

Berkeley Unified School District
Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes

October 7th, 2021 – 4:30 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was conducted via Zoom meeting # 852 7339 2873 and was called to order at 4:33 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

Mark Ramia, Instructional Assistant I at Berkeley High, asked for the status of scheduling a compensation & classification study at BUSD. He expressed concern about a shift in duties from teachers to the classified employees and asserted that there were issues around accuracy of sick leave accruals. He commented that Instructional Assistants lack a defined work space and that the workday remains unclear. He remarked that his colleague, Linnette Robinson, had reached out to Human Resources on numerous occasions regarding violations of the 20-day rule, but nothing has been rectified.

4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda

Vice-Chairperson Roter requested to pull list i from item 7 for discussion.

Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve the meeting agenda; Vice-Chairperson Roter seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

a) August 5th, 2021, Regular Meeting Minutes

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

Approved, 3-0

6. Reports

a) Union

Frank Hernandez, BCCE President, said that per Merit Rule 70.100.1. an accelerated hiring rate may be set for hard-to-recruit positions, and asked that the Commission consider this and recruit at Step 5 salary placement, as well as elevate salary steps for current employees, to bolster staff retention.

b) District Reports

None.

c) Commissioners Reports

Vice-Chairperson Roter reported that he has been working with Secretary Castillo to revise the current Merit Rules and has made use of the updates created by a previous Director to enable the current effort to focus on unaddressed material. He identified the Model Merit Rules provided by the CSPCA as a basis for revisions and said that he anticipated sharing the updates in sections with the District and the Union stakeholders in the coming months.

Vice-Chairperson Roter commented that the Commission would like to perform a Classification and Compensation Study. However, he questioned the appropriate time to do this work, given that several positions have duties that have temporarily shifted to facilitate District operations during the pandemic. He noted that the step advance requests brought to the Commission meetings point to the need for a compensation and class study; however, this does not guarantee that salary increases will occur.

Commissioner Davis expressed concerns regarding certain position recruitments that generate few candidates on the final eligibility lists. He noted this could be due to nationwide labor trends but said the compensation study would help BUSD to gauge whether salaries are competitive.

Chairperson Goldstein noted the District reached tentative agreements with BCCE and Local 21 in the prior month, resulting in one-time bonuses and salary increases. However, she said that this does not mean that the District should delay in evaluating the competitiveness of staff salaries. She observed that the District is accelerating the budget process this year because the current year budget is not balanced, and that it seems that money will be tight in outer years as well, given the structural deficits and the lower enrollment that the District faces. She said the District was required to submit a revised budget in mid-December to the Alameda County Office of Education. Chairperson Goldstein also pointed out that an Instructional Assistant (IA) had spoken out at the last Board meeting regarding a shortage in IA staffing, and she was very pleased to see a robust Instructional Assistant II, SPED eligibility list in particular for ratification at today's meeting.

d) Personnel Director

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

Secretary Castillo reviewed examination and personnel activity for the month of September and noted it was a very busy month, with eleven eligibility lists being brought to the meeting. He reported that PC staff had shared the IA lists with administrators a few weeks earlier, and he was hopeful that candidates would be hired very soon. He said the PC has upgraded recruitment efforts and has signed a contract with Careers in Government, a recruitment platform that would increase the District's presence in social media and facilitate additional diversity recruitment. Secretary Castillo said that he is also reviewing specific transfer requests to allow for flexibility in transfer options for similar positions in the same salary range to assist with employee retention. He reported that he has been meeting with staff from Classified Leaders of Color and Latinos Unidos to explore areas for further collaboration.

Secretary Castillo said that a district-wide compensation and classification study is overdue, as evidenced by the recurring requests for reclassification and salary step advances, which have been found to be warranted. He said that he intends to pursue further conversations with the District about this.

7. Consent Items

Ratification of Eligibility Lists

- a) Administrative Assistant II
- b) Compliance Officer & Title IX Coordinator
- c) Director, Family Engagement & Equity
- d) Evaluation & Assessment Analyst
- e) Instructional Assistant, ECE
- f) Instructional Assistant II, SPED
- g) Instructional Specialist (Cooking)
- h) Instructional Specialist (Gardening)
- i) Instructional Tech-BASP
- j) Media Technology Technician
- k) Payroll Specialist

Chairperson Goldstein pointed out that the average interval between written and oral exams was seventeen days and was pleased to see several robust lists.

Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve list a – k, except list i; Commissioner Davis seconded the motion,

Approved 3-0

Vice-Chairperson Roter pointed out the expiration year for asterisked items on list i seemed to be incorrect.

Vice-Chairperson Roter made a motion to approve list i to show the correct year, as amended; Commissioner Davis seconded the motion,

Approved 3-0

8. Conference Items

- a) Request for Advanced Step Placement- J. Viteskic

Secretary Castillo reported that Superintendent Stephens requested an advance salary step placement for the Compliance Officer & Title IX Coordinator candidate, Ms. Viteskic. Secretary Castillo said the candidate was highly qualified and that accelerating the step placement would further help to ensure the candidate joins BUSD. Vice-Chairperson Roter said he agreed with Secretary Castillo's assessment. Commissioner Davis said he was highly impressed with the candidate's resume. Chairperson Goldstein noted that for the previous incumbents the salary level, even at Step 5 placement, was not the primary reason for turnover and suggested that, organizational support and investment in the functions of the job are critical to ensuring an

incumbent will remain in the role. She asked HR Director, Glendaly Gascot-Rios, to convey this message to the District.

Vice-Chairperson Roter made a motion to approve the step placement at Step 5 for Ms. Viteskic; Commissioner Davis seconded the motion,
Approved 3-0

9. Public Comments

None.

10. Next Meeting

Chairperson Goldstein said that PC meetings will continue to be held on Zoom, matching to the format that the School Board was utilizing for their meetings, until further notice. The next regular Personnel Commission meeting will be held on November 4th at 4:30 pm.

11. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:25 pm.

Respectfully Submitted,

Charles Castillo

Charles Castillo
Secretary, Personnel Commission

12/06/2021

Date

Approved,

Heidi Goldstein

Heidi Goldstein

12/09/2021

Date