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Client Success story

Baltimore City School District Streamlines Operations with Asset Essentials

Client

Baltimore City Public Schools, Maryland

Challenges

Baltimore City Public Schools is charged with maintaining safe and effective learning environments for more than 70,000 students every day. With 150 different school buildings spread out across 19 miles, the system needed a software solution that can manage work orders as well as keep facilities staff on top of preventive maintenance.

Vitals

City School District with:

- Student population of 75,995 in the 2023 School Year
- 150 school buildings
- 17 million square feet of facility space across 19 miles

Results

By implementing Brightly's Asset Essentials software solution, Baltimore City Public Schools has been able to:

- Automate and simplify workflow processes
- Quickly identify maintenance challenges
- Easily access data to diagnose problems and justify capital requests

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Concerns

Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPS) is responsible for the teaching, learning and physical safety of more than 75,000 students, and facilities personnel share in that responsibility.

"We are the first line," says Monique Roumo, executive director of operations. "If those buildings don't open, the students can't come in and learn. Our goal is to make sure they have a safe place to come into that is clean, maintained well and free of distractions related to the physical building."

Until 2016, BCPS used a Brightly legacy solution for facility maintenance. BCPS loved the legendary service Brightly provided but needed a more future-generation solution to help streamline work order data for planning.

"In the past, people haven't understood that we are severely underfunded," Roumo says. "We needed work order data and contractor data to help them see where we're spending our resources and justify funding needs."

Our Approach

BCPS started using Brightly products in 2016 to streamline and automate the work order process. Because the software has drastically improved and simplified facility maintenance processes, BCPS chose to transition to Brightly's Asset Essentials in January 2023.

"We've been using Brightly products for seven years now, and we have had processes in place," says Patrick McGough, CMMS manager. "With our rollout of Asset Essentials, we took the opportunity to wipe our old processes, reevaluate our processes, come up with new things we wanted to do, and roll out a clean slate for the district."

Three months into implementation, BCPS has rolled over data from the former system to the new system and gotten staff up and running on AE. "It's going really well," McGough says. "We've had an awesome relationship, from our sales team all the way through support. It's been fantastic."

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Monique Roumo
Executive Director of Operations, Baltimore City Public Schools

The Results

Using Asset Essentials (and previous versions of Brightly Software) has been a game changer for BCPS, making it possible for the district to better track, manage and report on facilities maintenance and capital projects. With Brightly, BCPS has been able to:

Automate and simplify workflow processes. Asset Essentials automatically assigns preventive maintenance tasks that need to be done and keeps track of work order history.

"All of our assets have to be maintained or else they're going to fail," McGough says. "And then you close a building because the heating failed, or the air conditioning failed, or the indoor air quality or lighting is poor. The importance of maintaining these assets isn't just going and resolving the problems as they're identified, but it's also having the foresight to preventatively maintain these buildings to ensure that they keep running and that our children are in a safe school."

Quickly identify maintenance challenges to keep students safe. The tool also makes it easy for school personnel to request assistance with issues that arise on a day-to-day basis.

"Asset Essentials provides us a methodology for having principals and custodians articulate problems in their buildings," McGough says. "A urinal doesn't work, a teacher saw a mouse, a light bulb is out, there's a leak. With Asset Essentials, we can provide a tool for them to capture the problem in a work order. The system provides us the ability to route it to the appropriate department, and get someone working on it. With 150 buildings, there are a lot of issues. Without Brightly, we would be in trouble."

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Easily access data to diagnose problems. In the past, BCPS was unable to quickly find the root problem when building mechanical systems were down. But that changed after implementing Brightly software.

For example, during a cold snap in 2018, when several school buildings went down at once, leaders were able to refer to the work order system to compare data about maintenance issues and the building outages. "We were able to use the data in our software program to identify the key issues in our buildings, and eventually got the resources to improve our building automation system and begin to deal with our mechanical issues," Roumo says. "We would not have been able to do that without Brightly. We had been using paper systems, so we would've had to go through files to understand which ones were our problem buildings instead of being able to pull a report that tells us where our problems are."

Use data to justify capital requests. State requirements for capital project requests continue to become increasingly detailed, but with Asset Essentials, BCPS has no problem providing the necessary data. "Those requests used to be just a listing of how we prioritized things," McGough says. "Now we have a new element where we need to provide maintenance data to justify those capital projects. Asset Essentials' Capital Predictor gives us a tool to show where we are with our assets and whether money from the state will help us avoid asset failures."

With historic work order and maintenance data easily accessible with a few clicks, Asset Essentials has empowered BCPS to better tell its story to state government and local stakeholders. "We are going into asset-centered decision making, where we have to say more than just that we're doing maintenance and we don't have enough funds, Roumo says. "Our constituents want to understand the total cost of ownership of our buildings, and Brightly helps us tell that story: This is how much we're spending on preventive maintenance. This is how much we're spending on reactive maintenance. This is how much we're spending in inventory, this is our contractor cost. School districts need to be able to tell that story so that you can justify the resources that you need, and Brightly supports that."

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