

# UC San Diego

## UC San Diego Electronic Theses and Dissertations

### Title

Voice of the classified employee : a descriptive study to determine degree of job satisfaction of classified employees and to design systems of support by school district leaders

### Permalink

<https://escholarship.org/uc/item/56z3z9bm>

### Author

Barakos-Cartwright, Rebekah B.

### Publication Date

2012

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SAN DIEGO  
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, SAN MARCOS

Voice of the Classified Employee: A Descriptive Study to Determine Degree of Job  
Satisfaction of Classified Employees and to Design Systems of Support by School  
District Leaders

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

by

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright

Committee in charge:

California State University, San Marcos

Professor Delores Lindsey, Chair

University of California, San Diego

Professor Alan Daly  
Professor James Levin

2012

©

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright, 2012

All rights reserved.

This Dissertation of Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright is approved, and it is acceptable in quality and form for publication on microfilm and electronically:

---

---

---

Chair

University of California, San Diego  
California State University, San Marcos

2012

## **Dedication**

The discipline to complete this dissertation is due to the high expectations and belief my parents, Elizabeth Barakos and Dr. Peter Barakos have in my abilities. I thank them for instilling in me the value of reading, learning and the desire to be disciplined.

My husband, Larry Cartwright, is the foundation of all I have accomplished in the last thirteen years. His patience, understanding and adventurous character have provided me with the ability to complete this goal.

I thank these three for their patience and trust in me.

## Table of Contents

Signature Page .....	iii
Dedication.....	iv
Table of Contents .....	v
List of Figures.....	ix
List of Tables.....	x
Vita .....	xi
Abstract Of The Dissertation.....	xv
Chapter One.....	1
Introduction to the Study .....	1
Statement of the Problem .....	5
Definition of Terms .....	6
Research Questions .....	10
Preview of literature review .....	11
Organization of the Study – Preview of Methodology.....	18
Significance of the Study.....	19
Positionality/Limitations/Assumptions .....	20
Conclusion.....	25
Chapter Two .....	26
Review of Related Literature.....	26

Organizational Development, Culture, and the Possibility of Change.....	27
Relationships .....	35
Dialogue .....	39
Psychological Capital (PsyCap) .....	41
Job Satisfaction.....	47
Social Capital.....	48
Shared Leadership .....	50
Collective Efficacy .....	51
Additional Research .....	52
Supporting Frameworks of an Organization .....	55
Chapter Three .....	57
Research Design and Methodology.....	57
Pilot Study – Interviews .....	57
Design.....	59
Participants and Setting .....	61
Assessment Instrumentation.....	63
Research Hypotheses.....	69
Materials and Procedure .....	73
Data Collection.....	75
Data Analysis.....	76
Research Report.....	76
Summary.....	77

Chapter Four .....	79
Results and Findings.....	79
Data Analysis.....	79
Findings .....	80
Qualitative Data: Interviews.....	80
Selection of Focus .....	83
Professional Development.....	84
Communication .....	86
Relationship With Supervisor.....	90
Appreciation .....	96
Part Of A Team .....	101
Valued.....	104
Summary.....	108
Quantitative Analysis of Survey Findings.....	112
Factor Analysis - Validations of the scale .....	112
Correlational Analysis .....	114
t-Tests .....	115
Statistical Analysis: ANOVAs .....	116
MANOVA Analysis .....	117
Summary of the Quantitative Analysis.....	119
Conclusion.....	119
Chapter Five .....	121



Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations .....	121
Conclusions: What do the findings mean? .....	124
Recommendations: The Action Plan .....	125
Appendix A: Interview Protocol - Classified Employee .....	134
Appendix B: Administrator/Director Interview Questions .....	136
Appendix C: Focus Group Interview Questions .....	138
Appendix D: Frequency Report.....	140
Appendix E: Consent Forms .....	142
Appendix F: Survey Codes.....	152
Appendix G: Dr. Hoffman Contract.....	153
Appendix H: Compensation Study.....	154
Appendix I: Impact of Work Survey .....	175
References .....	178

## **List of Figures**

Figure 1.	Listening to the Voice of the Classified Employee .....	17
Figure 2.	Schein’s Three Levels of Culture .....	31
Figure 3.	Organizational Development: Supports for Increased Engagement of the Classified Employee .....	55
Figure 4.	Steps to Classified Employee Job Satisfaction: Theoretical Frameworks, Thematic Headings, and Codes .....	111
Figure 5.	Mean Values for the Degree of Employees’ Involvement with Students .....	118
Figure 6.	Combining Qualitative And Quantitative Analyses To Achieve Job Satisfaction In The Classified Employee .....	120
Figure 7.	Steps to Increased Social Capital .....	123
Figure 8.	Actions to Develop Relationships .....	129

## List of Tables

Table 1.	Trends in Organizational Development (Marshak, R.J. and Grant, D. 2008 p. 8).....	29
Table 2.	Thematic Coding Of Interviews In Pilot Study .....	59
Table 3.	Group Headings with Codes .....	80
Table 4.	Frequency Report – Codes Listed – Ordered Number of Times Used in Cases.....	82
Table 5.	Connecting Theoretical Frameworks to Thematic Headings and Codes .... .....	109
Table 6.	Factor Analysis of the Impact of Work Survey.....	113
Table 7.	Impact Of Work Survey Components According To Association With Three Factors: Satisfaction, Relationships, And Creativity .....	114
Table 8.	Intercorrelations of Three Factors from the HVVS.....	115
Table 9.	Means And Standard Deviations For The Impact Of Work Scale .....	116
Table 10.	Groups Of Positions Divided According To Job Titles.....	117

## Vita

### EDUCATION:

Doctor of Education, 2012  
California State University San Marcos  
University of California San Diego  
Educational Leadership

Master of Arts in Education, 1999  
San Diego State University, San Diego, CA  
Concentration in Educational Leadership – Curriculum and Instruction  
Administrative Services Credential

Bachelor of Arts, English – 1987, California Polytechnic University, San Luis Obispo, CA  
Professional Clear Single Subject Teaching Credential: English

### EXPERIENCE:

2010-Present Director, Human Resources,  
Coronado Unified School District, San Diego, California

2009-2010 Director, Foreign Language Acquisition Program (FLAP), San Diego  
County Office of Education, San Diego, California  
Coordinated the grant through oversight and project task management  
Outreach to FLAP grant partners to align resources with site needs and increase  
student access to Mandarin  
Researched and developed assessment tools and evaluated Mandarin programs  
Organized collaboration opportunities and accessed resources for Mandarin  
teachers to develop World Language curriculum  
Communicated with the federal FLAP liaison to support implementation of the  
grant.

2007-2009 Superintendent/Principal, Lassen Union High School District (9-12)  
Susanville, California  
Analyzed data and supported increased academic rigor for students through  
teacher training  
Established outreach to the Susanville Elementary School District and Lassen  
Community College through articulation meetings with faculty, K-14  
Developed, organized and implemented the district's Strategic Plan  
Increased communication to engage and inform the Susanville community and  
parents via a weekly column in the local Lassen County Times  
Directed, trained and supported dynamic staff development opportunities  
targeting standards based education resulting in the increase of California

Standards Test scores by a significant margin at the charter school, high school and continuation school

Implemented English Language Development programs for an increasing English Language Learner population

Promoted the support of special needs students through the gradual introduction and implementation of Response to Intervention (RtI) through master schedule development and teacher training.

2004 - 2007 Principal, Salt Creek Elementary School (K-6), Chula Vista Elementary School District, Chula Vista, California

Planned and supervised the opening of the 42<sup>nd</sup> school in the Chula Vista Elementary School District

Conferred with parents and experts to establish a dynamic Dual Immersion Program

Collaborated with and supported our Parent Teacher Group to implement an arts education program

Articulated with Sweetwater High School District to support transitioning students

Trained faculty on standards based instruction and curriculum application

Managed a positive and fair work place focused on trust and transparency

Encouraged rigorous academic standards for student achievement resulting in high state test scores

Supervised the implementation of the innovative Foreign Language Acquisition Program (FLAP) in Spanish, Mandarin and Japanese

Supported the training of staff to implement the SPARKS P.E. program

Planned, developed and opened the school's computer lab

Developed a site KIDCO program utilizing the 2006 Early Mental Health Initiative Grant.

2002 – 2004 Principal, Arena Union Elementary School (Pre-K-8), Arena Union Elementary School District, Pt. Arena, California

Organized and implemented standards based training to support a challenging standards aligned curriculum in all subject areas

Evaluated certificated and classified personnel

Established and supported a relationship of trust amongst employees

Coordinated and implemented site budget

Created support and training structures for staff and students

Implemented a Latino Family Literacy Program

Led staff professional book discussions: RESULTS, The First Days of School

Developed workshops: Framework for Understanding Poverty, STAR/CAT-6

Data Analysis for Student Academic Improvement, Teacher Observations, Collaboration and Coaching

Wrote and received approval for the Reading First Grant, 2003-2004 for Arena Union Elementary.

1996 – 2002 Principal / Teacher, Palm Academy for Learning, Alternative High School (9-12) Coronado Unified School District, Coronado, California  
Collaborated with staff members to create a high interest, standards based curriculum for “at risk” high school students  
Set high expectations, communicated with the local community colleges to create support systems for students to graduate from high school and create and attain future goals  
Developed a school schedule to accommodate highly qualified teachers from Coronado High school to teach at our continuation school  
Worked closely with parents, law enforcement and teachers to create a positive, supportive environment for students  
Supported staff to value each student’s strengths and maintain high expectations

English Teacher / Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment-Support Provider  
Coronado High School (9-12), Coronado Unified School District, Coronado, CA  
1987 – 1996

English and Dramatic Arts Teacher, San Luis Obispo High School (9-12),

San Luis Coastal Unified School District, San Luis Obispo, California

Teacher of English, Dramatic Arts, ESL, Athletics, Nagoya International School (Pre-K-12),

Nagoya, Japan (Leave of absence from San Luis Coastal Unified District 1993-1995)

#### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS:**

American Educational Research Association (AERA)  
Association of California Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL)  
Phi Delta Kappan

#### **PROFESSIONAL PRESENTATIONS**

2005-2009 Faculty and community presentations:

“Strategic Planning - The State of the District, Goals”

“Character Counts!”

“Report Cards and What They Mean”

“Dual Immersion Programs – Success and Next Steps”

“Understanding State Testing and Data (CAT-6 and STAR)”

2003 “Framework for Understanding Poverty”

2000-2002 Trainer for Year 1 and Year 2 Support Providers

1994-1995 Presentations, Japan Council of International Schools – Kobe, Japan

*Asian Art and Asian Literature (1994)*

Designed a curriculum, that applies the fundamental characteristics of Asian art to Asian literature

Researched and integrated the use of art, music, history, religion and philosophy to facilitate the acquisition of Asian literature by the student

Formulated techniques to facilitate learning and increase student interest.

*Aligning Drama with English as a Second Language (1995)*

Conceptualized, outlined and developed a program utilizing techniques used in drama to heighten the language acquisition and strengthen the language production in the learner of English as a second language.

**PROFESSIONAL CONFERENCES and TRAININGS:**

- 2009-2010 American Council of Teachers of Foreign Languages (ACTFL), San Diego Chinese and American Summer Education Leadership Seminar , San Diego
- 2008-2009 Personnel Academy, ACSA – Burlingame cohort, Categorical Programs Academy, ACSA – Sacramento cohort, Character Counts! Trainer of Trainers – Burlingame
- 2007-2008 Superintendent’s Academy, ACSA – Vacaville cohort, Labor Law Consortium, Redding, CA
- 2006-2007 Response to Intervention, ADEPT Training, Business Manager’s Academy - San Diego County Office of Education (SDCOE), Aspiring Superintendent’s Academy – (SDCOE)
- 2004-2005 Guided Language Acquisition Development (G.L.A.D.), FRISK Training, Rigby – English Language Development Program, Personnel Institute, ACSA-Pomona
- 2002-2003 Latino Family Literacy Program Training, Framework for Understanding Poverty

## **Abstract Of The Dissertation**

Voice of the Classified Employee: A Descriptive Study to Determine Degree of Job Satisfaction of Classified Employees and to Design Systems of Support by School District Leaders

by

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

University of California, San Diego, 2012  
California State University, San Marcos, 2012

Professor Delores Lindsey, Chair

Classified employees comprise thirty two percent of the educational workforce in school districts in the state of California. Acknowledging these employees as a viable and untapped resource within the educational system will enrich job satisfaction for these employees and benefit the operations in school sites. As acknowledged and valued resources, these employees may play an important role in supporting the vision and mission of a district. The purpose of this study was to listen to the voice of the classified employee, identify, develop and implement systems that support classified employees to increase job satisfaction and engagement in the work place. The study relied on the frameworks of organizational development and the culture of an organization, relationships, dialogue, psychological capital, job satisfaction, social capital, shared leadership and collective efficacy as they relate to accessing and augmenting the



untapped resource of classified employees within the public school system. The methodology of the study evaluated the quality of job satisfaction and work engagement of classified employees by listening to the voices of these employees through surveys, focus groups and interviews. Analyses of those data revealed the following themes in attaining job satisfaction: importance of connecting with a team, engaging in the work place, communicating, and developing relationships with peers and supervisors. These findings led to an action-plan model offered by the researcher to establish systems to support classified employees toward greater job satisfaction. Investing time and implementing purposeful procedures through the development of supervisor-employee relationships, increased communication, professional development and fostering opportunities for employees to connect with students as action-steps has the potential to not only support social capital growth of classified employees but may lead to development of human capital. The expansion of classified employees' social capital through the augmentation of the supervisor-employee and professional learning teams' relationships were determined as an important step to building the job satisfaction and work engagement of the classified employee. The voices of classified employees served to frame action plans necessary to realize the positive impact these employees have within a school district. In the final chapter, the researcher described actions that district leaders might take to design and implement systems that support job satisfaction.

Keywords: classified employees, human capital, job satisfaction, positive organizational behavior, psychological capital, collective efficacy, self-efficacy, social capital

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction to the Study**

The purpose of this study was to determine the systems in place that increase the human capital of classified employees and to establish what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to become engaged in the vision and mission of the workplace. According to a U.S. Department of Education study, classified employees, (i.e. instructional aides and student support staff) comprise approximately 32% of the public elementary and secondary school systems education work force in California (US DoE, 1998). Classified employees are those individuals in a school district who have direct, daily contact with elementary and secondary students, parents, community members and teachers and have job responsibilities in the area of support services. These employees provide a wide variety of services in public schools including security, food services, office and clerical work, school maintenance and operations, transportation, academic assistance and para-educator services, library and media assistance, computer services and more (California School Employees Association, 2010). School districts designate employees as either certificated or classified. For example, certificated employees are teachers, psychologists, and administrators to name a few, essentially individuals who have a credential or certificate in a specialized area. In contrast, classified employees held job classifications as site secretaries, clerks, instructional assistants, custodians and bus drivers who typically do not have a teaching credential or advanced degree. Classified employees are individuals who may or may not

have a post high school educational experience. Bauer (2000) describes the role of classified employees as “frontline” since they are the first district representatives that parents, community members and county office personnel meet upon arrival at school sites and the district office. Paraprofessionals establish the immediate “face” of public education to the community when they enter the doors of each site with a school district. The classified employee functions in a variety of roles within the schools to support students and staff as they work within the organization to optimize the academic experience of the student. The science of education or pedagogy is central to the outcomes intended of the school system. The classified employee’s role in this system may be related to the social history of the word pedagogy. In Ancient Greece, rich families had servants who led students to their teachers. These individuals played an important role in the education of the student by providing the support services to get the students to their teacher and ready to learn (J. Levin, conversation, November 29, 2012). This relationship may be compared to the support services classified employees, such as bus drivers, food service workers and instructional assistants, provide within modern day school districts. Therefore, an important role for classified employees is to project an attitude that emanates from personal job satisfaction with their job assignment and to have a concrete awareness of how that job impacts the academic life of each student as well as the learning environment of the site and district.

Locke (1969) discusses the strength and quality of an employee’s connection to a job in his research. The quality of this relationship is described as job satisfaction. The more satisfying the employee’s experience at a job the more positive the job satisfaction of the employee. A district employee experiencing job satisfaction may positively impact

students, other employees, parents, and community members. Developing job satisfaction in classified employees may be an opportunity for individuals in leadership positions within districts to also build human capital. The human capital of an individual in the work place is defined as, the set of skills that an employee acquires on the job, through training and experience, and that increase that employee's value in the marketplace. The increase of job satisfaction and development of human capital will positively impact interactions with the public, impact student achievement and help develop a supportive learning environment.

Classified employees strategically integrated throughout the educational system within school districts have the potential to impact an organization either negatively or positively. An employee who feels valued and whose input is sought may have an increased positive impact on students, other employees, parents and community members. Developing human capital may increase the self-efficacy of a classified employee. Classified employees' human capital and the resulting potential of this impact is a resource that must be supported and developed in a school district in order to make full use of district resources. Maximizing the existing resources in a school district is a necessary step in light of the budget restrictions many school districts face.

In the same fashion, Dutton (2003) shares the improvement of the human condition as important to the vitality of organizations. This improvement could be approached from a deficit-based approach or a strengths-based approach. Using a strengths-based approach, Daly and Chrispeels (2005) state the importance of looking for three indicators of assets: systemic strengths, organizational resilience and supportive structures. Classified employees through their job classifications hold the unique

opportunity to provide support structures and systems for the school sites and staff. As the classified employees' role in the supportive structures is further examined and identified within a school district, these structures may be used to identify and guide the professional development for classified employees. The purpose of professional development is to augment the human capital of the classified employee. In turn, increased human capital within the classified employee group will strengthen support structures within the school district and may positively impact job satisfaction.

As systemic changes are put into place to support the professional development of classified employees, Fullan (2008) recommends incorporating an organization's individuals including their differences and perspectives into the change effort. Including the voice of the classified employee in this process may increase the impact of the systemic changes within an organization. The inclusion of voice, as recommended by Paulo Freire (2000), places an emphasis upon what is referred to as *true dialogue* as a method of creating solidarity and problem solving. Freire (2000) believed that as dialoguers, we must engage in critical thinking. Involving the classified employee in critical dialogue on the issues, that affect student environment and academic achievement, may increase employee engagement and awareness of the role support staff has on these issues. Measuring job satisfaction will determine the established levels of self-efficacy. Bandura (1982) defines self-efficacy as a person's attitudes, abilities and cognitive skills. These play a major role in how situations are perceived and the individual's reactions to different situations. Essentially self-efficacy is the individual's belief in their own ability to complete a task. The measurement of job satisfaction provides additional data that may help to inform the quality of human capital of the

classified employee. The identification of existing procedures and support systems that are strengths-based within the school district provide a foundation on which the researcher may build the action plans resulting from this research to increase human capital and the quality of engagement of classified employees.

As noted earlier, the purpose of this study is to determine the systems in place in a school system that increase the human capital of classified employees. In the same fashion, factors that challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to become engaged in the vision and mission of the workplace will be analyzed. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the issues that bring this study to the forefront through a statement of the problem. Key terms are defined for the reader followed by the significance of the study and the literature the researcher has reviewed to provoke additional research.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Classified employees are thirty-two percent of education's work forces, and they hold positions throughout district offices and school sites. Their involvement within the school support systems impacts a schools' academic environment. Their level of job satisfaction and engagement in the work place will support or undermine the changes that district leaders wish to put into place. Locke (1969) states the relationship between the expectations of a job and the actual job is what results in either job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Development and awareness of job competencies implicit within the expectations of a job may need to be shared and reviewed with the classified employee to determine job satisfaction. Seligman (2004) reveals the elements of productivity in work

as a function of positive emotion, engagement, and meaning. Engaging the classified employee in a discussion involving the elements of productivity will help to connect job descriptions to these elements and provide an impetus to increasing engagement of the classified employee within the district.

Classified employees are rarely if ever asked for their opinions, input or recommendations regarding the vision and mission of the school district. Consequently they are not active members of the district's decision-making procedures. This lack of involvement does not take advantage of the existing human capital available within this group of employees. In these restricted budgetary times in education, it is necessary that school districts' administrators review existing district resources to ensure that these are maximized. The problem researched in this study is that within school districts there is a group of employees that has been ignored. This group of classified employees is a neglected resource with the potential to positively impact the function of a school district. This research study revealed the potential of this group of employees through their involvement in interviews, focus groups and surveys. The voice of the classified employee was accessed through these research methods to inform action plans that maximize the district's resource: classified employees. These action plans developed with classified employee input include recommendations of classified employees and support the increase of classified employee engagement in the work place and possibly classified employee job satisfaction.

### **Definition of Terms**

Certain terms specific to this research are described in this section.

**Academic Optimism** – A collective attitudinal measure of schools consisting of three dimensions: collective teacher efficacy, academic emphasis and faculty trust in students and parents (Hoy, Tarter, & Hoy, 2006).

**Agency** – The ways that people exercise some level of control over their own lives (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004, p. 4).

**Certificated** - A person who holds a professional education certificate issued by the superintendent of public instruction and who is employed by a school district in a position for which such certificate is required by statute, rule of the professional educator standards board, or written policy or practice of the employing school district.

**Classified** - An employee of a school district who is in a position not requiring certification. The classified staff consists of three subgroups. The “paraprofessional” subgroup includes teaching assistants, teacher’s aides, pupil services aides and library aides. The “office/clerical” staff members are the employees who perform clerical or administrative support duties, such as a school secretary. The “other” subgroup consists of the remaining noncertificated staff, such as custodians, bus drivers, and cafeteria workers.

**Collective Efficacy** - People’s shared beliefs in their collective power to produce desired results. A group’s attainments are the product not only of shared knowledge and skills of its different members, but also of the interactive, coordinative, and synergistic dynamics of their transactions (Bandura, 2000, p. 75).

**Commitment** – Strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization. This has three major qualities: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goals and values, (b) a willingness to exert considerable effort on



behalf of the organization, and (c) a strong intent or desire to remain with the organization (Chan, W-Y., Lau, S., Nie, Y., Lim, S., & Hogan, D. 2008, p. 598).

**Organizational Culture** – Shared assumptions that are “invented, discovered, or developed by a given group as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration” (Schein, 1984, p.3).

**Human Capital** - The set of skills that an employee acquires on the job, through training and experience, and which increase that employee’s value in the marketplace.

**Job Satisfaction** – The emotional state which is a consequence of the employee’s appraisal of the job regarding whether the job helps the employee to achieve or facilitate the employee’s job values (Locke, 1969, p. 316).

**Para-educator** - A job title given to persons in various occupational fields, such as education, healthcare, engineering and law. These employees are trained to assist professionals but may not be licensed.

**Paraprofessional** – see **Para-educator**

**Positive Emotions** – Emotions such as joy, interest, contentment, love, etc. are moments in that individuals are not plagued by negative emotions such as anxiety, sadness, anger, etc. (Frederickson, 2004, p. 1367).

**Positive Organizational Behavior (POB)** – includes the pursuit of employee happiness, health and betterment issues as viable goals or ends in themselves (Avey, Luthans, Smith, Palmer, 2010). Constructs within POB are trust, satisfaction, retention, commitment, engagement, etc.

**Positive Psychology** – An umbrella term for the study of positive emotions, positive character traits and enabling institutions. The purpose of positive psychology is to

understand the personal characteristics and tendencies contributing to psychological health and wellness of individuals and the public in general (Seligman 2005).

**Psychological Capital (PsyCap)** - PsyCap elements are the foundation of what is necessary to build and sustain positive employees and positive organizations. The elements of PsyCap are resiliency, hope, self-efficacy and optimism within self and in peers (Avey, Wernsing, & Luthans, 2008).

**Routes to Happiness** – (a) positive emotion and pleasure (the pleasant life); (b) engagement (the engaged life); and (c) meaning (the meaningful life) (Seligman & Steen, 2005, p. 413).

**Self-efficacy** - A person's attitudes, abilities, and cognitive skills comprise what is known as the self-system. This system plays a major role in how we perceive situations and how we behave in response to different situations. A critical component of the theory is an individual's belief about capacity to organize and execute the actions required to produce a given level of attainment (Bandura, 1982).

**Social Capital** – An investment in the social relations in a system through which the resources of other individuals can be accessed, borrowed, or leveraged (Daly & Finnegan, 2010, p. 115).

**Social Cognitive Theory** – A general framework for understanding human learning and motivation (Bandura, 1986, 1997).

**Social Network Analysis (SNA)** – A systemic approach used to quantify and visualize the ties and overall structure of formal and informal networks (Daly & Finnegan, 2010, p.113).

The purpose of this study is to determine the systems in place, that have the potential to increase the human capital of classified employees, and to determine what factors, from the point of view of the classified employee, challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' organizational commitment.

### **Research Questions**

A strong connection between an employee and the organization is necessary to support employee satisfaction (O'Leary, Lindholm, Whitford, & Freeman, 2002; Shaw & Reyes 1992; Mowday & Seers 1979; Saari & Judge 2004). To increase the connection and engagement between an employee and a job, the investigation of what that job means to the employee is a first step. Understanding the perspective of the classified employee through interviews, surveys and focus groups will inform policy and decisions made by management within a school district. The research methods, interviews, surveys and focus groups contain questions that elicited discussion about the recognition of the classified employee's value and purpose of the job to the organization as a whole. The resulting discussions informed the research questions established by the researcher. The resulting action plans support managers and policy makers in school districts to implement policy focused on the needs of classified employees based on research based decisions resulting from this research study.

This study investigated the following questions:

1. In what ways is human capital of classified employees described by classified, certificated employees and administrators?
2. From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or

facilitate the classified employees' efforts to maximize their own human capital?

3. What are exemplars of classified employees being valued by supervisors at school sites?
4. To what degree are classified employees valued by supervisors at school sites?

As this study provides data and findings in response to these questions, appropriate interventions may be put into place, therefore increasing the engagement of classified employees within a school district. The increase in engagement may lead to happy employees whose job satisfaction and involvement in the work place will support higher collective efficacy within each school site and in the district.

### **Preview of literature review**

The focus of the literature review for this study will center on these topics: (1) organizational development and the culture of an organization, (2) relationships, (3) dialogue, (4) psychological capital, (5) job satisfaction, (6) social capital, (7) shared leadership and (7) collective efficacy. O'Leary, Lindholm, Whitford and Freeman (2002) state, "Competencies form a common language that communicate the requirements for job success" (p. 328). Though this statement rings true, additional research should be conducted to determine whether a connection exists between job satisfaction and job success. As the development of a 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce is supported, the competencies that current and future employees will require may evolve. O'Leary et al. (2002) hypothesize that competencies may have an impact in the educational setting if schools are to be successful in preparing students for the world of work. If the classified

employee is expected to meet certain job competencies to be successful in the 21<sup>st</sup> century work place, could the classified employee positively impact students to be prepared for 21<sup>st</sup> century jobs by being a positive role model? The job competencies must be clearly defined, discussed with employees and addressed as the value of a job is examined. Clarifying job competencies is an initial step in the collective understanding of the value of a position within an organization. This clarification may improve the relationship between the job and the employee. It may also help to establish job satisfaction and may ultimately affect the classified employees' impact upon the school environment. Locke (1969) refers to job satisfaction as the result of the employee's emotional reactions to the job. These reactions are either positive or negative depending upon the employee's personal goals and values. O'Leary et al. (2002) share the notion that the ability to reason is important as well as the ability to develop interpersonal and social competencies. Students observing classified employees who exhibit both interpersonal, social competencies and who are adaptable, responsible, able to work with others and satisfied with their jobs may be influenced to develop these social and interpersonal competencies that are needed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workplace.

Establishing safe zones for classified employees to dialogue about these competences is a step in the development of the 21<sup>st</sup> century employee. Supporting the 21<sup>st</sup> century employee through recognition of the skills these employees will require as they create academic environments for the 21<sup>st</sup> century student is a necessary component in acquiring these competencies. These skills are known as the four C's: communication, collaboration, critical thinking and citizenship. Using forums to elicit the "voice of the classified employee" may be instrumental in supporting this type of dialogue. This form

of team building may enrich the work environment. Increasing the human capital of classified employees, communicating expectations through clear job descriptions and establishing a high standard of professionalism for classified employees may help to increase and systemize consistent forms of communication between all individuals within a school district.

During a pre-election board forum in 2010 sponsored by parent teacher groups within the Coronado Unified School District, board candidates were questioned about what they envisioned as a necessary plan of action for the district. One candidate stated that human capital needed to be developed. This prospective board member was referring to students and the need to develop students' capacities for the future. I propose that in addition to student-centeredness, the focus of school district work must also be placed on the development of the human capital of employees. Specifically emphasis must be placed on the human capital of classified employees who are employed by school districts to fulfill a wide variety of roles. O'Leary et al. (2002) reveal through their research that the current trend of organizations is to invest in human capital as they invest in other forms of capital. "Success will belong to those organizations who define return on investment not only in terms of profit and loss but also as the development and aggregation of human and intellectual capital" (p. 325). This notion is very important to school districts in this time of budget concerns and restrictions.

Both certificated and classified employees are part of the academic environment of the student (California School Employees Association, 2010). The certificated employee is defined as a person who holds a professional education certificate issued by the superintendent of public instruction and who is employed by a school district in a

position for which such certificate is required. Classified employees are employed to implement the support systems in a district. Certificated and classified members of a district work to improve instruction and maintain a positive environment and support the development of students from Pre-K through twelfth grade (California School Employees Association, 2010). Building opportunities for classified employees to experience personal and professional growth in order to support and enrich job experiences and professional relationships has the potential to energize employed individuals who may feel disengaged from their work environment. Opportunities to improve the efficiency and quality of their work as well as their sense of self-efficacy must be made available to them to increase engagement and job satisfaction. Knowing how to increase self-efficacy and connect classified employees to the district are components of this research. This researcher proposes these two factors, increased self-efficacy and engaged classified employees will support job satisfaction and increased engagement in the work place.

The classified employees' union, California School Employees Association (CSEA), provides training, guidance and resources for its employees to sharpen their job skills. This organization is also available to support and maintain the security of classified employee's positions within the work place. Employees make up 75% or more of a typical school district budget. Conversely, the classified employee may be the first laid off in times of budget cuts. From the perspective of the classified employee the action of a layoff may elicit the notion that their jobs are expendable, resulting in statements such as, "We are treated like second class citizens," "The district does not appreciate us," "We aren't worth the benefits, look at the hours they give us" (Classified Employees Meeting, October 2010). Layoffs exist in both the classified and the certificated ranks. Yet the

classified positions reduced or laid off may consist of a minimum of workday hours ranging from two hours to six hours per day. The repeated layoff of a non-benefitted individual who earns a minimum of \$11.39 per hour has an impact on the self-efficacy, engagement and trust of these employees toward their employer, the school district.

