

**Be a Premier Employer Action Plan**  
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Santa Clara County  Office of Education

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# Introduction

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Research indicates we are most effective and happy when we are actively engaged in purposeful work, continue to become more effective in our work practice, and connect with our coworkers (Hallowell, 2011; Pink, 2010). In Silicon Valley, where the cost of living continues to rise and the “war for talent” is real, recruiting and retaining outstanding employees who are passionate about our work is a continual challenge. As such, the focus on Goal 3: *Be a Premier Employer* is imperative to the success of the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) and requires focused, intentional efforts to build and maintain a healthy organization.

From an organizational development perspective, being a premier employer encompasses all aspects of the Office and engages the members of the SCCOE in an intentional, planned, and sustained improvement effort (Schmuck, Bell, & Bell, 2012). By focusing on organizational structures and procedures, as well as the underlying norms that define, support, and perpetuate them from the lens of a premier employer, this plan is designed to empower members to assess, diagnose, and transform the organization (Schmuck, et al., 2012). Education thought leader Michael Fullan (2011) challenged organizations to instill and reinforce a collaborative culture that allows employees to collectively engage in work that is meaningful and rewarding. This plan is designed to meet Fullan’s challenge.

SCCOE’s *Be a Premier Employer* action plan is part of the Office’s strategic plan, *Framing Our Future*, and a tool to communicate priorities. The items in the action plan are not intended to be a comprehensive list of all services and activities. Rather, they express specific direction for the advancement and improvement of the SCCOE over the next three to five years.

The action planning process, for the *Be a Premier Employer* goal, is key to continuous improvement and supports:

- Relying on data to make decisions;
- Anticipating and responding to stakeholder needs;
- Developing a compelling vision for the future; and
- Agreeing on priorities.

The *Be a Premier Employer* action plan includes input from the 2016 employee satisfaction survey, employee exit interviews from this fiscal year, and specific staff groups including the Superintendent’s Advisory Council, the SCCOE culture committee, and *Framing Our Future* employee stakeholder engagement results to help us shape our strategic direction. This input is proactively sought as it helps us to be responsive to stakeholder expectations and requirements.

Our ability to execute on the plan will be accomplished through careful monitoring. Any action plans not meeting timelines and performance measures will be evaluated to determine root cause. Accountability to implement the plan is gained by publishing

objectives and high-level action plans, proposed budget, delineation of responsibility (responsible department), timeline for accomplishment of the objective, and performance measures/evidence of completion.

The Office will formally adopt the action plan as part of the *Framing Our Future* strategic plan prior to the start of the next school year. This action plan, a component of the *Framing Our Future* plan, is a living document and the SCCOE will update both plans as needed. Additionally, the Office will provide progress and status reports.

## How to Read the Action Plan

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### Objectives and Effective Practices

Objectives were developed in eight key effective practice areas that will help us accomplish our goal to *Be a Premier Employer*.

The eight key effective practices (not in priority order) are:

1. Offer opportunities for personal and professional growth;
2. Recognize outstanding performance;
3. Encourage creativity and innovation;
4. Value input from staff;
5. Create a positive work environment;
6. Review policies to ensure they make sense and facilitate our work;
7. Review salary and health benefits; and
8. Recruit and retain competent employees.

Within each of the eight key areas are multiple SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) objectives that were developed from input received. The objectives were developed to promote the accomplishment of the goal to *Be a Premier Employer* and are to be realized in three to five years. When the objective reads, “continue...,” this signifies the objective is not a new objective but deemed worthy of continuing effort. All other objectives in the action plan are new objectives.

### Definitions

Term	Description
Effective Practice	An outcome statement that defines what the organization is trying to accomplish. They are general intentions and are broad.
SMART Objective	<b>S</b> pecific, <b>M</b> easurable, <b>A</b> ttainable, <b>R</b> elevant, and <b>T</b> ime-bound objectives are developed to help achieve the effective practices by dividing them into manageable components.
High-Level Action Steps	Defined activities that contribute to the success of the objective.
Leader(s)	The department or staff member that will lead the Office's efforts for the action and review of performance.
Timeline	I = immediate, ST = short-term, LT = long-term

