

The focus in education is always on classroom learning and rightly so. But in order to get children to school, make sure they are fed and have clean, well-maintained facilities in which to learn, a cadre of employees is necessary.

These workers, known as classified staff, who drive busses, mop floors and peel potatoes, are critical components to any educational organization. Not only do they support education outside of the classroom, but inside of it as well.

The full range of their contributions might be hard to quantify, but at a recent Board of Education meeting, SEIU Local 790 President Crawford Johnson put it simply. "We work."

This year, the Board of Education honored 22 of these Classified Champions, who exemplify the best characteristics of district employees.

"They are an invaluable part of the educational system," said Norm Tanaka, a district personnel director and

community.

Karen Redmond, Camellia Basic, Instructional Aide. Karen's ability goes unnoticed by the students because she performs many tasks from "behind the scene." The students benefit when they have a successful experience navigating