The focus on self-efficacy and a feeling of worth within one's job is relevant to the larger group (including certificated employees, management, students and parents), yet it is conceptually bound in that the classified group is a unique group separate from certificated and management employees. This researcher's observation is that the classified employees' supportive role within a school district is overlooked and undeveloped. The potential benefit the collective efficacy of a group of individuals brings to the team of a school district is significant. Bandura (1993) establishes the importance of a staff having a strong belief system in their abilities. "The belief systems of staffs create school cultures that can have vitalizing or demoralizing effects on how well schools function as a social system" (p. 141). In the academic environment, an understanding and analysis of an employee's position and how that position fulfills the vision and mission of the educational setting is a foundation that leaders can build upon the employee's awareness of the importance of the job. Bandura (1993) affirms through his research that high collective efficacy in the belief that collective staffs can promote a high level of academic progress contributes to the schools' level of academic achievement (p. 143). Asking classified employees their perception regarding how they fit into the educational setting is a step in the improvement process.

The school district should develop policy and move as a district wide team to utilize practices that meet the goals of engagement of classified employees' and

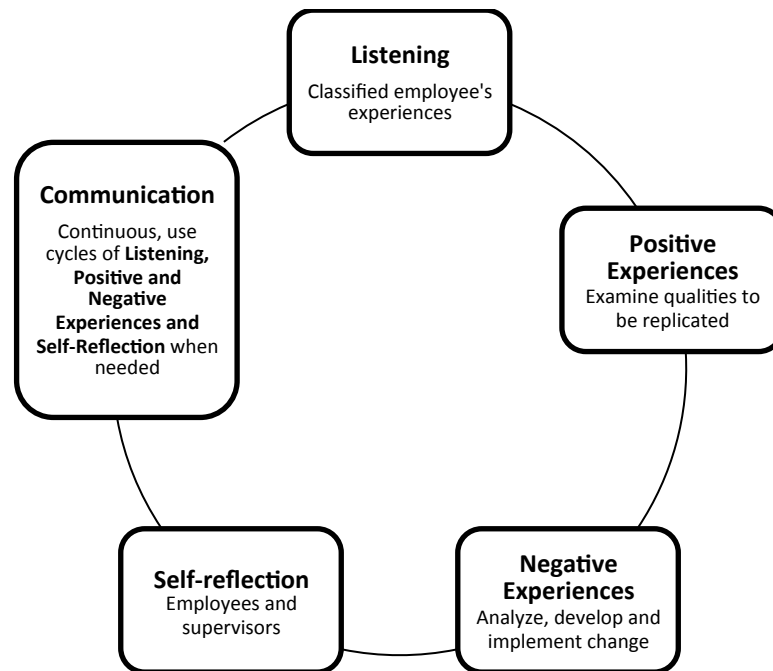


awareness of job satisfaction in classified employees. Adjusting and redefining the role of the classified employee within the educational system to address and fulfill rigorous job competencies, engage in critical dialogue, and promote a sense of efficacy, both self and collective, may increase classified employees' human capital.

The resources classified employees provide to improve the quality of schools are limitless. Yet these resources are not fully developed and utilized. A comparison of the professional development opportunities provided by the Classified School Employees Association and those offered by six districts in which this researcher has been employed reveal that there is a significant disparity between what could be offered and what currently exists in professional development provided for classified employees. Professional development was offered to classified employees in one out of six districts in which this researcher worked.

Classified employees are one third of the work force in the public schools. They are a resource that, if developed through professional development, has the potential to be a significant asset to the district and to the development of an improved academic environment for students (U.S. Department of Education, 1998). What is not known in examining the role of the classified employee at a school site is what systems are in place to strengthen human capital. These systems must provide opportunities for all employees to feel valued by supervisors and to understand the importance of their jobs. The district must develop systems that allow classified employees to contribute to the team and motivate the classified employees to maximize human capital. Figure 1 visually demonstrates the direction of improvement the researcher plans to implement utilizing the voice of the classified employee to direct the development of supporting policies and

procedures. These supporting policies and procedures will support engagement in the work place and the self-efficacy of individual classified employees and the collective efficacy of this group of employees.



**Figure 1.** Listening to the Voice of the Classified Employee

The first step in this model created by the researcher is to listen to the employee and access his or her perspective, knowledge and perception of the role within the district. If an employee has an overall positive experience and there are few areas to improve, the next step will be to continue the acceptable relationship within the job and add aspects to the existing job situation that increase the positive experience. When negative experiences are evident it will be necessary to analyze the reasons for these experiences, establish how to minimize these negative experiences and collaborate with classified employees to determine steps that lead to positive work experiences.

The steps contained within this direction of improvement include accessing the voice of the classified employee, establishing systems of support, increasing self-reflection and obtaining high collective efficacy. All in all the purpose of this model is to support policy makers, administrators and classified employees to realize the role high self-efficacy has on the system, its impact upon each school site and on the entire district. Collaboration, dialogue, implementation of action plans and a continuous cycle of reflection may result in high collective efficacy for all classified employee. It is important to recognize that this is not a model which may be easily replicated. Each district and its employees are different, thus the district will need to first complete an analysis regarding the necessary steps which need to be implemented for this model to be successful.

### **Organization of the Study – Preview of Methodology**

This study examines the classified employee's perspective regarding the work place and this relationship to the factors of organizational commitment and the systems that support this commitment. The perspective of employees accessed through one-on-one interviews of thirteen randomly selected classified employees and administrators are transcribed and coded. After determining the themes within the classified employees' perspectives, these themes were used to develop action plans and to increase the depth of knowledge regarding the classified employees' perspectives in relation to the workplace.

In order to quantify the collective efficacy of classified employees, multiple data points were accessed. Some of these data points are classified employee attitudes, collective efficacy, and administrators' perception of classified employees. In order to triangulate multiple data points, surveys, focus groups and interviews were administered.

In addition, administrators were interviewed. These interviews were used to access additional information to establish a point of reference about the classified employee's job from other perspectives. Saari and Judge (2004) discuss two extensively validated employee attitude survey measures in their research on employee attitudes and job satisfaction: the Job Descriptive Index (JDI) and the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) (p. 400). Additional research has been completed to determine which of these surveys or whether another survey best meet the needs of this research study. Measuring employee attitudes expands this researcher's ability to evaluate the factors challenging or facilitating the classified employees' engagement in the organization and the impact a change in psychological capital and collective efficacy has on the role of the classified employee.

### **Significance of the Study**

This study proposes to fill a knowledge gap regarding the perspective of the classified employee within a school district. The acknowledgement of the perspective of classified employees has the potential to increase human capital of these employees. The managers of these employees will have access to the results of this study to ensure the work place sustains an environment that supports the classified employee. This study will fill a gap in the research through interviews with employees and a review of systems to determine how to support classified employees' self-efficacy, organizational commitment and the impact of the collective efficacy of this group on these same employees and others within a school site or district.

Mowday and Steers (2007) define organizational commitment as “the relative

strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization" (p. 226). These researchers identify three factors that characterize organizational commitment: "(1) a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values; (2) a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and (3) a strong desire to maintain membership in the organization" (p. 226). The commitment a classified employee either exhibits or doesn't may play a significant role in the employee's self-efficacy and engagement in the work place. Determining what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' organizational commitment will be instrumental in removing obstacles to full organizational commitment.

Determining self-efficacy and engagement of the classified employee and formalizing these employees' roles in the vision and mission of the educational institution is a step toward engaging these employees in a common purpose. Fully engaged classified employees affect the academic environment, increase customer satisfaction and improve the perception of public schools by the public.

### **Positionality/Limitations/Assumptions**

Examining the limitations related to this study, this researcher acknowledged the need to limit the number of interviews to those employees who self-selected to be part of the study. The positions of those involved in the study were classified employees, certificated administrators and mid-management supervisors. An assumption held by the researcher was that the employees who participated in this study were interested in the role of the classified employee and wished to be involved in the study as it might pertain

to any impact on policy, procedures and opportunities for the classified employee.

Participants in the study revealed their interests, voices, perspectives and desires to impact the role of the classified employee by their participation through one or more of the following: survey, interview or focus group.

Another possible limitation of this study is the researcher's role as employee of the participating district. As the Director of Human Resources in the study district, the researcher's position may have influenced the involvement of classified employees in this work. Takacs (2002) in his research on positionality as it relates to social justice shares the need to listen, to respect what was heard and to learn from what was heard. Clearly, the researcher of this study was intent on listening to the employees. Kirby, Greaves and Reid (2006) describe the researcher's intent through this statement, "aims to work with various stakeholders in a participating and action oriented way" (p. 37). The researcher was also very aware of the relationships between the positions held by employees within the organization. The researcher recognized that the types of relationships between and among employees, the manner in which these relationships are developed, and the quality of these relationships are important to the function of the organization. Takacs (2001) reveals the importance of understanding the relationships between positions in the following statement: "We must understand how we are positioned in relation to others--as dominant/subordinate, marginal/center, empowered/powerless" (p. 169). The researcher understands the multiplicity of roles she holds within the single position of Director of Human Resources. Anderson and Herr (2005) reveal additional roles this researcher accessed as a result of embarking on this study through the statement, "many practitioners have been socialized into academic research through graduate study and

have internalized many outsider social categories” (p. 51). As an insider of this study and as a practitioner this researcher has increased the roles she holds in order to maintain the integrity of this research. In some cases the employees’ relationship to the position may have encouraged them to participate in the study because they may have felt that what they shared with the researcher would be acted upon to realize change within the organization. Regardless, the researcher approached this research study with contextual awareness built from years of experience in the district and a robust literature review of employee job satisfaction as seen through the eyes of classified employees.

The researcher’s sensitivity to her position and the impact it may have had on the participants has been an element in the forefront of her mind throughout this research study. Kirby, Greaves and Reid (2006) reveal the importance of engaging in a reflexive process and describe this process as one which “involves openly and honestly recognizing one’s location and experiences and deeply considering the implications of one’s power” (p. 39). The position of Director of Human Resources is complex since the responsibilities of this position adjust to the needs of employees according to particular situations. Some of the varied roles inherent in the position of the researcher are provider of resources, advocate, confidante, evaluator and supervisor. The position of Director of Human Resources provides a foundation in which the limitations and possibilities established through interactions with employees enriches the position of the employees. In this research, the role of the researcher was an advocate for the voice of the classified employee. The researcher presented herself as a scholarly researcher, a role different from the Director of Human Resources, in an effort to safeguard against the position conflict or limitation of the usual position.

Throughout the research study the researcher used years of experience and context knowledge to mitigate the impact of positionality as it may have influenced the information employees provided in surveys, interviews and focus groups. Member checking and the triangulation of data were also part of the procedures used when analyzing the data provided by classified employees, certificated administrators and supervisors. Participants in the study could withdraw from the study at any time. In addition, member checking allowed all participants the opportunity to review what they shared to ensure its accuracy. The triangulation of the data was accomplished through surveys, interviews, and focus groups administered and conducted by the researcher.

The district's policies were adhered to as the study commenced. Transparency of the researcher's position as the Director of Human Resources at the district in which the researcher completed the research study was communicated to all concerned individuals. Permissions and appropriate protocol have been accessed and completed. Ethical limits have been met through the completion of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process.

The researcher was keenly aware of role and positionality during the research process. As the Director of Human Resources, the researcher realized the limitations of this position during interviews with employees with whom the researcher supervises and works. Safeguards, outlined in the Institutional Review Board process and accepted by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board, were taken to resist bias and to protect the employees. (See Appendix E.)

### **Voice and Change**

The researcher has daily opportunities to collaborate with district employees to support change to increase engagement in the work place and job satisfaction of



classified employees in the district. In addition, the connection the researcher has with leaders at the San Diego County Office of Education and within other school districts in California will support the extension of the voice of the classified employee. Recommendations for strategically implemented support for classified employees that are a result of this research are more likely to be discussed and acted upon because of the positionality and the interest of the researcher. Human Resource and Personnel directors often seek ways to improve the profession. What better way to do so than to study our own relationships with our employees? We must find ways to listen to the voices of classified employees. This study presented one approach to do just that.

The variety of positions held by classified employees as well as the differences in job classifications: security, food services, office and clerical work, school maintenance and operations, transportation, academic assistance and paraprofessional services, library and media assistance, computer services and more, and the manner in which relationships with supervisors are developed reveal a need to research influential factors of these relationships. The employees who fill these varied positions have an instrumental role in the organization through the established network of relationships with supervisors and with classified employees. Maher and Tetreault (2001) share that these relationships can be analyzed and changed according to function within the relationship. Accessing the voice of the classified employee, certificated administrators and mid-management supervisors, through this study, is a promising step in revealing the relationship between these positions and increasing classified employee engagement in the work place and job satisfaction.

## **Conclusion**

The purpose of this study is to determine the systems in place, that increase the human capital of classified employees, and to determine what factors, from the point of view of the classified employee, challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' organizational commitment.

Finally, determining what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to access increased self-efficacy, and involvement in the district vision and mission is a starting point to fortify the support structures of the organization. Human beings are complex. The depth and breadth of this study is increased through the analysis of classified employees' roles in the work place through responses to a survey and interviews. Theoretical frameworks which impact this research study are discussed in the review of related literature. These frameworks are: (1) organizational development and the culture of an organization, (2) relationships, (3) dialogue, (4) psychological capital, (5) job satisfaction, (6) shared leadership, (7) social capital and (8) collective efficacy. This researcher's investigation will assist policy makers, site administrators and district managers as policy decisions that impact classified employees are established and implemented.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Related Literature**

Classified employees are engaged in a variety of roles in support of students and staff in school districts. These roles range from the food service worker to the custodian to the secretary greeting parents, students and the public in the school office. In addition, Fredrickson (2004) defines classified employees as paraprofessionals in direct contact with students, parents and teachers. Salzberg and Morgan (1995) share that individuals in these positions, such as instructional assistants or instructional health care assistants within the special education or regular classrooms, are under the guidance of the certificated classroom teacher and are expected to provide academic support to students with special needs.

A review of the research in areas of strengths- based approaches, Psychological Capital, as well as organizational development and the learning communities within an organization are discussed. Included within this research is literature surrounding the culture of an organization, relationships, collective efficacy and the value of dialogue. Finally, research regarding the impact of self-knowledge a leader has about Psychological Capital will increase the understanding of the environment of the classified employee.

The following literature review is divided into six sections according to the areas of literature reviewed: (1) organizational development and the culture of an organization, (2) relationships, (3) dialogue, (4) psychological capital, (5) job satisfaction, (6) shared leadership, (7) social capital and (8) collective efficacy. Although these topics represent

integrated concepts, for the purpose of clarity they are separated within this review. Considerable overlap reflects the complexity of an organization. Through extensive reading this researcher determined these to be the components that were most critical to determine how to most efficiently support the classified employee and provide the background required to address the central question of this proposal. Specifically these create avenues to resources that support the knowledge this researcher wishes to acquire to determine how to best meet the needs of the classified employee. Educational leaders may apply the results of this research to augment their knowledge about a classified employee's work experience and the advantages to nurturing a collective efficacy. Through application of the results of this research, leaders may increase the engagement of classified employees and maximize the human capital of these employees.

### **Organizational Development, Culture, and the Possibility of Change**

Districts implement organizational change to increase academic rigor and to increase employee engagement. Organizational change will be necessary as districts begin to develop policies and programs that are designed to support classified employees as increased engagement is expected by leaders in the district. To be successful organizational change and the resulting development must include the voices in an organization. Leaders must seek and learn from the numerous realities of all groups within the organization.

Marshak & Grant (2008) examined the differences between classical organizational development and new organizational development practices, approaches and techniques. The differences are delineated in Table 1. Varied cultures in an

organization are a result of different perspectives. These diverse perspectives may not fit into the mainstream of thought of individuals in an organization. Using the classical organizational development approach these may be viewed as misperceptions that must be addressed and corrected. According to new organizational development practices these cultural perspectives are important as leaders work to analyze, perceive and decipher the forces that operate in classifications within an organization (Schein, 2010; Marshak & Grant, 2008). Acknowledging differences allows varied perspectives amongst employees to be described, not as aspects that need to be corrected but as “alternative and competing realities” (Schein, 2010, p.59). Using this approach, ideas and actions of employees from varied classifications within an organization are appreciated and viewed as authentic. Use of new organizational development may diminish marginalization and broaden the spectrum of involvement of classified employees.

Establishing change and the implementation of change requires an understanding of the cultural perspectives of the individuals within an organization. The impact change has in an organization is dependent upon the culture of an organization. Schien (2010) proclaims cultural analysis is necessary to gain an awareness of the cultural forces that are an intrinsic part of classifications, organizations and positions. This analysis will help leaders to understand actions, thoughts and statements that may have been incomprehensible before an analysis. By understanding the culture within each employee, and therefore the groups in which employees are involved, the leader will be able to comprehend why groups of employees may think or behave a certain way.

**Table 1.** Trends in Organizational Development (Marshak, R.J. and Grant, D., 2008 p. 8)

<b>Classical Organizational Development (1950s onward)</b>	<b>New Organizational Development (1980s onward)</b>
Based in classical science and modern thought and philosophy	Influenced by the new sciences and postmodern thought and philosophy
Truth is transcendent and discoverable; there is a single, objective reality	Truth is imminent and emerges from the situation; there are multiple, socially constructed realities
Reality can be discovered using rational and analytic processes	Reality is socially negotiated and may involve power and political processes
Collecting and applying valid data using objective problem solving methods leads to change	Creating new mindsets or social agreements, sometimes through explicit or implicit negotiation, leads to change
Change is episodic and can be created, planned and managed	Change is continuous and can be self-organizing
Emphasis on changing behavior and what one does	Emphasis on changing mindsets and how one thinks

Varied groups of employees within the organization have numerous perspectives, needs, personalities and characters. Schein (2010) shares the notion that an individual's "personality and character reflect the groups that socialized us and the groups with which we identify and to which we want to belong" (p.27). Understanding the individual personalities that exist in an organization is part of understanding the culture. Marshak & Grant (2008), through their research on new organizational development and discourse, recognize the impact and value personalities and cultures have, resulting in a number of realities that are part of an organization and, in turn, create a unique organization.

According to Schein (2010), understanding the culture of an organization is one of the necessary steps an individual should be aware of if organizational change is to be systematically implemented. Understanding the organizational culture provides the leader with information regarding what exists in the current below the overt actions and

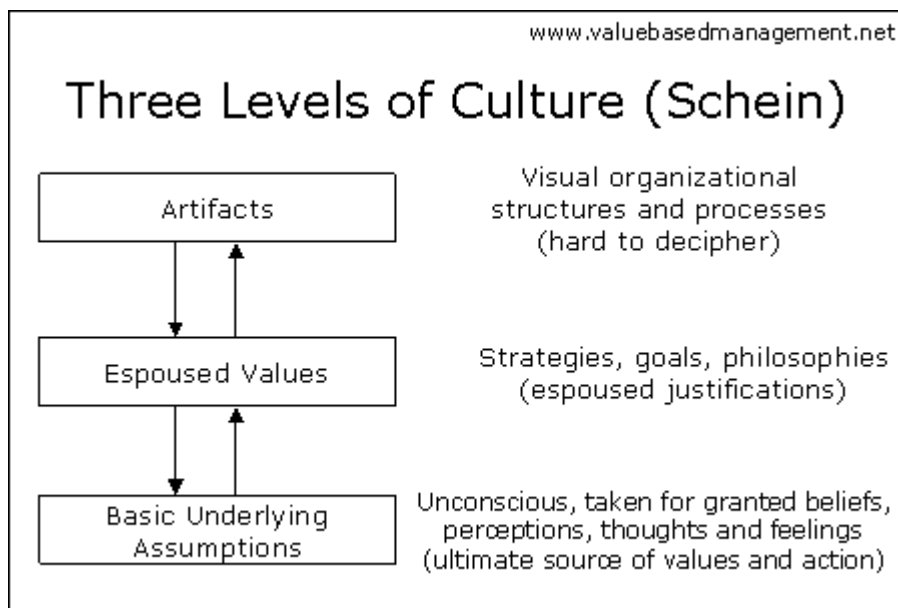
statements of employees and their groups. The awareness of this latent influence may have a profound impact on the organization. Understanding the culture developed within each individual and that is brought to the workplace is important. Moreover, the culture developed while employees are participating as team members is valuable. Recognizing aspects of the team member's experience both within and outside the organization helps to decipher the layers of culture developed within an organization. Equally important, an employee's need for stability, consistency and meaning must be addressed. How these elementary needs are fulfilled determine the culture of each classification within an organization.

It is important for the leader of an organization or group to be aware of the culture within the group. The leader could be a teacher managing a group of instructional assistants in a classroom or a site principal guiding teachers who in turn are training instructional assistants. The superintendent also plays a role in the culture of an organization through the supervision of principals and transmission of expectations. These actions are displayed in each level of the district's system: district, site, department, and classroom.

The hierarchy that exists in a district provokes questions. How are the hierarchies within a district interactive? How does communication occur within and between these hierarchies? Identification of the classified employee's place within the organization of a district is a step in the analysis of hierarchies within a district. Examining the culture of an organization may help to provide answers to these questions.

Exploring answers to these questions and investigating examples of the impact leaders have on the culture of a district is critical. With diminishing monetary resources

and human capital within districts, the remaining human resources available in school districts must be maximized to their full potential. Shrinking state budgets have an impact on policy decisions that in turn impact the culture of organizations. Understanding the levels of culture supports a depth of awareness for the leaders of an organization. The interaction between these levels is demonstrated in Figure 2.



**Figure 2.** Schein's Three Levels of Culture

Schein (2010) developed a model describing the three levels of culture within an organization. This model can be used to analyze a district's governing board goals as related to the impact of artifacts, espoused values, and basic underlying assumptions on the culture of an organization.

Coronado Unified School District is the site of my research. For this reason, reviewing the Coronado Unified School District's Governing Board goals utilizing Schein's model may be instrumental in beginning an analysis of the values in this district.

The Governing Board Goals for the 2011-2012 school year include:



1. Learning – Discern the unique characteristics and learning traits of 21<sup>st</sup> century students and implement plans to educate students employing best practices with emphasis on using online instructional techniques and digital tools.

This goal as a value is not examined and realized in its full complexity as the phrase “educate students employing best practices” is applied to the instructional environment of the student. It is an espoused value as described by Schein (2010). The paraprofessional in this district is not fully trained and used to fully impact the instructional environment of the student. Without training, these paraprofessionals and the teachers who supervise them will not fully actualize their human capital as employees/educators in the district. Consequently, without training - that does require planning and money - the full capacity of students may not be realized without the appropriate use of this valuable resource: paraprofessionals.

2. Fiscal responsibilities - Communicate the District’s fiscal prudence and stress the need for additional significant financial support in order to sustain and expand student success.

If student success is to be sustained and expanded, the use of fiscal resources to train paraprofessionals and the teachers who work with them is one way in that current district resources may be expanded and used to positively impact and sustain student success. This is a goal that has not been interpreted in the past to apply to paraprofessionals. In fact, an assumption within this district is that the paraprofessional is one -that is hired preferably with experience, but additional training to increase the efficiency and efficacy of these employees is not a requirement within this district. Thus, the espoused value or goal that fiscally monies are to be used to sustain and expand student success has not

been fully fleshed out and realized. Introducing the notion that paraprofessionals and the teachers who work with them require training in order to have an impact upon student success is necessary to fully realize the true potential of this goal.

3. Communication - Improve the content and frequency of communications with and among shareholders by using written, digital, and face to face methods.

Despite this goal, most classified employees are not provided with access or time to use a computer to read e-mail to and stay in the loop of communication within the district. In fact, the California School Employees Association (CSEA) president has stated that it is not the responsibility of the employee to check e-mail during the employee's work day (CSEA meeting, October 2010). In addition, during negotiations with the CSEA representatives, due to lack of consistency in communication and work schedules not all of the employees are made aware of the process of negotiations. Not all employees see the posted leaflet in the staff lounge or have access to e-mail.

4. Character Education - Promote character education community-wide and encourage all shareholders to model the Six Pillars of Character.

Classified employees are not involved in the Character Counts character education program the superintendent introduced to the employees, students and community of the district in 2006. Furthermore, when the topic of this program and the desire to provide training on Character Counts for the classified employees was mentioned in a meeting, the CSEA president rolled her eyes and said, "What do they care about that" (CSEA meeting, October 2010)?

5. Assessment - Encourage a culture where all shareholders seek the highest level of performance and develop assessments that evaluate progress toward this goal

This goal is not used to directly address employee evaluations. Administrators, directors, and managers of the supervisors of the classified employees are not trained to complete evaluations that may help employees improve in their professional practice. Expecting all shareholders to perform at their highest level of performance is facilitated by collaboration, feedback and professional discussions produced through evaluation process. This evaluation process is not fully developed.

Evaluating the organizational culture of this district through the use of Schein's three levels of culture provides a starting point for an analysis of culture in the Coronado Unified School District. Likewise, importance should be placed on the historical circumstances that shape the present (Morgan, 2006, p.128). Layoffs of classified employees in this district during the 2007 school year, as well as in previous years, have established a continuing fear that a layoff may occur now and in the future. Shrinking budgets also negatively impact the culture of this district. These two events, layoffs and shrinking budgets, may have a negative impact upon relations between administration and the self-efficacy of classified employees. Therefore, the value of focusing on increasing the efficacy and the human capital of the classified employee reveals the importance of this research.

It is important that a network is created within the organization. This network may be supported through community building (Morgan, 2006). Creating a network within an organization may have an impact upon the involvement of an employee in the work place: community building may be realized through meetings, e-mail groups, and virtual on-line spaces. These may provide an avenue for the employee to be increasingly engaged and a contributing member of the community.

Examination of an organizational counterculture, such as those supported by trade unions or unions in the case of the classified employee, reveals a component that may directly impact or affect the employee within the workplace. The battle for power within an organization is supported through the existence of a union. Morgan (2006) shares the following statement regarding the impact of unions on the culture of an organization, “The philosophy, values, and norms of union culture usually exert an important impact on the mosaic of culture, subculture, and counterculture that characterizes life in any organization” (p.134). Coronado Unified School District has experienced this first hand through statements made by the president of the Classified School Employees Association (CSEA). The CSEA president stated that classified employees should not be responsible for accessing e-mail. This statement supports disengagement of the employee from the culture of the district and runs counter to the goal of supporting classified employees to be an integral part of the organization. Limiting classified employees access to communiqués from the superintendent, communication from other employees, district resources and updates regarding health benefits, meetings, trainings, etc. via e-mail may make sense from the perspective of the CSEA, but it fails to meet the needs of a school district. District leadership has the ability to make changes in the culture of the organization to increase the engagement of classified employees.

### **Relationships**

Established theoretical frameworks previously mentioned are used to frame this study of the classified employee. These frameworks are organizational development and the culture of an organization, relationships, dialogue, psychological capital, shared

leadership and collective efficacy. Awareness of the components within these frameworks may be used to positively impact the development of classified employees. Research in the areas of positive organizational behavior (POB) and relational marketing provide information that illuminates how to increase the involvement and the value of the classified employee in the educational environment. Constructs such as trust, satisfaction, retention, commitment, engagement and others contained in Positive Organizational Behavior (POB) and relational marketing have potential to provide opportunities for dialogue and affect the professional development and engagement of classified employees in a school district. Maximizing administrators' awareness of these constructs may help when redefining the role of the classified employee in a school district. Gradually strengthening these constructs as they relate to classified employees may result in employees who are more positive. Avey et al. (2008) share that positive employees have a significant impact on organizations. These researchers also state that the potential of positive employees is ignored. If classified employees have strong Psychological Capital (PsyCap), the positive emotions they reveal in the workplace will help facilitate organizational change. With positive emotions, regardless of the difficulty change brings to the workplace, the perspectives and actions of the positive classified employee will be more likely than those of an employee with negative emotions to support the change effort.

Hennig-Thurau and Hanse (2000) discuss the network approach that exists within relationship marketing. Relationships are viewed as capital assets. The relational constructs, trust and satisfaction are framed as important elements in the behavior of relationships. POB and relational marketing are frameworks that reveal how trust and

satisfaction in the classified employee must be valued and supported to increase engagement of the classified employee in the educational environment.

Creating relationships between individuals in a district will strengthen the collective sense of purpose. This purpose, revealed in the mission and vision of a district, has the potential to positively affect the relationship between the employee and the district. In addition, the relationships between employees and the organization will increase the connection to augment a sense of devotion by the employee in support of the collective strength of the whole. Feeling a sense of connectedness to the district may help to establish a stronger sense of allegiance to the district. According to Wheatley (1999) increasing participation of all individuals within an environment produces positive results. Conditions must be clearly stated (such as a clear intent i.e. Governing Board Goals), and should be set in place for all to see. When these conditions are determined, the members of an organization will work together. The purpose of working together is to “co-create with their environment” (p. 46). Furthermore, the involvement of members from diverse classifications and purposes in an organization increases the network of relationships. This consequently provides numerous contexts for connections between members of an organization.

Organizations divided into departments, classifications or silos that separate employees do not provide the best environment for the individuals within it. Wheatley (1999) discusses a fact taken from physics that illustrates the importance of networks within an organization: “no particles can be drawn, independent from the others” (p.34). The purpose of this statement is to illustrate the interconnectedness of employees within a district. This indicates the value of focusing upon relationships within an organization,

and reveals the loss of human capital produced through the isolation of employees into classifications, silos or departments. If employees are connected within the work place through professional development, discussion groups and other opportunities these may foster the development of relationships.

Wheatley (1999) states, "None of us exists independent of our relationships with others" (p. 35). Both the organization and the employee will have equal influence on behavior in an organization. For this reason relationships need to be developed within an organization to create change. As the culture emerges during the development of an organization, awareness of the perspectives of each employee must be maintained. Organizations are created or destroyed through the perceptions of the employees. Each employee has individual perspectives and consequently creates varied environments within an organization. Individualized environments impact the entire organization. Developing strong relationships within an organization supports achievement of the organization's goals. As a district we "need to become better at listening, conversing, respecting one another's uniqueness, because these are essential for strong relationships" (p.39). These elements of communication are a vital component of building relationship within an organization.

Essentially as Weick (1979) states, "The environment that the organization worries about is put there by the organization" (p.168). These perceptions are individual according to the views of each employee. Instead of arguing over whose way is the right way, Weick establishes the importance of focusing on issues of effectiveness using reflective questioning. The focus on questioning what actions will increase the efficiency or serve the organization better will increase the ability of an organization to change to

better meet the needs of its employees. Thus foundations should be built to develop opportunities for employees to reflect, dialogue and create together to positively impact the organization.

### **Dialogue**

The Dalai Lama stated in an article in the August 4, 2011 issue of Rolling Stone magazine, “This should be a century of dialogue. Peace must be built by humans, through action. So that means, whenever we face problem – dialogue. That’s the only way” (p.57). Central to creating change is the active involvement of individuals in this change. This involvement is most likely to occur through sharing and honoring one another’s ideas in discussions. Establishing discourse amongst all classified employees may provide a deep insight into what is deemed valuable and necessary to support these employees at work. It is possible to use conversations to make change. Marshak & Grant’s (2008) research supports organizational discourse as a method for discursive interventions and organizational change, “engaging in discursive activity such as conversation, narrative and dialogue in order to frame new shared meanings and change mindsets is a principal means to create change in organizations” (p. 15).

