

Berkeley Unified School District
Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes

May 4th, 2023 – 4:30 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was held in a hybrid format, live in the Board Room and via Zoom meeting #852 7339 2873. The meeting was called to order at 4:32 pm.

2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum

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

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein moved to proceed with the agenda, treating agenda item 7 as a discussion item; Commissioner Roter seconded the motion, Approved, 3-0

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve the April 13th, 2023, regular meeting minutes; Commissioner Roter seconded the motion, Approved, 3-0

6. Reports

a) Unions

None.

b) District Reports

None.

c) Commissioner Reports

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein attended a BSEP community conversation at the Berkeley Adult School related to measures that will appear on the ballot next March. Since BSEP funds many things, including programs and classified staffing, she urged anyone involved with the classified service to attend the next meeting on May 8th. She said that legislation (AB 1699) introduced by California State Assemblymember McCarty presents some changes to the process for eligibility for part-time positions at school districts. She urged the Commission to get more familiar with the bill and develop a position on it.

d) Personnel Executive Director

Secretary Castillo reviewed the April examination and personnel activity, highlighting 169 exams. The department is working on the beginning of a new fiscal year with exam and recruitment planning. He anticipates the summer months to be quite busy.

e) Classification & Compensation Study

Secretary Castillo said there were strong opinions about proposed changes to some of the job descriptions in Phase 1. However, he continues to remind employees and members of the Steering Committee that these are recommendations, that nothing is finalized, and that everything remains in draft form until the Personnel Commission and the School Board approve it. Finally, he said that Phase 2 is officially launched, and the Study is on schedule. Commissioner Roter asked again how the 29% completion rate for the JCQ compares with other projects in EHA's experience. Secretary Castillo said that it is low but not unexpected since BUSD has not done a Classification & Compensation Study in 10 years. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein asked if Secretary Castillo was satisfied that employees and supervisors understood the MOU for paid release time to participate. He said that HR had been a great partner, but some employees did not want to join despite their best efforts.

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein noted that it is the work of EHA to look at our job descriptions, and the organizational development track should fall to Human Resources and senior management. However, she said it is valuable that EHA offers suggestions on how other districts are organized. Chairperson Zenor-Davis asked if any approaches will be taken in Phase 2 to increase participation. Secretary Castillo said the plan is the same as for Phase 1, and early indications point to increased participation based on response to the invitation to the Phase 2 employee and supervisor orientation.

Frank Hernandez, Maintenance Engineer, asked if the revisions would be negotiated with the Unions. Secretary Castillo confirmed the union would meet and confer with the District and that the compensation component would occur at the end of the Study.

Commissioner Roter and Vice-Chairperson Goldstein requested a special meeting dedicated to the Classification and Compensation Study and asked that EHA, the Unions and other Steering Committee members be present.

7. Consent Items

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| a.) Administrative Assistant I | f.) Instructional Specialist, Gardening |
| b.) Educational Occupational Therapist | g.) Instructional Tech-BASP |
| c.) Executive Assistant to the Board
(Confidential) | h.) Instructional Technology Technician |
| d.) Instructional Assistant | i.) Nutrition Services Assistant |
| e.) Instructional Assistant II, SPED | j.) Nutrition Services Satellite Operator I |
| | k.) School Safety Officer |

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein and Commissioner Roter had questions on items: b, c, d, h, j, k. The Commissioners approved item 7a. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein noted that items b, h, j and k are notoriously difficult for recruitment and came back with only two ranks. In light of a proposed increase to the recruiting budget, she asked for specific ideas to enhance difficult recruitments.

Secretary Castillo responded that the recruiting plan would expand on the tools available with existing online recruiting services and focus more on in-person job fairs and an enhanced presence on the BUSD website. Commissioner Roter said recruitment is a long-range issue and would be interested in a special meeting for a robust, strategic discussion. He suggested including other stakeholders (local community colleges and school-to-career programs) in the conversation to develop a work plan.

On item 7c, Commissioner Roter asked for clarification on the April 13th date for establishing the list and questioned why the eligibility of the two ranks is set to expire on June 1st, 2023. Erin Arinez explained the April 13th date is a typo and will be corrected in the packet. Furthermore, this was a recruitment for a limited-term assignment, and no current vacancy exists. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein asked if rankings apply when a pool is combined for a limited term. Ms. Arinez explained that the process is not the same as filling a vacancy; everyone is called on. She said the posting notes if the opportunity is open/promotional or to establish a list. When the list comes to the Personnel Commission, there could be a vacancy, but not always; every list is used for both purposes. Vice Chairperson Goldstein asked if the lists could be arranged in the agenda to note which lists are for a vacancy. Ms. Arinez explained that it would only be accurate on the day of the meeting as current vacancies change daily.

