



After the Last Bell

10 questions to ask your operations leader about the cleaning work that opens every school, every day.

This isn't a test of your operations team.

It's a test of whether they have the tools to show the board the work they already do.

Can we answer with data, not guesses?

Inside the cleaning budget

30–40%

of the daily operations budget goes to cleaning in most districts¹

90–95%

of custodial cost is typically labor²

\$90B

estimated annual U.S. gap in school facility funding³

What the budget buys: APPA cleaning levels

More square feet per custodian means a lower level of clean.

1	Orderly Spotlessness	8,500 sq ft	Hospital patient areas, luxury hotels
2	Ordinary Tidiness	16,700 sq ft	Upscale hotels, corporate headquarters
◆	CGCS member median	24,909 sq ft	Just above a Level 3 staffing level
3	Casual Inattention	26,500 sq ft	Typical office buildings, retail stores
4	Moderate Dinginess	39,500 sq ft	Under-resourced public buildings
5	Unkempt Neglect	45,600 sq ft	Not acceptable for occupied buildings

APPA staffing per CrowdComfort's APPA guide; environments are illustrative. CGCS median: Council of the Great City Schools, Managing for Results KPI report, FY2022-23.

WHERE DO WE LAND?

$$\frac{\text{CLEANABLE SQ FT}}{\text{CUSTODIAL FTEs}} = \text{SQ FT PER CUSTODIAN}$$

We expect Level _____ We're staffed for Level _____ Gap: _____

STAFFING MODEL



In-house



Vendor



Hybrid (e.g., nights by vendor)

DID YOU KNOW?

Students are more likely to miss school in buildings with lower custodial capacity. Simons et al., AJPH, 2010

¹ CrowdComfort estimate. ² FMLink, 2007. ³ 2025 State of Our Schools (21st Century School Fund, IWBI, NCSF). APPA data: CrowdComfort, "How APPA Scoring Works."

Ask your operations leader.

Our score ____/20

1

LABOR & STAFFING

How many square feet is each custodian covering, building by building, and is it equitable?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

2

BUDGET ALLOCATION

Where are we paying the most overtime this month, and why?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

3

DAILY CLEANING CONFIRMATION

How much of today's cleaning is done so far, building by building?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

4

QUALITY ASSURANCE INSPECTIONS

Which inspections failed this week, and has someone gone back to fix them?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

5

DAY PORTER REQUESTS

How do teachers, principals and staff request help during the day, and is every request captured?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

6

WORK ORDERS & EQUIPMENT

How do custodians report broken equipment or building issues they find on their rounds?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

7

SUMMER & BREAK READINESS

What percentage of room-related tasks are "Summer complete" in each building in real time?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

8

VENDOR & CONTRACT ACCOUNTABILITY

What percentage of contracted scope did our vendor verifiably deliver last month?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

9

HEALTH, SAFETY & DOCUMENTATION

If there is an illness outbreak, how quickly could we deploy and document enhanced disinfection?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

10

TEAM, RECOGNITION & RETENTION

Who are our highest-performing custodians, and how do we recognize them?

☐ Not Yet (0) ☐ With Effort (1) ☐ On Demand (2) SYSTEM OF RECORD _____

NOTES _____

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