

Unanswered Questions from Merit System/Personnel Commission Campus Information Sessions

General

The last time this system was implemented was in 1978—has the system been updated since?

If Merit System is necessary, why do few CA Community College Districts use it? [5 of 73]

How many years will this take to get under way? What do we do about hiring in the meantime?

Explain how diversity will be handled?

What would happen to Human Resources (all the positions that already exist)?

How does someone “show” that they “believe” in the Merit System?

It has been said the CSEA contract is just a guideline by some administrators. How does the Personnel Commission view the contract? Is it the law to follow or just a guideline?

If this is such a great thing, why hasn't the CSEA proposed this years ago?

Does the Personnel Commission do comparability studies comparing job for job at multiple districts or only with a benchmark?

CSEA told me signing the petition was only to get more information about a Personnel Commission—what can I do to get my name removed from the petition?

You say that this will create a more transparent process, but isn't it true that there will be little difference between what can be shared openly about why an employee is or is not hired or disciplined?

What are some current struggles of a Merit System district which you have had to resolve or investigate?

There are already systems in place to protect employees from being fired for “no reason.” How does the Merit System provide additional protections?

A District employee can request a classification review when the employee feels they are working “out of class.” How is the re-class review under the Merit System more beneficial to the employee?

Do you have statistics on how current classified employees employed in a Merit System feel about the system?

In order to make a decision, can you provide statistics? Retention rate with Merit System and without? Promotion rate with Merit System and without?

We were told employees who are permanent before the Merit System are permanent once the system is implemented but what happens to current HR staff who are hired into Personnel Commission because they did not test high enough? Can they be laid off?

If there is an employee who has unacceptable behavior, does the Merit System protect them because now they have to be interviewed by people who don't know what they are really like at work?

How does my vote get counted if I am sick or on vacation on 7/18/19?

I have to complete a daily log documenting what I do each day. It's not fair. Can the Personnel Commission tell my supervisor to stop making me do this?

What is the point of HR, don't they do what the Merit System is proposing to take over? Why spend money for an extra/new department when HR already exists to handle this? What is wrong with the current system in place? Why don't we overhaul what we have now? Why are we spending to create something new instead of fixing what is in place?

Why aren't certificated employees part of the Merit System process?

How are positions in a classification differentiated? EX: Administrative Assistant II in a department vs division vs program? Would applicants know where they were going to be working – the department, the campus? Would they have a choice other than accepting or turning down a job?

What will the performance evaluation/promotion process be like under the Merit System compared to now?

With the Merit System, I hear the terrible things that happen to us in our daily jobs now will no longer happen. The Merit System will fix the problems with the managers. Is that true?

If CSEA isn't giving me information on insurance changes, how can I trust they won't make other changes to merit system without my knowledge?

Personnel Commissions

When I first heard the term "Merit System" I thought it was about hiring the best employees. But then I did research and what this does is create a Personnel Commission. Why isn't this being called what it really is?

What gives the Merit System "teeth" where does their power come from? Why would HR or anyone listen to them?

Does the appointed Commissioner follow and adhere to the nepotism clause?

How much (salary) will these Commissioners be paid? Do they decide their own salary?

Where is the Personnel Commission Director located?

Must all Personnel Commission staff be appointed with the Merit System hiring process and from an eligibility list?

Since most Personnel Commission Rules will not apply to me as a CSEA member, why do we need to incur the extra cost and bureaucracy of a Personnel Commission/Merit System?

Can you provide a concrete example of a problem that exists today in NOCCCD that will be solved with a Personnel Commission?

Is the Personnel Commissioner allowed to speak with or meet with staff or managers and give information on their processes?

If the Commission can hear you and you have access to them but what can they do as far as change?

- Job descriptions-if they make recommendations do they have to be changed?
- If they have salary data for negotiations, are they just recommendations?

What is the process to make Commissioner changes immediately or after their term ends?

Does the Merit System remove management from the final say on who will be hired?

Classified managers are impacted by the Merit System and so are confidential employees. Yet, we get no voice in appointing a Commissioner because we are not members of CSEA. How do we get to help select if approved?

How does CSEA plan to recruit its Personnel Commissioner? How do they find people? Will there be a vote for candidates?

Can an appointed Personnel Commissioner serve on another Personnel Commission (for another educational agency) concurrently?

Who determines the Personnel Commissioner salary/benefits? Are they subject to the same COLA, step increases as classified members?

Who has oversight of the Commission? Does the District have to accept every Commission directive?

Testing

What happens if you don't test well? What happens if you don't place in the top three ranks? How long are the tests valid for? When can I re-test?

What happens if a position comes up and I miss a testing date?

At a time when it is recognized that tests are inherently unfair for students (AB 750), why would we move to the practice of standardized testing for hiring employees?

Who writes the recruitment tests?

How hard are the tests? Are they timed?

How are testing accommodations handled?

How often do I need to test to be eligible for a promotion?

Do I have to place in the top three ranks every time I test for a promotion?

How long are probation periods? If promoted, will an employee need to go through probation again? And for how long?

