Berkeley Unified School District

The Board Room, 1231 Addison Street,
Berkeley CA 94702

Personnel Commission

Isaiah Roter, Chairperson | Timothy Carter, Vice-Chairperson | Heidi Goldstein, Commissioner
Erin Arinez, Secretary

Special Meeting Agenda

October 1st, 2024 –10:00 am

1. Call to Order — **Chairperson Roter**

2. Roll Call & Establishment of Quorum — **Chairperson Roter**

3. Public Comments (15-minute limit) — **Public**

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on Personnel Commission business, not on the agenda. The time limit is five minutes per individual and a total of fifteen minutes per subject. No action can be taken by the Commission.

4. Approval & Adoption of Agenda — **Chairperson Roter**

5. Conference Item — **Chairperson Roter**

a) Classification & Compensation Study: Personnel Commission Recommendation & Referral to the District, ***Attachment A***

6. Public Comments (15-minute limit) — **Public**

This is an opportunity for the public to comment on Personnel Commission business, not on the agenda. The time limit is five minutes per individual and a total of fifteen minutes per subject. No action can be taken by the Commission.

7. Next Meeting — **Chairperson Roter**

Follow-up items for next Personnel Commission Meeting.

8. Adjournment — **Chairperson Roter**

Agendas and minutes of Personnel Commission meeting are available at the District's website, www.berkeleyschools.net. Also, in accordance with the Brown Act and Government Code § 54957.5 (b)(1), writings that are related to an agenda item for an open session of a regular meeting, that are public records not otherwise exempt from disclosure and that are distributed less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, shall be made available for public inspection at the time the writings are distributed to at least the majority of Commissioners. The public may request copies of the records at the District's Human Resources office at 2020 Bonar Street, Berkeley, CA 94702.

PERSONNEL COMMISSION
BERKELEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
October 1st, 2024

AGENDA ITEM 5 a.

SUBJECT: CLASSIFICATION AND COMPENSATION STUDY: PERSONNEL COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION TO THE DISTRICT AND REPORT

BACKGROUND

In 2022, the Personnel Commission of the Berkeley Unified School District engaged EH&A/MGT to conduct a comprehensive classification and compensation study for its classified staff, which consists of approximately 620 employees across three units: confidential, classified management, and unrepresented staff. Many job specifications are outdated, requiring revisions to accurately reflect current roles and responsibilities, as the last major study was performed during the 2013-2014 school year. Employee requests for reclassifications have further complicated salary structures.

EH&A/MGT has presented preliminary findings and recommendations in multiple phases throughout 2023 and 2024, aiming to align job descriptions with current positions and ensure competitive salaries relative to similar districts. The Personnel Commission is now referring these findings to the Board of Education for approval, although concerns have been raised by the Berkeley Council of Classified Employees (BCCE) regarding earlier phases of the recommendations.

The study underscores that while BUSD attracts quality talent through various intangible benefits, there remains a need for competitive compensation, particularly in specialized roles. The Personnel Commission recommends the development of a compensation philosophy that outlines how pay decisions align with the district's values and strategic goals. This philosophy would help to ensure fair, competitive, and transparent compensation practices over time.

The Personnel Commission also suggests that an ongoing review process for classification and compensation be established and that a new position be added to its team to manage this continuity effectively.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S RECOMMENDATION

I suggest the Personnel Commission proceed with the Class and Compensation Study recommendations for Local 21, Unrepresented Management, and Confidential Employees. Additionally, I recommend that the BCCE job descriptions be presented to the District for negotiations, as detailed in the attached referral, which will be forwarded to the Board of Education.

ATTACHMENT A

Berkeley
PUBLIC SCHOOLS
Berkeley Unified School District

Office of the Personnel Commission
1005 Parker Street
Berkeley, CA 94710

The Personnel Commission of the Berkeley Unified School District hired EH&A/MGT in 2022 to conduct a district-wide classification and compensation study for classified service positions. Currently, the District employs around 620 classified staff organized into three units—confidential, classified management, and unrepresented staff. However, many job specifications remain outdated and need revision to accurately represent essential job functions and skills. The last comprehensive classification and compensation study was conducted during the 2013-2014 school year under the guidance of the Personnel Commission.

