San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools
Procedure 4056.4

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

1. Administrator and Division Head Responsibilities

A. Administrators and division heads will support the suggestion program by being open to new ideas submitted by employees.

B. The Employee Suggestion Program Committee will assign each suggestion to a qualified evaluator and the division head will be responsible for ensuring the timely analysis, completion and return of the suggestion evaluation to the committee, in accordance with program guidelines.

C. Administrators and division heads will implement approved suggestions within 6 months unless there are extenuating circumstances that prevent implementation.

IL Employee Suggestion Program Committee

A. Role of the Committee. The Employee Suggestion Program Committee, hereinafter called the Committee, shall meet as needed to review suggestions, determine eligibility and recommend awards. The Committee will develop and present procedures for the promotion, publicity, and maintenance of the program.

B. Membership of the Committee. The Committee will be composed of not less than six voting and two non-voting members. Voting members shall carry out the functions of the Committee. Non-voting members will provide support to the Committee to ensure smooth functioning.

C. Voting Members

1. Each division of the San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools shall appoint one voting member to represent their division except that the Student Services division shall have two representatives, one certificated and one classified. The division head has the authority to appoint and remove his/her representative.
2. For each voting member, an alternate shall be appointed, who will have full voting rights in the absence of the regular member.
3. Appointments to the Committee shall be for a term of two years with one half of the Committee members replaced annually.
4. Appointments to complete unexpired terms of Committee members shall be made by the division head. Departments are encouraged to appoint alternates, whenever possible.

D. Non-Voting Members

The Human Resources Division shall appoint an Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator to provide staff support to the Committee (in an advisory capacity). The Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator shall, in turn, appoint a Secretary to keep minutes of each Committee meeting. The Coordinator and Secretary are non-voting members of the Committee.

E. The Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator shall

1. Attend all Employee Suggestion Program Committee meetings as an advisor;
2. Develop and present procedures for the promotion, publicity and maintenance of the Employee Suggestion Award Program to the Committee;
3. Promote, publicize and maintain the program;
4. Ensure compliance with program requirements and goals;
5. Coordinate processing of suggestions in accordance with this policy and procedure;

6. Provide information to the Committee based on historical data regarding appropriate awards and/or disposition of suggestions;
7. Prepare a semi-annual report to the Superintendent summarizing the suggestions recommended for implementation and awards by the Committee, as provided in this procedure;
8. Prepare at least an annual follow-up report to the Superintendent describing the status of suggestions previously recommended for implementation.

III. Function and Responsibilities of the Employee Suggestion Program Committee

A. The Committee is directly responsible to the County Superintendent of Schools and has full discretion to determine which suggestions are eligible for awards, the type of award to be made (monetary or non-monetary) and the amount of monetary awards, in accordance with this procedure.

B. The Committee will

1. Meet as needed;
2. Receive and review employee suggestions;
3. Decide on all eligible suggestions, evaluations and appeals;
4. Request evaluations and analyses of eligible suggestions from any County Schools employee;
5. Determine the type (monetary or non-monetary) and amount of suggestion awards;
6. Develop and implement programs to promote and encourage employee participation in the Employee Suggestion Program;
7. Review and modify program procedures.

C. Conduct of Meetings

1. The Committee will determine the time and place of meetings and conduct Committee business in accordance with these procedures;
2. Each voting member of the Committee, or their officially designated alternate, will have one vote;
3. A quorum will consist of 50% plus one of the voting membership. Provided a quorum exists, committee action will be taken based upon a majority vote of members in attendance.

D. The Committee, by majority vote of the entire Committee, may recommend amendments of these procedures to the County Superintendent of Schools.

IV. Suggestion Eligibility Guidelines

A. A valid suggestion must save the County Superintendent of Schools office time or money; eliminate waste, duplication of effort, extra steps, or a safety hazard; improve morale or the public image, or increase production or service. It must provide a basis for a solution as well as identify the problem. Suggestions on salary or classification, or normal maintenance, are not considered valid.

