



Benchmarking Report

State College Area School District

Physical Plant

November 2011

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Introduction and Background

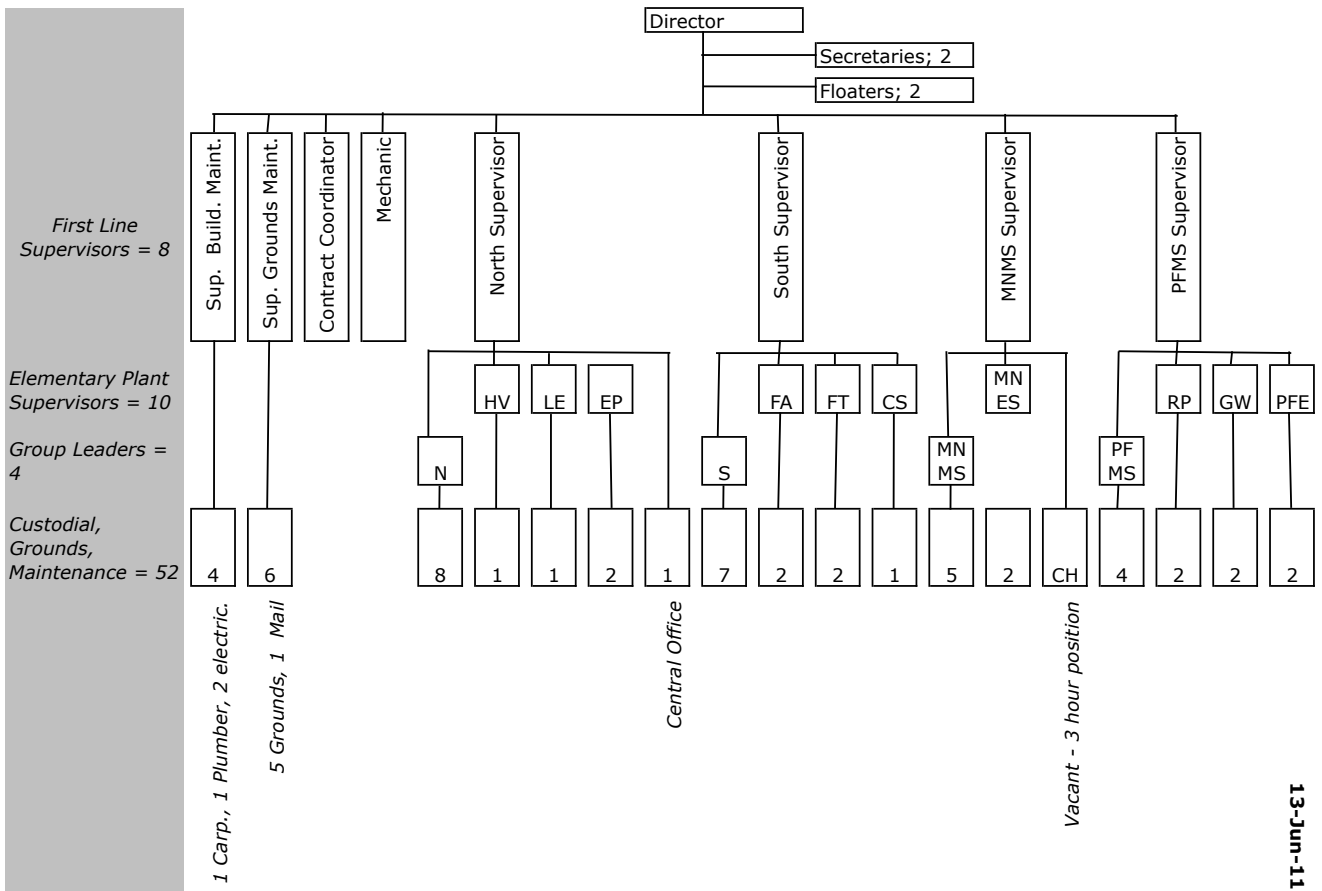
The contents of this report clearly demonstrate that the State College Area School District spends less on facilities than the average Pennsylvania district. While this data shines a positive light on the maintenance of existing buildings, further analysis details significant issues with aging facilities. A more accurate interpretation of this report should be a link between the overall condition of the physical plant and facility spending.

