

**Senate Finance Committee
Testimony of Claire Bugen, Superintendent
Texas School for the Deaf
February 9, 2015**

Chairman Nelson, Vice-Chair Hinojosa, members of the committee, my name is Claire Bugen and I am the Superintendent of the Texas School for the Deaf. I appreciate the opportunity to present testimony on behalf of the school's biennial budget request.

Joining me today is Gary Bego, TSD's Director of Finance and Support Operations, several members of our Governing Board and a great team of key program leaders from the school.

As some of you know, TSD is a state agency that provides public education to 100% special education population of students from across Texas who are deaf and hard of hearing, and who may have additional complex disabilities. Our school has been here in Austin on the same site since 1856 or 159 years if my math is correct.

The campus where our students live and attend school consists of 67 acres and 46 buildings. Our campus is busy 12 months a year with our school year and summer programs and the community at large enjoys use of our track, swim center, and auditorium. Additionally our facilities are leased for special community events, and have become extremely popular as base camps for movies.

TSD has a dual mission in statute:

- The first is to provide educational services on a day or residential basis in on-campus programs in Austin, and
- The second is to serve as a primary statewide resource center in partnership with state, regional and local agencies who work with deaf and hard of hearing students.

Last year we served 581 students on campus in our regular school year programs from Parent-Infant through post High School transitional programs and an additional 459 students in summer and short-term programs.

Through statewide outreach services, TSD provided technical assistance, training, consultation, online resources and distance learning opportunities for more than 2,000 parents, school districts and professionals across the state. 99% of our customers rated our technical assistance as excellent.

The strategies in our budget request are framed by three key themes characterizing what we do at TSD:

- 1. The need to make our students college and career ready**
- 2. The need to deliver federally mandated individualized educational programs designed to meet the unique needs of each student**
- 3. The requirement to provide these services at no cost to families in a safe and positive learning and living environment**

The **challenges** we are facing include, but are not limited to:

- Increased academic rigor required by HB 5, and increased accountability on STAAR testing
- Increased enrollment of students with additional disabilities, requiring more support staff and specialized services
- Additional demands on our school buses and vehicles that provide daily transportation for students to and from school, in addition to field trips, athletic travel, travel to work sites, etc.
- More statewide requests for assistance than can be met
- Teacher recruitment and retention issues as well as the need to generate better data for student accountability
- Deferred maintenance needs, creating a backlog of needed repairs on the campus

Our request for funding above base includes:

1. Additional Instructional and Support Staff

- An additional *Occupational Therapist and a Teacher Aide* to support the mandatory related services provided under the IEP to our students. (We currently have one OT serving the entire student population.)
- A *Transition Teacher, Teacher and Job Coach* for our growing Transitional program (Current students enrolled, aged 18-22 = 61)
- An *Academic Intervention Specialist and a Database Specialist* for our High School to support our accountability responsibilities under HB 5. This includes: monitoring credit plans, providing Accelerated Instruction for students who do not pass EOC assessments, PSAT, and SAT remediation efforts, grade monitoring, etc.
- A *Hispanic Family Support Specialist and an Outreach Specialist* to support our statewide services in two critical areas—0-3 Services and Support to Hispanic Families. All of our current 0-3 services are limited to campus-based programs and the need across the state is high. 0-3 is the critical time for language and communication intervention for our students. We currently have only one Hispanic Family support person for the entire campus
- *Two Custodians* to assume some of the TFC defined “non-maintenance” functions and
- *Communication Specialist* to support PR, publications, marketing, web and digital strategies, etc. at the school

2. Replacement of School Buses and Vans

- Requesting 2 buses, and 2 8-passenger vans
- Our buses endure a lot of wear and tear
- Current mileage on the 4 replacements is over 200K miles
- By 2016-17 will be 6 years beyond recommended replacement
- Also requesting two 8-passenger vans are to replace 15 passenger
- Federal ban on 15-passenger vans in schools—rollover risks
- Our vehicles are used for day student transportation to and from school for Austin and surrounding area students, athletic trips, school field trips in pre-school through High School, transportation to student work sites and various other extracurricular activities
- Obviously this is a safety issue as older vehicles are more prone to breakdowns

