Human Resources Audit Report
Fiscal Year 2024-2025

Human Resources Audit Report
Index

Arlington
Public
Schools

To: Ms. Mary Kadera, School Board Chair
Ms. Miranda Turner, School Board and Audit Committee Member
School Board Members
Dr. Francisco Durán, Superintendent
Cc: Members of the Cabinet
Mr. Brian Stockton, Chief of Staff
Dr. John Mayo, Chief Operating Officer
Mr. Cory Dotson, Assistant Superintendent Human Resources
From: Ms. Alice Blount-Fenney, Director, Internal Audit
Re: Human Resources (HR) Audit Report
Date: February 14, 2025

Section I- Background and Objectives

The Annual Audit Plan for 2024-2025 was presented and approved at the September 19, 2024, Board Meeting. The audit schedule included a review of Human Resources (HR). The newly appointed Assistant Superintendent (effective September 2024) also requested an audit prior taking on this role. The Human Resources Department currently has a total of 35 FTE employees who report to the Assistant Superintendent, who in turn reports to the Chief Operating Officer.

The School Board Chair indicated that one of the goals of the Board is to ensure that the new Assistant Superintendent, HR, has the tools he needs to be successful and that HR employees also have the tools and resources they need for them to perform their jobs well. The Board also recognizes the critically important role that the HR department plays for the school division. More importantly, HR is the primary department facing the public, including job seekers and with professional relationships with multiple vendors.

 The HR department is the primary contact for various regulatory agencies that evaluate the district's business practices for compliance with federal regulations to prevent the risk of fines and related penalties as well as reputational damage.

HR also plays a major role in managing and maintaining personnel records for both active employees and retirees. It is common for HR departments to be thought of as an invaluable resource for employees including new hires and retirees with various matters including benefits, leave, professional development, recruitment, and guidance for employees in navigating the organization.

Traditionally, HR employees are regarded as subject experts for multiple HR support services.   It is essential that the HR department function in an effective and efficient manner in providing support to members of the APS community.

Section II-Audit Scope

The initial audit scope was expanded due to the assessment of internal controls noted once the audit began. A scope modification was sent to the School Board and was in turn approved. The modified scope follows.

Standard Operating Procedures
In collaboration with the School Board, the defined primary objectives for this audit were to assess the levels of operational and management controls over formally documented standard operating procedures for selected business processes.

HR Employee Questionnaire
As part of pre-audit planning, a questionnaire was administered for Human Resource employees. This document was used to gather information pertaining to the employee's professional experience within APS and prior experience with external organizations. The questionnaire also addressed employee educational levels and associated training. *Additional information is included in Appendix II at the end of this report*.

HR Customer Service Survey including Active and Retired Employees
In addition to a review and evaluation of standard operating procedures, a customer service survey was conducted for all APS employees. With the assistance of the APS Evaluation team, the survey was sent out to active APS employees ʄduring the first week in December with a January 13, 2025, closing date.

All APS staff received access to an anonymous survey link to access the HR survey. A total of 1,539 staff surveys were completed. The total number of surveys represented 19.8 of the total number of APS employees (7,779 employees). This number of responses represents a margin of error of 2%. With a margin of error below 5% at a confidence level of 95%, the number of survey respondents statistically represents the larger APS employee population.

Retirees were also provided with an opportunity to provide feedback regarding their customer service experiences with HR. This included 65 retirees with separation dates from fiscal year 2023-2024. The HR Department does not maintain email addresses for retired employees; therefore, survey notifications were mailed with a QR code for responses. This invitation was mailed out on December 11, 2024. Seven retired employees responded to the survey.

The survey data results for both active and retirees are included at the end of this report. Please refer to Appendix IV for statistical data and results.

HR Department Employee Survey
At the request of the School Board and the new Assistant Superintendent, a survey was also developed and administered for members of the HR Department. A total of 16 HR employees returned the survey. The goal was to solicit feedback on what is going well within the department and to identify what additional resources and support would be beneficial. The HR Department has

been subject to high rates of turnover and one goal expressed by School Board members was employee retention. The Assistant Superintendent's goal regarding the surveys was to use the results as a foundation on how to improve his department and maintain staff morale. *The survey results are included at the end of this report, Appendix V.*

Concerns filed with the School Board and the Office of Internal Audit Regarding HR
The audit scope included follow-up with multiple employees who came forward to share their experiences and related supporting documentation concerning HR. Most of these issues were benefits-related, and these cases were outside of the questions and concerns reported in the Let's Talk portal.

 When employees brought matters to the Internal Auditor, she met with the Executive Director of HR to pass on the information for resolution by HR staff members.

This report includes recommendations for the improvement of internal controls, over fiscal and administrative business processes, and overall management control over HR operations.
The report also includes the results from the Customer Service and HR Department Surveys.

I would like to thank APS employees and retirees for their time and efforts in completing the Customer Service Survey and the HR Department employees who completed the Departmental Survey. *Your feedback was essential for identifying ways to improve the HR Department.*
Appreciation is also extended to the HR management and evaluation teams who worked collaboratively and constructively with me in conducting this audit.

Best regards,
Alice Blount-Fenney
Director, Internal Audit

Section III- Assessment of Management Controls over HR Operations and Regulatory Risks

The results of the audit confirm that overall management controls over the Human Resources Department are unsatisfactory and warrant the attention of the Superintendent and the School Board to discuss oversight of this department. This rating was assigned due to several operational deficiencies noted during the audit, within various HR business practices, continuous staff turnover, lack of consistency in its[2] business practices and communications with employees. Failure to maintain adequate levels of management controls has the potential to expose APS to multiple levels of risks. Examples include financial risks which were noted during the review of multiple errors for calculating leave time and related compensation mishaps.

There are also the risks associated with operations. The department has been operating without documented standard operating procedures in several areas. Frequent staff turnover heightens these risks and increases potential exposure for the district. For APS and other organizations, HR is traditionally a high-risk area since it is subject to many federal and local regulations. There are

regulatory risks associated with operating without the benefit of adequate management oversight and accountability.

It must be noted that for the past three months the new HR administration has been proactive in filling various critical positions. Full cooperation from HR employees was provided during the audit.

Section IV-Summary Major Audit Findings

A. Standard Operating Procedures
   a. HR has not maintained a systematic and consistent business practice for documented standard operating procedures.
   b. A few operational business processes are documented but are not comprehensive.

B. Succession Planning and Business Continuity

a. There are no documented procedures for succession planning and business continuity.

b. It appears that under the prior administrations, succession planning and business continuity were not a part of their department goals.

c. Succession planning and business continuity are critical to prevent business interruptions. This is critical since there are limited documented business standards in HR and turnover ratios are at high levels. These issues have a significant impact on employees requesting various benefits, including family medical leave time.

C. Regulatory Compliance
   a. There are no documented standards covering HR federal or local regulations.
   b. There is no evidence to support compliance training for employees.
   c. HR employees have indicated that general training is needed including compliance training.

