



Council of the Great City Schools Review

Board Meeting

September 7, 2023

Agenda Item No. 9.2

Presented by:

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Council of the Great City Schools

Agenda

- Human Resources Profile, Goals, and Objectives
- Rationale for CGCS Audit
- Presentation of CGCS Report and Recommendations
- Steps Taken Since CGCS Review
- Moving Forward on our Continuous Improvement Journey

Acronyms

- Human Resources (HR)
- Council of Great City Schools (CGCS)
- Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs)
- Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI)
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)
- Employment Development Department (EDD)
- Budget Development Process (BDP)
- Human Resource Automation (HRA)
- CA Collaborative for Educational Excellence (CCEE) Systemic Instructional Review (SIR)
- Single Plan for Student Achievement (SPSA)
- CA State University Sacramento (CSUS)
- Policy Analysis for CA Education (PACE)
- Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT)
- Department of Justice (DOJ)

Driving Governance

SCUSD CORE VALUE

We recognize that our system is inequitable by design and we vigilantly work to confront and interrupt inequities that exist to

level the playing field and provide opportunities for everyone to learn, grow and reach their greatness.

SCUSD GUIDING PRINCIPLE

All students are given an equal opportunity to graduate with the greatest number of postsecondary choices from the widest array of options

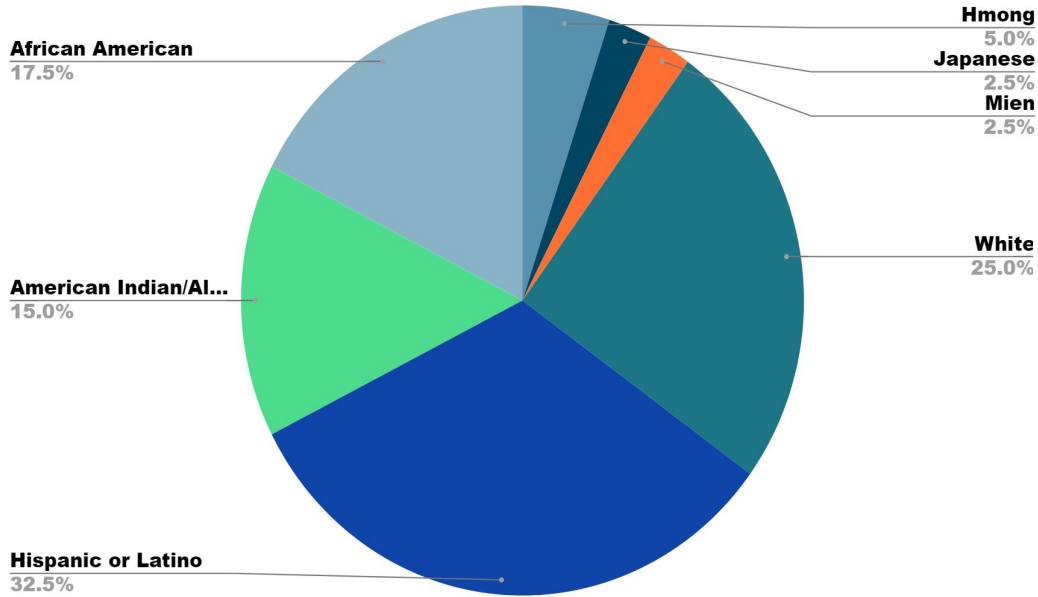
Human Resources Profile

Human Resources Department Vision Statement

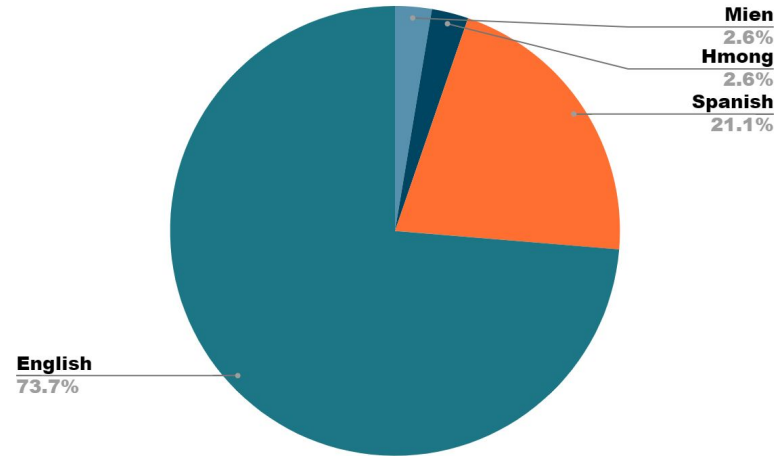
Together, we will make a positive difference in the lives of our students, employees, and community. Our investment in our employee's personal and professional advancement is reflected in the academic growth and social-emotional well-being of our students. We recognize that each day is a new opportunity to be better than the day before.

