

Escalon Unified School District

Staff Survey Report - April 2016

SCHOOLPRPRO

Escalon Unified School District

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Survey Purpose

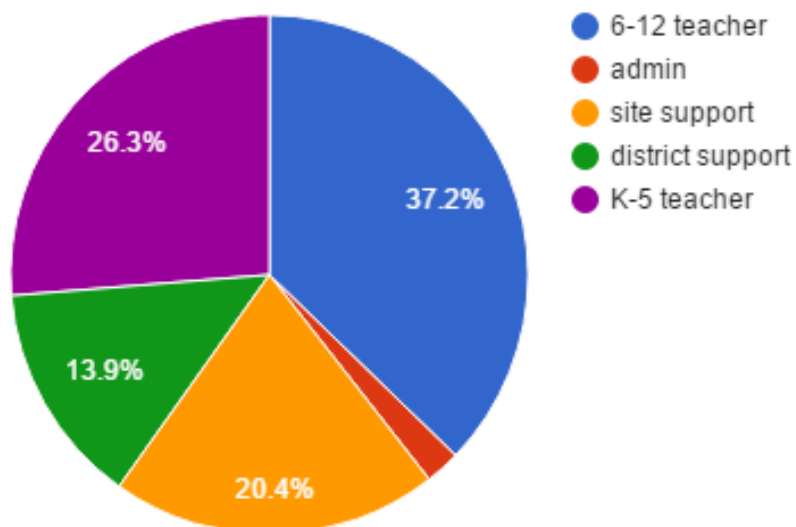
In an effort to listen to the thoughts and ideas of all staff in an anonymous and safe environment, the Escalon Unified School District (EUSD) conducted a district-wide electronic survey consisting of 54 questions that asked about working conditions and relationships, district vision and effectiveness.

Methodology

The survey was distributed to staff using district email with a link to the form. There were two emails, one to announce that the survey was open and another to remind potential participants of the closing date. Responses were gathered between March 11 and March 23rd, 2016 in the Google Form Survey platform. Of the 54 questions that were asked, all but one were multiple choice format.

Survey Respondents (Question One)

- 6-12 teacher (about 37 percent of all participants)
- K-5 teacher (about 26 percent of all participants)
- Site-based support, including instructional, clerical, kitchen, bus (about 20 percent of all participants)
- District-based support, including clerical, maintenance and operations (about 14 percent of all participants)
- Administrator or Principal (about 2 percent of all participants)



Respondents - Question One Highlights

The EUSD employs approximately 300 people across various levels and in full-time and part time roles. During the course of this survey, 143 responded, although not every respondent answered all questions. This is about a 48% response rate, fairly high for employee surveys. The average employee survey response rate is about 30%-40%. The majority of respondents were teachers (63.5%) and the smallest group were administrators (2%).

Quantitative Results

For the purposes of this report, the percentages of agree and strongly agree are tallied and compared against the percentages of those who selected neutral or not applicable and those that selected disagree or strongly disagree on the statements that employees were asked to rate.

Question Two

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. I feel like:

- 2a - *I belong at my school site*
 - About 84% agree or strongly agree, 10% neutral, 6% disagree or lower
- 2b - *I belong at this district*
 - About 76% agree or strongly agree, 14% neutral, 10% disagree or lower
- 2c - *I am recognized for good work*
 - About 63% agree or strongly agree, 18% neutral, 19% disagree or lower
- 2d - *I am intrinsically rewarded for doing good work*
 - About 75% agree or strongly agree, 12% neutral, 13% disagree or lower

Question Two Highlights

- A large majority feel that they belong at their school site, slightly less feel the same way about belonging at EUSD.
- More people feel like they receive an intrinsic reward for good work than feel they are recognized for good work.
- Receiving recognition received the lowest percentage in this question group.