D. Customer Service
   a. APS employees have indicated that there are significant problems in reaching HR employees, especially regarding benefits related matters.
   b. Survey results confirmed that a significant number of employees have indicated that HR employees do not respond in a timely manner to questions and inquiries.

E. Training and Resources
   a. A significant number of HR employees have indicated that they need training.
   b. Only 12% of HR employees indicated that they had adequate training and resources to comply with policies and procedures.

Section V. Detailed Audit Findings

Standard Operating Procedures

It has not been the practice of Human Resources employees to maintain documented standard operating procedures (SOPs) on a consistent basis for all critical business functions. During interview processes and as a result of requesting SOP's, many Human Resources employees appear to be unclear as to what a standard operating procedure is.

Members of the Human Resources management team have not required employees to maintain or create standard operating procedures as part of their regular business practices.

The School Board requested the following SOP's:

Topic	Status *N*=Not Provided *P*=Provided
Hiring Practices	P
Onboarding	N
Job Descriptions and Reclassifications	N
Compensation Adjustments	N
Administration of Annual Contracts	P
Support for Customer Service Requests	N
Offboarding including exit interviews, and the return of equipment	N**
Administration of retirement protocols	N
Administration of benefits, including leave time	N only web page reference materials
Expectations of employees	N
Employee investigations and disciplinary actions and protocols	Some documents were available

** Assistant Superintendent indicated that these functions are also under the jurisdiction of the employees supervisor.

- In September, all HR employees were asked to provide copies of their standard operating procedures for the audit. More specifically, employees were asked to submit whatever operating procedures were available. A second request for SOP's was made on October 21, 2024, to ensure that employees were given sufficient time to provide any documented procedures. HR Employees were provided with a list of the specific business processes through which SOP's were requested with the goal of narrowing down the major business processes in which information was needed
- During staff interviews some employees informed me that they were never asked to prepare SOP's in the past.
- It was confirmed that there was no central location in which the documents resided. Documentation provided in response to audit requests was in multiple locations.

- Some employees provided checklists of business processes and there were references to the HR webpage for reference material, as well as an assortment of screenshots.
- Draft "SOP's" covering hiring and recruitment processes were provided for various business functions performed by the Talent Acquisition and Management team. Information was also provided covering transfer processes. Employees from other units provided an assortment of miscellaneous documents. The table that follows summarizes the material that was submitted by various HR employees:

Source of Documentation	Description of what was provided	Deficiency
Talent Acquisition Management	Access to HR portal: Draft procedures covering: hiring processes protocols to be followed after an offer is made Points of Contact Recruitment Exit Interviews Contract Manual Onboarding and offboarding forms and checklists	Lack of version controls More details are needed, i.e. Who does what function? Unclear designations of authority.
Human Resources Operations	General system information for the Win Ocular Systems dated 3/24/23. Screenshots from August 2022 for hourly employees, Interim promotion information, not complete and reference to attachments with no data. Information pertaining to various evaluation cycles, dated 3/24/23 with incomplete information. Statements "follow-up with staff" with no additional information.	Incomplete information and lack of supporting documentation for any "follow-up" actions.
HRIS Employees	Multiple screen-shots including: • Add second name • Hourly employees paid with stipends • Name change • Re-hire • Update preferred name • FTE Change • Transfers • New hourly employee • Grade and Step • Interim promotion • New Salaried Employee • W-4 form • Terminations	Information about how to perform these inputs and updates, and who should perform them, was not provided.

HR Portal	• Benefits reference material on webpage	No SOP to cover benefits information and options for employees
Annual Contract Administration	• Procedures covering annual contract and assignment letter	On HR webpage

- HR employees indicated that documented SOP's were not a requirement for their job duties. For the most part they followed the protocols that were in place when they were hired and/or learned from each other.
- It was confirmed that the former Executive Director of HR Operations began a project covering SOP's, but it was not completed. A few employees took the initiative and began to document some of their business process. There was no specific format mandated for SOP's. In addition, there was no management oversight to ensure that the SOP project was completed including a formalized review process.
- The Assistant Superintendent, a former Talent Acquisition Management employee at APS, was able to provide access during the audit for TAM draft procedures. The current Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources was appointed in September 2024.
- There were a few checklists for various functions provided during the audit. This included new hires and off-boarding processes as a few examples.
- There is also a copy of an Employee Contract and Assignment Letter Manual on HR Share Ppoint drive. Some of the exhibits within the manual appear to be for 2020-2021.
- Some benefits documentation appeared to serve as reference material as opposed to operating procedures.
- For the Family Medical Leave Act, information was included on the APS intranet site, Staff Central, and there is information outlining the procedures to be followed.

Recommendations

- The Assistant Superintendent, Human Resources and his management team should implement a system for the development and implementation of standard operating procedures.
- A schedule is recommended to ensure that all critical business functions are covered including expected preparation, edits, and completion dates. Any existing draft SOP's should be revisited to ensure that they reflect current business practices, and the information provided is comprehensive in describing who does what, when, and how.
- The SOP's should cover all major business processes performed by the HR Department.
- A standard format should be developed for SOP's and a process for including the effective date for the business practices. There should be a standard established defining the approval processes for SOP's.
- When appropriate, narratives should be supplemented with visual aids like screenshots.

- Standards should be cross-referenced to policy implementation procedures and any appropriate provisions of collective bargaining agreements.
- SOP's should be maintained in a central location and accessible to all appropriate personnel.
- The HR management team is encouraged to mandate regular reviews of SOP's to ensure that they reflect current operations.
- Whenever there are new employees in HR they should be provided with an introduction to the department's standard operating procedures.
- All HR employees should be accountable to maintain adherence with SOP's. Any questions about the procedures or need to deviate from them should be directed to the Assistant Superintendent.
- Model SOP topics are included for reference in *Exhibit II* at the end of this report.

Management Comments

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the findings and recommendations of the audit, which focuses on the development, implementation, and maintenance of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). We are committed to working collaboratively to establish comprehensive SOPs and a systematic process for their revision, creation, review, and maintenance.

However, it is important to note that with the implementation of the Oracle Cloud system, scheduled to go live in Spring 2025, many of our current HR processes will undergo significant changes. Developing SOPs based on our existing systems and processes may result in inefficiencies and redundancy as these procedures will need to be re-evaluated and updated post-implementation.

To align with the audit's recommendations and the evolving functionality of Oracle Cloud, we propose the following approach:

Focus on Future-Ready SOP Development: SOPs will be developed to reflect the capabilities and workflows of the new Oracle Cloud system. This ensures alignment with the system's functionality and reduces the need for extensive revisions after go-live.

Comprehensive Review and Template Creation: A standardized template for SOPs will be developed, including detailed narratives, screen prints, and cross-references to policies and collective bargaining agreements. Effective dates and approval processes will also be integrated.

Centralized Access and Accountability: SOPs will be maintained in a central repository accessible to all appropriate personnel. The HR Leadership Team will ensure regular reviews to keep SOPs current and enforce accountability among employees for adherence to these standards.