B. Only original suggestions are eligible for consideration. The term “original suggestion" means the suggestion

1. Has not been implemented in any County Schools department or program;
2. Has not been previously approved by the Committee;
3. Is not under active consideration by the affected department;
4. Is not the result of a job assignment, duty , or responsibility of the suggester.

C. Joint suggestions may be submitted by two or more employees.

D. Suggestions are submitted to the Employee Suggestion Coordinator, Personnel Division.

V. Employee Eligibility Guidelines

A. All employees of the County Superintendent of Schools are eligible to submit suggestions within the guidelines outlined above.

B. An employee may submit as many original suggestions as time permits, provided this activity does not interfere with the employee's assigned job responsibilities.

C. Employees who have separated service remain eligible for participation in this program provided the suggestion was received prior to the separation date.

D. Members of the Employee Suggestion Program Committee and members of the Superintendent's cabinet are not eligible to receive monetary awards through this program.

VI. Suggestion Evaluation Process

A. Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator Review. On March 1 and September 1 of each year, the Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator begins the evaluation process by reviewing the suggestions received during the previous 6 month period for completeness.

B. Initial Committee Review. Suggestions are received from the Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator for initial review by the Committee. Original suggestions meeting eligibility requirements are forwarded by the Committee for departmental analysis.

C. Departmental Analysis. Designated individuals, within the affected departments evaluate and analyze the suggestions within 10 work days, the designated individuals provide a written analysis to the Committee outlining the potential cost savings to the organization, and whether this savings is tangible or intangible. If there is no savings benefit, the analysis should indicate whether the suggestion would be of value to the organization. The name(s) of the employee(s) submitting the suggestion is(are) not disclosed during the evaluation and analysis process.

D. Final Committee Review. Within 20 work days of receipt of the department evaluation and analysis, the Committee will meet with the department representative(s) to review the written analysis. The Committee then determines final eligibility and develops award recommendations.

E. Superintendent Approval. The Committee prepares a report to the County Superintendent of Schools summarizing the suggestions, department analyses, implementation costs (if known) and award recommendations. The report is submitted to the Superintendent for final approval of awards.

F. If a suggestion is determined to be ineligible at any step in this process, the suggestion will be returned in a timely manner to the employee with a written explanation of ineligibility. Such suggestions are eligible for appeal as outlined in Section VIII below.

G. If a suggestion is determined to be ineligible and is adopted within six months from the date of receipt of an ineligibility letter, the employee may submit an appeal as outlined in Section V1II(D) below.

H. All suggestions become the property of the County Superintendent of Schools and the County Superintendent reserves the right to publicize the names of award recipients, amount of award given and related information about the suggestion. Use of the suggestion by the County Superintendent of Schools office may not be the basis of any future claim against the County Superintendent of Schools and its employees by the employee, his/her heirs or assigns.

VIL Awards

A. Monetary Awards. Awards of money for suggestions that reduce or eliminate expenditures, increase revenues, or improve operations, programs, service or effectiveness may range from $25 to $200 per suggestion. A Certificate of Award is presented to an employee who receives a monetary' award. The amount of monetary award is determined by the committee based on revenue.

   1. If two or more employees receive a monetary award for a joint suggestion, the amount of the award will be divided equally among the eligible employees.
   2. Monetary awards are paid through the Employee Suggestion Program budget, administered by the Employee Suggestion Program Coordinator.

B. Non-monetary Awards. A Certificate of Commendation is given for suggestions that, although adopted, do not meet the criteria for a monetary award (i.e., suggestions which improve morale or public image).

VIII. Appeals

A. An employee whose suggestion has been deemed ineligible by the Employee Suggestion Program Committee has 30 days from the date of receipt of the ineligibility letter to submit a written appeal to the Employee Suggestion Coordinator requesting Committee reconsideration of the suggestion.

B. Appeals will only be considered when they contain relevant and new information.

C. Appeal decisions of the Committee are final and binding.

D. A suggestion that is not accepted by the Committee, but is subsequently adopted within 6 months from the date of the ineligibility letter, will be reconsidered for award upon request of the employee.

Approved: November 22, 1996