



2020-2021

Personnel Commission Annual Report

Santa Cruz City Schools





About Santa Cruz City Schools

Santa Cruz City Schools (SCCS) is comprised of an elementary and a secondary district, governed by one Board of Education. The district serves students residing in the City of Santa Cruz and in county locations from Davenport to Soquel. Santa Cruz City Schools is comprised of approximately 6,140 students K - 12, 460 certificated teachers, librarians, and administrators, and 360 classified employees. SCCS offers preschool and pre-kindergarten programs, comprehensive K-12 programs, a home-school program, a continuation high school, and independent studies.

Introduction

Merit System

The merit system is a method of personnel management which is designed to promote the efficiency and economy of the workforce and the good of the public by providing for the selection and retention of employees, promotional opportunities, in-service training, and other related matters on the basis of merit, fitness, and the principle of "like pay for like work."

The first merit system law for school districts was established in 1936. California led the national movement to implement the merit system in school districts when, as a result of a disgraceful patronage system in the Los Angeles Unified School District, more than 700 non-teaching employees were fired on the day after a school board election in order to make room for hiring political "spoilsmen" for their positions.

The Merit System was created to ensure that school districts hire and promote qualified classified employees through consistent and lawful testing and hiring practices. This is accomplished through a set of rules adopted by the Personnel Commission and is subject to the provisions of the California Education Code. Santa Cruz City Schools adopted the Merit System in 1967. The Merit System operates in approximately 96 California school districts. Almost 60% of all classified school personnel in the state work under the Merit System.

Personnel Commission

The Personnel Commission establishes and enforces rules to ensure equitable selection, promotion and retention of employees based on merit and fitness, without favoritism or prejudice. It recruits and tests applicants for all classified positions within the District in such a manner as to obtain the best employees possible.

Responsibilities for the Personnel Commission are provided by Sections 45240-45320 of the Education Code. The following activities fall under the purview of the Personnel Commission:

- Recruit and advertise to fill vacant classified positions
- Accept and screen applications
- Set procedures for determining applicant eligibility
- Determine type of qualifying examination to be given
- Construct and administer examinations
- Set up interview panels and score examinations



Personnel Commission continued

- Establish eligibility lists for appointment and promotion
- Certify top three ranks to site administrator for employment
- Establish and maintain personnel records for all classified employees
- Classify new positions
- Allocate classes to appropriate ranges on the salary schedule
- Maintain a classification plan and conduct classification studies
- Reclassify positions within occupational groups
- Set procedures to follow for layoff
- Maintain seniority lists
- Hear appeals of suspension, demotion, dismissal, or layoff

The Personnel Commission is an independent body composed of three Personnel Commissioners:

Mark Violante: Mark Violante has been on the Commission since December 1, 2013 and is the union's appointee to the Commission. His term expires on December 1, 2022.

Brian Murtha: Brian Murtha was selected to be the Vice Chair of the Commission in December 2020. He has served on the Commission since August 4, 2015 and is the joint appointee to the Commission. His term expires on December 1, 2023.

Pamela Hernandez: Pamela Hernandez was selected to be the Chair of the Personnel Commission in December 2020. She has served on the Commission since October 3, 2017 and is the Board's appointee to the Commission. Her term expires on December 1, 2021.

Personnel Commission Staff:

Keneé Houser: Director, Classified Personnel

Denice Grogan: Human Resource Specialist: Personnel Commission

Highlights of 2020-2021

- Revised Job Descriptions:
 - Behavior Technician-PBIS
 - Behavior Technician-Special Education
 - Director-Finance
 - Lead Payroll Technician
 - Lead System Support Specialist
 - Office Assistant-District Office
 - Paraeducator
 - Paraeducator-Academic Intervention
 - Paraeducator-After School
 - Paraeducator-Special Education
 - Payroll Technician



Highlights of 2020-2021 continued

- New Job Descriptions:
 - Assistant Director-Maintenance & Operations
 - Chief of Communications & Community Engagement
 - Fleet Technician/School Bus Driver
 - Lead Custodian
 - Nutrition Coordinator
- Merit Rule 600 - Reclassification:
 - Changed the effective date from July 1st to the 1st of the month following Board and Commission approval.
- Merit Rule 1400 - Probation Period:
 - Per AB 1353, took away the exception of extending probation periods beyond 6 months.

