

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Division for Human Capital Leadership & Merit System Accountability
Classification Appeals Program

San Francisco Field Services Group
120 Howard Street, Room 760
San Francisco, CA 94105-0001

Classification Appeal Decision
Under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code

Appellant: [Name of appellant]

Agency classification: Office Automation Assistant
GS-326-5

Organization: [Appellant's organization/location]
Department of Defense Education
Activity (DoDEA)
DOD Dependents Schools
(DoDDS)
Department of Defense

OPM decision: Office Automation Assistant
GS-326-5

OPM decision number: C-0326-05-04

Robert D. Hendler
Classification and Pay Claims
Program Manager

August 18, 2005
Date

As provided in section 511.612 of title 5, Code of Federal Regulations, this decision constitutes a certificate that is mandatory and binding on all administrative, certifying, payroll, disbursing, and accounting officials of the Government. The agency is responsible for reviewing its classification decisions for identical, similar, or related positions to ensure consistency with this decision. There is no right of further appeal. This decision is subject to discretionary review only under conditions and time limits specified in the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*, appendix 4, section G (address provided in appendix 4, section H).

As indicated in this decision, our findings show that the appellant's official position description does not meet the standard of adequacy described on pages 10-11 of the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*. Since position descriptions must meet the standard of adequacy, the agency must revise the appellant's position description. The servicing human resources office must submit a compliance report containing the corrected position description to the San Francisco Field Services Group within 30 days of the date of this decision.

Decision sent to:

[Name and address of appellant]

[Name and address of appellant's representative]

[Address of appellant's servicing human resources office]

Chief, Classification and Compensation
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Introduction

On February 9, 2005, the San Francisco Field Services Group of the U.S. Office of Personnel Management (OPM) received a position classification appeal from [name of appellant]. On April 6, 2005, we received the agency's complete administrative report. The appellant's position is currently classified as Office Automation Assistant, GS-326-5. However, he believes the classification should be School Support Assistant, GS-303-6. The appellant works in the [name of appellant's organization/location] Department of Defense Education Activity (DoDEA), Department of Defense Dependents Schools [appellant's school area], Department of Defense. We accepted and decided this appeal under section 5112 of title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.).

This appeal decision is based on a careful review of all information submitted by the appellant and the agency. In addition, to help decide the appeal we conducted separate telephone interviews with the appellant and his immediate supervisor.

General issues

The appellant does not believe that his current official position description (PD) [number] is completely accurate, but the record shows that his supervisors have certified to its accuracy. A PD is the official record of the major duties and responsibilities assigned to a position by an official with the authority to assign work. A position is the duties and responsibilities that make up the work performed by the employee. Classification appeal regulations permit OPM to investigate or audit a position and decide an appeal on the basis of the actual duties and responsibilities currently assigned by management and performed by the employee. An OPM appeal decision classifies a real operating position, and not simply the PD. This decision is based on the work currently assigned to and performed by the appellant.

Our fact-finding disclosed that the appellant's PD is not completely accurate, and does not meet the standard of adequacy addressed on pages 10 and 11 of the *Introduction to the Position Classification Standards*. The scope and effect of the appellant's assignments described under Factor 5 and the appellant's work contacts described under Factor 6 in the PD do not reflect our findings for those factors addressed in this decision. Therefore, the PD must be revised to reflect our evaluation.

The appellant makes various statements about the classification review and position management process conducted by his agency. By law, we must classify positions solely by comparing current duties and responsibilities to OPM position classification standards and guidelines (5 U.S.C. 5106, 5107, and 5112). In adjudicating this appeal, our only concern is to make our own independent decision on the proper classification of his position. Since comparison to standards is the exclusive method for classifying positions, we have considered the appellant's statements only insofar as they are relevant to making that comparison. Because our decision sets aside any previous agency decision, the previous actions of the appellant's agency are not germane to the classification appeal process.

Position information

The appellant works in the administrative front office of the [name of appellant's school] preparing a variety of letters, reports, memoranda, parent newsletters, and handbooks using a personal computer and multiple functions of different types of software. These duties take about 35 to 40 percent of his time. In addition, he spends from 50 to 55 percent of his time performing general administrative and clerical support duties such as managing files and records, maintaining logs, greeting visitors, receiving calls and responding to inquiries, and updating DoDEA publications and regulations. Other miscellaneous duties occupy the remainder of his time

The results of our interviews and other materials of record furnish more information about the appellant's duties and responsibilities and how they are performed. We find that the PD of records covers the functions performed by the appellant and we incorporate it by reference into this decision.