To make change, leaders may utilize the art of conversation in daily interactions with employees. Engaging employees in daily dialogue may help to increase engagement of employees within an organization. Increased engagement encourages employee involvement in change. Increased involvement may help to decrease disengagement and may help to offset the feeling that any changes within an organization were implemented without the employee’s input. Employees who have not had the opportunity to be



involved in conversation may not have a full understanding of the purpose of the intended changes, or how they will be impacted by these changes.

Searle (1995) has divided the art of conversation that produces change into five speech acts: assertive, directives, commissives, expressive and declarations. Combinations of speech acts appear in four types of conversations: initiative, understanding, performance and closure. Employees require the opportunity to share their own ideas, thoughts, recommendations and issues with the changes enacted through conversations that contain combinations of these speech acts. Without this step, according to Searle (1995), the change process has not fulfilled its full potential.

Paolo Freire (2000) also places an emphasis upon true dialogue. As dialoguers, we must engage in critical thinking: “thinking which discerns an indivisible solidarity between the world and the people and admits of no dichotomy between them – thinking which perceives reality as process, as transformation, rather than as a static entity – thinking which does not separate itself from action, but constantly immerses itself in temporality without fear of the risks involved” (p. 92). Dialogue between leaders of school districts and classified unions often consist of an “us against them” framework. If we frame this dialogue as Paolo Freire reveals, the discussions between the leaders of a school district and the union may transform into a unified voice. The two entities working together to achieve the common goals revealed in the district’s vision and mission statements in support of employees and the district.

Ibarra et al. (2010) refer to opportunities that leaders must provide for their employees to examine any assumptions about ineffective methods, practices etc. The leaders should address those assumptions head-on and provide opportunities for honest

dialogue. Through dialogue, the obstacles, that inhibit individuals, may be changed so that employees are ready to implement innovative practices while utilizing skills learned through professional development. Progressive approaches are necessary for the success of employee-focused programs as leaders and employees learn their way together through problems and solutions. It is time to create opportunities for dialogue with all employees in a school district to engage and support all employees to be part of the work it takes to educate students.

### **Psychological Capital (PsyCap)**

PsyCap elements are the foundation of what is necessary to build and sustain positive employees and positive organizations. Leaders must learn to maintain, develop and overtly acknowledge PsyCap in their employees. PsyCap impacts and influences employees' Psychological Well Being (PWB) (Avey, Luthans, Smith, & Palmer, 2010). Two elements of PsyCap, resiliency and self-efficacy, are deemed, through findings in research, as important in supporting organizational change (Avey et al., 2008; Avey et al., 2010; Fredrickson, 2004; Seligman et al., 2005; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001).

It is difficult for employees who do not have the resources contained within PsyCap to be supportive of and positive towards an organization. Therefore, to create positive work environments that are supported by positive administrators, leaders and employees should recognize and develop the four elements of PsyCap: (a) resiliency, (b) hope, (c) self-efficacy, and (d) optimism within themselves and in their peers. As leaders and employees identify the elements of PsyCap, they will then learn to be reflective and mindful as they endeavor to maintain high PsyCap within themselves and in others

(Avey, Wernsing, & Luthans, 2008). The results of this focus will be administrators integrating methods learned through PsyCap into professional development. This augmented professional development will lead classified employees to reflect and develop positive relationships with managers. All members of an organization must be trained to assess the quality of their personal PsyCap and then be encouraged to build, develop and practice their PsyCap to positively impact themselves, others and the organization.

Fredrickson (2004) discusses the component of resiliency in people through the exhibited characteristics of optimism, zestful, and energetic approaches to life. Resilient individuals are curious and open to new experiences. Faced with setbacks, they bounce back and continue to persevere (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001). Seligman et al. (2005) expand further on resiliency. They acknowledge that as human beings we must be aware of the varied experiences in our lives. Life is filled with ups and downs and the balance of the human experience relies on self-reflection as a tool to augment positive human interactions in the workplace. The interaction of suffering and happiness is necessary; we must value both extremes.

Although it is important to support members of an organizational community in times of distress, there is also evidence that positive emotions can be fostered successfully in a workplace. One aspect of positive emotions to be developed in the workplace is happiness. Seligman et al. (2005) developed the Steen Happiness Index (SHI). He found that, "Happy people are healthier, more successful, and more socially engaged, and the causal direction runs both ways" (p. 414). Individuals who are healthy, successful and socially engaged will become happier, creating an upward spiral in their

happiness. Seligman et al. (2005) proposes that individuals who are satisfied are those who are engaged and focused on finding meaning. When a classified employee enters this stage of engagement and meaning, productivity at the workplace will increase. In addition, the happiness of the individual will increase. Finding meaning in work and recognizing its value will support a positive work environment and increase the happiness of the classified employee. The ability to use positive feelings during periods of uncertainty in the workplace reveals resilient facets within employees.

Resiliency is not only revealed mentally, but it helps to develop stronger immune systems and resilient individuals are physically healthier (Avey et al., 2010). Consequently, leaders and employees who mindfully develop resiliency will be proactive, positive and productive during organizational change. Resilient employees are able to rebound during the change process (Avey et al., 2008). High levels of positivity are linked to (a) broader behavioral repertoires, (b) greater flexibility and resilience to adversity, (c) greater social resources, (d) connectivity among team members, and (e) optimal functioning or flourishing (Fredrickson, 2004). Positive individuals such as classified employees who interact and work in schools, and build their PsyCap may use these positive skills to support the process of organizational change.

Self-efficacy, a component of PsyCap, is important in supporting organizational change. The reservoir of resources available within individuals who rate high in self-efficacy is a positive bucket of tools from that employees can pull as they are exposed to setbacks or organizational change (Avey et al., 2008). Avey and colleagues (2010) reference Hobfoll's (1989) Conservation of Resources Theory (COR) and discuss the importance of having access to a large number of resources from that a person can pull to

cope with obstacles or other events within life's day to day cycle. Classified employees are asked and expected to meet the immediate demands of changing job expectations without appropriate preparation and support. They may be unable to perform. The classified employee's bucket of resources may not yet be developed enough to meet the demands made of them within the classroom, in the front office, on the school bus or in the cafeteria. Consequently, leaders and managers must be aware of the fit of each classified employee's personal resources as they relate to the demands of the school's academic, social and physical environment.

Fredrickson's (2004) *Broaden and Build Theory* illuminates the impact of positive emotions in the workplace. These emotions produce: (a) optimal functioning, (b) adaptational encounters, and (c) engagement. As a result of positive emotions, individuals find meaning and are open to new ideas (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001). When positive emotions are triggered, thinking is broadened and individuals find meaning in organizational change. This upward spiral is revealed as positive emotions and broadened thinking lead to increases in emotional well-being and the building of personal resources. It is a possibility that if employees are open to new ideas they will be more likely to be engaged in their work. Fredrickson's (2004) research reveals that "positive emotions carry the capacity to transform individuals for the better, making them healthier and more socially integrated, knowledgeable, effective and resilient" (p. 1373). When employees are at a point in that they have fully developed their PsyCap they then have the ability to positively impact the academic environment.

Avey, Luthans, Sith and Palmer (2010) state that the PsyCap of an individual encompasses a number of components that impact attitude towards work, self-efficacy

and the trust of employees towards a school district. These elements: efficacy, hope, optimism, and resilience, support employees to feel successful and productive at work (p. 17). There exists a wide range of backgrounds and needs within the classified employees in school districts: socioeconomically, educationally, ethnically, linguistically and culturally.

In addition, a growing need is apparent in the population of advanced industrial nations. Florida (2002) has completed extensive research in creativity and how it is transforming work. He references Robert Fogel's work, *The Fourth Great Awakening* in that Robert Fogel documents that since 1960 during the fourth great awakening, people began to desire work that is challenging, provides them with enjoyment, allows them "to do good, to make a contribution and to learn" (p. 101). More and more, according to Fogel (2000) businesses are asking employees to take an active part in their work through critical evaluation and reflection. These expectations are reflective of the characteristics necessary within the 21<sup>st</sup> century educator: communication, collaboration, critical thinking and citizenship. Throughout this process, the employer and employee are engaged in a dialogue as performance is improved. The ideal will be to "embrace the new values and structures of the creative age, acting on people's intrinsic motivations and allowing them to nurture and express their creativity" (p.101). The notion of embracing the creativity of the employee within the workplace will allow for enriched discourse and sharing of perspectives that may then be used to positively meet the needs of a 21<sup>st</sup> century organization in a creative and fluid merging of knowledge, creativity and power.

Jobs should be challenging and provide the employee the ability to access autonomy in completing work and expand the ability of employees to adapt when on the

job while building their own resources (Fredrickson, 2004; Saari & Judge 2004).

Employees want interesting work, work with that they find success and the personal resources to be able to complete this work in a manner filled with success and pride. As employee satisfaction is examined, the area that must be focused on as recommended (Saari & Judge , 2004; Locke, 1969; Rousseau, 1977; Bauer, 2002) is the nature of the work employees are doing.

Bauer (2002) establishes that there are four factors that support employee satisfaction and workforce commitment (rewards and recognition, issues of work-life balance, opportunities for growth through training and development and perceptions of the work environment). Rousseau (1977) relates necessary psychological states that support an individual's motivation and satisfaction on the job (experienced meaningfulness, experienced responsibility, and knowledge of results). These researchers establish a correlation between job satisfaction, an employee's experiences and that of the employee's performance.

How does the classified employees' awareness of their own PsyCap and their ability to become life-long learners impact the success of these employees upon others and within their workforce? Classified employees whose individual abilities are supported and expanded may have increased PsyCap as a result of their ability to successfully complete a variety of jobs within the workplace. This increase in PsyCap and the validation of the individual abilities of each employee may increase the employees' connections to public education, motivate the employee to learn and validate the positive results of training through extended learning opportunities and cross-training. These opportunities will further intensify the self-efficacy of the employee and result in

an employee who desires to succeed within the work environment.

Paul Tierney and Steven Farmer state, the “job tenure, job self-efficacy, supervisor behavior and job complexity contribute to creative efficacy beliefs” (p. 437). Increasing the ability of employees to be creative within their jobs is a benefit to students and the district. The practical implications are that employees who feel supported and valued will have an increased positive impact upon students and other employees. In addition, the support and growth of these employees will have a positive impact upon the community and society surrounding a school district. Working with employees to increase the depth and breadth of their performance and acknowledging the value they bring to the work place is of great importance. Maximizing the potential and impact of employees and thus increasing the human capital within an organization may be a best practice.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Locke (1969) defines job satisfaction as the emotional state an employee reaches as the employee determines whether the job supports the employee’s ability to achieve personal job values. The value an employee holds of a job depends on what that employee wishes to achieve and on what the employee feels is beneficial. According to Locke, the values an employee has about a job determine the employee’s actions and the emotional reaction to a job. As a result, whether the job measures up to the employee’s job values determines satisfied or dissatisfied with the job.

Judge, Bono, Patton, and Thoresen (2001) reveal through a qualitative and quantitative review on the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance that



the job satisfaction of the employee may have an effect on job performance.

Consequently, the job satisfaction of the employee may impact the organization in which the employee is employed. Thus, the manner in which a supervisor communicates the importance of the employee in the work place has an impact on the employee's job satisfaction and ultimately the retention of the employee. Bauer (2000) indicates that when supervisors demonstrate an employee is "needed, valued and appreciated," the retention and job satisfaction of the employee is enhanced. Therefore, the type of relationships held between supervisors and employees may have an impact on retention and job satisfaction of the employee.

### **Social Capital**

Social capital is the culmination of the benefits derived from the relationships an individual may have within the work environment and socially with friends and peers. In an organization social capital may be viewed as the resources available to employees as a result of the relationships they have with others. Daly and Finnegan (2010) use the term social network analysis (SNA) to describe the visual and quantifiable analysis of these relationships. The development of professional learning communities to support both the development and expansion of social capital and the complexity of the social network is the manner in which school districts address the need to establish connections between school sites, departments, grade levels and job classifications. Since classified employees work district wide, collaborative structures established with the classified employees within the varied job classifications may positively impact all departments within the district. School districts have a single goal: the education of students. In order to achieve

this goal there are two groups of employees employed. The manner in which the district recognizes the value of the social capital of each group, classified and certificated, and also establishes and supports the connections or social network between these groups of employees may increase the quality of the support systems used to achieve this goal. School districts must recognize the importance of the relationship between site and district administrators to implement change at the school sites and within the district. This recognition may require school districts to closely examine the quality of the relationships and to determine how to best augment these relationships. As relationships are grown, the social capital of employees may also develop. Daly and Finnegan (2010) share the “key conditions of these successful networks include frequent and pervasive communication, shared understanding and purpose, joint challenging work, and relationships built on trust that enabled the transfer of tacit and explicit knowledge (p.114).

Before the key conditions described by Daly and Finnegan (2010) may be implemented these researchers acknowledge the importance of first evaluating the interactions between the individuals who are part of the organization. This evaluation may allow for an acknowledgement of existing relationships and awareness of gaps between individuals within the organization. Awareness may lead to the creation of support systems which may be used to change, support or augment the existing social capital and resulting social networks of all employees within a school district. Acknowledging the variety and number of social networks available to all or select members of a school district are also valuable criteria to access as an initial evaluation of social networks is completed.

## Shared Leadership

Chrispeels (2004) begins her book, *Learning to Lead Together*, with this quote, “For children, there is no shortcut to becoming thoughtful, responsible, and intellectually accomplished adults. What it takes is keeping company with adults who exercise these qualities in the presence of adults-to-be” (p.3). The concept of modeling what we expect for our students is continually reiterated through educational literature. Thus the importance of acknowledging and supporting the value of adults aware of their impact on the education of students and who are in daily contact with students amongst all leaders within a district is revealed. Ensuring all adults surrounding students are aware of the qualities necessary in education is vital. In addition, these adults must be aware of how important it is for them to practice and model the desired qualities expected of students.

Defining shared leadership for staff members and revealing the importance of classified employees is the first step in describing the value of the involvement of the paraprofessional and the classified employee in the education process. Chrispeels (2004) defines shared leadership as “principals, teachers, support staff and in some cases community members and students who come together in leadership teams, governing bodies, or committees to jointly make decisions required to manage the school and improve the learning environment” (p.5). Chrispeels’ research accesses longitudinal studies that reflect the positive impact of shared leadership and reveals that “building good relationships that allow shared leadership and accountability is achieved only through hard work, high energy and considerable social and political skills”(p.7). Daly and Chrispeels (2005) describe a strengths-based model of support for leaders in effective schools. This model uses a focus on trust, self and collective efficacy, positive

psychology, and positive organizational scholarship in support of a strengths-based model in lieu of the traditional steps to seeking a remedy to a problem: problem-solution (p.8). Providing leaders with the appropriate tools as they strive to engage and increase existing human capital and the development of social capital of support staff is one step towards intensifying the engagement and focus of employees in positively impacting the academic environment of students. In addition, these two steps focused on the classified employee, development of human capital and social capital, may help to increase job satisfaction and work engagement of classified employees.

### **Collective Efficacy**

Bandura (2000) shares the notion individuals are molded by their environment and they create the environments in which they work, live and play. Therefore, individuals are agents of change. As agents of change, they have influence on the events and environment that are part of their daily existence. The intricate web of design contained in the relationship between the impact an individual has on environment and personal efficacy is revealed through Bandura's (1997) research. The motivation to commit to various actions is influenced by an individual's personal efficacy. Bandura (1993) states, "beliefs of personal efficacy can shape the course lives take by influencing choice of activities and environments" (p. 135).

Three forces of human agency provide an avenue for individuals to manage events in their lives. Bandura (2000) divides these forces into three distinct categories: personal, proxy, and collective (p.75). Personal agency or self-efficacy is the self-system that influences and supports an individual's ability to adapt and change. The use of proxy

agency is revealed in the actions of individuals as they influence others to act on their behalf to access desired results. Finally, collective agency is realized in a group's achievements. These are a result of the "interactive, coordinative, and synergistic dynamics of a group's interactions (p. 75).

Collective agency is not the "sum of the efficacy beliefs of individual members" (Bandura, 2000, p.76). Instead, collective agency is revealed through the emerging characteristics of the group. Individuals within the group have shared beliefs in what can be accomplished as a group. These shared beliefs may affect the types of futures individuals in a group seek to achieve through collective action. In addition, the efficient use of resources and the effort individuals put into group actions will also be impacted. Other aspects influenced by shared beliefs are the group's persistence when collective efforts fail to quickly produce results or meet obstacles (p.76).

Accordingly, the measurement of an individual's perception of the amount of collective efficacy contained by the group has an impact. The greater the perceived collective efficacy, the greater the "groups' motivational investment in their undertakings, the stronger their staying power in the face of impediments and setbacks, and the greater their performance accomplishments" (p. 78).

### **Additional Research**

Research conducted in the area of teacher efficacy may provide depth to the topic of the efficacy of the paraprofessional. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk (2001) developed and used the Ohio State Teacher Efficacy Scale (OSTES) to examine teacher efficacy. Three dimensions of teacher efficacy were examined: (a) instructional

strategies, (b) student engagement, and (c) classroom management. Research revealed numerous components of a teacher's personal teaching efficacy (PTE). These determine the teacher's own feelings of competence as a teacher. Teacher efficacy is related to student achievement and revealed through descriptions of student-teacher interactions. Actions exhibited by teachers who have developed their PTE are: (a) effort invested in teaching, (b) exhibiting greater levels of planning and organization, (c) willingness to experiment with new methods to better meet the needs of students, (d) willingness to work longer with students, and (e) students' own sense of efficacy. These actions reveal an increased teacher commitment (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk, 2001, Chan, Lau, Nie, Lim, & Hogan, 2008). These researchers also found that building and maintaining elements of PsyCap in teachers may positively impact students' educational experience. Teachers who exhibit self-efficacy use reflective dialogue and teachers who identify with and are committed to their school are also those who are found to use reflective dialogue. Throughout the research, there is a paucity of available information specifically identifying the use of reflective dialogue and commitment by classified employees. Determining whether these studies may be applied to the variety of situations in which classified employees find themselves is an area for future research.

Awareness and support of the value of classified employees must be continually reviewed and brought forward in discussions as policy is developed to guide the classified employees' professional development. However, additional research regarding the development of relationships between the employer and employee and the nurturing of classified employees is needed as an impetus to develop policy in these areas. The employees' perspective is an important component of this process. Questions that may be

used to guide the development of policy are: What is the classified employee's perspective regarding the fit of their work into the strategic plan, vision and mission of an educational environment? Have we (administrators and policy makers) asked for the employee's input regarding their role and engagement in the workplace?

Layoffs of classified employees are prevalent within public school districts. As classified employees struggle with maintaining their job and equity in the workplace there are numerous factors that may impede or support success in maximizing the human capital of the classified employee. Building capacity in employees and distributing leadership will help to nurture the classified employees' psychological capital. One of the areas of focus addressed in this study, managers' awareness of their own psychological capital and their ability to teach the acquisition of PsyCap and the thoughtful reflection of classified employees as they increase their proficiency at work, has far reaching potential for positive impact on the retention of employees.

An important theoretical application to future research may be: how will the method established to support the classified employees within a district or site be adapted to other groups of employees within the district or to school sites within other districts? The contribution of this research to the field of education is to provide educational leaders with knowledge regarding how to involve and engage the paraprofessional. Up until now increased focus has been placed on the involvement of the certificated teacher in the education of students.

Leaders have the potential to create positive working environments for classified employees through organizational change. The components of a working model the researcher created to visually realize the development of relationships between classified

employees and managers determines that dialogue, development of psychological capital and social capital and established shared leadership may impact classified employees as their role in the organization is supported. In addition, job satisfaction is a isolated in its own band due to the impact the factors in the workplace have on job satisfaction of classified employees (Figure 3).

**Supporting Frameworks of an Organization**



**Figure 3.** Organizational Development: Supports For Increased Engagement of the Classified Employee

Schein (2011) introduces the notion that leaders must develop the skills to work with cultural issues they may come across in order to appropriately support the development of an organization moving to change. Moreover Chrispeels (2004)



acknowledges the importance of administrator training. Principals with a wide range of skills involving “knowledge of group dynamics, effective listening skills, treating others with respect and keeping one’s perspective and humor are important skills in group collaborative problem solving” (p.12) may have the capacity to integrate PsyCap training into daily conversations and professional development.

Leaders of schools are not typically trained to build the psychological capital of employees and to help those individuals teach awareness of these elements within themselves and their peers. As leaders focus on the development of PsyCap and relationships, a system wide implementation must be established to increase the impact positive emotions in administrators may have on employees within the workplace.

Leaders must acknowledge the necessity to increase the role of the paraprofessional and the classified employee as partners in the education of students. With this increased employee power dedicated to the education of students the education of students may be positively impacted. In addition, the application of this research to classified employees may provide additional information to industries, that have comparable populations to the classified employee within the public school setting. Therefore, we may utilize the findings from this study to not only impact school districts but also industries outside education.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Research Design and Methodology**

The purpose of this study is to determine the systems in place that increase the human capital of classified employees and to determine what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to become engaged in the vision and mission of the workplace. Classified employees are the support staff in school districts. As a director of human resources, this researcher is interested in understanding the classified employees' perception of their role in the workplace. With this understanding, steps may be taken to maximize the human capital, be aware of the level of job satisfaction and learn methods to increase classified employee engagement within school districts. A qualitative descriptive study is used to determine factors that challenge or facilitate classified employee's experiences in the workplace.

#### **Pilot Study – Interviews**

A qualitative pilot study was completed prior to the qualitative research study. The researcher interviewed two classified employees who were available and willing to be take part in the pilot study. This convenience sampling was achieved through a request by the researcher for classified employees to volunteer to participate in an interview. (Refer to Appendix A for the interview protocol.) Two employees volunteered and both employees were in the job classification of secretary. The interviews were conducted during two separate lunch periods off campus. Each employee has been employed in the school district for more than ten years. The three themes contained in the research

questions: systems in place, interaction and support of students and challenges/facilitates efforts to support students are used to organize the coding from the two interviews. This organization is documented in Table 2.

Analyzing the extensive lists of codes in the two columns titled *Interaction and Support of Students* and *Challenge/Facilitate Efforts to Support Students* and a paucity of codes in the *Systems in Place* column reveals the need to formalize procedures. The list in the column titled *Interaction and Support of Students* may be examined to determine opportunities for professional development to increase the number of support systems the classified employee may use to interact with and support students. The analysis of themes from this pilot study helped to formulate the research, interview and focus group questions. The results of implementing this pilot study informed the research study and increased the depth of investigation by the researcher.

**Results.** The results of the qualitative research of the pilot study revealed access to rich data. This qualitative research consisted of interviews. The various codes listed under the themes contained in the three headings: Human Capital Skill Set, Challenging or Facilitating, and Appreciation and Acknowledgement provide information that improved the quality of the survey, interview and focus group questions. In addition, the qualitative research provided access to an enriched quality and depth of information about the classified employee. These data and the corresponding themes provide a basis for the organization of the thirteen interviews conducted during this research study.

**Table 2.** Thematic Coding Of Interviews In Pilot Study

SYSTEMS IN PLACE	CHALLENGE / FACILITATE EFFORTS TO SUPPORT STUDENTS	INTERACTION AND SUPPORT OF STUDENTS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Evidence of stability and longevity</li> <li>• Input is not requested regarding implementation of new systems</li> <li>• Must sustain through administrative turnover</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No training to support students</li> <li>• Dealing with parents</li> <li>• Putting out fires</li> <li>• Emotionally upsetting</li> <li>• Self trained</li> <li>• Takes over responsibility entrusted to other staff</li> <li>• Job isolation</li> <li>• Administrators out of touch or not knowledgeable of classified staff's job</li> <li>• Job takes a physical toll</li> <li>• No relief from job</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attends to emotional needs of students</li> <li>• Monitor drug and alcohol use</li> <li>• Connects student to counselor</li> <li>• Connects information to Assistant Principal</li> <li>• Directs teacher to counselor for student information</li> <li>• Generates rules to support students</li> <li>• Attends plays</li> <li>• Attends football games</li> <li>• Deals with students' medical emergencies</li> <li>• Sets personal specific boundaries for interacting with students</li> <li>• Acts as a parent</li> </ul>

### Design

This study has two objectives: first, to measure and determine the impact of work on the group of classified employees as well as gather and analyze the characteristics of the employee's experiences in the workplace, that produce negative or positive responses. The fundamental elements of PsyCap: resiliency, hope, self-efficacy and optimism within self and in peers are components within the survey and interview questions used to access data for this research study. The second objective is to measure the perceived collective

efficacy. Bandura (2000) reveals a gap in research surrounding perceived collective efficacy. He reveals three areas in research requiring additional development: (1) evaluate how to measure and identify collective efficacy (2) create analytic procedures that can be used to identify aspects that result from the social interactions contained within systems and (3) develop strategies that may be used to enhance collective efficacy.

The gaps Bandura reveal are addressed in this research study. First, the use of Hoffman's Vocational Value Scale (HVVS) elicits the employee job satisfaction through the data accessed from the forty-seven completed surveys. These data was analyzed to determine the collective efficacy of the group: classified employees. Next, the social interaction between the supervisor and the classified employee is further examined in this research study. The manner in that relationships are established between supervisors and employees is an significant factor in classified employees' job satisfaction and engagement in the workplace. Finally, collective efficacy is supported through frequent, organized meetings that support the classified employee.

Three methods were used implementing Bandura's three areas of research development to determine steps that may diminish the gap in measuring collective efficacy. The first step was to access a survey instrument that measures and identifies collective efficacy through the measurement of individual efficacy. The second method was the use of two focus groups to access collective efficacy, job satisfaction and work engagement. This method supported the researcher's analysis of the social interactions that produce collective efficacy. Finally, the third and final step was a series of thirteen interviews completed with classified employees, certificated administrators and departmental supervisors. These interviews provided a volume of data that were analyzed

to determine individual job satisfaction and perspectives. The focus groups and interviews were used to reveal the experiences of classified employees in the work environment. The data collected from these research methods will inform research surrounding the topics of job satisfaction and work engagement. In addition, data garnered from these tools will inform collaborative discussions with classified and their supervisors. The discussions will result in action steps to increase personal and collective efficacy, as well as job satisfaction and engagement in the workplace by the classified employee.

This chapter describes the methodology used for the study. The researcher uses a qualitative descriptive study implementing a survey, focus groups and interviews to tell the story of the classified employees as members of the school district. The chapter begins with a description of the setting for the study and the participants followed by the details of the assessment instrumentation.

### **Participants and Setting**

The participants in this study included nine randomly selected classified employees, who volunteered to participate in interviews and focus groups, out of one hundred and thirty classified employees from a variety of classifications within the Coronado Unified School District (CUSD). Forty seven classified employees out of the district's group of classified employees returned surveys. In addition, four certificated administrators and departmental supervisors out of seventeen administrators and supervisors volunteered to participate to be interviewed. The classified employees include employees in the following classifications: Food Service, Custodians,

Maintenance and Operations, Instructional Technology, Paraprofessionals (Instructional Assistants and Instructional Health Care Assistants), Child Care Workers, Secretaries, Clerk/Typists, Administrative Assistants, etc. The certificated administrators who volunteered to be interviewed either work at a school site or the district office. The departmental supervisors are mid-management employees who supervise a department within the district.

This district was selected because it is one in which the researcher is employed. The researcher believes that with this research she will help build a stronger support structure for the classified employees in this district and increase the personal efficacy and human capital of the district's classified employees. The researcher further believes this descriptive research study may provide a model for other school districts to use in designing opportunities for increased personal and collective efficacy for classified employees. In addition, supervisors of departments and site staff may benefit from effective strategies outlined as a result of this research study. It is this researcher's hope that district leaders recognize the importance of building employee's human capital within the school district.

One of the principal ways in that perceived efficacy contributes to academic development is through the "staffs' collective sense of efficacy that their schools can accomplish significant academic progress" (Bandura, 1993, p.135) resulting from a group effort. The group meetings discussed earlier are an important component in developing a sense of collective efficacy. Both the surveys and the interviews revealed the positive effects organized group meetings may have on the voice of the classified employee.

Including the classified employee in collective staff events and opportunities is important and may have an impact on the academic environment of school systems.

### **Assessment Instrumentation**

A consent form and survey was distributed to one hundred and thirty classified employees in the researcher's school district. The researcher selected classified employees who indicated on the survey that they were willing and available to either be interviewed or participate in a focus group. In addition, certificated administrators and supervisors were asked by the researcher if they were available and willing to be interviewed. Two certificated administrators and two supervisors volunteered to participate in the study and be interviewed. This convenience sampling allowed the researcher to access useful information through interviews and focus groups to answer the research questions in which the district employees participated. Those classified employees, administrators and supervisors who chose to complete and submit a survey, to participate in an interview or focus group did so.

The submitted surveys were used to populate the study. The schedule established to administer surveys, conduct interviews and focus groups was defined in February of 2012. The schedule was established in the following manner.

In February of 2012 consent forms and surveys were delivered and explained to the district's one hundred and thirty classified employees. As the researcher evaluated this initial step, she recognized her positionality within the district may be an impediment. Consequently she used a personal approach and hand delivered the consent form and the survey to each classified employee. This helped the researcher to provide a



clear description of the purpose of the survey to the employee and allowed the researcher to emphasize the voluntary nature of the employee's participation. The researcher met with each classified employee individually and presented the consent form and the survey. The researcher explained the purpose of the research and reviewed the consent form with the employee. The classified employee's voluntary participation was explained. It was explained to each employee that participation in the survey and interviews was not required. In addition, it was shared with the employee that if the employee did not wish to participate in the study, the lack of participation would not impact the employee's employment.

A deadline to return surveys was established. The expectation was to have the surveys returned within two weeks. After the researcher delivered and explained the surveys to classified employees, a general thank you e-mail was sent to the employees. The follow-up e-mail thanked the employees and shared appreciation for the time the classified employee spent with the researcher. In addition, employees were reminded of the deadline for the surveys. Forty surveys were returned. To increase the number of surveys she received, the researcher mailed surveys to classified employees with an additional description of the purpose of the survey. As a result of this step, an additional seven surveys were returned for a total of 47 surveys returned. An additional personal e-mail or thank you note after the initial meeting or mailing during which the survey and consent form were presented may have increased the response rate of the classified employees.

