

# Personnel Commission

2020-2021 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   | 07/01/18 to 06/30/19 | 07/01/19 to 06/30/20 | 07/01/20 to 06/30/21 |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Promotional Appointments           | 21                   | 21                   | 26                   |
| New-Hire Appointments              | 108                  | 58                   | 43                   |
| Separation from Service            | 73                   | 48                   | 49                   |
| Layoffs                            | 1                    | 3                    | 1                    |
| Rehires                            | 6                    | 8                    | 1                    |
| RECRUITMENT/SELECTION ACTIVITY     | 07/01/18 to 06/30/19 | 07/01/19 to 06/30/20 | 07/01/20 to 06/30/21 |
| Number of Recruitments             | 74                   | 81                   | 74                   |
| Applications Received              | 1196                 | 1756                 | 1331                 |
| Written Examinations Conducted     | 762                  | 802                  | 774                  |
| Qualification Interviews Conducted | 260                  | 298                  | 278                  |
| Performance Examinations Conducted | 88                   | 42                   | 22                   |
| Eligibility Lists Established      | 66                   | 68                   | 45                   |

## Personnel Commission

### Heidi Goldstein , 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 (2014-2018), and is a member of 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. Term expires 2024.

### Isaiah Roter, Vice-Chairperson



Isaiah Roter has lived in Berkeley since attending UC Berkeley in 1969. He is a retired labor attorney and has served on the BUSD Audit Committee since its founding in 2005. He volunteers in a seventh grade humanities class at King Middle School where he helps with distance learning. Isaiah’s son is a proud graduate of Berkeley High School, Class of 2004. Isaiah also served on the City of Berkeley’s Personnel Board for 16 years. He was appointed to the BUSD Personnel Commission by the School Board in October 2020. Term expires 2022.

### Timothy Zenor-Davis, Commissioner



Timothy Zenor-Davis has been a Berkeley resident for 25 years. His two children are BUSD students. He was appointed to the Personnel Commission by B.C.C.E. in 2021. Tim has served on the 2020 Vision Design Team (2014-2017), he was a member of B.O.C.A. (Berkeley Organizing Congregations for Action, 2010-2014), and facilitated anti-violence workshops at Berkeley Technical High School. In his professional work, Tim is a Program Coordinator for Roots Community Health Center. Term expires 2023.

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**Executive Director of Classified Personnel and Secretary to the Personnel Commission - Charlie Castillo** was raised in Miami, FL and lives in San Francisco with his wife and three daughters. Mr. Castillo brings over 23 years of public service as a Human Resources professional. Charlie has served as the Human Resources Director for both the City of Petaluma and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. He has also worked at the General Services Agency, San Francisco Airport Commission as well as with the San Francisco Unified School District. Charlie has been a Board member (2012-2015) of the San Francisco Conservation Corps, served as Program Chair (2012-2016) for CALPELRA and is currently a Board member for IPMA San Francisco Bay Area Chapter.

## 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. 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 year saw continued staffing challenges brought on by COVID-19, a changing national political landscape, and families forced to relocate due to job loss, illness, or an unpredictable economy. Additionally, two Commissioner vacancies and the resignation of a Personnel Director in December 2020 introduced operational turbulence during the 2020-2021 school year. Despite all of that, I am glad to share a positive and promising outlook for the future ahead.

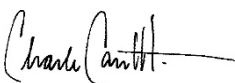
With the assistance and direction of Commissioners and Commission staff, the Personnel Commission started the calendar year 2021 with an executive search, a new recruitment plan, and a renewed sense of urgency as the District's hiring freeze, initiated in the fall of 2020 ended, and the Superintendent called on the Personnel Commission and District staff to rise to the challenge of fully re-opening schools to in-person learning in August 2021. New initiatives to reboot the commission's recruitment and exam capabilities are underway and producing strong results. A great many thanks need to go to Phillip Gordillo who stepped well outside of his usual role of Executive Director of the California School Personnel Commissioners Association in order to serve as the Interim Executive Director of Classified Personnel for BUSD for several months. His leadership, counsel, and continued support were a key to our success during this year and he continues to be an essential resource to the Personnel Commission and Commission staff.

Despite the hiring freeze and staff turnover, 20/21 saw Commission staff process 1,331 applications, and conduct 74 recruitments, 1,074 exams, and 69 new-hires and promotions. These numbers are a testament to commission staff's dedication and professionalism.

With dropping enrollment and a current year budget deficit, challenges remain. However, I am very optimistic these will be matched and resolved through determination, enthusiasm, and the support of our strong parent community, continued dedication from our teaching and classified staff, and our very supportive and active commission members. Looking into 21/22 we are continuing to update and improve our recruitment and exam processes with diversity initiatives, streamlining our process, engaging a broad array of local community resources, and reimagining staff training. We are updating merit rules and working with intention to further stakeholder partnerships with our Unions, District staff, Human Resources, and the Superintendent. I'm grateful for my colleagues' supportive and forward thinking which I'm confident will build success in the coming year.

I want to thank the Commissioners for their unconditional support. They have made themselves available since my first day on the job answering every question and taking every meeting. I have an amazing staff. Their commitment and dedication inspire me every day. I am extremely excited about what can be achieved in 21/22, and I am proud to serve you in my capacity as Executive Director and Secretary to the Personnel Commission!

Best to you and yours,



Charlie Castillo  
Executive Director, Classified Personnel