



Clarkston Community Schools



Michigan School District Integrates Maintenance & Facility Usage Program

Similar to other districts, Clarkston Community Schools in Michigan had disparate systems for managing its maintenance department's work orders and facility scheduling. In 2002, the district ceased outsourcing its maintenance operations and chose SchoolDude for its work order and IT incident management. While SchoolDude automated the work order process, the facilities department's processes were still manual.

The district's facilities department had attempted to implement a cost recovery program for the community use of Clarkston's facilities; however, the current system in place was not conducive to an automated invoicing process. In order to implement a full cost recovery program that integrated with the district's other systems, the department knew it needed to switch to another solution. Clarkston first looked to SchoolDude because of the district's success with SchoolDude's MaintenanceDirect. The district quickly decided FSDirect met all its needs for facility scheduling and cost recovery.

Maintenance Solutions

The work order process for maintenance requests is now streamlined and automated. Faculty and staff can use the district's website to submit work orders, which are automatically routed based on SchoolDude's customized routing rules to either the building's head custodian or the facilities office. The turn-around time has improved significantly since implementing MaintenanceDirect; requests are either addressed or escalated within 24 to 48 hours. "At first, it was difficult to get teachers acclimated to the online work order system," said Jessica Kimmel, manager of facilities and energy. "However, they quickly became champions of SchoolDude and the online request portal when they saw response time improve significantly." Additionally, the facilities department now runs more efficiently because of SchoolDude. "There are more eyes on maintenance issues because teachers identify and submit more issues," Kimmel said. This allows the department to catch and fix things earlier. Managers also have increased visibility into technicians' and custodians' workload and can improve load balance between staff.

PMDirect, SchoolDude's preventive maintenance solution, has greatly improved the buildings and equipment in Clarkston Community Schools. The maintenance department started by inputting all equipment and buildings in the district into PMDirect and created maintenance schedules based on manufacturer, consultant, or maintenance recommendations. The team created proactive maintenance schedules for filter changes, boiler checks and many other items. Now, the maintenance team simply checks their work orders and handles preventive maintenance work orders as they become due. The district is now evenly split (50/50) between preventive work and reactive work, extending the life of equipment and reducing deferred maintenance.

Who they are

CLIENT: Clarkston Community Schools

LOCATION: Clarkston, Michigan

SIZE: 8,100 students, 14 buildings

SchoolDude products used

MaintenanceDirect

PMDirect

PlanningDirect

FSDirect

ITDirect

ITAMDirect

UtilityDirect

MySchoolDude

PM work orders now make up 50% of maintenance work



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Facility Usage Solutions

Bethney Kerr, district scheduler and head of facilities, manages the district's use of FSDirect for all facility scheduling and invoicing needs. The system allows her to schedule all events from school recitals to community Girl Scout meetings and baby showers. Community groups submit event requests directly to her and fill out the required application. She can then approve the event based on scheduling availability. This process is streamlined with the scheduling and calendar functions in FSDirect. Kerr no longer has to chase down community groups and can easily keep her facilities calendar organized. "We handle over 15,000 events per year, and it's just me," said Kerr. She needs no additional resources to handle the scheduling and planning of all the events that take place thanks to FSDirect.

In addition to time savings, Kerr implemented a successful cost recovery program for community events. She began with a task force who looked at surrounding districts' procedures to determine guidelines for pricing. She then used a process in which the community was gradually introduced to paying for space to ease community members into the transition. To implement her plan, she applied a 50% discount rate for the first two years of the program, followed by a 25% discount in year three, and slowly did away with blanket discounts. This process made the charges easier for the community to handle. She now has a standard process and standard hourly fee in place. FSDirect also generates professional invoices that Kerr sends on a set schedule, including initial notices and past due notices. The facilities department brings in over \$190,000 per year in revenue through its cost recovery plan and has reduced non-payments to just 1%, from over 15% in the first year.

Kerr has been able to increase rates while still remaining competitive and books facility spaces such as gyms nearly every night. The community has been very satisfied with the event scheduling and payment process. "I continue to get repeat and new customers requesting facilities for their events," said Kerr.

Conclusion

The implementation of multiple SchoolDude products at Clarkston has improved each department individually and the coordination and integration of the operations departments as a whole. The automatic routing feature in FSDirect allows the IT and Maintenance departments to easily coordinate everything. IT technicians know what technology items are needed in various rooms, such as a laptop and projector for conference meetings. Additionally, the maintenance staff knows what spaces need to be heated or cooled, what equipment is needed, and who should handle it. "The custodial staff loves SchoolDude," said Kerr. "We have improved coordination between departments by more than 80%."

The Executive Director of facilities and operations for the district is extremely happy with SchoolDude and the district's success. He works for two districts, and has implemented the same SchoolDude solutions at Lake Orion Community Schools, a nearby district. Clarkston Community Schools is a model for others; it shares its maintenance and facility operations best practices with peers, including its cost recovery procedures. "We have done webinars and other regional seminars to teach other education professionals how our district successfully implemented SchoolDude and improved our processes," said Kerr.

***Recovers over
\$190,000
annually with
cost recovery
program***