Classified employees had an option on the consent form (Appendix E) to indicate if they were interested in participating in an interview or focus group. During the months

of March through June 2012 a list of the interview participants and focus group participants was developed as consent forms were reviewed by the researcher. The researcher scheduled interviews and focus groups commencing in March and ending in August of 2012. Of the fifty-four classified employees who consented to participate in either a focus group or an interview or both forty-five classified employees were randomly selected and invited to participate in either a focus group or an interview. Nine classified employees were interviewed and thirty six classified employees participated in two separate focus groups. These employees work at different sites in the school district. In addition, these employees work within a variety of job classifications: secretaries, clerks, instructional assistants, and library technicians.

Administrators and supervisors who work with classified employees were randomly selected and asked to participate in an interview. Two certificated administrators and two district supervisors at the mid-management levels agreed to take part in an interview for this research project. These leaders consisted of administrators located at a school site, the district office, and two directors of departments within the school district. The interviews held with the administrators were held within the same time period as those interviews scheduled with the classified employees, March through June 2012.

Focus groups were also organized. These focus groups were developed using the consent forms submitted by the classified employees. All classified employees who completed a consent form and a survey had the opportunity to determine whether they wished to participate in a focus group or an individual interview. The researcher reviewed the consent forms and randomly selected classified employees to participate in two focus

groups. One focus group consisted of four individuals. The second focus group had one classified employee attend. This employee consented to be interviewed. As a result of the lack of attendance by classified employees an additional focus group was scheduled.

Two focus groups were held in June of 2012 and August 2012. One of the focus groups consisted of four individuals and the other focus group consisted of thirty two individuals. The second focus group was scheduled during a professional development day. This second focus group was developed to offset the paucity in attendance of a previously scheduled focus group. Attendance at the second randomly selected focus group was one classified employee. The three other classified employees who were invited could not attend the scheduled focus group. Consequently, another time was scheduled for a focus group. Fortunately, the researcher had the opportunity to schedule time for the second focus group within an existing professional development day for both certificated and classified employees. Classified employees were invited to participate in a fifty minute period described as “revealing the voice of the classified employee.” This focus group consisted of a group of employees who had completed consent forms but could not attend the previously scheduled focus groups in June. The employees were invited to attend this focus group as part of the professional development day in August and had the option to attend other trainings on the same day and time. Thirty two classified employees chose to attend the focus group described as “revealing the voice of the classified employee.”

Interviews were transcribed using an online service, WeScribeIt, each interviewee had an opportunity to review the transcription to ensure accuracy of interviewee’s

statements. Once transcriptions were reviewed and approved by each interviewee, the data were uploaded to HyperResearch and coded by the researcher.

Throughout the summer of 2012, July through September the initial analysis of survey data, focus group and interview transcripts was completed.

In determining the design of this study the researcher was very aware of her positionality in the district. Throughout each meeting with classified employees the researcher clearly described the purpose of the research. The manner of the invitation to classified employees to participate in this study was carefully crafted due to the positionality of the researcher. The reason for this is due to the need for employees to feel comfortable that their work situation would not be negatively impacted by their involvement in this study. A step the researcher took to ensure classified employees felt comfortable participating in the study was to personally meet with each employee when delivering the consent form and survey. During each brief meeting the researcher explained the voluntary nature, whether the employee participated or not, of the research study and emphasized the research study would not impact their status as an employee. Invitations to participate in the study were mailed to those classified employees the researcher was unable to personally meet within the designated timeline. Out of the distributed one hundred and thirty (130) surveys, forty seven (47) surveys were returned.

In the explanation of the survey during each brief meeting, the researcher shared the four research questions, elaborating the purpose of the study was to access the “voice” of the employee. Upon recommendation of the IRB committee, in order for the questions to be better understood by the classified employee, the researcher amended the research questions so they may be understandable using concrete language to support the

classified employee's awareness of the purpose of the survey and the resulting study. The slightly amended questions using the IRB committee's recommendations are listed.

1. In what ways is the skill set (human capital) of classified employees described by both classified, certificated employees and administrators?
2. From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to maximize his/her skill set (human capital)?
3. What are exemplars (examples) of classified employees being appreciated and acknowledged (valued) at school sites?
4. To what degree are classified employees appreciated and acknowledged (valued) at school sites?

The phrases in parentheses are those that appeared in the initial questions developed by the researcher. In summary the phrase human capital was replaced by skill set, the word "exemplars" was replaced by "examples" and the word "valued" was replaced by "acknowledged." These amendments were made at the recommendation of the IRB committee to support the classified employees' understanding of the intent of the questions.

Since classified employees are thirty-two percent of education's work forces, and these employees hold positions throughout district offices and schools sites, it is likely that ensuring an experience that is a positive work experience will result in positive outcomes in the workplace. Luthans et al. (2008) mention some outcomes that may be expected as a result of a positive work environment. For example, some of these outcomes may result in lower employee absenteeism, less employee cynicism and

intentions to quit, and higher job satisfaction, commitment, and organizational citizen behaviors. These job factors as they are revealed in employees' work attitudes may certainly influence a schools' academic environment. More than likely, classified employees' level of job satisfaction will support or undermine the changes district leaders wish to implement in the district as a whole.

Avey et al. (2010) demonstrated that maximizing the integrative aspects of PsyCap. hope, efficacy, resilience and optimism (HERO) of employees has the potential to provide opportunities to predict desired employee outcomes better than individual resources independently.

### **Research Hypotheses**

The research hypotheses for this study have a foundation in Seligman's (2004) research in the area of PsyCap and Bandura's (2000) work in the area of collective efficacy. The productivity of employees is a function of positive emotion, engagement and meaning. If leaders in school districts are aware of the methods to increase PsyCap and implement these methods to help employees increase their personal PsyCap, then, employees will be happier and more productive. In addition, if employees are engaged, find value and know the meaning of their work, they will have higher productivity. Negative or positive job satisfaction was determined through the results of an amended Hoffman Vocational Values Scale (HVVS) survey distributed to 130 classified employees in the district. Forty-seven surveys were returned. The results of the initial survey were used to support a cross sectional design. The two comparison groups are:

those with positive job satisfaction in the work place and those with negative job satisfaction in the work place.

Qualitative data were gathered using the voice of the employees through interviews to determine how the work environment affects the job satisfaction and work engagement of these employees. Collaborative discussions or focus groups including all employees will provide for a deliberate and focused change in the work place. This will be a change that meets the needs of the employee. With discussion topics directly generated from employee input, it will be possible to positively impact the systems in an organization and increase the PsyCap of classified employees in an organic, grass roots manner. The factors that challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to be engaged in the work environment will be revealed, analyzed and used to educate processes used in the district as they impact classified employees.

Bandura's (2000) research influences the development of systems within an organization that increase efficacy. These systems will increase the collective efficacy of a group of employees, nurture the individuals within this group and provide a shared sense of efficacy in the group. In addition, incorporating technology with the use of social networking systems to promote a larger scope of shared efficacy amongst classified employees may help to expand opportunities for and the impact of professional development. This larger scope of interactions supported by social networking systems may result in a perceived increase in collective efficacy.

With these thoughts in mind, the following hypotheses are used in answer to each research question for investigation through this study:

1. In what ways is human capital of classified employees described by both classified employees and their supervisors?
  - a. Hypothesis: What this researcher believes she will find is that the value of employees is not acknowledged or compensated, as it should be. Instead a heavy dissatisfaction with the treatment of classified employees will be told in the stories of the classified employees.
  - b. Hypothesis: Understanding the depth of human capital will be a challenge initially, but will be further described using responses to interview questions and focus groups.
2. From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to maximize human capital?
  - a. Hypothesis: Challenges may exist in a lack of information for the classified employees and a lack of awareness by supervisors and classified employees of job expectations that are expected of the classified employee.
3. What are exemplars of classified employees being valued at school sites?
  - a. Hypothesis: classified employees feel valued through acknowledgement and recognition of their work
4. To what degree are classified employees valued at school sites?
  - a. Hypothesis: this may rely on how or whether employees are recognized or acknowledged

A possible result of this research as it is used to influence the systems in place as they impact classified employees is the potential of implementing action plans resulting



from the research study through the use of discussion groups. The discussion groups may be developed to establish areas of action in that the answers to the questions of this research study are evaluated and further discussed to determine impact and potential to increase job satisfaction and employee engagement in the work environment. As research is conducted and questions answered, appropriate employee generated topics for discussion may be organized for discussion groups, resulting in increased interaction of classified, certificated employees and administrators within a school district. These interactions will be used to further increase the support available to classified employees with the purpose of increasing classified employee engagement through resulting action plans.

Discussion groups may be used after this research study is completed to facilitate changes in the work environment. Topics for discussion groups will be developed based on the inquiry of classified employee's experiences within the work environment. Employee's perspectives, job satisfaction, psychological capital and self-efficacy will be accessed through interviews, focus groups and surveys. Events that reveal a higher collective efficacy will be recorded. On the other hand, when a lower collective efficacy is revealed, research will be conducted to determine how to remedy the situation. The research will provide information for additional discussions that will include input from the classified employee, site leadership and the researcher. Recommendations resulting from the discussions will be implemented through collaboratively developed action plans at respective school sites. Classified employees and site leadership will be surveyed to determine impact and ascertain whether increased human capital and value added

experiences resulted through the implementation of this research and the resulting discussions.

### **Materials and Procedure**

Written permission to conduct surveys, focus groups and interviews was obtained prior to beginning research. Permission was requested and received from the Coronado Unified School District (CUSD) Board, CUSD Superintendent as well as from the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB) Committee.

To initiate the study, a number of surveys were reviewed to determine applicability to this particular research project. Hoffman's (2009) survey, the Hoffman Vocational Values Scale (HVVS) was specifically designed to address the lack of tools available to measure workplace experiences. This tool (HVVS) provides an objective manner in that employees may label areas of contentment and satisfaction at work and identify circumstances that cause frustration or unhappiness. The HVVS measures job satisfaction on twelve dimensions. The identified dimensions used in the HVVS were a result of Dr. Hoffman's research on psychologist Abraham Maslow's work on self-actualization. These dimensions are described by Dr. Hoffman as: 1. Importance of Work, 2. Avocation or "calling," 3. Personal Fulfillment, 4. Sense of Physical Safety, 5. Sense of Belongingness and Sociability, 6. Respect and Admiration of Co-Workers, 7. Feeling Respected and Appreciated, 8. Having a Teacher and a Hero, 9. Feel creatively challenged, 10. Feeling Involved and Unhindered, 11. Moments of Joy and Inspiration, 12. Helping to Make the World a Better Place.

Since Dr. Edward Hoffman is the sole author of the HVVS and holder of its copyright, the researcher contacted Dr. Hoffman to access permission to amend the HVVS for use in this research study. Permission was granted by Dr. Hoffman and a letter of agreement was drafted and signed (Appendix F). The letter of agreement established the parameters of use of the amended HVVS. The researcher has permission to administer the adapted scale to one hundred fifty participants.

The researcher reviewed the entire HVVS and selected statements that met the needs of this research study. The adapted survey has items measured using a 5-point Likert scale of agreement with response options ranging from 1= very low to 5 = very high. The scale items were drawn from Dr. Hoffman's previously published and tested scale, the HVVS. The scale items were amended to fit the needs of the researcher's study.

After permission was obtained from Dr. Hoffman, the twelve dimensions and questions in the HVVS scale were reviewed and amended by the researcher to create the survey used in this research study. Dr. Hoffman is a clinical psychologist. His research in developing this scale was the result of the desire of human resource managers to increase employee engagement. The HVVS was developed by Dr. Hoffman to fill the gap of assessment tools that are available to managers, directors and other human resources supervisors in the workplace. This tool, HVVS, helps individuals to understand the causes of fulfillment and pleasure as well as those events that may inhibit positive experiences at work. The researcher sent the amended survey to Dr. Hoffman for his review (Appendix I).

## **Data Collection**

Primary to this study is accessing the voice of the classified employee. Data has been collected to accomplish this primary goal through interviews, surveys and focus groups. Each of these data collecting strategies brought validity to the research. The interviews provided the researcher with the primary voice, the voice which emanated from the perspective and language of the classified employee. These initial data establish a background upon which subsequent discussion groups will be developed after the research study is completed. The purpose of the discussion groups will be to make use of the results of the research study and to positively impact the classified employee's relationship to work. Finally, the voice of focus groups allowed for the creation of a unified voice for the classified employee. Using these three methods, interviews, focus groups and a survey, the voice of the classified employee has been accessed. This voice helped to inform the development of action plans that will benefit the employer, the school district, and the classified employee through increased job satisfaction and engagement at work by the employee. Finally, the resulting research summarizing the classified employee's unified voice may provide a platform for action research defined as methods used to support and increase engagement of classified employees within the researcher's school district. Upon refinement these methods may be shared with human resource directors in neighboring school districts to increase the engagement of classified employees in other districts.

## **Data Analysis**

The survey data were analyzed using SPSS. One negatively stated question in the HVVS, question ten, was reversed before running any analysis. Coding of the transcribed interviews and focus group conversations was completed using HyperResearch. Both the quantitative data and the collective qualitative data provide insight to the classified employees' engagement in the work place and sense of collective efficacy.

## **Research Report**

This research is provocative due to the large number of hidden stories discovered in the classified employees selected to interview. As a result of these interviews the researcher has discovered the power of holding face-to-face conversations with employees. These conversations (interviews) provide a moment in time in that the employee's thoughts, opinions and perspective are sought and valued by the supervisor. Each employee has a vast number of intriguing experiences and knowledge that are hidden until they are brought out into the light and examined. In examining the content of these conversations, the researcher discovered the essence of the changes that must be put into place to increase the human capital and the engagement of the classified employee in a school district. These changes are revealed through the voice of the classified employee.

**Discussion.** Areas of additional research are necessary in determining the methods to access data regarding the systems that impact classified employees in the organization. Systems that impact classified employees revealed through interviews and focus groups will be evaluated. As a result of this research, analysis of these systems to

ascertain the type of and degree of impact on the employee will be completed. The methodology used to review these systems will be determined.

The next component of this study is the evaluation of the human capital of the classified employee. The human capital of the classified employee may be generated from the employee's personal satisfaction with the job assignment. Surveys, interviews and focus groups are used to measure job satisfaction of the classified employee. These methods provide qualitative data that were used to inform the study.

Awareness of the impact a classified employee has upon a school site is another component of this study. Understanding the value of the employee's job assignment and the role this assignment has in the organization's system and culture is a component of this study that addresses the following question: To what degree are classified employees valued at school sites? As administrators and department supervisors reveal their perspectives of the job assignments, these may inform the awareness of the classified employee's impact and consequently their value.

## **Summary**

The researcher commenced the collection of data using pilot interviews to provide a basis for the development of questions for two focus groups consisting of classified employees and thirteen interviews with classified employees, certificated administrators and supervisors. In addition, a survey was created to assess what components impact job satisfaction for classified employees. This survey was created using the components of Dr. Hoffman's HVVS. As the data for this research study were accessed through interviews and focus groups, the importance of face-to-face contacts and group meetings

was revealed. The classified employees expressed their hope in the potential for change in the work place resulting from their recommendations and shared experiences as revealed in the focus groups and interviews. The researcher's analysis of the data obtained through this investigation will assist policy makers, site administrators and district managers as policy decisions that impact classified employees are established and implemented.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results and Findings**

This goal of this study is to reveal the voice of the classified employee. Three methods were developed and implemented to reveal these voices: a survey, a series of interviews and focus groups. The survey was developed utilizing Dr. Hoffman's HVVS. With Dr. Hoffman's approval and a payment of \$150 the researcher was provided access to the HVVS questions and corresponding categories. The researcher amended Dr. Hoffman's scale and created a 12-question survey. (Appendix I) The survey was distributed to all of the employees in the school district: one hundred and thirty. Forty-seven classified employees completed and returned the surveys. The survey data were inputted into SPSS and analyzed. The questions used in the thirteen interviews and two focus groups were developed using a pilot study completed by the researcher. Transcribed interviews were uploaded to HyperResearch and analyzed by the researcher. This chapter is divided into two parts: the analysis of the qualitative data and that of the quantitative data with a summary of each and a final summary of the qualitative descriptive study.

#### **Data Analysis**

This study was conducted within a district in Southern California. By focusing on school sites within the same district, the researcher hoped to gain insight into the relationships between employees and supervisors, job satisfaction and work engagement



of classified employees and determine the impact these components upon the organization.

## Findings

### Qualitative Data: Interviews

The interviews were coded using HyperResearch software. The codes were created using the research questions as a guideline and resource. The researcher grouped related codes under three headings: Human Capital, Acknowledgement, and Engagement. The complete list of identified codes is grouped under each of the summarizing categories by common theme. These thematic categories and codes are listed in Table 3.

**Table 3.** Group Headings with Codes

<b>Human Capital</b>	<b>Acknowledgement</b>	<b>Engagement</b>
Autonomy	Appreciation	Job description is unclear
Resistance to change	Impact at Work	Part of a Team
Communication	Recommendations for Improvement	Awareness
Experience outside of education	Job Satisfaction	Support by classified Parent
Learning something new on the job	Valued	Group Meetings
Initiative	Opportunity for Advancement	Morale
Professional Development	Opportunity to be creative	Challenges
Worked a number of positions in the district	Compensation	Best Aspect of the Job
Lack of training	Feedback or Evaluation	Involvement
Interaction with students		Personal and Professional Goal
		Relationship with supervisor
		Accountability
		Divisive Actions
		Union

Thirteen interviews and two focus groups were transcribed and uploaded to HyperResearch. Codes and the grouping of the codes were applied to each interview. The

Frequency Report as seen in Table 4 contains a summary of how often the researcher's codes have been used in the study. Table 4 illustrates the name of the code and the frequency of each code in the six columns. The smallest number of cases in that each code has been used in any case in this research study is shown in column two with the header Min. If there are any cases in the research study in that the code has not been used, the minimum number for that code is zero. The largest number of times that the code has been used in any case of this research study is reflected in the column with the heading Max. The Mean denotes the average (arithmetic mean) number of times the code is used per case. Finally, the column header Std Dev reflects the standard deviation of the distribution of codes across the cases.

**Table 4.** Frequency Report – Codes Listed - Ordered Number of Times Used in Cases

<b>Code</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Min</b>	<b>Max</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std Dev</b>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.40</b>	<b>3.02</b>
<b>Communication</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>3.96</b>
<b>Relationship with supervisor</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>4.27</b>	<b>3.97</b>
<b>Appreciation</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>4.20</b>	<b>3.28</b>
<b>Part of a Team Valued</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3.67</b>	<b>2.58</b>
Impact at Work	32	0	7	2.13	2.20
Recommendations for Improvement	31	0	11	2.07	2.84
Challenges	31	0	4	2.07	1.53
Divisive Actions	30	0	9	2.00	2.80
Interaction with students	29	0	10	1.93	2.84
Awareness	27	0	7	1.80	2.37
Group Meetings	25	0	5	1.67	1.92
Morale	23	0	5	1.53	1.46
Initiative	22	0	4	1.47	1.60
Involvement	22	0	7	1.47	2.03
Feedback or Evaluation	22	0	6	1.47	1.85
Learning something new on the job	21	0	6	1.40	1.88
Personal and Professional Goal	21	0	4	1.40	1.35
Lack of training	20	0	5	1.33	1.80
Compensation	18	0	6	1.20	1.97
Support by classified	17	0	3	1.13	1.13
Union	14	0	4	0.93	1.34
Experience outside of education	13	0	4	0.87	1.25
Worked a number of positions in the district	12	0	3	0.80	1.08
Best Aspect of the Job	12	0	4	0.80	1.21
Job description is unclear	11	0	6	0.73	1.62
Opportunity for Advancement	11	0	6	0.73	1.67
Opportunity to be creative	10	0	5	0.67	1.40
Parent	10	0	3	0.67	1.05
Job satisfaction	10	0	7	0.67	1.84
Resistance to change	7	0	4	0.47	1.13
Accountability	6	0	2	0.40	0.63
Autonomy	5	0	2	0.33	0.62

### **Selection of Focus**

There are 34 codes revealed within the 15 interviews. The 6 codes with the highest mean of use: 4.4 at the highest to the lowest at 3.267 are the focus of the results portion of this research study. These codes were selected as the focus due to the high frequency of references. The next code has a sudden reduction in mean to 2.133 and a significant reduction of number of references of the code to 32 times in 7 interviews. Thus the codes with a mean of 3.267 and above were selected by the researcher to analyze. These topics are Professional Development, Communication, Relationship with Supervisor, Appreciation, Part of a Team, and Valued. Classified employees referenced the topic of Professional Development a total of 66 times in 11 of the 15 interviews. Communication was referenced a total of 64 times in 14 interviews. The code Relationship with a Supervisor was also referenced 64 times in a fewer number of interviews: 12. Appreciation was referenced 55 times in 8 of the interviews and the topic of Valued was referred to 49 times in 9 interviews. The items in bold text listed at the beginning of Table 4 are the codes most frequently mentioned in interviews and consequently are the focus of the qualitative study. Using the most frequently used codes in interviews as listed in Table 4, the researcher used HyperResearch to develop lists of quotes aligned to each code. These were highlighted in HyperResearch by the researcher. The interviews were read and reread by the researcher and the quotes were designated as significant examples of each of the codes. The quotes from administrators, district supervisors and classified employees are highlighted in the next section to illustrate the voice of the classified employee as it relates to the six most frequently mentioned topics. The topics discussed in the next section of this chapter are in order of frequency of

references in the interviews. The combined interviews of administrators, department supervisors and classified employees revealed these codes as important. These topics are Professional Development, Communication, Relationship with Supervisor, Appreciation, Part of a Team, and Valued.

### **Professional Development**

Comments about Professional Development (PD) were made by most of the participants in both the interviews and the focus groups. The interviews revealed an overall desire on the part of administrators to provide more PD for classified employees. In addition classified employees wished to have access to a greater amount of PD. Administrators acknowledged the inequity of PD between certificated and classified employees. An administrator stated, "I don't think that either myself or the district has adequately supported the PD of classified employees." In addition, providing PD for classified employees as an afterthought was revealed. Administrators and classified employees mentioned the feeling that primarily the focus is on planning PD for certificated employees. The following statement about planning PD reveals the lack of focus on classified employees and their PD. "I think it's been so geared towards the teaching staff that it's just kind of an add-on or an oh yeah, well classified staff here it is."

Classified employees value the opportunity to attend PD. The statement, "I think that PD just recognizes the value that I bring and not only are they recognizing the value that I bring, but they care enough to want me to be more valuable and instill new training in me to make whatever I need to do easier, or better, or more efficient, or expand my

knowledge, or whatever I want to make it be.” The opportunity to attend PD is appreciated. Yet, the lack of PD is viewed as a lack of support and a lack of desire to help classified employees improve their skills. The positions held by classified employees are viewed as positions that are not stepping stones to a better job within the district. The ability to progress into another job with more responsibility and better pay is not viewed as an option. Classified employees wished to have access to training so they could advance to higher paying positions. Administrators are willing to provide PD to support their staff to improve their skills within their existing jobs. In addition, the focus on cross training classified employees is emphasized by administrators so if a position is vacant an employee who has had experience or training in that particular position will be qualified to fill it.

Due to a decrease in budgets, classified employees are no longer routinely sent to conferences. The ability to connect with other classified employees within similar professions is a valuable component of expanding the knowledge base of an employee. A method used to utilize funds more efficiently is to send one or two classified employees out to a training and have those individuals share what they learned with the employees who were not sent to the training. This is a strategy used by administrators when funds are not adequate to send all classified employees to a training. With this strategy classified employees take advantage of training opportunities without depleting a budget.

Instructional Assistants consistently requested training to better meet the needs of students and teachers. The statement, “I would be willing to pay myself to go to some of the seminars that are given on autism that I know they send a lot of the teachers to. If they

would have offered that to some of us, we would have really, really enjoyed the opportunity to go.”

The job classifications of classified employees are so varied the need for specific PD focused on the particular elements of a job class is necessary. Despite the fact that all of the classified employees are grouped together, this grouping does not necessitate one type of training. Training must be specific to the needs of each class. For example, Food Service Workers, have access to Serve Safe Certificates purchased for them by the district after they complete the training. In addition, custodians have the opportunity to access certification in Waste Water Management. If the Food Service Worker or the Custodian decides to move to another district or position the certificate documents their training and is a validation of an increase in human capital. According to both the supervisors and the classified employees, PD is an important component in acknowledging the value of the classified employee. In addition, the recognition that PD must be varied and developed to specifically meet the needs of the varied groups of classified employees is a necessary aspect of planning PD for all classifications. PD is necessary within the ranks of classified employees in supporting job satisfaction and engagement in the work place.

### **Communication**

The second most frequently mentioned code in the interviews is communication. Communication occurs in numerous ways in a school district. Increasingly e-mail is a form of communication in that meetings, notices and a variety of other get-togethers are shared with all staff. In the past in the school district in that this researcher is conducting

the research, classified employees have typically not had an e-mail address unless they were a classified employee who needed to have e-mail to complete the job. In this district, the practice has been to not provide an e-mail address for the classified employees. This has changed gradually throughout the last three years.

When the researcher first began working in this district and asked the CSEA president why all classified employees did not have e-mail addresses, the response was, “They don’t need them. Why will they waste their time accessing district e-mail. They are not paid to read e-mail.” Classified employees have requested access to district e-mail. Consequently, district policy regarding e-mail access has gradually shifted in the past years due to a desire to meet the needs of employees. Classified employees wish to have access to e-mail and value the avenue of communication other district employees have access to and use within the school district. In addition, administrators recognize the value of all employees having access to district e-mail.

Communication is closely aligned to value. This is realized in the following quote, “Keeping them (classified employees) informed in what’s going on, including them in events or decisions. To me that’s the easiest way to show value, that they’re opinion matters.” Administrators value the ease of e-mail to provide access to information for all employees. When classified employees do not have access to information, a lack of value is implied and a lack of understanding regarding expectations on the part of classified employees result. Holding staff meetings for employees may be another avenue for communication and may be helpful, yet regular staff meetings are not held due to constraints in work schedules and lack of budget to encourage the participation of classified employees in staff meetings beyond their work day.



Consistently administrators shared that they believed classified employees were much more valued by the administrator than what was shared with the classified employee. Administrators shared that communicating value to employees lacked consistency and frequency due to constraints of time. Some administrators shared that they really try to provide a lot of positive feedback. "...try to give them as many accolades as I possibly can just so that they know that they're valued and appreciated. I say thank you a lot and I recognize them a lot." The relationship created with classified employees in some situations is positive in that the administrator feels that classified employees feel comfortable approaching the administrator and sharing opinions, perspectives and concerns. On the other hand classified employees stated, "They (administrators) don't ask our opinion." Consistently classified employees were concerned about the manner used to speak about them or to them. Statements such as "We're not idiots. You know, you can talk to us like a grown up" were shared to illustrate how classified employees feel when spoken to by administrators and other employees.

Avenues of communication for the classified employee are not clearly outlined. Administrators were concerned that classified employees were not sure what avenues should be taken to get support to have their concerns shared. As a result, classified employees were not easily able to access support when they had an issue or concern. Classified employees often will ask a question of an administrator and not receive an answer. "If they've gone to either a site administrator or even a district administrator, they (classified employees) don't get the answers. They ask the questions, but never get an answer." This lack of knowledge regarding the appropriate channels of communication or lack of response to a question may result in employees who resort to

the union and the grievance procedure instead of directly contacting a supervisor if they have a concern or question. In addition, job descriptions and expectations are not clear nor are they consistent amongst school sites in the district. Differing demands are made of employees throughout the district according to the individual needs of sites and administrators. The variance in expectations of classified employees due to the administrators needs is an area that should be addressed to ensure the consistency for classified employees. District wide expectations of employees according to job classifications must be consistently enforced and supported throughout the district by all employees.

To maintain consistent and frequent channels of communication some administrators consciously try to meet with classified employees frequently throughout each week. Other administrators will only meet with classified employees to discuss the process of evaluation at the beginning, middle and end of the evaluation process. Therefore, consistency of communication between classified employees and administrators amongst all school sites in the school district does not exist. Administrators recognize the need for a consistent meeting time with classified employees and do lament the lack of implementations. These administrators recognize the negative message this sends to classified employees and do attempt to establish a regular meeting schedule at the beginning of each school year. Unfortunately as the year progresses and the impact of other meetings are increased, the meetings with the classified groups are negatively impacted and gradually are taken out of schedules.

Classified employee opinions are asked by some administrators and relationships are developed and maintained to ensure the smooth running of a school site.

Administrators work closely with their front office staff and request opinions and perspectives on aspects of site decisions that impact them. In addition, the recognition that one-to-one contact and acknowledgement of classified employees as individuals who are contributing to the district work is also a component of the administrator's awareness. Taking the time to visit with employees and ask how they are doing is an essential component of developing a culture of togetherness within a school site. Being sensitive to the perspectives of employees through an openness and desire to listen to their needs, requests and concerns is a consistent statement revealed by administrators in interviews. "Look them in the eye to see that they actually, that you see them, that they are not just a fixture that's coming through the building and cleaning up your mess." In essence, the need to establish frequent avenues of communication is a necessary part of job satisfaction and work engagement.

### **Relationship With Supervisor**

Relationship with the supervisor is the third most frequently mentioned category throughout the interviews. Throughout the interviews the concept of connections with the supervisor were mentioned as a way to develop and expand relationships within the district. These connections did not have to be made with a supervisor, but connections with other aspects of the district were facilitated if the initial relationship with the supervisor was nurtured. The essence of the classified employees' statements was that connections with supervisors helped to determine whether classified employees feel valued by supervisors or not. These relationships vary according to school site, leadership style of the administrator and processes that are established or not within the school

district. The two levels of supervisor-employee relationships described in this study are with supervisors at the district level supervisors and secondly with school site supervisors. Relationships are developed within classrooms with certificated teachers, yet these relationships are not clearly defined as supervisory within the school district. This may be an area of future research to determine the needs related to classified employees working in classrooms with teachers. Within this study, the researcher is focused upon the formal relationship between supervisors who are responsible for evaluating, managing and supervising classified employees.

District level supervisors are intent on providing the classified employees whom they supervise with opportunities for growth. This perspective is realized through opportunities provided to the classified employee by supervisors to cross train. Cross training is a situation in that employees temporarily step into another job classification to access experience in that job. For instance, a food service worker working only in the serving line or the food preparation may not be aware of the responsibilities of the food service cashier. These opportunities to cross train provide the classified employee with increased knowledge, human capital and value to the school district. In addition, the classified employee as access to employment in other job classifications. With this added knowledge to the classified employees' human capital, the opportunities are thus increased for the employee to advance to other positions with increased responsibility and compensation in the district. A district administrator demonstrates in the following quote the method in that opportunities are provided for experiences in other job classifications through substituting for absent employees, "I also let them know when there is other openings in other parts of the district, so if there is a teacher's assistant position open and

it's more hours, try and let them know, hey why don't you sub (substitute) so that you can potentially get more hours." As a result of this intervention, the employee will access additional hours and compensation in this type of situation.

