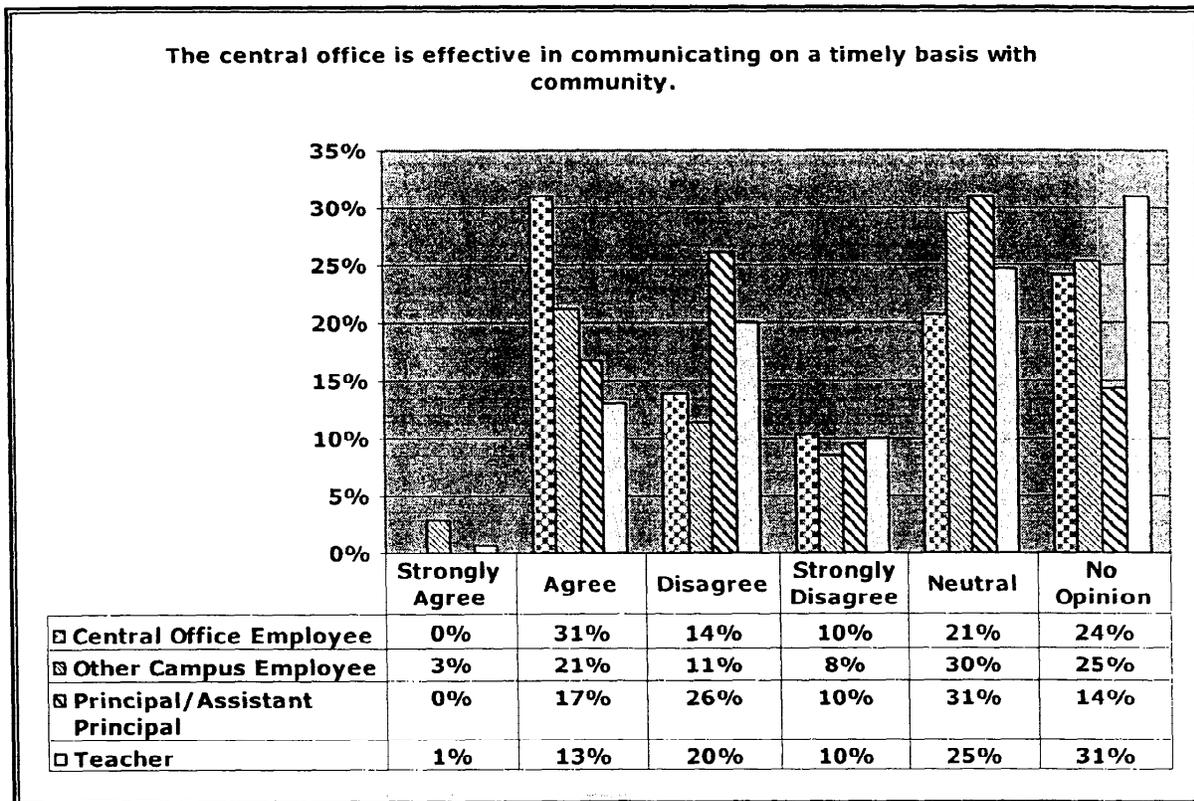


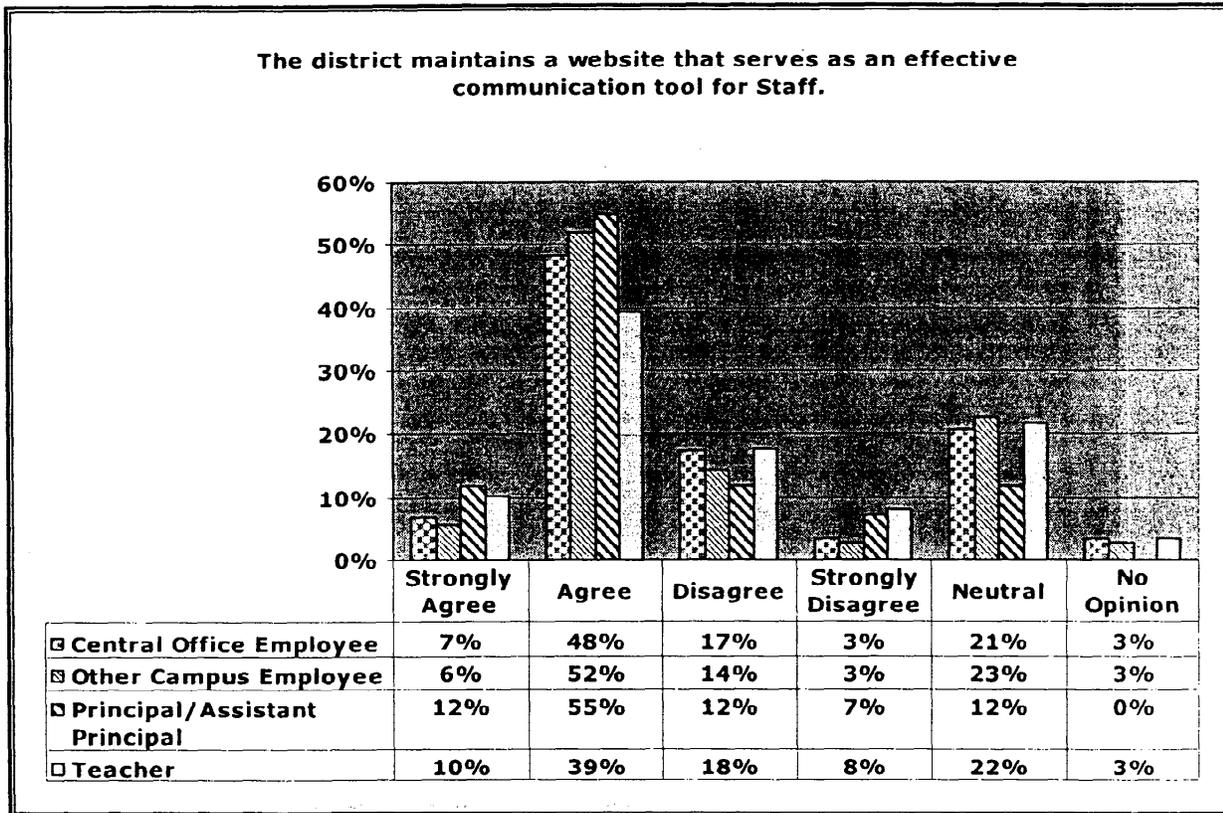
**Exhibit 2-18
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
External Communications**



The responses regarding varied by employee groups on both internal and external communications, although there were more negative than positive responses in most instances. Teacher responses may be explained in part by the email issue described earlier in this section.

Most Pasadena USD employees agreed that the District website is an effective communication tool for the District staff. **Exhibit 2-19** shows that employee responses were fairly consistent across employee groups. A separate question was asked about the effectiveness of the website as a communication tool for the "community" - employee responses were similar although slightly less favorable.

