

# Kicking Off a New School Year

## GREETINGS FROM THE DIRECTOR

*Welcome to the start of a new school year!*

*Although I have worked in classified personnel in public education for over 27 years, I have never had the privilege of working in a traditional school environment with the excitement that comes with the start of a new school year. When I started last September, the school year was already under way so I missed out on the unique ups and downs of the summer work season. Better yet, on Tuesday I had the pleasure of seeing firsthand the energy and enthusiasm that comes with the first day of school. What a treat!*

*Summer started out on a positive note. As I was getting out of my car the first work day after school let out, I received a text message from a colleague informing me that today was the start of “summer dress.” Although I was disappointed that I had already missed the first day to take advantage of this practice, I walked into the District Office wondering what the District’s take would be on “summer dress.” I was thankful to see that the bar was set at a level that I could wholeheartedly embrace. As an employee still serving probation, I was not eligible to take any vacation over the summer so dressing comfortably felt almost as good as having time off. That first week or so of summer was the most relaxed I had spent in my job to date. I wrapped up year-end reports and tended to a few things I had put on the back burner.*

*The relaxed atmosphere quickly disappeared as requisitions to staff new positions came through our office and current employees informed us of decisions to retire, move, or pursue other employment. My “it’s almost as good as being on vacation” attitude came to an end as our office entered the “gearing up for the school year” work mode. As you all know, our classified hiring process involves a lot of work for both the applicant and our office staff in that we develop and administer a number of tests to ensure those who are hired possess the required knowledge, skills, and abilities for their respective assignment.*

*On the bright side of this hiring frenzy, we were able to add many outstanding new employees to our District team. Whenever possible, I like to remind everyone that classified employees of our District are among the “best of the best” in their respective field. All of us, in order to be working in our current position, were required to go through the rigorous selection process that is the Merit System and all of us succeeded by scoring among the top of all our competitors.*

*As a way to showcase the high quality of our existing classified staff to the community as well as create a new tool for recruiting, the Personnel Commission staff will be expanding our webpage. For more details and to find out how you can help spread the word about the strength of our classified team, please continue reading this newsletter.*

*As always, I invite you to contact me personally if you have questions regarding any job postings, or general questions regarding transfers, promotional opportunities, professional growth, or other personnel issues. I look forward to serving you!*

Susan Dixon  
Director of Classified Personnel



### PERSONNEL COMMISSIONERS:

- John Baird, Chairperson
- Terry King, Vice Chairperson
- Patricia “Pat” Spirit, Member

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## Staff Feature: Maintenance & Operations Workers



*M&O Team Members from left to right—George Santillan, David Atchison (summer help), Dale Umphrey, Joe Smith, Jim Boyce, Steve Snedeker, Jason Rowe, Johnnie Toler, Ralf Bernard, Tom Hernandez, Jim Mitroff, Tim Snedeker (summer help), Adam Buckley, Jason Marden. Not pictured, Mike Hayes, Wayne Baldwin, and Dwayne Vonfraenkel.*

When you think of a “first responder” in the world outside of our District, your initial thought may be of a paramedic or firefighter. However, when you are at work and any sort of facility emergency arises, the “first responders” are members of our highly-skilled M&O team who come to the rescue. In addition to the many preventative maintenance tasks performed, our M&O employees are regularly tasked with “breathing life” into a failing HVAC system, “clearing the arteries” of a plumbing system, or putting out any number of proverbial “fires” that arise at our facilities.

You’ve probably seen all of these staff members dashing off to tend to some sort of crisis at one time or another. Since they are always busy completing any one of the 7,000+ work orders received annually, you may not have had the opportunity to get to know them personally.

I spent some time with this group recently and asked them to respond to some questions to help us get a better understanding of what it’s like to be in their shoes each day. Below is a summary of their responses.

