Santa Clara County Office of Education

EMPLOYEE FEEDBACK SURVEY

SUMMARY REPORT

2023 - 2024

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Message from the County Superintendent

June 1, 2024

Dear Staff,

It is my pleasure to share the Santa Clara County Office of Education's *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey Summary Report.*

The contents of this report are organized in three sections, beginning with a *Year in Review* which features initiatives and resources that support employee well-being. In addition, this section celebrates employee accomplishments, highlighting some of the outstanding work completed this past year by Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) staff in their continued effort to transform education through their leadership, service, and advocacy.

Following the *Year in Review* section is a summary of findings from the *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey*. Findings from this survey are carefully reviewed and used alongside many other sources of feedback to inform the organizational strategies, resources, and decisions that impact employees and their families each and every day. This year, over 450 employees provided their response to various items on this survey, sharing their feedback on topics including employee engagement, health and safety, psychological safety, and job satisfaction.

Responses indicate that SCCOE employees acknowledge the excellent performance and commitment of their colleagues, have the resources needed to perform their role safely and effectively, and understand the alignment between their role and the strategic plan goals. A description of the current efforts to support employees and the opportunities to cultivate the career well-being of all staff members is provided in the concluding *Looking Ahead* section of this report.

I want to acknowledge all SCCOE staff for their hard work and commitment to serving Santa Clara County students and families. Together, we are united by our shared commitment to improving outcomes for all students. We are stronger together.

With gratitude,

Mary Ann Dewan

Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.
County Superintendent of Schools

Year in Review

The Year in Review section of the Santa Clara County Office of Education's (SCCOE) *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey Summary Report* spotlights employee resources, accomplishments, and updates from the past year. Details on employee health and wellness resources are included to connect staff to available opportunities. Organizational updates are included in the Year in Review, highlighting investments in employee safety and recent campus enhancements. Recent employee accomplishments are celebrated in this section, as are awards received by SCCOE staff for excelling in their work and serving the Santa Clara County community.

Supporting Employee Health and Wellness

The SCCOE is committed to promoting the health and well-being of staff. By creating resources catered to all aspects of wellness and opportunities for employees to invest in their personal and professional well-being, employees can feel empowered and engaged in their work.

Employee Health and Wellness Calendar

The SCCOE's staff wellness program, The Well, supports employee well-being in five key areas: career, social, community, financial, and physical. The Well provides resources, including activities, webinars, and events, that address each of these well-being areas. All employees are encouraged to access these resources in addition to other monthly resources and activities which are highlighted on the Employee Health and Wellness Calendar. This calendar provides SCCOE employees with up-to-date information on relevant, diverse, and holistic well-being resources in order to support and empower a healthy, energized, and engaged workforce.

Events listed on the calendar typically include activities such as Modern Health Circles, Kaiser Permanente health classes, Santa Clara County Federal Credit Union classes and resources, CalPERS, and CalSTRS webinars, and links to meditations. Other resources mentioned on the calendar may include Modern Health's *Activities & Recommendations*, a Community Resource Guide, kindness and gratitude challenges, monthly happiness/kindness calendars to print, as well as a Wellness Seminar Library of on-demand recordings. One of the newest wellness incentives is the SCCOE Walker Tracker Challenge, which employees are encouraged to join and participate in each month. In addition, the monthly Wellness Newsletter offers specific challenges related to strengths and each area of wellness: career, social, community, financial, and physical.

The calendar is updated each month and sent out to all employees on the 1st of the month, and can be accessed by visiting the SCCOE's The Well website.

Workforce Development and Organizational Culture Resources

In addition to the Employee Health and Wellness Calendar, the Workforce Development and Organizational Culture team engages and empowers SCCOE staff through a wide array of professional learning and wellness programs to sustain a responsive, agile, efficient, and healthy workforce through evidence-based research and best practices aligned with the SCCOE mission, vision, goals, and values. Anchored in adult learning theory, the Workforce Development and Organizational Culture team members are highly trained and skilled in facilitating, presenting, and coaching individuals and teams. These resources seek to create a supportive work environment where employees can thrive, and the organization can achieve its goals effectively.

Tuition Reimbursement Program

Education is a lifelong process which improves self-esteem, enhances work performance, and increases career mobility within the organization, thereby helping employees provide better service to the public. As part of the SCCOE's investment in employee career well-being, the SCCOE's tuition reimbursement program offers financial support to those interested in furthering their education. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, nearly 90 reimbursement applications were submitted across the organization's four bargaining units. This program provides permanent and tenured employees with the opportunity to apply for reimbursement for the cost of tuition, books, and other mandatory fees incurred while completing coursework or training outside of work hours. Maximum reimbursement amounts and specific coursework completion requirements vary by bargaining unit. Employees interested in pursuing additional coursework or education directly related to their position, duties or occupational area are encouraged to apply.

For more information, visit the Employee Tuition Reimbursement webpage.

Employee Benefits Hub

The implementation of the Employee Benefits Hub marks a significant milestone in efficient data management and transparent communication of employee benefits. This online portal offers easy access to administrative information by streamlining benefits data for both employees and their dependents. Designed through interdepartmental collaborative efforts and initially implemented in 2023 to support the Benefits team, this resource later evolved into the Employee Hub. As of 2024, this expansion now provides all employees with up-to-date information about their benefits selections.

Key features and benefits of the Employee Hub include:

- *Centralized Access to Benefits Information:* The Employee Hub serves as a centralized platform where employees can access all their benefits-related data in one place. This eliminates the need for employees to search through multiple sources or contact Personnel Services for information, saving time and streamlining the process.

- *Transparent Benefit Selections:* Employees can easily view their selected benefits, including details such as enrollment status and associated costs. This transparency allows employees to understand their benefits package better and make informed decisions about their coverage.
- *Visibility into Enrollment Status:* The Employee Hub improves visibility for benefit plan enrollees in order to help employees understand their coverage options and verify the status of covered dependents, if applicable.
- *Access to Benefit Summaries:* Employees can access detailed benefit summaries directly from the Employee Hub. These summaries provide comprehensive information about each benefit plan, including coverage details, exclusions, and plan documents.
- *Contact Information for Voluntary Plans:* The Employee Hub includes contact information for voluntary benefit plans, allowing employees to easily reach out to plan providers for questions or assistance. This enhances communication and support for employees who have additional voluntary coverage.
- *Direct Access to Benefits Specialist:* Employees also have direct access to contact information for their benefits specialist through the Employee Hub. This facilitates communication between employees and the benefits team, ensuring that employees can get the support they need regarding their benefits.
- *User-Friendly Interface:* The Employee Hub features a user-friendly interface that is easy to navigate, making it accessible for employees of all technical levels and ensuring efficiency in finding the information they need.

To access the Employee Hub please visit the Benefits Webpage and click here for instructions on how to access and navigate the portal.

Celebrating Employee Accomplishments

SCCOE employees live out the organization's values of service, innovation, and collaboration each day in pursuit of the mission of the SCCOE. In recognition of their commitment to service and the provision of quality support, this section spotlights select achievements and awards received by staff members and teams.

Champions For Innovation

The SCCOE's flagship program Champions for Leadership re-emerged in 2022-23 as Champions for Innovation with an intentional shift toward innovation-centered trainings that utilize the design thinking process. Each year, this program identifies current and future leaders from each division, matches them with a mentor, and provides them with the skills to effectively develop, lead, and execute projects with innovative approaches. The 2023-24 Champion for Innovation cohort consisted of 14 participants and 14 mentors from across

various divisions, with a diverse array of projects that helped to create dynamic experiences for students and develop valuable resources for colleagues and community partners. Throughout their time in the cohort, participants earned a Google Project Management certification and were partnered with a mentor from within the organization to support in the development of the project. In fall 2024, participants will present their projects at an SCCOE leadership team meeting in which they will share project plans, lessons they learned, and successes they experienced through the Champions for Innovation process.

More information about Champions for Innovation can be found in the Looking Ahead section of this report, or by visiting the Champions for Innovation webpage.

Awards

NSPRA Golden Achievement Award

Recognized as the Leader in School Communication, the National School Public Relations Association (NSPRA) has been honoring the best work in school communication for over 50 years. NSPRA's Golden Achievement Award is a prestigious recognition of exemplary work across all facets of school public relations, communication, marketing, and engagement. In 2023, the SCCOE was honored with the Golden Achievement Award for the *Kindergarten Readiness Campaign*. Launched by the SCCOE Resource & Referral (R&R) Program, the initiative aims to empower community partners to distribute timely information regarding the benefits of preparing children for kindergarten and the necessary steps for enrollment in kindergarten programs. The campaign utilizes several strategies, including providing toolkits for school communicators and distributing postcards that encourage caregivers to enroll their children in kindergarten.