**Exhibit 2-19
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
District Website**



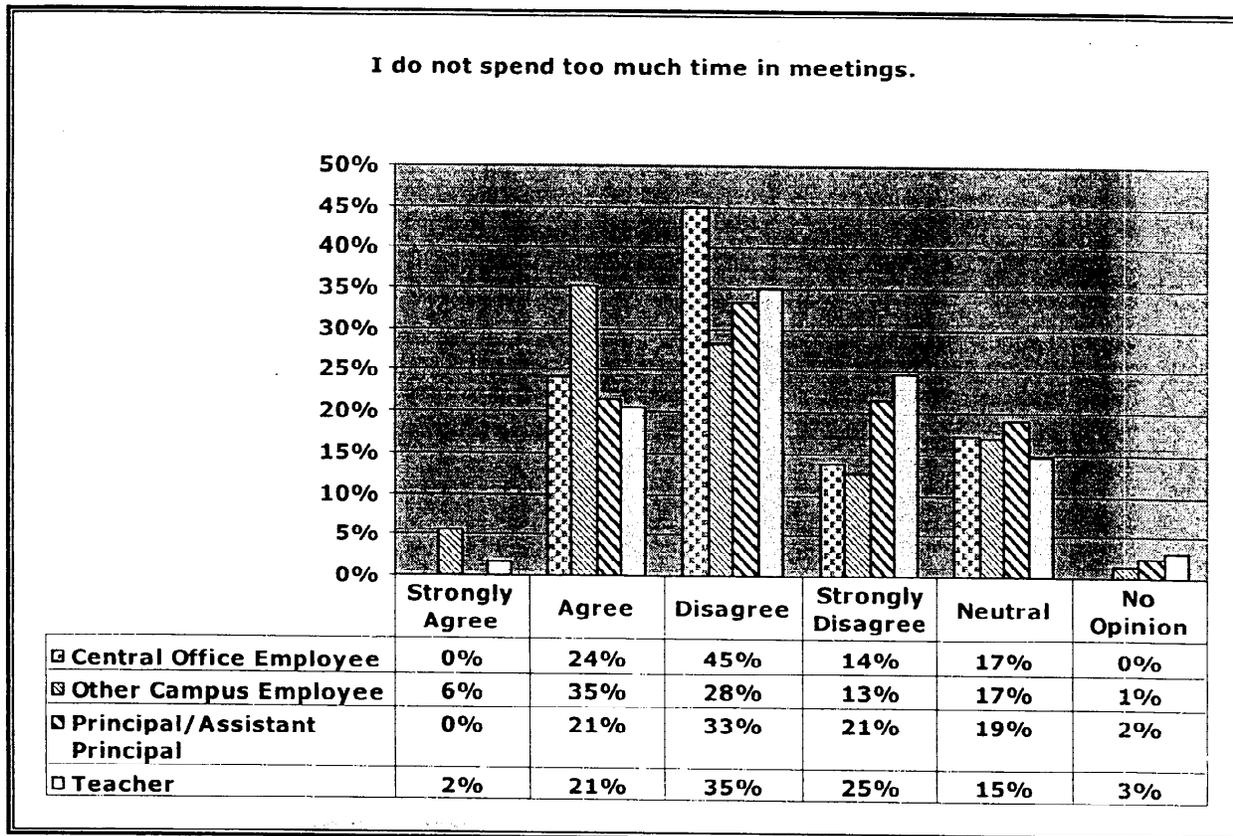
Recommendation 2-13: Upgrade the District’s phone system to VOIP.

Interviews with District and school staff indicated that the District is having various problems with its phone systems at school sites. Most school districts throughout the country have upgraded their aging telephone systems to Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP) technology. VOIP uses the District current network infrastructure (as opposed to telephone lines) to carry voice communications. This allows the District to consolidate and better manage its investments in communications and technology. Since VOIP is digital, the quality of communications is also better. Pasadena USD uses an outdated analog system that is limiting the effectiveness and efficiency of District communications. An upgrade to VOIP is mentioned in the technology priority project list for 2006-07.

Recommendation 2-14: Reconstitute all recurring staff meetings and establish standard for ad-hoc meetings.

Meetings represent another means of communicating information. However, in many instances meetings are conducted only to share information that could be transmitted via email or other means. **Exhibit 2-20** presents employee responses to a survey question regarding time spent in meetings. More employees believe that too much time is spent on meetings, particularly Central Office employees.

**Exhibit 2-20
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Meeting Time**



During campus site visits, several Principals expressed concerns about meeting time that pulls them off campus. Many of these meetings are "on-demand" and do not allow time for sufficient planning.

Stakeholder Input

Stakeholder input is important to any decision-making process. Stakeholder representatives should be involved in evaluating viable options for decisions, and once decisions are made, stakeholders should either serve on the implementation team or be communicated with to ensure a smoother implementation.

Pasadena USD has included stakeholders on its major decisions regarding facilities, standards-based curriculum, and other initiatives. However, for many lower level decisions at the Central Office and schools, stakeholders are frequently omitted from the decision-making process and the communication loop during implementation.

Examples of stakeholders not being included at the school level are described below:

- **Changing lunch schedule.** A leadership team at one school decided to change the lunch schedule for the school. The decision resulted in several complications because

neither the food service staff nor the custodial staff was consulted about the decision.

- **Planting trees.** A decision as simple as planting a tree can create difficulties for schools if not done right. At one school, a decision was made to plant a tree. The decision was made without consulting stakeholders that could be affected by the decision, including the maintenance and grounds staff, and warehousing. As a result, the tree impeded the delivery of goods to the school by limiting the truck's access to the delivery area, and the tree was planted to close to water and sewer lines.

Recommendation 2-15: Identify and include decision stakeholders in the decision-making process and the communication loop upon implementation.

This recommendation can be implemented as a procedural extension of the recommendation to adopt a single decision-making framework made earlier in the report. For each decision identified in that framework, internal and external stakeholder types should be identified and listed for each decision in a documented procedure. When decisions are being made at any level in the organization, this procedure can be used as a checklist to ensure that all stakeholder groups are appropriately included in the decision-making process and in communications throughout implementation.

Implementation of Decisions

Once decisions are made, with the necessary communication, planning and project management is applied to effectively implement the decision and monitor the results. The cycle repeats itself as subsequent data and measures are analyzed to determine if the decision is having the desired impact. The quality of implementation at Pasadena USD is more dependent on the person rather than the structured process. Some recommendations were well planned, well managed and stakeholders were informed throughout the process. Other decisions - in some cases because of the short time between decisions and implementation - did not receive adequate planning or project management time to ensure a successful implementation.

Recommendation 2-16: Adopt formal project management techniques and train project managers.

Project management training is available through sources outside public education. For certain types of decisions or initiatives, such as technology, there are certification programs for project management.

