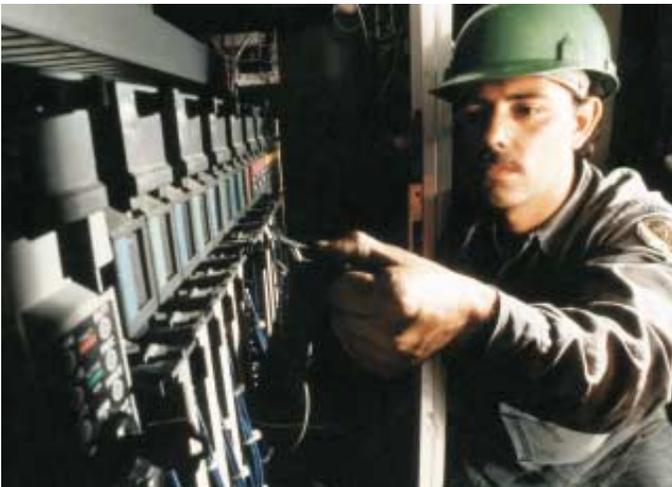




Dwindling *Support*

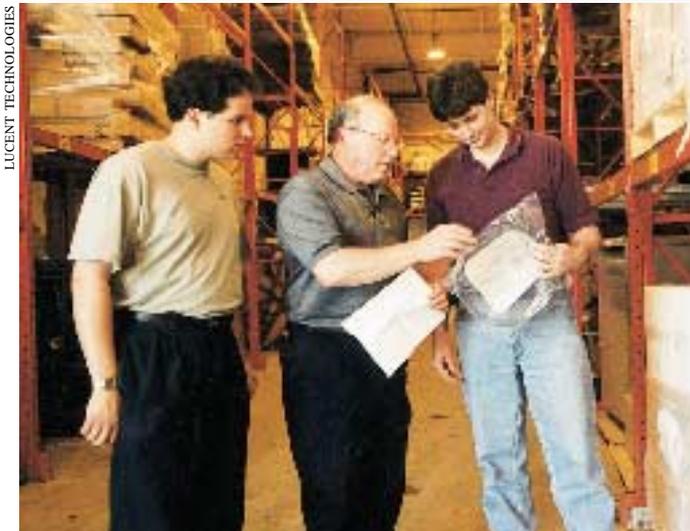
By Joe Agron

School districts continue to allocate a smaller percentage of expenditures to maintenance and operations of their facilities.



As the nation's school buildings grow older and physical conditions continue to deteriorate, the logical solution would be for school districts to concentrate more resources to improve the situation. However, this is not the case for most elementary and secondary institutions. School districts across the nation are dedicating a smaller percentage of available funds to maintaining and operating the facilities that house America's youth.

“Not only is this the fourth consecutive year that schools have allocated a smaller percentage of expenditures to M&O of their facilities, but also the figure is the lowest in three decades.”



LUCENT TECHNOLOGIES

Spending per student for the 2000-01 school year on maintenance and operations (M&O) by school districts actually increased slightly from last year's survey—up 3 percent. But when taken as a percentage of net current expenditures (NCE), spending dropped to 8.5 percent compared with 9 percent the year before, according to *American*



School & University's 30th annual Maintenance and Operations Cost Study.

Not only is this the fourth consecutive year that schools have allocated a smaller percentage of expenditures to M&O of their facilities, but also the figure is the lowest in three decades.

GETTING THE NUMBERS

In November, a detailed survey was mailed to chief business officials at public school districts with enrollment of more than 600 students. The questionnaire asked administrators to document various M&O costs, including salary/payroll, energy, utilities, maintenance and grounds equipment and supplies, outside contract labor and other costs.