Since the campaign's launch in summer 2023, the toolkit has been distributed to 51 community partners and postcards were included in dry goods bags delivered to 100,000 clients throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. In 2023, the SCCOE R&R received 1,001 referrals from individuals seeking information about early learning programs, and 840 requests for early education and childcare programs within Santa Clara County. These figures underscore the ongoing need within the community for early education resources and highlight the enduring impact of the R&R program in the county.

CalSPRA Award of Merit: Community Outreach and Public Engagement Initiative

The California School Public Relations Association (CalSPRA) is an award-winning, nationally recognized organization of education public relations professionals, administrators, and school personnel who have full- or

part-time responsibility for communications. In March 2024, the SCCOE was recognized during the CalSPRA award gala for its *Fentanyl Awareness Campaign*, which received an Award of Merit - Community Outreach and Public Engagement Initiative. As part of a collaborative effort between the SCCOE Youth Health & Wellness Department, the SCCOE Office of the Superintendent, and the Santa Clara County Fentanyl Working Group, the *Fentanyl Awareness Campaign* is designed to educate families, youth, and educators about the dangers of illicit fentanyl and to provide guidance on accessing life-saving resources. Through the campaign, over 1,298 boxes of naloxone were distributed to more than 100 schools in the county, and the SCCOE facilitated 43 trainings for local education agencies and the greater community in partnership with the County Behavioral Health Services Department and the Santa Clara County Opioid Overdose Prevention Project (SCOOPP).

Further, the SCCOE was a co-sponsor of State Legislation 10 (SB 10), commonly referred to as Melanie's Law and introduced in December 2022, as part of an ongoing effort to prevent the loss of young lives to opioid overdose. During the 2023-24 school year, the SCCOE shared its support and encouragement for its passage and signing by the California Governor. Melanie's Law encourages county offices of education to establish county working groups focused on fentanyl education in school settings. The law further mandates that schools serving students grades 7-12 develop comprehensive school safety plans that include protocols for responding to student opioid overdoses. This legislation was enacted in October 2023. Additional information and resources related to fentanyl awareness can be found on the SCCOE's Opioid and Naloxone Awareness webpage.

Employee Recognition

Falling For Wellness – Staff Appreciation & Wellness Event

In October 2023, the SCCOE hosted "Falling for Wellness – Staff Appreciation & Wellness Event" in appreciation of the dedicated efforts of all SCCOE employees over the past year. This was a two-part event, the first of which took place on October 13, 2023, at South County Annex, and the second on October 27, 2023, at Ridder Park. The event served as a platform for colleagues to connect, partake in various activities, and access wellness resources. Attendees enjoyed games such as cornhole and lawn bowling, massages, gratitude activities, snacks, and a raffle featuring over 70 prizes. Additionally, the wellness event featured a free flu vaccination clinic and blood drive, along with a resource fair for staff to pick up free items such as face masks, sanitizing wipes, COVID-19 rapid tests, and more.

Employees of the Month

Employees of the Santa Clara County Office of Education consistently demonstrate their commitment to their community as public servants. In recognition of their outstanding efforts to not only support the goals of the SCCOE but also in surpassing expectations, employees have the opportunity to nominate their peers for Employee of the Month recognition using the Employee of the Month Nomination Form. In 2023-24, the SCCOE recognized 10 staff members from five (5) different departments and three (3) school sites, with tenures ranging from three (3) to 24 years of service in the SCCOE.[1]

2023-2024 SCCOE Employees of the Month

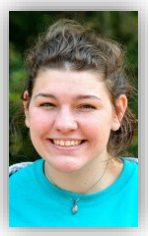
June 2023
Anthony Moreno
4 Years of Service
Custodian II
Walden West

November 2023
Leticia Garcia
20 Years of Service
Custodian II
General Services

December 2023
Minh Le
10 Years of Service
Paraeducator
Steinbeck Cluster

January 2024
Rodrick Ang
4 Years of Service
Product Manager
Technology and Data Services

February 2024
Bernadette O'Donnell
7 Years of Service
Student Services Specialist
Special Education



March 2024
Penelope Kirby
3 Years of Service
Outdoor Recreation Specialist
Walden West

April 2024
Juvencio Montiel
24 Years of Service
Lead Custodian
General Services

May 2024
William Baker
3 Years of Service
Applications System Analyst
Applications, Business and Dev.

[1] The SCCOE honored an Alternative Education employee in September 2023 and a Special Education employee in October 2023, who requested to not be publicly recognized.

Campus Enhancements

As part of the SCCOE's continued safety and security improvement strategy, the 2023-24 year saw several updates to SCCOE's campuses in efforts to enhance the safety and security of staff and students. These updates included upgrades to campus access systems and refreshers on safety and security protocols. Improving sustainability efforts was also a focus this past year, with the expansion of the growing gardens initiatives on SCCOE's work sites and increases in energy efficiency.

Growing Gardens Initiative

The SCCOE supports Santa Clara County schools in local prioritization of environmental literacy and the integration of environmental sustainability and climate-resilient practices. These environmental literacy initiatives create and expand opportunities to participate in school gardens, and support student participation in garden education and outdoor learning experiences. In 2024, the special education and early learning programs received small grants to build accessible garden spaces, ensuring that students have access to communal gardens and receive the benefits offered by these outdoor spaces. Moreover, increased staffing (i.e., garden specialists) at existing on-site gardens have facilitated community partnerships and provided crucial support for recent updates such as aquaponics and hydroponics projects that enhance gardens at SCCOE Court and Community schools.

To highlight the important work accomplished at these on-site gardens and share the best practices with the greater education community, the SCCOE Environmental Literacy and Facilities teams presented a workshop on culturally responsive garden education at the statewide Growing School Gardens Summit in March 2024. This workshop emphasized the importance of honoring diversity and inclusion and designing culturally relevant garden settings, curriculum, and pedagogy. As part of these continued efforts to build interconnectedness of employees, community partners, and school gardens, the ongoing Growing Gardens Community of Practice offers a place for school garden coordinators, community members, teachers, partners, volunteers, and other school garden personnel. This community of practice facilitates collaboration and networking and creates opportunities to share resources and best practices for designing and sustaining school gardens. To get involved or learn more about these environmental literacy and sustainability initiatives, please visit the Environmental Literacy & Sustainability webpage.

Car Charging Station Updates

As part of the SCCOE's ongoing commitment to sustainability, the electric vehicle charging refresh commenced during the 2023-24 year in an effort to increase the energy efficiency of these stations. Currently, the SCCOE has two dual electric vehicle (EV) charging stations designated for staff use. Both stations are located on the southside of the Ridder Park campus, and each can charge up to two vehicles at a time. However, these "Level 2" chargers can take several hours to fully charge an electric vehicle. To create more opportunities for staff members to charge their electric vehicles while on site, the SCCOE Facilities Department is in the process of upgrading the current stations to direct current fast charging (DCFC) stations which will reduce the charging time to less than one hour. This upgrade is anticipated for completion in summer of 2024.

Enhancing Site Safety and Security

The Santa Clara County Office of Education considers the safety and security of students and staff a top priority and is committed to providing a safe workplace for employees. In May 2023, the SCCOE implemented a Workplace Violence Prevention Plan to make work sites more secure. Since this plan was implemented, California Senate Bill 553 was signed into law. This new law contains additional requirements that must be incorporated into Workplace Violence Prevention Plan by July 1, 2024. To update this plan in accordance with these additional requirements, the SCCOE is proactively seeking feedback from all divisions through specialized Campus and Workplace Safety Planning Retreats that facilitate the active involvement of employees and authorized employee representatives.

Moreover, as part of the SCCOE's continued safety and security improvement strategy, additional access card readers were installed and current access card reader strategies were expanded at SCCOE sites during 2023-24. These additional card readers have been installed in areas such as building entrances, hallways, corridors, and entryways to other sensitive work areas, and are one of many added layers of safety and security. In combination with expanded access card strategies, card readers create a safer and more secure working environment while also expediting the time necessary for authorized staff to gain access to their respective buildings or work areas. Access cards can quickly be issued to appropriate personnel as needed and are easy to use at designated readers when accessing appropriate work locations. Moreover, if a card is lost or damaged, building access for the lost and damaged card can be revoked remotely, and a replacement card can be reissued seamlessly. To allow staff to quickly gain access to their respective work area or site, all SCCOE employees are provided with a photo badge-access card that they can scan at the card readers located throughout the building at their work site.

