2017-2018 Employee Satisfaction Survey

Introduction

The Santa Clara County Office of Education annually seeks the input of its employees through the Employee Satisfaction Survey. This survey is conducted as part of the larger Strategic Planning Initiative. "Improve organizational effectiveness and efficiency" has been one of Santa Clara County Office of Education's (SCCOE) major goals as an organization, and this is only possible through continued dialogue, feedback, and reflection on strengths and growth areas as a workplace. The input received about the organizational culture and the services provided directly shapes the vision and priorities moving forward. Ultimately, the aim is for every employee to know they are valued, supported, and able to grow professionally, so that all are empowered to accomplish great things in service to our students, schools, and community.

A Year in Review

Strategic Planning: The input received from past Employee Satisfaction Surveys have shaped our strategic actions. Efforts around the strategic plan over the past year have been made to continue the important work. Such efforts and activities have included:

- Monthly Strategic Planning Core team meetings, quarterly strategic leads retreats, and numerous strategic action working group meetings
- Ongoing Cabinet discussions about budget development
- Continuing discussions and next steps during SCCOE Leadership Team meetings, Superintendent Advisory Council (SAC) meetings, and retreats.
- Budget Town Hall, and budget-focused surveys

SCCOE Goals and Values: in focusing the implementation of SCCOE's goals and values, continued and new efforts have included:

- Building organizational culture- anti-bullying initiative (wear orange), cultural celebrations (i.e. Diwali), person-first terminology
- Implementation of Champion for Leadership projects- such as paperless timesheets for Head Start and the expansion of StrengthsFinder for new employees
- Living Our Values Everyday (LOVE) recognition program
- Continued efforts in the Wellness program resulting in record employee participation rates

- Cross-branch collaborations such as Head Start Preschool Financial blending model, Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS), and launch of the Professional Development Portal
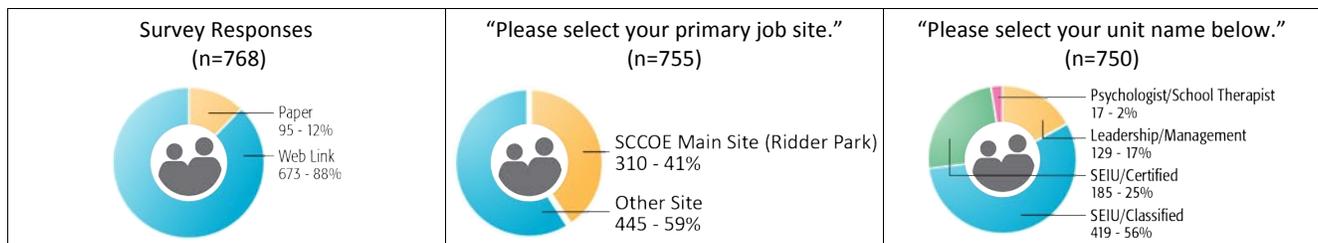
Overview of Results

This summary report provides an overview of the 2017-2018 Employee Satisfaction Survey results. Results are used along with other data points to develop and update the strategic plan. Between December 2017 and January 2018, employees of the SCCOE were asked to complete the Employee Satisfaction Survey. The collection methodology did not change from the previous year. An e-mail message with a link through the SurveyMonkey system was sent to all employees and paper copies were made available for anyone desiring to use this method. Offsite staff received a paper survey to their worksite. The survey had a total of 18 questions divided into various sections: demographics, job satisfaction, climate, values, and SCCOE branch services.

A total of 768 survey responses were logged between December 4, 2017 and January 18, 2018 representing a 45% response rate from the total number of 1,674 employees. Table 1 illustrates completion rates by methodology, job site, and unit name.

Table 1. Survey Completion Rates*

Survey Responses (n=768)	"Please select your primary job site." (n=755)	"Please select your unit name below." (n=750)
Paper 95 - 12%	SCCOE Main Site (Ridder Park) 310 - 41%	Psychologist/School Therapist 17 - 2%
Web Link 673 - 88%	Other Site 445 - 59%	Leadership/Management 129 - 17%
		SEIU/Certified 185 - 25%
		SEIU/Classified 419 - 56%

*Note: Not all survey respondents (n=768) answered the questions "Please select your primary job site." (n=755) and "Please select your unit name below." (n=750)

Key Findings - Strengths

This section summarizes the strengths of the SCCOE as indicated on the survey.