The Physical Plant of the State College Area School District consists of 19 buildings on 21 properties, which are detailed below:

Facility	Major Construction	Site Acres	Building Square Footage
Bus Garage	1973	5.00	5,176
Central Office	1924	0.48	15,585
College Heights	1931	2.00	14,000
Corl Street	1952, 1961, 1996	4.70	27,780
Easterly Parkway	1961, 2002	11.40	55,895
Fairmount Avenue	1914, 1921, 1931, 1942	1.14	88,978
Ferguson Township	2011	9.20	64,500
Gray's Woods	2002	15.00	56,795
Houserville	1959, 1968	55.00	36,952
Lemont	1939, 1966	6.80	28,142
Maintenance Storage	1980	1.00	7,200
Memorial Field	1937	2.00	0
Mount Nittany Elem.	2011	0.00	59,946
Mount Nittany Middle	1995	40.00	155,500
North High School	1955, 1965, 1989, 2000	42.00	258,398
Overlook Heights	NA	4.00	0
Panorama Village	1959, 1968	15.60	36,952
Park Forest Elem.	2005	25.00	62,326
Park Forest Middle	1971, 1995	55.00	150,317
Radio Park	1963	26.00	56,697
South High School	1962, 1965, 2000	38.00	191,280
Total		359.32	1,372,419

The district employs in-house custodial, grounds, and maintenance staff, which are supplemented by selected contracted services. During the past budget year, 4 FTE were cut from the staff resulting in the following distribution:

Physical Plant Organizational Chart



(Important Note: Most of the benchmarking data used in this report is from 09-10 and does NOT reflect the reduced size of the maintenance staff, which is shown above.)

In order to fully understand school facility funding, four major factors should be analyzed: Demographics, Existing Facility Condition, Operational Spending and Capital Debt. Each of these impacts the other; consequently, examining 1 piece of this puzzle without looking at the other 3 could yield a false impression.

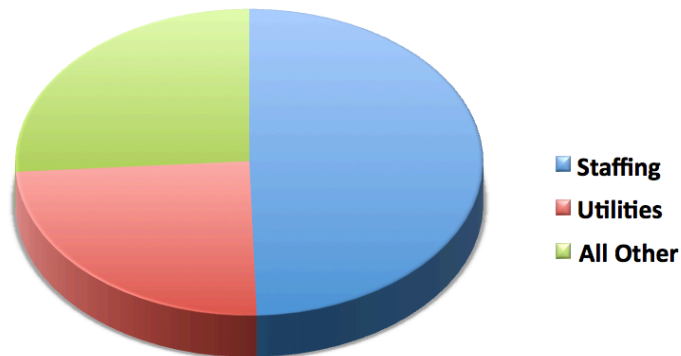


Demographics, or more specifically, student population has been relatively stable. While movements in Elementary attendance areas and grade level population have been common, the overall student population has remained within several hundred of 7,000 for most of the past 2 decades. The enrollment in 1994-95 was 6,918. It rose fairly steadily to a high of 7,577 in 2002-03. Since then, it has fallen fairly steadily back to its current level of just under 7,000. Projections predict that this will remain steady, to slightly falling, for the foreseeable future.

If these predictions follow the trend and remain accurate, there will be no need to spend capital funding for additional capacity in the near term. For that reason, demographics will not be significantly explored as part of this report.

Operational Spending-

Staffing and Utilities are the 2 largest operational expenditures in school facility spending.



Accordingly, emphasis has been given to these 2 areas of spending. A detailed staffing analysis is presented on page 7 of this report, and a detailed analysis of utility expenditures is presented on page 8.

The overall operational spending is then summarized. This summary includes all spending in the 2600 category, which encompasses staffing, utilities, and all other non-capital spending for facilities.

Staffing- The Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO) has published a formula for determining custodial staffing allotments. The formula factors building size, number of students, number of teachers, number of teaching spaces, and total washroom fixtures, to yield a recommendation for the number of custodians required. The district has used this formula as a guideline when evaluating its custodial numbers. The current calculations are listed on the following page:

School	PASBO formula	SCASD Actual
Corl Street	1.92	2
Easterly Parkway	3.05	3
Fairmount Avenue	3.29	3
Gray's Woods	3.21	3
Houserville	2.01	2
Lemont	1.83	2
Mount Nittany Elementary	3.22	3
Ferguson Township	3.19	3
Park Forest Elementary	3.83	3
Radio Park	2.94	3
Mount Nittany Middle	7.69	7
Park Forest Middle	7.61	6
South High	10.04	9
North High	11.2	10
Total	65.02	59

