2021 & 2022 Employee State of the District: Spring Update

**Purpose and Audience:** For the past six years, Clovis Unified has engaged in an intentional information campaign for our employees that is designed to accomplish multiple purposes. In 2021 we had to modify delivery of this annual update to account for COVID conditions. The 2022 delivery returned to a traditional model whereby the Employee State of the District Spring Update is delivered by site and department leaders trained on the material. Specifically, the campaign, called our Annual State of the District Spring Update is intended to: 1) train and develop our site and department leaders as key communicators not just about topics related to their own site/department, but also to be effective communicators of district-wide issues that have an impact on our employees. 2) engage employees in effective two-way conversations about educational, staffing, compensation/benefits, finance and operational decisions that may impact them personally or as a team. 3) build knowledge about and support for the district’s various decision-making employee committees, upcoming facility projects and much more.

**Implementation:** The presenter toolkit is delivered to leaders in an annual training session that precedes the delivery window for the Spring Update, and a district office session delivered by the Superintendent is conducted on the first morning of the delivery window with any first-year leader in attendance to see the presentation modeled before their own delivery to staff. Every department and school site holds a meeting within a two-week period, and leaders report back with feedback and questions from staff to plan future Employee State of the District Spring Update presentations.

**Research:** The Employee State of the District Spring Update was first developed based on needs identified in annual climate assessment surveys conducted with classified and certificated employees. Action items were identified in surveys conducted in 2015 related to a lack of knowledge and understanding among employees of how employee compensation decisions were made, the role employee-represented groups had in the process, and questions posed by employees in these surveys related to how the district was using LCAP funds to effectively support students. Since that time, content of the spring update is developed using research conducted with the district’s site and department leaders; leaders of our certificated and classified operations and non-operations employee groups; employee representatives on all employee committees. Research on effective forms of communication to deliver complex topics with a high degree of knowledge retention has also driven choices about how content points are delivered.

Decisions on what content to include, tools used to make content easy to understand and to convey to employees of all levels, and in the case of 2020 and 2021, who would deliver the content and in what way are made over a one-month time. Research was conducted in meetings of site leaders, our administrative directors, and through cabinet members. In these settings, questions were asked as to the issues of most interest to employees, the relative understanding level of employees engaged in teaching or support roles, and a list of the most commonly asked employee questions related to the pandemic, district spending, a current bond measure, and the future was developed. The list was then processed with certificated and classified leaders. Employee climate assessment surveys were also reviewed to identify top issues of interest to employees. Two-way conversations facilitated by site/department leaders were also deemed critical to answer specific questions and concerns of individual employee groups in a way that research had proven was most effective at building trust and inspiring confidence.

In 2021, with employees back at work, and students in hybrid or online learning, research again demonstrated a need for employees to see the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent in an authentic conversation, for all employee groups (union and self-represented groups) to also be visible in the presentation, and for dept/site leaders to again facilitate conversations and provide detailed information as interest was demonstrated by their employee groups. The goals for the 2021 State of the District Spring Update were 1) for all employees to participate in a site/department facilitated viewing and question and answer session 2) for all three of our employee group to report back that their respective groups felt the information was valuable 3) for climate assessment survey results to drop by no more than 5%- recognizing that in the tumult of the pandemic it would be impossible to increase employee satisfaction- which we succeeded in doing. 5) all new site/department leaders would attend training and participate in the model update delivery prior to their own presentations, and that assistant superintendents would report back that these young leaders demonstrated confidence as a result of the training.

**Evaluation:** Reports from school and department leadership were that 98% of employees (even night custodians and shift-working employees) participated in the Spring Update Presentation. Officers of our three employee groups, following meetings with their membership, all reported back that employees felt better connected with the district, reported an increased understanding about how decisions were being made regarding the District’s COVID protocols, and that employees felt increased rapport with the Superintendent and Deputy Superintendent following the 2021 & ‘22 Employee State of the District. All of our new site leaders and mid-level classified leaders were provided training, and all participated in the model presentation by the Superintendent. Reports back during leadership meetings was that the training was valuable and they felt prepared to make their own presentations. We also saw multiple positive outcomes reported after the Employee State of the District Spring Update, with the number of employee speakers at governing board meetings decreased to zero, the number of complaints reported through our employee groups decreasing to a level consistent with pre-pandemic figures, and site and department leaders reporting that the mood on their campuses has improved significantly between March and November of 2021.
Each year a toolkit of resources are created to support delivery of the Employee SOD-Spring Update to all employee groups. Included in this presenter toolkit are presenter notes/talking points, handouts on critical topics, video content, and follow up material to share after the presentation.

2022 Link to Presenter Toolkit
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1UPtxCwn2Vk65AoK4SAa7KqJM9LuNsqBQ?usp=sharing

Included in the above link are:
- A PowerPoint with video embedded and talking points and presenter directions.
- A .pdf of the presentation and presenter talking points
- Handouts to share during and/or after presentation:
  - Budget and Finance One-Sheet
  - Infographic on compensation
  - A Market Study update and resource
  - Vaccination One-Sheet
- A sample follow up email for presenters to customize and send in follow up to meeting
- Separate video files to support embedded content

2021 Link to Presenter Toolkit
https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1aFihjB-cnXK-c9uezcHGqCOE6AQE4f0-?usp=sharing

Included in the above link are:
2. Handouts for site and department leaders to use in their delivery and question and answer sessions following delivery of the video. Handout subject matter included: Benefits, COVID Relief Dollars, Employee Compensation
3. Frequently Asked Questions to support leaders in responding to questions from staff.