

1 **BEFORE THE PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD**

2 **STATE OF WASHINGTON**

3 JEFFREY MAX PHIPPS)

4 Appellant,)

5 vs.)

6 EVERETT COMMUNITY COLLEGE)

7 Respondent.)

CASE NO. R-ALLO-15-016

ORDER OF THE BOARD
FOLLOWING HEARING ON
EXCEPTIONS TO THE
DETERMINATION OF THE DIRECTOR

8
9 **Hearing on Exceptions.** This appeal came before the Personnel Resources Board, NANCY
10 HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair; SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair; and VICKY BOWDISH, Member, for
11 a hearing on Appellant’s exceptions to the director’s determination dated June 9, 2015. The hearing
12 was held on October 7, 2015.

13
14 **Appearances.** Appellant Jeffrey Max Phipps was present and was represented by Jennifer Dixon of
15 the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE). Respondent Everett Community College
16 (ECC) was represented by Linda Nichols, Director of Human Resources, ECC.

17
18 **Background.** Appellant requested reallocation of his Photographer 2 position on March 7, 2014, by
19 submitting a Position Review Request (PRR) to ECC Human Resources (HR). In his PRR,
20 Appellant requested reallocation to an Information Technology Specialist 5 (ITS 5) position.

21
22 By letter dated August 18, 2014, ECC notified Appellant that his position was not reallocated to ITS
23 5 and remained as a Photographer 2. On September 10, 2014, Appellant submitted a request to OFM
24 State HR for a director’s review of ECC’s determination.

25
26 By letter dated June 9, 2015, the director’s designee determined that Appellant’s position should
27 be reallocated to the Media Maintenance Technician Lead job class.

1 On July 2, 2015, Appellant filed timely exceptions to the director's determination. In his exceptions,
2 Appellant indicated the scope of his work best fit the duties of the ITS 5. Appellant's exceptions
3 are the subject of this proceeding.

4
5 Appellant works in Media Services at ECC. As summarized in the director's determination,
6 Appellant provides expert level technical support and development for computer integrated,
7 campus-wide media systems. Appellant provides specialized consulting, designing, installing,
8 programming, maintenance, troubleshooting and technical support on media peripherals and
9 media software in support of a variety of campus-wide instruction and presentations.

10
11 **Summary of Appellant's Arguments.**

12 In summary, Appellant contends that the advancement of technology has changed the duties of his
13 position to primarily computer based, making his position closer to that of an IT Specialist.
14 Appellant further contends that prior to connecting to a network, software, applications and other
15 technological advances, media equipment was simply plugged in, a light bulb changed if needed,
16 and other basic, non-computer based tasks performed. Appellant asserts that in order to make the
17 media equipment work, he must understand how to interconnect equipment into one electronic touch
18 screen system for instructors and be able to communicate with IT staff about items such as port
19 usage and VLANs. Appellant further asserts that his position most closely aligns with an ITS 5
20 since he serves as the expert and go-to person in the Media Unit and assigns work to other media
21 staff.

22
23 **Summary of Respondent's Arguments.**

24 Respondent asserts that Appellant's work is not as complicated as they present. Respondent
25 contends that some of the Appellant's duties may overlap with IT duties, but that does not change
26 the position's best fit into the Media Maintenance Technician series. Respondent agrees with
27 Appellant's testimony that IT staff, not media staff, have network access and network access is one
28 example of how the two job series differ. Respondent maintains that the organizational structure of

1 the college is such that Media Services supports instruction, whereas IT supports facilities and that
2 each area is part of two separate divisions.

3
4 **Primary Issue.** Whether the director's determination should be affirmed and Appellant's position
5 should remain in Media Maintenance Technician Lead job class.

6
7 **Relevant Classifications.** ITS 5; Media Maintenance Technician Lead.

8
9 **Decision of the Board.** The purpose of a position review is to determine which classification best
10 describes the overall duties and responsibilities of a position. A position review is neither a
11 measurement of the volume of work performed, nor an evaluation of the expertise with which that
12 work is performed. A position review is a comparison of the duties and responsibilities of a
13 particular position to the available classification specifications. This review results in a
14 determination of the class that best describes the overall duties and responsibilities of the position.
15 See *Liddle-Stamper v. Washington State University*, PAB Case No. 3722-A2 (1994).

