



SPECIAL NEWS EDITION

MARSDEN SERVICES HELP HANDLE A BUSINESS WITHIN A BUSINESS

Any superintendent, principal or school board member knows that facilities maintenance is a business unto itself. Taking care of the HVAC, janitorial, maintenance and even security is a specialized job - one that typically isn't covered in formal schooling for a career in education leadership. For most educational leaders and administrators, these responsibilities steal focus from their prime goal: Education.

But that doesn't mean facilities maintenance isn't important. On the contrary, students can't learn as well in a building that isn't clean, comfortable and safe.

That's where Marsden Services comes in. The St. Paul, Minnesota headquartered enterprise started small in 1952 but now has nearly 10,000 employees and 500 franchises operating in 46 states. The firm specializes in managing and providing HVAC, janitorial and security services for education, government, industrial and commercial properties, including education service agencies and school districts.

Anthony Messner, Marsden's Executive Vice President of Facility Management Services, offers an impressive laundry list of the services his company provides.

"What we do is take a look at what is keeping the administrator away from their core business, which is education. Then we make recommendations on how they can improve their business," Messner said, adding that "some organizations spend extreme amounts of money above the norm. It really is a business within a business that requires a specialized skill set." Facilities at school districts in particular are often run very informally, leaving the opportunity for savings.

Marsden will care for your HVAC system, whether it's a large boiler or a cooling tower system all the way down to a simple roof-top cooling system. But this is where Marsden is special: They also offer a-la-carte maintenance items such as plumbing, carpentry, electrical, furniture repair and even remodeling consultation.

Marsden can offer these services because they have an entire nation's worth of experts to call upon, even though their service-delivery is local.

"We maintain a local presence while offering the strength of a national company," Messner said. "We only hire from the local area, and that includes management."

Marsden is a LEED-certified company that uses environmentally safe chemicals for its janitorial services. Those chemicals that aren't environmentally friendly are treated with the utmost care. "Our commitment isn't just to provide great cleaning at a reasonable price, but to be stewards of the environment as well," Messner said.

One of Marsden's signature programs is its Touch-Point Program in which janitors target areas in schools where germs are most likely to travel between one student and another and implement a program for on-going sanitization of those spots with environmentally friendly cleaners and disinfectants.

In its security business, Marsden is capable of providing services from guards to plain-clothes security officers. In addition to providing on-site security personnel, Marsden offers its Safe Schools Initiative which focuses on preventative security. They examine facility vulnerabilities, student and surrounding community, profiles and facility activities, as well as other metrics, to determine who might be a potential threat to the school and head that person off before student and staff safety is even an issue.

After having been in business for more than 50 years, Marsden is adept at finding ways for organizations to save time and money. "At Marsden, it is all about the people. We are adept at putting people in place who care about the facility as if it were their own. With us, people find a path to a career in facility care. Our CEO is our best example having started work at Marsden as a janitor when very young and, 30 years later, is in the top job leading our 10,000-employee enterprise" said Sita Morantz, President and Chief Administrative Officer.

"We are willing to visit anyplace at any time to discuss any organization's business, program improvement or cost savings needs," Messner said. "We have yet to find a situation where we couldn't offer a solution that offers better

service at a better value; our education service agency customers have realized better quality and saved 15% to 30% of their former cost when transitioning to Marsden for a full facility care program."

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