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein questioned the names on the hired list versus those on the eligibility list for approval, specifically the Instructional Assistant II, Special Education list. Secretary Castillo explained that this particular list is generated every six weeks, so the employee appearing on the newly hired list is from a previous list. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein noted no date listed for the oral exam on item k. Ms. Arinez pointed out the

error, said it would be corrected, and confirmed there was an oral exam. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein noted the average interval between written and oral exams was 10.4 days, a remarkable feat considering it was a short month. She commended the work of the exam team.

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to ratify eligibility lists a-k with changes made to c,d, and k as discussed; Commissioner Roter seconded the motion,
Approved 3-0

8. Conference Items

a) Step Advance Request – L.Vasquez

Secretary Castillo said that Mr. Vasquez comes to BUSD in an area of great need. He has two years of practical experience working in a similar class at the Long Beach school district, a great letter of recommendation and the degrees to match; BUSD wants to recruit people like Mr. Vasquez. Secretary Castillo strongly supports Mr. Vasquez's request for Step 4 placement. Mr. Vasquez said he was here for the long haul and thanked the Personnel Commission for considering his request. Max Eissler, Director of Technology, said he is happy to bring in someone with technology and school district experience and supports his step-advance request.

Vice Chairperson made a motion to approve Mr. Vasquez's advance step request at Step 4; Commissioner Roter seconded the motion,
Approved, 3-0

9. Public Hearing: Education Code § 45253- Personnel Commission Budget, 2023-2024

Secretary Castillo reiterated that the proposed budget asks for resources necessary to meet District demand, in particular; the (0.5FTE) Administrative Assistant III to support the department; an increased recruitment budget to get people hired faster; and more money for professional development for staff and commissioners, all to better serve the District. He said this budget is reasonable with only conservative increases. Chairperson Zenor-Davis asked how having an Administrative Assistant III has benefited the department. Secretary Castillo noted that the Administrative Assistant III does the work that others in the department were working overtime to accomplish, so now those people are free to do the job they were hired to do. As a result, the department can now provide better customer service and a work product that results in better candidates, more recruitment, and more strategy for solving District issues.

Commissioner Roter said the department is clearly trying to accomplish some critical tasks over the next few years, and resources are required to do so. He questioned the increases to two budget line items (applications, announcements, copying, recruiting, and advertising). Vice-Chairperson Goldstein said the increases to these budget line items are quite modest. Secretary Castillo said that BCCE is asking for more hard copies because not everyone has a District-provided device for viewing communications electronically. Ms.

Arinez explained that all vendors had raised prices by 20%. Commissioner Roter asked if Assistant Superintendent Follansbee had seen the budget. Secretary Castillo said he submitted the budget and had invited Ms. Follansbee to this and the previous meeting, with no response. Ms. Follansbee's office is aware, but there have not been any discussions.

Mildred Scherr, BCCE Vice-President, mentioned 142 classified vacancies and reiterated that the workload of the Personnel Commission does not support the request for an Administrative Assistant III. Ms. Scherr said the needs of the Admissions Department have been overlooked. Chairperson Zenor-Davis assured that no position had been overlooked and that Administrative Assistant III is needed for the better functioning of the department. He said that sometimes, from the outside, it can be challenging to understand what happens inside a department since so much goes on behind the scenes. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein said she supports the budget as reasonable and rational. Furthermore, no one should assume the 142 classified vacancies had not been recruited for; people are leaving working in schools, and competition is fierce. Commissioner Roter said the 142 vacancies are an argument for more resources and not fewer and that not being directly involved with the work of others can sometimes make a person unaware of the depth of the work being done.

Commissioner Roter moved to adopt the Personnel Commission budget for 2023/24; Vice-Chairperson Goldstein seconded the motion, Approved, 3-0.

10. Public Comments

Ms. Scherr said she and other BCCE members are not confident in the Classification & Compensation Study process, and there are many concerns.

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein said that based on the earlier Classification & Compensation discussion and because of Ms. Scherr's comments, she is enthusiastic about scheduling a special meeting devoted to the Study.

Mr. Hernandez spoke about the promotion process, specifically that administrators sit on a list instead of promoting from within. He said the Personnel Commission could enforce the process and encouraged the Executive Director to do a payroll audit.

Commissioner Roter agreed with Mr. Hernandez's comment and said that having an advancement pipeline is tremendous and needs to be encouraged. He said this needs to be discussed at a special meeting with District participation.

11. Next Meeting

The commissioners requested three special meetings: Classification & Compensation on May 31st with EHA, BCCE, Human Resources and Steering Committee representation as constituents; staffing/vacancies on June 7th with District Administration (Jill Hoogendyk or Debbie Dean), HR (Samantha Tobias-Espinosa) and the Unions as constituents; and recruitment in August at a date still to be determined. Before the June 7th meeting, the commissioners requested a report identifying when a vacancy occurred and any patterns within classifications, categories and sites. They also request pertinent language from the Education Code, the Merit Rules and the current bargaining unit agreements.

12. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:35 pm.