Series, title, and standard determination

The agency assigned the appellant's position to the Office Automation Series, GS-326, titling it Office Automation Assistant. However, the appellant believes that his position should be titled School Support Assistant, and that his duties and responsibilities warrant classification to the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303.

As specified in the classification standard for the Miscellaneous Clerk and Assistant Series, GS-303, work in that series includes positions that perform or supervise clerical, assistant, or technician work for which no other occupational series is appropriate. The work requires knowledge of the procedures and techniques involved in carrying out the work of an organization, and involves application of procedures and practices within the framework of established guidelines. The purpose of the GS-303 series is to cover one-grade interval work which is not elsewhere classifiable. The GS-303 standard notes that positions frequently involve mixtures of work classifiable in more than one occupational series, but as a general rule, mixed positions should be classified in the series appropriate for the paramount qualifications required. For example, where a position requires the services of a fully qualified typist and also involves general clerical work, the typing skill is the paramount recruitment consideration.

The Office Automation Clerical and Assistance Series, GS-326, includes all positions with the primary duties of performing office automation work, including word processing, either solely or in combination with clerical work, when such work is performed in the context of general office clerical support. Positions in this series require: knowledge of general office automation software, practices, and procedures; competitive level proficiency in typing; and the ability to apply these knowledges and skills in the performance of general office support work. The GS-326 standard indicates that if the primary purpose of a position is to provide general office clerical support, and the position requires knowledge of office automation hardware and software systems, and if the position requires the skills of a fully qualified typist, then the position is appropriately classified in the GS-326 series. The appellant's position meets those criteria. The paramount qualifications requirements and recruitment sources are for persons who can perform

general office clerical support, and are fully qualified typists with knowledge of office automation hardware and software. Consequently, this position is properly assigned to the GS-326 series, and, based on our grade level determination that follows, is titled Office Automation Assistant.

The GS-326 standard directs that the office automation work of a position be evaluated using the Office Automation Grade Evaluation Guide (OAGEG). Therefore, we have applied the grading criteria in the OAGEG to that portion of the appellant's position. In addition, we have applied the grading criteria in the Grade Level Guide for Clerical and Assistance Work (GLGCAW) to evaluate his general clerical support duties.

Grade level determination

Evaluation of office automation duties

The OAGEG is written in the Factor Evaluation System (FES) format which contains nine factors to evaluate the grade level of a position. Under the FES, each factor level description in a standard or guide describes the minimum characteristics needed to receive credit for the described level. Therefore, if a position fails to meet the criteria in a factor level description in any significant aspect, it must be credited at a lower level. Conversely, the position may exceed those criteria in some aspects and still not be credited at a higher level. Each factor level has a corresponding point value. The total points assigned are converted to a grade by use of the grade conversion table in the standard or guide.

Factor 1, Knowledge required by the position

This factor covers the nature and extent of information and facts the employee must understand to do acceptable work and the nature and extent of the skills needed to apply this knowledge. To be used as a basis for selecting a level under this factor, a knowledge must be required and applied.

At Level 1-3 employees are required to apply knowledge of varied and advanced functions of one software type; varied functions of more than one software type; or other equivalent knowledge of automated systems. The employee applies knowledge of software functions to produce a wide range of documents that often require complex formats, such as graphics or tables within text, to edit and reformat electronic drafts, and to update or revise existing databases or spreadsheets. One typical knowledge and skill at this level involves employees who apply knowledge of office automation systems to use several types of software for various office needs. They must know the processing procedures and function keys for performing a substantial range of functions within each software type. A work illustration at this level includes using word processing software to produce a variety of documents, e.g., spreadsheets.

At Level 1-4 employees apply knowledge of the capabilities, operating characteristics, and advanced functions of a variety of types of office automation software. Knowledge is applied to select the most appropriate software type for a specific office need, to integrate different software types into a single document, to devise new methods of automated office support, to

resolve problems with current automated office support methods, or to complete other nonstandard assignments using varied office automation technologies.