3. Career Pathway Expansion: Culinary Arts and Building Construction Trades

- Request to assist us in implementing HB 5 endorsements
- Some Career Technical Education areas need to be upgraded some CTE areas to become more rigorous and to allow for dual credit and certification programs in some of these areas
- Culinary expansion involves relocating and upgrading a traditional Home Economics classroom to a Culinary Arts Training Center
- Preliminary estimate done prior to TFC involvement \$494,000. TFC is now currently planning to do an assessment. Cost may change pending that.
- The Building Trades enhancement will be achieved by expanding our current Mill and Cabinet Making program to include two new classes that will allow us to offer an endorsement in this area.
 - Very cost effective method to do this is the purchase of 12 portable stations to focus on Blueprint reading, Concrete, Drywall, Electrical, Plumbing, etc.
 - \$60,000 cost includes tools and equipment for the workstations and curriculum. Another real benefit of this program is that the videos supporting the curriculum are close-captioned and the instructional materials are written on various grade levels.

Now, allow me to address issues raised by this committee and Texas Facilities Commission in last week's Senate Finance Hearing. I would like to direct your attention to the attached document, *Ten Year History of TSD Requests for Deferred Maintenance Dollars*, delineating TSD's history of requests for deferred maintenance for the past 5 biennia. You will note that this document contains the dollar amounts requested and received by the agency and appropriated by the Legislature since the 2004 – 2005 biennium. I want to assure you that the deferred maintenance dollars appropriated to the school could not be and were not spent on anything other than their original intent. When such concerns were first brought to the Governor's office by TFC this fall, TSD responded by providing the requested documentation and explanation.

With great admiration and respect, I continue to appreciate the work of Senate Finance's best efforts to support TSD's deferred maintenance, and our continuous work together developing a specific strategy in the school's budget for deferred maintenance. Over the last 10 years, TSD has received a total of \$10.7 million for deferred maintenance. \$5.2 million of this funding was transferred to the Texas Facilities Commission at the beginning of the 2014-2015 biennium. Projects associated with this funding are still in progress.

Ultimately last session's decision by Senator Duncan to completely separate deferred maintenance and day-to-day maintenance from the school resulted in the passage of SB 1457.

In the 18 months of collaborations between TFC and TSD, TFC's expenditures have come from funds transferred from TSD under SB 1457 which included TSD maintenance FTEs and operational and deferred maintenance dollars.

Though met with challenges throughout the transition, our impression was that we had settled into our current collaborative team approach, working together to do our best to implement the spirit of this new legislation.

Although we've experienced bumps along the way we have grown to work better together within the parameters of each agency's different systems, processes and procedures. Ultimately if we are not a team, we will not be able to achieve the legislative intent set out to do by separating these maintenance functions from the school.

Let me close by saying that we are grateful for the work of this committee and appreciate your consideration of TSD's exceptional items before you.

Now, I am happy to respond to any questions you might have. Thank you.

The Texas School for the Deaf has a need for increased funding for direct services to students, Additional Instructional and Support Staff, Funds for Purchase of Replacement School Buses and Vans, and Career Pathway Expansions. Our population of students with complex additional needs is growing and families and school districts across Texas are increasingly choosing TSD, as the placement of choice to provide a “free and appropriate public education” FAPE through the IEP to meet their child’s specialized needs.

Exceptional Item 1: *Additional Instructional and Support Staff*

Our students require many services and supports in order to access their school day successfully. Some of these supports involve specialized related service staff; others involve 1:1 support. Transition services for student’s post-graduation is a growing area at TSD and additional staff are needed to develop job skills and independent living skills.

There is also a growing need for more data driven accountability to implement HB 5. The positions of Academic Intervention and Database Manager will assist in this process.

We are requesting additional custodial support to provide for basic school minor maintenance and moving needs. The Communications Specialist position is requested to foster internal and external communications and coordinate existing services on the campus.



Elementary students work on math skills using iPads and manipulatives.