HR Department Reflects Diversity

Ethnicity



Languages Spoken



Areas of HR Responsibility

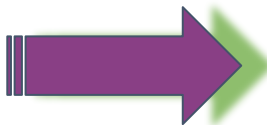
- Employee Recruitment
- Posting Positions/Referrals/
Facilitating Interview Panels/
Hiring/Salary Placements
- Onboarding /Offboarding
- Staffing/Managing Staff Movement
- Fingerprinting
- TB Monitoring
- NCLB Testing
- Subpoenas
- Mandated Trainings and
Notifications
- Staff Permits and Credential Audits
- Classification and Compensation
- EDD Claims
- Leaves of Absence
- Performance Evaluations
- Employee Discipline
- Job Descriptions
- Salary Schedules
- Work Calendars
- Substitute Services
- Processing Per Diems/Employee
Updates
- Employee Recognition
- Employee Retention
- Employee and Community
Complaints
- Exit Interviews
- Level 1 Grievances



Rationale for CGCS Audit

CGCS Audit Rationale

Feedback received from labor partners and other interest-holders indicated low levels of satisfaction with the service received from the HR department. In order to gauge specific areas for improvement, the District engaged CGCS to review and assess the following areas:



- HR department structure
- Necessary Department and system-wide improvements in:
 - Systems
 - Processes
 - Practices

HR Department Goals and Objectives

Goal:

To improve student experiences, we want to attract and retain a high-quality, diverse workforce that experiences top-tier customer service resulting in staff feeling:

- Seen
- Heard
- Valued
- Appreciated

Objective:

Use the CGCS recommendations to drive HR's improvement journey

- Five year improvement continuum, resulting in
- Improved learning experiences for our students

CGCS Report and Recommendations

The CGCS report contains:

- *Seventeen specific recommendations*

Whose purpose is to:

- *Provide HR with a roadmap for improvement*

District-Wide Reviews and Needs

- CCEE SIR
- FCMAT
- HR Review
- PACE
- Special Education Review
- SPSA Review by CSUS



Need for a system-wide approach to address both specific areas of gaps as well as District-wide processes and systems

CGCS Audit Report and Recommendations

Sacramento City Unified School District



Human Resources Support Team Overview

Ray Hart and Willie Burroughs
September 7, 2023

Background and Commendations

Key Findings – Commendations



- The request for this review was evidence that the district's senior leadership recognized that **talent acquisition, development, and retention of human capital are critical factors in the role of the Human Resource Services Department** in the district's ability to meet its strategic goals.
 - All requested background information in a timely and organized fashion prior to the team's on-site arrival.
 - Created the Inter-Departmental Team (IDT) meetings forum to improve internal communications.
 - Classified employees new to their position appeared to be consistently and timely evaluated while still on probation. This best practice allows for adequate notice to the employee of areas that need improvement.
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Key Findings – Commendations

- Staff members interviewed demonstrated resilience and a **commitment to continuous improvement**.
 - Human Resource Services Department scored in the **“best quartile” rankings on multiple 2020-2021 CGCS Managing for Results**.
 - SCUSD offers highly competitive substitute pay rates when compared to nearby districts.
 - SCUSD provides a \$1,500 early notification retirement (resignation) incentive for teachers to allow early planning for filling retirement vacancies.
 - **Position descriptions and salary schedules are easily accessible** to applicants and current district staff.
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Historical Leadership and Management Findings

Key Findings – Leadership/Management



- Currently, the department functions as a transactionally oriented HR department concentrating on HR maintenance tasks that leave **minimal time to focus on customer service, organizational development, process improvement, and capacity building** among the people working within the district or department.
 - The department **lacked formal internal training programs** to develop its employees' management, leadership, cross-functional team building, or technical competencies, especially its new employees.
 - **Over-reliance on only one experienced person to complete specific job functions** and little evidence of proactive succession planning, capacity building, or cross-training in critical functions to ensure continuity in the absence, leave, retirement, promotion, or resignation of essential department staff.
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Key Findings – Leadership/Management