Question Three

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. I work with people who:

- 3a - *treat me with respect*
 - About 85% agree or strongly agree, 8% neutral, 7% disagree or lower
- 3b - *listen if I have ideas about doing things better*
 - About 77% agree or strongly agree, 13% neutral, 10% disagree or lower
- 3c - *hold me accountable for my work*
 - About 83% agree or strongly agree, 14% neutral, 3% disagree or lower

Question Three Highlights

- A large percentage of people responded that they work with people who treat them with respect and hold them accountable.
- A smaller number of people, though still fairly high, feel like they are heard when they have ideas about doing things better.

Question Four

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. My site administrators - (Adjusted for Not at a Site)

- 4a - *treat me with respect*
 - About 84% agree or strongly agree, 8% neutral, 8% disagree or lower
- 4b - *are effective instructional leaders*
 - About 65% agree or strongly agree, 18% neutral, 17% disagree or lower
- 4c - *facilitate effective communication*
 - About 65% agree or strongly agree, 16% neutral, 19% disagree or lower
- 4d - *support me in my work with students*
 - About 85% agree or strongly agree, 6% neutral, 9% disagree or lower
- 4e - *support shared decision making*
 - About 70% agree or strongly agree, 16% neutral, 14% disagree or lower
- 4f - *allow me to be an effective instructional leader*
 - About 79% agree or strongly agree, 14% neutral, 7% disagree or lower
- 4g - *are effective in helping us reach our mission/vision*
 - About 66% agree or strongly agree, 20% neutral, 14% disagree or lower

Question Four Highlights

- Respondents rated site leaders the lowest in instructional leadership, communication and helping to achieve the mission/vision.
- A sizeable majority of respondents feel respected and supported by their site leaders.

Question Five

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. My district administrators:

- 5a - *treat me with respect*
 - About 72% agree or strongly agree, 13% neutral, 15% disagree or lower

- 5b - *are effective instructional leaders*
 - About 52% agree or strongly agree, 23% neutral, 25% disagree or lower
- 5c - *facilitate effective communication*
 - About 54% agree or strongly agree, 23% neutral, 23% disagree or lower
- 5d - *support me in my work with students*
 - About 63% agree or strongly agree, 23% neutral, 14% disagree or lower
- 5e - *support shared decision making*
 - About 53% agree or strongly agree, 27% neutral, 20% disagree or lower
- 5e - *allow me to be an effective instructional leader*
 - About 64% agree or strongly agree, 23% neutral, 13% disagree or lower
- 5f - *are effective in helping us reach our mission/vision*
 - About 56% agree or strongly agree, 25% neutral, 19% disagree or lower

Question Five Highlights

- Overall, respondents felt slightly less positive about district than site administrators.
- Respondents rated district leaders lowest in instructional leadership, communication and helping to achieve the mission/vision, matching the lowest rated areas for site leaders.

Question Six

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. My school board: (Adjusted for *Not Applicable*)

- 6a - *treat me with respect*
 - About 76% agree or strongly agree, 15% neutral, 9% disagree or lower
- 6b - *are effective educational leaders*
 - About 48% agree or strongly agree, 35% neutral, 17% disagree or lower
- 6c - *support me in my work with students*
 - About 57% agree or strongly agree, 29% neutral, 14% disagree or lower
- 6d - *is effective in helping us reach our vision/mission*
 - About 57% agree or strongly agree, 26% neutral, 16% disagree or lower
- 6e - *are aware of the importance and make an effort to visit school sites*
 - About 49% agree or strongly agree, 30% neutral, 21% disagree or lower

Question Six Highlights

- Respondents rated board members treating them with respect as highest among the statements provided.
- The lowest rated statements were around educational leadership and school visits.

Question Seven

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. I have the opportunity to:

- 7a - *develop my skills*
 - About 80% agree or strongly agree, 9% neutral, 11% disagree or lower
- 7b - *think for myself*
 - About 91% agree or strongly agree, 5% neutral, 4% disagree or lower
- 7c - *collaborate with peers*
 - About 81% agree or strongly agree, 9% neutral, 10% disagree or lower

Question Seven Highlights

- On the whole, these statements were rated higher than most throughout the survey.
- Respondents felt strongly that their working environment gives them the opportunity to think for themselves.