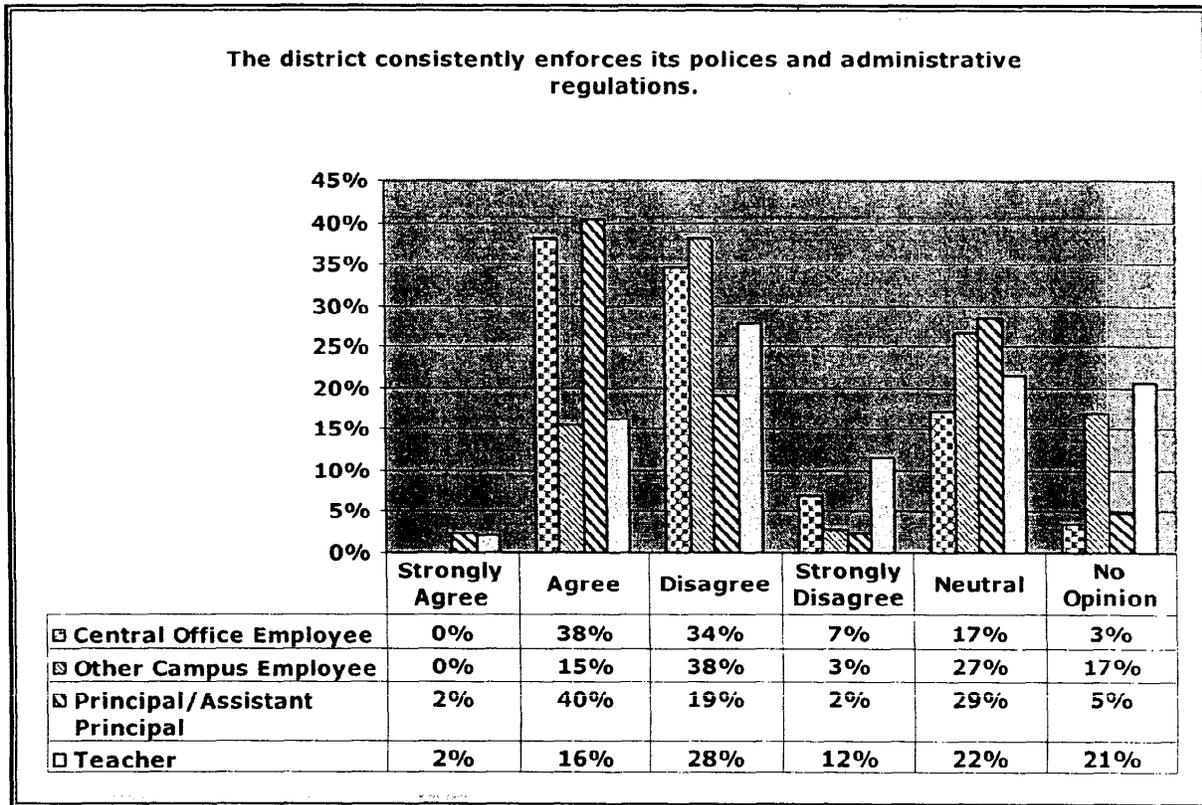
Procedures and Controls

Procedures and controls provide guidance to employees on how they conduct their work in a manner that ensures compliance with applicable laws and regulations and that safeguards District assets. An example of a control is the segregation of duties between employees that have access to District assets, such as equipment, and employees that have access to the accounting records for tracking equipment.

Each year the District is subject to a financial audit by an accounting firm, and the audit includes a review of the District's internal control environment. The purpose of this study is not to duplicate this work, but rather to look at procedures and controls that affect the decision-making process.

Pasadena USD employees are split in their perceptions of how consistently the District enforces its policies and administrative regulations. **Exhibit 2-21** presents the results by employee group. Teachers and other campus employees showed the lowest positive responses at approximately 15 percent, less than one-half of the positive responses expressed by Central Office staff and school leaders. This may indicate procedural and training issues at the schools.

**Exhibit 2-21
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Enforcement of Policies**



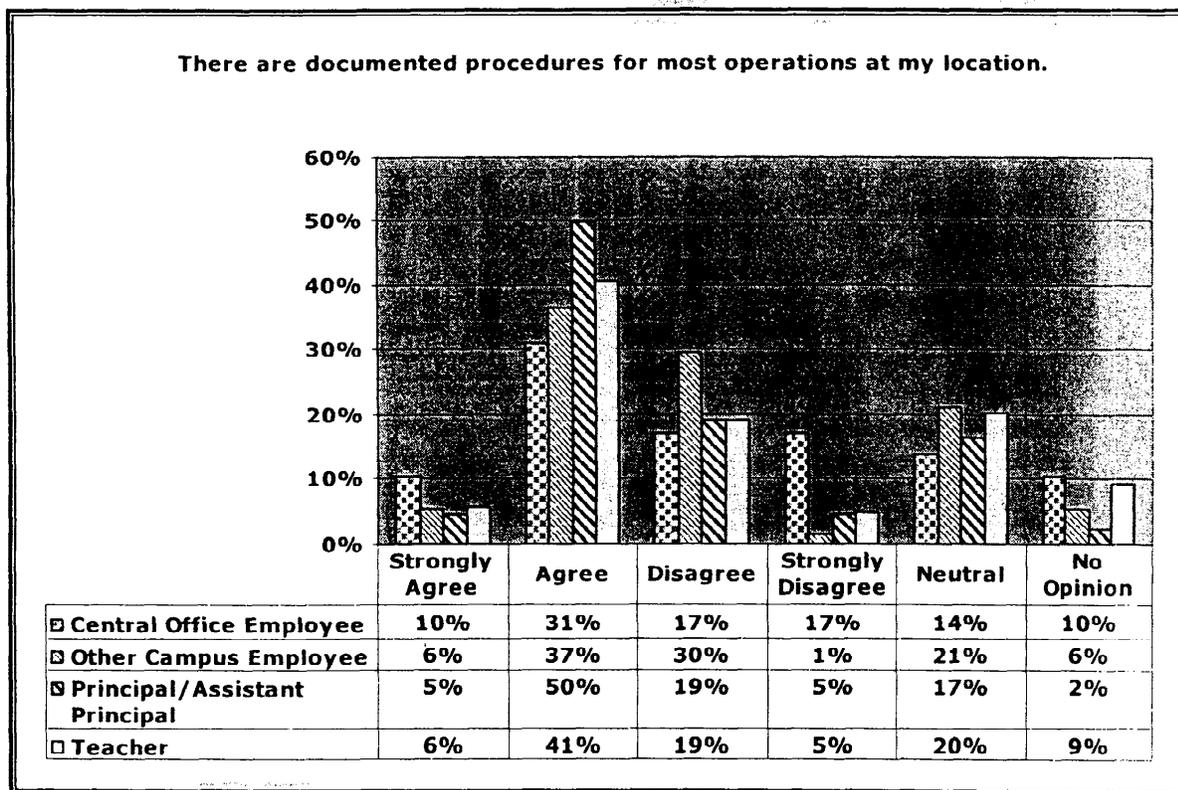
The District does not have a clearly defined quality control process to catch errors or make corrections in District information systems. Below are examples of data integrity concerns:

- **Position Control** – the budget department struggles with keeping accurate staffing numbers due to insufficient data systems. Deficiencies of these information systems are discussed earlier in this chapter.
- **Reports** – Also because of management information system issues, data may be different each time reports are run. Staff spends significant time to verify the data to ensure it is accurate.
- **Enrollment** – Based on input from several sources, enrollment numbers shown on the Student Information System do not reflect the actual number of students for each school. The Budget Department uses this system to project staffing for the budget.