- Many HR staff have been in the department or their current position for less than one year.
 - HR staff did not consistently provide clear and timely communication with school site leaders, including the time it takes to receive a list of candidates (reportedly weeks) after a posting closes.
 - School administrators shared that they **lacked training on HR policies and practices** that impacted their operations and that there was **no written guide or handbook to help principals resolve HR-related issues**. The team did not find evidence that principals were at the table to provide input or collaborate in developing recruitment strategies or guidelines.
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Key Findings – Leadership/Management



- District's **lengthy onboarding process put hiring departments and schools at a disadvantage** for adding top-tier candidates, and many are lost to other school districts. These include:
 - Lack of a comprehensive recruitment plan, annual calendar, appropriate budget, retention strategy, or online tracking system
 - Labor-intensive manual data entry requirements
 - The final step of the onboarding process – getting staff and teachers first-day access to needed systems (e.g., email, student attendance) – fell short for newly hired employees
 - Staff shared that some collective bargaining agreement (CBA) language contributes to slow hiring processes.
 - Some language delays the timely recruiting, selecting, and onboarding of new teachers to the district.
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Organization Findings

Key Findings – Organization



- The hierarchical placement of the Human Resource Services Department within the district's organization was undervalued and misaligned with current best practices.
 - Department's organizational placement failed to recognize that the HR function performs an enterprise-wide strategic role that should report to the Office of the Superintendent
 - The current HR department's organizational structure and functionalities did not support the strategic alignment and service delivery throughout the employee life cycle. Specifically, HR was not organized around the critical functions of --
 - **Onboarding**, including recruitment, vetting, selection, and placement;
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Key Findings – Organization



- **Employee Services**, including performance assessment, employment verification, leaves, transfers, employee retention, labor relations, position classification, highly competitive compensation, professional development, and employee misconduct and discipline; and
 - **Exit Transition**, including retirement, resignation, non-renewal, exit interviews, and exit trending.
 - Employee Relations function was moved from the HR team.
 - Position descriptions were not consistently reviewed and updated
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Key Findings – Organization



- A full-functioning position control system to connect Finance, Budget, Payroll and Human Resources did not exist at the time of our visit.
 - The team could not identify a functional position control system that integrated the Human Resource Services Department for HR information, the Budget Department for budget development, the Payroll Department for payroll-related data, and the Finance Department for salary and benefit projections. As a result, positions were sometimes added before budget approval had occurred
 - HR and finance were not utilizing the position control automated approval processes module or existing budget development and staffing modules.
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Key Findings – Organization



- Effective teacher substitute management has challenged SCUSD due to extremely high teacher absenteeism.
 - **Teachers were off an average of 16 days per year which is double the CGCS national median for this metric**
 - High volume of manual data entries required from one standalone system into another standalone system
 - Multiple standalone HR systems created the need to develop workarounds
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Recommendations

Recommendations



1. *Realign the Human Resource Services Department as a **direct report to the Office of the Superintendent** to reflect the department's role and value as an enterprise-wide strategic partner in the management and leadership of the school district*
 2. *Convene, with a sense of urgency, ongoing meetings to **analyze the findings and recommendations identified in this management letter and any previous reviews, audits, or reports.** Use this "combined" recommendations document as a "road map" to develop, prioritize, and assign project owners and timelines to move all recommendations forward*
 3. *Develop a realistic **five-year HRT strategic plan** laser-focused on customer needs*
 4. *Transition to a **data-driven organization** that relies upon fact-based and analysis-centric justifications for decisions, including the use of benchmarks, techniques, and key performance indicators (KPIs) - turnover rates, absentee rates, substitute fill rates, vacancy rates, time to fill vacancies, recruitment rates, and retention rates*
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Recommendations



5. *Reorganize the Office of Human Resources and Talent to **optimize efficiency and effectiveness, sharpen its focus, improve internal communication, eliminate silos, and promote clear lines of responsibility, authority, and accountability** to focus on key areas of the HRT work –*
 - a) *Talent Acquisition and Staffing (onboarding),*
 - b) *Employee Effectiveness and Services (current employee services), and*
 - c) *Leadership and Employee Development Pipelines (staff development and exit transition)*

 6. *Develop and fund a **realistic recruitment and marketing budget** for job fair travel*
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Recommendations