Training and Onboarding: *All new HR employees will receive an introduction to the department's SOP standards during onboarding to ensure consistency in operations and adherence to established procedures.*

Responsible Persons

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Persons

- Human Resources management team and support staff

Management Responses Due: November 21,2024

Responses Received: December 3, 2024

Discussed with Management: October 31, 2024

Regulatory Compliance

It has not been a formal business practice of HR management to document its operational functions and procedures reflect regulatory standards.

- As noted in previous sections, HR business practices have not included an organized system of maintaining documented SOP's and the department has experienced recurring levels of turnover.
- There is a risk that current HR business practices are not fully in line with current regulatory requirements. In discussions with some HR employees, they do not appear to be fully versed in regulations, especially in governing the administration of benefits.

Recommendations

- As a priority, the Assistant Superintendent should develop and implement documented business processes that incorporate all appropriate federal, state, or local regulations. It would also be helpful to reference the specific regulations within these SOP's.

Some examples follow:

Workplace Discrimination Laws	Should be included in SOP's governing hiring practices and as a part of an Employee Handbook
Employee Benefits Laws	Should be included in FMLA SOP's

Wage and Hour Laws	Include in compensation related SOP's
Pre-Employment Laws	Include in SOP's governing I-9 Right to Work

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the findings regarding the lack of formalized business practices, specifically the absence of a structured system for maintaining documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and ensuring compliance with regulatory standards. We recognize the importance of addressing these gaps to enhance HR's effectiveness and ensure adherence to all applicable federal and local regulations.

Responsible Persons

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Persons

- HR Management Support Team

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Annual Performance Evaluations

It was confirmed through the review of responses received on the HR staff questionnaire that regular performance evaluations have not been performed for all employees.

- Upon reviewing the responses from HR employees with over one year of service related to regular performance evaluations it was confirmed that some employees were not subject to an annual evaluation.
- According to PIP G-3.14.31, it is a requirement for "an annual evaluation for each administrator".

Recommendations

- The Assistant Superintendent, HR and his management team are encouraged to ensure that every eligible employee is subject to an annual performance review.

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the findings that regular performance evaluations have not been conducted consistently for all employees, and we recognize the importance of ensuring

compliance with established policies, including PIP G-3.14.31, which mandates an annual evaluation for each administrator.

Next Steps for HR where applicable:

      Implementation of a Formal Performance Evaluation Process:

- HR will establish a structured process to ensure that all eligible employees receive an annual performance evaluation.

- Clear timelines and guidelines will be communicated to managers to ensure compliance.

      Training and Guidance for Managers:

- HR will provide training sessions for managers on conducting meaningful and constructive performance evaluations with emphasis on a growth mindset.

Responsible Persons

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Persons

- HR Management Support Team

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Employee Benefits Communications

<u>There are insufficient internal communications between the employees charged with leave calculations and related essential employee benefits.</u>

- During the audit interviews in which information was requested to gain an understanding of the current business practices for calculating employee FMLA, it was confirmed that two employees charged with essential FMLA functions have what appears to be personal conflicts with each other and limit work related communications between them.
- It appears that there may be limited discussions covering factors that may contribute to the numerous errors experienced by employees regarding leave time and compensation. More specifically, as confirmed during the audit there are no documented standards for leave calculations.

Recommendations

- This is an internal matter that should be addressed by the Assistant Superintendent. Failure to do so can result in continued errors with leave time.

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the audit findings regarding insufficient internal communication between employees responsible for leave calculations and essential employee benefits, particularly concerning FMLA administration. The identification of personal conflicts impacting work-related communication is a serious concern, as it directly affects the accuracy of leave time calculations and overall employee experience.

Next Steps for HR, where applicable:

Addressing Workplace Conflict and Improving Collaboration:

- HR leadership will promptly address the personal conflicts between the involved employees to ensure professional and effective communication.

- If necessary, mediation or conflict resolution strategies will be implemented to facilitate a more productive working relationship.

Enhancing Communication and Workflow Processes:

- A structured communication process will be developed to ensure that essential discussions related to FMLA calculations and employee benefits occur consistently.

- Regular check-ins or team meetings will be introduced to improve collaboration and reduce errors in leave calculations.

Error Reduction and Process Standardization:

- A review of current FMLA and leave calculation procedures will be conducted to identify gaps and improve accuracy.

- Clear documentation and standard operating procedures (SOPs) will be developed to guide employees in correctly processing leave time and compensation.

Ongoing Monitoring and Review:

- HR will establish a mechanism to monitor and audit FMLA calculations periodically, ensuring that errors are identified and addressed proactively.

- Feedback loops will be created so that employees affected by leave-related errors have a clear path to resolution.

Responsible Persons

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Leave Calculation Business Practices

Current leave time business processes and calculations are not documented, and it has been a tradition of APS employees to follow past business practices.

- The Benefits employee follows a protocol for calculating leave via a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet based upon the work of past APS employees. These tasks are not included in any SOP. There is no formalized process to ensure that the calculations are accurate.
- It has not been past practice to consult with the Department of Labor, APS Legal or other authoritative sources to ensure APS is in compliance with federal, state, or local regulations.
- During the audit, HR employees were tasked with contacting other school districts to determine what business practices they are currently following. The new HR administration has been proactive and has assigned an employee to contact other school districts to identify what processes they have in place to calculate leave time and how any accumulated sick time and short-term disability is taken into consideration for payments and related leave benefits.
- In the interim, the HR management team has adopted the business practice of applying sick leave for the initial seven days of a disability period. After that period of time, short term disability benefits apply, and sick time is no longer used.

Recommendations

- The Assistant Superintendent is encouraged to review the research into other districts' leave time processes and also consult with a member of the APS legal team. This would ensure that APS follows proper regulatory standards for leave calculations and employee compensation for benefits. Once these measures have been taken, then as a priority,

standard documented SOP's should be prepared and implemented. These SOPs should be in line with all applicable regulations as well as APS policies and business practices.

- It is also recommended that the Assistant Superintendent implement bi-monthly information sessions for APS employees to discuss benefit applications and respond to questions. This would cover the processes of requesting various types of leave as well as examples of how leave payments are calculated.

- Leave information and leave calculation examples should be posted on the HR webpage for employee reference.

<mark>Management Comments</mark>

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the audit findings regarding the lack of documented business processes for leave time calculations and the reliance on past practices without formalized procedures. Ensuring compliance with regulatory standards and implementing a structured approach to leave calculations is a priority for HR. We appreciate the recommendations provided and are committed to taking the necessary steps to address these concerns.

Next Steps for HR where applicable:

Formalizing Leave Calculation Processes:

- HR will review the findings from research conducted on other school districts' leave calculation methods.

- In collaboration with the APS legal team and relevant regulatory agencies, we will ensure that APS leave calculation practices align with legal and compliance standards.