Summary of Scaled Items

Employees were asked various items on their attitudes towards job satisfaction, workplace climate, and values. Such prompts included "My work is satisfying" and "I value collaboration" where employees indicated their level of agreement on a Likert- scale from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree, Neither Disagree nor Agree, Agree, to Strongly Agree (5). Some items ("My job is challenging" and "I value providing good customer service") were on a frequency scale; employees indicated if they felt that these events happened Almost Never (1), Seldom (2), Sometimes (3), Usually (4), or Almost Always (5). The three themes with the **highest weighted averages** (M) were:

1. **Customer service:** "I value providing good customer service," ($M=4.6$) "I ask myself how I can better serve customers," ($M=4.4$) and "I meet the needs of my external customers (districts, parents, students, etc.) ($M=4.4$) and internal customers (SCCOE employees)" ($M=4.2$)

2. **Collaboration:** "I value collaboration," ($M=4.6$) "I am comfortable ($M=4.6$) and successful collaborating with others" ($M=4.6$)

3. **Students First:** "I am aware of how my work impacts student success," ($M=4.5$) and "My team makes decisions based on what is best for students" ($M=4.3$)

These strong positive responses indicate that on average, SCCOE employees have adopted and regularly practiced the stated SCCOE values of exceeding expectations for service, leveraging collective capacity through collaboration, and focusing on student success.

Summary of Open-Ended Responses

Employees were given the opportunity to provide additional information on what the SCCOE is doing well as it relates to organizational efficiency. All comments were grouped into categories; one comment could be counted more than once (i.e., one comment could be placed in more than one category) depending on the content. Of the 768 survey respondents who completed the survey, 184 employees wrote comments for this prompt. The three most mentioned categories about what the SCCOE is doing well were:

1. **Communication and Collaboration (n=40)**
   - "Opportunities for departments, branches, and leadership coming together is great (stay updated and feel like a whole agency). I also enjoy the memos, emails, and updates from communications. SCCOE is also working on decreasing silos, and communicating with other departments on work as it relates to districts, outside county agencies, and students."
   - "The SCCOE relays information very well to the staff. I feel like I always know what events are happening, when to be concerned about a full parking lot, when emergency drills will be happening and fun events, just to name a few..."
   - "The SCCOE has improved its communication."
   - "The vision of SCCOE reflects supporting students with achieving their goals. The various departments maintain good communication and collaboration overall, which is helpful in terms of obtaining organizational efficiency."

2. **Training and Professional Development (n=15)**
   - "Training and development programs for employees. However, it should be aligned to the training needs of the employees."
   - "There [is] a lot of professional development available."
3. **Policies and Procedures (n=15)**
   - "Seeking opportunities to streamline process."
   - "Taking the opportunity to review policies, eliminating unnecessary redundancy, giving departments the freedom to review and realign so that they are more efficient."

Key Findings - Areas for Improvement

This section summarizes the areas for improvement of the SCCOE as indicated on the survey.

Summary of Scaled Items

Employees were asked various items on their feelings and attitudes towards job satisfaction, workplace climate, and values. Such prompts included "My work is satisfying" and "I value collaboration" where employees indicated their level of agreement on a Likert-scale from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Disagree nor Agree (3), Agree (4), to Strongly Agree (5). Some questions ("My job is challenging" and "I value providing good customer service") were on a frequency scale; employees indicated if they felt these events happened Almost Never (1), Seldom (2), Sometimes (3), Usually (4), or Almost Always (5). The three themes with the lowest weighted averages (M) were:

1. **Trust:** "There is a climate of trust at the SCCOE" (M=3.0) and "There is a climate of trust in my branch" (M=3.2)
2. **Opportunities for growth and pay:** "I am satisfied with the opportunities for career advancement" (M=3.1) and "I am satisfied with the pay I receive for the work that I do" (M=3.1)
3. **Reputation** "I am satisfied with the SCCOE's public image/reputation." (M=3.1)

Despite having the lowest weighted averages when compared to other survey questions, is it important to note that these items, on average, **indicate a neutral response**. The SCCOE strives for excellence and therefore views these findings as opportunities for growth. To that end, initiatives targeting improving trust, creating opportunities of growth, and improving the organization's reputation have been rolled out this past spring. Some examples include: providing extensive opportunities for employee input on budget development, LEAP and EPIC opportunities for employee growth and advancement; and an investment in the StrengthsFinder assessment for new and incumbent employees that focuses on naming, claiming, and aiming individual strengths and talents.