On a biennial basis, PASBO benchmarks facility operational data. The chart below shows results from the 2010 report that are related to staffing. Due to the number being reported in square footage per FTE, a higher number indicates less staff. (This benchmarking analysis was completed prior to our recent maintenance cuts)

	SCASD	Median		
		Statewide	>7000 students	Region 3*
Square feet of instructional space per total Building and Grounds staff	15,845	15,439	14,977	15,354
Square feet of instructional space per Custodial staff	22,498	20,556	19,972	20,910
Square feet of instructional space per Skilled Trades/Maintenance staff	120,692	108,378	104,394	85,584
Acres, per Grounds staff	46	49	43	ND

**Region 3 is shown in the appendix; page 14*

Utilities-

Data on overall utility spending from the 2010 PASBO benchmarking report is shown below:

	SCASD	Median		
		Statewide	> 7000 students	Region 3
Utilities per square foot of instructional building space	\$1.38	\$1.60	\$1.70	\$1.53

Additionally, the district has been using EnergyStar, a utility tracking tool sponsored by the EPA, to benchmark buildings individually. The EnergyStar tool uses building data to track like buildings and generates an overall score. Scores at 75 and above are considered excellent. (Antiquated steam heating systems from the 1950's are largely responsible for the poor scores at Corl Street and North High School)

My Portfolio: SCASD					
1-Oct-11					
Total Buildings: 15 *					
Facility Name	2011				
	Oct.	June	May	April	11-Jan
Central Office	72	72	73	72	73
Corl Street Elementary	42	42	42	41	44
Easterly Parkway Elementary	78	79	79	81	82
Fairmount Ave	80	80	80	86	87
Gray's Woods	74	73	76	79	80
Houserville	74	74	75	76	76
Lemont	84	84	85	85	85
Mount Nittany Middle	83	82	80	79	80
North High	56	56	58	57	59
Park Forest Elementary	86	85	84	84	85
Park Forest Middle	86	86	86	88	88
Radio Park	89	89	87	85	86
South High	80	81	82	82	83

*Insufficient data to analyze Ferguson Township and Mount Nittany Elementary Schools.

Overall Operational Spending-

Data from the 2010 PASBO benchmarking study related to overall operational spending minus utilities is summarized below. In every comparison but 1, the district spends less than its counterparts. The lone outlier is for Region 3, total expenditures per square, which is within 2%.

	SCASD	Median		
		Statewide	> 7,000 students	Region 3
Maintenance Expenditures as a percent of Total Expenditures	5.72%	6.32%	6.15%	6.81%
Total Maintenance Expenditures per square foot of instructional building space	\$4.60	\$4.68	\$5.37	\$4.51
Total Maintenance Expenditures per Student	\$848	\$864	\$878	\$864

The chart below compares total spending in the 2600 category of the budget, which encompasses, staffing, utilities and all other maintenance expenditures. (2009-2010 AFR data)

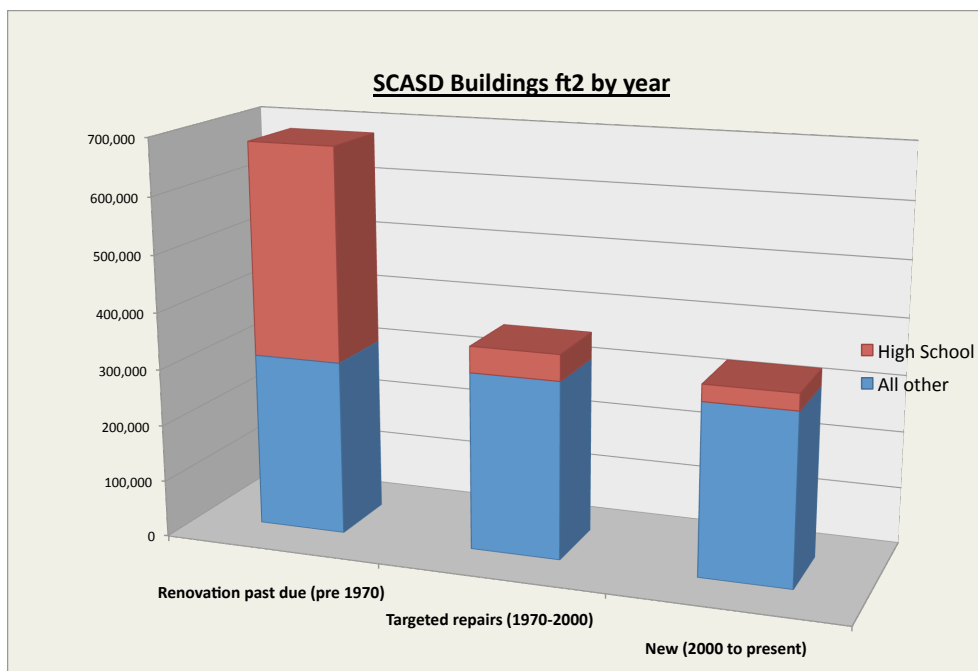
If SCASD would increase its operational budget to meet the state average of \$1,184 per student, it would need to add \$830,349 (a 10.74% budget increase).

