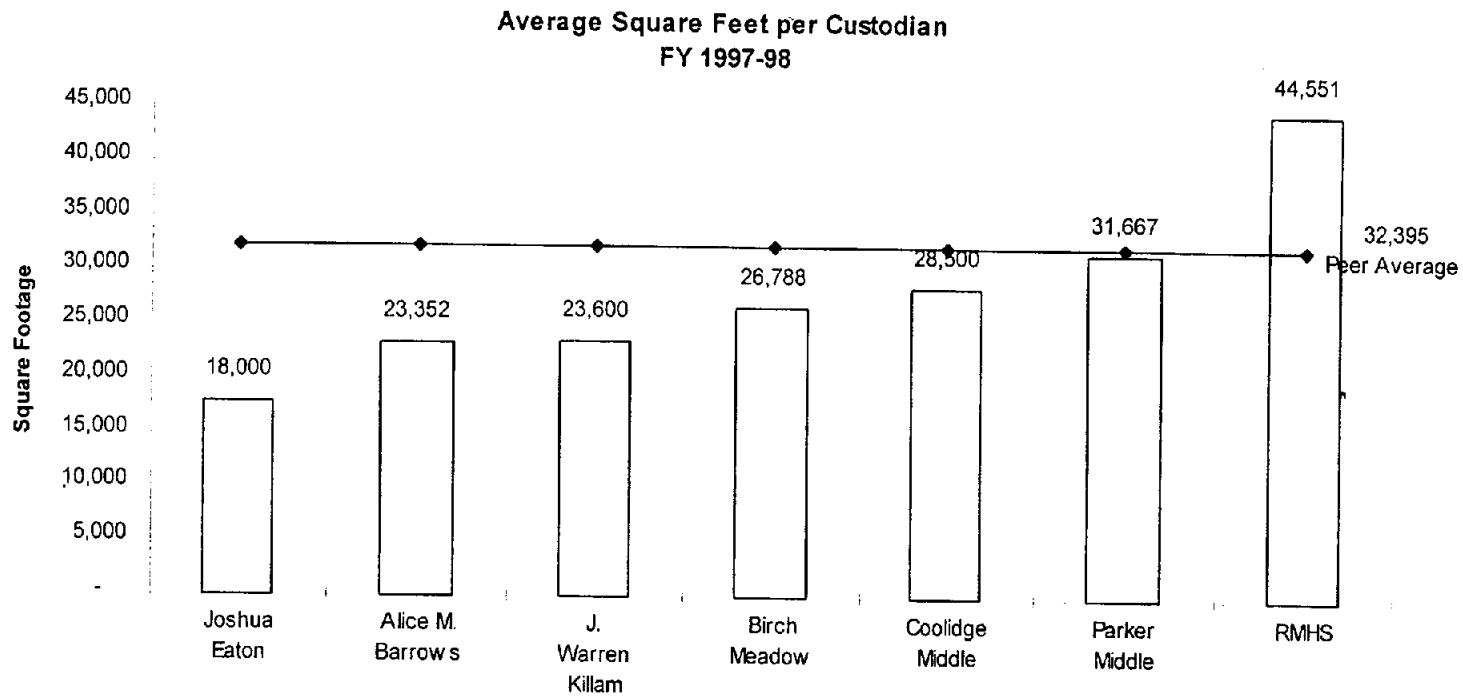
- Custodians at RPS are staffed leaner than all of the peer school systems surveyed. On average, RPS' custodians clean an average of 19 percent more square footage than custodians at peer school systems.



Source: KMPG benchmarking surveys and telephone interviews.