District level supervisors are also interested in providing a big picture scenario as to the vision and mission of the district. Supervisors wish to provide opportunities for their employees to have access to information about the district so the employee may then have "buy in" into the decisions made in support of the vision and mission of the district. Administrators state they value the input of the classified employee and wish to have classified employees provide their own input regarding the district's operations. A supervisor shared the sensitive process used to access classified employee input and feedback. Eliciting this engagement from the classified employee through a strategic systematic process was a predetermined result of the steps the supervisor took with the employee. What follows is a description of a practice put in place for employee input and to occur, "...explaining the whole process and so that they have buy in and getting their feedback and sometimes stepping back and waiting until it's their idea..."

Finally, consistently both site and district supervisors communicated a need to value employees as the supervisor in the supervisor-employee relationship through acknowledging the employee's work. Supervisors acknowledged that feedback regarding work performance should be immediately provided to the employee. In addition, supervisors acknowledged the value this feedback communicated to the employee regarding the quality and value of their services within the school district. Despite the intentions of the espoused statements of the administrators, classified employees consistently refer to the lack of consistent feedback.

Per contract, supervisors evaluate classified employees yearly in the first six years of their employment at the school district. After six years, supervisors evaluate every other year or more frequently depending upon whether the administrator or the classified employee requests additional evaluations as necessary. Typically classified employees don't remember the last time they had an evaluation or they are uncertain as to how their job performance is perceived by the supervisor. "...in my almost twelve school years I think I've only had three (evaluations)...they're nice to have so that you know ... if someone's not coming and saying you're doing this wrong or you're messing up ... you have to feel that you're probably doing it okay but I think it's kind of nice to hear that you are.."

Some site supervisors have a very close relationship with the classified employees at the school site. A site supervisor used some of the following statements to describe the relationship developed with the classified employees at her school site: "the eyes and the ears of the school," "he helped me with a lot of different things, and we forged a really good relationship," "I go in and I sit down and I have dinner with the custodians sometimes," "... was my right-hand man for the last two years." Ultimately, the supervisors and classified employees recognize different relationships exist between the employees and the supervisors according to the department or school site. Those employees, who work closely with the site supervisors such as custodians, clerks and secretaries, seem to have developed close relationships with their respective supervisors. The work they do as a team provides a consistent support system for district employees, programs and school sites. According to the researcher's observations, analyzing classified employees' statements in interviews and the responses of administrators, it is

apparent that site level relationships between classified employees and administrators are not consistent across all school sites.

Classified employees reveal that the quality of the relationship with their supervisor depends on the supervisor for whom they are working within the school district. The following statement from a classified employee reveals this difference, “I think a lot of classified (employees’) ability to feel professionally and personally motivated and fulfilled on the job has to do with who they report to...” Classified employees’ performance is impacted by their site supervisor as revealed through this statement, “...a hard personality to deal with...whatever is on (the supervisor’s) mind at that time, that’s what needs to be done right now. Right now.” In addition, the disparity between two site administrators at the same site revealed through this statement evokes a sense of flexibility as well as frustration on the part of the classified employees as they address the varied needs of the two site administrators. “We have one that’s ADHD and then we have another one that’s very passionate, sometimes so passionate that it seems like she’s coming at you with all four feet...”

Classified employees are often the individuals who have longevity within the district. These employees are faithful to the district as revealed by the length of time the sample of employees who completed the survey have worked in the district. The mean years of employment of the 47 employees who completed an amended HVVS survey is 10.28 years of service. Throughout the tenure of these employees, they share experiences with a variety of administrators as revealed in this statement. “I have been through...five-six administrators, so a couple of them ... get me involved... some of them want to be involved all the time...depends on the administrators...”

The variety in administrator style in managing is an important component of the supervisor-employee relationship. If there is a consistent method throughout the district as to how all administrators work with classified employees, there may be a stronger sense of value felt on the part of the employee. Classified employees state, "...they (administrators) pretty much do things differently, every administration is different how they handle stuff..." A method the district may wish to implement is to highlight the bright successful spots in supervisor-employee relationships and expand these methods to all supervisors within the school district via a clearly defined professional development for district supervisors. The consistency in developing relationships between the supervisor and the employee may be helpful in promoting the value of classified employees.

The administrators' knowledge of what is supposed to be accomplished through a classified employee's position is important. As mentioned before, the expectations supervisors may have of classified employees may differ from the job descriptions. If administrators are aware of the complexity and requirements of the tasks within a job description, and of the length of time taken to complete a task they will then be more apt to be aware of how the classified employee prioritizes the tasks asked of him or her. The need to prioritize on the part of the classified employee is a vital part of the process of success in completing the tasks required of a particular position. The supervisor – employee relationship is fundamental to establishing smooth processes in an office or department. In essence, the supervisor-employee relationship that clearly establishes consistent lines of communication and appreciation for the classified employees are successful. This success is measured through the positive statements of the classified



employee regarding their feeling of worth in the job and school site as a result of a strong connection with the supervisor. This connection increases a sense of engagement at work and job satisfaction.

### **Appreciation**

Connections established between students and the classified employees support the culture of classified employees feeling appreciated within the school district. Appreciation is received through acknowledgement of work completed, awareness of other employees personally and professionally within district and connections with students. There was repeated mention of appreciation revealed by employees stating they would feel more appreciated if job descriptions clearly delineated job duties. In addition, employees felt that appropriate compensation for the work expected of them was extremely important in revealing how their employer appreciated them. Once job descriptions are updated and clearly delineate job duties, the administrators would then be aware of the complexity of the jobs classified employees accomplished. One classified employee shared the amazement of a fellow employee when the employee discovered the extent of responsibilities she had as part of her job. The employee stated, “Wow, you do all this and you deal with that stuff? Thank you, you’ve been friendly and so helpful, thank you very much.” As a result of this conversation, the classified employee whose job was revealed to the other employee shared, “ I feel like she really appreciated what I bring. I feel valued.” Repeatedly concerns were brought up by classified employees regarding the lack of updated job descriptions. Some of the job descriptions in this district have not been updated since 1988. As a result, lack of communication with

classified employees regarding clearly defined job expectations has been a significant part of the feeling of lack of appreciation on the part of the classified employee.

In addition, the expectations of classified employees should be aligned to awareness of their job duties. As shared earlier, if job descriptions were updated and were clearer then Instructional Assistants may not be expected to complete the duties of a custodian as was shared in this anecdote from a classified employee. “There are teachers who think that we are sort of custodial staff. Pick up this ... wipe this, clean that. And it’s like, you know, we can of course, we do that because that’s our job. But, you know, we’ve all gone to college. We, we’re not idiots. You know, you can talk to us like a grown up.”

Employees felt that if the job descriptions were clear, all employees would be aware of the contributions they made to the district. This is one way employees could have access to information regarding one another’s role in the district. In addition, if the professional background and credentials of a classified employee were revealed as those of other employees in the district, then classified employees may not be as likely to share the following statement, “I just feel like no one takes into consideration that what I actually put in here might be useful to their students.”

If all employees had an awareness of one another’s contribution to the entire district’s vision and mission, the appreciation of one another within the district will be greatly enhanced. Classified employees throughout the district felt that the staff was sometimes appreciative and supportive. The classified employees at one particular school site acknowledged their site as family oriented, supportive and accommodating regarding personal family issues. In addition, classified employees were themselves appreciative of

the health benefits that were provided for full-time employees and their dependents. At another school site, the atmosphere of the relationships amongst employees was described as an “us against them” mentality when describing the foundation of a lack of appreciation for classified employees.

Unfortunately the lack of appreciation for classified employees is reflected in the widely publicized “Teacher’s Day.” A classified employee described the following scenario, “It was Teacher Appreciation Day ... and I were just so petty. We really were, we were really petty because this one teacher made a haul that year. She was really bringing it all in. And ... and I said, ‘... (Name) hasn’t spent ten minutes with these kids, not ten lousy minutes with these kids.’ And she’s going ‘Boy, I’m going to Starbucks, I’m going to this, I’ve got this card, I’ve got that card.’ And I’m thinking, you might want to share. Could we have a card too? She pretty much said no, you know, ‘I got the degree, I earned it.’ So we can’t argue with that. It’s like, okay, I guess you’re right.” This classified employee’s experience reveals the disparity in recognition and appreciation of the impact an employee has in the work place. Appreciation is not delivered in an equitable manner within this school district.

Once again the desire for consistency in treatment is seen in how appreciation is realized or not by the classified employee. Classified employees desire that they be seen as individuals, they wish to be taken seriously and not to be dismissed like a child. They don’t wish to be viewed as furniture. One classified employee recounted an instance in that a teacher was requesting an Instructional Assistant. “You know, like when I had to go up to \_\_\_\_\_ (school). This resource teacher said, ‘I need,’ and pointed ‘I need one of them.’” According to the classified employee, she was standing with the group of

employees discussing the needs of the students in the classroom. During the conversation, the teacher pointed at the classified employee without using the employee's name as an example of what was needed for the classroom.

Analyzing the responses of the district supervisors and the school site administrators, the researcher uncovered two very different perspectives. A group of administrators shared they have a solid appreciation of the classified employees. This view was revealed through statements referring to the value of the classified employee. In addition, administrators shared the variety of ways in that they revealed their appreciation. Statements taken from the interviews that reflect these actions are:

“They make the place function. The place wouldn't function without them,”

“I buy them flowers all the time and I tell them how great they are, and I love this year we got to recognize a classified staff member.”

“I recognize them at staff meetings and I will send e-mails to people to say this is great and I love that they did this. I will talk about them with other administrators or with other teachers. I try to recognize them as much as I possibly can.”

“...try to give them as many accolades as I possibly can just so that they know that they're valued and appreciated. I say thank you a lot and I recognize them a lot.”

In addition, classified employees shared statements that reflect they are appreciated. An example of this is revealed through the following statement,

“My employers tell me thank you, thank you for the job you do, thank you for helping me, thank you for all you did, thank you for getting all of this done. I mean it is the little things like that telling me that they like the job I do and that they care. They care about us as an individual, they care about us as full people not just as employees.”

Yet on the other hand other site administrators have a different point of view, “The administrators, need to make sure that the classified feel a part of the staff. And I think they haven’t done a very good job of that. I was specifically told by the principal that the childcare staff wasn’t part of the school staff. Not one child care staff member was mentioned or at least acknowledged for anything.” This perspective is a result of the differences in leadership style amongst leaders at different sites. The differences are clearly described between two school sites in the following statement, “At the ... school I feel very much appreciated very much supported not only by my coworkers but by my administration. We are recognized, acknowledged not like it is with other administrative personnel. It is night and day, kind of like a Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde between the (Name) school and the (Name) school.”

Finally, a statement shared by a classified employee revealed the essence of appreciation as it is found within the relationship between a supervisor and the employee. In an effort to express the appreciation felt for this classified employee, the administrator stated to the employee, “I appreciate the time that you’re here. I don’t know how long that’s going to be, but I appreciate it.” The value of the individual to the supervisor is discovered in this statement. The administrator is acknowledging the need for the employee’s input and work through an awareness of the potential brevity of access to the employee’s expertise and value. Statements such as these expose the value of communicating appreciation to bolster the efficacy of classified employees. The fundamental skill of communicating appreciation is one that should be required of managers to ensure the classified employees are aware of their value to the district.

## **Part Of A Team**

Administrators and classified employees realize the importance of employees feeling connected, engaged and working as part of a team. Due to the wide variety in job classifications within the classified employee ranks and the manner in that the employees are distributed at various locations throughout the district, it is difficult to provide opportunities for all classified employees to mingle and feel part of a unified district wide team. At individual school sites the ability to create a team atmosphere may be much easier due to the decreased number of staff. Yet, the classified employees at various school sites shared different perspectives regarding feeling part of a team while at work. Invariably employee involvement depended on the leaders at the school sites.

Administrators must be visible, available, and connected to the employees providing support services at their school sites. A conscious effort must be made to invite classified employees to be part of a team. Administrators may espouse the concept of involving classified employees to be part of the team, yet the classified employees at their school sites do not feel that what is espoused or communicated is the practice.

Classified employees share that their involvement in staff meetings is necessary, yet these meetings do not occur. “We don’t get together as a whole: administrator and personnel. I think if we were to have more interaction that way. If we were to have more regular staff meetings where we can discuss those things we would feel more a part of what is going on.” The feeling of working in a silo within a school site is also shared, “Sometimes I get the feeling that I am by myself, because I am only a one person department, and you get the feeling that you are the frontlines because of where I sit. Basically the other people in the back don’t know what you are going though. I don’t

think a lot of people know what the other person's going through." On the other hand, classified employees at another school site feel connected amongst themselves within their site or job classifications. "I totally think we're part of a team, definitely at the ....school. When a project's going on and that person needs help, we just all kind of go and help..." The disparity amongst school sites related to classified employees and their involvement as a team is apparent from these statements shared by classified employees.

Administrators recognize the importance of knowing the names as well as a bit about the personal lives of the employees at their sites. They also understand the importance and have the expectation that all employees are involved in events at the school site. In addition, the notion that all employees are "part of the school community...a team here for the same purpose" is a statement shared by administrators. Yet they recognize the silo effect within their school sites. There are events that occur at school sites or within the district about which classified employees have no information. The employees have not been notified nor included. An administrator stated, "I think they don't even know there are events going on half the time to be honest...there has been several times ... things are going on at the sites where my staff has no idea. I have to call and tell them, 'hey they're doing staff appreciation in your lounge; you're more than welcome to go in there'." Consequently, it is quite obvious the desired, espoused practice is not a definitive part of the active practice within the district as well as at school sites.

Administrators also mentioned a desire to create a sense of team through an established unified sense of purpose such as achieving a goal for a particular department. A desire to create a sense of competitiveness so service for staff and students is improved within a department separated across school sites was shared by one administrator. This

example was proposed by the Director of Child Nutrition Services who wishes to increase the employees' motivation within the Food Service Department in order to increase children participating in the child nutrition program at all school sites. The Director feels both employee motivation and student engagement could be accomplished through supporting employees to recognize the importance and impact of positive experiences surrounding the nutrition break and lunch periods for students. The manner in that Food Service Workers prepare food, greet students, and recognize the value provided to students through their work is an important step in motivating this department to increase the quality of service and participate as a team in their efforts. If each site's student participation in the child nutrition program was compared and a competition created amongst the Food Service Workers at each school site, to see whose site had the most students participating, this friendly district wide competition within the Food Service Department may increase the quality of service. In addition, a sense of team may result at each site as employees work together to increase the number of students participating in the child nutrition program in order to win the competition. Finally, recognition of the positive steps occurring at each site to increase student participation may be shared within the Food Service Department so all members of this department may benefit from the strategies used at each school site. Strategies such as these may help to create a team mentality within departments. With opportunities for increased participation to support department and district goals, classified employees may feel more vested in the expected outcomes of a department or the district.



## **Valued**

The codes discussed thus far, Professional Development, Communication, Relationship with Supervisor, Appreciation, and Part of a Team all contribute to classified employees sense of being valued by their employer. Expressing value of or acknowledging the importance of classified employees' input is significant. This significance is revealed through classified employees' statements through focus groups and interviews. Both codes, appreciation and value, have components which are interchangeable, yet a difference is realized through the content of the interviews. Appreciation is described as overt expressions of recognition, such as saying thank you. The code, value, is revealed through employees' contributions being viewed as important to the functions of the work place. As employees' contributions are recognized as important to the work place, the employees may be more inclined to increase engagement. Through the administrators' varied responses during the interviews, it is evident that supervisors have different leadership styles. They may either recognize or not recognize the value of the classified employee. Overall, the coded interviews revealed that some administrators are receptive to the input of classified employees. In addition, some administrators are willing to access ideas from classified employees regarding processes.

Consequently, the manner of valuing classified employees is not consistent amongst all sites in the school district. Valuing of employees is dependent upon the leader. Providing for opportunities for classified employees to share their perspective and a willingness to be open to recommendations and ideas of the classified employee is an aspect that administrators recognize they should encourage within their own practice. An

administrator shared the following regarding valuing classified employee input, “being open to the fact that this person not only has a perspective on what’s taking place, but in that perspective there is probably some value that you could gain if you were open to hearing that perspective.” On the other hand classified employees recognize a distinct separation between the response to certificated employees’ recommendations as opposed to their own. “You know what I find hard and sense I am not certificated and not a teacher, it’s hard for me to make any recommendations that are...that I think are heard...”

Administrators express a desire to maintain a consistent form of communication to allow for “keeping them (classified employees) informed in what’s going on, including them in events or decisions.” This is one avenue of inclusion that allows for increased value amongst classified employees. Making sure the classified employees’ opinion matters is important. Administrators recognize that classified employees are not overtly valued by them and others within the district. This awareness is revealed through the statement, “they’re a lot more valued than they think that they are.” In essence, administrators recognize classified employees contributions, “They make the place function. The place wouldn’t function without them.” Reliance upon the longevity and historical knowledge of classified employees is revealed through the impact they have on the training of new administrators. Classified employees, due to their experience and longevity in the district train new administrators and help with assimilation into the district and its processes. Administrators self-reported they try to “work really hard at being very fair to everybody.” District leaders consistently throughout the interviews iterated the hope that the classified employees know how much they are valued by their

supervisors and the district. These statements may have been a result of the basic underlying assumption that classified employees are not valued by employees within the district.

Training classified employees in the same manner of certificated employees is one way that administrators felt value for the classified employee could be revealed. Administrators value sending classified employees to training due to the increased skill set of the employee and the importance of that employee to the functions of the district. Classified employees felt valued by their supervisor when they were supported to attend professional development. An administrator shared, “You would have thought I was sending them to Las Vegas just in terms of they just so appreciated that fact that they were valued enough.”

Taking the time to visit with classified employees to find out how they are feeling or to ask them about the day, are avenues to demonstrating value for them as a person. The action of having a conversation with the employee and providing an opportunity for the individual to feel connected and appreciated by a supervisor establishes a foundation on that relationships may be built. In addition, including the classified employee in the processes that are used to determine actions within a school district are an important component of valuing the employee. Involving employees, provides them with the knowledge as to why and how decisions are created. In turn, they recognize that there may be heightened expectations of them based on their knowledge that further integrates them into the processes of the district. By creating opportunities for collaboration with the classified employee value is communicated.

Administrators grasp the value of involving classified employees through statements such as this, “I think that when you include the classified employee in that type of process where they understand the importance of it. I think that their self-esteem is actually raised in terms of they know the importance of these documents because they see where they’re going. To be included in it and have some ownership in it.”

Recognizing classified employees with certificates at ceremonies is important, yet the day to day acknowledgement is described by both administrators and classified employees as a step in clearly communicating that classified employees are valued. “...if you can show them that you really are appreciative of their work and the way to do that is to involve them in your work.” A classified employee expanded upon this concept by sharing, “If it is an ongoing thing where you are getting some kind of feedback periodically, I think that one event is well that’s great, but what about the rest of the time? I don’t think any situation can be defined by one event, whether you feel valued or not. I think it has to be ongoing.”

Classified employees expressed both a lack of value by their supervisors and shared situations in that they felt valued by supervisors. Typically whether they felt valued or not depended upon the site administrator. When asked how classified employees were valued in the work place, one supervisor remarked, “I’m not sure that they are.” References to not being treated professionally by the rest of the staff were revealed to the researcher. “I don’t think a lot of times they are treated professionally by the rest of the staff. I’ve seen people be disrespectful to them. Every job in the district does have value, but I don’t think that value is often communicated to each employee.” The importance of evaluations and feedback as signifying value was mentioned as an

important part of this communication. As mentioned before, classified employee evaluations are not consistent in the district. Employees felt that it would be worthy to have feedback regarding their performance.

Classified employees shared this lack of value through numerous statements. Statements revealing a lack of value are: “I have not felt as valued in my current situation; although I know I’m appreciated but it’s such a dysfunctional situation,” “I don’t think there’s time or energy to value me,” “I have not felt valued, valued where I am now,” “We’re furniture. I don’t think the district values us at all,” “They don’t ask our opinion.” The large number of these statements is reflective of the consistent undervaluing of the classified employee.

On the other hand an employee did state, “My employers tell me. They tell me thank you, thank you for the job you do, thank you for helping me, thank you for all you did, thank you for getting all of this done...it is the little things like that telling me that they like the job I do and that they care. They care about us as an individual, they care about us as full people not just as employees.”

### **Summary**

As the researcher analyzed the interviews and reviewed the six themes most frequently mentioned throughout the interviews, it became evident these may be grouped to create actionable steps that may be implemented to increase the job satisfaction and engagement of the classified employee in the work place. It is apparent from the analysis of the interviews that the process of creating a working environment supportive of classified employees may be realized through the implementation of three steps. These

steps are grounded in the theoretical frameworks discussed in Chapter 2. The theoretical frameworks: dialogue, collective efficacy, relationships and psychological capital are the broad supporting foundations to this proposed system to support the classified employee.

After the initial step of establishing the theoretical frameworks, an analysis of the interviews resulted in the most frequently mentioned codes organized under three thematic headings: human capital, acknowledgement and engagement. Embedded under these themes are the coded employees' statements. The coded statements analyzed earlier in this chapter due to the frequency in their occurrences in the interviews are associated with the thematic headings according to their connection to the thematic heading. This is revealed in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Connecting Theoretical Frameworks To Thematic Headings And Codes

<b>Theoretical Frameworks</b>	Psychological Capital	Relationships	Dialogue Collective Efficacy
<b>Thematic Heading</b>	Human Capital	Acknowledgement	Engagement
<b>Codes</b>	Communication Professional Development	Appreciation Valued	Part of a Team Relationship with Supervisor

The theoretical frameworks are grouped into three columns and frame the themes that in turn create a thematic heading for each of the grouped codes.

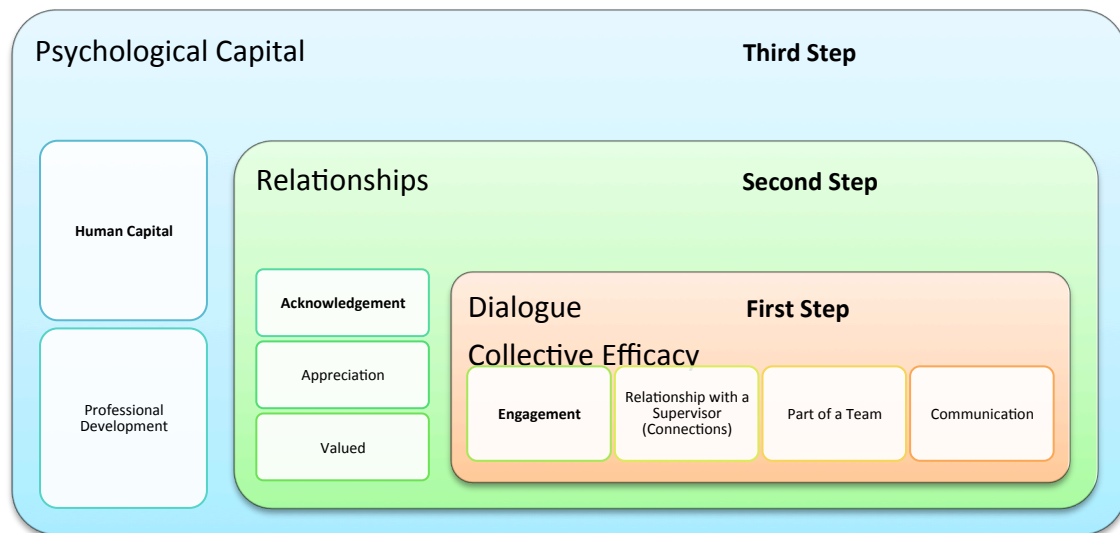
Table 5 is used as the foundation for the resulting theoretical model the researcher has developed as a result of this research project. The model is divided into three steps. The steps correspond to needs shared by the classified employees. In order that a classified employee attain a level of job satisfaction and engagement in the work place, each of these steps builds upon the preceding one, much like climbing a set of stairs to

reach the next floor in a building. The first of these steps is engagement. This is nested within the other two steps because it is the necessary first step in creating a supportive work environment for classified employees. This first step consists of the theoretical frameworks: dialogue and collective efficacy. The thematic heading, engagement, that is in turn revealed through the specific topics most prominently discussed in the interviews: relationship with supervisor (connections), part of a team and communication supports the theoretical frameworks, dialogue and collective efficacy.

The thematic heading, acknowledgement, describes the second step within the theoretical framework label of relationships. This theme heading is supported by the topics discussed most often in the interviews completed with employees. These topics, appreciation and valued, are components of the second step that is necessary in building a supportive working environment for the classified employee.

The final and third step in creating a functional working environment for classified employees is led by the theoretical framework: psychological capital. This framework is supported by the thematic heading, human capital that is revealed through the most frequently mentioned codes of professional development and communication.

Building a strong foundation of support for the classified employee, both employees in leadership positions and classified employees have consistently shared through interviews that developing, implementing and increasing opportunities for engagement, acknowledgement and human capital is necessary. The researcher created Figure 4 to reveal the nested quality of each step.



**Figure 4.** Steps to Classified Employee Job Satisfaction: Theoretical Frameworks, Thematic Headings, and Codes

Figure 4 reveals a guiding model that may be implemented in this district to focus district leadership training in support of increasing job satisfaction and engagement of the classified employee in the work place. This model reveals the importance of first establishing opportunities of engagement for the classified employee. Building connections, including employees to be part of a team and establishing consistent forms of communication with classified employees will form a foundation in that dialogue is encouraged and a collective efficacy enriches the work place. The first step, dialogue, is the foundation of this model.

As engagement is established, continual acknowledgement of the classified employees' efforts through appreciation and sharing their value to the employer by their supervisors is a necessary second step. This step increases the opportunities for employees to build human capital. The physical connections to their workplace connected



to increased appreciation creates a solid foundation on which the classified employees may then build their personal human capital. The analysis of the quantitative data reveals an additional element which impacts job satisfaction and engagement in the work place.

### **Quantitative Analysis of Survey Findings**

The amended survey based on the HVVS was distributed to 130 classified employees. Out of the 130 distributed surveys, 47 were returned and completed by classified employees corresponding to a 37% return rate. Responses were entered into a statistical analysis program in preparation for analysis. All questions were positively worded, with the exception of question 10. Question 10 responses were reversed before running any of the analyses. The data were analyzed using SPSS and submitted to the following analyses: correlations, factor analysis, t-tests, and MANOVA.

### **Factor Analysis - Validations of the scale**

The twelve items of the Impact of Work scale were validated for construct coherence using a rotated varimax principal components factor analysis using a cutoff value of eigenvalues greater than one. A three-factor model was generated explaining 73 percent of the variance. (Table 6) Factor 1 consisted of HVVS components: Sense of Physical Safety, Moments of Joy and Inspiration, Importance of Work, Avocation or “Calling,” Personal Fulfillment. The higher load of these components revealed a stronger sense of job satisfaction when these are present in the classified employees’ responses. The components of Respect and Admiration of Co-Workers, Having a Teacher and a Hero, Feel Respected and Appreciated and Sense of Belongingness and Sociability were grouped under Factor 2 and are present when relationships are strong in the work place.

Finally, the components Feeling Involved and Unhindered, Feel Creatively Challenged and World a Better Place were grouped under Factor 3 and support the environment of creativity within the workplace.

**Table 6.** Factor Analysis of the Impact of Work Survey

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Q4 Sense of Physical Safety	<b>0.807</b>	0.324	-0.104
Q11 Moments of Joy and Inspiration	<b>0.707</b>	0.431	0.310
Q1 Importance of Work	<b>0.705</b>	0.101	0.234
Q2 Avocation or “Calling”	<b>0.675</b>	-0.035	0.490
Q3 Personal Fulfillment	<b>0.586</b>	0.303	0.566
Q6 Respect and Admiration of Co-Workers	0.097	<b>0.901</b>	0.165
Q8 Having a Teacher and a Hero	0.070	<b>0.830</b>	0.143
Q7 Feel Respected and Appreciated	0.492	<b>0.638</b>	-0.049
Q5 Sense of Belongingness and Sociability	0.515	<b>0.623</b>	0.348
Q10 Feeling Involved and Unhindered*	0.071	0.195	<b>0.838</b>
Q9 Feel Creatively Challenged	0.175	0.555	<b>0.643</b>
Q12 World a Better Place	0.581	-0.067	<b>0.628</b>

Note. Rotation converged in 11 iterations.

Evaluation of the primary themes across the three factors were as such: Factor 1 was related to satisfaction and fulfillment at work and was titled Satisfaction, Factor 2 was related to positive work relationships and was titled Relationships and Factor 3 was the most enigmatic but appeared to be related to the opportunity to be creative at work and was titled Creativity. These three factors, Satisfaction, Relationships and Creativity were used to more clearly define the relationship between proximity to students and job Satisfaction, Relationships and Creativity. Table 7 reveals the association between the

components of the Impact of Work survey and three factors: Satisfaction, Relationships and Creativity.

**Table 7.** Impact Of Work Survey Components According To Association With Three Factors: Satisfaction, Relationships, And Creativity

<b>Satisfaction</b>	<b>Relationships</b>	<b>Creativity</b>
Important Source, Calling, Fulfilling, Physical Safety, Wonderful Experiences	Belonging, Respect and Admire People at Work, Am Respected and Appreciated, Mentor at Work	Relatively Challenged, Bored and Stifled, World a Better Place

In Table 7 the three factors, Satisfaction, Relationships and Creativity emerged from the factor analysis, and were given their respective meaning through examining the focus of each question in the Impact of Work Survey as the question related to each component of the factor analysis.

### **Correlational Analysis**

The three constructs were evaluated for their relationship to one another using a Pearson bivariate correlation matrix. (Table 8) There was a highly significant correlation between all three factors, indicating that overall the degree to that employees felt Satisfaction at their work was related to the degree to that they experienced positive Relationships and felt Creative.

**Table 8.** Intercorrelations of Three Factors from the HVVS

	Satisfaction	Relationships	Creativity
Satisfaction	-	.607**	.675**
Relationships		-	.536**
Creativity			-

Note \*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

### t-Tests

Survey Data were analyzed for normality using the Kolmogorov-Smirnova statistic. The overall mean distribution of the data was determined to be normal, but slightly negatively skewed (value = -.743). Data were submitted to independent samples t-tests examining both the overall mean survey scores as well as the component means of Satisfaction, Relationships and Creativity. The dependent grouping variable was based on the participants self-reporting as working with students or not. Results indicated a significant difference between those who said they worked with students and those who did not on the overall mean score,  $t=2.11$  ( $df=44$ ),  $p<0.05$ . There was also significant difference on the Satisfaction component of the scale where those who worked with students scored higher on the Satisfaction subscale,  $t=2.99$  ( $df=44$ ),  $p<0.005$ . For the two other subcomponents of the scale, Relationships and Creativity there were no significant t values (Table 10).