- Payroll – Staff is not being paid timely for summer work and professional development. At the time of the management audit team site work of November, staff stated that they have not been paid for this past summer work and professional development.
- Payroll – staff stated that errors were made regarding longevity payments. It is also possible that there are inconsistencies in calculating longevity payments for part-time employees.

Most Pasadena USD employees stated that there were documented procedures for the operations at their location, as shown is **Exhibit 2-22**. Based on information obtained by the review team, many of the documented procedures are outdated or incomplete. Each department is responsible for maintaining its own documented procedures.

**Exhibit 2-22
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Documented Procedures**



Job descriptions were also found to be outdated and/or incomplete. Pasadena USD has a job description for a PBX operator. This position description title and related functions are obsolete. For classified employees, the burden of getting a job description updated is often left with the employee, who will do so to get the position appropriately upgraded and compensated. Some classified employees do not want to initiate the process because of the time and effort involved, and continue to perform duties that are not reflected in the job description except through "other duties as defined." Classified hiring practices and the Personnel Commission are discussed in a separate chapter of this report.

Job descriptions for some senior management positions are also out of date or non-existent. The lack of current and complete job descriptions impairs the ability to hold individuals accountable for performance.

Another weakness in procedures and controls involves performance evaluations. Performance evaluations are not conducted for all staff, and others are done very infrequently or late. For some positions, the employment contract requires evaluations every two or three years. Examples of deficiencies in performance evaluations are presented below:

- One Principal indicated that the previous year's Principal had conducted only one evaluation of staff that year.
- One director position at the Central Office state that she has not been evaluated in six years.
- One Teacher specialist stated that she was evaluated last in 1999-2000 at the campus and has not been evaluated since.

This frequency of performance evaluation is insufficient to hold individuals accountable for performance against annual goals and objectives. Individuals interviewed during this study – at schools and the Central Office - also perceived that poor performing or incapable employees are not terminated. This is also symptomatic of an inadequate performance evaluation process.

Other examples of procedure weaknesses or lapses in control include:

- Employees not following the chain of command, and in some cases going directly to Board members on matters that should be dealt with by their supervisor or the next position up on the organization chart.
- Employee concerns regarding missing computers and equipment at closed schools. There is concern that some of the equipment was stolen.
- Some schools have not received student records of transferred students. If any of these students have special requirements documented in these files, particularly medical requirements, there is not assurance that the current school has the information it needs make decisions or provide services to the student.

The Fiscal & Crisis Management Assistance Team conducted a Business Services Review of Pasadena USD in late 2005 and made many recommendations that appear to still be relevant today. These include:

- Provide adequate and appropriate training
- Review and update all job descriptions
- Consider designation of an internal auditor
- Review position control system
- Hold department managers accountable
- Develop procedures manuals

Recommendation 2-17: Update and document all operating procedures and job descriptions.

Job descriptions should reflect the current duties and responsibilities assigned to the position, and should contain specific, measurable performance objectives to support an evaluation of performance. Procedures should be documented initially through process maps to better understand and communicate the processes that run across the organization. The development of job descriptions, process maps and procedures should be done in concert with each other to ensure internal consistency. These documents can be used to support improved internal training, as well as to identify process deficiencies and opportunities for streamlining and automation.

Recommendation 2-18: Prepare performance evaluations annually for all personnel.

Performance evaluations need to be conducted at the same frequency as District goals are established. Currently this is done annually. Performance evaluations should meet all minimum legal and contractual requirements, and also be used to support accountability for performance.

CHAPTER 3: PERSONNEL COMMISSION AND CLASSIFIED STAFF RECRUITMENT

BACKGROUND

The Personnel Commission is a separate legal entity that provides services on behalf of the District in connection with the recruitment and hiring process of classified employees. The objective of this review was to evaluate the processes applied by District and Personnel Commission employees and identify possible areas for improvement. An overview of findings and recommendations is provided below.

- For several reasons, the Pasadena USD Classified Human Resources (HR) Department does not work effectively with the Personnel Commission. The Classified HR Department should take primary responsibility for improving the coordination and communication between the two entities in order to increase their collective effectiveness. Communication with current and prospective employees also needs to be improved and better coordinated.
- Pasadena USD management does not believe that the current process is yielding the highest quality candidates, and efforts are sometimes made to circumvent the process. The two most significant factors influencing quality are outdated job descriptions and a highly paper-intensive and lengthy recruitment process. Both Pasadena USD and the Personnel Commission share responsibility to streamline the process and improve its results.
- Pasadena USD and the Personnel Commission should adopt a governance philosophy applied by other California school districts that provides better coordination between the two entities and accountability to the Pasadena USD Board of Trustees. Basset USD provides an example of a best practice that Pasadena USD can follow.

The Pasadena Unified School District (Pasadena USD) is a merit system District under Article 6 of the California Education Code. The merit system was adopted at Pasadena USD in January of 1979 by a 70.1 percent affirmative vote of the eligible non-certificated employees of the District. The designation as a merit system is the basis for the establishment of a Personnel Commission. This system is unique in the United States for public schools.

The Personnel Commission is an independent body within the school District and is responsible for the following functions for positions which are "classified" according to the Education Code:

- Administration – rules, employee assistance concerning rights, etc.
- Recruitment and selection
- Classification of positions
- Hearings and appeals

- The District is responsible for all other functions, including maintaining job descriptions, employee training, establishment of pay rates based on position classification, and performance evaluations.

The California Education Code Section defines the employees and positions which are considered to be part of the classified service. Section 45103(a) states that all positions not requiring certification are included in the classified service. Section 45103(b) specifies the exceptions as:

- Substitute and short-term employees, employed and paid for less than 75 percent of a school year
- Apprentices and professional experts employed on a temporary basis for a specific project, regardless of length of employment
- Full-time students employed part-time, and part-time students employed part-time in any college workstudy program, or in a work experience education program conducted by a community college district pursuant to Article 7 of Chapter 5 of Part 28 and that is financed by state or federal funds
- Part-time playground positions

The code further defines "substitute employee" as someone employed to replace any classified employee who is temporarily absent from duty, and a "short-term employee" as one who is employed to perform a service for the District, upon completion of which, the service required or similar services will not be extended or needed on an continuing basis.

