



# **PERSONNEL COMMISSION HANDBOOK 2026**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Personnel Commission seeks to establish agreed upon and clearly understood operational and procedural practices for both the current and future Personnel Commission Teams in order to support and maintain high-functioning, effective, and efficient teams that benefit students, staff, and the community of the Sonoma County Office of Education (SCOE). This *Handbook* supports and reinforces the practices of the Personnel Commission and is aligned with the Personnel Commission Rules and Regulations, Education Code, and Government Code.

This *Handbook* will also assist and support the smooth transition of new personnel commissioners, Director and support staff as effective members of the Personnel Commission Team and serve as a resource for reviewing protocols, policies, rules, and regulations for the current Personnel Commission team.

It is the responsibility of the Personnel Commission Director to schedule an annual review of this *Handbook* by the Personnel Commission Team to ensure that it remains a viable and useful document for the operation of the Personnel Commission.

## SCOPE STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

| Human Resources Vision                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Our Promise                                                                                                                                                                                     | SCOPE's Mission                                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Through equitable practices and policies, our vision is to support, educate, and collaborate with employees, educators, and school communities to ensure the students of Sonoma County are served by the highest quality professionals.</i> | <i>Ensure that classified school employees are selected, promoted and retained on the basis of merit and fitness, without favoritism or bias, as mandated by the California Education Code.</i> | <i>Foster student success through service to schools, students, and the community</i> |

| Personnel Commission Goals                                                                                                                                                                  |                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <i>Establish and foster collaborative and collegial relationships between and among all SCOPE stakeholders, departments, unions, districts, and agencies.</i>                               | <i>Regularly attend Merit Rule based professional service conferences to learn new programs, procedures and promote positive relationships.</i>                    | <i>The Commissioners shall visit at least two SCOPE programs during the course of a year and report back to the Commission after the visits.</i> |
| <i>Maintain positive and collaborative employee-employer relations through effective contract management and regularly scheduled SCOPE and SEIU Labor Relation Council meetings (SLMC).</i> | <i>Provide support and guidance for staff regarding internal business and personnel systems to allow SCOPE to be more technologically accessible and web-based</i> | <i>Contribute to the overall quality of the educational environment by focusing on the people who make a difference to our students.</i>         |

## THE MERIT SYSTEM

Merit System Law governs classified school personnel and is defined by the California Education Code (Division 4, Chapter 5, Article 6). Its fundamental purpose is to ensure that employees are selected, promoted, and retained based on merit and fitness without favoritism or prejudice. In merit-system school districts and county offices in California, the system is administered by the Personnel Commission, a separate agency authorized by the State to be responsible for certain personnel matters affecting classified school personnel.

Principles of the Merit System include:

- Hire and promote employees on the basis of ability, with open competition in initial appointment.
- Remove appointments to positions from the political arena or personal favoritism.
- Ensure that employees doing like-work are classified alike and receive like-pay.
- Provide for fair, impartial rules and consistency of administration of the rules.
- Assure fair treatment of applicants and employees in all aspects of personnel administration without regard to political affiliation, gender, age, or religious creed, and with proper regard for their privacy and constitutional rights as citizens.

Link to [Merit System Rules and Regulations](#)

## **RULES & REGULATIONS**

The Personnel Commission adopts rules and regulations pursuant to the authority of the County Superintendent of Schools under Chapter 10 commencing with Education Code Section 45240, and other provisions governing the Merit System in the Education Code applicable to school districts and county offices that have adopted the Merit System. The rules and regulations are maintained on the county website:

The Personnel Commission Merit System Rules and Regulations are divided into the following chapters:

- CHAPTER 10 - DEFINITIONS AND PRELIMINARY STATEMENT
- CHAPTER 20 - THE PERSONNEL COMMISSION
- CHAPTER 30- POSITION CLASSIFICATION PLAN
- CHAPTER 40 - APPLICATION AND EXAMINATIONS
- CHAPTER 50 - EMPLOYMENT LISTS AND APPOINTMENTS
- CHAPTER 60 - EMPLOYMENT REQUIREMENTS
- CHAPTER 70 - WAGE AND SALARY PROVISIONS
- CHAPTER 80 - MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

The Personnel Commission operates and conducts its business as outlined in Chapter 20 of the Personnel Commission Merit System Rules and Regulations.

