

Summary

Buildings

The MPS school building conditions are not much different than other districts either locally or nationally. Other districts are dealing with the same deferred maintenance issues, aging buildings, staffing and equipment needs, addressing a back log of general repairs and capital projects that lay dormant due to lack of available funding. The past thought process of fix it when it breaks has shown these repairs to be more costly than it would be to provide some form of preventive maintenance that prolongs the life of the building system or piece of equipment.

Maintenance: The maintenance staff is currently performing reactionary repairs with limited time allotted to preventive maintenance. Over the 3 years the goal is to;

- Improve the percentage of labor dedicated to preventive maintenance procedures
- Reduce reactionary repairs to building systems

Preventive Maintenance: When preventive maintenance is performed, it means the system is being checked on a periodic basis for proper functioning and operation and the life of the building system is prolonged. Before we can dedicate labor hours to perform any preventive maintenance;

- Identify building systems in need of repair or replacement is the priority
- Gather information on each building system as they are repaired and reviewed for seasonal operation to establish preventive maintenance measures
- Include uncovered repair needs, upgrades or improvements in budget discussions

SchoolDude Work Order Program: To assist facilities maintenance achieve maintenance goals and improve system operation;

- Change current method where some faculty members wait until school break or the end of the year to input maintenance request that can overwhelm or distract planned repairs and cleaning
- Open access to the SchoolDude program and allow all MPS employees to input work orders from their own computers
- Obtain and complete as many needed general repairs during the year as we can so the summer work schedule can accommodate capital improvement projects

Personnel

Reviewing personnel needs for the MPS over the past year indicates there are immediate needs for additional custodians throughout the district as well as a grounds crew.

Custodians: The custodial crew at each building has gone above and beyond in support of the MPS education programs and activities. In support of the custodial staff improving the cleaning level, over the past year they have been provided with;

- Professional development to teach and reinforce cleaning procedures
- Improved custodial cleaning chemicals

- Equipment review for repairs or replacement with some new equipment purchased to reduce labor in some areas of cleaning
- Paper product dispensers planned to be installed this year to reduce both cost and labor
- Routine cleaning procedures will be established that outlines a periodic time table for cleaning tasks to be completed daily, weekly, monthly and annually

Custodial Position:

- National Guidelines state each custodian should be assigned 33,000 square feet of cleaning space Based on this information the MPS has the appropriate number of custodians.
- Need to rethink this standard as it does not take into account the “non-cleaning” activities performed on a daily basis.
- Adjusting the amount of square footage each custodian is responsible for to 25,000. The results indicate the MPS custodial staff is short by at least three (3) custodians in the district.
- There are many times over the course of the school year when there is only one (1) custodian in the building at night due to time off requests and this could be an issue with safety.

Grounds Position: The establishment of a grounds crew is needed to improve the landscaping and provide proper maintenance to all the school properties and equipment.

- All the MPS properties and athletic programs are directly impacted by the lack of a grounds crew and the overall condition of the MPS properties.
- For too long the landscaping has gone unattended and is overgrown, lacking curb appeal and a welcoming appearance that could impact enrollment.
- Contracting with the Middleborough Park Department to assist with the athletic fields was a short term solution that has outlived its intent and is not enough.
- The grounds equipment, expensive Kubota tractors, has received minimal preventive maintenance over the years.

Energy conservation plan: With the cost of energy increasing, it is necessary to implement as many energy saving techniques as possible to conserve energy. The following procedures are a few of the steps being taken to accomplish this goal;

- Continue to improve energy savings through awareness and techniques to the MPS staff through emails
- Develop a friendly competition among buildings for energy savings. The school building with the best implementation of the recommended energy savings procedures that include shutting off lights, turning heat down, closing windows and shades as a few examples will be recognized
- Consider energy conservation when a repair or improvement of a building system is planned

- Currently, interior lighting in the gym of HBB is being replaced with energy efficient lighting that reduces cost and improves available lighting.
- Exterior wall sconces that provide the majority of exterior lighting at rear of HBB is in the process of being replaced with energy efficient lighting.
- Climate controls at MECC and NMS are being reviewed for an upgraded control system. The current program is installed on a local PC and this limits access and control. A proposal to upgrade these climate controls to a web based system that safeguards the program and provides access from a remote location to address heating or AC issues that may arise.
- Future plans include installing similar programs at the HS, MKG and HBB.

Capital Planning: Capital planning will be an ongoing process that will continue to address the backlog of approved projects while others are researched and approved. In the meantime, the facilities maintenance department will;

- Establish a building deficiency list for each school location
- Review the list of deficiencies and plan for repairs in future budget discussions
- Determine if repair can be absorbed into operation budget or add to capital planning procedure

In Closing, it is understood there are constraints placed on budgetary needs for all town departments. However, the MPS system is not where it needs to be regarding the funding for maintenance of its buildings, and facilities staffing. In order to achieve the desired level of operation, it is important for the residents of Middleborough, the School Committee and the Town officials to understand that without support of the recommendations explained in this report, the overall conditions of the aging buildings and landscaping will continue to deteriorate and with it the morale of MPS staff which can ultimately impact enrollment.

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to provide you and the town with data that can be used to begin to improve the conditions of the school buildings and properties. As the Director of Buildings, Grounds & Operations it is my responsibility for planning, organizing, developing and directing the overall operation of the Facilities Maintenance Department to ensure that our Schools are maintained in a safe and comfortable manner.

Sincerely,

James Harding
Director of Buildings, Grounds & Operations