



Educational  
Service District 112

# Feedback from Agency Culture Focus Groups

From the pages of data collected from the focus groups, following are the most significant themes that rose to the top.

## What Matters Most to People

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- Equity, consistency and respect
- Balanced workloads and opportunities for more time off
- Flexibility in schedules
- Positive relationships with managers and co-workers
- Good communication with, and praise from, supervisors
- Communication regarding agency matters
- Opportunities to learn and advance within the ESD
- Financial support for education and training
- Wellness activities
- Agency events (examples: End of Year Celebration, Hootenanny, All-Staff meetings, Holiday Party, ESD Connects Activities)
- Compensation
- Kudos for job well done
- Jeans day

# Drilling down: Feedback from the FOUR priority concepts

## Communication

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### *What is working:*

1. GO ESD
2. ESD Connects
3. Weekly meetings with supervisor
4. Team meetings
5. Information from other departments
6. Emails from Tim

### *Where can we improve:*

1. Cabinet/agency/department updates (weekly)
2. Advanced notice/planning
3. Face-to face communication with Tim (Tim talks)
4. Weekly email update
5. Standard communication protocols across agency
6. GO ESD (use more)
7. More team meetings
8. More information from other departments
9. Make cabinet aware of the work being done
10. Acknowledgements/sharing work and accomplishments
11. All supervisors examine research and come up with plan to make change in departments
12. Top down decision making vs. hearing what employees want
13. Consistent expectations, consistent implementation

## Taking Care of Employees

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### ***What is working:***

1. Connects activities
2. Kudos
3. Flexibility in hours
4. Jeans
5. Face time with supervisors
6. Friendly co-workers
7. Acknowledgement of work
8. Supervisor support
9. Internal PD classes

### ***Where can we improve:***

1. Diversity
2. Equitable access to training
3. Communication
4. Department retreats
5. Comparable equal pay
6. Pay incentives for longevity
7. Professional learning opportunities
8. Transparency/input from employees
9. Trust employees to get work done
10. Flex schedule – some are allowed flexibility and some are not

## Work Life Balance

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### ***What is working:***

1. Flexible work hours and schedules
2. Increased support for self-care (walks, breaks and socializing)
3. Front loaded sick leave and 2 days personal leave
4. Wellness activities – mindful minutes, walks, flex schedules for fitness
5. Staff sharing at meetings and less micro managing / supporting each other
6. Supportive leadership with less micro managing

7. Social work events – games at all staff day and fun agency events

***Where can we improve:***

1. Workloads and work expectations are too high / unrealistic
2. Stop 40+ hour work weeks and work on weekends
3. Plan and staff up – workload should represent capacity
4. Communication - follow through on plans and keep employees up to date
5. Provide equitable training / professional development
6. Address gossip (positive and negative)
7. Train and foster supportive leaders and co-workers
8. Communicate ESD role better to districts
9. Provide flexible schedules for family needs
10. Balance coverage issues for flex time use
11. Reduce paperwork redundancies
12. Work space – cleaner bathrooms, temperature control, space self-reflection
13. More notice about work parties

***What employees would like to see:***

1. Regular breaks
2. More prep time
3. Opportunities for job sharing
4. Allowed to bring pets to work
5. Enhanced paid vacations for part-time employees
6. Mental health days, more sick time for personal issues, more personal days
7. Allowed to combine break time with lunch time
8. Accommodate more part-time and summer schedules
9. Increased use of flex schedules - for appointments and personal needs
10. Year round flexible schedules with options for 4-10 hr day and 7 to 4 vs 8 to 5
11. Work from home - telecommute
12. More early release
13. Allow vacation to build to allow for 3-month sabbatical every 5 years

14. Improved coverage for people with set schedules
15. More Commit to Fit during the 8:00 – 5:00 work hour
16. Group breaks, walks, snack breaks
17. Yoga and other additional group classes
18. Thirty minute fitness classes with gym/shower area
19. Contract with an off-site gym
20. Adequate sub support; sub finder
21. Wiki site to share common resources
22. Off-site retreats for employees
23. Improved collective work space – nice patio area, lunch room, enhanced café
24. Reflective practice for all teaching positions
25. Support when deadlines aren't met – not made to feel bad
26. More money and paid opportunities for training/PD
27. Agency pay cost for required certifications or training that's needed for job

## Succession Planning

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### ***What employees need to learn and grow personally and professionally:***

1. Increased access to internal resources – job shadowing and cross training
2. Mentors
3. Time and support for learning with and from others
4. Training opportunities through a variety of sources
5. Internal and external trainers, on-line or in person, various topics
6. Flexibility and adjustments in work schedules
7. Information and good communication about opportunities
8. Increased resources – time, money and offerings

### ***What employees need to pursue opportunities to grow and advance:***

1. Knowledge and understanding of job requirements
2. Career pathways – how to get from current job to a more advanced one
3. Training and education

4. Funds for training and education
5. Information regarding the amount and availability of funds
6. Mentors
7. Supportive managers and organizational leadership
8. Advanced planning
9. Communication in many forms and many times
10. Information about job opportunities and requirements

***Where can we improve:***

1. Develop career pathways
2. Regularly inform employees of job openings – emails and goESD
3. Educate employees regarding different job requirements
4. Fund tuition and training
5. Provide transparent and equitable access to funds for tuition/training
6. Communication regarding access to funds
7. Engage in strategic planning at department and individual employee level