

# ***A Big Property to Maintain***

## ***School Maintenance is Year-Round***

With maintenance costs consuming from 7 to 9 percent of school budgets, school administrators continue to look for more cost-effective ways to maintain school property. Keeping the school plant in good repair, as well as maintaining school grounds and school buses, is a big job. When you add to that the necessity for keeping the entire property safe, insured, and ready for community use, you have the composite of school maintenance.

School maintenance is actually a year-round effort requiring qualified, trained personnel and appropriate supplies and equipment. Many districts have tried a variety of procedures to reduce the cost per pupil, and some efforts show promise. But the bottom line is that no single formula works in every school district, and each administrator and school board must seek what is best for the area they serve.

Research done in New York State examined differentiated use of school personnel with the basic conclusion that some savings could be realized without sacrifice of service if part-time specialists were used for specific jobs. Results also recommended joint purchasing of commonly used supplies in order to have the advantage of bulk purchase prices.

Several school districts have found it advisable to contract with private service companies for some

of the maintenance and upkeep of school equipment. This appears to be especially true regarding heating and cooling systems, and in the area of maintenance of vehicles used in transporting students.

The goal of school maintenance remains a threefold commitment: a safe and sanitary environment for teaching; a plant in good condition for use today; and preservation of equipment, buildings and grounds for use tomorrow.

With these goals as guidance, maintenance personnel work year-round

under the direction of school administration, following carefully orchestrated plans for preserving school property and readying it for use as a place for learning. Cleaning and polishing floors, renewing chalkboard, removing smudges from

walls, repairing equipment, adjusting thermostats, cleaning sidewalks, trimming and planting shrubbery and trees, cutting grass, repairing playground equipment, cleaning buses and checking their tires and tanks – the list is endless. And all these services are provided in a professional manner in an environment inhabited by children and youth. It is a big job which is essential to the learning climate.

Each school district has its own methods or plan for providing maintenance of school property. Contact your school or the district office to discuss the issues with the staff. Your interest will be welcome.



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