	Total 2600	% of budget	Rank	\$/student	Rank
Lower Merion	\$14,564,289	8.08%	5	\$2,147	1
Abington	\$13,766,414	11.68%	1	\$1,836	2
Tredyffrin-Easttown	\$9,997,225	9.57%	2	\$1,563	3
Parkland	\$11,356,182	9.14%	3	\$1,189	4
State Average				\$1,184	5
SCASD	\$7,727,915	7.43%	6	\$1,069	6
Cumberland Valley	\$7,755,364	8.27%	4	\$989	7
North Allegheny	\$7,800,883	6.60%	7	\$954	8

Existing Facility Condition

The condition of the district's existing facilities greatly impacts spending. Older facilities are prone to large and expensive equipment breakdowns. Maintenance expenditures can be higher and contract services may be called upon for more support.

Despite the recent completion of several successful projects, the district is still challenged due to aging building stock.



The graph above illustrates the backlog of facility renovations that the school district faces. It further serves to highlight the importance of a High School modernization project.

Considering that the district maintains 14 school buildings, and that major building projects generally take in excess of 3 years to plan and complete, the district should adopt a mindset of always being in some phase of a capital building project.

FCI

As part of the most recent Master Planning effort, the district commissioned a detail facility condition assessment. A summary of the December 2008 report is shown below. Both the physical condition and the educational adequacy of each building was analyzed. In both cases the results are shown in terms of deficiency on a 100-point scale, or in other words, the lower the number, the better the facility is judged.

School	Facility Condition Index	Educational Deficiency	Combined rating
North	59	73	132
South	57	65	122
Corl Street	56	66	122
Radio Park	69	49	118
Lemont	56	59	115
Houserville	62	42	104
Fairmount Ave.	76	NA	NA
College Heights	72	NA	NA
Panorama Village	63	NA	NA
Central Office (Nittany Ave)	61	NA	NA
Park Forest Middle	29	31	60
Mount Nittany Middle	9	1	10
Easterly Parkway	0	0	0
Gray's Woods	0	0	0
Park Forest Elementary	0	0	0
Mount Nittany Elementary*	0	0	0
Ferguson Township*	0	0	0

**Not part of the 2008 report, shown here in order to complete the entire school inventory.*

Debt

(Unless otherwise noted, figures refer to 09-10 data).

The district is below average in capital debt. This fact is helpful in understanding the condition of the existing facilities. While this allows the district flexibility in addressing its older buildings, achieving approval of large expenditures of funds could be problematic.

The district currently has \$52,752,133 in debt, which equates to about \$7,300 per student. The average district in state has around \$14,745 per student in debt.

SCASD has identified 6 school districts in the state of similar size and demography and used these as “Cohort Districts” for comparative purposes. The chart below compares SCASD to its 6 cohort districts:

	Total Debt	Rank	\$/student	Rank
Lower Merion	\$321,962,624	1	\$47,473	1
North Allegheny	\$142,064,979	3	\$17,365	2
Abington	\$118,285,817	4	\$15,774	3
Parkland	\$145,945,572	2	\$15,274	4
State Average			\$14,745	
Cumberland Valley	\$108,785,749	5	\$13,869	5
Tredyffrin-Easttown	\$53,829,669	6	\$8,415	6
State College Area	\$52,752,133	7	\$7,300	7