7. Identify **previous or anticipated potential "bottlenecks" or "chokepoints"** in the recruitment and onboarding process and proactively take corrective action before annual recruitment efforts
 8. Convene a team of appropriate stakeholders (i.e., Human Resources and Talent; the Budget Department; the Payroll Department; and the Finance Department) to **clarify and document the district's position control process**. This documentation should include flowcharts and who "owns" each step in the process.
 9. Strengthen stakeholder communication activities to enhance HR services by employing meaningful communication outreach with **regular meetings with school principals (or a representative group), staff from the Office of the Instructional Assistant Superintendent, and others to identify opportunities for improved communication** and address challenges described in this document.
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Recommendations



10. Monitor **turnover rates and establish exit interview protocols** for department employees who voluntarily separate from CPS, and identify and track the causes for leaving to identify opportunities to make or recommend changes in policy
 11. Research and evaluate the opportunity to **fill positions** with high-quality candidates as expeditiously as possible and not lose top-tier candidates to other districts
 12. Evaluate the benefit and operational case justifications for returning employee relations to the Human Resource Services Department and consider having HR as an expert resource during labor negotiations.
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Thank You Questions and Answers



Steps Taken Since the CGCS Review

Steps Taken Since CGCS Review: Recruitment and Retention Enhancements

- Offered Open Contracts to 86 certificated individuals for the 23-24 school year
- Attended approximately 50 hiring/community events compared to 5-6 in 2021/2022
- Increased community presence and connections with community partners (HBCUs, HSIs, community and workplace/career development centers)
- Supported SCUSD graduating seniors with entry level career pathway – Luther Burbank Hiring event
- Pioneered SCUSD's 1st two-week long recruitment event at the CA State Fair in July
- Established Espresso Yourself Coffee Meetups to encourage networking amongst BIPOC educators and allies
- Established monthly Application Support Sessions – included Edjoin profile/application support, resume development, Paraprofessional Exam preparation, tutoring, and mock interviews for interested applicants
- New Administrator Training sessions offered the last Monday of each month
- Job Talks (parent/community connections at school sites and churches)

Steps Taken Since CGCS Review - Enhancements

- Building New Teams - Additional HR staff members (grant funded)
- Learning sessions and increased collaboration time for HR staff members team to calibrate
- Streamlining the onboarding process and the hiring packets (more to do in this area)
- HR/DOJ/onboarding communications timeline has been reduced
- HR staff members have increased their visits to sites/depts. to provide training, support, and build relationships
- HR staff has been cross-trained with emphasis on knowing the “WHY”

Steps Taken Since CGCS Review: Enhancements

- Created a vacancy dashboard - certificated vacancies

- Launched Use of Informed K12 Document Management System (IK12) for improved efficiency and transparency in the areas of:
 - ◆ Benefits Authorization
 - ◆ Contracts and Terms of Employment
 - ◆ Credential Audit Forms
 - ◆ HR New/Update Forms
 - ◆ Requests for New/Revised Position Descriptions
 - ◆ Resignation/Retirement
 - ◆ SEIU Request to transfer
 - ◆ Certificated Staffing Dashboard
 - ◆ Working out of Class

Steps Taken Since CGCS Review - Enhancements

- Established an HR Advisory Group
 - ◆ Meets monthly since March 2023
 - ◆ Participants include department leaders, labor partners, community representatives, Cabinet members, and HR staff
 - ◆ Focus areas have included:
 - Staffing
 - Employee retention
 - Employee recruitment
 - Onboarding
 - Substitute Services
 - Automation
 - Customer Service
- HR Communication & Connection Plan-including introduction of new Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Engaged RT Fisher Educational Enterprises in initial exploratory conversation to explore partnership and support in creating a strategic 5 year plan

Steps Taken Since CGCS Review: Report Analysis

- Shared draft report with internal departments to analyze and gather feedback
 - ◆ Shared draft CGCS report with the Board
 - ◆ Created document and process to gather feedback
 - ◆ Shared and gathered feedback from:
 - Cabinet
 - HR Department
 - IDT
 - HR Advisory Group

Focus Areas as Highlighted within the CGCS Report

- ★ Improved customer service and efficiency
- ★ Shift towards Implementation of and reliance on HR technologies
- ★ Use of data as the driver for decision making
- ★ Transfer of emphasis on a transactional, reactive approach to a vision of proactivity in the model of a strategic, 21st-century HR organizational model, aligned with best practices

Moving Forward



Commitment to use the CGCS report as a roadmap in the development and implementation of a 5-year strategic plan.



Engage educational partners



Provide regular reports on progress

Questions?