Benchmarks

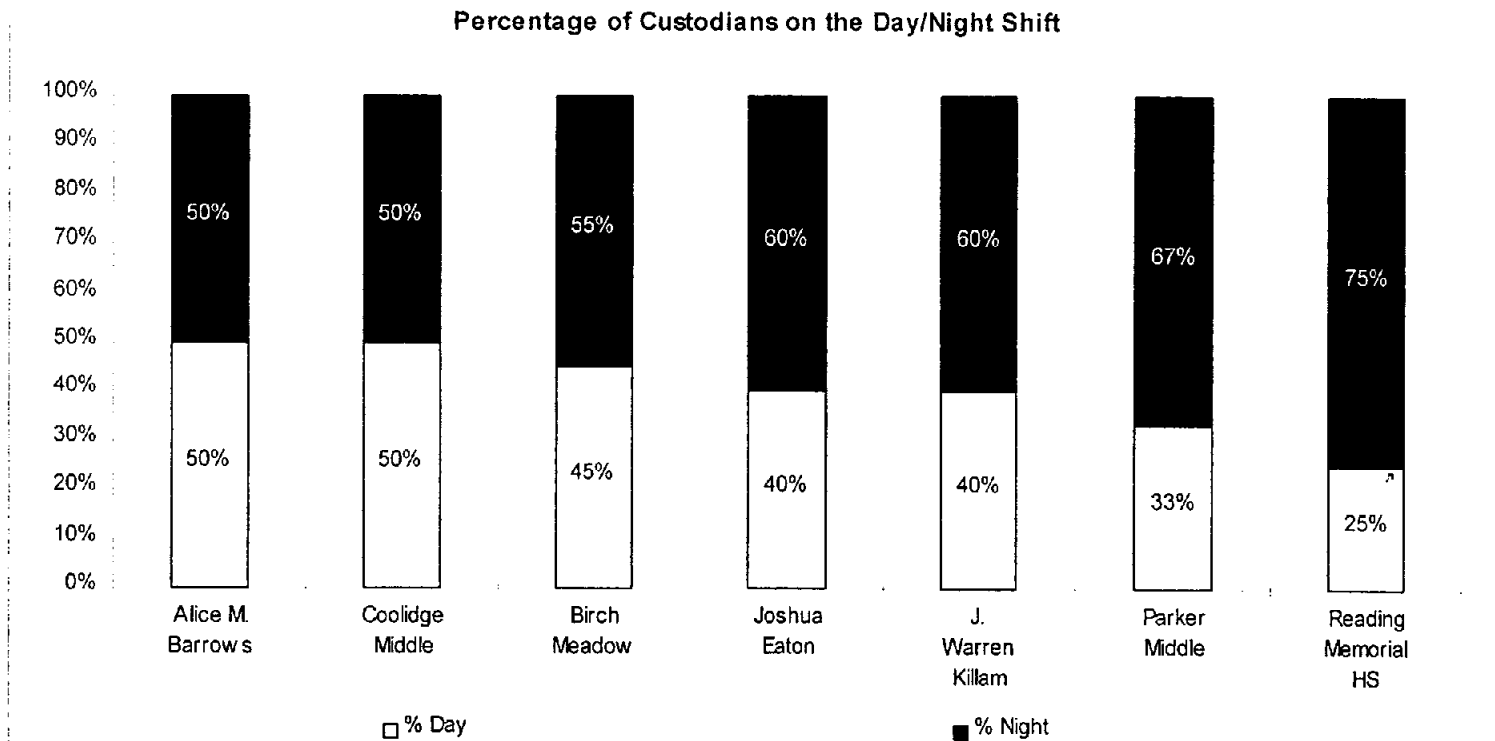
- Custodial workloads for FY 1997-98 vary among the schools, ranging from 18,000 square feet per custodian at the Joshua Eaton school to 44,551 square feet per custodian at the Reading Memorial High School. Custodians at the Coolidge Middle, Parker Middle, and Reading Memorial High School are staffed leaner than the peer and national averages.



Source: Reading Public Schools.

Benchmarks

- RPS staffs the majority of custodians during nighttime hours, which is consistent with KPMG’s best practice standards.



Source: Reading Public Schools.