- Based on these findings, formalized **Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)** will be developed and implemented to standardize leave calculations and ensure accuracy.

Enhancing Compliance and Oversight:

- HR will consult with the **Department of Labor, APS Legal, and other authoritative sources** to confirm that leave calculations and benefit applications comply with all relevant regulations.

- A review process will be established to periodically assess and update leave policies as needed.

Employee Education and Communication:

- **Information sessions** will be implemented, led by benefits employees, to educate staff on the leave request process and calculations.

- These sessions will include **PowerPoint presentations** that provide clear guidance on requesting various types of leave, as well as examples of leave payment calculations.

   Improving Accessibility of Leave Information:

- A **dedicated section on the HR webpage** will be created to host PowerPoint presentations, FAQs, and resources related to leave policies and benefits.

- Employees will have access to updated materials, ensuring transparency and consistency in the application of leave policies.

Responsible Persons

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Let's Talk Portal

Prior to the current administration in HR, it appears that there was a lack of management oversight for dialogue/tickets received via the Let's Talk portal relating to HR questions and concerns.

- It was confirmed that there are various ways in which employee questions and related inquiries are communicated to HR staff.
- Let's Talk, an on-line customer service platform, provides APS employees with the ability to ask questions and request information from various areas of the organization, including HR. This management tool is administered through the HR Service Support Center.
- Questions regarding HR including Benefits, Contracts/Assignments, New Hires, and general HR questions and concerns are received through the Let's Talk portal and are routed to various HR specialists. Weekly and monthly Let's Talk reports provide an audit trail of tickets (also referred to as "dialogues") received and their disposition.
- Once a ticket has been received, the appropriate HR specialist conducts g research and takes related actions to address the inquiry or concern. They are expected to contact the inquiring employee within 3 business days with a solution and close the ticket.
- If a ticket is closed without a response evident in Let's Talk, the specialist is required to document steps taken in the Notes section of the ticket to support that action: for example, "explained to the employee what was missing from their VOE request form over the phone."
- During the audit, it was confirmed that there are inconsistencies in the availability of supporting documentation within the Let's Talk system, which would provide an audit trail justifying the decision to close out a ticket/dialogue.
- A review of dialogs closed by an employee from July 12 to 16, 2024 and November 13 to 15, 2024 was included in the audit sample. Between the two samples there were a total of 412

tickets in which 23 tickets were closed without evidence of a response or supporting documentation for the ticket, about 5.6%.
- While conducting this HR audit, I received multiple requests for help from employees requesting assistance with benefits-related matters that were not resolved. Therefore, I decided to examine additional benefits related inquiries made via the Let's Talk platform. More specifically, I analyzed two series of tickets closed by the Benefits employee for the period of July 12-24, and October 14-22[d]With these two reports, there were a total of 137 tickets closed by this employee, with a total of 68 tickets lacking notes or an explanation of why the report was closed – about 50%.
- The results of activity within the Let's Talk portal were discussed with the Executive Director, HR, who receives weekly reports from the Human Resources Service Support Center (HRSSC) Department's Supervisor.
- Going forward, upon requests from the Executive Director, HR, the HRSSC Supervisor will perform bi-weekly spot checks reviewing ticket activity and this information will be provided to the Executive Director, HR, who is now charged with providing oversight in conjunction for reviewing tickets and related supporting documentation. Audit is requesting an enhanced review process as stated in the next section "recommendations".

Recommendations

- The HR management team with the support of the Assistant Superintendent should request regular reports, at least every two weeks, from the HRSSC Supervisor to flag how many tickets are closed with no explanation or supporting documentation. Any identified irregularities should be investigated in a timely manner and resolved as appropriate.

Management Comments

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the audit findings regarding inconsistencies in the management, documentation, and follow-up of employee inquiries submitted through the **Let's Talk** portal. Ensuring timely, accurate, and well-documented responses to HR-related questions is essential for maintaining trust and efficiency within the organization. We appreciate the recommendations provided and are committed to strengthening oversight and accountability in this area.

Next Steps for HR where applicable:

Enhancing Oversight and Accountability:

- o HR Leadership will continue to receive and review weekly reports from the HR Service Support Center (HRSSC) Supervisor to monitor ticket activity and resolution trends.

- o Periodic spot checks will be conducted by the HRSSC Supervisor to ensure proper documentation and timely responses to employee inquiries.

Ensuring Consistent Documentation in Let's Talk:

- HR specialists will be required to consistently document their actions in the Notes section of each ticket before closing it. This includes providing details of employee interactions, solutions offered, and reasons for closure.

- If a ticket is closed without a formal response in the system, clear justification must be recorded (e.g., "Employee contacted via phone and issue resolved").

Training and Process Reinforcement:

- HR will conduct refresher training sessions for all employees handling Let's Talk inquiries to reinforce expectations for response time, documentation, and ticket resolution.

- A standardized response protocol will be developed to ensure consistency across all HR specialists managing tickets.

Improved Employee Support and Follow-Up:

- HR management will ensure that unresolved inquiries, particularly those related to benefits, contracts, and assignments, are escalated appropriately to prevent employee concerns from going unaddressed.

- The HRSSC team will conduct follow-up reviews of randomly selected closed tickets to verify that all inquiries have been handled appropriately.

Responsible Persons

- Ms. Tia Halstead, Executive Director, HR Operations

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Employee Compensation Errors and Adjustments

Employees do not receive advance notification of reductions in their compensation due to APS departmental errors.

- It has not been the business practice of HR or Payroll to notify employees if an error has been made creating first an inadvertent overpayment and subsequently creating a need for a reduction in compensation.
- The lack of advance notice could lead to hardship for some employees.
- Failure to provide employees with advance notice of compensation reductions is a violation of Collective Bargaining's Agreement-Licensed Unit, specifically Article 23 for Payroll

Procedures section C, under Deductions which states "employees will receive advance notice of at least one pay period of any adjustment to pay".

- It was confirmed with HR that effective December 2024 written notices had begun to be sent to any affected employees.

Recommendations

- The HR management team is encouraged to work with the Payroll team to develop an SOP covering the requirement for advance notices to employee's prior to a reduction in salary as per the terms stated in the Collective Bargaining Agreements.

<mark>Management Comments</mark>

The HR Leadership Team acknowledges the audit findings regarding the lack of advance notification to employees impacted by compensation reductions due to APS departmental errors. Ensuring compliance with the Collective Bargaining Agreement-Licensed Unit (Article 23, Section C) is a priority, and we recognize the importance of timely and transparent communication to mitigate potential hardships for affected employees.

Next Steps for HR where applicable

Formalizing Notification Procedures:

- HR will work closely with the Payroll team to develop a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) that mandates advance written notification to employees prior to any salary reduction.

- This SOP will align with the Collective Bargaining Agreement and ensure that all employees receive at least one pay period's notice before an adjustment is made.

Employee Support and Communication:

- In addition to written notifications, HR will explore options to provide impacted employees with resources or guidance to help them navigate any financial challenges resulting from payroll adjustments.

