

Berkeley Unified School District
Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes

September 2nd, 2021 – 4:30 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was conducted via Zoom meeting # 852 7339 2873 and was called to order at 4:31 pm.

2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum

Chairperson Goldstein, Vice-Chairperson Roter, and Commissioner Davis were present, and a quorum was established.

3. Public Comments

Paula Phillips, Classified Professional Development Coordinator, said she wanted to bring to the Commissions' attention that BCCE members have contacted her regarding their concerns around testing notifications. She said she is working on scheduling CPR testing for classified staff and developing a schedule for the district-wide professional development (PD) day to be held on October 11, 2021, and a PD plan for the remainder of the year.

4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda

Chairperson Goldstein noted that Commissioner Davis had to leave the meeting early and requested that closed session item 9 be moved to follow item 6.

Vice-Chairperson Roter made a motion to approve the meeting agenda as amended; Commissioner Davis seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) July 1st, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes

Chairperson Goldstein requested two minor edits be made.

Vice-Chairperson Roter made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as amended; Commissioner Davis seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

b) July 15th, 2021, Special Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Davis made a motion to approve the meeting minutes; Chairperson Goldstein seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

6. Reports

a) Union

Frank Hernandez, BCCE President, said that there are numerous classified position vacancies throughout the District, resulting in a heavier workload on classified staff and affecting the students

and families served by the District. He identified the afterschool program in particular; and reported that the Union is in discussions with the District to address these issues and that he has recommended that additional FTE assignments be made to current members to bridge staffing gaps. President Hernandez requested that the Commission pursue expanded recruitment outlets for open positions.

b) District Reports

None.

c) Commissioners Reports

Vice-Chairperson Roter complimented PC staff on eighteen new hires in the previous month. He said that the priority should continue to be to fill existing vacancies. He also noted the remarkable efforts of classified employees in the successful reopening of schools and expressed his gratitude for their important work.

Commissioner Davis expressed concern that some eligibility lists have fewer than three ranks, and suggested that recruitment efforts be expanded to include other forums where the Commission can post District jobs.

Chairperson Goldstein remarked on the new hire volumes for certificated and classified staff as reported in the board personnel reports. She observed that labor competition was fierce and that, because many BUSD positions were fractional FTE's with low wages, it was necessary for the Commission to evaluate new and different modes of recruitment to find candidates to fill the District's open positions. She said that expected this would continue to be an issue over the course of the semester. She thanked Ms. Villanueva, an HR tech who has assisted the Personnel Commission on a limited-term basis during a time of peak activity.

d) Personnel Director

i. New Hires and Examinations administered in the month of August 2021

Secretary Castillo reviewed examination and personnel activity for the month of August. He reported that he has been meeting with BCCE Leadership regularly to understand their concerns. He said he had reviewed historical candidate diversity data and recruitment intervals to make informed recommendations for changes to existing recruitment practices. He has also looked at options to promote efficiency including: consolidation of similar eligibility lists; transfers in similar classifications; as well as a means to centralize the distribution of the eligibility lists to hiring managers to streamline hiring. He has investigated engaging a resource called Careers in Government, which has high success in developing diverse candidate pools for K-12 school positions, to assist the Personnel Commission in expanding its social network and internet presence. He also discussed his plans to engage with UC Berkeley and local community colleges to develop candidate pools from these sources.

Secretary Castillo reported a productive meeting with BUSD Board member Laura Babitt, to address her questions about Personnel Commission operations. He will be presenting on the Merit System at the upcoming school Principals meeting. He has also started working on revisions

to the BUSD Merit Rules in collaboration with Vice-Chairperson Roter and expressed his hope that substantial progress will be made in the coming months.

7. Closed Session

The Personnel Commission went into closed session at 4:57 pm.

8. Report from Closed Session

The Personnel Commission came out of closed session at 6:43 pm. The Commissioners authorized the Executive Director to engage outside counsel for clarification of several outstanding jurisdictional questions. (*Commissioner Davis left the meeting at 6:10 pm*).

9. Consent Items

Ratification of Eligibility Lists

- a) After School Program Specialist
- b) Instructional Specialist (Athletics)
- c) School Administrative Assistant II
- d) School Bus Driver
- e) School Campus Aide
- f) Payroll & Benefits Manager

Vice-Chairperson Roter expressed concern that some lists only have one or two ranks. Secretary Castillo advised that he is working with his team to review cut scores to expand the eligibility pool where possible. Chairperson Goldstein suggested that Secretary Castillo look into the utilization of signing bonuses or similar incentives to enhance the attractiveness of district positions. Vice-Chairperson Roter made a motion to approve eligibility lists a-f; Chairperson Goldstein seconded the motion,

Approved, 2-0

10. Conference Items

- a) Request for Advanced Step Placement- D. Hernandez

Secretary Castillo noted prior recruitment challenges for this position and highlighted Ms. Hernandez' excellent experience, bilingual capabilities, and longtime community involvement in support of his recommendation that she be hired at an advanced salary placement at Step 5. He expressed his belief that doing so would promote employee retention. Vice-Chairperson Roter agreed with Secretary Castillo's analysis and recommendation. Denise Diggs-Ray, Administrative Assistant III, asked if the employee would be compensated for her bilingual skill and suggested that she should be notified that there is a bilingual stipend available to her. Chairperson Goldstein asked Secretary Castillo if the candidate had already started work.

Vice-Chairperson Roter made a motion to approve the advanced salary placement at step 5 for Ms. Hernandez; Chairperson Goldstein seconded the motion,
Approved, 2-0

11. Public Comments

Ms. Diggs-Ray asked that page numbers be included in the agenda packet going forward. She commented that there have been efforts to update the Merit Rules in prior years and asked the Commission to consult that earlier work to avoid duplicative efforts. She also asked about the status of beginning a new class and compensation study, and noted that when new hires are started at advanced salary steps, it is unfair to current employees in similar roles who have been with the District for a longer period of time. She asserted that a District-wide compensation and classification study would help to rectify these issues.

12. Next Meeting

Chairperson Goldstein said that a special meeting would likely be scheduled for the week of September 13th. The next regular Personnel Commission meeting will be held on October 7th at 4:30 pm.

13. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:58 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charles Castillo

Charles Castillo
Secretary, Personnel Commission

11/01/2021

Date

Approved,

Heidi Goldstein

Heidi Goldstein
Chairperson, Personnel Commission

11/04/2021

Date