Summary of Open-ended Responses

Employees were given the opportunity to provide comments in an open-ended question about what they think the SCCOE can do to improve organizational efficiency. All comments were grouped into categories; one comment could be counted more than once (i.e., one comment could be placed in more than one category) depending on the content. Of the 768 survey respondents who completed the survey, 242 employees wrote comments for this prompt. The three most mentioned categories about what the SCCOE can do better were:

1. **Communication and Collaboration (n=86)**
   - "Management should set examples of teamwork and collaboration across departments."
   - "Improve positive communication with teachers and staff from the administration."
   - "Communication - I have perceived many instances where if there was better communication from various areas of the organization (i.e. accounting to branches, chiefs to branches) employees would have a better understanding of what is expected."
2. **Training and Professional Development (n=15)**
   - "As pertains to my department, I feel like the personnel department is organized poorly. There is a mismatch in employees' skills, their tasks, their permissions, their pay, and their positions (i.e., titles)."
   - "Making sure staff is sufficient for classrooms."
   - "Hire more staff. Hire staff who are experienced."
3. **Policies & Procedures**
   - "Specific policies should be implemented with consistency. Proper planning and examining all presenting factors would be helpful in terms of managing and preventing crises."
   - "Less bureaucracy. Reduce the number of "hoops" to jump through to get things done."

"One way to improve our efficiency is recognizing employees that really care about the SCCOE and getting their ideas on how to improve the efficiency."

Key Findings - Job Satisfaction

Employees' overall satisfaction with their jobs is the result of a combination of factors. The SCCOE's role in enhancing employees' job satisfaction is to provide a work environment that is positive, morale is high, and relationships are respectful and constructive. This section summarizes the findings regarding job satisfaction.

Summary of Scaled Items

Employees were presented with four items related to their job satisfaction and asked to indicate their level of agreement as to how much each item would increase their job satisfaction. For example, the first item stated that "A better relationship with my colleagues/coworkers would increase my job satisfaction". The second item stated that "A better relationship with my immediate manager/supervisor would increase my job satisfaction". Generally respondents rated career advancement as the most important item. Table 2 presents the ranking of factors important to job satisfaction.

Table 2. Ranking of Factors Important to Job Satisfaction

Item	Score
Career Advancement	3.9
Better Work-Life Balance	3.8
Better Relationship with Supervisor	3.7
Better Relationship with Colleagues	3.6

Summary of Open-ended Responses

Employees were given the opportunity to provide additional information that addressed their level of job satisfaction. All comments were grouped into categories; one comment could be counted more than once (i.e., one comment could be placed in more than one category) depending on the content. Of the 768 survey respondents who completed the survey, 142 employees wrote comments for this prompt. The three most mentioned categories (with either positive or negative points) about job satisfaction were:

1. **Leadership/Management (n=50)**
   - "I appreciate the support from my Principal and feel valued by him. Due to the recent collapse of Admin and SOC jobs, many of us have been stretched thin. It is difficult to serve our high-risk population and meet all of their needs. This has led to a constant high level of stress."
   - "I enjoy the work I do with students and am lucky to work with a great team at my sites. But I'm not sure that management really understands and supports the amount of work it takes to make a work environment and classroom environment where students can receive the services that they need. I see teachers and staff being overwhelmed with the numbers of students in the classroom and their level of needs."
   - "Though my immediate supervisor is good, it is the upper administration (directors, etc.) that has decreased my job satisfaction. It is difficult to enjoy your job when you lack faith/trust in the upper administration."

2. **Resources (i.e., Equipment/Materials/Staff) (n=25)**
   - "Size of classrooms have increased and the staff is sometimes not enough."
   - "The support I get for certain essential parts of my job is low - not sure if it should come from my immediate supervisor or the principal of my cluster. My principal tries hard to support me, but so much of my work comes from budgets outside her control, she can't actually do much."

3. **Love job/kids (n=23)**
   - "I really enjoy my job! I'm so glad the SCCOE is committed to my program."
   - "I'm happy with my job but I would like to learn different skills."
   - "Working with the students is most satisfying, that is why I do this job."

"Fortunately, I have a great principal so my stress is somewhat less compared to the stress of my other colleagues. I love doing my job as long as I have enough independence in making decisions in the classroom, which I have."

Key Findings - Compared to Last Year

The Strategic Planning Initiative has distributed an Employee Satisfaction Survey for three years; the tables below depict the comparisons between responses for the 2015-16, 2016-17, and 2017-18 survey distributions. Table 3 shows the weighted average response for each item on a frequency scale. Employees reported on average that the responses below are usually true. Their responses indicated if they felt these events happened Almost Never (1), Seldom (2), Sometimes (3), Usually (4), or Almost Always (5); lower numbers on the scale indicate lower frequency of the statement occurring and higher numbers represent higher frequency. On the next page, Table 4 shows the weighted average response for each item where employees indicated their level of agreement on a Likert-scale from Strongly Disagree (1), Disagree (2), Neither Disagree nor Agree (3), Agree (4), to Strongly Agree (5); lower numbers on the scale indicate disagreement with the statement and higher numbers represent agreement.