# Be a Premier Employer Action Plan

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
1.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Offer opportunities for personal and professional growth.</i></p> <p><b>1.1 Objective: Execute an upgraded learning and development plan for all staff to increase skill sets, improve staff and organizational performance, and position staff for future promotional opportunities driven by the business requirements of the SCCOE by June 2017.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hire two Staff Development Specialists</li> <li>• Create cross-branch learning and development advisory committee</li> <li>• Conduct a training needs assessment</li> <li>• Create a training matrix by job class</li> <li>• Implement a job shadowing process</li> </ul>	ST and ongoing;	Human Resources Branch	Objective and planned deliverables on project plan met by due date of June 2017	
	<p><b>1.2 Objective: Continue the Champions for Leadership Program. Deploy the 8<sup>th</sup> cohort by August 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review opportunities to improve the program</li> <li>• Market the program</li> </ul>	ST and ongoing	Human Resources Branch	<p>Opportunities to improve the program identified</p> <p>At least 15 staff begin the program in August.</p> <p>Successful graduation of at</p>	August 2016

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Recruit candidates for program</li> <li>Conduct program</li> </ul>			least 95% of cohort	
	<p><b>1.3 Objective: Offer the (Kouzes &amp; Posner) Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) assessment to 100% of the SCCOE Leadership Team so leaders are able to communicate more effectively with staff and model desired leadership competencies by September 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete vendor agreement</li> <li>Communicate purpose of the tool</li> <li>Deploy LPI by May 1, 2016</li> <li>Conduct debriefing sessions with coach by June 1, 2016</li> <li>Leaders act on lessons learned</li> </ul>	ST	Office of the Superintendent	<p>LPI deployed on time and within budget</p> <p>100% of leaders are aware the assessment is available</p> <p>Personal reflection of practice</p>	August 2016
	<p><b>1.4 Objective: Increase internal learning opportunities to review best coaching, supervision and evaluation processes by June 2017.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Offer at least four professional learning opportunities for best coaching strategies and ensure that some sessions are offered at sites other than the Ridder Park Drive campus.</li> <li>Provide and promote <u>online</u> courses for all employees to use, helping reframe the definition of a “coach.”</li> </ul>	LT and ongoing	Human Resources Branch, Technology Program and Instructional Support	Learning opportunities are offered with at least 50% attendance to registration ratio and at least 80% satisfaction rate from participants by June 2017	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
2.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Recognize outstanding performance.</i></p> <p><b>2.1 Objective: Develop a process in which each month County Office department and school site cluster is highlighted and acknowledged for their contributions to the students, families and the communities we serve by September 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Highlight one Cluster and one COE Department each month. Information to be disseminated by Superintendent's Office. Example: include in Superintendent's Monday Memo.</li> <li>• Leadership Team Members and Department Supervisors provide information to Directors (via weekly meetings) for the cluster and department highlighted at the beginning of each month.</li> <li>• Highlight each department on information video monitor located in lobby of the COE.</li> </ul>	I and on-going. Timeline to begin August 2016	Office of the Superintendent Branch and Media and Communications Department	LTM and other COE Supervisors provide information regarding sites prior to the month they are recognized	Pending



