

State of New Hampshire

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1986-C-000

CLASSIFICATION APPEAL - SECRETARY STENOGRAPHER II

Youth Development Center

September 16, 1987

On August 20, 1987, the Personnel Appeals Board, Commissioners Haseltine and Allard sitting, heard an appeal by the Youth Development Center regarding the Division of Personnel's denial of a request to reclassify a position of Secretary Stenographer II, salary grade 8, to Correctional School Secretary, salary grade 10. The latter would have been a new class title.

SEA Field Representative Stephen McCormack represented the Youth Development Center. Classification and Compensation Administrator Edward McCann represented the Division of Personnel. Both the appellant and the Division of Personnel made written submissions for the Board's review prior to the hearing.

The Board found that originally John Sheridan had requested that the position under appeal be upgraded to salary grade 10. The former incumbent, Sarah Clawson completed a Position Classification Questionnaire and a desk audit of her position was performed. After the review, the Division of Personnel concluded that the position was properly classified as a Secretary Stenographer II, salary grade 8. YDC Superintendent Ronald Adams requested reconsideration of that decision. The Division of Personnel, however, responded that in the Division's opinion, the position was properly classified.

At the hearing, the Youth Development Center altered its original reclassification request, asking that the Board approve upgrading the position to Executive Secretary Stenographer, salary grade 11. The Board reviewed both the original and the amended request and made the following findings.

The former incumbent, in her Position Classification Questionnaire, had requested that her position be upgraded to Executive Secretary, salary grade 10, and had requested upgrading the attributes of Experience, Initiative and Working Conditions. Upon review of the Questionnaire submitted (SEA exhibit) the Board found the position, as described by Ms. Clawson, to be properly classified at the time of the initial review as a Secretary

Stenographer II. The former incumbent and her supervisor attested to frequent review of her work, did not indicate any rationale for more than 2 years of experience in similar work, and failed to provide sufficient justification to warrant upgrading the Working Conditions factor. In support of her request to upgrade the Initiative factor, Ms. Clawson made repeated reference to the degree of professionalism and competency required in the position. The Board noted, however, that these are performance traits rather than substantiation for an upgrading request. As is so often the case in positions under appeal, appellants and agencies tend to see upgrading as a means to increase salary for valuable employees. While the Board can appreciate the difficulty agencies experience in recruiting and retaining good employees, the Board can not base classification decisions upon salary considerations but must, rather, look at the position from the standpoint of requirements at entry level for satisfactory execution of the tasks required.

While it is not the Board's general practice to look at "new" responsibilities as described at a hearing, there were substantial discrepancies between the responsibilities described by the former incumbent and those described by the agency in its submission to the Board. The current incumbent and her supervisors describe the position as having almost no direct supervision available, requiring constant monitoring of students' whereabouts, training new staff, frequent contact with the public, and significant daily contact with students and staff.

The degree of individual judgment, frequent lack of direct supervision, responsibility for maintaining appointment schedules for all educational staff, and the financial and data management described by the current incumbent persuaded the Board that the position should be upgraded to the title Executive Secretary Stenographer, salary grade 11. In consideration of the evidence and documentation presented, and the Board's conclusion that the position has in fact changed since the time it was last reviewed by the Division of Personnel, the Board voted to make the reclassification effective the beginning of the pay period immediately following the date of this decision.

The appeal is, therefore, granted in part.

FOR THE PERSONNEL APPEALS BOARD



MARY ANN STEELE
Executive Secretary

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cc: Ronald G. Adams, Superintendent - YDC

Stephen McCormack, SEA

Virginia A. Vogel
Director of Personnel