16
17 Most positions within the civil service system occasionally perform duties that appear in more than
18 one classification. However, when determining the appropriate classification for a specific position,
19 the duties and responsibilities of that position must be considered in their entirety and the position
20 must be allocated to the classification that provides the best fit overall for the majority of the
21 position's duties and responsibilities. See *Dudley v. Dept. of Labor and Industries*, PRB Case No.
22 R-ALLP-07-007 (2007).

23
24 When comparing the assignments of work and the level of responsibility to the available class
25 specifications, the class series concept (if one exists) followed by definition and distinguishing
26 characteristics are primary considerations. While examples of the typical work identified in class
27 specifications do not form the basis for an allocation, they lend support to the work envisioned
28 within the classification.

1 As technology advances and many tasks that were once performed by technicians become
2 computerized, many functions and disciplines utilize computers to perform tasks that were once
3 performed using less computerized processes. However, this does not change the purpose or
4 nature of the work being performed. Rather, **only the tools being used and the processes**
5 **necessary to employ those tools have changed.** Granum v. Department of Corrections, PRB
6 Case No. R-ALLO-15-004 (emphasis added). While some aspects of the work Appellant performs
7 appear to be described by the IT classes, the primary focus of the Appellant’s position falls within
8 the scope of the Media Maintenance Technician series.

9
10 Appellant’s duties and responsibilities meet the intent of the class series concept for the Media
11 Maintenance Technician series. Appellant “diagnoses malfunctions, maintains, repairs, installs,
12 constructs, and tests electronic media and/or multi-media equipment and systems.” He also
13 “provides media maintenance technical support.”

14
15 The Appellant’s duties and responsibilities are illustrated by the definition of the Media
16 Maintenance Technician Lead classification. Appellant “leads assigned personnel and performs
17 complex media maintenance work troubleshooting, maintaining, constructing, installing and
18 repairing media and/or multi-media equipment and systems.” Appellant serves as the campus
19 expert, leading and assisting other media staff.

20
21 Appellant’s duties and responsibilities meet the intent of the distinguishing characteristics of the
22 Media Maintenance Technician Lead. Appellant “regularly assigns, instructs and checks the work
23 of others.” Appellant “performs complex media maintenance, construction and repair work as a
24 senior level technician such as: designing and constructing specialized multi-media interfaces;
25 recommending update or replacement service work for major media control systems; assisting in
26 media installation planning.”

27
28 The class series concept, definition and distinguishing characteristics in the Media Technician
29 Lead class specification encompass the majority of Appellants duties and responsibilities. The

1 process by which Appellant performs these tasks, as in *Granum v Department of Corrections*, will
2 continually require employment of different tools as technology advances. However, that does not
3 change the overall nature and purpose of the job, which is media services, not IT infrastructure.

4
5 Therefore, we agree with the director's designee that the overall scope of Appellant's position best
6 fits the Media Maintenance Technician Lead classification.

7
8 Since classification revisions are outside the Board's jurisdiction, we strongly encourage ECC to
9 work with the Classification and Compensation staff at OFM State HR to update the Media
10 Maintenance Technician class series to better reflect technological advances in the work
11 performed.

12
13 In a hearing on exceptions, the Appellant has the burden of proof (WAC 357-52-110). Appellant
14 has failed to meet his burden of proof.

15
16 **ORDER**

17 NOW, THEREFORE, IT IS ORDERED that the appeal on exceptions by Jeffrey Phipps is denied
18 and the director's determination dated June 9, 2015 is affirmed.

19 DATED this ____ day of _____, 2015.

20 WASHINGTON PERSONNEL RESOURCES BOARD

21
22 _____
23 NANCY HOLLAND YOUNG, Chair

24
25 _____
26 SUSAN MILLER, Vice Chair

27
28 _____
29 VICKY BOWDISH, Member