

HOW DO YOU STACK UP?

What Schools are Saying about Budget and Staffing Levels:

Facilities Budget, Staffing, and Operations Survey Results



A research survey and report conducted by

**SCHOOL
DUDE**

THE DUDE SOLUTIONS 2016 FACILITIES SURVEY:

Benchmarking Budgeting, Staffing & Operations In K-12 and Higher Education

As an inaugural piece of research into facilities budgets, staffing, and operations in K-12 and Higher Education, this survey will be useful as a benchmark moving forward.

Some of what we discovered might have been expected: ***Both K-12 and Higher Ed facilities management are dealing with an aging infrastructure that is also facing disruptive change driven by the inexorable advance of technology into schools.***

The nature of technology is changing, both in its capabilities and pace of introduction; moreover, it has become a part of everyone's daily life and self-identification, a fact that is likely to increase its impact in facilities design and management.

The percentage of overall budget allocated to facilities appears relatively stable at 10 percent, with increases or decreases equally likely through the past five years. How that capital resource is being allocated at schools and institutions of varying sizes and scope can be seen in this industry-first snapshot, and should prove useful as those responsible for facilities seek better data to plan for future work, justify required resources, and maintain the buildings and grounds necessary for the academic mission to not only continue its course, but to thrive.

The summary that follows addresses the facilities landscape, facilities budget and staffing, and operational Key Performance Indicators. Key findings include:





Facilities Landscape

- Both K-12 schools and colleges face the task of maintaining an aging facilities infrastructure. The average age of K-12 facilities is 38 years; the average age of higher education facilities is even higher at 40 years.
- Technology is having an increasingly profound effect on how classrooms and workspaces are being designed as technology takes on an increasing role in both business and academic daily activity.
 - 91 percent of Higher Ed said that technology setup will disrupt classroom setup in the near future.
 - 78 percent of K-12 said that technology will disrupt classroom setup in the near future.
 - In terms of likely immediate impact, Higher Ed indicated a higher percentage (56 percent) than K-12 (39 percent).
- In both K-12 and Higher Ed, the overwhelming percentage of maintenance is done in-house (>84 percent in both instances).
- The custodial function is structured significantly differently in K-12 and Higher Ed:
 - In K-12, 51 percent are centralized within physical plant, maintenance, and operations, while 34 percent are distributed (managed at every location by the local administration).
 - In Higher Ed, 66 percent are centralized within physical plant, maintenance, and operations, while 28 percent are outsourced to a for-profit vendor.
- K-12 custodians are nearly twice as likely to be unionized as those working in Higher Ed:
 - K-12: 45 percent unionized
 - Higher Ed: 25 percent unionized
- Age and tenure of facilities staff is remarkably consistent across both sectors: the average age is 45 in each; tenure is 12.5 years in K-12, 10 years in Higher Ed.





Facilities Budget and Staffing

- As a percentage of the overall school budget, Maintenance and Operations averages 10 percent for both K-12 and Higher Education.
- During the last five years, there was an equal split in Higher Education maintenance and operations (M&O) budgets that decreased and increased (37.5 percent), while 25 percent of Higher Ed M&O budgets stayed the same over the last five years.
- During the last five years, a higher number of K-12 institutions reported their M&O budgets increased (38 percent) rather than decreased (31.4 percent). Nearly 30 percent of K-12 M&O budgets stayed the same over the last five years.
- K-12 spends a higher percentage of its budget on payroll (46 percent) than Higher Ed (34 percent), 12 percent more.
- Higher Ed spends a higher percentage of its budget on energy (30 percent) than K-12 (22 percent), 8 percent more.
- Both sectors spend roughly equal percentages on supplies and contract services.
 - In terms of staffing, for both K-12 and Higher Ed, Custodial staff ranks highest, followed by Maintenance staff, then Grounds staff.
- The pressures in terms of physical area of responsibility vary widely from K-12 to Higher Ed and by function:
 - K-12 school maintenance personnel are responsible for maintaining the greatest area per employee.
 - In K-12, square feet per employee for Maintenance and Custodial decreases as school enrollment increases; however, acres per Grounds employee increases as school enrollment increases.
 - Grounds employees in Higher Ed maintain less than half the acreage that K-12 grounds employees maintain.





Facilities Budget and Staffing (cont'd)

- Median salaries tend to be higher for K-12 facilities workers than for those in Higher Education, particularly so in larger K-12 schools.
 - Maintenance salaries are the highest of the three functions for both K-12 and Higher Ed; grounds and custodial salaries are largely comparable.
 - Grounds employees in Higher Ed maintain less than half the acreage that K-12 grounds employees maintain.
- Both sectors are generally satisfied with staff performance. Using the APPA Service Levels 1 to 5, where 1 is “orderly spotlessness” and 5 is “unkempt neglect,” K-12 ranks 93 percent 3 or higher, Higher Ed 88 percent 3 or higher.

Operational Key Performance Indicators

- Comparing service levels (defined as work order percentage completed in less than one week) and maintenance staffing, the number of institutions with low staffing and high service is virtually identical to the number of institutions with low staffing and low service.
 - Staffing numbers may not be the direct cause of service and efficiency levels