Maintenance and Operations Costs Expressed in Dollars per Student

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6
Payroll (\$)						
Custodial	281.40	284.65	164.73	123.70	210.63	152.28
Maintenance	44.93	95.20	102.38	63.38	43.33	71.68
Grounds	37.50	34.62	13.91	17.84	12.99	26.79
Outside Contract Labor	41.04	54.61	41.13	20.59	45.59	47.05
Gas	23.14	55.65	32.10	25.99	38.36	22.01
Electricity	93.02	105.11	107.66	119.71	98.30	122.27
Other Fuel	57.88	45.45	31.84	13.24	0.68	4.58
Other Utilities	29.21	43.09	34.00	28.24	29.22	40.71
Maint. Equip. & Supplies	32.06	28.81	36.23	25.63	40.49	65.58
Grounds Equip. & Supplies	6.89	8.62	13.65	3.93	13.06	21.05
Other	6.20	4.74	15.62	0.00	0.00	28.10
Total M&O	653.27	760.55	593.25	442.25	532.65	602.10
Total NCE	7,812.03	9,829.60	6,948.69	6,458.31	6,176.62	5,920.50
M&O as % NCE	8.4	7.7	8.5	6.8	8.6	10.2
Salary (\$)						
Custodial	28,567	29,037	19,577	16,245	25,578	16,095
Maintenance	31,900	33,000	31,244	27,500	32,750	25,645
Grounds	23,000	32,379	28,008	23,363	34,923	16,629

Maintenance and Operations Costs Expressed in Dollars per Square Foot

Region	1	2	3	4	5	6
Payroll (\$)						
Custodial	1.62	1.76	1.32	0.91	1.75	0.93
Maintenance	0.28	0.52	0.80	0.48	0.30	0.43
Grounds	0.18	0.15	0.08	0.10	0.10	0.19
Outside Contract Labor	0.27	0.29	0.25	0.11	0.31	0.21
Gas	0.09	0.19	0.22	0.18	0.28	0.12
Electricity	0.57	0.56	0.67	0.88	0.65	0.79
Other Fuel	0.25	0.29	0.18	0.10	0.01	0.03
Other Utilities	0.15	0.22	0.24	0.20	0.22	0.21
Maint. Equip. & Supplies	0.19	0.15	0.23	0.25	0.29	0.34
Grounds Equip. & Supplies	0.04	0.05	0.08	0.05	0.08	0.10
Other	0.04	0.03	0.19	0.00	0.00	0.11
Total M&O	3.68	4.21	4.26	3.26	3.99	3.46
Total NCE	45.34	61.41	41.86	45.01	44.27	34.71
SF/Custodian Wkr.	22,546	20,836	21,200	22,801	20,724	21,445
SF/Maintenance Wkr.	120,000	93,000	57,091	64,000	119,163	60,582
Acres/Grounds Wkr.	35*	45	59	30*	32	15

*Data represents fewer than 10 respondents.

The median number for each category (payroll, gas, electricity, utilities, equipment and supplies, etc.) was identified on a national and regional level. (It's important to note that the number of responses received from each region will directly affect final figures reported from year to year.) Data reported identify budgeted expenditures for M&O per student and per square foot for the 2000-01

school year.

Following are the categories used on the survey questionnaire:

•**Budgeted:** Amounts for the 2000-01 school year, reported as of the December 2000 survey deadline.

•**Per student:** Based on enrollment (average daily attendance as of November 2000).

•**Per square foot:** Based on total gross area of all district buildings maintained, including corridors, offices and common space.

•**NCE (net current expenditure):** Total district expenditures, including teacher salaries, minus the cost of capital outlay, debt service and transportation.

•**Total maintenance and operations (M&O) expenditures:** Including salaries, fringes, overhead, energy, utilities, equipment and supplies, outside contracts, etc., for custodial, maintenance and grounds.

•**Custodial:** Those individuals responsible for building upkeep and cleaning.

•**Maintenance:** Those individuals who perform skilled jobs, such as HVAC, electrical or plumbing repair.

•**Grounds:** Those individuals responsible for landscape upkeep and maintenance.

•**Payroll:** Including fringes.

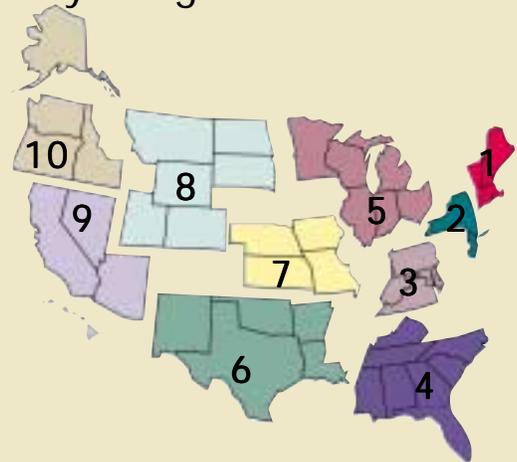
•**Average salary:** Annualized, excluding fringes.