### **What is your favorite thing about your job?**

The first response to this question was that they really like that there is a lot of variety in all of their jobs. No two days are the same. Another facet they like is that, because they are always in demand, they enjoy the fact that they are always needed. This enjoyment is magnified when those whom they are helping acknowledge and appreciate the work they do. Interaction with the staff and students at the sites rounds out the top of their list of favorite things about their jobs.

(M&O staff continued from previous page)

### **What is the most unusual task you've ever been asked to do?**

Most of these answers centered around the senior pranks that are performed each year. This has included cleaning dead fish off the top of condensers, removing chairs from on top of a building, cleaning the remnants of baby chicks from a fence, or unstacking a tower of trashcans. Weather has also created some unusual tasks such as complete flooding of buildings that sit at the bottom of a hillside. Of course the requests for assistance with termination of insects and/or relocation of snakes is ongoing.



### **What can SDUHSD staff do to help you complete your work better?**

After the quick humored response of, “stop breaking things,” the group stated that the biggest help they can get from staff is for us to be as clear and detailed as possible on our work orders. If they know a lot of details ahead of time about the work they will be doing, they can bring the proper tools and parts and work much more efficiently. Additionally, although everyone enjoys a good challenge, trying to identify which room, which desk, or which faucet needs attention takes time that is better spent on the repair itself. The more specific we can be on what needs repair, the better.

### **How does the fact that we serve pre-teens and teenagers impact your work in M&O?**

The pranks, level of curiosity and other “issues” that are inherent with this age group are seen regularly by this group. Aside from this, concern for safety has a huge impact. Whether you are painting, performing carpentry tasks, or rewiring equipment, if you are around students there are many more safety concerns that need to be addressed than if you were performing these tasks elsewhere. This group must always be very aware of their work environment and the potential for safety hazards.

### **Is there an employee you interact with regularly who makes your job better? Who and how?**

The first answer several members of this team were quick to offer was Dale Umphrey, who serves as the Lead Maintenance Worker in the North region. The crew appreciates his efforts to serve as a good lead and values his sense of humor.

Although the group appreciates many members of our staff, they wanted to give a shout out to the School Plant Supervisors. The M&O team mentioned how quick these folks are to jump in and help when needed and how they take their responsibilities seriously. A special shout out goes to Ramon Muñoz at Carmel Valley MS and Carlos Magaña at Diegueño MS.

### **What is the biggest change you have seen over the years in your job?**

This group has many long-term employees among them. A big change they noted is the computerization of many things and the use of computers in general to perform work. It was mentioned that one significant point related to the length of time some of them have worked here is that students they see daily were not even born when they first started working for the District. Despite all the change that has occurred over the years, the M&O team concluded that the kids are still kids in the way they act.

### **What is the most challenging part of your job?**

Proving that this group is indeed highly intelligent, the response to this question was, “going home at the end of the day.” Enough said, the District is fortunate to have this group of hard-working individuals on its team! Thanks guys!

## **THE PERSONNEL COMMISSION**

The Personnel Commission is responsible for the recruitment, selection, training, and retention of employees in the classified service. Staff are responsible for implementing practices that adhere to the adopted Rules and Regulations. In addition, we conduct classification and compensation studies.

### **BECAUSE OF YOU**

The Personnel Commission and staff believe that each classified employee plays a key role in supporting the work of the District to educate students. Some classifications directly support student education, such as our Instructional Assistants and Learning Commons Technicians. In other cases the work we perform indirectly supports student education by providing services such as transportation, beautiful school grounds and classrooms, needed supplies, healthy meals, data to improve instruction and other vital services. Our goal is to support you in the work that you do, whether that's through training opportunities to enhance your skills in your current position, preparation for your career advancement, or to recruit strong candidates to work on the team alongside you. Please feel free to contact us with any questions you may have about recruitment, selection, training and retention. We're here to help!