Position	FY 2016	FY 2017	FTEs
Occupational Therapist	50,000	50,000	0.88
Hispanic Family Liaison	45,000	45,000	1.00
Transition Teacher	45,000	45,000	0.88
Transition Job Coach	25,000	25,000	0.83
1:1 Teacher Aide	25,000	25,000	0.83
Database Administrator	50,000	50,000	1.00
0-3 Statewide Outreach Specialist	50,000	50,000	1.00
Academic Intervention Specialist	50,000	50,000	0.92
Custodian II (2 FTEs)	52,000	52,000	2.00
Communication Specialist	45,000	45,000	1.00
Total Per Year	437,000	437,000	10.4
Total for the Biennium	874,000		

Exceptional Item 2: *Replacement of School Buses and Vans*

The number of day students from Austin and surrounding districts enrolling at TSD is increasing. The results in an increased number of daily routes to and from school and a high use of vehicles for extra and co-curricular activities. Since transportation is a related service under IDEA it is difficult to impossible not to provide this service.



Vehicle	FY 2016	FY 2017	#
School Bus	100,000	100,000	2
8-Passenger Van	25,000	25,000	2
Total Per Year	125,000	125,000	4
Total for the Biennium	250,000		

Exceptional Item 3: *Career Pathway Expansions: Culinary Arts and Building Construction Trades*



Endorsement requirements under HB 5 require TSD to upgrade its Career Pathways to ensure a coordinated sequence of courses. Funding this exceptional item will expand our Culinary and Hospitality pathway and allow us to establish a pathway in Construction Trades.

Career Pathway	FY 2016	FY 2017
Culinary Arts	494,000	0
Constructions Trades	60,000	0
Total Per Year	554,000	0
Total for the Biennium	554,000	

TEXAS SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF

We are a "CHILD FIRST" school...

Our students are included in our accessible linguistic, academic and social community.



FAST



FACTS



Mission

- Provide comprehensive education and residential programs for deaf and hard of hearing students, ages zero through twenty-two, including those with multiple disabilities.
- Serve as a Statewide Educational Resource Center on Deafness providing outreach, technical assistance and short-term programs to parents, professionals and students across Texas. Texas Education Code §30.051 - §30.059

We Are a Unique State Agency

- We are the oldest continuously operating public school in Texas, 157 years on the same site in South Austin
- We provide public education to a 100% special education population
- Our services are a legal entitlement under IDEA for any student who meets our admission criteria
- We operate a six-day a week 24-hour program
- The campus where our students live and go to school is 67 acres and includes 48 buildings
- We support parents, families and professionals statewide with technical assistance, workshops, distance learning and short-term programs

Our Recent Accomplishments

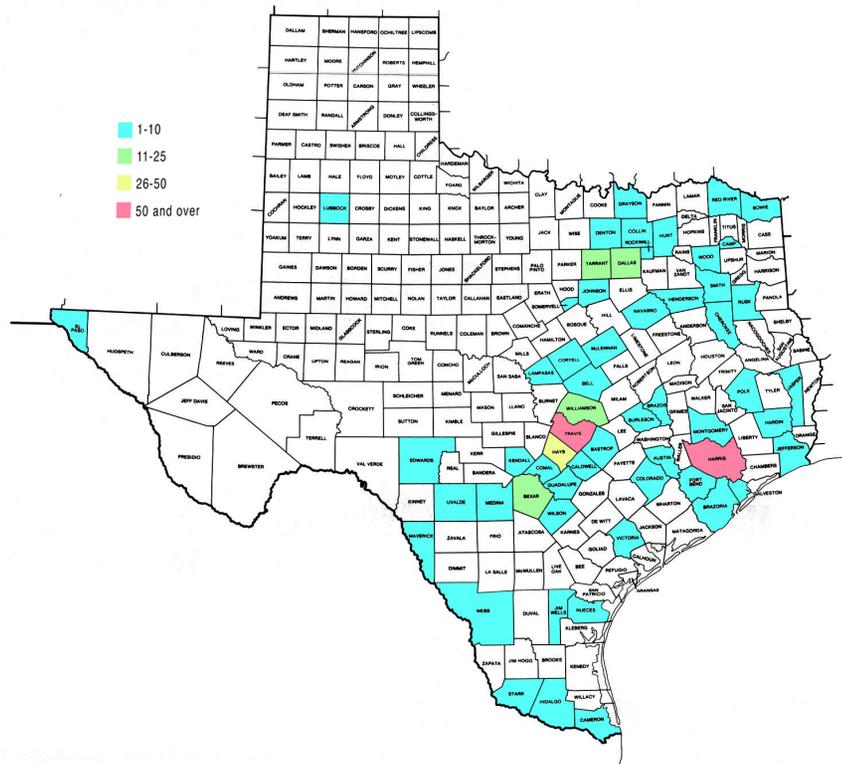
- 1040 Student served directly: 581 in regular school year programs and 459 in summer and short-term programs
- 99% of our customers rated our technical assistance as excellent
- Successfully transferred maintenance services of TSD to the Texas Facilities Commission
- Texas Education Agency Special Education Audit shows only 1 finding
- Recipient of a National Science Foundation DeafTEC grant to promote STEM related programs in collaboration with community colleges and industry