- A point of contact within HR and Payroll will be designated to assist employees with any questions or concerns regarding compensation corrections.

Responsible Person

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Person

- Ms. Tracey Strictland, Interim Payroll Supervisor

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

==Decentralized Employee Support Services==

Many APS employee support functions are decentralized, which has led to a lack of accountability for these essential services.

- During the HR Audit it was confirmed that there are critical employee support functions that fall within HR as well as other APS Departments.
- The risk of inefficient operations is increased if the departments do not communicate and there are no clear and consistent standards to serve as guidelines.

The following table illustrates some of the employee support functions that must be coordinated among different departments:

Application Status Communicating the status of applications for employment (received/ thank-you for your interest/ keep resume on file/next steps if applicable)	Hiring Managers and Talent Acquisition Management
Documentation Needed for Hiring Pre-hire paperwork	Hiring Managers and Talent Acquisition Management
Hiring Process encourages selection of the best and most qualified candidates	Hiring Managers and Talent Acquisition Management
Managing the Timeline from Interviewing through Hiring	Hiring Managers and Talent Acquisition Management
Identification Badges Process of obtaining ID	Safety and Emergency Management and /HR
IT Related Equipment and Processes ***Business Functions***	Information Services and Hiring Managers
Training Communicating required APS Training	Various Department Managers and HR for district-wide required training

Evaluations *HR should work with departments and programs to ensure all annual performance evaluations are conducted. Follow up with departments/programs for pending evaluations.*	Various Managers and HR

Recommendations

- It is recommended that the Assistant Superintendent coordinate meetings with department management teams whose responsibilities overlap with traditional HR functions. More specifically, various teams of hiring managers, Information Services, Safety and Emergency Management should be included for these sessions with a focus on developing clear and consistent SOPs with the roles and responsibilities for both HR and the associated departments. The primary goal of this exercise is to provide a *united front* for future and current employees with well-coordinated workflows. A model for these tasks follows:

Business Function	Responsible Parties	Actions
Application Status	HR (TAM) and hiring managers	Jointly issue an email or other notification of application updates. Clearly identify who should be contacted with questions.
	HR (TAM) and hiring managers	Jointly issue an email or other notification to future employee regarding the documents required during the hiring process. Clearly identify who should be contacted with questions and other inquiries.
Hiring Process encourages selection of the best and most qualified candidates	HR (TAM) and hiring managers	TAM employees are to meet with hiring managers to understand what is needed to fill the open position. Specifically, what are the skills and educational requirements needed for the position? How are we assured that the candidate would come into APS with the knowledge to successfully meet the demands of the job? Define

		proper job posting protocols. Issue/revisit any SOPs with standards clearly outlining hiring practices.
Identification Badges Process of obtaining employee IDs	Safety and Emergency Management and HR	HR/hiring managers send email to new employee with appointment information and instructions on how to obtain their work ID. Copy to Safety and Emergency Management.

HR management has not maintained a practice of business continuity and succession planning within the department.

Recommendations

- The Assistant Superintendent, HR, should begin the process of developing a system of cross-training employees including documenting the main business procedures and policies that are essential for the performance of essential functions. This should be an ongoing process.

Management Comments

Next Steps for HR if applicable:
   Enhancing Cross Departmental Coordination:
   - The Assistant Superintendent will coordinate regular meetings with department management teams whose responsibilities overlap with traditional HR functions.
   Developing Clear and Consistent SOPs:
   - HR, in collaboration with the identified departments, will work to establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that outline roles, responsibilities, and best practices for each area of shared responsibility.
   - These SOPs will serve as a formalized framework to ensure accountability, consistency, and efficiency across all employee support functions.
   Improving Communication and Collaboration:
   - A centralized communication strategy will be developed to facilitate ongoing dialogue between HR and associated departments, reducing gaps in service delivery.
   - A designated point of contact will be assigned within each department to serve as a liaison with HR for streamlined issue resolution.
   Monitoring and Continuous Improvement:
   - HR will track progress and periodically review SOPs to assess their effectiveness and make adjustments as necessary.

- o Feedback from employees and department leadership will be used to refine processes and ensure the best possible support for APS staff.

It has not been a business practice of HR to request and maintain e-mail addresses for APS retirees.

- When an employee retires, current HR business processes are to maintain the last known address and email addresses are not maintained.
- Although this observation may seem minor, the lack of email addresses can result in excessive delays in sharing essential information with retirees, including healthcare changes.

Recommendations

- The HR management team is encouraged to implement a SOP requiring the maintenance of email addresses for retirees.

Management Comments

HR Leadership team acknowledges the audit's findings regarding the need to collect retiree's personal email addresses.

Next Steps for HR, where applicable:

Developing a Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):

- o HR will implement an SOP requiring the collection and maintenance of retiree email addresses as part of the offboarding process.

- o Retiring employees will be asked to provide a personal email address before their departure to ensure continued communication.

Proactive Communication with Retirees:

- HR will send **periodic updates and reminders** to retirees to confirm and update their contact information as needed.

- A **dedicated retiree communications process** will be developed to ensure timely distribution of essential information, such as **healthcare benefit changes, pension updates, and APS announcements**.

Responsible Person

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Person(s)

- HR Management Team

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Business Continuity and Succession Planning

The HR management team has not maintained a practice of business continuity and succession planning within the department.

- The HR department has experienced high levels of turnover for a number of years.
- When an employee separates from APS the loss of knowledge is exacerbated by a lack of documented operating procedures.
- Succession planning has not been a past management business practice in anticipation of staff changes.

Recommendations

- The HR management team is encouraged to implement an SOP covering cross-training of employees including the development of a succession plan.

Management Comments

HR Leadership team acknowledges the audit's findings regarding the lack of formal business continuity and succession planning process within the HR department. High turnover rates, coupled with the absence of documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), have contributed to knowledge gaps and operational inefficiencies. To address these challenges, we are committed to strengthening succession planning, cross-training initiatives, and **documentation practices** to ensure business continuity.

Next Steps for HR where applicable:

Developing a Succession Planning Framework:

- o HR will implement a structured succession plan to anticipate and prepare for key staff transitions.

- o This plan will identify critical roles, key competencies, and potential internal successors to ensure continuity of operations.

Implementing Cross-Training Initiatives:

- o A cross-training program will be developed to ensure that multiple team members are proficient in key HR functions.

- o Employees will be assigned to shadow roles and participate in training sessions to build a broader knowledge base across the department.

Establishing Documented SOPs:

- o HR will prioritize the documentation of essential business processes to preserve institutional knowledge and streamline transitions.

- o SOPs will cover key HR functions, including payroll procedures, benefits administration, hiring processes, compliance, and employee relations.

Retention and Knowledge Transfer Strategies:

- o HR will explore mentorship and coaching programs to facilitate knowledge transfer between experienced staff and newer employees.