No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
	<p><b>2.2 Objective: Create a “Certificate of Recognition Program” for outstanding employee deeds or work by September 2016. (This is in addition to Employee of the Month.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Each cluster and department will choose up to five employees monthly to receive SCCOE-wide or branch-wide recognition</li> </ul>	I and on-going monthly	Office of the Superintendent Branch and Media and Communications Department	<p>List of recipients submitted by supervisor or Director prior to the beginning of each month</p> <p>Employees receive Certificate of Recognition through Office of the Superintendent or Chiefs’ Office.</p>	
	<p><b>2.3 Objective: Purchase and install a trophy case at Ridder Park to showcase staff accomplishments by December 8, 2015.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research costs and sizes of trophy cases</li> <li>Determine location</li> <li>Install case</li> <li>Install additional case by March 1, 2016</li> </ul>	ST	Office of the Superintendent	<p>Trophy case installed by due date</p> <p>Unveiling of trophy case for Ridder Park staff on 8/8/15 and for the Board of Education and other staff on 8/9/15</p>	December 8, 2015
3.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Encourage creativity and innovation.</i></p> <p><b>3.1 Objective: Implement a process so that 100% of the COE Leadership Team learns the “Cycle of Excellence” and the latest theories of motivation that encourage creativity and innovation by September 2017.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt book study of <i>Shine: Using Brain Science to Get the Best from Your People</i> for Leadership Team</li> </ul>	ST	Office of the Superintendent	Professional learning plan developed, implemented, and evaluated with at least 80% of LT members indicating they understand and will implement new learning	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use TED Talk and RSA videos of Daniel Pink's <i>Drive</i> theories of motivation to supplement book study</li> </ul>	ST	Office of the Superintendent		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explore inviting Dr. Hallowell or Daniel Pink to keynote the annual Leadership Team retreat</li> </ul>	ST	Office of the Superintendent And LTM Planning Team		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and showcase cross-branch projects that demonstrate innovative solutions</li> </ul>	ST	All Branches	Projects celebrated in Monday Memo, Board Presentations, and Golden Bell recognitions	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement a SCCOE innovation crowd sourcing platform to generate creative and innovative ideas and a program to select and develop most promising ideas</li> </ul>	ST and ongoing  LT	Representative from each Branch and Office of the Superintendent	SCCOE innovates platform and program developed and implemented. Minimum of three programs developed and successfully implemented	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
4.	<p><b>Effective practice: <i>Value input from staff</i></b></p> <p><b>4.1 Objective: Deploy a staff satisfaction survey to 100% of staff by November 2015. Use the results of the survey to inform the Strategic Plan (SP) by June 1, 2016. Implement at least three recommended actions generated by the staff satisfaction survey by September 30, 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop survey</li> <li>• Deploy survey</li> <li>• Analyze survey results</li> <li>• Develop Strategic Plan</li> <li>• Identify at least three recommended actions and implement them</li> <li>• Communicate with staff on a regular basis to demonstrate how we listened to their voices and acted on their input</li> </ul>	<p>Survey completed by 12/1/15</p> <p>Results analyzed by 2/1/16</p> <p>SP completed by 6/1/16</p> <p>Three identified actions implemented by 9/30/16</p>	Office of the Superintendent	<p>Survey deployed on time % of staff responding to survey</p> <p>Number of actions completed based on survey results</p> <p>Completion of the Strategic Plan with references to the staff satisfaction survey results</p>	December 2015
	<p><b>4.2 Study possible methods for increasing communications throughout the organization and expanding the options for sharing ideas and concerns.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a sub-committee to design a system for departments to share concerns and provide input</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Media and Communications Department and SAC		

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
5.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Create a positive work environment.</i></p> <p><b>5.1 Objective: Improve morale, collaboration, and communication by fostering positive, supportive, and inclusive work environments within branches, departments, and clusters by June 2017.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continue new employee orientation (HELLO)</li>   <li>• Expand upon current opportunities to include ways for Ridder Park staff to visit site teachers, principals, and students</li>   <li>• Evaluate current opportunities for staff to interact with colleagues not in their department or those with whom they have no regular contact</li>   <li>• Create more staff team building opportunities and allow more</li> </ul>	I, ST, and LT completed by June 2017	<p>Human Resources Branch and Talent Management Department</p> <p>Student Services Branch and Media and Communications Department</p> <p>All Branch Chiefs</p> <p>All Branch Chiefs</p>	System for collaboration and communication across branches implemented and marketed by June 2017	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
	<p>collaboration time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deploy a “Multicultural Month” for all SCCOE sites</li> <li>• Arrange special education clusters so that the schools/sites are near each other and streamline processes</li> </ul>	<p>I, ST, LT and ongoing; beginning in July 2016</p>	<p>Human Resources Branch and Talent Management Department</p> <p>Business Services Branch, General Services Department and; Student Services Branch</p>		
	<p><b>5.2 Objective: Increase employee morale by implementing a culture of trust and accountability by June 2017.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold administrators and teachers accountable for outcomes, adherence to required policies and regulations, and living our values</li> <li>• Review existing procedures for holding all employees accountable for treating workers equitably and revise as needed</li> <li>• Continue counseling for staff</li> <li>• Offer “Speed of Trust” (SOT) training</li> <li>• Continue the work of the SCCOE culture committee</li> </ul>			<p>Recommended adjustments (if any) made to accountability processes and procedures as of June 2017.</p>	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
	<p><b>5.3 Objective: Improve current work place to mirror 21<sup>st</sup> century facilities by June 2019.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review current facility needs</li> <li>• Look into what is a limited amount of support in basic/functional classrooms for students with disabilities in a non-diploma program</li> <li>• Explore building better or enhancing existing (more sound-sensitive) cubicles so that staffs are able to concentrate</li> <li>• Convene a committee to explore the possibility of a bigger facility with different services to the employees and more, better equipped with digital media</li> </ul>	ST and LT; completed by June 2018	Business Services Branch, General Services Department and; Student Services Branch	Facilities plan developed, marketed, and implemented by June 2018.	
	<p><b>5.4 Objective: Initiate an “Annual Get Together”. Provide all off-site COE Employees with a meal, similar to Ridder Park holiday luncheon. Include District Administration (I.E. Special Ed. Director and School Site Principal.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determine cost and funding</li> <li>• Investigate impact on COE cafeteria</li> <li>• Provide number of staff ahead of time to COE cafeteria</li> <li>• Principal and/or designated COE staff pick up and deliver meals to sites</li> </ul>	ST (Annually, to implement for 2017-2018 school year)		Clusters and other off-site departments receive meal at designated time such as the holiday season or teacher recognition week	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
	<p><b>5.5 Objective: Reinstate the annual “Back to School” All Staff In-Service</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate with staff about the purpose of the event</li> <li>• Secure venue</li> <li>• Secure keynote speaker</li> <li>• Plan the agenda</li> </ul>	ST & ongoing	Office of the Superintendent Branch, Talent Management Department	<p>Overall satisfaction on evaluation averages 4 out of 5 points on a Likert Scale of 1-5</p> <p>In-service is executed within budget</p>	
6.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Review policies to ensure they make sense and facilitate our work.</i></p> <p><b>6.1 Objective: Develop a work plan and timeline to review Superintendent Policies and Administrative Regulations to look for efficiencies and alignment with office values and applicable regulations by June 1, 2016. Revise Superintendent Policies and Administrative Regulations where needed by December 1, 2016.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop timeline and work plan</li> <li>• Report the recommended SPs and ARs to be revised</li> <li>• Revise the identified SPs and ARs</li> <li>• Implement the revised SPs and ARs</li> <li>• Provide an annual work plan update to maintain the currency of Superintendent Policies and Administrative Regulations</li> <li>• Add policies and regulations to BoardDocs to make them more readily available</li> </ul>	<p>Complete work plan and secure the Superintendent’s approval by May 1, 2016</p> <p>Revise and implement the identified SP and ARs by 12/1/2016</p>	Office of the Superintendent Branch	Policies and ARs are updated. Work flows are perceived to be more effective and efficient per staff input	

