
Saint Louis Public Schools

Human Resources Strategic Support Team Overview



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February 28, 2023

Commendations

Commendations



- ❑ Employee Relations services are highly regarded by district staff.
 - ❑ The department has created a 90-day "boot camp" to cross-train staff.
 - ❑ The department is focused on recruiting teachers who better represent student demographics by offering incentives that pay student teaching, pipeline programs for career advancement, master's degree tuition reimbursements, and relocation assistance.
 - ❑ The CHRO has developed a working environment (e.g., mental check-ins, open door policy) in which staff has a "sense of belonging."
 - ❑ Creating the Interim Learning Associate (ILA) and Building Learning Associate (BLA) positions was a creative temporary solution to the current teacher vacancies.
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Leadership and Management Findings

Key Findings – Leadership & Management



- ❑ The team heard a lack of customer service, responsiveness, and follow-through from some HR teams. To illustrate --
 - With high turnover, there was a lack of consistency, transparent processes, and stakeholder input.
 - ❑ The district failed to implement all components of an Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system scheduled for finance in 2018 and HR and Payroll in 2019. According to staff interviewed, this created unanticipated inefficiencies.
 - ❑ Employees reported that additional responsibilities were frequently added to existing positions, and job studies were not conducted to determine if a salary adjustment was needed to compensate for the new assignments.
 - ❑ Principals interviewed rated the overall effectiveness of the HR Department a 3.1 on a scale of 1 to 10
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Key Findings – Leadership & Management



- ❑ The team heard that while most new site administrators came from within the system, no internal program identifies, prepares, and develops future administrators so they can exhibit professional maturity.

 - ❑ On many occasions, the team heard that staff could not perform the jobs they were hired for or listed in their job descriptions. For example –
 - One staff member stated that they could only spend 35% to 40% of their time on the critical work they were hired to do because they are continuously called to help support other functions; and

 - Employees reported that some policies and procedure guides date back to the 1990s or 2000s.
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Organization Findings

Key Findings

- ❑ The team did not hear evidence of clearly established roles and responsibilities, formalized cross-training opportunities, or an established succession plan, which negatively impacted the ability of staff to perform their job duties effectively and efficiently.
 - ❑ There was a lack of business practices and structures to ensure service coverage.
 - ❑ A siloed mentality within and between departments has created a gap in communication and services supporting school sites.
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Operations Findings

Key Findings - Operations

- ❑ The team heard that there is no clear understanding of how the salary schedules apply or how employees are assigned a starting salary, which has created a perception of inequities in pay.
 - ❑ The reliance on manual data entry forces HR staff to be focused mainly on transactional and labor-intensive processes and does not allow time to focus on strategic planning.
 - ❑ The district does not have a systemwide enterprise resource planning (ERP).
 - ❑ The HR department does not use metrics or key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure performance as a baseline to evaluate and improve core functions that meet published goals.
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Key Findings - Operations

- ❑ The department lacks an integrated system and relies on individuals to process critical business functions that can be disrupted due to high employee turnover and absenteeism.
 - ❑ There is no identifiable system for information retrieved from exit interviews to be shared with principals, network superintendents, or deputies.
 - ❑ There is a lack of consistent processes and procedures in onboarding, salary placement, and training.
 - ❑ The team heard that the applicant tracking system is inefficient, creates competition amongst schools, and does not provide users with data or reports to aid high-volume hiring.
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Recommendations

Recommendations



1. Continue to move the Human Resources Department forward by setting a laser-clear focus on customer service and efficiency by ensuring the following activities are implemented through –
 - a. Convening, with a sense of urgency, ongoing discussions to analyze the findings and recommendations identified in this management letter and any previous reviews, audits, or reports.
 - b. Developing a realistic five-year department strategic plan that is laser-focused on customer needs.
 - c. Shifting emphasis away from transactional activities to a vision of proactivity, fully leveraging current HR technologies
 - d. Refining HR department-wide policies and procedures
 2. Eliminate any over-reliance on a single person to complete specific job functions by establishing succession planning and cross-training within the department to ensure knowledge transfer and the orderly transition of responsibilities.
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Recommendations



