

Berkeley Unified School District
Personnel Commission Meeting Minutes

June 7th, 2023 – 4:00 pm

1. Call to Order

The meeting was held in a hybrid format, live in Room 126 (2020 Bonar St.) and via Zoom meeting #852 7339 2873. The meeting was called to order at 4:06 p.m.

2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum

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

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve and adopt the meeting agenda; Chairperson Zenor-Davis seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

5. Conference Items

a) Step Advance Request – J.Rivas

Secretary Castillo said Ms. Rivas has excellent acumen regarding her education and over 20 years of administrative experience with the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory and the City of San Pablo; he strongly supports Ms. Rivas' request for a step 5 advance. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein asked for clarity on the role Ms. Rivas will fill. Secretary Castillo said she will be an Administrative Assistant III at the Berkeley Adult School. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein and Secretary Castillo discussed and clarified the schedule for step increases based on a June hire date. Commissioner Roter said that Ms. Rivas is extremely qualified and asked for verification that the recruitment for the Administrative Assistant III is, in fact, difficult. Secretary Castillo explained that the Administrative Assistant III position is not as difficult to recruit for as it was last year; however, the higher level of the classification usually results in fewer qualified applicants, and it is not an easy position to fill. Ms. Rivas said she is excited and ready to join the BUSD team.

Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve Ms. Rivas' step advance request at Step 5; Commissioner Roter seconded the motion,

Approved, 3-0

b) Step Advance Request – J. Battle

Secretary Castillo said that Ms. Stroud-Battle has a child development certificate and extensive teaching and supervisory experience. Although Ms. Stroud-Battle requested a Step 4, Secretary

Castillo found in his analysis that she merits a Step 5. Ms. Battle thanked the Personnel Commission for their consideration and said she brings 20 years of experience to the role and looks forward to continuing her family's legacy at BUSD. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein noted a typo on the Step 5 hourly rate listed in the agenda packet; the correct hourly rate was determined to be \$48.38. Commissioner Roter commented that Ms. Stroud-Battle is tremendously qualified for the position and will be a tremendous asset to the District. He referenced merit rule 70.100.1, which indicates the requirement that recruitment be difficult as the threshold for consideration of a step advance. Secretary Castillo said that he believed it was a difficult recruitment. Commissioner Roter asked for clarification as to the number of After School Site Coordinators coming into the role; Secretary Castillo confirmed the number to be 12. Chairperson Zenor-Davis highlighted a parent letter of recommendation as a testament to Ms. Stroud-Battle's professional character and personal demeanor; he welcomed Ms. Stroud-Battle to the District. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein made a motion to approve Ms. Stroud-Battle's step advance request at Step 5; Commissioner Roter seconded the motion, Approved, 3-0

c) Establish Classification – Executive Director Fiscal Services

Secretary Castillo explained that he had met with Pauline Follansbee, Assistant Superintendent of Business Services, and Samantha Tobias-Espinosa, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, to determine the best way forward in recruiting for the vacancy left behind from Liz Karam's retirement. Previous recruitments using the Director of Fiscal Services job description did not produce qualified candidates. Mr. Castillo, Ms. Follansbee and Ms. Tobias-Espinosa determined that upgrading the job title to Executive Director and emphasizing the financial services experience in a school district would considerably open up the applicant pool. Mr. Castillo determined that the appropriate salary range would be Range 89, that of other Executive Directors in the District. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein expressed concern that the minimum qualifications on the job description do not require the candidate to hold a CPA. She feels that having that knowledge in the role is essential, especially when audits are involved. She explained that this is a successor position and feels it would be hard to explain that the second in command of Fiscal Services did not have a CPA. Commissioner Roter said he served on the audit committee and is familiar with this position. He agrees that this is a hugely important job, especially in guiding the audit and providing all the documentation to the auditors. He was uncomfortable making the suggested change without conversing with Ms. Follansbee and feared that making the CPA a requirement would be a potential recruitment barrier. Glendaly Gascot-Rios, Director of Human Resources, reiterated that adding the CPA as a requirement will not advance recruitment and potentially cause the District to miss out on qualified candidates. She stressed that if Ms. Follansbee feels comfortable making the CPA a desirable qualification, the Personnel Commission should follow her recommendation. Chairperson Zenor-Davis agreed with

Commissioner Roter that any changes should be cleared with Ms. Follansbee and said that since the CPA is listed as desirable, CPA's may apply. He said he prefers to keep it as "highly desirable" and cast a wider net on the applicant pool. Vice-Chairperson Goldstein noted that the advantage of a CPA is having someone with a solid technical understanding of the rules and the knowledge to work with the auditors and external contractors. Ms. Follansbee said that CPA's will not come to a school district and reiterated that the CPA should not be required because many qualified individuals are not CPA's. She added that the CPA is a great qualification, but it is not helpful without management experience or background in school districts. Chairperson Zenor-Davis and Commissioner Roter agreed that the CPA should remain a "highly desirable" but not a "required" qualification for the role.

Commissioner Roter made a motion to establish the Executive Director of Fiscal Services as written; Chairperson Zenor-Davis seconded the motion; Vice-Chairperson Goldstein voted against.

Approved, 2-1

6. Public Comments

Secretary Castillo reported that the Classification & Compensation Steering Committee met yesterday and said that Erica Williams, field rep for BCCE, had joined the committee. He said that the committee would like to meet more frequently, and he believes that Phase 2 will have better participation.

Mildred Scherr, BCCE Vice President, said she hopes the Personnel Commission will put as much effort into filling BCCE vacancies as they had invested in discussing the Executive Director Fiscal Services class description.

7. Next Meeting

The next regular meeting of the Personnel Commission will be on Friday, June 23, at 1:00 p.m. in the Boardroom.

8. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 5:16 p.m.