The appellant applies knowledge comparable to Level 1-3. Like that level, he applies knowledge of the varied functions of more than one software type to produce a wide range and variety of documents sometimes requiring complex formats (e.g., tables within text), and to edit and reformat electronic drafts, and update existing databases and spreadsheets. His office automation responsibilities include the following: (1) using word processing software (Microsoft Word) to create parent newsletters and certificates, and edit and reformat draft documents; (2) using database software (Microsoft Excel) to update the existing data base and enter and retrieve student registration data, as well as volunteer and visitor data; (3) using electronic mail (Microsoft Outlook) to send and receive messages and to transmit data; and (4) using the Internet (Internet Explorer) to find graphics to import into Word documents. In order to create documents, he must know the proper processing procedures and function keys of each type of software.

The appellant's position does not meet Level 1-4. Unlike that level, his work does not require him to apply knowledge of the operating characteristics and advanced functions of a variety of software, as well as their differences and similarities so that they can be integrated when producing single documents. In contrast to Level 1-4, he does not have to apply knowledge sufficient to devise new methods of automated office support, or to complete other nonstandard assignments using a variety of office automation technology.

This factor is evaluated at Level 1-3 and 350 points are assigned.

Factor 2, Supervisory controls

This factor covers the nature and extent of direct or indirect controls exercised by the supervisor, the employee's responsibility, and the review of completed work.

At Level 2-3, the highest level described in the OAGEG, assignments are given with information on general administrative changes, deadlines, and priorities. For work that has not previously been automated, the supervisor defines overall objectives. The employee works independently to plan and carry out steps for completing assignments in accordance with established office instructions and practices for office automation. When current practices in an assignment cause problems, the incumbent uses initiative to resolve them, coordinating with other employees affected. Completed work is evaluated for technical soundness, usefulness, and conformance with office operating requirements and needs. The methods used to produce work normally are not reviewed.

The appellant's position meets the threshold for Level 2-3. Like that level, the supervisor assigns work mainly in terms of deadlines and priorities and is often out of the immediate work environment. The appellant works independently to plan and carry out steps for completing assignments in accordance with established school office instructions and practices for office automation. On his own initiative he attempts to resolve problems relating to the use of nonstandard office automation practices. Like Level 2-3, completed office automation work

products are reviewed for technical soundness and conformance with office operating requirements.

This factor is evaluated at Level 2-3 and 275 points are credited.

Factor 3, Guidelines

This factor covers the guidelines and the judgment needed to apply them.

At Level 3-2 guidelines include both detailed step-by-step instructions for specific office automation tasks and more general procedural guidelines in the form of manufacturer's manuals and tutorials for users, agency correspondence procedures, style manuals, , sample work products, etc. Employees must select and apply detailed instructions for each office automation task or function, when available. For tasks not covered by specific guidelines, they must search more general guidelines to determine the specific steps to apply. Judgment is required because of the number and similarity of guidelines or the availability of alternative procedures for accomplishing a function such as choosing which editing procedure to use, depending on the nature and extent of the changes required. Situations in which existing guidelines cannot be applied are referred to the supervisor or to an automation specialist.

At Level 3-3 general procedural guidelines are available, but they normally include user's manuals and tutorials for several software packages of different types. Much of the work requires adaptation of available guides, such as user's manuals, to meet requirements for new tasks or to solve processing problems either encountered in the employee's own work or referred by others. Judgment is required to search manuals for methods that can be applied and to adapt those methods to specific requirements. Employees also exercise initiative and judgment in deviating from existing instructions or practices to resolve operating problems or to develop more efficient processing procedures. Frequently the methods developed become guidelines for other employees in the unit. Problems that cannot be resolved by adapting existing guidelines are referred to automation specialists.

The appellant's position meets Level 3-2. Guidelines for the appellant's office automation duties include software manufacturer's manuals, sample work templates and style manuals, and materials covering training that the appellant has received in the areas of creating newsletters, certificates, and the new student management system. For tasks not covered by specific guidelines, he searches more general references to determine the specific step or procedure to follow. Because of the number, variety, and similarity of guidelines, he uses judgment to determine the proper procedure to accomplish office automation tasks. When specific guidelines cannot be applied or are unavailable, the appellant refers to the school's Administrative Technologist and Educational Technologist who can help with hardware and software situations or issues.