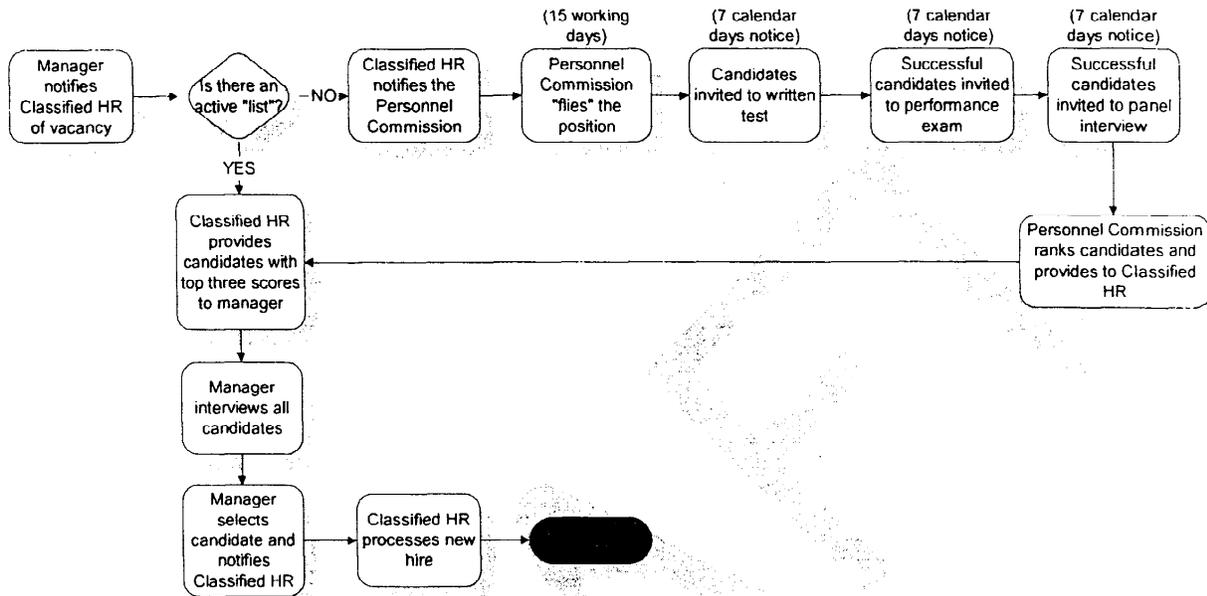
One further exception in Section 45103(c)(1) states that if the District is engaged in a procedure to hire a permanent employee to fill a vacancy in any classified position, the governing Board may fill the vacancy through employment (for not more than 60 days) of one or more substitute employees.

According to the California Education Code, Section 45319: A merit (civil service) system within a school district - and in essence the Personnel Commission - may be terminated by one of the following methods:

- If the governing Board of a school district, or a county Board of education, receives a written petition of qualified electors not less in number than 10 percent of the number voting in the last election for a member of the Board calling for the termination of the merit (civil service) system, the Board shall order the county Superintendent of schools to place the question of termination of the system on the ballot at the next regular governing Board member election, or county Board of education member election, or the next primary or general election in a general election year, whichever is the earlier after receipt by the county Superintendent of schools.
- If the governing Board of a school district, or the county Board of education, receives a written petition from 40 percent of the classified employees entitled to vote calling for the termination of the merit (civil service) system and the system has been in operation for not less than five years or has been imposed pursuant to the terms of Section 45119 or 45120, the governing Board shall conduct an election by secret ballot of its classified personnel to determine whether or not they desire to have the merit system terminated within the district.

Each candidate for a classified position goes through a process that involves both Pasadena USD Classified HR Department and Personnel Commission staff. **Exhibit 3-1** presents an overview of a typical recruitment process for classified staff.

**Exhibit 3-1
Classified Staff Recruitment Process**



The Classified HR Department is notified by District managers of any positions to be filled. The Personnel Commission Director is notified only if there is not an active eligibility list of applicants for the particular class of positions corresponding to the open position. Otherwise, the Classified HR Department provides the hiring manager with the names and contact information of the top three candidates on the list with the highest scores. The hiring manager is required to interview all provided candidates and make a selection from this list.

If there is not an active list of applicants, the Personnel Commission Director is notified and begins recruiting at that time. The position opening is posted, or flown, for 15 working days, and applications are accepted until the closing date. At that time, qualified applicants are scheduled for a written test, which requires an invitation to be mailed at least seven calendar days prior to the test date. After the written test is scored, successful applicants may be invited to a performance examination. Once that is scored, successful applicants may be invited to an oral interview with a panel of non-District employees. Once all applicants associated with the particular position have been through all tests and interviews, each one is scored and they are ranked from highest score to lowest to create the eligibility list of candidates with the top three scores.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Recommendation 3-1: District management should establish and give continuing support for cooperation between the Personnel Commission and Classified Human Resources Department staff.

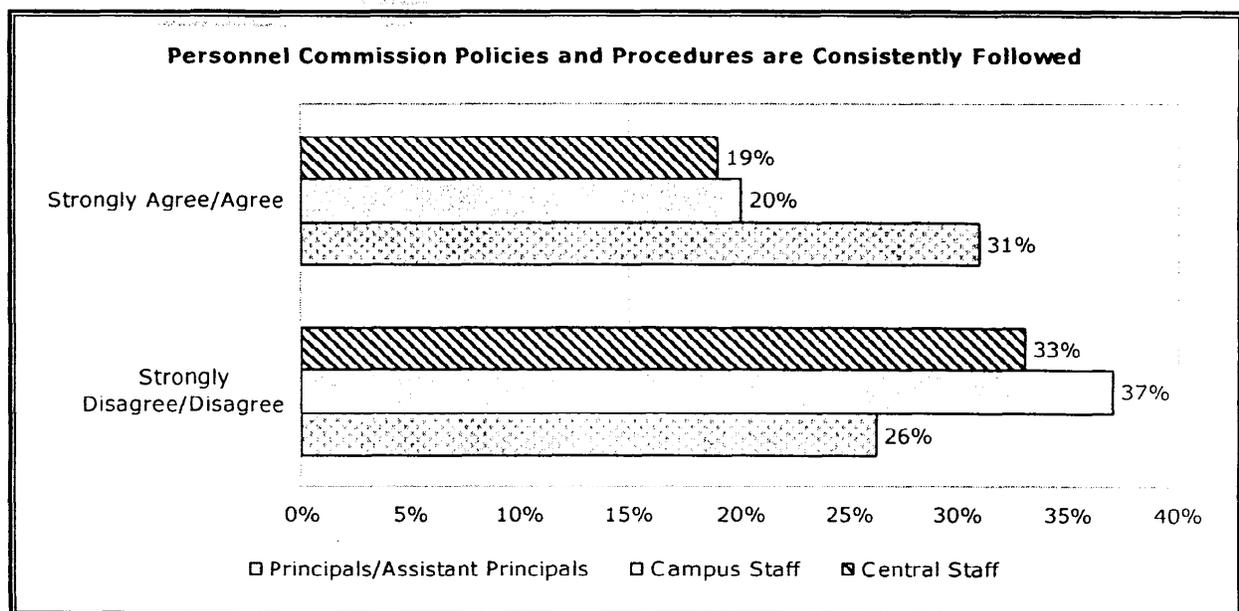
The Classified HR Department and Personnel Commission currently function as two disconnected entities, instead of an integrated human resources function. During several of the classified staff focus groups, participants were unaware as to which unit the staff they encountered during hiring or employment processes were affiliated.