Throughout the past years, employees and their representatives have made numerous requests for reclassifications, which may have led to disruptions in established salary structures and job hierarchies when approached individually. As the District continues evolving to enhance educational delivery, new job descriptions have surfaced that require alignment with outdated classification and pay frameworks.

Most recently, the Personnel Commission completed a district-wide Classification and Compensation Study. A preliminary report detailing the findings and recommendations was presented for discussion by phase at Personnel Commission meetings on May 31, 2023 (Phase 1), November 8, 2023 (Phase 2), and June 28, 2024 (Phases 3 and 4). For this study, the Commission relied on the recommendations, findings, and supporting data provided by the consultant EH&A while maintaining overall responsibility for the study's execution. Additionally, a Steering Committee composed of 12 classified employees representing BCCE, Local 21, Confidential and unrepresented management met regularly throughout the course of study, to help guide the process. This study aimed to ensure job descriptions were aligned with current roles and responsibilities while determining whether salaries were competitive with similar positions in other districts. The primary objectives of this ongoing initiative are to enhance competitive compensation compared to similar districts, attract top talent, and retain a high-quality workforce.

The Personnel Commission is now referring the Study’s results to the Board of Education and recommends that the Board approve the suggested recommendations (revised job descriptions, title changes and reclassifications) for Local 21, unrepresented management, and confidential employees (Phase 3) consistent with budgetary constraints and operational requirements. However, BCCE has raised concerns regarding the recommendations for its members outlined in the report for Phase 1 and Phase 2. The Personnel Commission advises that the relevant BCCE job descriptions be brought forward to the District for negotiations. It is the role of the Board of Education, as advised by the District’s administration, to determine the job duties of all positions in the District. The Personnel Commission believes that the revised job descriptions produced by the Study can serve as a valuable guide for further discussion and evaluation by the parties.

By referring the Classification and Compensation Study to the Board of Education and the District Administration, the Personnel Commission has reviewed the minimum qualifications, the knowledge base, skills and abilities and the class titles. The Personnel Commission requests that the Board of Education and District administration study the essential functions (main duties) and compensation indicated in the Study and direct staff to negotiate its impacts and terms with the employee organizations as appropriate.

The Personnel Commission consistently observes that BUSD successfully attracts talent for reasons beyond the basic compensation and benefits offered to employees. These "intangibles," such as modern, attractive educational facilities, curriculum and pedagogy innovations, and the quality of professional colleagues, are important determinants of BUSD's compensation approach - we do not compete on wages alone but also should not rely on intangibles to attract talent for key roles where compensation is not competitive. Reasoned choices around how BUSD resources are allocated for different job types will support competitiveness in key areas requiring specialized skills and abilities while keeping BUSD relevant where the labor pool is more plentiful for more generalized assignments.

Because the data from a compensation study is best utilized in the context of an organization's overall values and compensation goals, the Personnel Commission recommends that BUSD consider developing a compensation (pay) philosophy to guide subsequent actions. A compensation philosophy is the strategic articulation of how compensation choices are made within the organization. It is the foundational framework that guides decisions about how to pay employees and is based on the organization's vision, mission, values, and strategic objectives.

A compensation philosophy can help BUSD hire fairly, competitively, and affordably and remain equitable in its hiring practices over time. It should be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect current business factors such as the annual state education budget and revised agreements with union partners. The philosophy is usually developed by the human resources department in collaboration with the executive team.

Some key principles that a pay philosophy might include are:

- Compensation should be based on data, such as that provided by the 2023 Classification and Compensation study;
- Compensation approach should address all levels within the organization but not necessarily applied as "one size fits all" across all job types;
- Compensation practices should be transparent

The Personnel Commission believes that the Classification & Compensation review for BUSD should become an ongoing practice to make the process more manageable and effective for the Classified service. The Commission recommends that a new position be added to the PC team to manage this process internally in the future.