



The Challenge: Iredell–Statesville Schools (ISS) sought assistance in filling over 30 vacant custodial positions in their 42 locations. In addition, they wanted to uncover efficiencies and implement processes and policy changes to reduce administrative burdens to the school district while improving the overall custodial program and protecting ISS district employees – they wanted a resourcing solution, not an outsourcing plan, a partner, versus a contractor.

The Solution: ISS and HES combined efforts and worked collaboratively to achieve full staffing by immediately filling all district vacancies and all-natural openings forward, with qualified, committed staff, each receiving training and development, HES benefits, competitive pay, incentives, recognition, and career growth opportunities.

The Approach: In the summer of 2021, HES was contacted by Iredell–Statesville Schools (ISS), NC District Superintendent, Dr. Jeff James. After many meetings with ISS leadership, the ISS Board of Education elected to partner with HES in December 2021. They were able to begin services quickly by “piggybacking” on an available, NC-approved, and fully compliant cooperative contract currently being utilized in NC for the desired services.

An important requirement of the partnership included offloading the daunting workload and associated costs of the day-to-day management of the custodial program that detracted from ISS’s ability to focus on teacher recruitment, licensure, personal development, and retention of teachers. Critical staff members were now able to reduce time spent on the custodial program needs to include advertising, recruiting, hiring, training, scheduling, reporting, timekeeping, payroll, recognition, employee management, discipline, performance management, substitute scheduling, and more - all being repeated multiple times annually in each of their 42 locations due to high turnover in the custodial positions. These administrative burdens interrupted principal time and negatively impacted the mission-critical task of educating students, which occurred over and over again. HES was able to implement technology and add resources to effectively recruit and staff all positions while a proprietary retention plan significantly reduced turnover. Savings from the program included labor costs, benefits, payroll taxes, workers' compensation, general liability insurance, litigation, unemployment claims, ACA, time off, and more. HES achieved full staffing and kept the schools properly staffed and maintained to ultimately achieve a best-in-class program in the locations supported by HES. Additionally, substitute custodial staff absences were covered by HES instead of ISS, resulting in significant ISS cost benefits with the average custodian being out over 20 days annually on average.

HES provided coaching and support through talented and experienced program leadership living in the ISS community. These HES leaders provided weekly reporting for locations and personnel. Savings from efficiencies offset the HES management costs, gradually leading to increased savings that accrued annually. In effect, the HES program has consistently improved staffing to optimum levels, provided all new equipment and tools, reduced administrative burdens, promoted career growth, and improved school cleanliness, health, and safety while allowing principals, human resources, and administration to focus on students and staff who can now redirect the savings and resources back to the education mission – ISS’s students. HES continues to work with the district to add additional locations and staff as naturally occurring opportunities allow to avoid any negative impact on employees or district operations.

These efforts were only achieved through close, collaborative cooperation between ISS and HES acting as **One Team**, working together for a common goal – making every day count, for every student, every day. This is their story. What will your story be?