- o Exit interviews will be standardized to gather insights and recommendations from departing employees to continuously refine processes.

Responsible Person

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Accountability and Tracking HR Follow-up Responses to Employee Inquries

It has not been the practice of the prior HR management team to maintain an organized audit trail containing supporting documentation for when there are benefits related issues or concerns voiced by employees and the processes that are followed from beginning through resolution.

- These issues are exclusive to the Let's Talk portal reported cases.
- The School Board provided the Auditor with several examples of employee email requests for assistance with benefits-related matters.
- In addition to the examples provided by the Board, several employees presented their benefits issues and concerns directly to the Auditor.
- The employees were contacted acknowledging receipt of their concerns and asked to provide supporting documentation to aid in researching the issues at hand.
- After the employee's supporting documentation was obtained by internal audit, the Executive Director, Human Resources, with the assistance of HR staff began researching each concern.
- Although some documentation (mostly email) was located, there were some gaps in documentation that made it difficult to determine what the final disposition of the issues were. With the high rates of staff turnover, this task became even more challenging.

Recommendations

- The Assistant Superintendent, with the assistance of the support staff should ensure that there is an adequate audit trail to support the research efforts and resolution of each employee's issues and questions. This should include an email acknowledging the employee's request and an email from HR to the employee substantiating the resolution of the issue and closure.

Management Comments

The HR Leadership team acknowledge the audit's findings regarding the lack of a formalized audit trail for tracking and documenting HR responses to employee inquiries, particularly in benefits-related matters. It is essential that all concerns raised by employees are duly recorded, followed through, and resolved with appropriate documentation to ensure transparency, accountability, and efficiency in HR operations.

Next Steps for HR:

Implementing a Standardized Tracking Process:

- HR will establish and/or leverage a formal tracking system for employee inquiries, ensuring that each issue is assigned a unique reference number and tracked from initiation to resolution.

- A centralized log will be maintained, documenting the timeline of each case, including initial request, supporting documentation received, HR actions taken, and final resolution.

Enhancing Email Communication Protocols:

- HR will implement an SOP requiring employees to receive written acknowledgment of their inquiry within three business days of submission.

- **A final resolution email** will be sent to the employee outlining the steps taken and the outcome of their concern.

Strengthening Documentation Practices:

- HR will ensure that all supporting documentation related to benefits issues is properly stored and easily accessible.

- Training will be provided to HR staff on the importance of maintaining comprehensive records and ensuring compliance with best practices.

Responsible Person

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Person(s)

- HR Benefits Team

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

HR Web Page

The HR webpage lacks essential information for employee support services.

- The HR webpage lacks sufficient information regarding the appropriate persons to contact for specific information and inquiries. Many employees, as supported by the survey results, have indicated that they are unclear about who to contact with specific questions or issues.

Recommendations

- It may be helpful to include clear contact information as well as specific reference resources. For example:

Employee and Contact	Resource Information
Catherine Riley Extension 5434	Questions pertaining to Leave
Peter Bark Extension 5469	Questions pertaining to retirement
Jack Wang Extension 5433	Questions pertaining to licensure

- In addition to enhanced contact information and reference material on the web page, it is recommended that the key employees charged with support functions such as the administration of leave include a link to a recorded presentation or slide deck that provides a walk through for employees needing assistance in that area. requesting information regarding the process. For example, for leave requests the presentation would include the steps to request leave and identify the forms needed to proceed with the leave process.
- The HR web page as of 2/10/25 still lists Payroll as part of the HR department. This has possibly led to some of the confusion experienced by employees as to the responsibilities for HR versus Payroll. The Payroll function reference should be updated.

<mark>Management Comments</mark>

Next Steps for HR if applicable:

Enhancing Contact Information and Resource Accessibility:

- o The HR webpage will be updated to include **clear contact information** for key personnel responsible for specific HR functions. For example, **Leave, Retirement, Licensure**, and other relevant areas will each have designated contacts listed with direct extensions and email addresses.

- o This will help employees quickly identify the right person to contact for their specific needs.

Including Step-by-Step Process Walkthroughs:

- o We will **create and upload PowerPoint presentations** or other user-friendly guides on key HR processes, such as **leave requests, benefits enrollment, and retirement procedures**.

- o These guides will outline each step of the process, required forms, and relevant policies. This will provide employees with **clear, easy-to-follow instructions**, minimizing confusion.

Correcting Payroll Function References:

- o The HR webpage will be updated to **remove any outdated references** to payroll responsibilities that may have caused confusion between HR and Payroll functions.

- o This will help clarify the **distinct roles** of HR and Payroll to avoid further confusion for employees.

Increasing Webpage Usability and Accessibility:

- o We will ensure that the webpage is **easy to navigate** and clearly labeled so that employees can quickly find the information they need.

- o Additionally, we will regularly review the HR webpage for accuracy and relevance to ensure it continues to meet the evolving needs of employees.

Ongoing Monitoring and Feedback:

- o HR will monitor the webpage's usage and **gather feedback from employees** to assess if the updated information is effectively helping them access the support they need.

- o If any further improvements or adjustments are needed, they will be addressed promptly.

Responsible Person

- Mr. Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent

Support Person(s)

- HR Support Team

Management Responses Due: March 7, 2025

Responses Received:

Discussed with Management: February 14, 2025

Section VI-Human Resources Customer Service Survey Analysis:

General Findings

Although most employees know how to contact HR, the majority of employees have indicated that division-wide information is not effectively communicated by HR.

- In general employees did not have difficulty in knowing how to contact HR for general information. Specifically, 58% of respondents indicated that they know how to contact the HR Department.
- In addition, 42% of respondents indicated that they are aware of how to contact the HR Department if they have an issue.
- 41% of respondents indicated that the HR Department effectively communicates division-wide updates.
- 37% of respondents indicated that HR policies and PIPs are clear and understandable.

Experience working with HR with Personal Issues

It appears that there is a need for improvement in HR's support for individual employee matters.
initiatives.

- Only 37% of respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that HR employees that worked on personal matters were knowledgeable.
- In addition, 35% of respondents indicated that that they agree/strongly agree that the employees that worked on their personal matters were helpful.
- Many employees indicated that HR was not responsive when they needed support. More specifically, only 26% of respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that HR was responsive in addressing their needs.
- A low number of respondents indicated that they had positive experiences working with HR. More specifically, only 24% of respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that they had a positive experience working with HR.
- Only 20% of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they knew the right person to contact in HR.

Applying for Positions

Most APS employees know how to apply for positions. There appears to be no significant issue with this business process.

- It appears that the majority of respondents (76%) know how to apply for positions within the district.
- Only 24% of respondents indicated that they did not know how to apply for positions.

New Hires

It appears that there is room for improvement in providing onboarding training and information.

- 52% of respondents agree/strongly agree that they received benefits information upon hiring.
- Over 50% of respondents indicated that they did not have effective onboard training.
- More than 50% of respondents indicated that they were not satisfied with onboarding of new hires.

