



The Heart in the Hallways: The Vital Role of Custodial Services in K-12 Education



By Mike Daley, Senior Vice President, CCS Facility Services

Long before the first bell rings and long after the last student leaves, a dedicated team is at work, preparing the school for another day of learning. Their efforts are rarely noticed, but their impact is everywhere - in the freshly mopped hallways, the sanitized classrooms, and the stocked restrooms that make students feel comfortable and cared for. Janitorial staff are more than service providers; they are the unseen guardians of the school experience, ensuring that every child walks into an environment that is safe, clean, and ready for success.

Yet, their work extends beyond physical spaces. A well-maintained school fosters confidence, stability, and a sense of pride among students and teachers alike. It sends a message: **you matter, and this space was prepared for you.** In an era where schools face growing challenges - from staffing shortages to budget constraints - ensuring that janitorial teams are supported, valued, and properly equipped is more important than ever. When we invest in the people who care for our schools, we create a ripple effect that strengthens the entire educational community.

Custodial services in K-12 education often work behind the scenes, but their impact is felt in every classroom and hallway. A trusted cleaning team does more than just clean- it creates a safe, welcoming environment where students can thrive, and teachers can focus on what they do best: inspiring young minds.

Post-pandemic, many schools transitioned to third-party service providers, bringing both challenges and opportunities. One of the biggest hurdles is finding qualified janitorial staff, especially in the wake of labor shortages. Third-party companies have stepped in to bridge the gap, ensuring schools meet their cleaning needs—but their role goes beyond just cleaning. A great janitorial team doesn't just maintain facilities; it enhances the learning environment, creating a space where students feel safe, focused, and ready to succeed.



“The benefit of our service is not merely having sanitized floors or sparkling windows; it's about making every space in the school conducive to learning,” said **Victor Becerra**, CCS Facility Services Regional Vice President, Southwest Region. “Our company understands that schools, like homes, are places where people spend a significant amount of time, and ensuring that environment is clean, safe, and welcoming can have a huge impact on both staff and students.”

Schools are pillars of our community, and those who take care of K-12 facilities should view their role as more than just a cleaning checklist—they are a vital part of creating comfortable and safe spaces for children to learn. Inspiring employees to take ownership of their work, as well as their role within the school and community, cultivates a sense of accountability and empowers them to actively contribute to the school's success. Making custodial staff an integral part of the school's ecosystem also leads to lower turnover and higher job satisfaction amongst school staff.

“Whether it's a site manager, a director, or custodial staff, many are drawn to this work not just for the job itself, but because of a genuine passion for the schools and communities they serve. They take pride in creating a clean, safe environment where students can learn and educators can focus on their mission,” said Becerra. “For many, it's more than just a job—it's a way to give back, to support the next generation, and to be a part of something bigger than themselves. They understand that their work directly contributes to the well-being of the community, fostering a space where students and teachers can thrive.”

Just as schools are a place of learning for students, ongoing learning and training programs are essential in ensuring that janitorial staff are equipped and ready to create healthy learning environments for students and teachers. By offering customized training that meets a school's unique needs and providing top-notch education to all cleaning personnel, janitorial staff can create spaces that are not just clean, but that transform classrooms, hallways, cafeterias, and gymnasiums into places where students can thrive and grow. And learning doesn't stop when school is out—training and service continues year-round to ensure staff can always meet the high expectations that make a school feel like home.

Working in K-12 education requires more than just filling positions - it demands a deep commitment to the well-being of students and staff. Schools are more than buildings; they are communities, and the people who care for them should reflect the diversity, values, and spirit of those they serve. That's why staffing janitorial teams must be intentional, beginning with rigorous background checks to ensure a safe and secure learning environment. But safety is just the foundation. When schools hire locally and build teams that reflect their communities, they create a deeper sense of belonging for students, teachers, and staff alike. "A janitorial team that understands the heartbeat of a school isn't just maintaining a space—they're nurturing an environment where every child feels seen, supported, and valued," adds Becerra. Because when a school truly feels like home, students are free to focus on what matters most: learning, growing, and building their future.

At the end of the day, ultimate success comes from consistent communication. A productive feedback loop between the school and its janitorial team allows for timely response times when issues arise. A well-trained team that is dedicated to students, teachers, and administrators will ensure that they are deploying the right resources to resolve issues, often correcting or reacting to issues before it is raised to the administration. The more integrated a janitorial team is, the more they become a part of the school's family and are invested in ensuring that the school is always at its best.

Want to learn more about how [CCS Facility Services](#) can contribute to your learning environments through reliable, consistent custodial service? Click [here](#) to learn more!