There is no regularly scheduled, meaningful communication between the Classified Department staff and the Personnel Commission staff, and therefore, no continuity with respect to decisions made in each area. According to focus groups, some employees perceive the differences in decision-making as discriminatory, or arbitrary.

A contributor to the lack of communication between the Personnel Commission and the Classified HR Department is the physical proximity of the staff; they are located in separate offices, although they did recently move to the same floor. It is more difficult to coordinate activities and cultivate communication channels under these circumstances.

Exhibit 3-2 shows Pasadena USD employee survey results to a question about the consistent application of Personnel Commission policies and procedures. Although 31 percent of Principals and assistant Principals responding to the survey agree that Personnel Commission policies and procedures are consistently followed, 37 percent of other campus staff (excluding Teachers) and 33 percent of Central Office staff disagree. Additionally, in the classified staff focus groups, it was found that there is a perception by classified employees that managers can circumvent both the Human Resources and Personnel Commission rules because many exceptions are made.

**Exhibit 3-2
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Consistency of Policies and Procedures**



Since the survey included employees other than classified employees, many respondents were neutral or expressed no opinion.

Some specific suggestions to increase cooperation between the departments are:

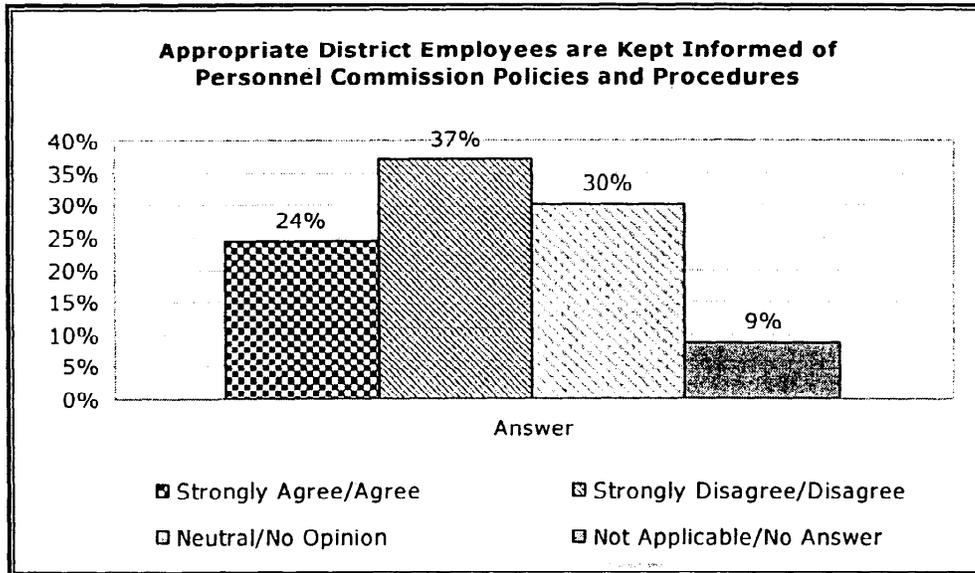
- Combine the two departments into one larger office space.
- Train one employee and a backup to fulfill the receptionist duties for both the Personnel Commission staff and the Classified HR Department staff to present the District's HR function as a coordinated effort to both employees and applicants.
- Re-engineer and integrate Classified HR Department and Personnel Commission operations to achieve needed efficiencies in the classified employee staffing processes.
- Develop procedures for all Classified HR Department processes – These should be prepared jointly by the Personnel Commission and the Classified HR Department.
- Conduct regular meetings between the Personnel Commission staff and the Classified HR Department staff to discuss issues that arise in the course of business.

In order for District employees and applicants to feel they are treated in a non-discriminatory manner, these two departments must work together to ensure that decisions made and actions taken are consistent with laws, rules, and set departmental procedures and processes.

Recommendation 3-2: Increase the frequency and value of communication regarding classified personnel policies and procedures.

Some Pasadena USD employees do not feel sufficiently informed of Personnel Commission policies and procedures. **Exhibit 3-3** presents the employee survey results. Approximately 37 percent of those responding felt that appropriate District employees are not kept informed of Personnel Commission policies and procedures, while only 24 percent felt they were.

**Exhibit 3-3
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Informed of Policies and Procedures**



Upon hire, Classified employees are provided a "Classified Handbook", which is issued by the Office of the Personnel Commission. This document contains general information about the District, as well as District policy information. This booklet also contains sections describing the merit system, the Personnel Commission, the Classified Personnel Services Department and some high-level explanations of employment processes. Although Pasadena USD's "Job Seeker" web page provides a link to some general information about the Personnel Commission, there is no avenue by which current employees receive information on Personnel Commission policies and procedures.

All human resources processes are affected by District policy, Personnel Commission rules or a related union contract. In classified focus groups, some District classified staff expressed that they are not aware of how employment actions are governed by the various regulations, policies and procedures.

While the Classified Personnel Handbook can be a good introduction for new hires, some supplementary targeted documentation can help applicants or employees, who are going through specific human resources processes, such as applying for a transfer, promotion or position reclassification, to better understand any related regulations, policies, or procedures that will affect them.

In order to provide clear and timely information to employees, the following should be accomplished:

- The Personnel Commission office should establish regular communications to employees regarding policies and changes. Some possible avenues are:
 - ❖ New employee orientation sessions
 - ❖ District website – Post comprehensive, organized, easy to access information on the District's website.

- ❖ Bulletin Board – Post changes to policies and procedures on the Personnel Commission bulletin Board.
- ❖ Periodic newsletter – Create a newsletter to be electronically distributed and mailed to classified personnel and their supervisors informing them of items of interest as well as changes to policies and procedures.
- The Personnel Commission staff and the Classified HR Department staff should cooperatively create quick references, or cheat sheets, which describe each human resources process and explain why the existing procedures are followed.
- Quick reference sheets should be provided to an employee or applicant as he/she begins a human resources process.

The quick reference sheets mentioned in the last bullet will provide information to better inform employees and applicants of the source(s) for each policy and its related procedural steps. As employees are more informed, they will understand which entity they should contact to address concerns that arise in their employment.

Another issue that was voiced in several of the classified focus groups was regarding the position reclassification process. The review team was informed that many employees did not understand the process required to have a position reclassified, and did not understand the basis for granting a position reclassification.

The *Personnel Commission Rules, Section 3112*, states that “a District employee shall have the right to submit a request for study of his/her position”. The rules also describe the procedures to be followed and the general basis for reclassification.

Because the classification of a position can directly affect an employee’s pay, reclassification information should be periodically communicated to all classified employees in a Personnel Commission newsletter.

This issue may be intensified because of the current state of job descriptions in the District. Reclassification requests will lessen as all District job descriptions are updated and reviewed for proper classification on a regular basis. In the interim, the District and Personnel Commission should communicate to all employees the process by which reclassifications can be requested, as well as the basis for granting reclassification.

Recommendation 3-3: Create and execute a plan to conform to and maintain established administrative requirements related to classified job descriptions and their classifications.