Hiring Leads

There is room for improvement for HR in providing hiring managers with timely support throughout the hiring process and the steps needed to be performed for the hiring process.

- Less than half of the respondents indicated that they were provided with sufficient information during the hiring process.
- Only 28% of the respondents agree/disagree that they were provided with timely information during the hiring process.

Benefits

HR needs to improve its level of customer service in supporting employees when there are problems and issues related to benefits.

- 68% of respondents agree/disagree that they were satisfied with the ease of enrollment.
- More than 50% of respondents indicated that they were satisfied with communication regarding open enrollment.
- 44% of respondents agree/strongly agree that they know how to find benefits information.

Job Classifications

HR needs to improve its business practices by providing clear and consistent standards for reclassifications of positions.

- Only 13% of respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that HR has clear and consistent standards for reclassifications of positions.
- 33% of respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that their grade and scale are appropriate for the work they perform.

==HR Department Employee Survey==

HR Department Employee Experience

HR management needs to improve internal departmental communications and examine ways to better support employees when policy changes occur.

- Over 50% of HR employees feel that internal communications are ineffective.
- Over 60% of HR employees do not feel supported by HR leadership when policy changes occur.
- An average of 75% of HR employees felt that their workload is manageable and feel encouraged to provide management with feedback and are comfortable in sharing their ideas for improvement.

HR Employee Support
HR management needs to explore training options for its employees and improve communications for HR employees covering policies and procedures affecting the department.
- Only 25% of the respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that they have the resources and training needed to provide accurate and helpful information for APS employees.
- Only 12% of respondents indicated that they agree/strongly agree that they were provided with training to keep them updated on policies and procedures.
- A total of 31% of employees indicated that they agree/strongly agree that policies and procedures affecting the HR team are communicated in a clear and timely manner.

Meeting APS Employee Needs

HR management needs to reexamine current HR processes and identify ways of improving current HR operations to better serve the needs of all APS employees.

- Only 25 % of respondents agree/strongly agree that current HR processes are meeting the needs of APS employees.

Appendices

Appendix I- Model Processes to be Included in SOP's

To ensure audit independence from operations, the following model topics are just a few examples provided for HR management's consideration:

Hiring Practices	What is involved? Who is responsible for these functions? Who makes decisions relating to hiring? Are there Search Committees? When and who decides when a new or re-hire is needed? What are the standards/protocols for an employee to accept a job offer? How are APS employees assured that there are no conflicts of interests including nepotism involved in hiring practices?
Onboarding	What steps are involved and who is responsible for performing these duties? What documents are provided or collected from new/rehired employees? Who answers questions for new employees? Are there orientation sessions? What information is provided? How are employees informed of what is expected of them? What processes are in place to ensure regulatory compliance such as Right to Work protocols?
Job Descriptions/Reclassifications	What are the steps involved in reviewing and creating job descriptions? Who is involved? Who approves

	them? What are the protocols for reviewing and updates of job descriptions? Are APS practices in line with industry best practices?

Appendix II

Employee Experience Levels in Current Position: Total 32 Full-time with Completed Questionnaires

Number of HR Employees	Time in current position
5	Less than through 1 year
19	More than 1 year through 3 years
6	More than 3 years through 5 years
1	More than 5 years through 7 years
1	More than 7 years -9 years
Total 32	

Appendix III- Staff Questionnaire Exhibit

Name_____

Title _____

How long in this position? _____

Any prior positions held at APS? If so, title and how long in this position?

_____

_____

Prior Professional Experience

Please provide a summary of your professional experience and the relevance to your current position. Include any degrees and certifications as well as special professional skills and accomplishments.

_____
_____
_____

Summary of your major roles and responsibilities:

_____
_____
_____
_____

Degrees earned or in progress (None then NA)

_____

Special Projects

Provide details and dates regarding any special projects completed within the past two fiscal years. Include the purpose/goals of the project, results, and any benefits for APS. Provide exhibits including a sample of reports prepared in conjunction with each project.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Provide information/examples of any interactions and services that you provide on behalf of responding to employee inquiries. Are there any SOP's covering customer service protocols?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Systems Roles and Responsibilities

If your role includes any APS systems, please list it and describe your roles and related responsibilities.

_____
_____
_____
_____

Reports

Please list any reports that you are responsible for preparing. How often are the reports generated, who receives them and what is the purpose of each report? Any actions taken in response to the reports?

Business Continuity

Who performs your duties when you are off?

_____

_____

Training and Orientation to APS

Have you received any APS training for your present position? If so, who provided this training?

_____

_____

Performance Results

How is your job performance measured? What are the key performance indicators?

_____

_____

_____

Performance Reviews

Have you received regular annual performance reviews?

_____

Appendix IV- Model Processes to be Included in SOP's

To ensure audit independence from operations, the following model topics are just a few examples provided for HR management's consideration:

Hiring Practices	What is involved? Who is responsible for these functions? Who makes decisions relating to hiring? Are there Search Committees? When and who decides when a new or re-hire is needed? What are the standards/protocols for an employee to accept a job offer? How are APS employees assured that there are no conflicts of interests including nepotism involved in hiring practices?
Onboarding	What steps are involved and who is responsible for performing these duties? What documents are provided or collected from new/rehired employees? Who answers questions for new employees? Are there orientation sessions? What information is provided? How are employees informed of what is expected of

	them? What processes are in place to ensure regulatory compliance such as Right to Work protocols?
Job Descriptions/Reclassifications	What are the steps involved in reviewing and creating job descriptions? Who is involved? Who approves them? What are the protocols for reviewing and updates of job descriptions? Are APS practices in line with industry best practices?

Appendix V- Customer Service Survey Results

Responses by Scale

Scale (n=1,515)	Percent
A	10%
C	Less than 1%
D	1%
E	6%
G	9%
M	2%
N	1%
O	Less than 1%
P	8%
T	57%
X	2%
Retiree within FY2024	2%
I'm not sure	5%

Number of Years At APS

Number of Years in APS (n=1,524)	Percent
Less than 1 year	6%
1-3 years	12
4-10 years	28%
More than 10 years	54%

Number of Years in Current Position

Number of Years in Current Position (n=1,525)	Percent
Less than 1 year	11%
1-3 years	25%
4-10 years	30%
More than 10 years	33%

General HR Perceptions

?