**WELCOME NEW HIRES!**

New this past Spring

Alexander Buckley  
Custodian Floater

Rita Cecil  
Instructional Assistant  
Coastal Learning Academy

James Madvig  
Custodian  
San Dieguito HS Academy

Scott Otto  
Custodian  
La Costa Canyon HS

Fernando Robles  
Theater Technician  
La Costa Canyon HS

New This School Year

Lisa Graciano  
Administrative Secretary  
Pacific Trails MS

School Bus Drivers

John Gonzalez  
Jeremy Thomas  
Jessica Rios

Campus Supervisors

Ruben Martinez  
San Dieguito HS Academy

Marcos Marta  
Earl Warren MS

Dan Dalager  
La Costa Canyon HS

Michael Artinian  
La Costa Canyon HS

John Fernandez  
Pacific Trails MS

Robert McKeon  
Torrey Pines HS

Instructional Assistants

Nancy Feraco  
Oak Crest MS

Cecilia Cobb  
Adult Transition Program, Earl Warren MS

Cara Dodaro  
Oak Crest MS

Amy Mears  
Oak Crest MS

Danna Rabasco  
Oak Crest MS

Nutrition Services Assistants

Cristiane Gilligan  
San Dieguito Academy

Brittany Martin  
Carmel Valley MS

Samantha Perry  
Pacific Trails MS

Suzanne Young  
Carmel Valley MS

John Amoroso  
Carmel Valley MS

Position Title, Current EDJOIN Postings	Posting Deadline
Plumber	September 20, 2016
Instructional Assistant Special Education (Behavior In-	September 19, 2016
Instructional Assistant Special Education (Non-Severe)	Continuous Filing
Instructional Assistant Special Education (Severe)	Continuous Filing
Nutrition Services Assistant I	Continuous Filing
School Bus Driver	Continuous Filing

**DID YOU KNOW...**

All job postings and applications are on [www.edjoin.org](http://www.edjoin.org). There are computers available for your use at each work site and in Human Resources. If you need assistance viewing a job posting or submitting an application, we can help over the phone, via email or in person.



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Employees on the Move

**Steve Snedeker** was promoted to Skilled Maintenance Worker.

**Douglas Gilbert** was promoted to Director of Purchasing and Risk Management.

**Jessica Richards** was promoted to Learning Commons Technician at Pacific Trails Middle School.

**Becky Tico** was promoted to Instructional Assistant Special Education (Behavior Intervention) at the Adult Transition Program (EW).

**Judy Mendez** was promoted to Secretary at La Costa Canyon High School.

**Neal Scheyer** is now a Campus Supervisor at Carmel Valley Middle School.

# Classified Staff: Thank You for a Great Start to the New Year



Missy Nunez, Administrative Assistant & Robin Coy, Learning Commons Technician, Diegueño MS



Lisa Graciano, Administrative Assistant, Pacific Trails MS



Richard Burton, Campus Supervisor, Torrey Pines HS



Kalani Crosby, Learning Commons Technician, San Dieguito Academy



Vetha Pierce, Administrative Assistant, Pacific Trails MS



Lamarr Devers, School Plant Supervisor, Pacific Trails MS



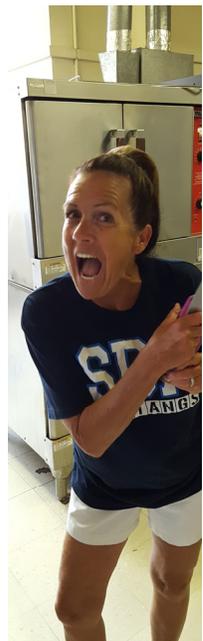
Norma Villa, Registrar, La Costa Canyon HS



Anita Monsibay, Robin Carafa, Marley Nelms, Gabby Cortez, Nutrition Services, Oak Crest MS



Cristina Rodriguez, Health Technician, Carmel Valley MS



Cathy Burnham, Nutrition Services Supervisor, San Dieguito Academy



Danielle Rodriguez, Colleen Haas Egan, Susana Kravzov, Rita Cecil, Instructional Assistants, Canyon Crest Academy



Sara Smith, Administrative Assistant, La Costa Canyon HS

Roberta Blank, Administrative Secretary, Earl Warren MS



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### **Job postings have a salary range listed but how do I know at which step I will be placed if I am selected for the job?**

The Rules & Regulations for the Classified Service dictate the step placement of all employees of the SDUHSD.