Question Eight

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. I love:

- 8a - *working at my site*
 - About 85% agree or strongly agree, 9% neutral, 6% disagree or lower
- 8b - *working in this district*
 - About 73% agree or strongly agree, 18% neutral, 9% disagree or lower
- 8c - *seeing my results of my work with students*
 - About 91% agree or strongly agree, 8% neutral or not applicable, 1% disagree or lower

Question Eight Highlights

- These statements were also rated more highly than others in the survey.
- People feel most connected to students, then their site, then their district.

Question Nine

Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment. I believe student achievement can increase through:

- 9a - *effective professional development related to our vision/mission*
 - About 81% agree or strongly agree, 10% neutral, 9% disagree or lower
- 9b - *teacher collaboration*
 - About 76% agree or strongly agree, 13% neutral, 11% disagree or lower
- 9c - *hands-on learning*
 - About 86% agree or strongly agree, 14% neutral or not applicable*
- 9d - *the use of technology*
 - About 78% agree or strongly agree, 15% neutral, 7% disagree or lower
- 9e - *close personal relationships between students and teachers*
 - About 84% agree or strongly agree, 7% neutral, 9% disagree or lower
- 9f - *teacher use of student achievement data*
 - About 68% agree or strongly agree, 22% neutral, 10% disagree or lower

Question Nine Highlights

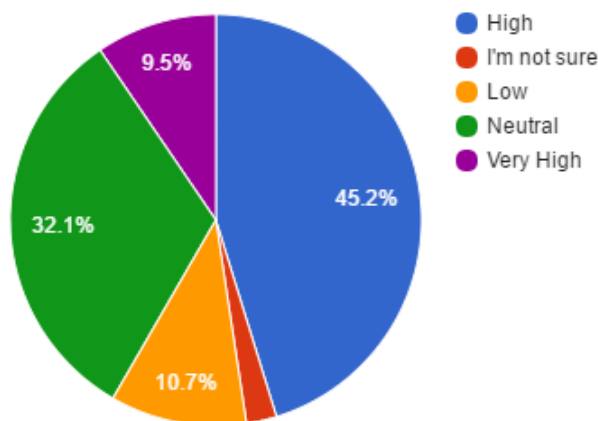
- Most respondents agreed that each of these things contribute to student achievement.
- The one area that did not score in the same range is teacher use of student achievement data.

Question Ten

Based on your experience, please rate morale in the following groups.
(Adjusted for I'm not sure)

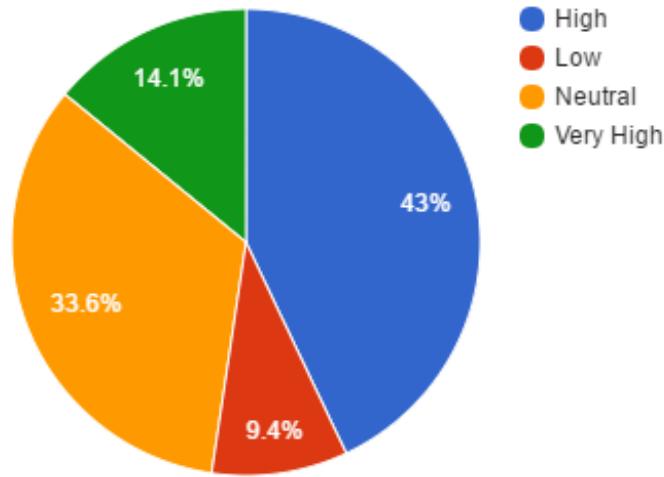
10a – Teachers (Only includes teacher responses)