**Table 9.** Means And Standard Deviations For The Impact Of Work Scale

<b>Group Statistics</b>						
	Student Serving	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	p
Mean All	Yes	36	3.96	0.702	2.11	0.041
	No	10	3.42	0.793		
Satisfaction	Yes	36	4.07	0.669	2.99	0.005
	No	10	3.36	0.624		
Relationship	Yes	36	3.85	0.879	1.12	0.271
	No	10	3.48	1.193		
Creativity	Yes	36	3.93	0.970	1.47	0.149
	No	10	3.43	0.802		

### Statistical Analysis: ANOVAs

In order to look more closely at the relationship between proximity to students and job satisfaction, the participants were divided into three groups in relation to their job titles and functions as related to students. Table 10 illustrates the division of the employees who completed surveys into three groups. The first group consisted of those employees who worked directly with students (StPos), the second group of employees were those who were worked less frequently with students. This group of employees served students and the organization (ServSt). The third group consisted of those employees who primarily worked in an office capacity with an organizational focus to their employment (OrgFoc). These three groups were then used as the grouping value for the ANOVA examining the three components of the scale as determined by the factor analysis.

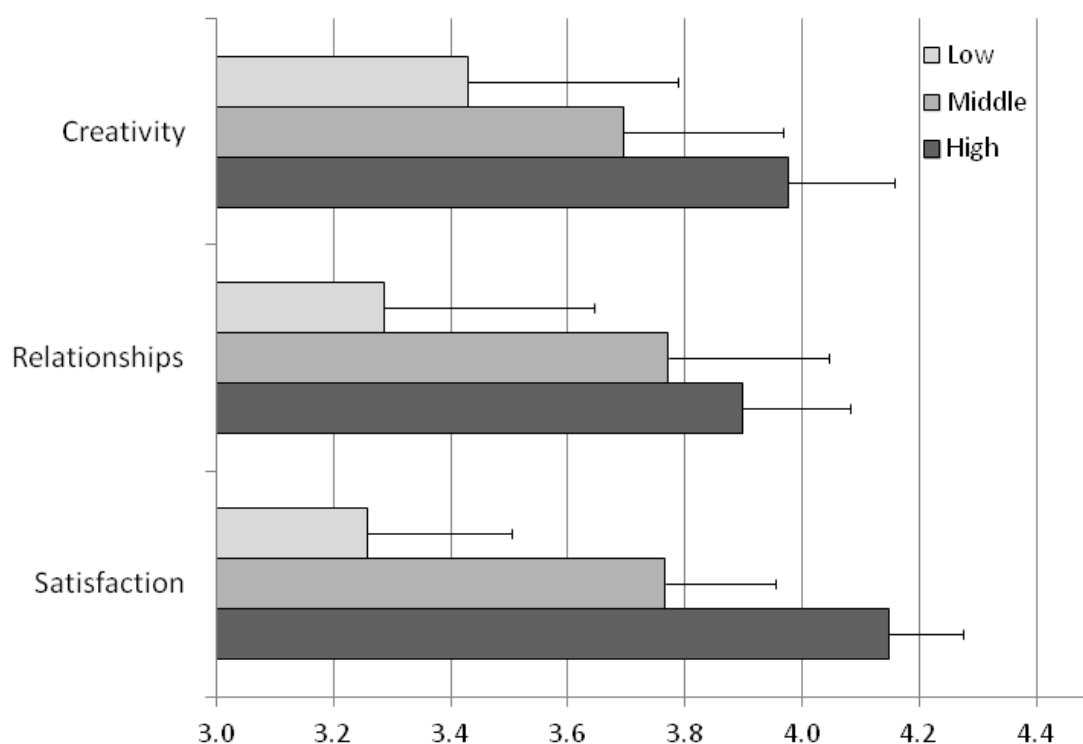
**Table 10.** Groups Of Positions Divided According To Job Titles

<b>Work With Students (StPos) High</b>	<b>Serve Students (ServSt) Middle</b>	<b>Organization Focus (OrgFoc) Low</b>
Clerk, Instructional Assistant, Instructional HealthCare Assistant, Library Media Technician, Preschool Teacher, Senior Lifeguard, Security, Child Care Worker	Food Service Worker, Health Technician, Lead Custodian, Secretary	Account Clerk, Administrative Assistant, Executive Assistant, Human Resources Technician, Network Supervisor, Network Support Technician

### MANOVA Analysis

The three factors of the Impact of Work survey were submitted to a MANOVA and planned post hoc comparisons using a Fisher's LSD using the Job Position distinction created by the researcher as the grouping variable. There was a significant effect of proximity to students on the Satisfaction subfactor  $F_{(2,43)}=5.58$ ,  $p<0.01$ . There were no significant effects of the subfactors of Relationship and Creativity. Post hoc analysis revealed a significant difference between office staff whose primary job did not include student interaction when compared to staff whose primary job was to work directly with students,  $p<0.005$ . When compared with those who worked somewhat indirectly with students, providing student services, the mean scores fell in between those who worked primarily with students and those who did not work with students at all. There was in fact a trend towards a significant difference both between those who did not work with students,  $p=0.10$  and for those who worked with students as their primary position,  $p=0.09$ . Figure 5 shows the impact of student interactions on each of the

components of the Impact of Work Survey with respect to position. The types of position were grouped according to the level of contact with students, whether this contact is direct contact with students, serving students and the organization or focused solely on the function of the organization (Figure 5).



**Figure 5.** Mean Values for the Degree of Employees' Involvement with Students

MANOVA indicated a significant effect of the extent to which an employee worked with students and satisfaction with their job. Greater involvement with students at work resulted in higher overall positive experiences across all three factors, and this effect was significant for job Satisfaction. (Low = low level of student involvement, Middle = moderate level of student involvement, High = high level of student involvement) (Error bars = Standard Error of the Mean)

As revealed in Figure 5, there was a significant effect of proximity to students on the Satisfaction component of the HVVS questionnaire. There were no significant effects

for student proximity for the two other components. However, both Creativity and Relationships showed higher overall responses in employees who worked more with students, and this effect increased as the degree of student involvement increased. The degree of the classified employee's job satisfaction could be dependent on the level of interaction the employee has with students.

### **Summary of the Quantitative Analysis**

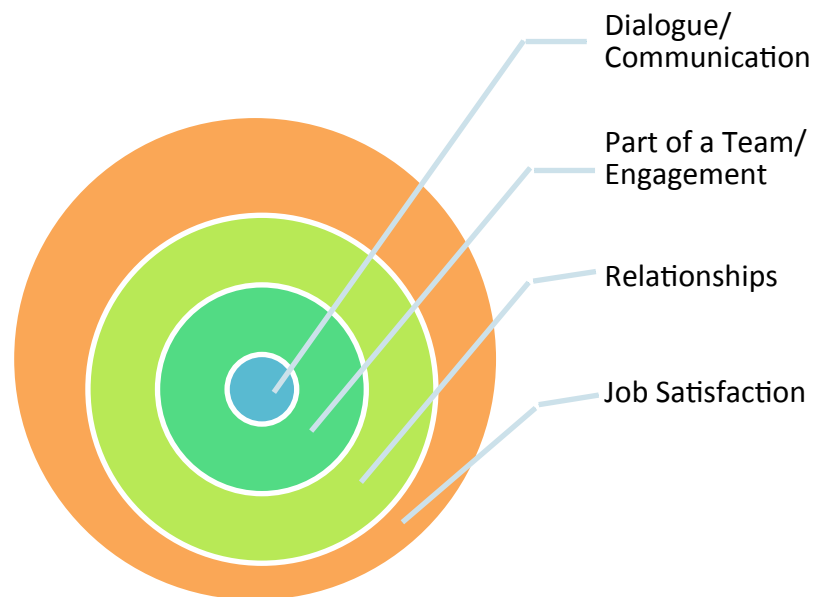
The initial factor analysis established a pattern in that the proximity to students in the working environment corresponded with a high rating of job satisfaction. The quality of relationships and the ability to be creative in the work place were also significant factors. In addition, the integrated relationship of these factors, Satisfaction, Relationships and Creativity was revealed through the correlation analysis. This analysis established the level of Satisfaction at work corresponded to the degree that employees experienced positive Relationships and felt Creative. The researcher delved further into the connection between job satisfaction and working in proximity with students by grouping the job classifications into groups that are defined by the level of contact with students. The additional correlation analysis revealed a significant relationship between those employees who worked closely with students and their responses on the HVVS to questions that related to a high level of fulfillment and meeting their calling in life.

### **Conclusion**

The qualitative data reveal the importance of connecting with a team, engaging in the work place and communicating as a first step in attaining job satisfaction. These qualitative elements revealed through the interviews also support the factor,



Relationships, described in the quantitative analyses. Both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses reveal the importance of a direct focus on the elements that support the development of relationships in the work place. These relationships may be with a supervisor, a fellow employee or a student. This element is the locus of import in achieving maximum job satisfaction and engagement in the work place for the classified employee. Both the quantitative and the qualitative analyses support a combined model illustrating the inner foundations that must first occur before job satisfaction is attained in the classified employee (Figure 6).



**Figure 6.** Combining Qualitative And Quantitative Analyses To Achieve Job Satisfaction In The Classified Employee

## **Chapter Five**

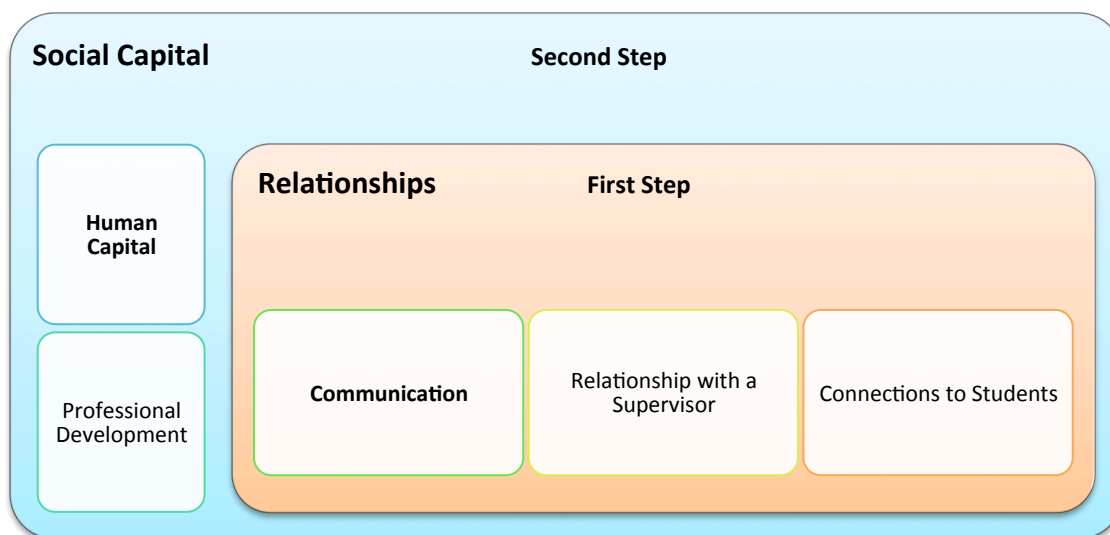
### **Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations**

Revealing the voice of the classified employee in order to increase job satisfaction and engagement in the work place is a benefit for the employer and the employee. The purpose of this research study was to reveal the voice of classified employees. The voices of this group of employees have been reviewed, analyzed and processed to create action plans in response to the concerns, problems and recommendations raised through the interviews and the responses to the surveys. The conversations with classified employees and supervisors were the most enlightening component of this research study. The results of this research revealed a need to strengthen the relationships and the individual social capital of classified employees in this school district. The richness of the data accessed through the interviews provided a strong foundation for next steps of improvement in the district.

The purposes of this chapter are to present a brief summary of the purpose of the study, offer conclusions based on the findings of the research, recommend further research and propose action to district leaders who supervise classified employees. Bringing to the forefront the need to increase communication and to nurture relationships revealed through interviews, focus groups and surveys was the foundation of the analysis of the research of this study. It was evident that the conversations held between supervisors and classified employees matter a great deal to the classified employee. Liu Xiaobo (2012) described the results of conversations by illustrating the impact of voicing

thoughts, opinions and desires through this statement, “Expose facts to the light of day and let people know that they have the right to comment” (p. 218). His work in the art of conversation and the potential of its impact, increasing the depth of relationships, revealed the aptitude for the positive impact of the results of this study for the classified employee and the organization.

The qualitative data and quantitative data helped formulate a model for action. The initial model was first shared in Chapter 4, Figure 4. The researcher created a three-step plan (Figure 4) from which leaders in the human resources profession may develop and implement professional development specific to the needs of co-leaders within school districts. With further analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data the voices of the classified employees revealed a need to strengthen communication systems, to augment professional development opportunities and to increase connections to students. The first step of Figure 7 illustrates that the development and strengthening of supervisor-employee relationships, connections with students and focus on communication will build relationships within the school district. The second step of the action plan illustrates that the benefits of professional development is supportive of human capital. By nesting the first step, relationships, within the second step, the impact of the relationships and professional development on social capital is realized. Formalizing the connections between relationships and social capital, the value of classified employees within the district is acknowledged and supported.



**Figure 7:** Steps to Increased Social Capital

Daly and Finnegan (2010) share that school districts should take into account the importance of establishing a strong relationship between district and site leaders in order to support any planned change (p. 113). Before initiating conversations regarding how district employees are valued by supervisors, each district should evaluate existing structures in place in that particular organization. The ability to increase the human capital and consequently the value of employees to a school district begins first by developing the relationships between the supervisor and the classified employee. The manner used to develop these relationships will differ according to each district's needs and the established quality of these relationships. Therefore it is recommended that an analysis be made of the existing relationship as a foundational step in the process of system wide implementation of engagement steps. The use of the recommended steps, as outlined in Figure 7, are dependent on each district's initial analysis of the supervisor-employee relationship. Paramount in this process is the use of a feedback loop designed by the researcher, Figure 1. The use of this feedback loop provides an opportunity for the

results of conversations to feed back into the system thus expanding the quality of relationships, processes and policy. Using the recommendations voiced by classified employees will necessitate continued dialogue, discussion groups and feedback as these recommendations are accessed and implemented. These initial steps of engaging employees and acknowledging their work and the value held for them and their contributions to the work place may provide opportunities for increased engagement in their work by classified employees. The time spent holding face-to-face conversations with the classified employee will provide a positive return to the district through increased connections with school site leaders. This increased engagement in their work will in turn establish a strong foundation for the development and increase of social capital. These connections may positively impact the work environment for the employees. As recommendations are implemented into the policy, procedures and culture of the district, the researcher may wish to explore the future impact on the district's culture and the increase of job satisfaction and engagement with the policies, expectations and vision and mission in the work place.

### **Conclusions: What do the findings mean?**

This research has a number of implications in the field of leadership. Leaders in districts and schools sites are instrumental in the work life and experience of employees. The manner in which classified employees are supervised, have access to district information, are communicated with and evaluated, directly influence the impact of work on these employees' social interactions, the quality of engagement while at work and job satisfaction. The findings from this study may influence the policy makers within a

district to increase support and awareness of the value of the classified employee. Overall, purposeful communication, participation in a team or professional learning communities and development of the supervisor-employee relationships may help leaders of the organization increase support of classified employees and encourage policy makers and leaders to adopt policy and procedures to actively support the development of the classified employees' human capital, social capital and consequently their value within the organization.

This study will contribute to the body of leadership literature and practices by recommending a variety of steps which may be put into place to support the development of social capital of classified employees which may then help to increase engagement and job satisfaction within the work place. Additionally studies regarding classified staff engagement and their value within school districts can build on the research questions posed in this study. Professional growth for district leaders can be enhanced, based on the findings of this study. In addition, classified employees may better understand their own feelings about their personal work engagement, their job satisfaction and how they respond to the organization and its response to them. Overall results of this implementation may help a school district to better support and value the classified employee.

### **Recommendations: The Action Plan**

This is a point in which the researcher will integrate an action plan resulting from the voices of the classified employees. Fundamentally these voices revealed a longing for involvement, integration, increased connections with students, respect and awareness of

the classified employee as an individual and an acknowledgement of the classified employee as a valuable contributor to the work place.

The researcher believes that with this research she will help build a stronger support structure for the study district's classified employees and increase the sense of efficacy of these employees. This research study may provide a model for other school districts to follow in designing opportunities for increased efficacy of these employees. The researcher further believes this study may provide a model for other school districts to follow in designing opportunities for professional development, and to design systems which promote valuing employees. A significant result of this study was the classified employees' need to access relationships in the work place by being acknowledged, increase connections with students and to be personally addressed. A strong desire on the part of the classified employee to be treated equally and with dignity emerged from the data. These needs may be realized through an emphasis on the day-to-day value of employees through increased face-to-face contacts with supervisors, acknowledgement of their contributions to the work place and feedback regarding performance. The supervisor's responsibility is to promote the classified employee and to identify methods of support which may be implemented to engage classified employees with dignity and equity.

The initial steps to realize this support require a close bond between the site and district administrators. The school district in which this research was completed has established a bond between site and district administrators through the principals' professional learning community (PPLC). Utilizing this existing structure, the district administrators may begin incorporating facets of the action steps recommended as a

result of this research study. Expanding this PPLC to encompass the conversations revolving around classified employees will be a starting point. Once again, human resource directors from other districts may wish to first analyze the structures in place specific to their school districts, and then align the necessary recommendations accordingly.

One of the principal ways in which perceived efficacy contributes to academic development is through the “staffs’ collective sense of efficacy that their schools can accomplish significant academic progress” (Bandura, 1993, p. 135). Including the classified employee in the collective staff is an important aspect of the academic environment of school systems. The emphasis on the classified employee’s desire to be involved in the collective staff’s functions was revealed through the quantitative and qualitative data. Classified employees consistently referred to connections with students as important to their job satisfaction. The importance of interactions with students as this related to job satisfaction was revealed through the interviews and surveys.

Thus with the voice of the classified employee in mind further analysis of the researcher’s model (Figure 7) is required. As seen in Step One relationships require the following basic needs be established: a relationship with the supervisor, connections with students, and communication. To support Step One a series of nine actions were developed using the voice of the classified employee. Figure 8 contains nine actions, which if consistently and equitably implemented through the supervisor-classified employee relationship, may increase the social capital and eventually the human capital of classified employees. Developing opportunities for relationships using the action steps listed in Figure 8 may help to expand the network of relationships classified employees



have within the school district. These expanded relationships may provide building blocks to increased job satisfaction and work engagement.

These actions garnered from the interviews are already partially implemented in the procedures of the district. These steps should be reviewed and discussed with site supervisors and the classified employees. The recommendations listed in Figure 8 are already contained within current policy and procedures of the district yet these policies are not consistently and equitably implemented. Consequently, to remedy this, the existing knowledge of district supervisors regarding the action steps should be measured. Professional development will be planned according to the measured needs of the administrators and supervisors in order to increase their abilities to work with and relate to classified employees. This initial step will ensure that supervisors consistently support classified employees throughout the district regardless of site or department. Thus before implementing the steps, it is recommended the human capital of district supervisors first be addressed.



**Figure 8:** Actions to Develop Relationships

The implementation of the actions outlined in Figure 8, communication, participation in a team and relationship with supervisors will be an avenue to increasing the number and quality of relationships within the school district. The supervisors’

awareness of the importance of appreciation and valuing employees is consistently referenced throughout the interviews. A missing yet very important component of the supervisors' awareness was the significant impact on the employee if communication with classified employees is forgotten or dismissed. The voices of classified employees have revealed the importance of acknowledgement of their value through communication, participation in a team and developing a relationship with the supervisor.

Classified employees shared the importance of accurate job descriptions in the measurement of their value to the district. These employees mentioned the lack of attention to updating the job descriptions as responsibilities grew year after year. It is evident the value of classified jobs in the school district is not supported through updated job descriptions. Most existing job descriptions of those positions held by classified employees have not been updated in the past twenty years. With this in mind, it may be of benefit to the district to submit to a compensation and classification study. This study will provide another opportunity for the voice of the classified employee to shine. Classified employees will have the opportunity to complete a detailed account of the work they do and have this account analyzed according to updated similar job descriptions. In addition, the compensation study will address the salary schedules of comparable positions in similar school districts. This study is detailed, complex and lengthy (4-5 months). The cost to the district for the study and the resulting costs in salary adjustments to the classified salary schedule may be an obstacle during the current education budget crisis. A proposal for a compensation and classification study was submitted to the researcher by Bill Ewing, the founder of Ewing Consulting Inc. for this school district. Ewing Consulting Inc. is a company that has conducted compensation

studies for more than 200 school districts and counties. This proposal is in Appendix H. Regardless of the cost, if an effort is made to review job descriptions, as requested by a number of classified employees, this could be a first step in a series of steps to gradually address all aspects of valuing a classified employee through an accurate job description.

Step Two of the model described in Figure 7 summarizes the potential of professional development's impact on human capital of the classified employee. The combined impact of relationships and human capital is that social capital of the classified employee is increased. This step is put into effect subsequent to the establishment of relationships. Professional development within this step should consist of two types. The first type of professional development is designed for administrators and supervisors in the district. An administrator-training plan should be required to be put in place to provide consistency, focus and support to the classified employee. As a district we ought to open our arms to embrace the entire group of employees in the district. It is time to broaden the focus beyond certificated employees and recognize that the services of classified employees greatly enhance and support the work of certificated staff and leaders in the school district.

As the administrators and supervisors establish a consistent implementation of the steps discussed in the action plan, training and professional development support for classified employees may then be integrated into the sequence of district procedures. The second phase of Step Two is for classified employees to receive specific professional development that should be developed and scheduled throughout the year to meet the time constraints and needs of each classification of classified employee. These opportunities should clearly align with the job descriptions and the expectations of the

classified employee. Classified employees become members of the planning teams for the professional development in which they will engage.

In order to determine the impact of this research on all classified employees as outlined in the actions detailed in Figure 7 and Figure 8, the researcher is interested in administering the amended HVVS survey as a pre and post assessment. Dr. Edward Hoffman, the founder of Hoffman's Vocational Values Scales (HVVS), recommends that all the employees take the HVVS. He believes the results will provide a valuable picture of the motivational strengths and deficits of the organization, and also give information on how to improve the motivation of employees by focusing on specific areas. Dr. Hoffman's research reveals that highly motivated employees are more engaged, productive, and innovative, and less likely to call in sick, make mistakes, and resist change. Administering the assessment as a pre and post assessment is an attempt on the part of the researcher to access a larger number of participants and to determine whether the actions detailed in Figure 7 and Figure 8 have an impact on job satisfaction and work engagement of classified employees. Before moving forward with a survey, the HVVS scale and other surveys that measure job satisfaction were researched and vetted. This step was necessary to ascertain which survey best met the goals of the school district and employees. Consequently, HVVS or another survey may be used to quantitatively document the impact of changes resulting from the implementation of action plans developed through this study. Use of this survey will determine the impact of changes on job satisfaction and engagement in the work place.

Now that the researcher has access to this knowledge, she has the ability to increase the job satisfaction and engagement in the work place through conversations,

communications and professional development within the school district and throughout the county. The relationship between the supervisor and the classified employee is the foundation of the organizational change in support of increased job satisfaction and engagement in the work place. The certificated administrators and mid-management supervisors should first be provided with opportunities to strengthen their own human capital through trainings which will support the interactions they have with classified employees. As the supervisors increase their ability to increase engagement of the classified employees, the classified employees will be supported to augment social capital and relationships with the district and other employees. The themes revealed in the coding of the interviews were further expanded in discussion groups consisting of supervisors and classified employees in collaboration as avenues of growth were realized to augment the engagement and job satisfaction of classified employees. The researcher's hope was realized through listening to and acknowledging the voice of the classified employee, the development of and the strengthening of communication systems and increasing the number of and quality of face-to-face communication relationships between supervisors and classified employees would increase support for the classified employee in the researcher's school district and would provide a model for other school districts.

This study has been a journey of purpose and commitment. The purpose has been to reveal the impact of the inconsistency of implementation of policies and procedures when working with classified employees. The commitment has been to the voices of the classified employee and to provide these employees the opportunity to reveal the impact of actions which diminish and augment their ability to access job satisfaction and

engagement in the work place. Involving the classified employee in an active role through increased social capital and access to social networks may provide for solutions to the issues raised through this research. Implementing varied methods of communication are vital components of the success of implementing the results of this research. Listening to the voice of the classified employee and district wide collaboration will facilitate development of action steps that positively impact this group of employees, increasing job satisfaction and engagement in the work place.

## Appendix A: Interview Protocol - Classified Employee

### Interviewer's frame of mind

- understand the school district from the classified employee's point of view,
- learn what the employee knows and be sensitive to the way in which the employee expresses what he or she knows
- understand what the meaning of the experience has to the employee and how that experience impacts others i.e. community, students, teachers, etc.

Script: Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for participating in this interview. My name is Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, and I am the Director of Human Resources in the Coronado Unified School District. I am also a doctoral student in the joint Educational Leadership doctoral program at California State University San Marcos and the University of California, San Diego.

I have invited you to this interview to seek your help in examining and identifying the practices which support the engagement and participation of classified employees in this district. I wish to hear your story as a classified employee.

Your participation is completely voluntary and will not in any way affect you or your standing as an employee and you may feel free to leave the interview at any point.

- At this time, I am going to give you a pseudonym name/number of \_\_\_\_\_. I also ask that you don't use anyone's real name during the course of the interview. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded. This will help me to retain your ideas more accurately for future research analysis. Your interview responses will be kept confidential and available only to the researcher and researcher's faculty advisor for analysis purposes.
- Participation is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time. If the length of the interview is inconvenient for you, you may stop the interview at any time without any consequence to you.
- I will be asking you to later review the transcript of your interview. This should take an additional ½-1 hour of your time. There are no consequences of any kind if you decide not to participate in the study. Are there any questions before we begin the interview?
- I have **nineteen** questions to ask you. Please tell me if you wish to skip a question. Please let me know if you would like any questions repeated.
- The whole process will take 60 minutes. If you wish to continue participation, please review and sign the consent form. (Provide employee with consent form).
- Thank you for completing the consent form.

Throughout this interview (maximum of one hour) the classified employee is the researcher's teacher and will help the researcher to understand the classified employee's perspective.

1. Describe how you began to work for the school district.
2. How has your work as \_\_\_\_\_ changed from when you first started work in this district?
3. What is the most important part of your job?
4. What has been your greatest challenge....
5. What is your favorite part of your job?
6. How are you valued as an employee? Are you part of the team?
7. What steps are implemented or could be implemented to improve the classified employees' situation?
8. Share an event in your experience with this district which made you feel valued.
9. What can individuals within the district do to make you feel that the district is interested in you as an employee?
10. To what extent do classified employees from different departments have an opportunity to meet to discuss school matters?
11. Describe your professional and personal goals.
12. Are you supported to achieve these goals?
13. What could be done?
14. How would you describe the morale within your department, school site, the district?
15. Who plays a significant role in your approach to work? Relationships, Social Networking
16. What type of professional development have you had?
17. How have you applied what you learned in professional development or informal training from a director, supervisor or administrator?
18. What further professional development support do you need in order to ...
19. Is there anything you would like to add?



## Appendix B: Administrator/Director Interview Questions

### Interviewer's frame of mind

- understand the school district from the administrator or certificated employee's point of view,
- learn what the employee knows and be sensitive to the way in which the employee expresses what he or she knows
- understand what the meaning of the experience has to the employee and how that experience impacts others i.e. community, students, teachers, etc.

Throughout this interview (maximum of one hour) the administrator/certificated employee is the researcher's teacher and will help the researcher to understand the classified employee's perspective through the lens of the administrator.

Script: Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for participating in this interview. My name is Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, and I am the Director of Human Resources in the Coronado Unified School District. I am also a doctoral student in the joint Educational Leadership doctoral program at California State University San Marcos and the University of California, San Diego.

I have invited you to this interview to seek your help in examining and identifying the practices which support the engagement and participation of classified employees in this district. I wish to hear your story as an administrator/ certificated employee. Your participation is completely voluntary and will not in any way affect you or your standing as an employee and you may feel free to leave the interview at any point.

- At this time, I am going to give you a pseudonym name/number of \_\_\_\_\_ . I also ask that you don't use anyone's real name during the course of the interview. With your permission, the interview will be audio recorded. This will help me to retain your ideas more accurately for future research analysis. Your interview responses will be kept confidential and available only to the researcher and researcher's faculty advisor for analysis purposes.
- Participation is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time. If the length of the interview is inconvenient for you, you may stop the interview at any time without any consequence to you.
- I will be asking you to later review the transcript of your interview. This should take an additional ½-1 hour of your time. There are no consequences of any kind if you decide not to participate in the study. Are there any questions before we begin the interview?
- I have **thirteen** questions to ask you. Please tell me if you wish to skip a question. Please let me know if you would like any questions repeated.

- The whole process will take 60 minutes. If you wish to continue participation, please review and sign the consent form. (Provide employee with consent form).
- Thank you for completing the consent form.

### **Administrator/Director Interview**

1. Number of times meetings are provided for classified employees? Content of meetings?
2. How are classified employees supported to be part of district professionally?
3. How are classified employees involved in vision, mission or strategic planning development?
4. How are classified employees' perspectives and experiences sought by administrators /certificated employees in the school district?
5. What has been your greatest challenge involving classified employees at your site?
6. How do you show that you value the classified employee?
7. What steps are being implemented or could be implemented to improve the classified employees' situation?
8. What have you done to show interest in a classified employee?
9. To what extent do classified employees from different departments have an opportunity to meet to discuss school matters?
10. How would you describe the morale within the classified employees on your site?
11. How are classified employees involved socially in site activities?
12. What type of professional development have you provided for classified employees?
13. Is there anything you wish to add?

## Appendix C: Focus Group Interview Questions

### Focus Group Leader's Frame of Mind

- understand the school district from the classified employees' point of view,
- learn what the employees know and be sensitive to the way in which the employee expresses what he or she knows
- understand what the meaning of the experience has to the employees and how that experience impacts others i.e. community, students, teachers, etc.

Script: Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for participating in this focus group. My name is Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, and I am the Director of Human Resources in the Coronado Unified School District. I am also a doctoral student in the joint Educational Leadership doctoral program at California State University San Marcos and the University of California, San Diego.

I have invited you to this focus group to seek your help in examining and identifying the practices, which support the engagement and participation of classified employees in this district. I wish to hear your stories as a classified employee.

Your participation is completely voluntary and will not in any way affect you or your standing as an employee and you may feel free to leave the interview at any point.

- Notes will be taken during this focus group session. This will help me to retain your ideas more accurately for future research analysis. Your names will not be used. I ask that you don't use anyone's real name during the course of our conversation today. This discussion will be kept confidential and available only to me and my faculty advisor for analysis purposes.
- Participation is voluntary. You do not have to participate in this study if you do not want to. If you agree to be in this study, but later change your mind, you may withdraw at any time. If the length of the focus group is inconvenient for you, you may leave at any time without any consequence to you.
- There are no consequences of any kind if you decide not to participate in the study. Are there any questions before we begin the session?
- I have **fourteen** questions to ask you. Our conversation is not limited to these questions. You may bring up your own questions or thoughts throughout this session. Please let me know if you would like any questions repeated.
- The whole process will take 60 minutes. If you wish to continue participation, please review and sign the consent form. (Provide employees with consent form).
- Thank you for completing the consent form.