•**Outside contract labor:** Those hired

	7	8	9	10	Nat'l Median
	215.65	239.45	88.89	220.58	215.15
	45.89	59.29	93.56	64.40	64.60
	14.37	15.81	22.32	29.45	22.32
	25.17	41.55	28.26	26.79	35.71
	50.57	79.79	5.03	33.80	34.88
	93.02	81.18	117.38	71.50	96.67
	2.32	53.68	63.92	4.25	34.12
	27.79	38.54	43.67	47.17	34.85
	46.90	73.17	32.23	40.91	40.60
	7.81	13.94	8.77	11.25	11.26
	86.57	0.18	0.00	14.71	0.73
	616.06	696.58	504.03	564.81	590.89
	6,377.97	7,458.00	6,625.07	6,343.39	6,931.07
	9.7	9.3	7.6	8.9	8.5
	23,000	19,443	29,727	24,653	22,686
	27,322	25,086	30,150	31,832	29,213
	19,500	19,538	25,300	25,500	23,858

	7	8	9	10	Nat'l Median
	1.21	1.00	2.35	1.50	1.33
	0.34	0.32	1.35	0.46	0.42
	0.01	0.01	0.31	0.17	0.13
	0.17	0.13	0.37	0.17	0.21
	0.29	0.37	0.08	0.16	0.22
	0.53	0.42	1.57	0.43	0.60
	0.02	0.13	0.23	0.12	0.17
	0.14	0.18	0.59	0.28	0.20
	0.27	0.22	0.33	0.20	0.23
	0.05	0.07	0.15	0.07	0.06
	0.13	0.07	0.00	0.08	0.00
	3.16	2.92	7.33	3.64	3.57
	36.65	27.49	55.11	43.33	41.04
	23,192	24,890	14,797*	23,283	22,222
	93,548	88,448	31,430	91,518	82,349
	26	36	11	49	30

Key to regions



Region 1:	CT MA ME NH RI VT
Region 2:	NJ NY
Region 3:	DC DE MD PA VA WV
Region 4:	AL FL GA KY MS NC SC TN
Region 5:	IL IN MI MN OH WI
Region 6:	AR LA NM OK TX
Region 7:	IA KS MO NE
Region 8:	CO MT ND SD UT WY
Region 9:	AZ CA HI NV
Region 10:	AK ID OR WA

for specialized jobs to maintain or repair building systems or equipment, such as HVAC maintenance or repair.

•**Other fuel:** Including oil and coal.

•**Other utilities:** Including water, telephone, etc.

•**Other:** Most often identified as clerical costs, trash removal, travel expenses, equipment repair and rental, and insurance.

When comparing your school district's M&O expenditures with the regional and national medians reported, keep in mind that all costs are greatly affected by the age and overall condition of buildings, climate, the labor market in your area, as well as other factors over which school administrators have limited control. Also, the rapid escalation in energy costs experienced by most areas of the country this winter most likely is not reflected in this year's data. This is due to the fact that budgets reported in the survey were already set for most schools prior to the spike in prices.

“The rapid escalation in energy costs experienced by most areas of the country this winter is most likely not reflected in this year's data.”

In addition, because the study uses medians, and the majority of the nation's school districts—and respondents to the survey—are small- to medium-size (median student enrollment of 1,196), costs may vary if you are from a much larger institution.

EXAMINING THE DATA

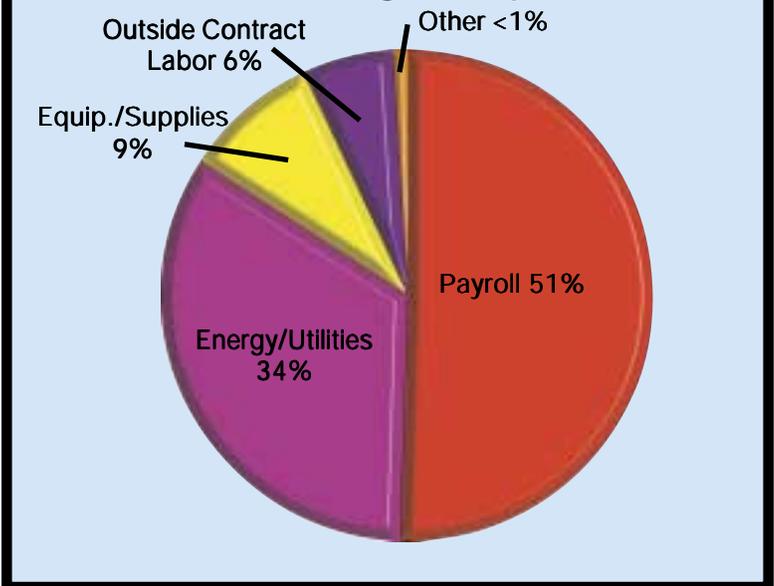
Among the findings of this year's survey:

Road rules

Transportation accounts for 4.45% of total school district expenditures and costs \$333.33 per student. Breakout by region:



How the M&O budget is split



•The median public school district has nine full-time custodial, three full-time maintenance and two full-time grounds personnel.