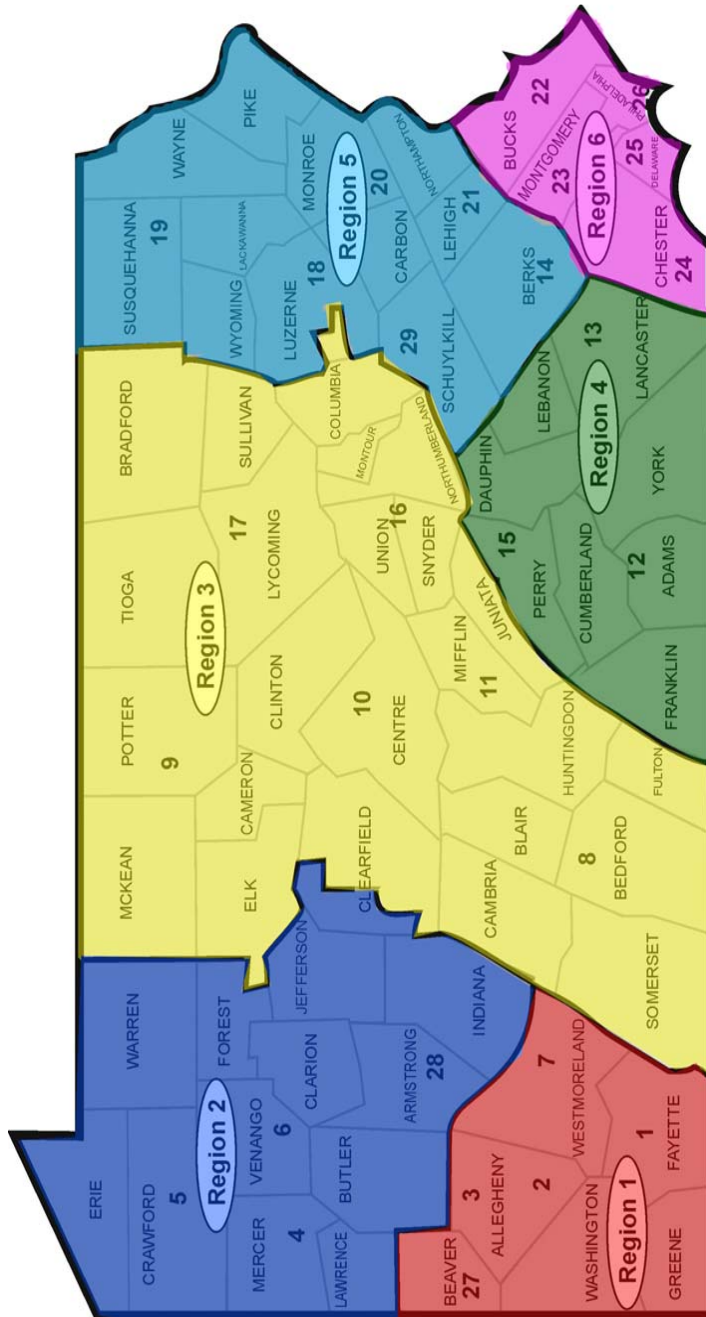
**Lower Merion has 2 High Schools; State College and North Allegheny each have 2 buildings one functioning as 9-10 and the other as 11-12, the remainder each have 1 High School building.*

Conclusion

This report clearly illustrates that the State College Area School District spends less on facilities than its cohort districts. The report further reveals that the district spends less than the average district in the State of Pennsylvania.

When the entire facility puzzle is examined, and these figures are considered in conjunction with the condition of existing facilities and capital debt, a cause and effect relationship can be demonstrated. Consequently; this report raises an argument for increased spending on facilities.

Pennsylvania Map Broken Down By Regions



- Region 1** - Physical location is southwest PA to include the Pittsburgh suburban areas (school districts served by Intermediate Units 1, 2, 3, 7 and 27)
- Region 2** - Physical location is northwest PA (school districts served by Intermediate Units 4, 5, 6 and 28)
- Region 3** - Physical location is the central area of the state from New York to the West Virginia borders (school districts served by Intermediate Units 8, 9, 10, 11, 16 and 17)
- Region 4** - Physical location is the south central area of the state to include Harrisburg surrounding areas (school districts served by Intermediate Units 12, 13 and 15)
- Region 5** - Physical location is the northeast and central east area of the state (school districts served by Intermediate Units 14, 18, 19, 20, 21 and 29)
- Region 6** - Physical location is southeast corner of the state to include the Philadelphia suburban area (school districts served by Intermediate Units 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26)