Our Challenges

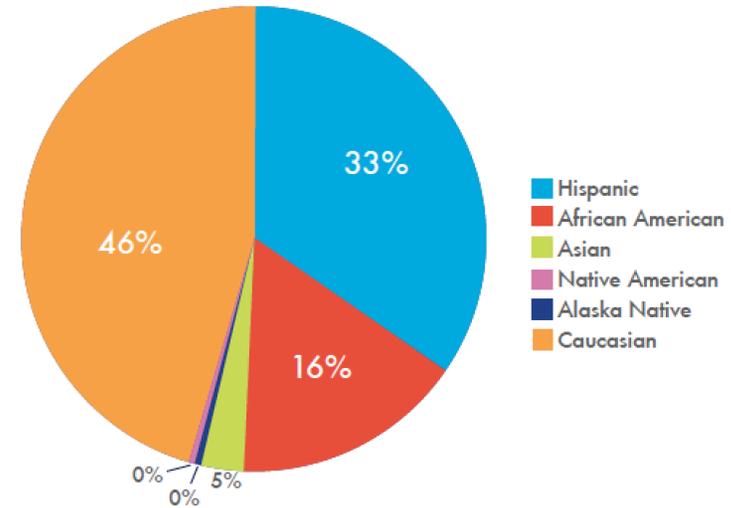
- All of our services are federally mandated under IDEA (We can't deny services based on lack of funding)
- Meeting all state and federal accountability standards with increasing student performance standards on the STAAR assessment
- Lack of funding for increased numbers of students with serious additional disabilities demanding specialized related services and more intense services
- Recruitment and retention of staff that are certified in deaf education, highly qualified in core subject areas and fluent in American Sign Language

School Program Highlights

- 67% of our 2014 graduates have been accepted in post-secondary education programs
- 54% of our students achieved proficiency or above on the STAAR Mathematics assessments
- 38% of our students achieved proficiency or above on the STAAR Reading/English Assessments
- High School students showed gains on End of Year Course Tests
- 17 students received CTE Mastery certificates in Automotive, Mill and Cabinetmaking and Culinary Arts
- Our athletic program yielded 71 All-American, All-State and All-District honors
- Our Fine Arts program entertained the local community with a Spring production of *Cinderella*