Table 3. Longitudinal Results - Frequency Scale Questions Weighted Averages

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
My job is challenging.	4.2	4.0	3.9
I feel stressed at work.*	3.4	3.1	3.1
I feel valued by my colleagues/coworkers.	4.1	3.9	3.9
My opinion matters to my colleagues/coworkers.	4.0	3.9	3.9
I feel valued by my immediate manager/supervisor.	3.7	3.9	3.8
My opinion matters to my immediate manager/supervisor.	3.6	3.8	3.8
My immediate manager's/supervisor's expectations are realistic.	3.8	3.9	3.9
I am assigned tasks by my immediate manager/supervisor that help me grow professionally.	3.4	3.6	3.5
The level of supervision that I receive is appropriate.	4.0	4.1	4.0

Notes: Scale (1- Almost Never, 2- Seldom, 3- Sometimes, 4- Usually, 5- Almost Always)

Asterisk (*) are worded such that a lower weighted average is desired

Table 4. Longitudinal Results - Agreement Scale Questions Weighted Averages

	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18
My work is satisfying.	4.1	4.2	4.1
I am satisfied with the pay I receive for the work that I do.	3.0	3.2	3.2
I am satisfied with the health-care related benefits.	3.1	3.3	3.4
I am satisfied with my total benefits package (medical, dental, vision, retirement, disability, life insurance, EAP, Wellness/Vitality, etc.).	3.4	3.5	3.5
I am satisfied with the opportunities for growth.	3.2	3.3	3.2
I am satisfied with the opportunities for career advancement.	3.1	3.2	3.1
I am satisfied with the SCCOE's public image/reputation.	3.1	3.5	3.1
I am likely to pursue job opportunities elsewhere.*	2.8	2.7	2.8
I am satisfied with my job.	3.8	3.9	3.8
My colleagues/coworkers encourage me to develop my job skills so I can advance in my career.	3.5	3.5	3.5
I trust my colleagues/coworkers.	3.9	3.9	3.9
My colleagues/coworkers trust me.	4.0	4.0	4.0
My immediate manager/supervisor encourages me to develop my job skills so I can advance in my career.	3.5	3.6	3.6
I trust my immediate manager/supervisor.	3.7	3.8	3.8
My immediate manager/supervisor trusts me.	3.9	4.0	3.9
There is a climate of trust in my department.	3.4	3.5	3.5
There is a climate of trust in my branch.	3.2	3.3	3.2
There is a climate of trust at the SCCOE.	3.0	3.2	3.0
Employees generally manage constructive feedback well at the SCCOE.	3.2	3.3	3.1
Employees generally admit to mistakes at the SCCOE.	2.9	3.0	3.0
Employees generally have humility at the SCCOE.	3.2	3.2	3.3
I am aware of how my work impacts student success.		4.6	4.5
My team makes decisions based on what is best for students.		4.2	4.3
I value collaboration.	4.5	4.6	4.6
I am comfortable collaborating with others.	4.4	4.6	4.6
I successfully collaborate with others.	4.3	4.4	4.5
There is a collaborative climate in my department.	3.5	3.9	3.5
There is a collaborative climate in my branch.	3.3	3.6	3.6
There is a collaborative climate at the SCCOE.	3.1	3.4	3.3
I value creativity.		4.5	4.5
I have the resources I need to be innovative.		3.6	3.6
Creativity is valued at the SCCOE.		3.6	3.6
I am comfortable with change.		4.2	4.1
I understand my department's vision.		3.9	3.9
I am aware of innovative practices in my area of expertise.		3.9	3.9
I value providing good customer service.	4.8	4.7	4.6
I meet the needs of my internal customers (SCCOE employees).	4.6	4.2	4.2
I meet the needs of my external customers (districts, parents, students, etc.).	4.7	4.4	4.4
I ask myself how I can better serve customers.	4.7	4.5	4.4

Notes: Scale (1-Strongly Disagree, 2- Disagree, 3- Neither Disagree nor Agree, 4- Agree, 5- Strongly Agree).

Blanks denote a new question for the 2016-17 distribution of the Employee Satisfaction Survey.

Italicized items (*) are worded such that a lower weighted average is desired.

Key Findings – Budget Development

County Offices have been flat-funded for the past few years while operational costs have steadily increased at SCCOE. Various efforts have been underway to identify priorities and provide input for reducing costs and increasing revenue.