Recently, the SCCOE Personnel Services Division rolled out new ID badges for all SCCOE staff that features an updated design that aligns with the current SCCOE logo. In early 2024, employees were provided with instructions on how to replace their current ID badge-access card with a new ID badge-access card. These instructions included information about where to send an up-to-date picture, what to do with their current ID badge, and where to pick up their new ID badge-access card. In addition to the new ID badges, staff were required to attend mandatory safety training sessions which presented information on how to use access cards, security strategies for using access cards and readers, and best practices for keeping one's building and work area secure. The rollout of this badge refresh project is anticipated to be completed by August 2024. For additional information about how to obtain a new access card badge, employees can contact their Employment Services Specialist.

Survey Design, Data Collection Methodology, and Main Findings

This section contains a summary of the Santa Clara County Office of Education's *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey* data elements, collection procedures, and survey findings. The presentation of findings segment begins with a description of respondent demographics, followed by results summaries of traditional survey components (i.e., items that query employee engagement and satisfaction with career progression opportunities) and items designed to assess employee perceptions of psychological safety in the workplace.

Methodology

Survey Design

The *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey* consisted of single-selection, scale, multiple-selection, and open-response questions, allowing for the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. Survey items were grouped into six (6) distinct sections:

Demographics

Included four (4) items that asked participants to report their division, unit, primary job site, and the number of years they have been employed at the SCCOE.

Health and Safety

Included the following seven (7) items:

- One (1) agreement-scale item with seven (7) statements tied to various aspects of health and safety.
- Two (2) items that queried participant awareness and utilization of:
    - Five (5) safety resources and methods of distribution for important safety guidance and information.
    - Six (6) SCCOE staff wellness resources available through "The Well."
- One (1) follow-up item that asked participants to select the most effective routes of communication for any resources with which they were unfamiliar.
- One (1) item that asked participants to select all health and safety behaviors they regularly engage in.
- Two (2) open-ended items that provided participants with opportunities to share ideas for future wellness activities and additional feedback about health and safety in the workplace.

Employee Engagement

Included one (1) item that asked participants to rate their level of agreement with 21 statements that pertained to employee engagement.

Psychological Safety

Included one (1) item that asked participants to rate their level of agreement with nine (9) statements that pertained to psychological safety in the workplace.

Employee Experiences

Included 11 items that asked participants to report their level of agreement with 34 statements related to topics such as *Career Progression* and *Diversity and Inclusion*. An overview of *Employee Experiences* survey components is provided in *Appendix A*.

Additional Feedback

Included one (1) open-ended question that provided participants with the opportunity to share additional feedback regarding the survey and/or their experience(s) as SCCOE employees.

Analysis

This report contains findings from a descriptive analysis of *Demographic*, *Health & Safety*, *Employee Engagement,* and *Psychological Safety* items.[2] Responses to items in the *Employee Experiences* section were used to calculate standardized scores, then sorted to identify *Areas of Strength* (i.e., the three (3) domains rated highest by employees) and *Opportunities for Growth* (i.e., the three (3) domains rated lowest by employees). A descriptive analysis of items within the identified areas of strength and opportunities for growth was conducted. Qualitative data elements (i.e., responses to open-ended questions) were examined for common themes. Where relevant, common themes are included in this report as supplemental insights for quantitative findings.

Data Collection

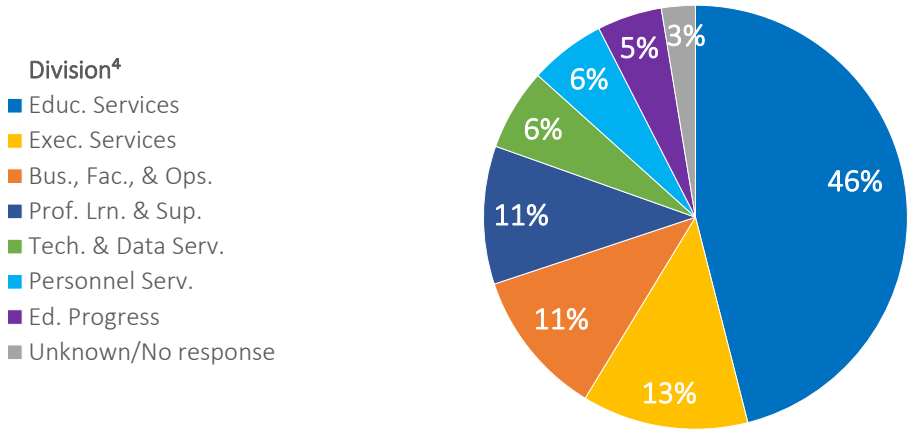
The *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey* was administered over a three-week period, from December 4 to December 22, 2023. SCCOE employees were informed of the data collection effort via an outreach message sent directly to employee email addresses. The outreach message included an easily accessible hyperlink for completing the survey. A hard copy version of the survey was made available for those who wished to complete the survey via paper-and-pencil. When requested, a hard copy form and a pre-addressed, stamped return envelope were mailed directly to staff. To maximize the number of responses received, reminders were provided in division meetings, Monday Memos, and through email notifications. These efforts resulted in the collection of responses from 465 SCCOE employees. Responses were collected from approximately 29.5% of staff employed at the SCCOE.[3]

Respondent Demographics

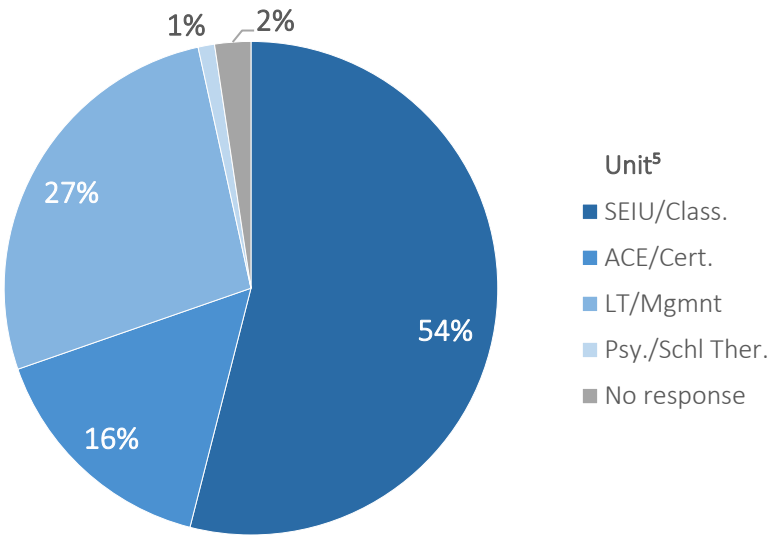
Graphical summaries and descriptions of self-reported respondent demographics and background information (division, primary job site, tenure, and unit) are provided below and on the following page.

Division

Of the SCCOE employees who responded to the survey, 46% of respondents self-reported that their division was the Educational Services Division. Thirteen percent (13%) were from the Executive Services Division. Approximately 11% of survey participants were from each of the Business, Facilities & Operations Division and Professional Learning & Support Division. The remaining respondents consisted of employees from the Technology & Data Services Division (6%), Personnel Services (6%), and the Educational Progress Division (5%).



[2] Response distributions are presented in graphs throughout this report. Graphs may not sum to 100 due to rounding.
[3] Response rate was calculated using personnel data as of collection window start date.
[4] **Abbreviations**: Educ. Services = Educational Services Division; Exec. Services = Executive Services Division; Bus., Fac., & Ops. = Business, Facilities & Operations Division; Prof. Lrn. & Sup. = Professional Learning and Support Division; Tech. & Data Serv. = Technology & Data Services Division; Personnel Serv. = Personnel Services Division; Ed. Prog. = Educational Progress Division.