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|---|--|
| Organizational Structure, Staffing and Workload | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RPS has not conducted a cost-benefit analysis for contracting out custodial services at the school buildings. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → RPS should consider contracting out for all of the custodial services at a pilot school to determine whether the function may be performed more efficiently. The district should allow private vendors and in-house staff to bid on the contract. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current approach to staffing custodians at the school buildings is based on historical levels and does not ensure equity of workload and optimal utilization of staff. • Custodial workloads for FY 1997-98 vary significantly among the schools, ranging from 18,000 square feet per custodian at the Joshua Eaton school to 44,551 square feet per custodian at the Reading Memorial High School. • On average, RPS' custodians clean 19 percent more square feet than custodians at peer school systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Re-assign .5 FTE from the Joshua Eaton school and .5 FTE from the J. Warren Killam school to the Reading Memorial High School. → Increase staffing by 3.5 custodians and staff them as follows: 3 FTE at the Reading Memorial High School, and .5 FTE at the Parker Middle School. All of these newly-hired custodians should be staffed during the nighttime shift to maximize efficiency. In the future, RPS should continue to monitor custodial workloads on a square footage basis. KPMG recommends that RPS set a target of approximately 26,000 square feet per custodian and adjust staffing levels accordingly. → Estimated fiscal impact: \$91,000 Investment. This estimate is based on an average salary of \$26,000. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Assistant Director of Buildings has a wide span of control (e.g., 25 custodians report directly to this position).• There is limited communication, coordination and standardization of custodial services throughout the district. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Establish Lead Custodian positions at each of the seven schools who would be responsible for, but not limited to, the following:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Supervising the day-to-day custodial operations, including observing and monitoring performance, and obtaining feedback- Ensuring that custodians perform work in accordance with pre-defined custodial responsibilities- Identifying custodian training needs and providing necessary training in all operating procedures- Responding to teacher/principal notices of custodial non-standard performance- Supervising campus cleanliness, materials usage, equipment upkeep, and custodian productivity- Ensuring communication and coordination with the Assistant Director and other lead custodians→ Estimated fiscal impact: \$7,000 Investment. This estimate is based on an \$1,000 annual stipend to seven custodians; however, RPS may choose other options for compensating lead custodians. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Best practices are not shared between schools. For example, in some schools students are required to place their chairs on the desks at the end of the day to make it faster for the nighttime custodians to sweep the classrooms. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Lead Custodians should communicate weekly to share “best practice” ideas so they can be replicated throughout the district. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current custodial staffing assignments at the Town buildings appear inappropriate. At the Town Hall, for example, the Town contracted with an outside service provider to clean the hallways, stairwells, bathrooms and main areas, while a Town custodian has been assigned responsibility for cleaning the designated office areas and emptying wastepaper baskets.• Oversight of the three Town custodians is limited.• Results of KPMG’s customer feedback survey indicate that building supervisors whose custodial services are provided by the private contractor reported a higher degree of satisfaction than building supervisors whose custodial services are provided by RPS. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ RPS and the Town should expand the scope of their current contract with the outside service provider to include provision of custodial services at all of the Town’s municipal buildings. Accordingly, the Town/RPS could reassign the three custodians to the schools, as described in the first recommendation. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Findings

- Maintenance workers are currently responsible for an average of 200,049 building square feet per FTE (including the seven Town buildings). KPMG’s experience with other school systems indicate an average of 64,000 square feet per maintenance worker is standard, while private sector “best practice” standards show an average of 100,000 square feet per maintenance worker.
- There is a backlog of approximately 150 maintenance work order requests.
- Interviews with Department staff as well as responses to KPMG’s customer surveys indicate that maintenance staff are not performing routine and preventative maintenance activities.