About 55% very high or high, 32% neutral, 11% low



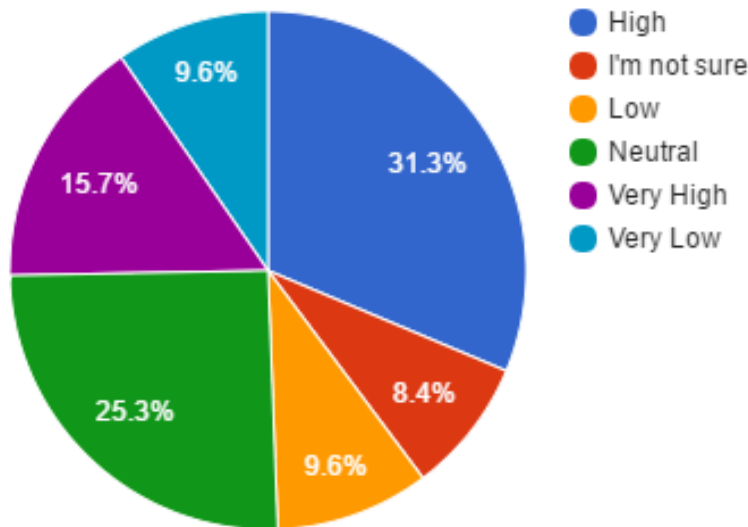
10b – Students

About 57% very high or high, 33% neutral, 9% low



10c - Support Staff (Only includes support staff responses)

About 47% very high or high, 34% neutral or not sure, 19% low or very low



Question Ten Highlights

- Less than 10 administrators answered the question about administrator morale. The question is not included in the report as it failed to reach a number that would be representative.
- Teachers rated themselves as having a slighter higher morale than classified staff.

Question 11

Please rate your agreement with the following statements.

- 11a - *I believe every student can learn*
 - About 96% agree or strongly agree, 4% neutral or not applicable*
- 11b - *The instructional program in this district is challenging*
 - About 61% agree or strongly agree, 30% neutral or not applicable, 9% disagree or lower
- 11c - *The district provides an atmosphere where every student can succeed*
 - About 61% agree or strongly agree, 22% neutral or not applicable, 17% disagree or lower
- 11d - *Quality work is expected from all students*
 - About 66% agree or strongly agree, 24% neutral or not applicable, 10% disagree or lower
- 11e - *Quality work is expected of me*
 - About 91% agree or strongly agree, 5% neutral, 4% disagree or lower
- 11f - *The vision/mission for our district is clear*
 - About 74% agree or strongly agree, 16% neutral or not applicable, 10% disagree or lower
- 11fg- *We have action plans in place which can get us to our vision*
 - About 59% agree or strongly agree, 29% neutral or not applicable, 12% disagree or lower
- 11h- *My school has a good public image*
 - About 71% agree or strongly agree, 16% neutral or not applicable, 13% disagree or lower
- 11i- *Our district has a good public image*
 - About 69% agree or strongly agree, 16% neutral or lower, 15% disagree or lower

Question Eleven Highlights

- Believing every student can learn and quality work is expected from employees received the highest level of agreement from respondents.
- Respondents agreed with these statements the least:
 - The instructional program in this district is challenging (61)
 - The district provides an atmosphere where every student can succeed (61)
 - Quality work is expected from all students (66)
 - We have action plans in place which can get us to our vision (59)

Qualitative Results

The last question of the survey, *please share any additional feedback regarding the direction and focus of the district*, was asked as an open ended question. Forty three participants, about 35 percent, answered this question in their own words. As part of the analysis of responses, we collected constructive input that could be made actionable. References to individuals, whether positive or negative, were removed. References to the respondent's identity, for example, location or position, were removed as well to ensure the anonymity of the respondent. After a careful analysis of the responses, a number of themes developed. They are listed below.