Personnel Actions

Appointments:	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
New Hire	75	60	92	67
Promotion	22	6	18	14
Transfer	16	5	11	8
Reinstated	0	1	0	4
Temp Hires	33	28	46	52
Increase FTE	12	21	18	11
Decrease FTE	2	6	3	2
Reclass	3	0	1	0



Personnel Actions continued

Separations:	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Resignation	56	34	58	46
Dismissed	0	0	0	1
Retired	17	9	9	14
Released During Probation	7	2	5	4
Layoff	2	0	4	0
Placed on 39-Month Rehire List	0	2	1	3

Welcome!

The Personnel Commission would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new classified employees for 2020-2021.

- Jacqueline Adler
- Sama AlRashid
- Louisa Ancic
- Jordan Anderson
- Laura Bajurin
- Sean Balke
- Kristen Baniaga
- Cindy Bautista
- Leda Baxley
- Jonathan Benko
- Alyssa Benton
- Tabitha Bernardi
- Maria Bonuccelli
- Marielle Bouchard
- Max Bryer-Bass
- Pilar Carrillo Salinas
- Elva Castillo-Elizondo
- Sydney Corbin
- Samantha De Hart
- Guadalupe Elizarraraz
- Sandie Evans
- Evelyn Flores
- Marciel Gomez Juarez
- Valerie Goodwin
- Claire Grishaw-Jones
- Ana Karen Guerrero Gonzalez
- Jeffrey Hall
- Sergio Hernandez
- Valerie Herrera
- Soledad Hess
- Sara Jakl
- Sofia Johns
- Kathryn Kuszmar
- Jerene Lacey
- Matthew Lamendola
- Jennifer Martinez
- Anna Miller
- Jasha Morales Puzon
- Jacob Myers
- Rhonda Oxley
- Autumn Perez
- Laura Quintero Perez
- Gustavo Ramirez
- Maya Reber
- Ana Rocha
- Sam Rolens
- Beatriz Solorzano
- Kathleen Thompson
- Andrea Tovar-Ramirez
- Ilda Vasquez
- Emma Waters
- Naomi Weizman
- Callie Welch
- Kimberly White
- Jaime Young
- Chelsey Zahn
- Jasmine Zamora



Congratulations!

The Personnel Commission extends out congratulations to the following employees who were promoted in 2020-2021.

- Cindy Baustista
- Trevor Buckley
- Helena Carranza
- Wanda Castellanos
- Kiauna Day-Smith
- Italia De Leon
- Amy Estuesta
- Maia Fernandez
- Ellery Flores
- Ana Goena
- Beatriz Lambert
- Alyssa Martinez
- Ulrich Scholten
- Simone Selder
- Lisa Sliney
- Alexis Vargas
- Daryle Williams
- Klorissa Wofford

Impact of COVID-19 Pandemic

Schools remained in remote learning for the 2020-2021 school year. Classes, meetings, and interviews were all held virtually, via "Zoom." Human Resources had recently moved to onboarding new employees using Frontline Central instead of in-person meetings.

Some classified employees worked remotely from home, while essential administrators, office employees and food service workers worked on a staggered schedule.

Santa Cruz City Schools continued to ensure that all classified staff maintained their positions and pay. School Bus Drivers assisted with food service, maintenance, and custodial work. Campus Safety Supervisors, Yard Duty Monitors, Playground Recess Coaches, and others assisted sites by communicating with families, distributing materials, and assisting sites as needed.

A rough overview follows:

- Start of 20-21, school was offered remotely.
- January 2021 - Small cohorts of students met on campuses
- January 2021 - Vaccines were offered to staff as they became available
- Late March/Early April 2021 - Elementary Schools open for in-person instruction in hybrid fashion
- Late April 2021 - Secondary Schools welcomed students in hybrid fashion

Special Thanks

The Personnel Commission and staff would like to thank the Classified Employees for the work they do to serve the students and staff of Santa Cruz City Schools. We also express our gratitude to the numerous employees who served as panel members on our interview teams. Their assistance is invaluable to the recruitment process and is greatly appreciated.