Recommendations

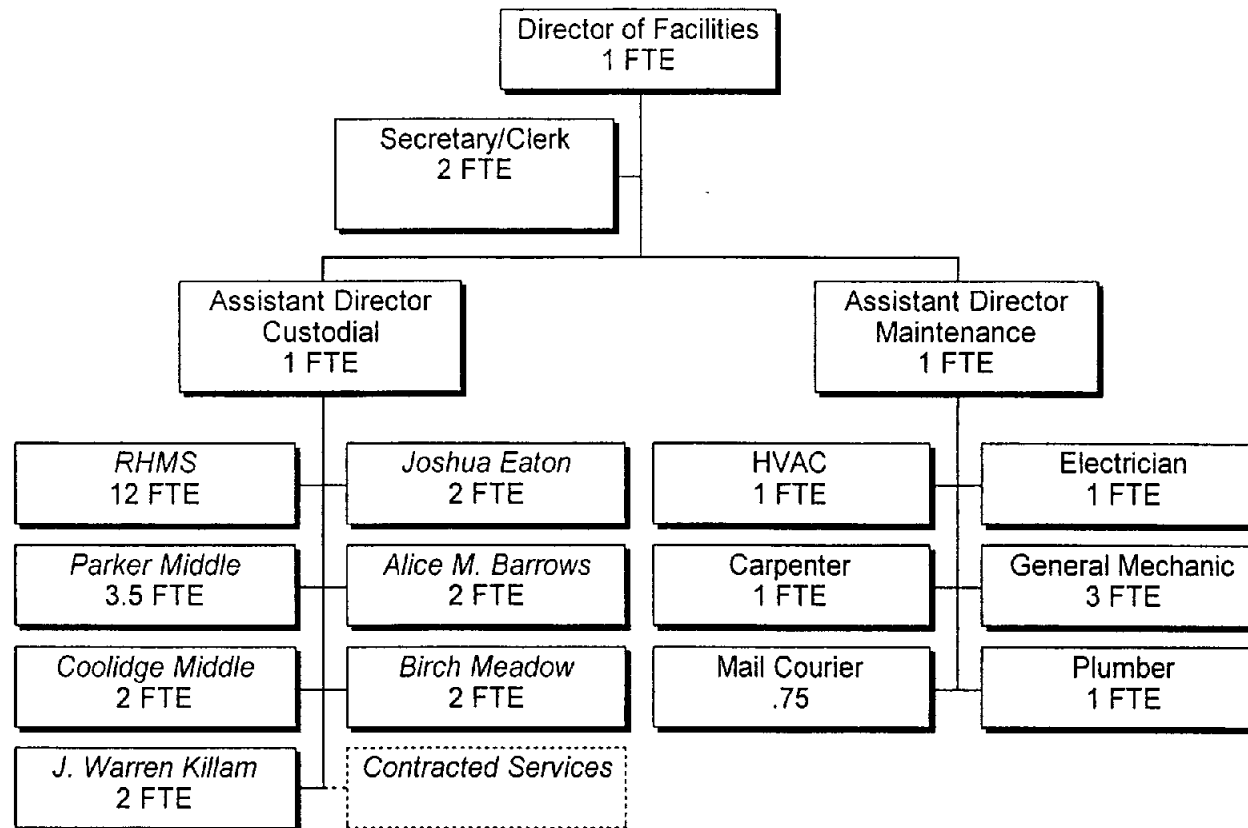
- RPS should hire additional maintenance staff to compensate for the increase in workload resulting from the shared services arrangement between the School Department and the Town. Specifically, RPS should hire one Assistant Director of Maintenance, and three full-time maintenance staff, including one plumber and two general maintenance staff. At this staffing level, each maintenance worker will be responsible for an average of 100,024 square feet, slightly more than the private industry best practice standard. RPS should continue to contract out for large maintenance and capital projects.
 - **Estimated fiscal impact: \$121,400 Investment.** This estimate is based on an average salary for maintenance workers of \$29,600 and estimated salary of \$32,600 for the Assistant Director of Maintenance.
-

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The current workload of the Secretary/Clerk is substantial. This position is currently responsible for the Department's personnel and payroll functions (e.g., tracking vacation, sick leave, workers' compensation, scheduling), overseeing contracts (e.g., typing contracts, tracking payments), maintaining the maintenance work order system (e.g., entering and updating work order requests), overseeing facility rentals (e.g., scheduling, staffing, billing), and supporting the Director of Facilities (e.g., handling phone calls, answering inquiries), etc.• Many administrative tasks are currently performed by the Director or Assistant Director, or are not being performed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Hire one Secretary/Clerk to support the Department's operations.→ Estimated fiscal impact: \$22,800 Investment. This estimate is based on an average salary of \$22,800. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Proposed Organization Structure



Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|---|---|
| Management Practices and Technology | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Position descriptions have not been revised in more than seven years, and do not accurately reflect the current responsibilities of custodial and maintenance staff.• School-based custodians perform activities unrelated to their position description (e.g., receiving food service shipments). | <p>→ Update position descriptions for all department staff (including the newly-created Lead Custodian and Administrative Assistant, and Assistant Director of Maintenance positions) to reflect assigned roles and responsibilities. In addition, the Director and Assistant Directors of Facilities, the lead custodians, and the school principals should jointly establish work parameters for custodians and maintenance staff which outline specific functions they are permitted to perform. For example, custodians <i>may</i> provide logistical/physical support for instructional staff by assisting with heavy or bulky items, moving audio/video equipment, books, or moderate size appliances. Custodians should <i>not</i> be permitted to throw out trash for cafeteria staff, restock vending machines, clean out faculty/staff refrigerator, etc.</p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Custodians are not required to perform light maintenance activities. | <p>→ Require that daytime custodians perform light maintenance activities and ensure that they are trained accordingly.</p> |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not all custodians are fluent in English. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Include demonstrated literacy requirements on all job descriptions for maintenance and custodial personnel. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• No policy and procedures manual exists for any of the Department’s custodial, maintenance or administrative functions. Without a policy and procedures manual in place, the possibility exists for certain responsibilities to be left uncompleted, and there is also a risk of losing the knowledge of duties performed by former or absent employees. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ Develop a policy and procedures manual for the Department. The manual should include step-by-step procedures for the custodial, maintenance, and administrative functions. The manual should be reviewed periodically to ensure that it is updated with any changes to the Department’s policies or procedures. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no established cleaning guidelines or standards of cleanliness for custodians. As a result, the equipment used and methodologies employed vary from building to building and custodian to custodian.• Cleanliness quality inspections are not performed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">→ RPS should include in the policy and procedures manual custodial guidelines and performance standards to ensure consistent, high-quality service throughout the district. Guidelines should include detailed “how to” descriptions and cleaning standards for all custodial responsibilities. KPMG has provide an example of “How to Dust Mop a Floor”, as well as examples of daily cleaning tasks and standards on the following two pages. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Cleaning Guidelines: How to Dust Mop a Floor

Equipment Needed:

- Dust mop (treated 12 hours in advance)
- Dust pan
- Counter brush
- Waste container with plastic liner
- Putty knife
- Wire brush

Procedure:

- Leave equipment at one end of the floor out of the way of traffic.
- Begin at door entrance, work along baseboard to corner; follow wall on third side until mid-room has been reached.
- Crack mop by lifting off floor and lightly shaking mop handle. Return in direction from which mopping was started until reaching wall at which time direction is again reversed.
- Crack mop each time center of room has been dust mopped. End up at the door. Repeat procedure a other side of room. (Be sure to overlap each preceding sweep to avoid missing areas.)
- Pick up dust with dust pan and counter brush.
- Deposit waste in trash can with plastic liner.
- Brush off excess dirt from the head with wire brush after every use.

Standard:

- Floors should be free of trash, scuff marks, spills and stains (spot mop as needed).

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Examples of Daily Cleaning Tasks and Standards

| Daily Task | Cleaning Standard |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweep all hard surface floors using dust mop or broom. | ✓ Should be free of trash, scuff marks, spills and stains (spot mop as needed). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dust all chairs, desks, tables, telephones, partitions, filing cabinets, shelves, lamps and other office furniture. | ✓ All items are to be free of dust, debris and graffiti. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean all chalkboards and trays daily. | ✓ Dust both board and tray; no chalk powder should remain in tray. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spot clean door frames, doors and areas around wall switches. | ✓ Area should contain no graffiti, hand prints or soiled areas. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean all drinking fountains. | ✓ Should be free from dirt, debris, graffiti and trash. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean and disinfect all toilets and urinals. | ✓ Should be disinfected and free from trash, graffiti and debris. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mop all tile floors in science rooms every night. | ✓ Should be free of trash, scuff marks, spills and stains. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Vacuum all carpeted areas. | ✓ Should be free from trash, spills, and stains. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean all mirrors. | ✓ Should be free from streaks and smears. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sweep gymnasium floor. | ✓ Should be free of trash, scuff marks and spills. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Shampoo all carpeted areas as needed. | ✓ Should be free from stains. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clean all splash marks from walls around sinks. | ✓ Should be disinfected and free from hand prints, stains and graffiti. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Findings