Student Ethnicity



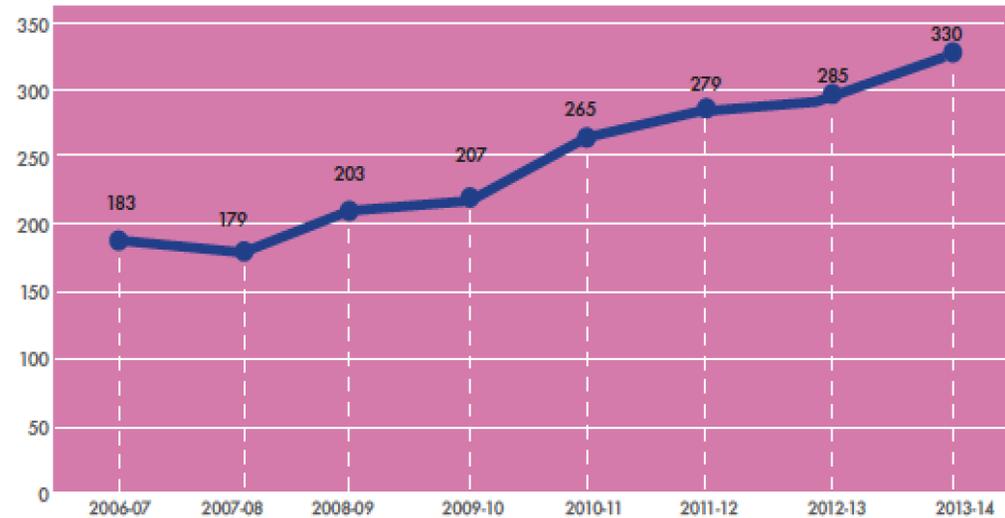
Outreach Program Highlights

- 1612 participants attended Family Events hosted by 13 Guides through the Texas Hands & Voices Guide By Your Side Program in 10 cities across Texas
- 489,797 digital contacts either through website, social media or newsletters of Guide By Your Side Program
- Over 5073 contacts were made with parents and professionals statewide of Guide By Your Side Program
- A 17% increase in statewide technical assistance to students, families, and service providers through: 13,527 documents shared, 2,010,901 web page visits
- Our week-long 24/7 Communication Skills Workshops helped 383 parents, teachers and interpreters get needed sign language skills
- Co-hosted the Statewide Conference on Education of the Deaf for 714 participants with 17 TSD Staff presentations

Our Student Demographics

- Our 581 on site students attend TSD from 65 counties and 133 different school districts
- 274 of our students reside in TSD dormitories while 307 attend as day students
- The average age of admission for our students is 14.1
- Of our 581 students 205 or 35% are over the age of 16
- 46% of our students are Caucasian, 33% Hispanic, 16% African American and 5% are Asian
- Only 52% of TSD students have a single eligibility of deafness. 22% have 2 disabilities and the remaining 26% have 3 or more disabilities
- 330 students have Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD), Emotional Disturbance (ED) or Behavior Disturbance, Vision Impairments, Autistic Spectrum Disorders, Other Health Impairments and 188 of these students require some type of Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). (This is an increase of 14% since the 12-13 School Year)

Number of High Risk High Need Students

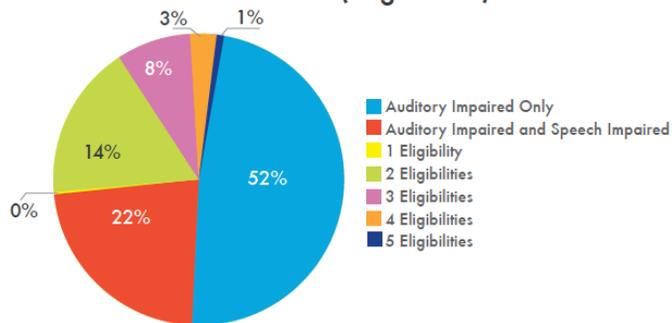


Student Enrollment in Comprehensive & Short-Term Programs

Regular School Year Programs	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Early Childhood Elementary	105	105	114	127	118	126	138	145	138	154	159
Special Needs	82	82	79	80	74	82	80	73	81	59	64
Middle School	78	60	70	68	80	91	108	96	106	104	98
High School	211	192	193	196	196	189	201	193	173	178	208
Transitional Returning students	11	21	21	17	25	26	25	34	28	55	52
TOTAL	487	460	477	488	492	514	552	541	526	550	581

Summer Programs	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14
Extended Year Services Programs	52	51	44	61	45	50	39	36	52	40	30
Summer School	73	67	124	92	94	115	242	169	248	203	66
Summer Enrollment Non-TSD	67	77	68	64	57	90	83	81	99	110	101
Early Childhood	16	12	6	13	12	14	16	14	16	23	17
Parent Infant	14	12	10	15	15	8	4	9	2	3	12
Other Short-Term Programs	44	6	84	121	123	151	131	210	145	179	233
TOTAL	199	148	268	302	289	338	432	438	461	445	459

