



# Cassia County School District 151

## Addressing Ongoing Maintenance Issues and Strengthening Accountability



Cassia County School District 151 is a public school system in southern Idaho.

### CHALLENGE

Cassia County School District had a backlog of maintenance requests that were going unresolved. Faculty and staff across the district's 22 educational and administrative institutions found longstanding maintenance issues impeding their ability to perform daily tasks. The district wanted to address deferred maintenance issues, better allocate funds, and add more efficient guidance to their managerial approach to maintenance.

### SOLUTION

After years of strictly relying on an in-house maintenance department, Cassia County Schools decided to outsource their maintenance program, selecting ABM to spearhead the initiative. ABM leaders formed a more unified maintenance team to quickly tackle old issues and begin addressing new ones while additionally improving team morale, equity, and responsibility.

As a community-driven school district, Cassia County residents highly value the tight-knit relationships of its members. By integrating their footprint within the community, offering significant employment opportunities, and becoming a trusted source of advice for more than maintenance issues, ABM was able to excel beyond Cassia County's highest expectations.

"Just wanted to let you know how much I appreciate all you and your staff are doing for us. Y'all are awesome. It would have been impossible to accomplish what you have done and continue to do if we were still directing our own custodial and maintenance programs. Thank you so much."

– Bruce Thompson  
School Board Member  
Cassia County Schools

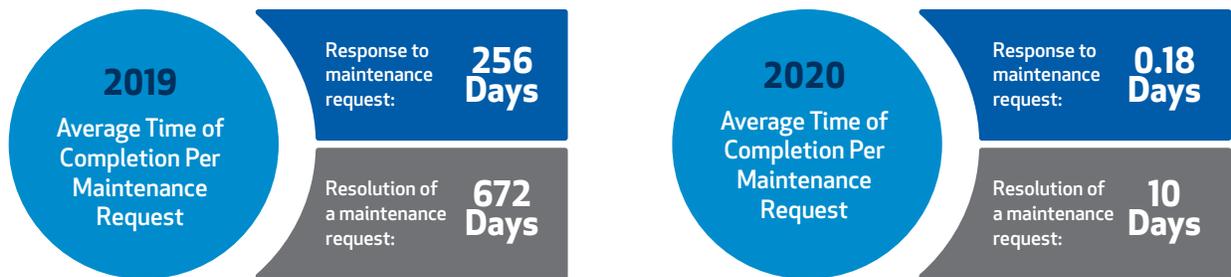


### Cassia County Schools Track Record

Located on the southern border of Idaho, Cassia County is a close community of roughly 23,000 residents across several neighboring towns. With 16 schools in their K-12 program as well as a technical center, a federal programs building, and more, Cassia County School District contains over 22 campuses that require consistent maintenance – an important task that was going unaddressed in nearly all locations for several years. From the students’ perspective, multiple school years could come and go in the time it took for certain issues to be properly remedied.

The school district’s maintenance department historically had extremely long response rates to faculty and staff maintenance requests. On average, it took the maintenance team 256 days to respond to a lighting, mechanical, or other maintenance issue, plus an additional 672 days to resolve the issue. Dissatisfaction became the norm for teachers and administrators who simply accepted a maintenance problem would not be remedied within two and a half years, if at all.

With an under-performing maintenance program, a lack of managerial presence, and years of deferred maintenance to overcome, Cassia County Schools looked for outside help to replace their in-house maintenance efforts.



### Welcoming in Outside Leadership

In undertaking their first contract with an outside provider, Cassia County Schools sought to nurture a partnership that could excel beyond the district’s pressing maintenance issues. Partnering with a team who could provide both the knowledge and the technical skills needed to minimize costs and complete existing and future projects proved to be the best solution.

Priority number one was addressing the school district’s \$11 million deficit of deferred maintenance. As the facility services provider chosen for the job, ABM quickly became a recognizable name across the district’s campuses as skilled workers solved lighting, mechanical, janitorial, and more challenges.

Under the district’s previous maintenance program, simple problems such as misaligned door closures, problematic keys and locks, and burnt-out light bulbs were neglected. In large-gathering spaces such as gymnasiums and hallways, reported CO<sub>2</sub> levels were off the charts, while only one out of every seven ventilators was properly working. ABM moved quickly to inspect and act on problems of all sizes.

### Spurring Internal Response

ABM’s leadership in improved efficiency and accountability has greatly stimulated faculty and staff response. Prior to ABM, faculty members were so frustrated with a lack of results that many simply stopped writing work orders completely; only an approximate 60 work orders were previously written per month. With a facility services partnership established, an average of 300 work orders are requested each month and current response times average 0.18 days with a resolution time of approximately 10 days – an over 6,000% decrease.

As one teacher put it, *“I have seen ABM here more in the last two weeks than I have seen our own workers in the last two years.”*



### Part of the Community

Cassia County residents and board members alike resisted outside intervention into their school system, the biggest fears being layoffs and downsizing. While other maintenance providers might fully replace an existing team, ABM strives to utilize as many current employees as possible.

ABM quickly conducted salary equality revisions of the maintenance team. Of the in-house workers who stayed on to join the ABM team, several were immediately promoted for their long-term dedication to the school district; all workers were awarded a minimum pay increase, achievable through ABM's economies of scale. The team's lack of turnover in the first ten months of their contract speaks to the satisfaction an ABM team member experiences.

ABM leadership made additional efforts to integrate into the community at large. Since joining the school district, ABM team members have been welcomed by the community, while in tandem, several hardworking members of the community have joined the ABM team.

### Cleaner Learning Environments in Crucial Times

ABM joined Cassia County Schools in the spring of 2020, only months before the school district was faced with new considerations in the wake of COVID-19 and its effect on their students' education. Despite the concerns of operating an educational institution during an ongoing pandemic, the school board decided to open as normal for the fall semester.

With less than seven percent of students electing to take their courses online, the majority of Cassia County students are taking classes in-person on campus and have been since August of 2020. For the safety of their students, faculty, and staff, Cassia County Schools was able to leverage ABM's expertise in proper cleaning and disinfection to successfully keep classes in session and maintain campus health.



### Partnering for the Long-Term

ABM teams are able to capitalize on the company's large infrastructure while maintaining a small and supportive presence. ABM's leveraged supply networks ensure consistent access to supplies, best practices, and a skilled workforce. ABM's buying power allows school districts like Cassia to stretch their dollars significantly farther than was previously possible.



Cassia County School District has been so pleased with ABM's results that new plans for ABM's expertise are in motion. An improved facility grounds program through ABM will bring more aesthetically pleasing landscaping to Cassia County, in addition to continued maintenance and custodial work.

## BENEFITS

- Strong leadership and dependability
- \$11 million in deferred maintenance addressed
- Response time decreased from 256 days to 0.18 days
- Resolution time decreased from 672 days to 10 days
- 98 special projects completed during extended summer of 2020
- More robust insurance coverage added and increased time off for employees
- Estimated 30% stretch per dollar
- Faculty satisfaction at an all-time high

## About ABM

ABM (NYSE: ABM) is a leading provider of facility services in the United States and various international locations. ABM's comprehensive capabilities include janitorial, electrical & lighting, energy solutions, facilities engineering, HVAC & mechanical, landscape & turf, mission critical solutions and parking, provided through stand-alone or integrated solutions. ABM provides custom facility solutions in urban, suburban and rural areas to properties of all sizes - from schools and commercial buildings to hospitals, data centers, manufacturing plants and airports. ABM Industries Incorporated, which operates through its subsidiaries, was founded in 1909. For more information, visit [ABM.com](http://ABM.com).



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