- Results of KPMG’s customer surveys indicate that building supervisors are generally dissatisfied with custodial and maintenance services.
- There is no standard procedure for communicating the completion of a work order task to the customer.

Recommendations

- Custodians should be monitored and held accountable for maintaining established performance standards (as described previously). In addition, the Department should implement a performance accountability system which would allow teachers, administrators, and department heads the opportunity to provide feedback to custodians. Each evening, custodians should leave a “Custodial Services Feedback Card” which would identify the custodian responsible for cleaning the designated area and would solicit feedback on areas in need of improvement. An example is provided on the following page.
- Similarly, RPS should develop a “Service Response Card” that is provided to customers for each maintenance work order performed. Maintenance workers should distribute these cards to Principals and/or the Lead Custodian who called in the request.

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Custodial Services Feedback Card

Dear Customer,

We were responsible for preparing this area for your use during the last custodial working shift. As part of our continued effort to provide high quality custodial services, we want to know if we failed to meet your expectations. Please check below any area(s) which did not meet your expectations, and place this card in the Lead Custodians mailbox. Thank you for you assistance!

Designated Area: _____

Custodian _____

| | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Baseboards | <input type="checkbox"/> Pencil Sharpeners |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Chalkboards/Tray | <input type="checkbox"/> Restrooms |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corners/Edges | <input type="checkbox"/> Sinks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Floors | <input type="checkbox"/> Walls/Doors |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Furniture/Equipment | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastebasket |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other (<i>please specify</i>): _____ | |
| _____ | |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|---|--|
| • Performance evaluations are not routinely conducted for custodial or maintenance staff. | → The Director and Assistant Directors should conduct annual performance evaluations for all Department staff. The Director/Assistant Director of Facilities should share completed service response/feedback cards with custodians and maintenance staff as part of their performance evaluation process. |
| • Facility use fees do not cover all costs associated with the rental of school or Town facilities. The current pricing policy covers the marginal expense of custodial services, but does not recover the costs of light, heat, utility, increased liability, wear and tear on the facility, and administrative costs. | → Develop a process for identifying and allocating all indirect costs associated with the rental of school and Town facilities, and adopt a policy directing that all direct and indirect costs for facility rentals be covered by the facility use fees. → Estimated fiscal impact: \$25,000 Savings. |

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Findings

- The recently purchased automated work order system (QUEST) is not being utilized. Instead, an ad hoc system is used to track work orders and supplies (e.g., triplicate work order forms and an Excel spreadsheet).
- Prioritization of work order requests is based first on safety and necessary repairs, but after that non-critical repairs are handled on an ad hoc basis, often in response to complaints from administrators.
- A fully operational inventory control system is not in place and may be allowing shrinkage and hoarding of supplies.

Recommendations

- RPS should establish as a priority the use of the automated work order system. In addition, RPS should consider implementing the use of “state-of-the-art” technology based on the priorities of the School Committee. A state-of-the-art work order system would:
 - Permit prioritization of work requests, and permits review of outstanding work orders by priority level
 - Record usage and cost of parts and labor by building/site and by maintenance craft/trade which supports analysis of time/cost to complete work, costs per project, etc.
 - Facilitate analysis of cost/benefit of employing contracted services versus performing repairs in-house
 - Allow work requests to be submitted directly to facilities maintenance electronically by schools and other sites

