



**Lompoc Unified School District**

# **THE MERIT SYSTEM**

## **Classified Personnel**

**Classified Staff Development Day**  
**March 9, 2012**

# THE MERIT SYSTEM – Classified Personnel

## Presentation Overview

- ☑ What is a “Merit System”
- ☑ Personnel Commissioners & Personnel Commission Staff
- ☑ History of the Merit System
- ☑ Responsibilities & Duties of the Personnel Commission
- ☑ History of the Merit System in Lompoc USD
- ☑ Principles of the Merit System
- ☑ Administering the Merit System
- ☑ Advantages of the Merit System



# THE MERIT SYSTEM – Classified Personnel

## What is a “Merit System”

A system of personnel management designed to promote the efficiency of the classified workforce by providing for the selection and retention of employees, promotional opportunities, training, and other related matters, on the basis of merit and fitness demonstrated by competitive examinations and performance.



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## History of the Merit System

**January 16, 1883** – Congress passed the Civil Service Act of 1883 (Pendleton Act), which set up the first civil service system for federal employees to guard against patronage appointments.

**September 15, 1935** – California Assembly Bill 999, known as the *Merit System*, was established and enacted into law. Its purpose was to provide statutory protection to classified employees, through the Education Code, against politically or personally motivated employment, promotion, discipline, or dismissal actions.



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# History of the Merit System in Lompoc Unified School District

- Voted and approved by classified employees – Adopted in 1967.
- Since 1967 the Personnel Commission has been strongly supported by CSEA, the community, administration, and the Board of Education.
- The LUSD Personnel Commission has had 5 Personnel Directors since 1967.



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# Administering the Merit System

### THE PERSONNEL COMMISSION

The Personnel Commission is the merit system agency of the Lompoc Unified School District, operating in cooperation with, but not under the jurisdiction of, the Board of Education. It is composed of three people appointed for three-year staggered terms.



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## Personnel Commissioners & Personnel Commission Staff

### Personnel Commissioners

Gayle Higgason, Chair – Joint Appointee (Since 9/15/94)

Hector Samaniego, Vice–Chair, District Appointee (Since 9/1/04)

Joyce Gehlhaar, Member, CSEA Appointee (Since 12/1/05)

### Personnel Commission Staff

Cynthia Carrillo, Director, Classified Personnel

Katherine E. Brown, Personnel Analyst

Lisa Smith, Personnel Assistant



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# Responsibilities & Duties of the Personnel Commission

The Personnel Commission has three core responsibilities as defined in the California Education Code.

1. **Oversee a personnel management program based on merit principals.**
2. **Develop and administer policies governing employment matters.**
3. **Conduct appeal hearings.**





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## Responsibilities & Duties of the Personnel Commission –Continued

### Other responsibilities:

Working together with Employees, Management and CSEA to ensure that Merit System Rules and Regulations, Board Policy & Administrative Rules and Regulations, Education Code, Collective Bargaining Agreement, and applicable labor laws are understood and applied fairly and consistently for the understanding and protection of employees and the District.



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## Responsibilities & Duties of the Personnel Commission –Continued

Adopts rules and procedures to be followed concerning such employment subjects as:

- ☑ Applications
- ☑ Classification Plan
- ☑ Discipline (appeals)
- ☑ Employment Eligibility
- ☑ Examinations
- ☑ Hiring
- ☑ Other rules necessary to carry out classified personnel administration
- ☑ Promotions



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## Principles of the Merit System

### *–Five Principles–*

#1. Recruit from all segments of society and select and advance on the basis of relative ability, knowledge and skill through a fair and open competition.

#2. Fair and equitable treatment of applicants and employees without regard to political affiliation, race, color, religion, national origin, sex, marital status, age, disabling condition or sexual orientation.



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# Principles of the Merit System

–continued

#3. Employees are protected from arbitrary employment actions and afforded due process rights consistent with applicable law.

#4. Employees are retained and promoted on the basis of merit, as measured by the adequacy of their performance and professional achievement.

#5. Employees are compensated with the idea of “similar pay for similar work.”



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## ADVANTAGES OF THE MERIT SYSTEM

### *–Ten Advantages–*

1. The Merit System assures selection of qualified job candidates on the basis of merit and fitness through competitive examination.
2. The Merit System assures neutrality in decisions related to hiring, retaining, promoting and discipline matters.
3. The Merit System assures clear personnel practices and procedures are in place thus eliminating guesswork.



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## ADVANTAGES OF THE MERIT SYSTEM – continued

4. The Merit System provides for consistency and assurances that changes in administrative personnel do not result in drastic changes in personnel procedures and policies.
5. The Merit System provides defensible arguments for employment practices and decisions.
6. The Merit System provides for an open and neutral forum for classified employees' concerns.
7. The Merit System provides centralized control of the salary structure, relieving the Board of constant pressure for reclassifications or individual negotiations of salary relationships.



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## ADVANTAGES OF THE MERIT SYSTEM – continued

8. The Merit System provides training opportunities in order for employees to continue to develop and improve themselves personally and professionally.
9. The Merit System protects employees from arbitrary disciplinary actions through the right of appeal and a formal hearing before a neutral party, the Personnel Commission, relieving the Board from conducting appeal hearings on its own disciplinary actions.
10. The Merit System reduces litigation costs associated with employee discipline because the adopted discipline procedures must be followed.



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## RESOURCES

California Education Code – Sections 45240 – 45320 (Relating to Merit System)  
(<http://www.leginfo.ca.gov/calaw.html>)

California School Personnel Commissioners Association – <http://meritsystem.org>

Classified Personnel Office: 1301 North A Street, Lompoc, CA 93436  
(805) 742-3220

LUSD/CSEA Collective Bargaining Agreement (*found on LUSD website*)

LUSD Website: [www.lusd.org](http://www.lusd.org) (*Classified Personnel*)

Merit Rules & Regulations (*found on LUSD website under classified personnel*)