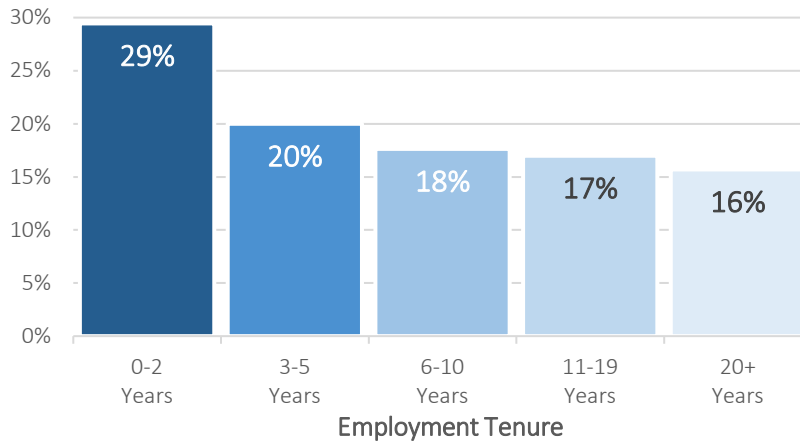


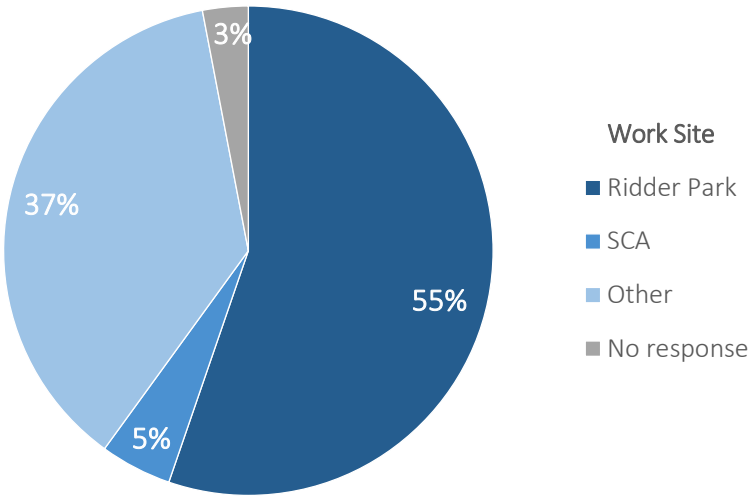
Unit

Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents were Classified staff or were from the SEIU unit. Over one-quarter of respondents (27%) were from Leadership Team or Management and 16% were ACE or Certificated staff. The remaining 1% of survey participants were Psychologists or School Therapists.

Employment Tenure

Nearly half (49%) of respondents have been employed at the SCCOE for five or fewer years. Eighteen percent (18%) reported tenures between six and 10 years. One-third of respondents (33%) have worked at the SCCOE for over 10 years.





Primary Work Site

Over half of the survey respondents (55%) identified Ridder Park as their main work site. Five percent (5%) of respondents selected South County Annex (SCA) as their primary work site. Thirty-seven percent (37%) of respondents reported working from another site.

[5] **Abbreviations:** SEIU/Class. = SEIU Unit and Classified Staff; ACE/Cert. = ACE Unit and Certified Staff; LT/Mgmnt = Leadership Team or Management; Psy/Schl. Ther. = Psychologist or School Therapist.

Main Findings

Health and Safety

Employee health and safety has been at the forefront of organizational efforts in recent years. Several initiatives have been prioritized to improve employee health and wellness through various resources and offerings. Many employee health and wellness resources can be found in The Well and are shared via communication channels, including the Monday Memo and direct emails from SCCOE leadership. Items in the *Health and Safety* section queried participant satisfaction, awareness, utilization, and feedback regarding safety in the workplace, communication of information, and wellness resources available to employees.

Most survey participants responded favorably to items concerning their safety in the workplace. The majority of respondents reported having the supplies (87%) and equipment (87%) needed to safely do their job. Eighty-five percent (85%) reported feeling comfortable going to their supervisor with safety concerns and sharing concerns regarding equipment and supplies needed to work safely. Among all survey respondents, 83% reported feeling safe at work.

In 2023-24, safety resources and materials have continued to be made available to all SCCOE employees. SCCOE staff can pick up easy-to-use rapid antigen test kits at Ridder Park and South County Annex. The SCCOE has kept employees up to date on health and safety recommendations related to preventing the spread of COVID-19 and other illnesses in the workplace. At the time of survey administration, 80% of respondents agreed that communications from SCCOE have been helpful in understanding what they are required to do in response to COVID-19.

Percent of Respondents Who Agree

87%

*"I have access to the **supplies** I need to do my job safely."*

87%

*"I have access to the **equipment** I need to do my job safely."*

85%

"I am comfortable reaching out to someone about my concerns regarding the equipment/supplies I need to do my work safely."

85%

"I feel comfortable going to my supervisor with any safety concern, no matter how small."

Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is the feeling of fulfillment and achievement that one experiences in their job when they know their work is worth doing. As an important indicator of job satisfaction, staff retention, and organizational success, employee engagement continues to be a priority of the SCCOE. The SCCOE's *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey* sought to measure this meaningful topic.

Over 20 items related to this key topic were featured in this section, including 11 items in alignment with Gallup's Q^{12} Survey. Most respondents agreed with statements conveying enthusiasm for their role, relationships with colleagues, and the SCCOE as an employer. For example, most employees reported feeling proud to tell people where they work and feeling valued by their colleagues and supervisor. Moreover, 97% of respondents indicated that they are committed to doing quality work, and 80% agreed with the statement "My work gives me the opportunity to do what I do best every day." Items related to career growth and development were favored, with 77% of survey participants reporting being provided with opportunities to learn and grow and 75% having conversations with their supervisor about performance and progress. General job satisfaction was queried, with 77% of respondents generally looking forward to work and 79% agreeing with the statement "Overall, I am satisfied with my job at the SCCOE." Response distributions for each of the employee engagement items can be found in *Appendix B*.

Percent of Respondents Who Agree

97%	86%	82%
"I am committed to doing quality work."	*"I have a friend at work."*	*"My opinion matters to my colleagues/coworkers."*

Psychological Safety

Psychological safety refers to the extent to which employees possess a clear understanding of the expectations of their role, feel that their skills and talents are valued by their colleagues, and have opportunities to leverage their unique strengths. Psychological safety also includes the comfort employees feel when asking questions, seeking assistance from colleagues, and addressing workplace challenges.

To aid the SCCOE's efforts to foster a positive, inclusive, and supportive work environment for all staff, the SCCOE's *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey* included nine items related to psychological safety. These items are in alignment with conceptual models of psychological safety. Responses to items on this scale serve as a guide for actionable strategies.

Nearly all survey respondents reported having a clear understanding of the expectations of their role (92%). Most agreed that their work allows them to utilize their unique skills and talents (85%). Staff who responded to the survey also commonly reported that they find it easy to ask coworkers for assistance (84%) and expressed that they feel accepted for who they are and included by their coworkers (83%). Over three-quarters of respondents (78%) reported feeling that their coworkers value their unique skills and talents, and the same proportion (78%) reported feeling comfortable calling attention to problems or tough issues. Seventy-four percent (74%) of participating staff conveyed that when something goes wrong in their department, their colleagues work as a team to find the systemic cause. Approximately two-thirds (67%) of staff respondents felt that none of their colleagues would deliberately undermine their efforts, and 65% reported that in their department, outcomes are valued more than outputs or inputs. Item response distributions for each psychological safety item are depicted below.

"Overall, I am satisfied with the work I do and the committed, passionate people I work with."

Employee Experiences

The *Employee Feedback Survey* is one of many mechanisms the SCCOE utilizes to collect data on employee experiences. Other data collection tools include a series of surveys for new employees regarding their onboarding experience as well as an exit survey for employees who depart from the SCCOE. Each of these data sources provide helpful information that the SCCOE examines in order to inform its efforts in creating a positive experience for all SCCOE employees. The *Employee Feedback Survey* is designed to comprehensively assess the experiences of employees on an annual basis. Eleven (11) key domains tied to job satisfaction and other relevant components of engagement, as measured by the *Employee Experiences* items, include topics such as communication, diversity and inclusion, career progression, and interactions with colleagues and supervisors. This section of the report includes a summary of *Areas of Strength* (i.e., the three (3) *Employee Experiences* domains rated highest by employees) and *Opportunities for Growth* (i.e., the three (3) domains rated lowest by employees).

"Thank you, SCCOE, for the great work you do to address and continue to sharpen our saw around psychological safety, diversity, equity, and inclusion."

