

**BOARD OF EDUCATION**  
**The School District of South Orange and Maplewood**  
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**2014 Custodial Survey and Contracted Services Recommendations**

Each year administration reviews the contracts we have in place to determine which should be renewed, if allowable by law, and which ones should be rebid. A number of renewals are being presented to the Board for consideration at the May 19<sup>th</sup> Board meeting, including, but not limited to, computer maintenance, environmental testing, vehicle maintenance, plumbing repairs, and transportation routes. Some of the contract reviews, such as custodial services and security services, include feedback from staff, in addition to the administrative review. Board Goal 4, Objective B calls for “well-maintained and safe facilities that enable focused and effective teaching and learning, and are repaired and updated in an architecturally sensitive and fiscally responsible manner.” Indicator 2 requires “feedback from parents, students, administrators and teachers on quality of facilities and solicitation of facility needs.” As part of the annual review of contracted services, three surveys were electronically distributed, one to building administrators, one to all district staff and one to students. The one to building administrators asked for feedback on all contracted services including custodial services (Temco), food service (Pomptonian), lunch monitoring (Pomptonian), security services (US Security), and transportation services (Jimmy’s). The surveys distributed to the district staff and to students covered the custodial services provided by Temco.

The information below refers to survey results, anecdotal observations of the programs, and recommendations for renewals.

**Food Service Management (Pomptonian)** – This was the last allowable renewal for this contract. The District utilized competitive contracting for procurement of services for the 2014-15 school year. A request for proposals has been advertised. A recommendation for awarding a contract is included as a resolution in the May 19<sup>th</sup> Board packet.

The administrators seemed satisfied with the current food service program overall. It was reported that staff is usually pleasant to students and the work area is kept clean. Past concerns about notification of low balances for student accounts seemed to be mitigated with the increased use of automatic school messenger notification; and about shortages of food are increasingly rare.

**Lunch Monitoring Program (Pomptonian)** – Bid specifications were included as an addendum to the new RFP for the Food Service Management company. A recommendation to reject both bids is being presented to the Board and to rebid the program separately.

Survey responses rated the program as getting better but in need of improvement, particularly in how the monitors speak with children. Most seemed satisfied with their staff but did share that some staff was better than others. There was a request for more creative recess activities. While

this responsibility is not part of the lunch monitors job description, Judy LoBianco, Supervisor of Physical Education/Health, K-12, continues working with staff on programming that aligns with the CATCH programs at the schools.

**Security Services at Columbia High School (US Security)** – This was the first year in the new contract awarded in 2013. A recommendation for renewing this contract is included in the resolutions for the Board meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Administrators are satisfied with US Security's proactive approach and openness to address issues, and their responsiveness to immediate needs.

**Transportation Services (Jimmy's)** – A resolution to renew these services is being presented to the Board at this month's meeting.

Overall, transportation has been running smoothly this year. While survey responses indicated that services are good this year, there was some concern with drivers' personalities and communication with students. These concerns will be brought to the attention of Jimmy's management. With the overall positive ratings, we do recommend renewal of the transportation services.

**Custodial Services (Temco)** – This was the first year in the new contract awarded in 2013. A recommendation for renewing this contract is included in the resolutions for the Board meeting on May 19<sup>th</sup>.

The annual survey of staff about custodial services was conducted in April 2014, using the online tool SurveyMonkey. Staff, administrators and students were invited to participate. The overall responses indicated that cleaning bathrooms and common areas and removing garbage are performed more favorably, and that additional attention is needed for dusting in classrooms and cleaning floors.

Staff were asked to rate how well the custodians performed in specific categories, such as trash removal, restocking bathroom supplies, impression of the grounds, etc. Satisfaction was similar across grade levels, with two elementary schools having the highest scores. Areas that need particular attention are blackboards/whiteboards, staff bathrooms and sweeping/dusting in corners. Most of the positive comments were about specific daytime custodians for being responsive, proactive and good with the children.

Two types of difficulties were experienced this year, and Temco worked closely with us to resolve them. When one school faced an acute issue of supplies running out, Temco's onsite and senior management were very responsive. Management investigated the situation and resolved it by improving inventory control of paper supplies and providing additional training about proper use of cleaning products.

Separately, multiple custodians went on unexpected, long-term leaves. In some instances, substitutes did not meet expectations. They received additional training or were replaced as needed.

Administrators' comments from the survey and personal discussions focused on improving the contractor's evening staff, while complimenting their daytime custodians' performance and attitudes. They praised the supervisors for being proactive and responsive, and welcoming the personal involvement by the on-site manager. Additionally, there has been concern about adequate coverage for snow removal, which has been addressed by more strongly coordinating with the maintenance department before each snow event.

Comments from students focused on bathrooms. Several said that bathrooms are generally clean in the morning but need to be cleaned better throughout the day and restocked more frequently with supplies. Compared to previous years, there was limited comment about bathrooms being old, highlighting the improvements from multiple renovations.

The overall impression of custodial services was higher than last year, and positive feelings about the individual custodians were expressed. Together, these points suggest that Temco is making strides in its first year of the contract.