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

| <i>Findings</i> | <i>Recommendations</i> |
|--|--|
| • (continued) | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Permit work requests to be reviewed, prioritized, cost-estimated, converted to work orders, assigned, and scheduled on computer without re-entry- Allow managers of buildings/sites to electronically check the status/schedule of their work requests without calling facilities maintenance staff- Allow work orders for preventive maintenance tasks to be generated automatically at appropriate intervals |
| • There is a backlog of more than 500 work orders which have not been entered into the current work order tracking system. | → Information from all completed work order forms should be entered into the database system in a timely manner to better track usage of supplies and labor time. Maintenance workers' efficiency (timely completion of work orders and positive ratings on response cards) should be tied directly to their performance evaluations. |
| • Work orders are not always completed for maintenance requests. | → Establish and enforce a policy whereby maintenance staff cannot perform significant tasks without a work order. |

Service Alternative

Findings and recommendations presented on the previous pages represent an evaluation of RPS' current operations, and recommendations to improve them. This page presents alternatives to the current approach. It includes options for which RPS should weigh the costs and benefits.

Service Alternative Options:

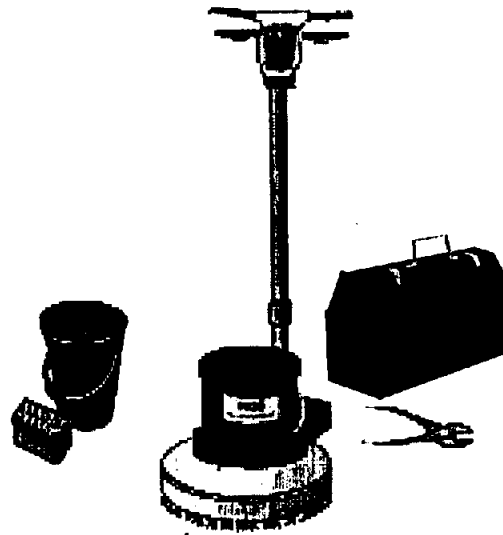
- The district should consider contracting out the night shift of heavy cleaning custodial duties at all facilities to a private contractor.



