



Client Success Story

Software Simplicity Motivates Pinellas County Schools to Implement Asset Essentials

Client

Pinellas County Schools

Geography

Pinellas County, Florida

Population

102,000 students

Challenges

With a high volume of technicians and customers to manage, the county's prior pen-and-paper approach had taken them as far as it could. Processes weren't as efficient as they needed to be, and communication suffered.

Results

Now using Dude Solutions Asset Essentials™, the Pinellas team sees greater communication between them and their customers, and scheduling of work has become much easier.

Pinellas County Schools is the seventh largest district in Florida, coming in at 102,000 students. The maintenance department for the district currently has 271 team members caring for 18 million square feet of conditioned space, including centralized grounds care and athletic field care. Without the proper system in place to oversee it all, maintenance operations could suffer quickly with this many factors on the table.

For years, the district had been using another maintenance management system, but when most of the employees who had been proficient in using it left the district and IBM stopped supporting it, there was a clear need to find a solution that ticked their boxes, and got them away from the inefficient pen-and-paper strategy they had defaulted to.

Mike Hewett, Director of Maintenance & Warehouse, said it was talking to other districts that put Dude Solutions and the Asset Essentials system on his radar. “In talking to our counterparts on a national level who are using Dude Solutions, they all seemed to agree on the simplicity of it and the capabilities of the software, so that’s what drove us toward this decision.”

The department soon began implementation of the software, citing that the process went smoothly. “They’ve been very responsive,” said Mike. “Our two guys have been fantastic to work with. Whenever we need something, they get the information to us.”



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Director of Maintenance & Warehouse

Mike, along with Melissa Hinote, Manager of Support Services, says the department is already seeing improvements in the way they’re able to work and serve their customers.

“I think we’re seeing a significant improvement in the communication aspect, particularly when it comes to scheduling our work orders. One of the things I liked about Asset Essentials was the system-generated emails that keeps the customer aware of the status. We never had that before,” said Mike. “Another plus was scheduling. Your cable guy isn’t going to just show up at your door and say, ‘Surprise, I’m here to fix your cable!’ Scheduling was really paramount for me — for our staff to let the schools know when we’re coming to address their issue. The schools get a designated time frame now.”

It’s not just those working within the maintenance department noticing a positive change, however. Faculty and staff throughout the district have also had a positive response.

“The feedback I’ve gotten from the requesters, the schools, so far is that they love the system, and it’s basically because of the simplicity of it. There are very few fields they have to supply, so they can get a work order into the system pretty quickly. They don’t have to remember all this archaic nomenclature that was in our previous system just to get a work request in,” said Mike.

“The simplistic use of the software is something that’s paramount to us. We have a lot of users in the system, and to be able to roll this out to a large body of people and not have an overwhelming response of How do I do this? or How does that happen? has been great. Being able to grow with our customer base and help them get their requests to us and being able to serve them is very

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important to us. Our customers appreciate how easy it is, and I appreciate that we don't have to answer a lot of questions. We sent out a simple how-to guide with it and there really hasn't been a lot of questions or push back. The simplicity is something we can't live without. It saves them time and us.”

“In the three weeks and two days that we've been live, we've generated 3,256 work orders through the system, an average of 140 a day,” Melissa added, proving how efficient the process is and how necessary getting a proper system in place to support the district's needs was.

As for the future, Mike plans to use Asset Essentials as a reliable way to capture and track valuable data that not only he and his team can use to improve operations, but that he can also easily share with leadership. “We don't have a great feel of our KPIs. That's where I want to end up. When a manager or a member of the leadership team logs into the system, we want it to tell them how many work orders are past due, how many critical work orders we have, things of that nature. That's where I'd like to get to.”

When asked what he would tell another district facing similar challenges, he said, “I would tell those considering it that if you're looking to move your organization into an era of better use of technology and better use of what's available to you in the modern world, then Asset Essentials is certainly something you should consider. It's easy to use. It's got large capabilities. There's a wealth of growth that can be achieved. If your district is like us, previously working on an antiquated system and using pen and paper, this is the system that can move you forward with whatever your technology goals are.”

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