An employee who transfers from one assignment to another retains their current step of pay. For example, a Custodian at Step 3 who requests transfer to a different school site will start the new Custodian assignment at Step 3.

Employees who are promoted to a higher-level position are placed at the step of the new salary range that provides a 5% increase over their current rate of pay. For example, if a Health Technician is at Step 5 of Range 35 and is promoted to Secretary, Range 36, his/her current rate of pay is multiplied by 1.05 to see which step provides for the 5% raise. In this case, it would be Step 6.

Employees who request a voluntary demotion are placed at the step of the new range which provides for the same or least possible decrease in pay. For example, an Instructional Assistant Special Education (Severe) at Step 4 of Range 36 who demotes to Instructional Assistant Special Education (Non-Severe) at Range 34 will be placed at Step 5.

### **When I receive the “Vacancy Notice” email, I am not clear on what I need to do if I am interested in being considered for the job. I don’t know when I am supposed to complete the interest form that is attached to the email and when I am supposed to apply online through Edjoin. Which one should I do?**

It depends on whether the vacancy you are interested in is a promotional opportunity for you or if the assignment would be a transfer or voluntary demotion for you.

Each time a position in our District becomes vacant, a notice is emailed to all employees announcing the vacancy. This email notice always includes a form for employees who are currently in that same job classification who are interested in remaining in that job classification but would prefer to work in the vacant assignment instead of their current assignment. This may be due to the preference of the work location (i.e. closer to home) or the work hours (i.e. a 6 hour position with benefits instead of a 3.9 hour position). Employees in this scenario will be certified to the hiring manager for consideration.

The form that is emailed with the vacancy notice may also be completed by employees who are working in a closely-related position on the same salary range or those who are currently working in a higher-level assignment in the same job family (series). Requests for consideration in this manner will be evaluated to ensure the classifications are sufficiently similar to allow for consideration without completing an examination for the classification.

Anytime the vacancy would be a promotion for the employee, he/she must be on an eligibility list for the classification in order to be considered for any vacancies in the classification. In order to be considered for the immediate vacancy, the employee must be in the top three ranks on the eligibility list. Sometimes, at the time the vacancy notice is emailed, an eligibility list may already exist because a recruitment for the job classification may have been conducted within the last six months. If an eligibility list does not currently exist, the vacancy announcement will include a link to the posting on Edjoin.org. and those who are interested in promoting can complete the application and, if they meet the minimum qualifications, go through the subsequent examination process to be placed on the eligibility list.

If you are ever in doubt as to what to do, please feel free to contact our office.

### **I really enjoy working for the District and would like to help the Classified Personnel Department show the community that the San Dieguito Union High School District is a great place to work. What can I do to help?**

Please see the information in the box below.

#### **COMING SOON! DISTRICT CLASSIFIED EMPLOYEES FEATURED ON PERSONNEL COMMISSION WEBSITE**

Calling all actors and actresses. Are you proud to be part of the SDUHSD classified employee team? Do you want a chance to show people outside of the District how great it is to work here? Do you have acting skills that you would like to display?

If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, we would appreciate your help in developing our website. Our goal is to have a section on our website entitled “Employees at Work.” This section will include video clips of employees at work as well as video clips of employees answering questions about what it is like to work at San Dieguito. Not only will this showcase the great work our classified staff performs each day, it will also give job seekers a realistic preview of what our jobs look like and the many reasons our District is one they should consider for employment. If you’d like to participate, please contact a Personnel Commission staff member.