Number of Disabilities (Eligibilities) 2013-2014



10-Year History of TSD Requests for Deferred Maintenance Dollars

GAA	Requested	Received	Summary
78th Legislature	2004- 2005	2004- 2005	
Capital Budget a. Repair or Rehabilitation of Buildings and Facilities 1. American with Disabilities Act Compliance Projects 2. Life Safety Code Projects 3. Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning Projects 4. Roof Repair and Replacement	913,500 464,000 187,000 <u>165,000</u> 1,729,500	0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA - Sidewalks and ramps • Life Safety Code – Fire Alarm Systems, Auditorium Sprinkler System • HVAC – Student Activity Center • Roof – Roof Repair on Clinger Gym, Roofs and Gutters on Cottages
79th Legislature	2006-2007	2006-2007	
Capital Budget a. Repair or Rehabilitation of Buildings and Facilities 1. American with Disabilities Act Compliance Projects 2. Life Safety Code Projects 3. Heating, Ventilating, and Air Conditioning Projects 4. Roof Repair and Replacement	913,500 464,000 187,000 <u>165,000</u> 1,729,500	913,500 464,000 187,000 <u>165,000</u> 1,729,500	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADA - Sidewalks and ramps • Life Safety Code – Fire Sprinkler Installation, Fire Notification System to Main Campus Panel • HVAC – Student Activity Center • Copper Roof Repair, Gym Floor Repair, Boiler Installation, Restroom and PE Offices Construction in Clinger Gym • Roofs and Gutters on Cottages • Campus Wide Elevator Repair • Parsons Facility Condition Assessment
80th Legislature	2008-2009	2008-2009	
D.1.3 Strategy: Facility Construction, Repair and Rehabilitation (Capital Budget)	2,227,303	2,227,303	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Plant Maintenance (Cooling Towers, New Gear Boxes, Interior Ceramic Rings) • Transformer Inspections and Maintenance • Plaster Pool Lining and Surge Tank Replacement in Natatorium • HVAC in Seeger Gym • Koen and Lewis Hall Window Replacements • Roof Repair on 10 Buildings • Fire Sprinkler System in Auditorium
81st Legislature	2010 - 2011	2010 - 2011	
D.1.3 Strategy: Facility Construction, Repair and Rehabilitation	2,227,303	2,227,303 (1,362,079)* 865,224	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transformer Maintenance and Repair • Central Plant Maintenance and Repair • <i>Energy Efficient Lighting*</i> • Expand North Bus Loading Zone

		*Part of the Mandatory 5% Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Install Sidewalk/Ramp Between Auditorium and MS Gym • <i>Fire Alarm System Repair and Upgrade</i> • <i>Emergency Communication Boards</i> • <i>Security Enhancements</i> • Boilers in Koen and Lewis Buildings • <i>Fan Coil Units Koen and Lewis Buildings</i> • Resurface Elementary Playground • Emergency Natural Gas Line Repair
82nd Legislature	2012 - 2013	2012 - 2013	
D.1.3 Strategy: Facility Construction, Repair and Rehabilitation	\$1,362,079	707,680	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replacement Fan Coil Units • <i>Fire Suppression Systems (Server and Records Storage Rooms)</i> • Central Plant Maintenance • Security Cameras (One at each entrance) • Roof Repairs • Parsons Facility Condition Assessment • Tile Flooring in Transitional Apartments • Re-plastering of Pool • Emergency West Loop Electrical Repair • Emergency HVAC Repair in Server Room • Emergency Mold Remediation Requiring New Air Handler System in Kleberg
83rd Legislature	2014 - 2015	2014 - 2015	
Contingency Rider for SB1457: Transfer Maintenance Responsibilities from Texas School for the Deaf to the Texas Facilities Commission <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. General Revenue Funds to TFC Base Rehab Funding. 2. Facility Construction, Repair and Rehabilitation Funds Transferred to TFC (Exceptional Item) 		707,680 <u>4,506,320</u> 5,214,000	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Campus Electrical Distribution System Repairs • <i>Recondition Boilers and Chillers in Central Plant</i> • <i>Water Line and Gas Line Repairs</i> • <i>Fire Alarm Panels</i> • <i>Fire Suppression Systems in Server and Records Room</i> • <i>Security System Upgrade</i> • <i>Roof Replacements and Repairs</i> • <i>Energy Efficient Residential Window and Lighting Replacement</i> • <i>Seeger Gym Bleachers</i> • <i>Replace Fan Coil Units in High School Dorms</i> • <i>Landscape Sprinkler System Repairs and Maintenance</i> • <i>Carpet/Flooring Replacement</i> • <i>Foundation Repair</i> • <i>Air Conditioning/Heating Systems</i>

**Italicized words indicate work not completed.*