



**PARTNERING IN A
NEW EDUCATION ERA**

10 INDICATORS

YOUR DISTRICT CAN BENEFIT
FROM FACILITIES EXPERTISE





K-12 EDUCATION IS FACING UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES.

Lack of funding, increased public scrutiny, poor use of space, and rising deferred maintenance backlogs are just some of the challenges K-12 education have been facing. At the same time, the unanticipated closure of school buildings during the COVID-19 pandemic has further illuminated both shortcomings and opportunities within the K-12 operating model, particularly in facilities management. Access to specialized expertise, supply chain viability, labor availability, and training and implementation are all areas that affect the K-12 environment.

In times like these, school district leaders should consider the benefits of a strategic partner to manage one of their largest areas of financial exposure and to create a desired environment and experience for student success.

The following 10 signs indicate areas where partnering with a facilities provider who can positively impact K-12 school districts.

1

REDUCTION OF OPERATING EXPENSES ARE SOUGHT.

Facility services is one of the largest expenses in a district's budget. Cost optimization opportunities exist in labor, expenses, procurement, space utilization, energy management, and productivity. Specialized expertise is required to recognize where these opportunities exist and how to release their value. Experienced companies have developed best practices for innovative programs, people management expertise, operational efficiencies, and purchasing leverage not often realized by individual districts. A partner with facilities as its core mission is best equipped to provide leadership and their schools with improved services and financial savings.

2

BETTER LEVERAGING OF INDUSTRY BEST PRACTICES IS DESIRED.

Updates in building system design, increases in building automation, and advancements in how tasks are now performed are occurring at a rapid pace. Most school district facilities management teams lack the resources, time, or skill sets to remain abreast of all the proactive and productive trends that are emerging. Additionally, preparing and executing training requires a large amount of time, but unfortunately, it can't always be a priority. An outside partner has dedicated resources to stay on top of best practices and implement the technical training facility staffs need to maintain well running school buildings. Additionally, they bring unique expertise at times of crisis. For example, during the initial COVID-19 pandemic, Aramark leveraged its experience in healthcare environments and its purchasing power to ensure our clients had access to the most up-to-date guidance, supplies, and training when many organizations struggled on these fronts.

3

CLEANER ENVIRONMENTS ARE NEEDED.

School district leadership is inundated with a slew of new information to discover, research, and implement for clean and safe facilities—from sustainability in school buildings to accommodating students with specific allergies to crisis management during a healthcare pandemic. Creating a clean and safe environment for students, teachers, and staff is important. Privatizing facilities management means allowing a partner who has deep experience in the latest technology and approaches to bring these developments and altered learning environments to your district. Additionally, deep supply chain systems and purchasing leverage at scale allows partners to source many supplies and resources that may be in short supply.



4

IMMEDIATE ACCESS TO BROAD TECHNICAL EXPERTISE IS NECESSARY.

The current pandemic has highlighted the need for accurate and swift guidance about such issues as CDC guidelines, cleaning systems, indoor air quality, supply chain, and other physical challenges. More common challenges involve capital construction options, space utilization guidance, mechanical system diagnostics, and energy management solutions. Capital and operating solutions are integrated and it is useful to understand how one affects the other. Aligning with a partner, particularly one with broad and deep technical expertise on staff, provides leaders with on-demand access to pressing problems. More importantly, they bring holistic solutions by being knowledgeable about the other areas of your operation. Technical challenges and their solutions are connected to other areas of operations. Partners can place technical guidance in context with other facility options, financial implications, and planning efforts.

5

GREATER USE OF INNOVATION IS DESIRED.

Staying abreast of innovation and best practices in facilities management is a costly and time-consuming luxury that most school districts do not have. The effort draws precious resources away from other daily service and maintenance activity. The introduction of enhancements and new ideas to building operation are slow—if nonexistent. The pressure to change and innovate grows across the education environment; yet, most facilities departments are not keeping pace. Privatizing facilities management means working with a partner that has made innovation a part of its mission. They possess dedicated resources to stay wired into the latest innovation, such as touchless technology, UV-C light disinfection, robotic cleaning, and advanced air filtration. Districts can benefit from a strategic partner's industry knowledge of more efficient and less costly products and equipment. Through market research, relationships with channel partners, and pilot programs, service providers bring K-12 schools innovation from the unknown to the attainable.

6

A BETTER APPROACH TO DEFERRED MAINTENANCE IS NEEDED.

The national gap in K-12 annual capital spending for deferred maintenance is estimated to be \$28 billion. Over the past two decades, deferred maintenance backlogs have increased from \$113 billion to between \$271 billion and \$542 billion. This likely means the deferred maintenance backlog is now both a safety and a financial liability. Additionally, functional obsolescence and response to COVID-19 may accelerate modification of some facilities well before their life cycle. Does a plan exist to address existing deferred maintenance or slow the growth of future deferrals? A facilities services partner brings expertise, perspective, and potentially capital to address school building needs. Having a partner develop a strategy to identify, prioritize, and reduce backlogs, while freeing resources for reinvestment, is typically a no-cost, no-risk endeavor for the districts.

7

ENVIRONMENTAL AND REGULATORY COMPLIANCE EXPOSURES ARE INCREASING.

Changes in regulatory compliance are frequent and may place a district and its leaders at risk of fines, penalties, and even more severe punishment. An outside provider stays abreast of these changes at the state and federal level. They identify risk using a standardized approach and will develop a correction and mitigation strategy to address compliance shortfalls.

8

USER COMPLAINTS ARE INCREASING.

Students, staff, and parents want their concerns addressed quickly. *Are restrooms dirty and out of supplies? Are maintenance requests not being addressed? Are response times increasing?* Partnering with experts can bring a more proactive approach to maintenance and operations. Modern customer service engagement techniques and technology can improve response time and accuracy. Gain peace of mind knowing complaints will decrease and satisfaction levels will improve.

9

GREATER MEASURABLE INSIGHTS INTO FACILITIES OPERATION ARE DESIRED.

Most school districts are challenged to provide facilities performance insights and value to their board. With no real performance data or insights that show a return on investment, facilities budgets continue to shrink while deferred maintenance continues to grow. An expert partner can implement technology to track, measure, score, and show value for every dollar spent in facilities services. For example, new technology is delivering real-time space utilization data that informs “make or buy” capital planning decisions, as well as operating service delivery strategy. Partners bring key performance indicators from other best-in-class districts and even other industries. Gaining confidence of data-based decision making is easily possible with the right partner.

10

A FACILITIES SUCCESSION PLAN IS NEEDED.

The facilities management industry faces an aging workforce and a skilled trades shortage. Department leadership may soon be retiring or seeking employment elsewhere. The loss of undocumented operating knowledge could interrupt continued operation. An aging workforce means retirement will create a void. A well-developed succession plan to seamlessly transition important facilities roles and responsibilities will ensure continued operations. A facilities services partner can effectively source and develop top talent. Considering a partnership with an outside organization allows districts access to critical expertise for proper documentation, employment needs, and continued operational success.

For more best practices on how school districts benefit from partnerships, please visit **k12insights.aramark.com**