To advance from Admin I to Admin II, do I have to take the test and go through the Merit System? How many times can you take the exam? How often?

We are moving forward with removing assessment testing for our students through AB 705. Why would we want to adopt the Merit System that will implement a testing system that has been statistically proven to not work?

In regards to the standardized testing, who decides what test is appropriate for jobs? And can they be changed if not effective?

Does the Merit System test for personality? It seems like the tests are only for what you know. We can always teach new technology or systems but not personality.

With Merit System, do you provide accommodations for the testing procedure for individuals with disabilities?

Is there any process for manager and/or staff to request the Personnel Commission to change the exam if they are not meeting the needs of the position?

Is it true that the test that is given to applicants has nothing to do with the job he/she is applying for? If this is so, is it right to assume that not the "best" candidates are forwarded to be interviewed for the job advertised?

With the Merit System, will there be various diverse methods of determining someone's ability to do the job aside from just taking tests and exams? What about people who get test taking anxiety but know how to perform their jobs effectively?

What if I don't test well and I don't place in the top three ranks, will I be able to get an interview? (English is my second language)

What is being done to eliminate bias in the testing to be more inclusive of underrepresented applicants?

There are many that are good test takers and have much experience in test taking. These individuals rank high. How will this be fair for current employees who may not be great test takers? These savvy individuals test in many counties and have advantage.

Is the Merit System is about fairness and being impartial, why do current employees get extra points or a “leg up?” How is that fair?

Interview panel members receive no training, how do you know that they are evaluating based on merit and not their personal bias? How do we know that they are impartial in their evaluations?

How are current employees given an advantage when applying for a position?

Eligibility Lists

I’m concerned about the eligibility list in terms of promotion/transfer. If a new position becomes available and I am not currently on the eligibility list, will I be able to apply?

What happens if a hiring manager doesn’t want to hire someone from the top three ranks of the eligibility list?

Is there another interview after one make the eligibility list? If so, who conducts it? How is the final candidate hired?

Why do only 10% of applicants in a Personnel Commission make is onto an eligibility list?

Hiring

Presently CSEA is fully represented in hiring committees. How does an outside Commission know more than the people who are doing their job every day?

Who does the hiring/interviewing of people? Is it still the department requiring a position filled or an outside entity?

Can District employees serve on hiring panels under the Merit System?

What are the specific perceived problems with the District’s current hiring processes? This has not been answered by CSEA.

I was the best candidate for a job, but I didn’t get promoted because the hiring manager doesn’t like me. In the Merit System, that same manager can still be on the final selection committee with no CSEA rep. If that manager is still making the final selection, I still won’t get the job. So how is this better?

I was the best candidate for the job, but I didn’t get promoted because the hiring manager doesn’t like me. In the Merit System I hear that same manager can still be on the final selection committee, with no CSEA representative. How does this Merit System keep a manager who doesn’t like me, keep me from getting the job if that manager is still making the final selection?

How is nepotism screened through the Merit System?

How does the Merit System ensure we as a District are hiring for diversity and inclusion?

Can you tell us how this system will affect how long it takes to get a position hired?

How will this affect hiring times? What about new positions versus existing?

If a job is required to post for 15 days, how can a person get hired in one month?

Discipline

Who has the final say in discipline? Board of Trustees or Commissioners?

Promotions

Will having a Personnel Commission make it easier for me to get a promotion?

If I am a bad test taker, does that mean I'll never have a chance at a promotion?

What is the rate of internal promotion at Merit System districts versus the rate without this structure? Also, can you provide those rates as they apply specifically to classified moving into management positions?

Won't classified management positions and promotion opportunities disappear if we implement a Merit System? Other districts have certificated management positions that correlate with a number of classified manager positions. Is our District essentially taking them off the table to potential promotion for classified staff employees?

How will the Merit System assist those who find it difficult to be promoted or transfer in lateral positions within their own departments?

Who does the Merit System benefit most? It appears that it's geared towards employees trying to promote within.

How will the effect opportunities for staff to move up? Meaning is this the only option?

Money

Would the Merit System affect the COLA that employees receive? What standards and/or variables will be utilized to determine employee performance?

What is the cost of implementing a Merit System for a district this size? What is the estimated ongoing cost?

How much will this new layer of bureaucracy cost to start up?

Where will the money to pay for this come from?

What about getting a raise or reclassification or promotion?

Temporary Employees

With the Merit System limiting tutors and hourly employees to six months, will there be a similar impact on employing professional experts and or special project managers both current and future?

Can the same short term employee (temporary & professional expert) work after they've completed six months? Or will I need to retrain a new hourly and waste my time?

What will happen to our hourlies and professional experts?

How will interim professional experts, special project managers, adult hourlies, and student hourlies be affected by implementation of a Merit System/Personnel Commission?

How would the Merit System affect current hourlies and the hiring of them?

Will the Merit System increase the number of hourly employees, professional experts, and interim managers? It seems management will just hire hourlies, interims and professional experts to go around the Merit System.

Exiting Merit System

If we decide the Merit System isn't working for us, how would we get out of it?