Areas of Strength

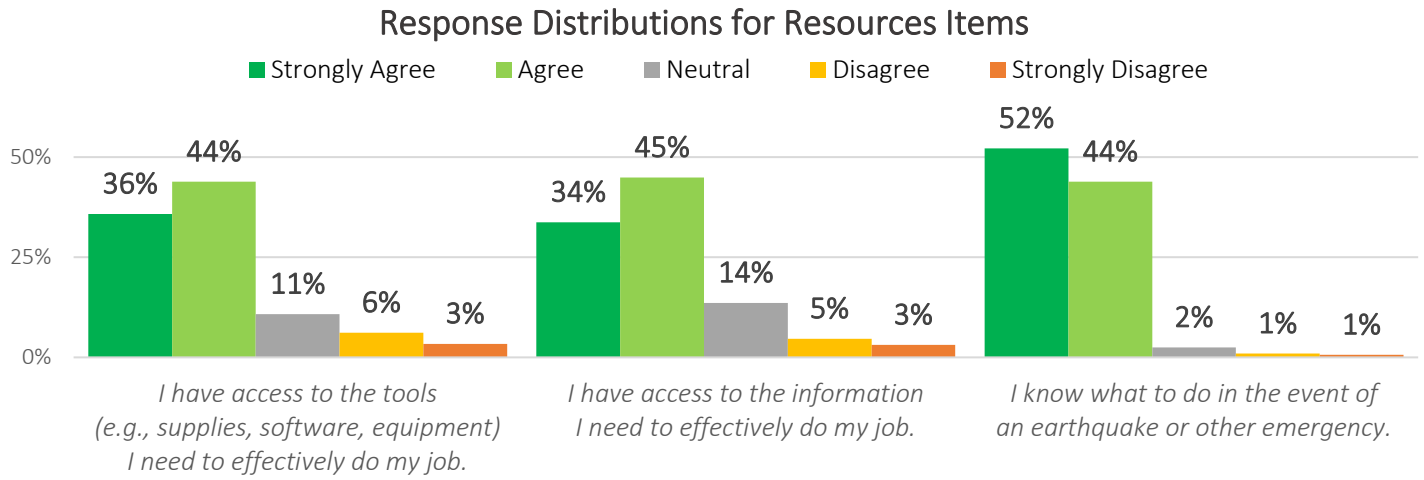
The domains *Resources, Recognition*, and *Strategy Alignment* were rated the most favorably by respondents. These three areas were also identified as the areas of strength in the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 *Employee Feedback Survey Summary Reports*. The average percent of agreeable responses for all three areas of strength this year were higher than the results of the *2022-2023 Employee Feedback Survey*.

Weighted Percent of Respondents Who Agree

Resources	*Recognition*	*Strategy Alignment*
85%	83%	81%

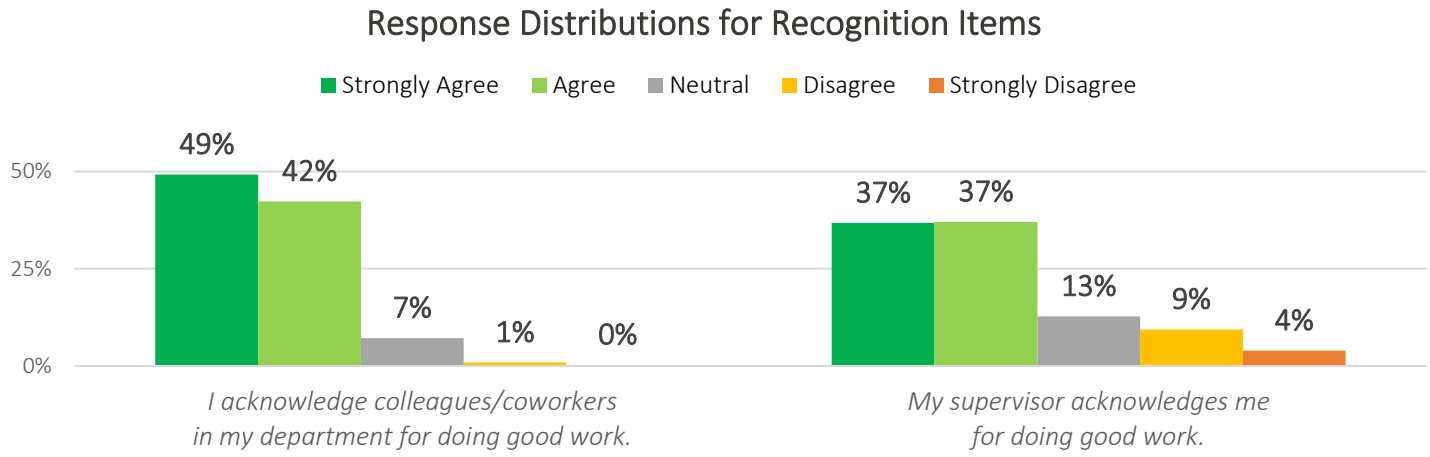
Resources

Resources refer to the information and tools (e.g., supplies, software, equipment) needed by employees to do their jobs safely and effectively. Nearly all respondents (96%) reported that they know what to do in the event of an earthquake or other emergency. Information on emergency procedures, including the Staff Emergency Preparedness Guide, can be accessed through the SCCOE Intranet. In addition to safety resources, most respondents reported that they have access to the tools (80%) and information (79%) needed to effectively do their job. Employees are encouraged to reach out to their supervisors regarding their specific supply and equipment needs. If applicable, employees may submit a ticket to the SCCOE Service Portal.



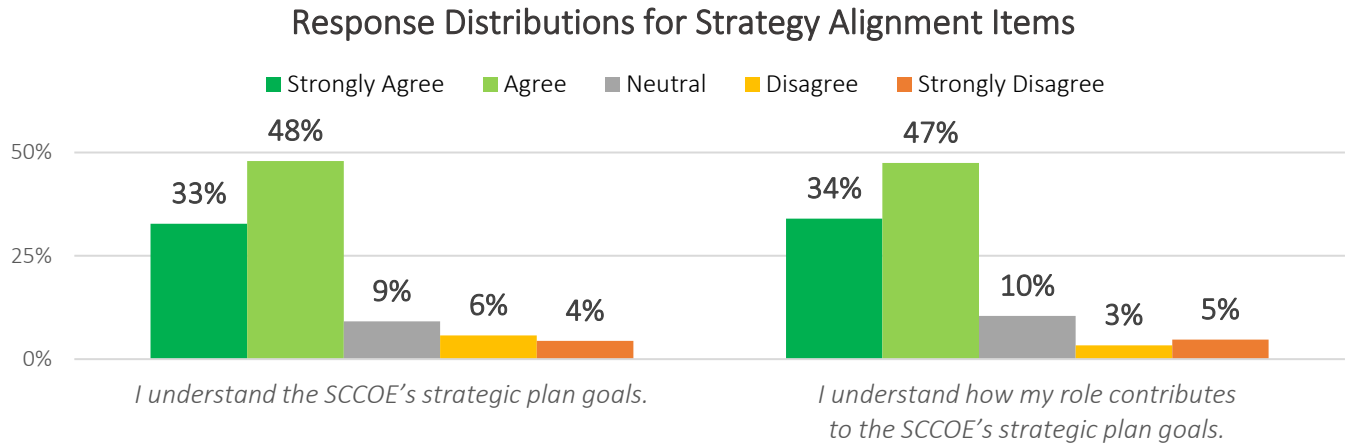
Recognition

The *Employee Feedback Survey* includes two items that measure staff perceptions of *Recognition*, the acknowledgement employees receive for their performance from colleagues and supervisors. Approximately 91% of respondents reported that they acknowledge the contributions and efforts of coworkers in their department. Nearly three-fourths (74%) of respondents said their supervisor acknowledges them for doing good work. All employees are encouraged to commend their fellow colleagues' excellent work, achievements, and commitment to SCCOE values and goals. This can be done informally or via acknowledgements such as the SCCOE Living Our Values Everyday (LOVE) Notes and Employee of the Month Nominations.



Strategy Alignment

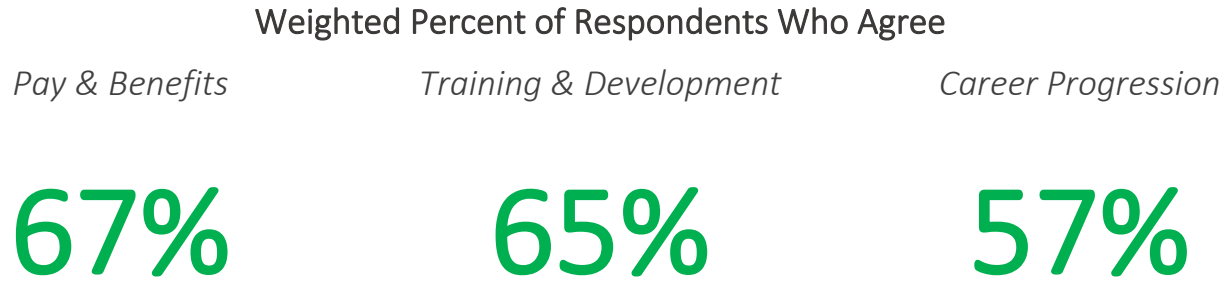
Strategy Alignment is the extent to which employees are aware of the organization's strategic plan and can align their work and contributions with the strategic plan. Guided by the principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and partnership, the SCCOE's strategic plan, "Investing for Impact," aims to transform education through leadership, service, and advocacy. The majority of respondents indicated that they understand the SCCOE's goals (81%) and understand how their role contributes to achieving those goals (81%).



