

Wickenburg Unified School District Maintenance and Operation Department

By William Moran, Director of M & O

Many of you have seen the Little Red Schoolhouse located next to the Basha's parking lot downtown. It is hard to imagine that a single building was the entire school district many years ago. Later we had safety patrol, where older students guarded the crosswalks, so that younger students could cross traffic safely. They even monitored bicycle riders to ensure that only a single rider was on a bike to promote safety. As eras have moved forward, we may even long for the times that a simpler life reflects, without snarling traffic, time deadlines, or the rush to stay ahead. Whether we long for the times of the Little Red Schoolhouse or not, we now are in a world that is much faster and demands much more of us.

Today, the tasks of the district once performed by volunteers, completed by students, or assigned to staff has given away to a maintenance department. The maintenance department has evolved with the times taking on new challenges as technology develops, laws change and safety concerns increase. Who remembers swamp coolers in all classrooms? Not only were they uncomfortable most of the time, they were often old, extremely noisy and prone to inflaming allergies. Over time air conditioning has been installed in almost all buildings, thus reliving the stress of the stifling heat, noise and allergy issues. Wood floors have been replaced with carpet and tile. Personally, I enjoyed the sound of the wood floors as students and staff scurried about during the day. The playground of a single swing from a tree, has been replaced with what we now refer to as equipment. Washing your hands no longer requires that you turn on a faucet, you merely place your hands in the sink and the water is dispensed to control overuse. With the constant development of new and more modern schools it requires staff to keep up with the maintenance requirements of each. Moving forward in our maintenance department, we have found we can no longer wait for repairs to come to us, but we have to develop a plan to anticipate what each school may need.

As we welcome the new year our maintenance department for the Wickenburg Unified Schools will be faced with new challenges; in meeting the needs of all our schools and programs. Our staff has and will continue work to develop preventive maintenance plans, ensure the safety of students and staff, and provide the best customer service we can.