•The amount of square feet maintained per custodian increased to 22,222 from 21,156 square feet last year.

continued...

Square feet maintained per maintenance worker dropped to 82,349 from 87,500 square feet last year. Acreage maintained per grounds worker decreased as well, falling to 30 from 41 last year.

•Modest salary increases were reported for the three titles surveyed. National median salaries for maintenance and grounds personnel were \$29,213 (up five percent from the prior year) and \$23,858 (up three percent) respectively. Whereas custodial salaries rose to \$22,686, the percentage increase from last year was less than one percent.

•It is more expensive to transport students to school this year. The median district spends 4.4 percent of its total budget and \$333 per pupil on transportation (4.2 percent and \$293 per pupil last year).

THE LOCAL LOOK

School districts in **Region 9** and **Region 2** continue to report the highest maintenance and operations costs in a variety of categories. **Region 9** led the pack in per-student expenditures for other fuel, custodial salaries, and per-square-foot costs for payroll (custodial, maintenance and grounds), outside contract labor, electricity, other utilities, grounds equipment and supplies, and total M&O.

Region 2 reported the highest per-student expenditures for custodial payroll, outside contract labor, transportation, total M&O and total NCE. Districts in the region also had the highest per-square-foot costs for other fuel and total NCE, and maintenance salaries.

Other highs were reported in **Region 1** (per-student cost for grounds payroll and square feet covered per maintenance worker), **Region 3** (per-student cost for maintenance payroll, per-square-foot cost for other expenses, acres maintained per grounds worker, and

The payroll picture

National median salaries for custodial, maintenance and grounds personnel at school districts:



M&O expenditures over the decade

Spending on maintenance and operations as a percentage of net current expenditures is at its lowest level since this survey's inception. The breakdown over 10 years:



transportation cost as a percentage of total district expenditures), **Region 5** (grounds salaries), **Region 6** (per-student costs for electricity and grounds equipment and supplies, per-square-foot cost for maintenance equipment and supplies, and M&O as a percentage of NCE), **Region 7** (per-student cost for other expenses), **Region 8** (per-student costs for gas and maintenance equipment and supplies, per-square-foot cost for gas, and square feet maintained per custodial worker), and **Region 10** (per-student cost for other utilities).

Stats at a glance

Following are national medians by district of survey respondents:

Enrollment	1,196
Total district expenditures	\$10.01 million
# of buildings	6
Total sq. ft. maintained	240,464
Total acreage maintained	50

Some of the lowest expenditures per category were reported in **Region 1** (per-square-foot costs for maintenance payroll and ground equipment and supplies), **Region 2** (per-square-foot cost for maintenance equipment and supplies), **Region 4** (per-student costs for outside contract labor, maintenance and grounds equipment and supplies, other expenses [tied] and total M&O, per-square-foot costs for custodial payroll, outside contract labor and other expenses [tied], and M&O as a percentage of NCE) and **Region 5** (per-student costs for maintenance and grounds payroll, other fuel and other expenses [tied], and per-square-foot costs for other fuel and other expenses [tied]).

Other lows were reported in **Region 6** (per-student cost for total NCE, and salaries for custodial and grounds personnel), **Region 7** (per-student and per-square-foot costs for other utilities, and per-square-foot cost for grounds payroll [tied]), **Region 8** (maintenance salaries, and per-square-foot costs for electricity, total M&O, total NCE and grounds payroll [tied]), **Region 9** (per-student costs for custodial payroll and transportation, per-student and per-square-foot costs for gas and other expenses [tied], transportation cost as a percentage of total district expenditures, and square feet maintained by custodial, maintenance and grounds personnel) and **Region 10** (per-student cost for electricity). [AS&U]

For information on obtaining the full report, call (913)967-1960 or e-mail scox@intertec.com.

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