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree

Statement	Percent
I know how to find general HR information, such as pay scales, leave-slips, HR policies, etc. (n=1,523)	58%
I know how to contact the Department of HR if I have an issue. (n=1,533)	42%
The Department of HR effectively communicates important division-wide updates to APS staff. (n=1,523)	41%
The HR policies/PIP are clear and understandable. (n=1,501)	37%

Experience Working with HR on Personal Issues

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree

The staff members I worked with on my personal matters were knowledgeable. (n=836) — **37%**

The staff members I worked with on my personal matters were helpful. (n=841) — **35%**

The Department of HR was responsive when I had questions or needed support.(n=844) — **26%**

Regardless of the outcome/resolution of my personal matters, working with the Department of HR was a positive... — **24%**

I knew how to contact the right person in the Department of HR to help me with personal matter/s (n=847) — **20%**

Applying for Positions

Have you been provided an opportunity to apply for all available positions of interest to you within APS? (n=1,502)

Yes — **76%**

No — **24%**

New Hires

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree

Statement	Percent
I received benefits information and was able to identify and contact the appropriate HR employee with any questions. (n=181)	52%
I received effective onboarding training from the Department of HR. (n=181)	40%
I am satisfied with the Department of HR's onboarding of new hires. (n=181)	35%

Hiring Leads

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree

Statement	Percent
The Department of HR provided me with clear explanations of the steps needed for the hiring process and what documents were needed to submit throughout the hiring process. (n=204)	42%
The Department of HR provided timely support I requested throughout the hiring process. (n=203)	28%

Benefits

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree

Statement	Percent
I am satisfied with the ease of enrollment. (n=867)	68%
I am satisfied with the communication provided about OPEN enrollment and…	62%
I am satisfied with who to go to if I need support with my employee benefits….	55%
I am satisfied with how to find information about employee benefits….	44%
I am satisfied with the support from HR employees when there were problems…	18%

Job Classifications

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree

Statement	Percent
The job description for my position is accurate for the work I do and my background. (n=717)	45%
I believe that there is a career growth trajectory within APS for my skills and background. (n=710)	34%
My grade and scale are appropriate for the work I am expected to complete. (n=716)	33%
The HR Department has clear and consistent business standards for reclassication of positions. (n=710)	13%

APS Department of Human Resources
Customer Service Survey – Open-Ended Results

February 2025

The following tables share the results of the open-ended responses to survey question 17 - *Is there anything else you would like to share about your experience with the Department of HR? Please include any additional remarks in this section. If you have a specific issue that needs to be addressed with the APS Department of HR, please contact Corey Dotson, Assistant Superintendent directly.*

Table 1. Overall Open-ended Response Categories

	Number of Respondents (n=770)	%
Comments Related to Communication	447	58%
Comments Related to Level of Service	470	61%
Comments Related to General Perceptions of HR	313	41%
Comments Identifying Concerns with a Specific HR Function	385	50%

*The number of responses and the percentages will be greater than the total number of responses and 100% since many respondents included multiple statements in their overall response. Each comment within a response can be coded into separate categories.

The tables below reflect a detailed break-down specific to each response category.

Table 2. Comments Related to Communication

	%
Lack of clear and adequate communication between HR and employees	13%
Unresponsive	34%
Difficult to reach a person	15%

	%
Lack of clarity on who to contact	18%

Table 3. Comments Related to Level of Service

	%
Satisfactory/positive experience	4%
Stressful, frustrating experience	15%
Staff did not maintain a professional demeanor – rude, cold, dismissive	13%

Table 4. Comments Related to General Perceptions of HR

	%
The department Is unorganized and inefficient	9%
Policies are unclear and not implemented consistently	27%3%
Website is difficult to navigate; links are inactive; information is outdated	5%

Table 5. Comments Identifying Concerns within a Specific HR Functions

	%
Concerns with payroll including communication between HR and Finance	6%
Leave issues (FMLA, maternity)	10% 3%
Benefits	5%
Hiring process/Recruitment	7%
Onboarding/Clearance	6%
Flawed investigation/grievance process	2%
Scale issues	9%

Classification process	2%
Unfair practices around hiring and promotions	3%
Concerns with health insurance change	9%
Retirement Process	6%

Human Resources Department Employee Experience

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree (n=16)

- I feel my current workload is manageable. — 76%
- I am satisfied with my role within the HR department. — 76%
- I feel encouraged to provide feedback or share ideas for improvement. — 75%
- I feel collaboration is fostered among team members within HR. — 51%
- I feel the internal communication within the HR department is effective. — 38%
- I feel supported and informed by HR leadership when policy changes occur. — 37%

HR Employee Support

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree (n=16)

- My colleagues and I have the resources and support we need to implement policies and procedures in a fair and consistent manner. — 50%
- My colleagues and I have adequate time and resources, including tools we need to assist APS staff members in a timely way. — 50%
- I feel I have opportunities for professional growth within the HR department. — 44%
- Changes to policies and procedures affecting the Humman Resources team are communicated in a clear and timely way. — 31%
- My colleagues and I have the resources and training we need to provide accurate, helpful information to APS staff members. — 25%
- I feel that I was provided training to keep me updated on policies and procedures. — 12%

Meeting APS Employee Needs

Percent of Respondents who Agree/Strongly Agree (n=16)

I believe the current HR processes are meeting the needs of all APS employees. — **25%**

(0% — 100%)

HR Functions

HR Staff Perceptions of the Most Important HR Functions (n=16)

HR Function	Percent
Benefits information and assistance	75%
Retirement planning information	69%
Salaray setting and adjustments	63%
Leave information and assistance	56%
Advice on employee/personnel issues	50%
New employee orientation	44%
Recruiting	31%
Applicant screening	25%
Hiring	19%
Annual contract process	13%

APS Department of Human Resources
Employee Survey – Open Ended-Results
February 2025

The following tables share the results of the open-ended responses to survey questions 6,10,13,18 and 19.

Table 1. Q6. What additional resources or support do you feel would help you perform your duties more effectively?

	Number of Responses	%
Additional staff training	6	46%
Ongoing assessment of resources and systems	2	15%
Fostering collaboration within and outside of HR	4	31%
Create additional staff positions	2	15%
More support from leadership	2	15%
Safe and respectful workplace protected from bullying	2	15%
Other	3	23%

*The number of responses and the percentages will be greater than the total number of responses and 100% since many respondents included multiple statements in their overall response. Each comment within a response can be coded into separate categories.

Table 2. Q10. What improvements would you suggest to enhance HR's service delivery or operational efficiency?

	Number of Responses	%
More effective and transparent communication	7	64%

	Number of Responses	%
Change in leadership/overhaul of programs and/or divisions	2	18%
Streamline policies	4	36%
Update and develop more user-friendly systems	3	27%
Other	1	9%

Table 3. Q13. Is there any additional feedback you would like to provide about working within the HR department?

	Number of Responses	%
Satisfactory/positive work environment	4	50%
Need for improved leadership with less turnover, more transparency and support	4	50%
Other	2	25%

Table 4. Q18. What is going well in Human Resources?

	Number of Responses	%
Improved processes for employees	2	22%
Historical knowledge/expertise in field	2	22%
Recent change in leadership	2	22%
Team collaboration	4	44%

Table 5. Q19. What could be improved in Human Resources?

	Number of Responses	%
Opportunities for professional growth/training	3	25%
Overhaul of departments/programs	2	17%
Processes to streamline HR policies and practices	4	33%
Communication within HR department	4	33%
Staff morale	4	33%
Support from APS leadership	3	25%