> *"The SCCOE is a great place to work. I feel like I have great and supportive people around me who help me grow and are great to work with."*

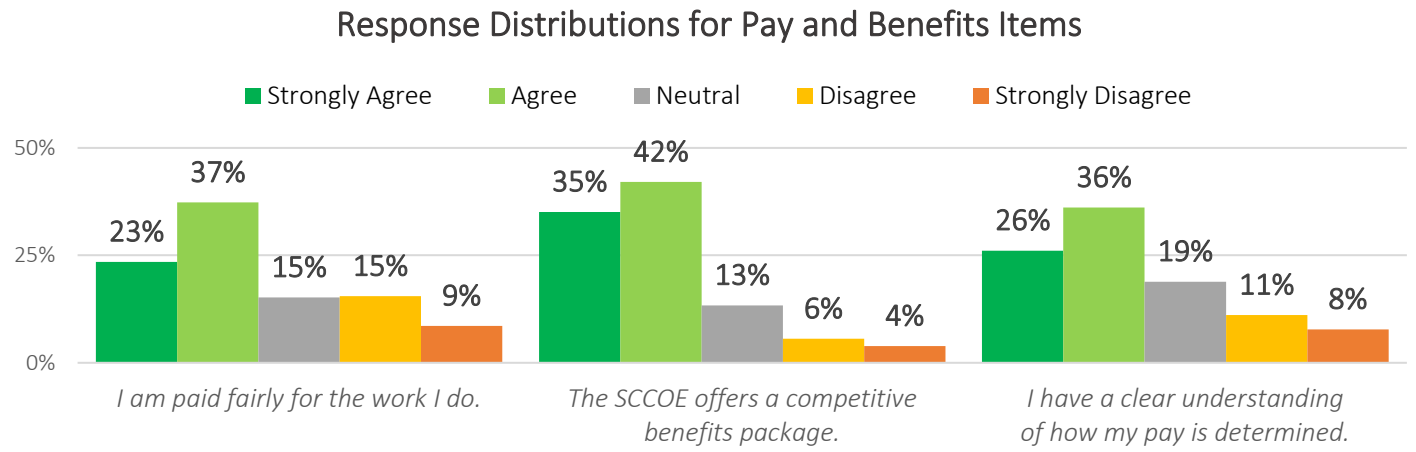
Opportunities for Growth

The domains *Career Progression, Training and Development*, and *Pay and Benefits* were rated the least favorably by SCCOE staff who responded to the survey. These areas are consistent with those noted on the *2022-2023 Employee Feedback Survey Summary Report*. The average percent of agreeable responses for all three areas for growth this year were higher than the results of the *2022-2023 Employee Feedback Survey*.



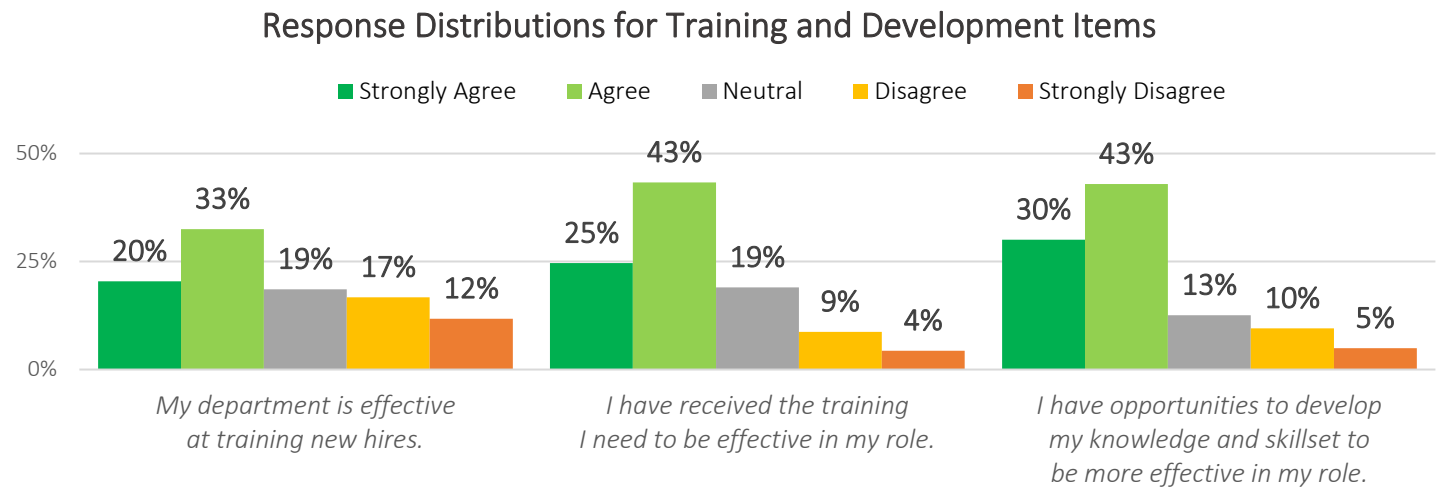
Pay and Benefits

The *Employee Feedback Survey* queries staff feedback regarding *Pay and Benefits* with three items. Over three-quarters (77%) of respondents felt that the SCCOE offered a competitive benefits package. Recently, newly expanded health benefits were made available to all SCCOE employees and their families, and salary increases were established. Sixty-two percent (62%) reported having a clear understanding of how their pay was determined, and approximately 60% reported feeling that they were paid fairly for the work they do.



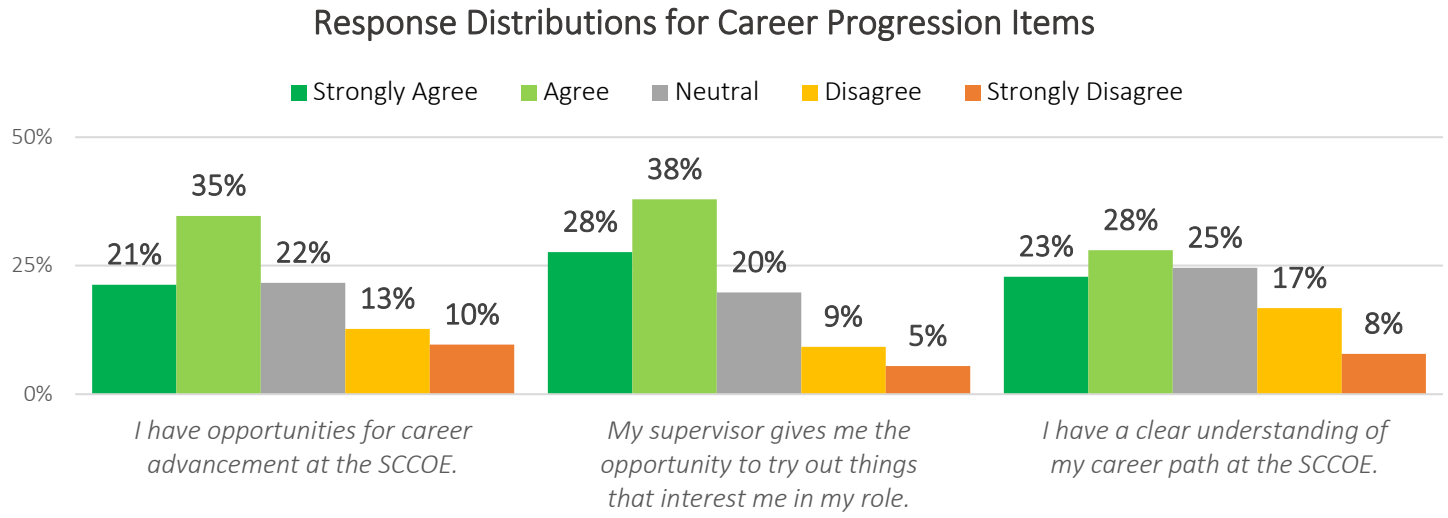
Training and Development

Training and Development items measure the extent to which employees feel they are adequately trained for their jobs or are given opportunities for further professional growth. Seventy-three percent (73%) of participants reported having opportunities to develop both knowledge and skillsets and approximately two-thirds (68%) of respondents reported that they received the training necessary to be effective in their role. However, only 53% felt their department is effective when it comes to training new hires.