Throughout the focus group session (maximum of one hour) the classified employees are the researcher's teacher and will help the researcher to understand the classified employee's perspective.

1. What is the most important part of your positions as classified employees?
2. What are your greatest challenge(s)?
3. What is your favorite part of your job?
4. How are you valued as an employee? Are you part of the team?
5. What steps are being implemented or could be implemented to improve the classified employees' situation?
6. Share an event in your experience with this district which made you feel valued.
7. What can individuals within the district do to make you feel that the district is interested in you as an employee?
8. To what extent do classified employees from different departments have an opportunity to meet to discuss school matters?
9. How would you describe the morale within your department, school site, the district?
10. Who plays a significant role in your approach to work? Relationships, Social Networking
11. What type of professional development have you had?
12. How have you applied what you learned in professional development or informal training from a director, supervisor or administrator?
13. What further professional development support do you need in order to ...
14. Is there anything you would like to add?

### Appendix D: Frequency Report

Code	Total	Min	Max	Mean	Std Dev
Professional Development	66	1	11	4.40	3.02
Communication	64	0	14	4.27	3.96
Relationship with supervisor	64	0	12	4.27	3.97
Appreciation	63	0	11	4.20	3.28
Part of a Team	55	0	8	3.67	2.58
Valued	49	0	9	3.27	2.87
Impact at Work	32	0	7	2.13	2.20
Recommendations for Improvement	31	0	11	2.07	2.84
Challenges	31	0	4	2.07	1.53
Divisive Actions	30	0	9	2.00	2.80
Interaction with students	29	0	10	1.93	2.84
Awareness	27	0	7	1.80	2.36
Group Meetings	25	0	5	1.67	1.92
Morale	23	0	5	1.53	1.46
Initiative	22	0	4	1.47	1.60
Involvement	22	0	7	1.47	2.03
Feedback or Evaluation	22	0	6	1.47	1.85
New Learning on the Job	21	0	6	1.40	1.88
Personal and Professional Goal	21	0	4	1.40	1.35

Lack of training	20	0	5	1.33	1.80
Compensation	18	0	6	1.20	1.97
Support by classified	17	0	3	1.13	1.13
Union	14	0	4	0.93	1.34
Experience outside of education	13	0	4	0.87	1.25
Held Numerous Positions	12	0	3	0.80	1.08
Best Aspect of the Job	12	0	4	0.80	1.21
Job description is unclear	11	0	6	0.73	1.63
Opportunity for Advancement	11	0	6	0.73	1.67
Opportunity to be creative	10	0	5	0.67	1.40
Parent	10	0	3	0.67	1.05
Job satisfaction	10	0	7	0.67	1.84
Resistance to change	7	0	4	0.47	1.13
Accountability	6	0	2	0.40	0.63
Autonomy	5	0	2	0.33	0.62

## Appendix E: Consent Forms



California State University  
**SAN MARCOS**  
San Marcos, CA 92096-0001

### Consent to Participate in Research – Focus Group

#### **Invitation to Participate**

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright, a graduate student in the joint doctoral program (a Doctoral student) at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California, San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that seeks to explore the unrealized human capital of classified employees in school districts. The purpose of this study is to identify practices which support the engagement and participation of classified employees.

You are being contacted because you have expressed interest in being part of a focus group.

This study has the following principal objectives:

The research questions for this proposed study are centered on the voice of the classified employee as well as include the perceptions of both certificated employees and administrators to reveal whether classified employees are valued in the public school setting.

These questions are:

- In what ways is human capital of classified employees described by both classified, certificated employees and administrators?
- From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to maximize human capital?
- What are exemplars of classified employees being valued at school sites?
- To what degree are classified employees valued at school sites?

#### **Description of Procedures**

You will be part of a focus group consisting of 4 to 12 individuals. The conversational style of the focus group regarding what you believe are factors which challenge or facilitate your value as a classified employee in this organization will take approximately one hour. Notes will be taken.

#### **Risks and Inconveniences**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

1. Loss of personal time necessary to participate in the focus group and review of the transcript
2. Identity disclosure

#### **Safeguards**

Safeguards put in place to minimize risk include:

- Focus group sessions will be restricted to 1 hour; if they persist longer than this duration, they may be stopped at your request.
- The focus group data will be kept confidential, available only to the research team (researcher and her doctoral advisor) for analysis purposes. Only the research team will have access to the information shared in the focus group. Focus group attendees will be identified by a pseudonym or number for the researcher.
- Pseudonyms for schools, districts, and classified employees will be used to minimize the risk of identification. Your responses will not be linked to your name or address, and there will be no follow-up sessions.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any time. If the length of the focus group session becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate. In particular, your job evaluation will not be affected if you choose not to participate.

### **Benefits**

Although your participation will yield minimal or no direct benefits to you, I believe the study has the potential to positively affect the classified employee.

### **Questions/Contact Information**

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, rbarakos@yahoo.com, (619) 319-5647, or the researcher's advisor/professor, Dr. Delores Lindsey, dlindsey@csusm.edu, (760) 750-8544. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB at (760) 750-4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

- I agree to participate in this research study.
- I agree to be part of the focus group.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Researcher's Signature

This document has been approved by  
the Institutional Review Board at  
California State University San Marcos  
**Expiration Date: February 6, 2013**





California State University  
**SAN MARCOS**  
 San Marcos, CA 92096-0001

## Consent to Participate in Research – Administrator or Certificated Employee

### **Invitation to Participate**

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright, a graduate student in the joint doctoral program (a Doctoral student) at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California, San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that seeks to explore the unrealized human capital of classified employees in school districts. The purpose of this study is to identify practices which support the engagement and participation of classified employees.

You are being contacted because you are either an administrator of a certificated employee who works with classified employees in the Coronado Unified School District.

This study has the following principal objectives:

The research questions for this proposed study are centered on the voice of the classified employee as well as include the perceptions of both certificated employees and administrators to reveal whether classified employees are valued in the public school setting.

These questions are:

- In what ways is human capital of classified employees described by both classified, certificated employees and administrators?
- From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to maximize human capital?
- What are exemplars of classified employees being valued at school sites?
- To what degree are classified employees valued at school sites?

### **Description of Procedures**

You will be interviewed individually. The conversational style interview regarding what you believe are factors which challenge or facilitate the value of a classified employee in this organization will take approximately one hour and, with your permission, will be audio taped and transcribed. You will be provided a transcript of the interview for checking and clarifying any information.

### **Risks and Inconveniences**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

1. Loss of personal time necessary to participate in the interview and review of the transcript
2. Identity disclosure

**Safeguards**

Safeguards put in place to minimize risk include:

- Interview sessions will be restricted to 1 hour; if it persists longer than this duration, it may be stopped at your request.
- Your interview data will be kept confidential, available only to the research team (researcher and her doctoral advisor) for analysis purposes. Only the research team will listen to and transcribe the information you provide. Audio recording. Recorded interviews will contain a pseudonym or number to identify the interviewee for the researcher.
- Pseudonyms for schools, districts, administrators and certificated employees will be used to minimize the risk of identification. You will be given the opportunity to review the transcribed interview and to eliminate any comments or references you feel may be identifiable or have negative connotations with respect to the district or school leadership. Your responses will not be linked to your name or address, and there will be no follow-up sessions.
- Professional transcription service. Recorded interviews will not contain the name of the interviewee only the identification number assigned to the interviewee. The professional transcription service will not receive the participant name, address, or any other private form of identification.

The audio tapes will be destroyed following final analysis; no later than June 15, 2013.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any time. If the length of the interview becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate. In particular, your job evaluation will not be affected if you choose not to participate.

**Benefits**

Although your participation will yield minimal or no direct benefits to you, I believe the study has the potential to positively affect the classified employee.

**Questions/Contact Information**

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, rbarakos@yahoo.com, (619) 319-5647, or the researcher's advisor/professor, Dr. Delores Lindsey, dlindsey@csusm.edu, (760) 750-8544. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB at (760) 750-4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

- I agree to participate in this research study.
- I agree to have the interview audiotaped.

---

Participant's Name

Date

---

Participant's Signature

---

Researcher's Signature

This document has been approved by  
the Institutional Review Board at  
California State University San Marcos  
**Expiration Date: February 6, 2013**



California State University  
**SAN MARCOS**  
 San Marcos, CA 92096-0001

## Consent to Participate in Research – Classified Employee – Interview

### **Invitation to Participate**

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright, a graduate student in the joint doctoral program (a Doctoral student) at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California, San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that seeks to explore the unrealized human capital of classified employees in school districts. The purpose of this study is to identify practices which support the engagement and participation of classified employees.

You are being contacted because you have expressed interest in being interviewed.

This study has the following principal objectives:

The research questions for this proposed study are centered on the voice of the classified employee as well as include the perceptions of both certificated employees and administrators to reveal whether classified employees are valued in the public school setting.

These questions are:

- In what ways is human capital of classified employees described by both classified, certificated employees and administrators?
- From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees' efforts to maximize human capital?
- What are exemplars of classified employees being valued at school sites?
- To what degree are classified employees valued at school sites?

### **Description of Procedures**

You will be interviewed individually. The conversational style interview regarding what you believe are factors which challenge or facilitate your value as a classified employee in this organization will take approximately one hour and, with your permission, will be audio taped and transcribed. You will be provided a transcript of the interview for checking and clarifying any information.

### **Risks and Inconveniences**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

1. Loss of personal time necessary to participate in the interview and review of the transcript
2. Identity disclosure

### **Safeguards**

Safeguards put in place to minimize risk include:

- Interview sessions will be restricted to 1 hour; if it persists longer than this duration, it may be stopped at your request.
- Your interview data will be kept confidential, available only to the research team (researcher and her doctoral advisor) for analysis purposes. Only the research team will listen to and transcribe the information you provide. Audio recording. Recorded interviews will contain a pseudonym or number to identify the interviewee for the researcher.
- Pseudonyms for schools, districts, and classified employees will be used to minimize the risk of identification. You will be given the opportunity to review the transcribed interview and to eliminate any comments or references you feel may be identifiable or have negative connotations with respect to the district or school leadership. Your responses will not be linked to your name or address, and there will be no follow-up sessions.
- Professional transcription service. Recorded interviews will not contain the name of the interviewee only the identification number assigned to the interviewee. The professional transcription service will not receive the participant name, address, or any other private form of identification.

The audio tapes will be destroyed following final analysis; no later than June 15, 2013.

### **Voluntary Participation**

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any time. If the length of the interview becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate. In particular, your job evaluation will not be affected if you choose not to participate.

### **Benefits**

Although your participation will yield minimal or no direct benefits to you, I believe the study has the potential to positively affect the classified employee.

### **Questions/Contact Information**

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, rbarakos@yahoo.com, (619) 319-5647, or the researcher's advisor/professor, Dr. Delores Lindsey, dlindsey@csusm.edu, (760) 750-8544. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB at (760) 750-4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

- I agree to participate in this research study.
- I agree to have the interview audiotaped.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

---

Participant's Signature

---

Researcher's Signature

This document has been approved by  
the Institutional Review Board at  
California State University San Marcos  
**Expiration Date: February 6, 2013**



California State University  
SAN MARCOS

San Marcos, CA 92096-0001

## Consent to Participate in Research – Survey - Classified Employee

### **Invitation to Participate**

Rebekah B. Barakos-Cartwright, a graduate student in the joint doctoral program (a Doctoral student) at California State University San Marcos (CSUSM) and University of California, San Diego (UCSD), is conducting a study that seeks to explore the skills you have obtained through training, additional education and abilities that are not made use of in the current job which you currently hold within this district. A term you will see for this idea is *unrealized human capital*. One of the purposes of this study is to find out what skills classified employees have that are not used in the jobs they hold in school districts. In addition, another purpose of this study is to identify practices established at school sites and throughout the district which support the engagement and participation of classified employees.

You are being contacted because you are a classified employee in the Coronado Unified School District.

This study has the following principal objectives:

The research questions for this proposed study are centered on “the voice of the classified employee” and include perceptions of certificated employees and administrators. These perceptions are included to reveal what actions or statements help classified employees to feel the work they do is appreciated or valued. In addition, this research will help to determine what actions or statements do not support the classified employee to feel the work he or she accomplishes is appreciated or valued in the public school setting.

The research questions are:

- In what ways is the skill set (human capital) of classified employees described by both classified, certificated employees and administrators?
- From the perspective of classified employees, what factors challenge and/or facilitate the classified employees’ efforts to maximize his/her skill set (human capital)?
- What are exemplars of classified employees being appreciated and acknowledged (valued) at school sites?
- To what degree are classified employees appreciated and acknowledged (valued) at school sites?

### **Description of Procedures**

The survey is completed by you individually. The questions of this survey are to access information regarding your feelings of your value as a classified employee in this organization. The survey should take a maximum of 15-20 minutes.

**Risks and Inconveniences**

There are minimal risks to participating in this study. These include:

1. Loss of personal time necessary to participate in the survey
2. Identity disclosure

**Safeguards**

Safeguards put in place to minimize risk include:

- Survey session will be restricted to 15-20 minutes.
- Your survey data will be kept confidential, available only to the research team (researcher and her doctoral advisor) for analysis purposes. Only the research team will analyze the information you provide.
- Pseudonyms for schools, districts, and classified employees will be used to minimize the risk of identification. Your responses will not be linked to your name or address, and there will be no follow-up sessions.

**Voluntary Participation**

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and may be withdrawn at any time. If the length of the survey becomes inconvenient, you may stop at any time. There are no consequences if you decide not to participate. In particular, your job evaluation will not be affected if you choose not to participate.

**Benefits**

Although your participation will yield minimal or no direct benefits to you, I believe the study has the potential to positively affect the classified employee.

**Questions/Contact Information**

This study has been approved by the California State University San Marcos Institutional Review Board (IRB). If you have questions about the study, you may direct those to the researcher, Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright, rbarakos@yahoo.com, (619) 319-5647, or the researcher's advisor/professor, Dr. Delores Lindsey, dlindsey@csusm.edu, (760) 750-8544. Questions about your rights as a research participant should be directed to the IRB at (760) 750-4029. You will be given a copy of this form to keep for your records.

I agree to participate in this survey.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Participant's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix F: Survey Codes

<b>Position (Pos)</b>	<b>CODE</b>	<b>Type of Position (TypePos)</b>	<b>CODE</b>
Account Clerk	1	Works with students (3,8,9,11,14,16,17,18)	1
Administrative Assistant	2	Serves students and organization (5,6,10,15)	2
Clerk	3	Organizational focus (1,2,3,7,12,13)	3
Executive Assistant	4		
Food Service Worker	5		
Health Technician	6	<b>Years Employed (YrsEmpl)</b>	<b>CODE</b>
Human Resources Technician	7		# of years
Instructional Assistant	8		
Instructional Health Care Assistant	9	<b>Gender (G)</b>	<b>CODE</b>
Lead Custodian	10	Male	1
Library Media Technician	11	Female	2
Network Supervisor	12		
Network Support Technician	13	<b>Time (T)</b>	<b>CODE</b>
Preschool Teacher	14	Full	1
Secretary	15	Part	2
Senior Lifeguard	16		
Security	17	<b>Student Serving (StServ)</b>	<b>CODE</b>
Child Care Worker	18	Yes	1
		No	2
<b>Survey - Impct of Wrk (ImpctWrk)</b>	<b>CODE</b>		
	1 very low to 5 very high	<b>Age</b>	<b>CODE</b>
1. Important Source (Imp Src)		18-27	1
2. Calling (Callng)	2 low	28-37	2
3. Fulfilling (Fulfillng)	3 moderate	38-47	3
4. Physical Safety (PhysSfty)	4 high	48-57	4
5. Belonging (Belng)	5 very high	58+	5
6. Respect and admire people at work (RspctAdmOthrs)			
7. Am respected and appreciated (AmRspctAppr)			
8. Mentor at work (MntWrk)			
9. Creatively challenged (CrtvChallgd)			
10. Bored and stifled (BrdStfld)			
11. Wonderful experiences (WondExper)			
12. World a better place (WrldBetrPl)			

**Appendix G: Dr. Hoffman Contract**

attention! Ms. Rebekah Barakos

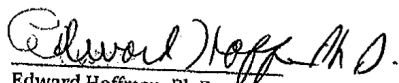
**EDWARD HOFFMAN, PH.D.**  
Clinical Psychologist  
19 West 34<sup>th</sup> Street, Penthouse Suite  
New York, New York 10001  
Phone: (212) 947-7111 Fax: (212) 239-0948


August 28, 2012

**LETTER OF AGREEMENT**

This letter is to affirm that Dr. Edward Hoffman, sole author of the Hoffman Vocational Values Scale (HVVS) and holder of its copyright, authorizes Ms. Rebekah Barakos, Human Resources Director of the Coronado Unified School District in California, to adapt this scale and administer it to 150 individuals for a fee of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150.00) payable to Dr. Edward Hoffman. Upon his receipt of this sum, this Letter of Agreement will immediately go into effect.

In any subsequent publication of Ms. Barakos' research utilizing her adaptation of the HVVS, she will cite it and indicate that Dr. Edward Hoffman is the author of this test.

  
Edward Hoffman, Ph.D.

  
Rebekah Barakos  
Coronado Unified School District

**Appendix H: Compensation Study**

A PROPOSAL TO PERFORM A  
CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY  
FOR

*CORONADO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT*

**ECI**

PRESENTED BY:

EWING CONSULTING, INC.  
WILLIAM A. EWING, PRESIDENT  
114 Calle Patricia  
San Clemente, CA 92672  
949-369-9302  
Fax: 856-292-0764

November 25, 2012

---

# Ewing Consulting, Inc.

## Human Resources Consulting

---

114 Calle Patricia

San Clemente, California 92672

(949) 369-9302

October 19, 2012

Rebekah Barakos-Cartwright  
Director of Human Resources  
Coronado Unified School District  
201 Sixth Street  
Coronado, California 92118

Dear Ms. Barakos-Cartwright:

Thank you for the opportunity to present our proposal to perform the classification and compensation study for Coronado Unified School District. We trust that our response to your request meets your needs.

Ewing Consulting specializes in providing human resources consulting services to the education industry throughout the State. We have considerable experience in the conduct of classification and compensation studies specifically for districts and will be pleased to assist Coronado Unified School District in this sensitive and important endeavor.

Our firm is uniquely qualified to perform this study for you.

1. We understand districts, their organization, programs, codes, policies and practices. Our people are specialists in district human resources matters and each has performed similar studies in several projects throughout the State. We have completed studies for over 160 school districts in the State of California.
2. Our approach to the study is specifically designed to provide a very thorough, technically sound result. Due to the central role of the class description in the entire personnel program, it is important to take care in preparing descriptions and allocating positions in an intelligent, objective manner.
3. The engagement will be directed by Mr. Ewing in an effort to properly control and assure the quality and responsiveness of the engagement. His style is one of establishing and maintaining rapport with people at all organizational levels. This is easily checked with former engagements in the public and private sectors. His references include work with bargaining units in several districts around the State of California. Our consultants are accustomed to dealing with management level people and are highly qualified, effective and credible before employee and management groups as well as Board of Educations.
4. Much of our project work will be on-site. In order to enhance communications and do a proper job of understanding your organization's operations, our work will be largely at your offices and work sites

where we will be accessible to classified employees and the Human Resources Department.

We believe our proposal meets the requirements specified in the Request for Proposal. Our proposal is divided into five sections.

Objectives and Scope  
Work Plan and Methodology  
Schedule, Staffing and Fees  
Resumes of Project Personnel  
Client List

We will be pleased to present the proposal orally and respond to any questions you might have. Thank you again for your consideration.

Very truly yours,

William A. Ewing  
President

**OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE**

Based on our understanding of your Request for Proposal, the objectives of the study will be as follows:

Prepare class descriptions which accurately describe current duties and responsibilities and requirements for about 41 classifications, covering about 150 positions.

Allocate about 150 employees to the classifications as described.

Perform a salary survey of selected public sector organizations, focusing on comparable districts.

Utilize a job evaluation technique to properly establish internal equity within the various classifications.

Assure compliance of class descriptions with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Provide specific recommendations regarding the appropriate level of compensation for all classes.

Provide a carefully described and valid method for arriving at future determinations of base salary.

Provide recommendations to update and administer the program including training in the use of any new aspects of the overall program.

Recommend other work flow, management practices, policies and procedural changes based on this thorough review of the organization.

***WORK PLAN AND METHODOLOGY***

Our experience in the conduct of similar studies indicates that the best results are achieved through a series of phases, each phase having one or more elements. The phases would be separate in performance but interdependent in overall effect and meaning. The phases and elements would be planned and carried out to maximize study value to District personnel. The phases would allow the District to properly follow study progress and assess its timeliness.

There are several features to our work plan which are key ingredients for a successful study. A classification study is very sensitive for all concerned. It is vitally important to establish methods to reduce apprehension and assure fair and responsive treatment for those employees whose jobs are being studied. Our work plan includes several steps which enhance the opportunity for a successful study.

- Advisory Committee - We have found that the use of an Advisory Committee in these studies is important to the final acceptance of the program. This is typically a group of five to nine people who represent the occupational groups and departments included in the study. The Committee is not asked to make decisions or vote on anything; rather, the Committee follows our study progress, provides feedback on employees' reactions to the study and our consultants, and assures themselves of an objective and independent report. We typically arrange four to five meetings with the Advisory Committee during the course of the study.
- Participation of Human Resource Department Staff - Our work plan includes several opportunities for discussions, training sessions and other communications to assure that the program may be maintained by the Human Resource Department.
- Participation of Union and Management Groups - Our work plan provides for meetings with the Superintendent, Human Resource Director and other key executives and the Board of Education, union leadership and others (at your request) who would have an impact on study results or input to study findings. These communications are vitally important to the ultimate acceptability of study procedures and results.

Each major phase outlined in our Work Plan and Methodology section is outlined below. The order of their presentation is approximately the order of their performance. However, several phases may be carried out simultaneously to minimize expenses and to use available time most expeditiously.

In addition, we have included a Project Schedule which shows the timing of these phases.

**PHASE I - SCHEDULING AND INTRODUCTION OF THE STUDY**

This phase is extremely important to the ultimate success of the project. The purpose of Phase I is to introduce the study, communicate study methodologies and procedures, initiate effective communications, and explain the role and contributions of District employees. If the District desired, it would also be intended to develop a program for effective involvement of assigned persons from the District's Human Resource Department.

1. Meet with Advisory Committee and other groups to set the study in motion, reach agreement on key study procedures and methods, discuss and refine the project schedule, define roles and contributions of District employees and to clarify study scope and output.
2. Meet with the Director of Human Resources and assigned staff to develop an effective method for including their involvement and input in the study.



3. Conduct meetings with the Superintendent and key department heads to introduce the study to them, to explain their function, role and contributions, to outline the study schedule, methodology and output, and to define time and effort involvement of their personnel; meet with union or other groups as necessary.

#### **PHASE II - ORIENTATION TO CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION PRACTICES**

The purpose of Phase II is to develop detailed familiarity with the District's organization structure and its use of various positions and classifications among its departments. We would also become well-versed in the content of current classifications and levels, study current base salary levels and pay relationships and review District policies, practices and procedures related to classification and compensation.

1. Meet with management personnel to obtain basic information on nature and diversity of services and programs (on-line as well as planned), work activities and functions, organization structure, reporting relationships, and the kinds of positions operating in each department. We would ask them to relate concerns and issues related to the current classification and pay structure and the administrative guidelines governing it.
2. Study and assess available material on the District's present system for classifying and compensating employees such as: classification, position guides or descriptions, base salary structures and related items.
3. Examine and evaluate administrative procedures and practices related to compensation, and gather data on the methods used to set and revise salaries for the classifications included in the study.
4. Review local or State rules and regulations and laws which impact on classification practices.
5. Meet with Advisory Committee to provide feedback on findings and to seek input on the format for the class descriptions and other related items.

#### **PHASE III - COLLECTION AND INITIAL ANALYSIS OF POSITION INFORMATION**

The purpose of Phase III is to systematically collect information related to the basic duties, responsibilities, reporting relationships and tasks of positions of involved departments. The procedure involves the use of a standard position information questionnaire, interviews and worksite observations and conversations. We can assure you that our position analysis techniques meet the requirements of the Federal Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (1978) and the California Department of Fair Employment Regulations (1980).

1. Modify an existing position information questionnaire which, our experience has shown, captures position information in a reliable and efficient fashion. The form will be constructed to permit easy completion without sacrificing its value to subsequent position analysis.
2. Review proposed questionnaire and its distribution and use with the Advisory Committee. Each participant would be asked to complete a questionnaire. Completed questionnaires would be reviewed by the employee's supervisor and sent directly to our consultants.

3. Distribute questionnaire and explain it and the procedure for its completion and processing to all participants through meetings held with the employees. We believe this step is especially important since it gives all employees the opportunity to meet the consultants prior to the study and the opportunity to receive careful instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. We plan to hold meetings at various locations around the District. We also provide for separate orientation sessions for supervisors who will be reviewing the questionnaires.
4. Collect and analyze completed questionnaires.
5. Conduct interviews with at least one incumbent per class, such that the total number of employees interviewed would represent about 60% of the District's positions. Interviews would normally last about thirty minutes and would consist of expansion of questionnaire responses and discussions regarding the relationships of the position to others in the organization. Some employees prefer group interviews which is fine with our consultants. We believe that any employee should be given the opportunity to be interviewed during this phase of the study.

#### **PHASE IV - REVIEW OF CURRENT CLASS DESCRIPTIONS**

The purpose of Phase IV is to complete our review of the existing class descriptions and suggest changes which better accommodate the positions described by each class description. The classifications will be prepared in such a manner as to specify the relationships between classes in a series.

1. Determine validity of current class descriptions based on questionnaire and interview analysis.
2. Meet with the Director of Human Resources and others to determine an appropriate format for the revised class descriptions; several alternatives will be presented and the format which best meets your needs will be selected.
3. Prepare revised descriptions as necessary, specify job duties, levels of responsibilities and skills, knowledge and abilities requirements. We will be sensitive to career ladders within and between series.
4. Assure compliance of the class descriptions with the Americans with Disabilities Act. We will provide an assessment regarding "essential functions" together with statements regarding working conditions for each class. Working conditions refers to the environment in which the work takes place and the physical demands and hazards associated with the work.
5. Allocate carefully all 150 employees to the proper classification and prepare an allocation listing summarizing our conclusions.
6. Present our preliminary class descriptions and allocations to the Advisory Committee for review and discussion. We will highlight new, revised or eliminated classes with proper rationale for our recommendations. We will also provide listings of classes by family, series or occupational groups and will be sensitive to career ladders and bridge classes in the process.

**PHASE V - FINALIZATION OF CLASSIFICATIONS**

The purpose of Phase V is to provide feedback to employees and their supervisors as to the classification to which they have been allocated. We believe this step is essential to the ultimate success of the program. In this way, communications will be such that any employee may appeal a classification to which he or she has been allocated. We will be pleased to adopt whatever method of dealing with appeals is customary for the District. We normally suggest the following process for consideration:

1. Provide each employee and supervisors with a copy of the class descriptions recommended for the position.
2. Provide a form to be completed by employees who do not agree with the classification recommended by the consultant.
3. Meet as necessary with employees who wish to appeal the recommendation. We would explain the reasoning behind our recommendation, listen to the employee's concerns and arrive at a conclusion regarding the appeal. This would once again be communicated to the employee in writing.

At this point, should the employee wish to carry the appeal further, we will discuss other possible steps with you relying on your own policies and practices regarding appeals. Our fee estimate includes any number of appeals received during the course of the study.

It is important to involve the consultant directly in the appeal process, and we will publish the final classifications where appropriate. We will be sensitive to career ladders and mobility as well as management succession and other organizational concerns.

**PHASE VI - DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS**

The purpose of this phase is to examine internal relationships between classifications based on the class descriptions and comparative levels of responsibility of each class. We will utilize organization analysis and quantitative position evaluation, if necessary, to properly rank the classes. We would be careful to employ proven methods of position evaluation, and would communicate the methodology in detail to the Advisory Committee to assure understanding and acceptance of our techniques. We believe it is important to bring a wide range of methodologies (from very simple to very complex) to your attention. Our firm has its own point-factor system, known as the Ewing Factor System (EFS), which has been implemented in many public sector organizations around the State.

1. Meet with the Director of Human Resources and others to discuss the full range of methods available to properly evaluate the relative level of each classification. We will be careful to propose methods which the District may utilize and maintain on an on-going basis.
2. Evaluate all classes using the agreed-upon methodology and display the resulting rank order of all classes within families or occupational groups.
3. Determine the appropriate relationship between classes in terms of percentages of salary and/or salary range differences.
4. Compare recommended rankings and salary range differences with current practice.

5. Present preliminary recommendations to the Advisory Committee and management to encourage discussion and feedback prior to finalization.

#### **PHASE VII - PREPARATION OF SALARY SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE**

The purpose of Phase VII is to arrive at basic decisions regarding salary philosophy and pay practices. The internal relationships will be displayed and discussed with the Advisory Committee and others. Based upon acquired knowledge of the District's organization and practices, we will do the following:

1. Recommend participants to be included in a salary survey. The market surveys may differ for certain classes. We will match the District's size and service profile with that of participants, and will be specific as to which public and private sector agencies should be included. We consider three criteria in selecting participants: the geographical area, some measure of size (population, number of employees, budget) and type of business (public sector, private sector). We carefully analyze each element and recommend a list of participants based solely on these criteria. This will be discussed in detail with you.
2. Recommend benchmark classes for the survey. We will select representative and typically populous classes to be included in the survey. The benchmarks will include representation at all organizational levels and will be carefully selected to represent specific occupational groups and job families. These will be described in summary form for use in the survey questionnaire.
3. Gather published survey data which may be helpful in our analysis.
4. Prepare a survey questionnaire which will gather salary and other data if desired.

#### **PHASE VIII - CONDUCT OF THE SURVEY**

The survey instrument will be distributed to all participants with appropriate explanations as to the use and confidentiality of the data. Normally, we would also provide each participant with a copy of the final product (survey) to act as an inducement for participation.

1. Follow-up in personal meetings with survey participants as necessary to encourage thorough and accurate completion of the questionnaire on a timely basis.
2. Contact participants to ask questions regarding responses which appear unusual or point to inappropriate classification matching; arrive at decisions regarding the usefulness and comparability of data.
3. Compile survey results in tabular form and analyze data in light of current pay practices.