The Global Leader

SUPT OFFICE

Reading Public Schools
Review of Custodial and Maintenance Operations



Final Report

March, 1998

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Findings

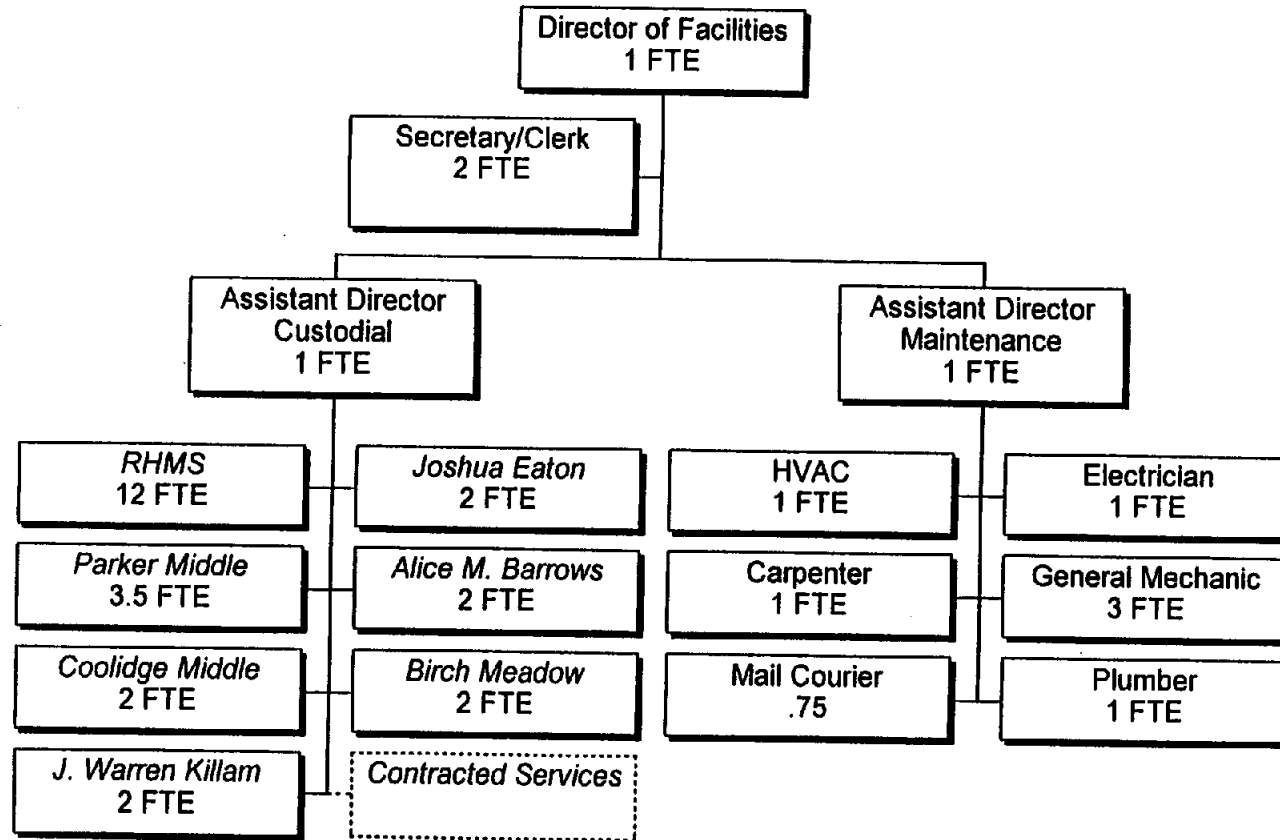
- The current workload of the Secretary/Clerk is substantial. This position is currently responsible for the Department's personnel and payroll functions (e.g., tracking vacation, sick leave, workers' compensation, scheduling), overseeing contracts (e.g., typing contracts, tracking payments), maintaining the maintenance work order system (e.g., entering and updating work order requests), overseeing facility rentals (e.g., scheduling, staffing, billing), and supporting the Director of Facilities (e.g., handling phone calls, answering inquiries), etc.
- Many administrative tasks are currently performed by the Director or Assistant Director, or are not being performed.

Recommendations

- Hire one Secretary/Clerk to support the Department's operations.
- **Estimated fiscal impact: \$22,800 Investment.** This estimate is based on an average salary of \$22,800.

Findings and Recommendations for Opportunities to Improve

Proposed Organization Structure

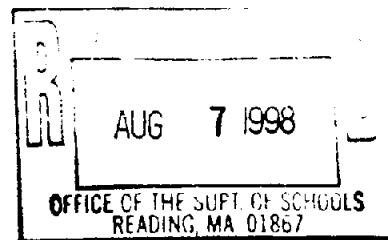


TO: School Committee Chair

FROM: Mary Williams

DATE: August 1, 1998

SUBJ: Custodian/Cleaning – Town Wide Responsibilities



I have a concern that I would like discussed by the School Committee long before we begin to set budgets.

After reading the Peat Marwick report, it is abundantly clear that our custodial unit is understaffed. It is also abundantly clear from comments made by Fin Com that while it would be nice to hire a full complement of custodians, we do not have the money to do so. Finally, staff, boards and the general public have made it quite clear that they doubt our ability to properly service the town buildings. Whether we consider each of the above facts separately or as a whole, we do have to accept the fact that we must rethink the original proposition and probably withdraw it.

School Committee did not have the Peat Marwick report when the decision to merge custodial responsibilities was made. However, we have it now and it speaks volumes to what we all “sensed” we knew—our understaffed custodian unit is trying to accomplish too much with too little. Adding additional buildings with minimal staff support is exacerbating our problem.

It is time we revisit the “cleaning deal” we made with the town; admit our limitations; apologize for any inconvenience this change of heart may cause and get back to what we do best—educating children in a clean and safe environment.

We need to be adding staff to keep our school buildings clean, not adding buildings that need to be cleaned. It is my opinion that we extricate ourselves before the new budget process begins and make the necessary adjustments (if there are any) to the current budget and separate town and school custodian responsibilities.

CC: School Committee Members