According to employees interviewed, many District job descriptions are out-of-date. The Personnel Commission Director is responsible for maintaining and keeping job descriptions current. However, it is critical that the District provide new information to the Personnel Commission Director as soon as it is received in order to keep job descriptions up-to-date.

The Personnel Commission Director is updating the District’s job descriptions. The Director should be mindful to align the job descriptions with the District’s organizational needs, including minimum experience and cross-training requirements. It is important that the Board and District management require supervisors and managers to cooperate and provide information to the Personnel Commission Director to accurately and efficiently update the job descriptions.

Additionally, *Section 3130* of the Pasadena USD Personnel Commission rules requires the Personnel Commission Director to periodically (no later than every two years) review the duties and responsibilities of all District positions in order to determine their proper classification. At present, this has not been done.

In order to meet these requirements, the Personnel Commission Director should:

- Create a timetable to inform District leadership when each District job description will be reviewed for accuracy and alignment with organizational needs.
- Coordinate the review of job descriptions with managers and supervisors.
- Review all District positions for proper classification.
- Institute a plan to review all District positions for proper classification every two years.

Classified employee focus group members expressed frustration that position reclassification requests at Pasadena USD take a long time to complete. For example, a high school registrar indicated that the reclassification of the registrar position took one calendar year. Several classified focus group attendees expressed that the time it takes to complete the process discourages them from initiating it.

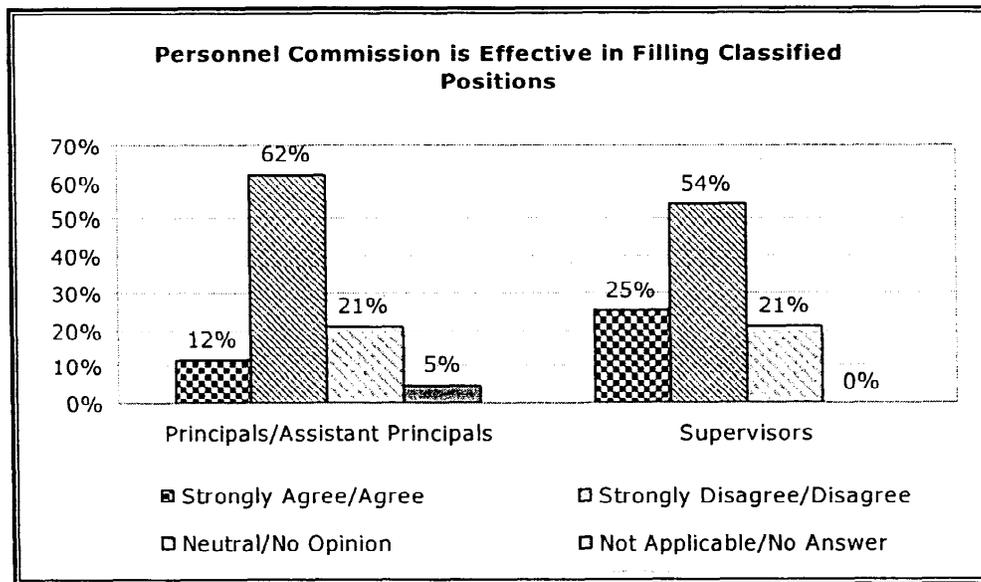
The District and the Personnel Commission should work together to establish reasonable time limits for decisions on reclassifications of positions. Two to four months is a reasonable time limit for the completion of the reclassification questionnaire and the review and approval processes.

RECRUITING AND STAFFING

Recommendation 3-4: Investigate ways to increase the quality and number of candidates for classified positions.

The majority of Pasadena USD Principals, Assistant Principals and supervisors are dissatisfied with the Personnel Commission's effectiveness in finding quality candidates. As shown in **Exhibit 3-4**, sixty-two percent of Principals and assistant Principals and 54 percent of directors, managers, supervisors and coordinators responding to our survey feel that the Personnel Commission is ineffective in filling open classified positions.

**Exhibit 3-4
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Personnel Commission is Effective in Filling Classified Positions**

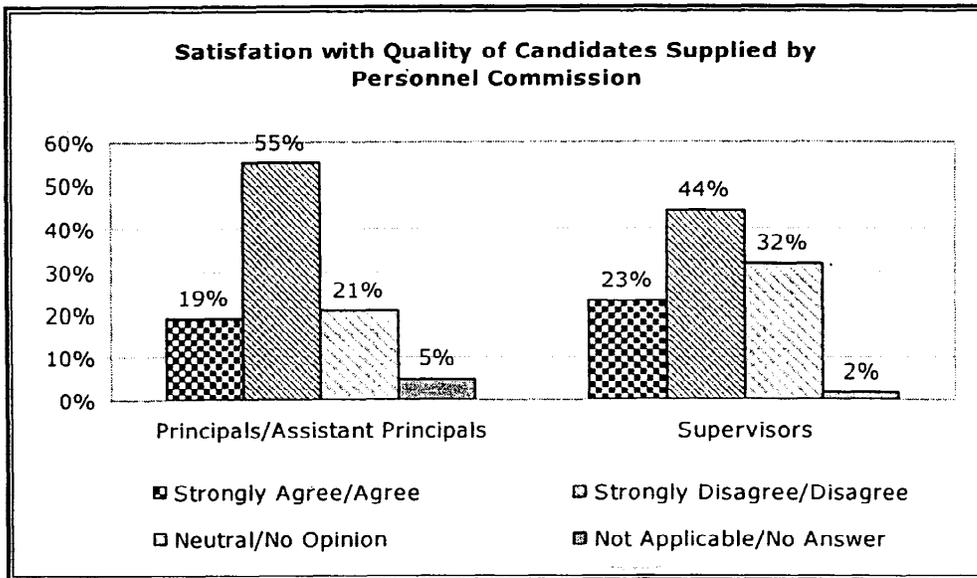


Some classified employees participating in focus groups felt that flyers for open positions do not consistently reach all employees who may wish to apply. It seems that the consistency primarily depends on where the classified employee works. Some employees, who do not have an office or "home base" to which they go daily, may not see a flyer during the 15 days for which it is flown. Flyers are emailed to some departments and may or may not be printed and posted for those employees without computers.

One resolution to part of this problem is to reinforce the directive to the departments to print the emailed job flyers. Flyers should continue to be posted on the Personnel Commission bulletin Board and the District website. The Classified HR Department and Personnel Commissions should develop a plan to work collectively to determine the best approach to reach the largest number of classified employees and candidates.

As shown in **Exhibit 3-5**, 55 percent of Principals and assistant Principals responding to the survey are dissatisfied with the quality of classified candidates supplied by the Personnel Commission. Only 19 percent of Principals and assistant Principals responding are satisfied. Forty-four percent of directors, managers, supervisors and coordinators in the Central Office and at the campus are dissatisfied with the quality of classified candidates.