## ROLES OF THE COMMISSION

Among the normal functions of the Sonoma County Office of Education Personnel Commission are the following (*SCOE Personnel Commission Merit System Rules & Regulations Chapter 20*):

- A. Serve as overseer of the Sonoma County Office of Education's merit system by enforcing the merit system and related statutory provisions.
- B. Participate as an advisory opinion in the selection, performance and evaluation of the Director of Human Resource Services in their capacity as the Personnel Administrator.
- C. Adopt a budget, including staffing provisions, for the merit system and office activities, subject to the approval of the County Superintendent of Schools.
- D. Review and approve qualifications for new classifications after the County Superintendent of Schools approves the duties.
- E. Review and approve classification plan guidelines.
- F. Review and approve reclassification recommendations of individual positions.
- G. Recommend salary range placement of classifications to the County Superintendent of Schools.
- H. Approve, maintain and establish eligibility lists.
- I. Establish rules and applicable regulations affecting the classified service (aside from those contained in relevant labor agreements: Article 6, Chapter 5, Part 25, Division 3, Title 2, and applicable provisions of Chapter 1 and Articles 1 to 4, Chapter 5, Part 25, Division 3 (Education Code Section 1317), pertaining to the merit system.
- J. Review various personnel transactions making recommendations to the County Superintendent of Schools on certain transactions.
- K. Serve as or appoint a hearing panel upon appeal from employees on formal discipline.
- L. Support the administration of SCOE's Equity Action Plan as it pertains to classified employees.

## ETHICS & BELIEFS

Statement of Ethics and Beliefs of Personnel Commission and Personnel Commission Staff:

We, the Personnel Commission and staff of the Personnel Commission of Sonoma County Office of Education shall honor and support the goals of the Superintendent of Schools and Board of Education;

We will implement the merit system with a blind eye to any particular group, reinforcing the principle that favoritism shall not enter into any decisions made by staff or the Personnel Commission;

We will make all decisions on the merit, free from partiality, prejudice or conflicts of interest and we will fulfill our responsibilities and use our positions to advance public interest, not for personal gain;

We will conduct all business openly, efficiently, equitably, and honorably so the public can make informed judgments and hold public officials and employees accountable;

We will honor and respect democratic principles; observe the letter and spirit of the laws, carry out in good faith all rules and regulations of the Personnel Commission and policies of the Superintendent of Schools and the Governing Board in the mutual interest of the employees, students, and the community we serve;

We will safeguard the public confidence in the integrity of the merit system and public service by avoiding appearances of impropriety and conduct unbefitting public officials and public employees;

We will treat all persons fairly, with respect and dignity; we will honor our responsibilities by behaving in a trustworthy and responsible manner; and we will conduct ourselves in an ethical manner free of conflict of interest at all times;

We will support the educational program of SCOE through efforts to recruit and provide to SCOE the most qualified classified employees possible;

We will ensure the efficiency of the classified service through well-defined processes free from partiality, prejudice, or conflicts of interest in recruiting, testing, selecting, promoting, and retaining qualified employees;

In that equal employment opportunity is a keystone of the merit system principles, and a diverse workplace is important in fostering strong relationships among people of different cultures, we will strive to ensure diversity in the candidates available for selection;

Service as an employee or a volunteer Commissioner in public schools is a noble one. We will fulfill our responsibility to the constituencies we serve (students, parents, community, school districts, and SCOE ) to provide the best possible caring service in fulfilling our responsibilities.