#### **PHASE IX - RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THE OVERALL PROGRAM**

The purpose of Phase IX is to come to well-reasoned recommendations regarding the compensation plan for the employees. Based on the data and analysis completed in earlier phases, we will do the following:

1. Recommend appropriate compensation ranges for each classification for the current year.
2. Recommend a proper salary differential between classifications and their immediate subordinates through establishment of a complete salary range program to provide both internal equity and external competitiveness.

3. Recommend alternative methods to implement the program. These studies typically have a certain cost associated with their implementation. We have learned a variety of methods to implement studies within the District's financial resources. We typically provide a number of options to set the stage for negotiations.
4. Recommend districts and other organizations to be included in future surveys. We will include a recommended survey questionnaire and a list of participants based on the results of the study.
5. Recommend a method to maintain and administer the salary program.

#### **PHASE X - PRESENTATION OF THE FINAL REPORT**

We will bring all the study results and recommendations together in a final report which will be presented in written form to the Advisory Committee, the Superintendent and the Board of Education if desired. It is vitally important that the District review a preliminary draft of the report to assure that the written word communicates and covers all the specific areas of concern. The final report will include the following:

1. Class descriptions covering all the participants (about 41 classes).
2. Allocation listings placing all 150 positions into final recommended classifications.
3. Internal ranking of these classes together with complete descriptions of the methodology utilized to determine internal relationships.
4. Salary survey performed by Ewing Consulting and other data collected from published sources.
5. Recommended salary ranges for each classification together with descriptive material and rationale.
6. Other recommendations resulting from the study. In the past, we have commented on such matters as total compensation practice, attitudes and morale, organizational issues or concerns, staffing, training or suggestions aimed at improving efficiency or effectiveness of District functions.

Once the final report is delivered and accepted by the District, we will be available for follow-up consultation should you desire. Whether on-site or by telephone, we will make ourselves accessible to answer questions or provide additional commentary on our recommendations. Should you require assistance in implementing study recommendations, we would be pleased to assist the District on an hourly plus expense basis.

***SCHEDULE, STAFFING AND FEES***

As indicated in our work plan, we have included a schedule which is meant to show the timing relationships of the various phases of the study. The work plan itself identifies the expected outputs for each phase and includes several ideas for the timing of meetings with the Advisory Committee and others. We anticipate that we will work closely with the Director of Human Resources throughout the course of the study. We will be pleased to meet with you whenever the need arises at your suggestion or ours.

The staffing of an assignment such as this is a very delicate matter. Due to the nature of the work and its potential impact on all personnel, it is vitally important the engagement be performed by someone with wide experience as well as someone with ability to sell ideas with credibility, integrity and independence.

For these reasons, Mr. William A. Ewing will be conducting the study on behalf of his own firm and the Coronado Unified School District. He will act as Project Manager and will have overall accountability for the technical quality of the work, its responsiveness and communication. Mr. Ewing is a seasoned professional who now enjoys his own consulting firm after three years as a Personnel Director and thirteen years as a Principal Consultant for two large personnel consulting firms. His complete resume is included for your review. He will be pleased to have you check with any number of the references provided in his resume - references in either the public or private sector. These references include only assignments for which he accepted responsibility as Project Manager. There is no attempt to include other studies conducted by someone else.

Our fee for the conduct of this study as described herein for all 150 positions in 41 classifications will be \$19,500 including out-of-pocket expenses. The estimate assumes that the District will provide graphics and printing services with respect to the questionnaires and study outputs.



***EWING CONSULTING, INC.******DESCRIPTION OF FIRM***

Mr. Ewing began his own consulting firm over 28 years ago. Prior to establishing the firm, Mr. Ewing was responsible for human resources consulting for the western region of what is now Ernst & Young and was a Director in the Los Angeles office of Hay Associates. Mr. Ewing is actively involved with his clients and personally directs the firm which continues to prosper largely due to his reputation in the fields of job evaluation, compensation planning, classification and organization planning. Over the past few years, he has especially become known for innovations in the integration of various human resources functions through the use of an integrated human resources management system, *Harmony*.

Ewing Consulting specializes in public sector organizations and is especially well-known in the organization planning, classification and compensation fields in the education field public sector. We maintain a staff of experienced consultants headquartered in Orange County, California.

Ewing Consulting has conducted several seminars for school districts on the subject of classification and compensation. We provide an overview of job evaluation programs available and focus on a variety of widely used internal equity systems.

Ewing Consulting specializes in a wide range of human resources services. The firm has performed hundreds of classification and salary studies and 60-70 organization studies and has prepared several human resources policy and procedure manuals. Another popular product has been our human resources department audits which provide some helpful suggestions to school districts on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of their human resources processes.



***STAFF QUALIFICATIONS*****WILLIAM A. EWING**

Bill Ewing, President of Ewing Consulting, began his consulting career 32 years ago with Ernst & Ernst (now Ernst & Young). He steadily moved up the professional ladder in the Denver, St. Louis and Los Angeles offices of this prestigious firm while serving major clients in the private and public sector in compensation, organization planning, human resources policies and training. He joined Hay Associates in Los Angeles as a Principal for two years before starting his own firm in 1980. Prior to his consulting career, he was Director of Human Resources for Carte Blanche Corporation, a national company with 1,000 employees headquartered in Los Angeles.

He is currently enjoying his 28<sup>th</sup> year serving primarily the education industry. Headquartered in the City of Orange, the Company's client list numbers over 200 school districts, 48 community college districts, 30 county offices of education and a number of other organizations. The firm also serves a large number of Cities, Counties and other public sector clients in California, Arizona, Kentucky and Washington as well as some very select private sector companies such as Northrop, Lockheed, Hughes, Warner Brothers and Architectural Digest.

Mr. Ewing is recognized nationally for his innovations in human resources including the Ewing Factor System, Harmony software, Organization Analysis methods (up, down, over and out) and others. He is a popular speaker at State, regional and national gatherings of educators and human resources people.

He taught for many years in the Human Resources Certificate Program at UCLA receiving recognition for his popular courses on compensation, job evaluation and general management. He also leads a variety of workshops around the country as well as his own two-day classification and compensation seminar.

Mr. Ewing holds Bachelor's and Master's degrees in psychology. He has studied with one of the great leaders in the field. He is very active in church and choral music activities and has served on the Board of Directors of both the Los Angeles Master Chorale and Pacific Chorale, two of the finest professional groups in the country. He is also a choral conductor himself having directed several choirs around the country.

Bill and his wife of 44 years, Diane, live in San Clemente and have raised three children, two of whom work for Ewing Consulting.

**WILLIAM (BJ) EWING**

William (BJ) Ewing will also participate as a team leader and member of the project team. Mr. Ewing is a graduate of California Lutheran University with a degree in Communication Arts with an emphasis in Business Administration. While attending the University, Mr. Ewing was a Student Senate Representative, served as Editor of the University newspaper and held office in several college organizations.

Over the past twenty years with the Company, Mr. Ewing has been involved with over 125 of our clients in classification and compensation studies. He has provided management training services and has become the firm's coordinator of ADA services.

BJ has performed over 100 salary and benefit surveys and is widely regarded for his knowledge of point factor systems, especially the EFS.

Mr. Ewing also serves as project director for numerous projects. His responsibilities include communication with clients, delegation of assignments to support staff and oversight to assure quality of work. He has established outstanding working relationships with our clients.

**MICHELLE L. STODDARD**

Michelle has been with the Company for twenty-four years and has specialized in job analysis and classification work. She has participated in over 160 studies specifically for public sector clients and serves as a Senior Human Resources Consultant with the Company.

Michelle also works with our software services practice as our Harmony Product and Support Director. She has become an expert in automated classification systems and frequently consults with our clients on maximizing use of the class description through our firm's software program. Michelle held forums with many human resources directors, analysts and assistants to incorporate their needs into the system. She was responsible for overseeing the work of our software developers to assure the system was user-friendly while maintaining high standards of quality system performance.

Mrs. Stoddard holds a bachelor's degree in Child Development and a Professional in Human Resources (PHR) Certificate issued by the Society of Human Resources Management Certification Institute. She has earned graduate-level credits in the areas of School Counseling and Human Resources.

**CLIENTS**

ABC Unified School District	Calexico, City of
Acalanes Union High School District	Calexico Unified School District
Adelanto School District	California Lutheran University
Alameda Unified School District	Camas, City of
Alum Rock Union Elementary School District	Capistrano Unified School District
Anaheim, City of	Carlsbad, City of
Anaheim City School District	Carlsbad Unified School District
Anaheim Union High School District	Carson, City of
Antelope Valley Community College District	Caruthers Unified School District
Antioch Unified School District	Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles
Apple Valley Unified School District	Central Unified School District
Arcadia Unified School District	Centralia Elementary School District
Architectural Digest	Cerritos Community College District
Barstow Community College District	Chaffey Community College District
Barstow Unified School District	Chaffey Union High School District
Bassett Unified School District	Charter Oak Unified School District
Bell, City of	Chico Unified School District
Bellflower Unified School District	Chino Unified School District
Big Creek Elementary School District	Chula Vista, City of
Blue Lake, City of	Citrus Community College District
Bonita Unified School District	Claremont Unified School District
Brawley Union High School District	Clark County School District
Brea-Olinda Unified School District	Clovis Unified School District
Broad Foundation	Coast Community College District
Buena Park Elementary School District	Colton Joint Unified School District
Burbank Unified School District	Colton-Redlands-Yucaipa ROP
Bureau of Indian Affairs	Colusa County Office of Education
Butte County Office of Education	Compton, City of
Cabrillo Community College District	Compton Community College District
Cabrillo Unified School District	Compton Unified School District
Cajon Valley Unified School District	Contra Costa County Office of Education

---

Covina Valley Unified School District	Fremont Union High School District
Creative Design Consultants, Inc.	Fresno County Office of Education
Cucamonga School District	Fresno Unified School District
Culver City Unified School District	Glendale Unified School District
Del Mar Union School District	Glendora Unified School District
Del Norte County Unified School District	Glenn County Office of Education
Delano Union Elementary School District	Goleta Union Elementary School District
Delano Union High School District	Grand Canyon National Park
Department of the Interior	Grant Union High School District
Desert, College of the	Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community College District
Desert Sands Unified School District	Guadalupe Unified School District
Dixie School District	Guajome Park Academy
Downey Unified School District	Hacienda La Puente Unified School District
Durham Unified School District	Hartnell Community College District
Eagles Peak Charter School	Havasu City
Earlimart School District	Hawthorne Unified School District
Edmonds, City of	Hayward Unified School District
El Camino Community College District	Hermosa Beach City School District
El Monte Union High School District	Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles
El Segundo Unified School District	Hughes Aircraft Company
Elk Grove Unified School District	Humboldt County Office of Education
Escondido Union Elementary School District	Huntington Beach City School District
Evergreen Elementary School District	Huntington Beach Union High School District
FCMAT	Imperial Community College District
Federal Way, City of	Imperial County
Fife, City of	Imperial County Courts
Fontana Unified School District	Imperial County Office of Education
Food Sales West	Imperial Valley Housing Authority
Foothill-De Anza Community College District	Inglewood Unified School District
Fort Wayne Community Schools	International Art Publishers
Fountain Valley School District	Irvine Unified School District
Fowler Unified School District	Jefferson Elementary School District
Franklin-McKinley Elementary School District	Jurupa Unified School District

---

Kaufman & Broad	Lynnwood, City of
Kent, City of	Lynwood Unified School District
Kentucky Department of Education	Madera County Office of Education
Kern Community College District	Manteca, City of
Kern County Office of Education	Manteca Unified School District
Kings Canyon Unified School District	Marin, College of
Kingsburg Joint Union High School District	Marin County Office of Education
Kiowa Casino	Mariposa Unified School District
Knapp Communications	Mendocino County Office of Education
La Mesa-Spring Valley Unified School District	Mendocino-Lake Community College District
La Puente Valley Regional Occupational Program	Merced City School District
Lake Havasu, City of	Merced County Office of Education
Lake Tahoe Community College District	Mesa Unified School District
Lake Tahoe Unified School District	Metropolitan Education District
Las Virgenes Unified School District	Metropolitan Parks District of Tacoma
Lassen County Office of Education	Midway City Sanitation District
Law Enforcement Support Agency	Mills College
Lawndale Elementary School District	MiraCosta Community College District
Le Grand High School District	Montebello Unified School District
Lewiston, City of	Monterey County Office of Education
Little River Casino	Monterey Peninsula Community College
Lockheed Corporation	Morgan Hill Unified School District
Lodi Unified School District	Morongo Band of Mission Indians
Lompoc Unified School District	Moscow, City of
Lone Pine Unified School District	Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Long Beach Community College District	Mt. San Antonio Community College District
Long Beach Unified School District	Mt. San Jacinto Community College District
Los Alamitos Unified School District	Mt. Shasta, City of
Los Angeles County Office of Education	Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
Los Angeles Olympic Organizing Committee	Muckleshoot Indian Casino
Los Angeles Unified School District	National School District
Los Rios Community College District	Needles Unified School District
Lucky Eagle Casino	New Haven Unified School District

---

Newhall Elementary School District	Poway Unified School District
Newport-Mesa Unified School District	Quechan Tribal Housing Authority
North Orange County Community College District	Ravenswood City School District
Northrop Corporation	Redondo Beach Unified School District
Oakland Unified School District	Redwood City Elementary School District
Ojai Unified School District	Redwoods Community College District
Ontario-Montclair Elementary School District	Renton, City of
Orange County Department of Education	Rhodes Homes
Orange County Head Start	Richland, City of
Orange County Transit District	Richmond Unified School District
Orcutt Union Elementary School District	Rim of the World Unified School District
Oxnard Elementary School District	Rio Hondo Community College District
Oxnard Union High School District	Ripon Unified School District
Pacific Autism Center for Education (PACE)	Riverside Unified School District
Pacific Sintered Metals	Rowland Unified School District
Palm Springs, City of	S.I.P.E.
Palm Springs Unified School District	Sacramento City Unified School District
Palmdale Elementary School District	Safford, City of
Palo Alto Unified School District	Saint Johns Lutheran Church & School
Palomar Community College District	San Bernardino City Unified School District
Palos Verdes Peninsula Unified School District	San Bernardino Community College District
Paramount Unified School District	San Bernardino County Office of Education
Pasco, City of	San Diego Community College District
Peralta Community College District	San Diego County Office of Education
Peter A. Lendrum Associates	San Diego Law Library
Pine Ridge Elementary School District	San Diego City Unified School District
Pioneers Memorial Hospital	San Dieguito Union High School District
Pittsburg Unified School District	San Joaquin County Office of Education
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District	San Jose/Evergreen Community College District
Pleasant Valley School District	San Jose Unified School District
Point Arena Joint School Districts	San Juan Capistrano, City of
Pomona Unified School District	San Juan Unified School District
Portland Public Schools	San Lorenzo Valley Unified School District

San Luis Coastal Unified School District	South Orange County Community College District
San Luis Obispo County	Southwestern Community College District
San Luis Obispo County Community College Dist	Stockton Unified School District
San Luis Obispo County Office of Education	Sulphur Springs Union Elementary School District
San Marino Unified School District	Sunnyvale Elementary School District
San Mateo County Office of Education	Sutter County Office of Education
San Ramon Valley Unified School District	Sweetwater Union High School District
San Ysidro School District	Tacoma, City of
Sanger Unified School District	Taft, City of
Santa Ana Unified School District	Temple City Unified School District
Santa Barbara Community College District	Torrance Unified School District
Santa Barbara County Education Office	Tri-Cities Regional Occupation Program
Santa Barbara Elementary/High School Districts	Tulalip Indian Casino
Santa Clara County Office of Education	Tuolumne County Office of Education
Santa Clara Unified School District	Tustin Unified School District
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District	Union School District
Santa Maria-Bonita School District	Upland Unified School District
Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District	Valley Regional Occupational Program
Santa Paula Elementary School District	Ventura County Community College District
Santa Rosa Junior College	Ventura County President of Schools Office
Santa Rosa Unified School District	Ventura Unified School District
Santa Ynez Valley Unified School District	Victor Valley Community College District
School Excess Liability Fund	Victor Valley Union High School District
Sequoias, College of the	Vista Del Mar Union Elementary School District
Shasta County Office of Education	Walla Walla, City of
Shasta College	Weatherly Area School District
Shasta Union High School District	Weaver School District
Sierra Sands Unified School District	West Hills Community College District
Silver Valley Unified School District	Yolo County Office of Education
Solano Community College District	Yuba Community College District
Somis Union Elementary School District	
Sonoma County Office of Education	
South Bay Union School District	

**Appendix I: Impact of Work Survey**

Background Information:

This information will be used only to group the overall responses to this survey. Your individual responses will remain confidential.

**1. Position**

Full-Time Classified Staff.

Please indicate general job title (please do not list department)\_\_\_\_\_.

Is this a student serving position?  yes  no

Part-Time Classified Staff.

Please indicate general job title (please do not list department)\_\_\_\_\_.

Is this a student serving position?  yes  no

**2. Gender** (check the appropriate blank)

Male  Female

**3. Age** (check the appropriate blank)

18-27  28-37  38-47  48-57  58+

4. How many years (total) have you been employed at your district? \_\_\_\_\_



**Directions:** On a scale from 1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high, rate the following statements while thinking about the impact work has on your personal and professional lives.

1. **Work is an important source of meaning and happiness in my life.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
2. **I have found my “calling” in life through my work.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
3. **My current job is personally fulfilling.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
4. **My current job gives me a sense of physical safety.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
5. **My current job gives me a sense of belongingness and sociability.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
6. **There are people at my workplace I respect and admire.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
7. **I feel respected and appreciated at my job.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
8. **There is a mentor, “hero” or other individual at my work I learn from and try to emulate.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
9. **I am creatively challenged at my job.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
10. **I feel bored and stifled at my job.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
11. **I have had wonderful experiences at my job.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high
12. **My job is helping to make the world a better place.**  
1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, 5 = very high

I thank you for your participation in this survey.

If you completed every question on the survey, the researcher would like to ask you if you would be willing to volunteer to be interviewed in about a month's time or to participate in a focus group.

The researcher will choose 6 classified employees and 3 administrators and 3 certificated employees from Coronado Unified School District for a total of 12 interview participants.

Focus group participants will be limited to two groups (4-12 participants in each group).

Once the interview and focus group participants are selected, another email will be sent to chosen participants requesting participation in the interview and/or focus group process (those who were not chosen will also be notified by email).

If you agree to volunteer, please submit your name and contact information. Survey information of all individuals who participate in the survey, focus group or interview will be kept anonymous.

I am interested in participating (mark the appropriate blank)

Focus Group  Interview  Both - Focus Group and Interview

Name:

Email:

Phone Number:

Comments:

## References

- Avey, J. B., Luthans, F., Smith, R. M., & Palmer, N. F. (2010). Impact of positive psychological capital on employee well-being over time. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 15*(1), 17-28.
- Avey, J. B., Wernsing, T. S., & Luthans, F. (2008). Can positive employees help positive organizational change? Impact of psychological capital and emotions on relevant attitudes and behaviors. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 44*(1), 48-70. doi:10.1177/0021886307311470
- Bandura, A. (2000). Exercise of human agency through collective efficacy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science, 9*(3), 75-78.
- Bandura, A. (1993). Perceived self-efficacy in cognitive development and functioning. *Educational Psychologist, 28*(2), 117-148.
- Bandura, A. (1982). Self-efficacy mechanism in human agency. *American Psychologist, 37*(2), 122-147.
- Bauer, K. W. (2000). The front line: satisfaction of classified employees. *New Directions for Institutional Research, 105*, 87-97.
- Benne, K. D. (Dec. 1971). Book reviews. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 16*(4), 548-550.
- Brown, R. (2010, November). Brave thinkers: The educator Deborah Gist. *The Atlantic*, (Special Issue), 97.
- California Department of Education website, glossary of terms, <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/sd/cb/glossary.asp#c>
- California School Employees Association (2010). About Classified Employees. Retrieved from <http://members.csea.com/memberHome/AboutUs/AboutClassifiedEmployees/tabid/1092/>
- Coronado Unified School District Governing Board. *2010-2011 Governing Board Goals Aligned with the District Strategic Plan*. Brochure Coronado, California: Coronado Unified School District.

- Cameron, K. S., Bright, D., & Caza, A. (2004). Exploring the relationships between organizational virtuousness and performance. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 47(6), 766-790. doi:10.1177/0002764203260209
- Chan, W-Y., Lau, S., Nie, Y., Lim, S., & Hogan, D. (2008). Organizational and personal predictors of teacher commitment: The mediating role of teacher efficacy and identification with school. *American Educational Research Journal*, 45(3), 597-630. doi:10.3102/0002831208318259
- Chrispeels, J. (2004). *Learning to lead together: The promise and challenge of sharing leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Daly, A. J., & Chrispeels, J. (Spring 2005). From problem to possibility: Leadership for implementing and deepening the processes of effective schools. *Journal for Effective Schools*, 4(1), 7-25.
- Daly, A. J., Finnigan, K. S. (2010). A bridge between worlds: understanding network structure to understand change strategy. *Journal of Educational Change*, 11(2), 111-138. doi:10.1007/s10833-009-9102-5
- Davey, M. (July 27, 2011, Among twists in budget woes, tensions over teaching the deaf. *The New York Times*, pp. A1-A3.
- Denison, D. R., & Mishra, A. K. (1995). Toward a theory of organizational culture and effectiveness. *Organization Science*, 6(2), 204-223.
- Dutton, J. E. (2003). Breathing life into organizational studies. *Journal of Management Inquiry*, 12(1), 5-19. doi:10.1177/1056492602250515
- Elmore, R. F. (2000). *Building a new structure for school leadership*. The Albert Shanker Institute.
- Florida, R. (2002). *The rise of the creative class*. New York: Basic Books.
- Fogel, R. W. (2000). *The fourth great awakening & the future of egalitarianism*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Ford, J. D., & Ford, L. W. (July 1995). The role of conversations in producing intentional change in organizations. *The Academy of Management Review*, 20(3), 541-570.
- Fredrickson, B. (2004). The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions. *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B: Biological Sciences*, 44(1), 1367-1377. doi:10.1098/rstb.2004.1512

- Freire, Paulo. (2000). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York, NY: The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc.
- Fullan, M. (2008). *The six secrets of change*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Gardner, D. G., & Pierce, J. L. (1998). Self-esteem and self-efficacy within the organizational context: An empirical examination. *Group & Organization Management*, 23(48) doi:10.1177/1059601198231004
- Goddard, R. D., Howy, W. & Hoy, A. (2004). Collective efficacy beliefs: theoretical developments, empirical evidence, and future directions. *Educational Researcher*, 33(3), 3-13.
- Gruman, J. A., & Saks, A. M. (2010). Performance management and employee engagement. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1-14. doi:10.1016/j.hrmr.2010.09.004
- Harvey, T. R., & Drolet, B. (1994). *Building teams, building people*. Lancaster, Pennsylvania: Technomic.
- Hennig-Thurau, T., & Hansen, U. (2000). Relationship marketing – Some reflections on the state-of-the art of the relational concept. In *Relationship marketing: Gaining competitive advantage through customer satisfaction and customer retention* (pp. 3-27). Berlin/Heidelberg: Springer.
- Herold, D. M., & Fedor, D. B. (2008). *Leading change management*. United States of America: Stanford Business Books.
- Herr, K., & Anderson, G. L. (2005). *The Action Research Dissertation: A Guide for Students and Faculty*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications.
- Hoffman, E., Simon, J., & Ortiz, F. (2008). Enhancing Employee Engagement: A Validation Study in Venezuela. *International Human Resources Information Management Journal*, 12(5), 21-27.
- Hoffman, E., Sogliano, F., & Ortiz, F. (2009). Enhancing Employee Engagement: A Validation Study in Italy. *International Human Resources Information Management Journal*, 13(3), 44-51.
- Hoy, W. K., Tarter, J. C., & Hoy, A. W. (2006). Academic optimism of schools: A force for student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 43(3), 425-446.
- Judge, T. A., & Bono, J. E. (2001). Relationship of core self-evaluations traits-self-esteem, generalized self-efficacy, locus of control, and emotional stability - with

- job satisfaction and job performance: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(1), 80-92.
- Judge, T. A., Bono, J. E., Patton, G. K., Thoresen, C. J. (2001) The Job Satisfaction-Job Performance Relationship: A Qualitative and Quantitative Review. *Psychological Bulletin*, 127(3), 376-407.
- Kegan, R., & Lahey, L. (2010, April). New help for closing the knowing-doing gap. Retrieved from <http://www.gse.harvard.edu/blog/uk/2010/04/new-help-for-closing-the-knowing-doing-gap.html>
- Kirby, S. L., Greaves, L., & Reid, C. (2006). *Experience Research Social Change: Methods Beyond the Mainstream*. Ontario, Canada: Broadview Press.
- Knowles, M. S., Holton III, E. F., & Swanson, R. A. (1973). *The Adult Learner*. Massachusetts: Elsevier.
- Learning to lead together* (2004). In Chrispeels J. H. (Ed.), Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publication.
- Locke, E. A. (1969). What is job satisfaction? *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 4, 309-336.
- Losada, M., & Heaphy, E. (2004). The role of positivity and connectivity in the performance of business teams: A nonlinear dynamics model. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 47(6), 740-765. doi:10.1177/0002764203260208
- Luthans, F., & Youssef, C. M. (2007). Emerging positive organizational behavior. *Journal of Management*, 33, 321-349. doi:10.1177/0149206307300814
- Maher, F. A., & Tetreault, M. K. T. (2001). *The Feminist Classroom: Dynamics of Gender, Race, and Privilege*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield Publisher, Inc.
- Marshak, R. J., & Grant, D. (2008). Organizational discourse and new organization development practices. *British Journal of Management*, 19, S7-S19. doi:10.1111/j.1467-8551.2008.00567.x
- Mathison, M. (August 4, 2011). The time has come for me to retire. *Rolling Stone*, (1136), 55.
- Morgan, G. (2006). *Images of organization*. Thousand Oaks, California: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Mowday, R. T., & Steers, R. M. (1979). The Measurement of Organizational Commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 14, 224-247.
- Morrell, M., & Capparell, S. (2001). *Shackleton's way*. United States of America: Viking Penguin.
- O'Leary, B. S., Lindholm, M. L., Whitford, R. A. & Freeman, S. E. (Fall 2002). Selecting the Best and Brightest: Leveraging Human Capital. *Human Resource Management*, 41(3), 325-340.
- Parker, S. K. (1998). Enhancing role breadth self-efficacy: The roles of job enrichment and other organizational interventions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83(6), 835-852.
- Pascale, R. T., & Sternin, J. (May 2005). Your company's secret change agents. *Harvard Business Review*, 73-81.
- Pfeffer, J., & Sutton, R. I. (2000). The knowing doing gap. Retrieved from [http://www.vedpuriswar.org/book\\_review/The%20Knowing%20Doing%20Gap.pdf](http://www.vedpuriswar.org/book_review/The%20Knowing%20Doing%20Gap.pdf)
- Rich, M. (September 7, 2010) Trend in Temp Hiring Doesn't Bode Well for Overall Jobs Picture. New York Times. [http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/09/07/trend-in-temp-hiring-doesnt-bode-well-for-overall-jobs-picture/?ref=motoko\\_rich](http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/09/07/trend-in-temp-hiring-doesnt-bode-well-for-overall-jobs-picture/?ref=motoko_rich)
- Rich, M. (September 19, 2010) For the Unemployed Over 50, Fears of Never Working Again. New York Times. <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/09/20/business/economy/20older.html>
- Ripley, A. (December 2010). Your children left behind. *The Atlantic*, 94-98.
- Roberts, L. M., Spreitzer, G., Dutton, J., Quinn, R., Heaphy, E., & Barker, B. (January 2005). How to play to your strengths. *Harvard Business Review*, 1-6.
- Rousseau, D. M. (1977). Technological differences in job characteristics, employee satisfaction, and motivations: A synthesis of job design research and sociotechnical systems theory. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 19, 18-42.
- Saari, L. M., & Judge, T.A. (2004). Employee Attitudes and Job Satisfaction. *Human Resource Management*, 43(1), 395-407.
- Sadler, B. L. (2010, April). *Framing the possible: lessons for education from Institute for Healthcare Improvement*. Powerpoint presented at the meeting of The Carnegie Foundation WestEd Forum, San Francisco, California.

- Salzberg, C. L., & Morgan, J. (1995). *Preparing Teachers to Work with Paraeducators. Teacher Education and Special Education, 18*(1), 49-55.
- Schein, E. H. (1984). Coming to New Awareness of Organizational Culture. *Sloan Management Review, 25*(2), 3-16.
- Schein, E. H. (2010). *Organizational culture and leadership*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Seligman, M., & Steen, T. A. (2005). Positive psychology progress: Empirical validation of interventions. *American Psychologist, 60*(5), 410-421.
- Spreitzer, G. M., & Sonenshein, S. (2004). Toward the construct definition of positive deviance. *American Behavioral Scientist, 47*(6), 828-847.
- Stajkovic, A. D., & Luthans, F. (1998). Self-efficacy and work-related performance: A meta analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 124*(2), 240-261.
- Sternin, J., & Choo, R. (2000). The power of positive deviancy. *Harvard Business Review, 14-15*.
- Takacs, D. (Winter 2002). Positionality, Epistemology, and Social Justice. *Social Justice, 29*(4), 168-181.
- Tierney, P., & Farmer, S. M. (December 2002). Creative self-efficacy: Its potential antecedents and relationship to creative performance. *The Academy of Management Journal, 45*(6), 1137-1148.
- Turner, N., Barlin, J., & Zacharatos, A. (2002). Positive psychology at work. In C. R. Snyder & S. J. Lopez, eds., *The handbook of positive psychology* (pp.715-728). New York: Oxford University Press.
- U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement, National Center for Education Statistics. (August 1998). *Public School Student, Staff and Graduate Counts by State, School Year 1996-97*, (NCES 98-219). Washington D.C. Statistics in Brief National Center for Education Statistics.
- Usher, E. L., & Pajares, F. (2008). Sources of self-efficacy in school: Critical review of the literature and future directions. *Review of Educational Research, 78*, 751-796. doi:10.3102/0034654308321456
- Vongalis-Macrow, A. (2007, November). *The knowledge-doing gap: A theoretical perspective on developing eco agency through education*. Paper presented at the meeting of Australian Association for Research in Education, Freemantle, Western Australia. Retrieved from <http://www.aare.edu.au/07pap/von07497.pdf>



- Weick, K. (1979). *The social psychology of organization*. New York: Random House.
- Wheatley, M. J. (1999). *Leadership and the new science* (Second ed.). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.
- Wright, T. A. (2003). Positive organizational behavior: An idea whose time has truly come. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, (24), 437-442. doi:10.002/job.197
- Xanthopoulou, D., Bakker, A. B., Demerouti, E., & Schaufeli, W. B. (2009). Reciprocal relationships between job resources, personal resources, and work engagement. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 74, 235-244.
- Xiabo, L. (2012). *No Enemies, No Hatred*. Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press.