Exhibit 3-5
Pasadena USD Employee Survey Response
Quality of Candidates Supplied



There are some contributing factors to these findings:

- Screening evaluations (eg. food service tests) are out of line with current position requirements. During the food service focus group, employees gave an example of a question on the test which required the applicant to know how to make a particular dish, which now comes pre-prepared.
- Overall, the recruitment and screening process is very lengthy, resulting in top candidates accepting other employment before Pasadena USD makes a job offer.
- While experience is used to determine whether the candidate meets the minimum qualifications to be admitted to the examinations, it is not used in ranking eligibility lists (Education Code 45272).

As a result of their dissatisfaction with the eligibility lists, managers hire "unclassified", hourly positions to circumvent the Personnel Commission rules and obtain an employee of their choosing with the desired experience and qualifications. The hiring of employees into these positions has been approved by the Classified HR Department. The Personnel Commission Director states that he is aware of 40 to 50 "unclassified" positions. Because these "unclassified" positions do not conform to the exceptions set forth in *Section 45103* of the *California Education Code* (detailed in the background section of this chapter), these actions may place the District at risk of litigation by an applicant or employee who would have filled the position through the Personnel Commission process.

As noted previously, the screening examinations administered by the Personnel Commission are not aligned with the actual duties performed by the incumbents in the positions. Both classified staff and supervisors, that attended the review team's focus groups, believe that potentially viable candidates are screened out because of this. According to Pasadena USD *Personnel Commission Rules, Section 5121*, supervisors of positions may evaluate the scope and content of screening examinations for their positions. The Personnel Commission

Director should communicate with managers and supervisors their responsibility to ensure that screening tests to fill their open positions are aligned with the actual duties of the position being filled. The Personnel Commission should create and provide detailed documentation on how to complete this process in the Personnel Commission newsletter and on the Personnel Commission bulletin Board. The Personnel Commission Director should also facilitate the alignment of job descriptions and screening tests.

As referenced above, managers and supervisors in the focus groups stated that, many times when applicants are offered a position within Pasadena USD, they have already accepted an offer from another employer. These managers and supervisors believe that the reason is the long recruitment and hiring process, but no information is currently collected from these applicants to support this notion. The District should begin asking applicants for the reasons that they did not accept employment with Pasadena USD. In addition to improving the recruiting and hiring processes, this information may provide useful information that could be used to increase the District's appeal to prospective employees.

Recommendation 3-5: The Personnel Commission should investigate methods to compress the time that it takes to complete the hiring process.

The current Personnel Commission's applicant tracking process is paper-intensive. Applicants are tracked by manual entry into Microsoft Excel by Personnel Commission staff. This can greatly affect the applicant processing time and thus the quality of new hires that Pasadena USD obtains.

Both the Bassett and Hacienda La Puente USDs implemented online applicant tracking systems in 2005-06, which they credit for enhancing the productivity of examination processing. Because Pasadena USD has an online applicant tracking system, the District and the Personnel Commission should jointly explore the feasibility of integrating Personnel Commission applicant tracking functions into the Pasadena USD applicant tracking system, versus purchasing a separate system for the Personnel Commission.

Most classified campus and Central Office staff responding to the survey express that it is easy to apply for open classified positions. This is supported by many comments during classified staff focus groups. In these groups, it was stated that while it is not difficult to apply for an open classified position, the process after applying for applications can be very difficult and drawn out.

The recruiting process is very lengthy, for several reasons cited in the *California Education Code Section 45278(a)*:

- a written notice concerning a vacancy must be posted, or "flown", for a minimum of 15 working days;
- oral examination Boards should be solicited from outside of the District;
- seven day testing notification must be mailed to the candidate.

Based on interviews with District staff, it appears that the Personnel Commission does not proactively plan for peak period staffing. The Personnel Commission begins the process for creating a new eligibility list only the prior staffing list expires.

The Personnel Commission staff should examine common recruitment patterns within the District and begin instituting proactive staffing activities during those times. Additionally, it

is essential that the recruiting process for frequently hired positions be initiated prior to the expiration of the related eligibility list.

Applicants are not invited to subsequent tests until they have passed the prior test(s), adding to the length of the sub-process.

The following are recommendations to consider are:

- For high-turnover positions that are “flown” frequently, authorize continuous examination procedures in order to compress the timeline.
- Consider using more District employees as raters for oral interviews.
- Compress the testing process by scheduling the applicant’s tests during the same week. Applicants should be informed that if one test was failed, they will not proceed to the remaining scheduled tests.
- Implement the use of automated testing and grading software in order to reduce the timeline for testing.

ACCOUNTABILITY OF PERSONNEL COMMISSION

The Bassett USD 2005 Personnel Commission Annual Report states: *“While the Personnel Commission is legally independent of the District in establishing its rules and in implementing the merit system, the staff and the Commissioners are part of the Bassett Unified School District management team. The Personnel Commission Director serves on the Superintendent’s Cabinet and the Personnel Commission staff provides a myriad of support to the District on matters that are not within the purview of the merit system.”* This District and Personnel Commission view the Personnel Commission as the District’s “insurance policy” against unfair labor practices lawsuits, rather than a hindrance to the classified hiring process.

While Bassett USD is a best practice, this is not practiced at Pasadena USD. The Pasadena USD Personnel Commission is not accountable to the School Board from a governance or customer standpoint, and does not collaborate with the District in this manner. Pasadena USD Board members expressed frustration with their statutory inability to hold the Personnel Commission accountable.

The logical start to establishing accountability to and collaboration with the District is to provide timely information to the Board in order to open a dialog.

Recommendation 3-6: Increase the Personnel Commission’s accountability to the District and to the Board.

Personnel Commissions are charged with “ensuring that the personnel policies and practices affecting the classified service are based upon merit, fitness and equal opportunity, and are in compliance with the provisions and procedures contained in the Education Code”. Furthermore, the Commission represents the District’s interest in hiring and retaining the best qualified employees. Because of this, it is important that the governing Board and administrators work in partnership with the Personnel Commission to improve the personnel functions of the District.

Currently, the Personnel Commission provides an annual report to the Board. In order to provide timely information, increased frequency of reporting by the Personnel Commission should be initiated.

The Personnel Commissioners, Personnel Commission Director, and the Board should meet to determine appropriate information to include in a monthly report to the Board. In addition to providing the Board with needed information, this report may also be used by the Personnel Commission Director and the Personnel Commission to proactively identify potential issues and make modifications to procedures and processes.

According to the 2004 Comparison of Merit System School Districts completed by the California School Personnel Commissioners Association (CSPCA), 55 percent, or 38 of 69, of merit system school districts in California place the Personnel Commission Director as a member of the Superintendent's Cabinet. Pasadena Unified School District was not one of the 38 districts.

Including the Personnel Commission Director on the Superintendent's Cabinet fosters better communication between the two offices, thus providing for more accountability to the District, the staff and its stakeholders. The Personnel Commission Director should serve as a liaison between the Personnel Commission and the Cabinet, Superintendent, and Board of Education, assuring that all are well informed of Personnel Commission issues and decisions.

If the District wishes the partnership with the Personnel Commission to succeed in improving the Personnel functions of the District, the Personnel Commission Director should also be included in all exchanges of information that involve District administrators.