Employee Satisfaction Survey

Employees were asked to provide their ideas for reducing costs and/or increasing revenue in the Employee Satisfaction Survey. A total of 260 comments were logged with the main themes being:

1. Resources (n=85)

Paperless/Tech solutions (mileage and supplies reimbursements), recycle/sharing of resources, and limit spending (catering, travel)

- "Less use of paper, proper inventory of student equipment, accept used equipment from students, a contracted person to fix or modify equipment."
- "Perhaps consolidate facilities, think about processes or services that can be automated."
- "Limit supplies, color prints, including business cards, overtime, and mileage reimbursements."

2. Student Enrollment & Programs (n=72)

Ideas for new programs, ideas of improvements for existing programs, and ideas for increasing student enrollment

- "As a team, attending community events where we can inform the community of our programs, which will increase spreading the word, advertisements, Donations from donors, partnerships with Districts for referrals."
- "The income qualifications for the families in the Santa Clara County should be revised so we can have more children enroll in the program."
- "Support and create strong relationship with families enrolled in the program so they can be our voice to other families and create outside/ community event to let other families know that we are here."
- "Offer low-cost child care/early learning services, not just to those who qualify."

3. Staffing/Personnel (n=71)

Reduction in workforce, hiring freeze, reduction in salaries/hours

- "Rather than just cutting positions, look into reducing the positions first."
- "We should consider condensing some of the overlapping classified positions."
- "Cut from the top, most money saved that way. The site employees could do better."
- "It seems that there are managers/coordinators who are being supervised by multiple Directors. If these team members are part of the leadership team and may even have administrative credentials, they would only need to report to one Director."

Budget Development

Over 35 meetings were held from November to May. Themes that emerged included:

1. Increase efficiencies
2. Invest in priority programs
3. Conduct in-depth study of indirect rate

Budget Town Hall

A budget town hall meeting was held on 02/15/18 for employees and other members of the community. The following themes emerged:

1. Eliminate redundancies and streamline processes
2. Eliminate underused programs and services
3. Increase employee accountability

Owning Your Budget:

To sustain budgeting health for 2018-19, employees have a shared duty to manage the limited funds. All employees are requested to:

- *Limit travel and conferences; consider carefully what the alignment of these activities are to the organizational goals and values*
- *Limit catering for meetings*
- *Limit printing*
- *If meeting plans change, release calendar holds on rooms at Ridder Park so others don't have to find alternative (costly) accommodations*
- *Pursue external and supplemental funding such as sponsors, grants, donations, and in kind partnerships*

Next Steps

Budget Development: These efforts are aimed at building an organizational structure and budget that is both sustainable and stable.

- Accountability for adhering to deadlines and timelines
- Finding efficiencies and reducing redundancies
- Discretionary spending (such as catering and travel)
- Indirect costs analysis
- Balancing indirect vs. direct services, operations vs. infrastructures, and short and long term investments
- Alternative Education fee and cost analysis
- Head Start grant application process and program
- Special Education re-benching process review
- Facilities master planning and policy review
- Opportunity Youth Academy enrollment growth

Organizational Alignment: As part of our efforts to improve our effectiveness, efficacy, and efficiency, some branches and departments will be organized differently to better support our mission and vision. These changes are being made only after careful consideration and reflect the input and feedback received by stakeholders during the budget process. The following changes will be made:

- Converting the Foster Youth Coordinator from a classified to certificated position to be more responsive to what districts and schools need
- Early Learning Services restructuring so that no Directors are reporting to Directors
- Public Affairs merged with the Office of the Superintendent to form an Executive Services Division
- The Local Planning Council (LPC) Early Learning Services will move from Student Services to the Executive Services division
- Homeless and Foster Youth Services will move under the Safe and Healthy Schools department and the Safe and Healthy Schools Department will move to the Student Services Branch
- The EPIC and LEAP programs will be moved from the Human Resources Branch to be housed in Educational Services and will directly support the Educator Resource Center (formerly Learning Multimedia Center)
- Head Start maintenance and custodial will move from Student Services to Business Services under General Services

- A new Emergency / School Safety Administrator position will be established to ensure student, school, and staff safety

Communication: was mentioned the most in open-ended portions of the survey in what the organization is doing well and what the organization could improve in terms of efficiency and effectiveness. Office communication will continue working with an increased social media presence (LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram) to reach employees in various ways.

Additional SCCOE priorities:

A study of the continuum of special education services will be launched. As the largest provider of special education services, the SCCOE will lead an effort to examine opportunities for more inclusive service delivery.