



2021-2022

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 7,232 students K - 12, 470 certificated teachers, librarians, and administrators, and 404 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, 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. Ed Code Sections 45220-45320 were added, introducing Personnel Commissions to school districts after a lawsuit involving the Los Angeles Unified School District. From 1965 to 1979, 65 School Districts added Personnel Commissions to their districts.

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 94 California school districts.

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:

Brian Murtha: Mr. Murtha has served on the Commission since August 4, 2015 and is the joint appointee to the Commission. His term expires on December 1, 2023.

Carol McKee: Ms. McKee has served on the Commission since February 1, 2022 and is the Board's appointee to the Commission. Her term expires on December 1, 2024.

Mark Violante: Mr. 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, 2025.

Personnel Commission Staff:

Keneé Houser: Director, Classified Personnel

Denice Grogan: Human Resource Specialist, Personnel Commission



Personnel Actions

Personnel Actions:	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
New Hire	160	75	60	92	67
Promotion	29	22	6	18	14
Transfer	16	16	5	11	8
Reinstated	3	0	1	0	4
New Subs & Temp Hires	58	33	28	46	52
Increase FTE	23	12	21	18	11
Decrease FTE	4	2	6	3	2
Reclassification ***	1	3	0	1	0

Separations:	2021-2022	2020-2021	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018
Resignations	100	56	34	58	46
Dismissed	0	0	0	0	1
Retired	9	17	9	9	14
Released During Probation *	13	7	2	5	4
Layoff	0	2	0	4	0
Placed on 39-Month Rehire List **	0	0	2	1	3

* Ed Code 45301 - Probation is a trial period of 130 days during which employees can be released from work without cause.

** Ed Code 45195 states that after employees have exhausted all available leave, they are placed on a 39-month rehire list. They can then be placed into an open position if they are able to return to work during that period.

*** Reclassification occurs when a position is removed and placed into a new or existing position, due to a change in duties over 2 or more years.

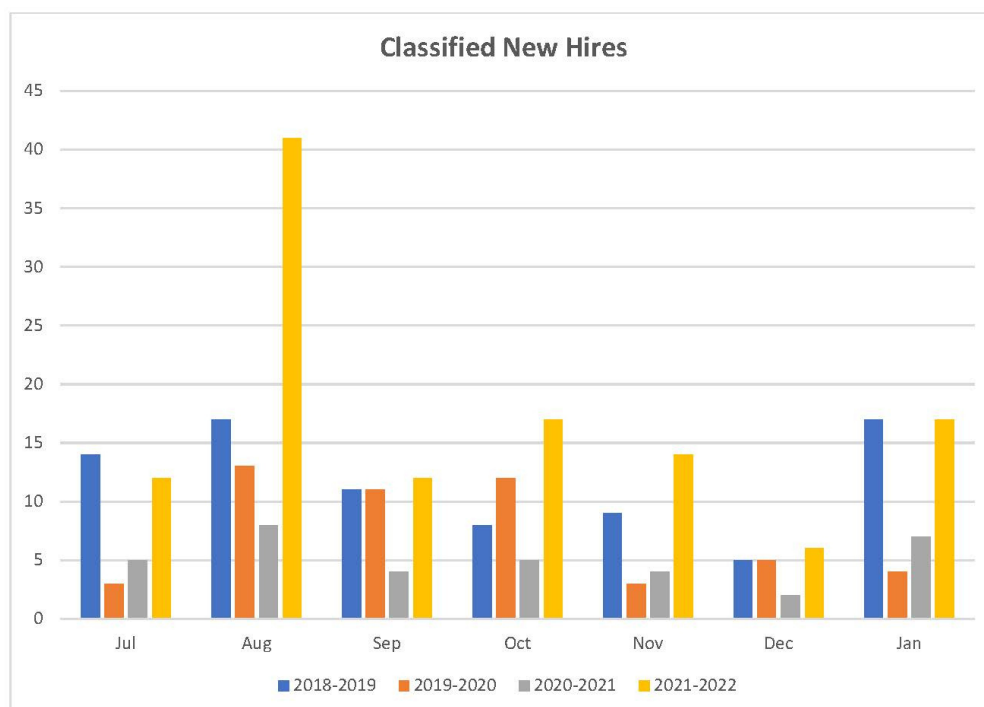


Trends and Changes

Making sense of the data was tricky during the pandemic. There was a decrease in hires in 2019-2020 due to schools closing mid-March 2020. In 2020-2021, hiring began to normalize and return close to the pre-pandemic numbers. In 2021-2022, the District experienced a surge of resignations and new hires. This trend wasn't unique to Santa Cruz City Schools. Throughout the nation, this period was referred to as "the great resignation" as companies and organizations lost employees. At the same time, new COVID (and COVID-related) resources resulted in a significant increase in classified positions such as paraeducators to assist in classrooms and in after school programs, custodians to clean and sanitize classrooms, and food service workers to feed more students.

In the fall of 2021, the Personnel Commission Office struggled to keep up with the volume of openings and new hires. Fall is always a busy time, but this load of work seemed unprecedented. In October, staff began a graph of new hires for each month over the past several years. The data explained the backlog of work to be done. The Human Resources team stepped in to provide more support and took on the role of onboarding new employees - getting fingerprints and TB test results and guiding new employees through the process of completing the necessary new-hire forms. This shift allowed the Personnel Commission to focus on marketing, advertising, recruiting, and testing.