Collaboration and Professional Development

- Collaboration time needs to be more effective to improve consistency and strength of curriculum
- Need more than meetings within grade-level teams
- Need more focus and consistency
- Better utilization of coaches, more interaction and support
- Coaches rich with knowledge in a specific subject area can help drive and refine lessons while making suggestions on developing meaningful lessons
- Tap teachers who attend trainings to bring that knowledge back to the district
- Need more opportunity to collaborate at our site
- Consider early release once a week to limit use of subs, falling behind in academics
- Site-based lesson studies, rounds with trusted peers focused on a specific subject and/or strategy to improve would be helpful
- Professional development to give a deeper understanding of common core subject matter, standards, and best practices would be helpful
- Including some para-educators in some of the collaborations/trainings that involve instruction would be a huge benefit, including instructional aides and other support staff

Communication and Culture

- Need more focus on the good things teachers are doing
- More communication, especially about meeting outcomes
- More opportunities like surveys to share feedback
- More focus at sites on building a positive culture and celebrating staff and student achievement in a visible way
- Listen to employee and a parent concerns and communicate what you are doing about them
- Better communication between classified and administration
- More appreciation for special education staff
- Improve positivity at site level
- Lack of respect for classified employees, need to affirm their hard work and commitment to do good work
- Need more opportunities for classified staff to provide input
- Classified longevity and seniority are not appreciated enough

Operational and Personnel Concerns

- Ceilings and bathrooms need attention
- Some site administrators need additional skills to run a school
- Teachers are overwhelmed with tasks/duties, for example coordinating subs and checking tb tests for field trips
- Teachers are out of the classroom too often, 20 days this year
- There are not enough Chromebooks and a Chromebook check-out program for students that do not have access to a computer or internet at home would be nice
- Youtube is blocked for students and there are many educational reasons to have it available
- Lack of strong site leadership and synergy among staff
- Site administrator doesn't spend enough time in classrooms
- More opportunities for advancement for current staff, hands-on experience should be given more weight
- Less money on technology, and more on curriculum, materials and manipulatives so that teachers are not spending their own money

Decision Making

- Site administrators do not make enough decisions on their own, district dictates decision making on site staff placement/status
- PLC trainings brought a sense of empowerment and buy-in from teachers. When it went away, it was difficult to accept top-down decisions again on what our priorities should be

Positive Comments about the Schools, District and Opportunity for Feedback

- Thank you for asking for our input, I applaud you for putting out this survey, thanks for the opportunity to voice my opinion
- I think this survey was a positive step in the right direction acknowledging that the feelings staff have effect how people facilitate within their classrooms
- Being able to communicate, ask questions, and being supported and challenged by our district administration is what makes working for Escalon Unified School District so enjoyable
- I believe and support our district completely
- We are working hard and making progressive growth here in Escalon
- I am extremely grateful to be working in this district and at my site
- I have consistently loved my job during my duration in the district, I truly believe EUSD and EHS are great places to be right now
- Our site administrators are supportive and proactive
- I enjoy going to work every day because of my relationships with my coworkers and students
- I love my job!!!
- We have committed teachers and site administrators that collaborate often and openly
- I'm proud of the direction we are headed as a district and am privileged to be a part of it

- Our district is moving in the right direction for students
- I value the respect, support, and constant appreciation of the job I do. I could not do my job without this structure and support system
- The administrators at this site highly respect teachers and allow us to use the gift we are best at- teaching
- These leaders are on campus, walking around, talking to students and parents
- When our principal doesn't have the answer, he doesn't pretend to know. He asks for our input, and staff morale in my opinion is HIGH!
- In my 30 years, I have never felt more excited about teaching and being there for my kids.
- I'm not feeling like I'm being judged, and therefore am willing to use common core the best possible way I can
- I feel blessed to live and work in this community
- We may not be perfect in all aspects, but I truly believe that we are making positive changes and growing in the right direction
- It is my pleasure to work with so many dedicated people
- I feel compelled to take this opportunity to express that I have been positively affected by the leadership of my current site administrator, consistently proven himself to be friendly, approachable, fair, consistent, competent, and most importantly, an ethical and professional leader
- I feel our district has made great strides towards student success, district office staff are always very helpful, approachable and extremely supportive. I truly feel I can come to any one of them with any concern and will be met with respect, fairness and support
- My administrators and staff are a great team who work extremely well together and complement each other's attributes
- I enjoy working with everyone at my site, and my district team
- The administrators at this site highly respect teachers and allow us to use the gift we are best at- teaching

Potential Areas of Improvement

Continue to ask for input on a regular basis in a variety of ways

In addition to the comparatively slightly lower results on the quantitative questions related to shared decision making and feeling like their ideas are being heard, respondents provided several comments in the open-ended question related to the survey. They voiced appreciation for the request for their input and hoped that their input and ideas would be considered going forward.

