

Personnel Commission

2019 – 2020 Annual Report

Berkeley Unified School District

Personnel Commission

The Berkeley Unified School District Personnel Commission, established in 1943, is one of the oldest established personnel commissions in northern California. It is authorized by the Education Code and our Merit System rules and regulations. A “merit system” of employment is like a civil service system. It only applies to the District’s classified employees (those employees who are not required to maintain a teaching credential). The purpose of the merit system is to ensure that classified employees are selected, promoted and retained on the basis of merit and fitness without favoritism or bias.

The Personnel Commission is an independent body composed of three members and is an entity separate from the BUSD Human Resource Office. One commissioner is selected by the governing board, one commissioner is selected by the largest classified employee collective bargaining unit, and one commissioner is selected by the other two commissioners. Commissioners are appointed for a staggered three-year term. The term of one commissioner expires each year.

PERSONNEL COMMISSION TRANSACTION	07/01/17 to 06/30/18	07/01/18 to 06/30/19	07/01/19 to 06/30/20
Promotional Appointments	7	22	21
New-Hire Appointments	55	108	58
Separation from Service	35	73	48
Layoffs	4	1	3
Rehires	3	6	8

RECRUITMENT/SELECTION ACTIVITY	07/01/17 to 06/30/18	07/01/18 to 06/30/19	07/01/19 to 06/30/20
Number of Recruitments	90	74	81
Applications Received	2220	1196	1756
Written Examinations Conducted	857	762	802
Qualification Interviews Conducted	256	260	298
Performance Examinations Conducted	75	88	42
Eligibility Lists Established	71	66	68

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Timothy Carter, Chairperson



Timothy Carter is a local business owner and an active member of the Berkeley Unified School District community. He has children that attend Berkeley Unified Schools. He is a member of Berkeley High’s PCAD parent group and served on the Parent Advisory Committee to review and advise on the BUSD’s adoption of the LCAP. Timothy was appointed in 2012 to serve as Personnel Commissioner and was the Chair of the Commission for 2014 and for 2017 and 2020. He is currently a Candidate for Berkeley City Council.

Heidi Goldstein, Vice-Chairperson



Heidi Goldstein has lived in Berkeley since 1991. Her two children are BUSD alumni. She was appointed to the Personnel Commission by State Superintendent Torlakson in February 2016. She has served as a board member of the Berkeley HS Development Group, and on the BUSD Sexual Harassment Advisory Committee (SHAC). She is currently the board chair of Stop Sexual Assault in Schools and an adult advisor to the nationally recognized student-led grass roots organization BHS Stop Harassing.

Vacant, Commissioner

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Director of Classified Personnel and Secretary to the Personnel Commission - Kimberle Sanders was raised in Berkeley, and started school in the Berkeley Public schools. After graduation from college she started an insurance business in Alameda California. After 15 years she decided to sell the business to spend more time with her three children, who were students in the Berkeley Unified School District. While working on a masters degree in public administration, she began working for a noted affordable housing development organizing in HR and Operations management. Kimberle came to BUSD in 2015 as the Risk Manager and Benefits Supervisor, and joined the Personnel Commission as the Director of Classified Personnel in January of 2020.

WHAT IS THE MERIT SYSTEM?

Personnel Commissions are a part of a system of personnel administration termed the "merit system." Legal guidelines for the merit system in California school districts are outlined in Education Code Sections 45240 to 45320 and 88000 to 88180 and are based upon the following general principles:

Employment and promotion on the basis of merit as shown by competitive examination: Employees for positions in the classified service are to be chosen by impartial selection methods to ensure that merit is the prime factor in employment. In addition, the Personnel Commission shall establish recruitment methods that will reach all segments of eligible applicants within an appropriate geographical area.

Career service: Employees are encouraged to remain with and to promote within a given agency; thus, the School District has the benefit of retaining the services of qualified persons it has selected and trained. As part of a career service, examinations are given on a "promotional only" basis whenever possible with only district employees allowed to compete. Like pay for like service: Positions in the public service are carefully delineated according to type and level so that all employees performing similar tasks at the same level of difficulty and responsibility are compensated equally.

Impartial hearing of appeals from disciplinary actions: An employee may appeal a disciplinary action (such as a suspension, demotion, or dismissal), and is entitled to request a hearing by the Personnel Commission to ensure that due process and fair play have been observed.

Prohibition against discrimination: No person can be denied a job or promotion because of affiliations, race, color, national origin, ancestry, age, religious beliefs, marital status, sex, sexual preference, sexual harassment, disability, medical condition, employee organization membership or non-membership, legal activities, political beliefs or acts as provided in the California Education Code.

This was a historically challenging year for BUSD and the world at large as we battled the COVID pandemic. Fiscal year 19/20 started much like any other year, but as we entered the last quarter of the year under a mandatory shelter-in-place order; employees began working remotely and students completed the school year at home. The Personnel Commission staff had to quickly switch gears to accommodate recruitment in the time of COVID, with remote testing and virtual interviews becoming the norm. The commission had (6) reclass requests, and (3) advanced step requests. Even with a three month slow down due to COVID, promotional appointments for the year were up by (1) from the prior year, new hire appointments were down 46%, commensurately, separations were down 34.2%, making the ratio between separations and new hires only a 1.7% difference compared to a 3.2% difference the prior year. Notably, the recruiting efforts of the PC team, even with three months of the year affected by the complications of recruiting and testing during COVID, saw a 9.5% increase in the amount of recruitments. The PC team processed 1756 applications, which amounts to a 47% increase over the prior year. Due to social distancing requirements of COVID, Performance examinations were down by almost half from the previous fiscal year, and the established eligibility list increased by (2), with written exams up 5.2%, and Qualification Interviews conducted were up 14.62 %.

I wish to extend my thanks and appreciation to the Personal Commission team and the Commissioners for all of their efforts and support as I navigated my way through what will prove to be a historic year, and my first year as the Director of Classified Personnel. Additionally, I wish to thank the entire BUSD HR team for the work they do to support the value of the merit system.

Sincerely,
Kimberle Sanders