The Personnel Commission advertises on social media platforms including Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, Twitter, and TikTok. Because SCCS hires primarily from the local population, new strategies including posting flyers throughout the county, banners at school sites, and messages to parents through Blackboard have helped to fill positions. QR codes have been added to all promotional materials to assist interested applicants in the application process.





Highlights of 2021-2022

- Revised Job Descriptions:
 - Day Custodian
 - Director -Information Technology
 - Food Service Worker I
 - Groundskeeper I
 - Groundskeeper II
 - Groundskeeper III
 - Mental Health Specialist
 - Night Custodian
 - Paraeducator - TK
 - Project Coordinator
- Job Title Changes:
 - Instructor-Lead School Bus Driver
- New Job Descriptions:
 - Athletic Trainer
 - COVID Prevention Manager
 - Fleet Technician 2 / School Bus Driver
 - Nutrition Outreach Instruction Specialist
- Merit Rule 1400 - Probation Period:
 - Employees on the Classified Salary Schedule and Licensed Professionals Salary Schedule who have served an initial probationary period in a class not to exceed six (6) months or 130 days of paid service, whichever is longer, shall be deemed to be in the permanent classified service.
 - Employees on the Confidential Salary Schedule and Classified Management Salary Schedule who have served an initial probationary period of one (1) year shall be deemed to be in the permanent classified service. (EC45301).
- Meetings & Conferences:
 - Eleven (11) total Personnel Commission Meetings (one per month except July).
 - The Director, Human Resource Specialist and a Commissioner attended the School Personnel Commission Association / Northern California Conference in Lafayette, CA on October 18, 2021.
 - The Director and two (2) Commissioners attended the California School Personnel Commission Association Conference in Monterey, CA on March 6-8, 2022.
- Job Fairs:
 - July 24, 2021 - Classified Job Fair - Harbor High School
 - March 5, 2022 - Certificated & Classified - Job Fair - Harbor High School



Welcome!

The Personnel Commission would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following new classified employees for 2021-2022.

- Katie Arnold
- Cynthia Ayala Melendres
- Isabella Bachman
- Cassandra Blume
- Kimberly Bradbrook
- Stu Branoff
- Mayahan Carmona Anzures
- Leah Carrillo
- Soledad Carvajal
- Abigayle Casarez
- Nicholas Cavazos
- Laura Chavez Cruz
- Maria (Rosario) Chavez De Avila
- Sydney Corbin
- Abigail Cortes
- Estevan Cortez
- Cynthia Cripe
- Barbara Crosser
- Jessica Cuttriss
- Joanna Danielson
- Jennifer Dumas
- Lucy Famanian
- Javier Fernandez
- Mirtala Garcia
- Elizabeth Garcia Avila
- Ruben Garcia Santos
- Yesenia Garcia-Montesdeoc
- Kelly Gardner
- Linda Getz
- Leana Godoy
- Nancy Gonzalez
- Eli Guzman
- Jesse Henderson
- Erick Hernandez Munoz
- Rebecca Heymann
- Nicole Hilton Sutlick
- Yvette Jones
- Mia Keenan
- Mark Kemerling
- Megan Kiernan
- Karla Kirch
- Leslie Lapp
- Prima Long
- Roy Lopez
- Wednesday Manners
- Hilda Marquez
- Rosa Martinez
- Perla Martinez-Garzia
- Rachel Martinez-Steele
- Julianne May
- Mockalee McDonald
- Wayne McFaddin
- Jesus Medina
- Cesar Melendez
- Irene Miller
- Cory Montanez
- Mariela Montes Barraga
- Gina Morning
- Mayra Munoz Trejo
- TJ Orlando
- Senka Pavisic-Bogren
- Liliana Perez Fuentes
- Francisca Perez Fuller
- Felix Perez Jimenez
- Wendy Ramirez Vilchez
- Gary Resendes
- Penske Ripley-Phipps
- Stephanie Rodriguez
- Kimberly Sakellis
- Martin Sanchez Ortega
- Paula Sandas-Harvey
- Bryan Shinsato
- Rhiannon Soto
- Ally Stutzman
- Amanda Thomas
- Aud Vagseth
- Jorge Valdez
- Karina Vargas
- Raymundo Velasco Cuevas
- Amy Vincent
- Marilu Viveros
- Peggy Waters
- Nick Watson
- Juliette Wong
- Kevin Yates
- Mary Youngdale
- Mario Zamora



Congratulations!

The Personnel Commission would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the following classified employees for promoting in 2021-2022.

- Yesenia Anaya Mendez
- Mario Avila Moreno
- Jory Berdan
- Jason Blyston
- Ruth Dimarzio
- Sandie Evans
- Todd Hammonds
- Sara Jakl
- Beth Laurance
- Areli Lopez
- Eddie Moreno
- Alicia Reyes
- Martin Sanchez Ortega
- Beatriz Solorzano
- Fernando Uribe Figueroa
- April Walls
- Julie Williams

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.