Career Progression

Career Progression items measure staff perceptions of opportunities for professional growth and advancement. Sixty-six percent (66%) of participants felt their supervisors provide opportunities for them to experiment in their role. Fifty-six percent (56%) of respondents indicated they have opportunities for career advancement and 51% felt that they have a clear understanding of their career path at the SCCOE.



Summary

The SCCOE Strategic Planning Committee reviews data collected through the administration of the *Employee Feedback Survey* every year. Findings and insights drawn from the survey results are used to inform strategic planning efforts, workforce development, and the development of policies and practices that impact employee job satisfaction, engagement, and performance. Findings from the *Employee Engagement* items indicate that survey participants feel satisfied with their job and are committed to doing quality work. Responses to the *Employee Experiences* section indicate that employees feel they have the resources and information needed to do their work effectively, that employees acknowledge the efforts of their colleagues, and that they understand how their work contributes to the SCCOE's Strategic Plan goals. Further, the findings within the *Psychological Safety* responses indicate that respondents understand the expectations of their role, are comfortable asking colleagues for assistance, and feel that their work allows them to utilize their unique talents. Findings from the *2023-2024 Employee Feedback Survey* are in alignment with the SCCOE's continued efforts to provide employees with robust personal wellness resources and to engage staff in professional growth opportunities.

Looking Ahead

By investing in strengths-based approaches that fully engage employees in all aspects of their work, the SCCOE cultivates a workforce that is aligned with the SCCOE's mission of serving, inspiring, and promoting student and public school success. The Looking Ahead section addresses identified opportunities for growth and highlights relevant resources and opportunities that seek to support employees throughout their work.

Developing Employees' Strengths

The SCCOE invests in the growth and development of teams and individual employees through strengths-based approaches that support the unique and dynamic needs of the diverse projects and programs that they support. As part of the employee onboarding process, all staff complete the CliftonStrengths Assessment which identifies individuals' top talent "themes" from among the 34 themes. Each theme is grouped into one of four (4) categories: Strategic Thinking, Relationship Building, Influencing, and Executing.

An employee's strengths are the unique qualities they bring to the organization. Both individual employees and teams are encouraged to seek out strengths-based coaching offered through the team of Gallup-certified Strengths Coaches within the Workforce Development and Organizational Culture department. The strategies utilized by Strengths Coaches are designed to assist employees in discovering how to apply their strengths to become more effective in their work. These services are offered to all SCCOE employees and are rooted in the belief that individuals and teams are more likely to thrive, grow, and achieve their goals when they understand and build upon their unique strengths.

Individual Strengths Coaching

Individual strengths-based coaching is a coaching approach that focuses on helping individuals with identifying and embracing their talents in ways that are important to them. By developing and cultivating new ways to apply an individual's identified strengths within their role, individual coaching creates opportunities for individual employees to gain insights into how to best apply those strengths in their work. Coaching can take place as standalone sessions or as part of an ongoing coaching process. SCCOE employees can request Strengths Coaching by filling out the Request to Collaborate Form.

Strengths Team Building

Teams that can identify and utilize the strengths of their individual members are better equipped to maximize the impact of their collaborative efforts. Defining the ways in which teams collaborate most effectively and understanding how each team member's strengths uniquely contribute to this collaborative effort is vital to the success of both the team and the individuals who comprise the team. When team members value each other's strengths, team cohesion improves and members are more likely to effectively relate to one another, avoid conflicts, and create positive dialogue.

The SCCOE promotes the efforts of its teams through customized strengths-based team building resources. Gallup-certified coaches within the Workforce Development and Organizational Culture Department assist teams

as they discover their strengths and the ways in which these strengths show up in their work. Coaches facilitate the use of strengths-based strategies to open up opportunities for teams to develop a common language and vocabulary, improve communication, optimize conversations, and increase collaboration. Customized Strengths-based team building collaborations and other professional development supports are available as standalone sessions or part of a larger series. Interested employees and teams can request these services by filling out the Request to Collaborate Form.

Leadership Courses & Coaching

Leaders within the SCCOE are committed to continuous growth and driving meaningful change. The SCCOE engages and empowers its leaders through professional learning and coaching supports that offer focused explorations of practical techniques and strategies that are essential for effective organizational management. SCCOE leaders can access tailored professional learning opportunities such as leadership development courses, managerial training sessions, and coaching sessions. Brief descriptions of these ongoing and upcoming opportunities are provided below.

Leadership Development Course: Beginning in July 2024, new and seasoned leaders alike are invited to attend "Elevate: The Art of Leading," a seven-session course offered to leaders who are seeking to elevate their effectiveness and impact. This series provides practical insights and actionable strategies while guiding attendees through interactive discussions, real-world case studies, and personalized feedback. Participants will be given opportunities to delve deep into advanced leadership principles, refine crucial skills for navigating complex challenges, master strategic decision-making, and learn to lead with authenticity.

Leadership Managerial Training Sessions: Through interactive sessions and real-world case studies, participants of management training sessions learn how to streamline processes, motivate teams, incorporate wellness into the workplace, and improve their understanding of organizational policy, procedures, processes, and best practices. Practical skills and information are also incorporated into training sessions for topics such as leaves of absence, evaluations, reasonable accommodations, complaints and investigations, and workplace safety. Interested leaders are encouraged to register for upcoming sessions by completing this form.

Leadership Coaching: Personalized coaching sessions for leaders are available through the Workforce Development and Organizational Culture team. Certified coaches facilitate professional dialogue and development, enabling leaders to cultivate their strengths and develop Strengths-based strategies in their professional role. By guiding leaders in exploring approaches to navigate team dynamics effectively, workforce team members offer valuable thought partnerships to leaders who are actively navigating professional challenges. Depending on the individual leader and their goals, leadership coaching typically occurs over a three- to twelve-month period. Requests for Leadership Coaching can be submitted by filling out the Request to Collaborate Form.

"[SCCOE] is an excellent organization that is diverse and allow[s] employees to grow in their field of expertise."

Investing in Career Progression

Recognizing the importance and value of facilitating professional growth and career well-being, the SCCOE invests in creating opportunities for employees seeking to progress in their career and develop their capacity for leadership and innovation. Select opportunities available to all employees are described below.

Stepping Into Leadership Training Opportunity

The "Stepping into Leadership" class seeks to empower employees looking to move into a leadership position. This resource is designed to equip individuals with the knowledge and mindset that are fundamental to leadership roles. Participants explore key concepts such as team motivation, effective communication, decision-making strategies, and conflict resolution skills. Through interactive workshops, case studies, and role-playing exercises, attendees develop confidence, self-awareness, and strategies to inspire them in their career. Practical tips for networking, finding mentors, securing references, and writing resumes and cover letters are also addressed. The next session will be available in Fall 2024.

Champions for Innovation

The Champions for Innovation (CFI) program aims to cultivate leaders from within the organization and to help staff reach their full potential. Each year, a new cohort grows into a community of innovation while facilitating opportunities for individual cohort members to concentrate their efforts on self-selected projects that are relevant to their current professional role, engage in "design thinking" strategies that allow them to execute dynamic solutions for complex issues, and work toward a project management certificate that supports their project development and completion.

The recruitment process begins in May for those wishing to participate in the upcoming cohort of the following year. At the start of the recruitment period, nominees for the program may be self-nominated or nominated by another employee including their supervisor, direct report, colleague or any other SCCOE staff member. Permanent employees (certificated and classified) including existing managers, teachers, office staff, classroom staff, and service workers are eligible to participate. The program selection process includes a statement of interest and onboarding conversation. Applicants are interviewed by the Workforce Development team to gather relevant information about the applicant, including details about their professional goals, what they value in a mentor, and the type of project they are interested in starting or continuing.

In August, the recruitment process ends, the nomination window is closed for the cohort of that respective year, and applicants are notified about their participation in the cohort. New cohort members are then paired with a mentor for the duration of the program. Prospective mentors demonstrate strengths across SCCOE leadership

team competencies and typically hold leadership team roles. Generally, these mentors are identified and selected based on availability, the preferences of the participants, and the types of projects that participants are developing. In an effort to create cross-divisional ties, participants are intentionally paired with a mentor outside of their division to facilitate opportunities for both participants and mentors to gain insights about other aspects of the SCCOE. After cohort members are paired with a mentor, participants begin designing their projects at the kick-off orientation in September and subsequently attend monthly virtual and in-person lunch sessions to connect with CFI colleagues, share their learnings, and gather feedback. The program concludes the following August with a project showcase.

To learn more about how to participate in the upcoming 2024-25 cohort of Champions for Innovation, visit the Champions for Innovation webpage.