In addition to district and site level online surveys, EUSD could consider adding other venues for discussion of concerns and submission of new ideas. Inviting each site to select representatives to participate in classified and certificated advisory councils to the superintendent could ensure that they are made aware of issues and can work with site administrators when appropriate to address them.

In site level and district staff meetings, adding a standing item for concerns and suggestions could provide an additional avenue for staff input and ensure that soliciting this kind of feedback from staff becomes part of a working culture.

Review the ways in which EUSD recognizes and rewards employees

Given the comparatively lower results on the quantitative questions related to employee recognition combined with the qualitative input on the need for increased respect for classified employees and more focus on the positive things that all employees are doing, it may benefit EUSD to explore a variety of annual, monthly and as-they-happen recognition programs at the site and district level. These kinds of programs may also be able to contribute to raising morale levels in each employee group and the positivity and climates at school and district sites.

Communicate more about district vision, collaboration, decision making

Throughout the quantitative and qualitative input, respondents provided a great deal of feedback related to these issues. In some cases, responses are in conflict with each other and in others they may not reflect the district's immediate plans that haven't yet been communicated. It would be helpful for EUSD to provide clear communication about district expectations in these areas with explicit examples of how sites are implementing these plans. This area may be ripe for collecting staff suggestions for improvement and effective implementation and increased communication would also contribute to raising morale.

Communicate more about the positive things happening at all levels

While there were a number of areas that employees identified for potential improvement, there were also a large number of comments submitted that indicated a great deal of pride in the work that is happening at the site and district level. While respondents indicated relatively high staff perceptions of both site and district public images, there is still plenty of room for increasing that number in future surveys. In addition to improving employee morale and feelings of pride, increasing communication about EUSD's accomplishments, people and programs will improve relationships and perceptions with all stakeholder groups.

APPENDIX A – SURVEY QUESTIONS

1 -What best describes your position in Escalon Unified School District?

2 - Please select the option that best matches your feelings about your working environment:

- like I belong at my school or site
- like I belong at this district
- recognized for good work
- support me in my work with students
- intrinsically rewarded for doing my job well

3 - I work with people who:

- treat me with respect
- listen if I have ideas about doing things better
- hold me accountable for my work

4 - My site administrators:

- treat me with respect
- are effective instructional leaders
- facilitate effective communication
- support me in my work with students
- support shared decision making
- allow me to be an effective instructional leader
- are effective in helping us reach our vision/mission

5 - My district administrators:

- treat me with respect
- are effective instructional leaders
- treat me with respect
- are effective instructional leaders
- facilitate effective communication
- support shared decision making
- allow me to be an effective instructional leader
- are effective in helping us reach our vision/mission

6 - My school board:

- treat staff with respect
- are effective educational leaders
- support me in my work with students
- is effective in helping us reach our vision/mission
- are aware of the importance and make an effort to visit school sites

7 - I have the opportunity to:

- develop my skills
- think for myself
- collaborate with peers

8 - I love:

- working at my site

- working in this district
- seeing my results of my work with students

9 - Rate your agreement with the following statements:

- effective professional development related to our vision/mission
- teacher collaboration
- hands-on learning
- the use of technology
- close personal relationships between students and teachers
- teacher use of student achievement data

10 - Based on your experience, please rate morale in the following groups:

- teachers
- Students
- support staff
- Administrators

11- Please rate your agreement with the following statements:

- I believe every student can learn
- The instructional program in this district is challenging
- The district provides an atmosphere where every student can succeed
- Quality work is expected from all students
- Quality work is expected of me
- The vision/mission for our district is clear
- We have action plans in place which can get us to our vision
- My school has a good public image
- Our district has a good public image

12 - Please share any additional feedback regarding the direction and focus of the district. (Open ended)