No.	Strategic Actions	Timeline **	Leader(s)	Evidence of Success	Dates and Status or Date Completed
7.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Review salary and health benefits.</i></p> <p><b>7.1 Objective: Continue to improve wellness program and encourage good health among employees by June 2017.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluate current matrix of incentives provided</li> <li>Continue Vitality Program implementation</li> <li>Implement incentives within teams, departments, schools, etc., based on recommendations from Wellness Champions</li> </ul>	LT and ongoing; completed by June 2017	Human Resources Branch; Talent Management Department	Additional incentives added to Wellness Program by June 2017	
	<p><b>7.2 Objective: Continue to revisit salary schedules and make recommended adjustments by June 2018.</b></p> <p>HR standard processes</p>	LT; completed by June 2018	Human Resources Branch	Recommended adjustments (if any) made to salary schedule as of June 2018	
8.	<p><b>Effective practice:</b> <i>Recruit and retain competent employees.</i></p> <p><b>8.1 Objective: Review potential succession plans, evaluate hierarchy of office and opportunities for succession by June 2018.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review and make public a flowchart of current SCCOE employee structures for reference and transparency</li> <li>Have every department create a 1-3</li> </ul>	LT; completed by June 2018	Human Resources Branch	Flowchart of SCCOE departments and positions made public on website and identified opportunities for succession identified and made public by June 2018	



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	<p>minute video describing what they do, post videos to the SCCOE YouTube Channel and send one video out with already-existing communications to both internal and external audiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review potential succession opportunities and add if needed and recommended</li> </ul>				
	<p><b>8.2 Objective: Review turnover rates of teachers and paraprofessionals. If applicable, reduce turnover rates through increased marketing of positions open and positive press at SCCOE schools and classrooms (not just new openings), by June 2018.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gather current turnover data</li> <li>Increase marketing and outreach to celebrate schools, principals, teachers and students' gains and improvements</li> <li>Increase outreach from Human Resources to advertise job openings beyond the use of EDJOIN</li> </ul>	<p>ST, LT and ongoing; marketing can begin immediately</p>	<p>Human Resources Branch; Human Resources Administrative and Classified Personnel;</p>	<p>Turnover rates decrease, and increase in marketing of positive messaging by June 2018</p>	

## Next Steps

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The input received about our organization will directly shape our priorities moving forward for the rest of the year and beyond. Next steps include:

- ✓ Continue to include staff and stakeholder group feedback in the action planning process on an ongoing basis;
- ✓ Coordinate and align this action plan with other *Framing Our Future* action plans.

**County Board of Education**

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