Virtual Career Development Sessions

Virtual career development sessions offer staff members immersive opportunities to invest in their professional growth via remote locations to accommodate the diverse accessibility needs of participants. Through a series of interactive virtual sessions, participants will explore diverse topics crucial for career advancement, including goal setting, personal branding, effective communication, and leadership skills. Led by the Workforce Development and Organizational Culture team and seasoned professionals, virtual career development sessions combine engaging presentations, interactive workshops, and networking opportunities to empower employees at every stage of their career. This resource aims to equip employees with a wide array of the tools, insights, and support necessary to thrive in any career stage. Interested employees can attend virtual career development sessions beginning in Fall 2024.

Step into an Education Career

Twice each year, the SCCOE hosts Step into an Education Career (formerly Step into Teaching), a resource available to all SCCOE employees and members of the public who wish to learn about, pursue, or continue professional careers in the field of education, regardless of their current career or student status. Partners from universities, community colleges, teaching programs, financial aid and credential specialists are available during the event to provide personalized information to the attendees and connect them with resources on various career and credential pathways.

Upcoming Step into an Education Career events have been expanded to include information on CTE credential pathways, along with early learning and preschool educator pathways to meet the increasing need for early education staff. The next events will be held on Saturday, August 17, 2024, and Saturday, February 8, 2025. To learn more, please visit the Step into an Education Career page on the SCCOE website.

Educator Preparation Program

SCCOE employees have diverse opportunities for professional growth and development through pathways offered by the Educator Preparation Programs (EPP) Department. The Behavioral and Mental Health Pathways, the Early Learning Pathways, and the Teaching and Administrator Credential Pathways offer several programs that support participants through financial assistance such as scholarships and coaching while they pursue credentials and engage in continuing education opportunities.

In the Behavioral and Mental Health Pathways, aspiring school counselors and social workers can pursue a Master of Social Work (MSW) with a Pupil Personnel Services Credential (PPSC) through a partnership with San Jose State University School of Social Work, with a substantial $59,000 scholarship available. Post-master's PPSC scholarships of $20,000 and $30,000 are available for newly recruited or currently employed, fully credentialed school counselors and school social workers. Support for licensure as a Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) is provided through the School-Based Mental Health (SBMH) initiative. Additionally, the Wellness Coach Certification prepares participants to play a role in improving the mental health and well-being of children and youth in California, and participants of the Human Service Assistant Apprenticeship can earn their Associate of Arts Degree (AA) and work alongside school social workers, counselors, and psychologists to provide comprehensive care for the mental health and well-being of children and youth in California.

In Early Learning Pathways, SCCOE offers the Early Education Teacher Development Grant to expand access to classroom-based prekindergarten programs at local educational agencies and to plan for the increased number of teachers needed to fully implement Universal PreKindergarten (UPK). Financial aid is also available for enrolling in Early Childhood Education (ECE) or Child Development (CD) coursework and for those pursuing bachelor's degrees and teaching credentials.

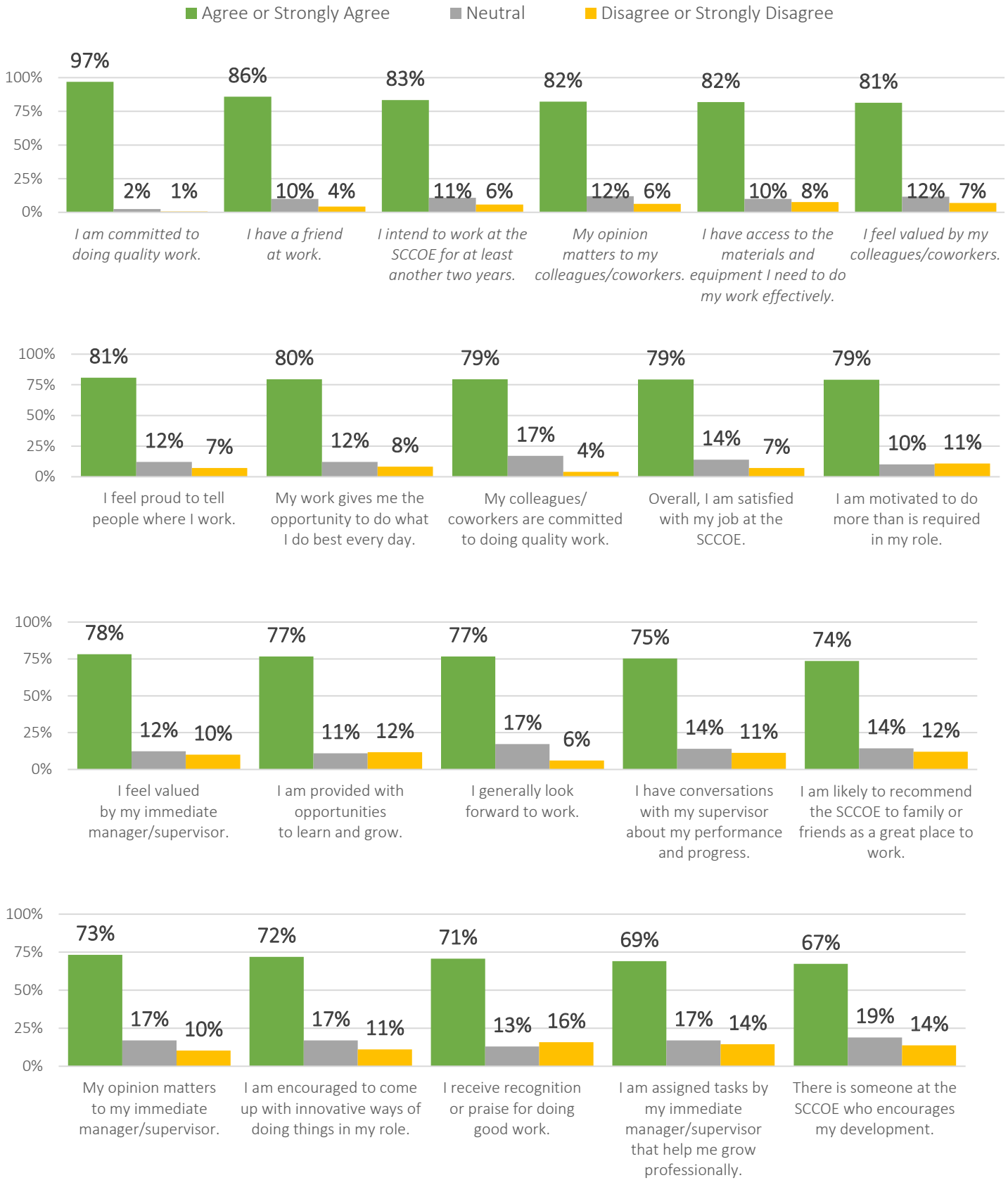
The Teaching and Administrator Credential Pathways includes programs such as Educator Preparation for an Inclusive Classroom (EPIC) and the Multiple Subject Credential Program, both fully online with evening and weekend classes. Moreover, current and former classified employees of Santa Clara County Office of Education are eligible to participate in the California Classified School Employee Teacher Credentialing Program. This program aims to address the state's teacher shortage in STEM, special education, bilingual education, and transitional kindergarten. Eligible participants receive financial assistance for degree and credentialing-related expenses such as tuition, fees, books, and examination costs; academic guidance; and other forms of individualized support to help them complete their undergraduate education, teacher preparation program, and transition to becoming credentialed teachers. For more details about each of these programs, including instructions, commitment requirements, and contact information, please visit the Educator Preparation Programs webpage or email epp@sccoe.org to learn more.

Appendix A: Employee Experience Domains

Domain	*Number of Items*	*Number of Respondents*	*Weighted Percent of **Agree** and **Strongly Agree** Responses*	*Weighted Percent of **Neither Agree nor Disagree** Responses*	*Weighted Percent of **Disagree** and **Strongly Disagree** Responses*
Resources	3	324	85%	9%	6%
Recognition	2	334	83%	10%	7%
Strategy Alignment	2	298	81%	10%	9%
Communication	3	341	76%	12%	11%
Collaboration	4	328	74%	14%	12%
Supportive Management	5	334	72%	14%	14%
Diversity & Inclusion	2	308	69%	15%	16%
Focus on Community Partners	4	271	67%	20%	12%
Pay & Benefits	3	364	67%	16%	17%
Training & Development	3	328	65%	17%	19%
Career Progression	3	299	57%	22%	21%

***Note**: Agreement distributions may not sum to 100% due to rounding.*

Appendix B: Employee Engagement Item Distributions



***Note**: Response distributions may not sum to 100% due to rounding.*

Santa Clara County Office of Education

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