# ANNUAL CALENDAR

## Personnel Commission Meeting Dates for 2025

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>July</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>January</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selection of Personnel Commission Officers for 2026</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>August</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend Back to School Event</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                   | <b>February</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review Team Player Nomination Form</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>September</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel Commissioner Appointment Process</li> <li>• Consideration of Calendar Amendments</li> </ul>                                                                                 | <b>March</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review draft budget for subsequent school year</li> <li>• Compare with past two years</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| <b>October</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel Commissioner Appointment</li> <li>• SPCA/NC Fall Conference</li> <li>• Proposed PC Meeting Dates for 2026</li> <li>• Review PC Calendar for subsequent school year</li> </ul> | <b>April</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve budget for subsequent school year</li> <li>• Review draft of Annual Report</li> <li>• Adopt resolution for Classified School Employees Week</li> <li>• Team Player Award Selection</li> <li>• Information: Draft PC Preliminary Budget 25-26</li> <li>• Draft PC Annual Board Report 24-25</li> </ul>                                                          |
| <b>November</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>May</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classified School Employees Week</li> <li>• Employee of the Year Celebration</li> <li>• Retiree Celebration</li> <li>• Team Player Award Reception</li> <li>• Closed Session Personnel Public Employee Performance Evaluation: Director of Human Resource Services</li> <li>• Final PC Annual Board Report 24-25</li> <li>• Final PC Preliminary Budget 25-26</li> </ul> |
| <b>December</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appoint Commission Chair</li> <li>• New Commissioner term begins</li> </ul>                                                                                                            | <b>June</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt PC Calendar for subsequent school year</li> <li>• Present Annual Report to the Board of Education</li> <li>• PC Commissioner Chair to attend Board Meeting to present Team Player of the Year recipient.</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                               |

## CONSENSUS AGREEMENTS & UNDERSTANDINGS

The Personnel Commission Team has agreed to the following Agreements and Understandings to ensure effectiveness and efficiency as a team:

1. Commissioners will inform the Director of Human Resource Services as soon as possible if they cannot attend a scheduled meeting.
2. Commission staff will provide the commissioners with the commission meeting packet the Thursday before the regular commission meetings or notify the commissioners of any delay.
3. Commissioners will, to the best of their ability, send questions regarding the meeting packet to the Director of Human Resource Services in advance of the meeting (by noon the day of the meeting) to help ensure that commission staff is prepared to answer questions and facilitate meeting efficiency and optimization (i.e., the “no surprises” rule).
4. Each commissioner will provide commission staff with a preferred email address to be used for correspondence between commission staff and commissioners.
5. A general personnel commission email address: [personnelcommission@scoe.org](mailto:personnelcommission@scoe.org) will be used for SCOE staff and members of the public to contact the commission. The personnel commission email address will be monitored by the commission staff. Commission staff will forward pertinent information to each commissioner’s preferred email address.
6. Individual personnel commissioner SCOE email addresses will not be publicly posted.
7. Each commissioner will set up an auto-reply on their SCOE email address informing others that (a) the email address is not regularly monitored and (b) to contact the personnel commission office for assistance.
8. The commissioners will forward any complaint to the Director of Human Resource Services and inform the complainant that their concerns will be forwarded to the Director of Human Resource Services.

9. A draft budget for the following school year will be brought to the commission for review and discussion in March, followed by a final budget for final approval in April

10. Job Descriptions

- a. Commission staff will inform the commissioners of new and/or revised job descriptions that will be brought forth at a future meeting.
- b. The commissioners will bring forth any questions to the Director of Human Resource Services before the next scheduled meeting to allow for information gathering.
- c. Changes will not be made to a ratified job description unless a substantial revision is needed to proceed.

11. Commissioners and staff are committed to continual professional development and will attend relevant personnel commission trainings, conferences, and workshops to the best of their ability.

12. The Commissioners will comply with the Brown Act and refrain from participating in serial meetings.

## SCOE Personnel Commission Handbook

We have reviewed and agreed to the aforementioned personnel commission team norms and protocols in order to support a positive and productive working relationship among the Sonoma County Office of Education Personnel Commission. staff. students. and the community. We shall review and renew these agreements annually.

### Personnel Commissioners

### Sonoma County Office of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deborah Muchmore  
Personnel Commissioner, Chair

\_\_\_\_\_  
Dr. Amie Carter  
Superintendent of Schools

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Holly Camozzi  
Personnel Commissioner

\_\_\_\_\_  
Nicole Rosaschi  
Director, Human Resource Services

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Theresa Cunningham  
Personnel Commissioner

Date: \_\_\_\_\_