3. Implement a systematic review, evaluation, and reconstruction of the department's teacher recruitment program. Ensure that a representative group of school site administrators and labor partners are at the table and that the following activities are incorporated into the reconstructed program –
 - a. Developing and funding a realistic recruitment and marketing budget
 - b. Identifying and filling appropriate seasonal staffing needs to ensure that SLPS is well-represented at job fairs and university/college recruitment opportunities.
 - c. Updating annual marketing and recruiting master plans

 4. Build a strategic and coordinated districtwide professional development plan to increase organizational coherence and employee value. This plan, to be championed by the Human Resources Department, will have all impacted stakeholder groups at the table.
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Recommendations



5. Convene, with considerable urgency, a team of appropriate stakeholders (i.e., Human Resource Services Department for HR information; Budget Department for budget development and funding for possible procurement and training; Payroll Department for payroll-related data; the Finance Department for salary and benefit projections; and Technology Services for guidance and support) to –
 - a. Determine the viability and a cost-benefit analysis of bringing unused modules (position control, budget development processing, staffing, and attendance management) online or procuring newer systems, especially an automated onboarding tracking system so principals and other administrative staff can observe where candidates are in the onboarding process; and
 - b. Clarify and document to strengthen the district's position control process. This documentation shall include flowcharts and who "owns" each step in the process to ensure that no positions can be added without approved funding in place.
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Recommendations



6. Continue to strengthen stakeholder communication activities to enhance HR services by implementing meaningful communication outreach with regular meetings with Network and Associate Superintendents, school principals (or a representative group), budget and payroll staff, appropriate IT staff, and other appropriate leadership staff to identify opportunities for improved communication, rebuilding trust, and eliminating existing information islands and siloed environments.

 7. Create opportunities to invite and confer with internal and external stakeholders to provide input and analyze potential outcomes for establishing and staffing with cross functionally trained personnel; streamlining the online application procedure; and implementing programs to measure the degree to which the Human Resource Services Department provides responsive, results-oriented services and meets the needs of its customers.
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Recommendations



8. Monitor turnover rates, establish exit interview protocols for all employees that voluntarily separate from SLPS, and identify and track the causes of leaving for opportunities to make or recommend policy changes.
9. Develop a comprehensive plan to boost employee retention and provide opportunities for employees at all levels to enhance their skills and learn industry best practices.
10. Require the CHRO to be at the table to serve as an expert resource for any human capital impact when the district's instructional leadership evaluates, considers, or determines –
 - a. Potential school closures,
 - b. Enrollment decline and unused classroom seat options,
 - c. The most effective use (and return on investment) of teachers not assigned to classrooms, and
 - d. Incorporating "right-sizing" or "leveling" classrooms after the first state-wide enrollment count to ensure the most appropriate use of teaching resources.

Recommendations



11. Conduct a comprehensive study to determine appropriate staffing levels and future funding needs for all functions in the new HR organization;
 12. Develop concise reporting relationships with clearly defined job titles, roles, and position (job) descriptions to provide a realistic portrayal of duties, responsibilities, expectations, accountabilities, and reporting lines that represent the core functions of the HR organization and its focus on customer service; and
 13. Maximize opportunities for cross-training, capacity building, and promotability within and between HR operational units.
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SLPS Action Plan



- 3 Phase Approach
 - The HR Team is working with key stakeholders to implement a 3 phase approach to the recommendations
 - **Phase 1** – quick win matters that can be address prior to start of 2023/2024 school year
 - July 30, 2023
 - Example: Institute principals `focus group with monthly meetings and reporting
 - **Phase 2** – matters that are dependent on phase 1 and/or that require 1 year and/or less to complete
 - June 30, 2024 –
 - Example: Automating and optimizing current systems
 - **Phase 3** – matters that are dependent on phase 2 completion and/or require more than a year complete
 - June 30, 2027
 - Example: identify and implement new ERP system
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SLPS Action Plan



- Each finding and recommendation is currently being tracked to monitor progress. The document may be accessed at the following link.
 - [Key Findings and Recommendations Spreadsheet and timeline 2.2.23.xlsx](#)
 - We will use the spreadsheet and tentative timeline to work with the CGCS, an appropriate facilitator and key stakeholders to finalize a strategic plan that we will be published and followed as the blueprint for HR success and excellence.
 - Tentatively July 30, 2023
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Thank You Questions and Answers