The position does not meet Level 3-3. The record shows that the appellant is not regularly and recurrently required to adapt available guidelines to resolve processing problems. Unlike Level 3-3, the appellant is not routinely required to search manuals and adapt methods to specific requirements. His work does not require or permit him to significantly deviate from existing

instructions to resolve operating problems, and he is not routinely tasked to develop more efficient operating procedures which could become guidelines for other employees in his organization.

This factor is evaluated at Level 3-2 and credited with 125 points.

Factor 4, Complexity

This factor covers the nature, number, variety, and intricacy of tasks, steps, processes, or methods in the work performed; the difficulty in identifying what needs to be done; and the difficulty and originality involved in performing the work.

At Level 4-2 the documents, formats, and specific processing functions involved require a varying number and sequence of steps and use of different functions from one assignment to another. Some assignments involve using one type of software to create or edit a variety of standard documents requiring differing procedures and functions, or to process lengthy documents with a variety of format changes within each document. Other assignments involve using two or more types of software to process different types of documents, paragraphs, tables, reports, etc., that can be combined in a number of ways and that require extensive entry of data from drafts. In deciding how to proceed, the employee must recognize differences in existing procedures and applications and make choices from among established alternatives. Processing steps and procedures required to complete assignments are varied and numerous. They differ in terms of the type of software used, the type of document or report produced, formatting requirements, and the existence of pre-recorded formats.

At Level 4-2 employees are expected to recognize discrepancies and correct or question originators in such matters as improper formatting. The third illustrative work example in the guide describes an employee at this level who maintains administrative records for the unit using an existing database. Information is selected from a variety of sources and the data entered into established electronic records. The employee determines whether the entry reflects additional data or whether it requires adjusting or deleting existing data.

At Level 4-3 the work involves using several types of software packages for different office needs. Assignments typically include a broad range of office automation duties such as: (1) using word processing and graphics software to prepare reports and briefing documents, using spreadsheet software to maintain the unit's fiscal records, and using project management software to track the status of a number of projects assigned to the unit; or (2) performing complex office automation duties requiring different approaches and methods from one assignment to another. This may involve using different word processing packages to edit lengthy and complicated technical reports and resolving incompatibility problems in transferring text from one software package to another when menu options or specific software instructions are not available.

At Level 4-3 the employee considers many factors that are varied and that are not always clearly established. These include, for example, the nature and capability of different software types or software packages of the same type; the similarities, differences, and integration compatibilities among software types and software packages; the general operations of the unit such as the

source and timing of data for reports; and the current and long term use of the subject document or report and how its use may change. In performing the work, the employee applies judgment in considering and selecting from among many different software types in light of the range and peculiarities of the unit's information processing capabilities and requirements. The employee regularly develops methods and procedures for office automation tasks, and identifies and solves problems in existing methods or procedures.

The appellant's position meets Level 4-2. Like that level, he uses a variety of specific processing functions and steps to create different documents. For example, he uses one type of software with different steps and functions to create or edit parent newsletters from a Word template. Like Level 4-2, he also uses two or more types of software to process different types of documents that can be combined in a number of ways. Similarly, the appellant combines data using Word and Microsoft Excel to create reports using graphics imported from the Internet, tables, charts, and text all combined into one document. The appellant's work is similar to the third illustrative example in the OAGEG describing employees who maintain administrative records for a unit using an existing database, entering data into established electronic records, and assembling information for reports. This compares closely to the appellant maintaining the WinSchool database, which contains student registration data.

The appellant's position does not meet Level 4-3. Although he uses different types of software, unlike that level he does not perform the broad range of complex office automation assignments described at Level 4-3. In proceeding with his assignments, he is not faced with considering many varied factors that are not clearly established, e.g., the capability and compatibility of different software types. In contrast to Level 4-3, his work does not regularly require him to develop methods and procedures for office automation tasks, or identify and solve problems in existing methods or procedures.

This factor is evaluated at Level 4-2 and 75 points are credited.

Factor 5, Scope and effect

This factor covers the relationships between the nature of work, i.e., the purpose, breadth, and depth of the assignment; and the effect of work products or services both within and outside the organization.

At Level 5-1 the purpose of the work is to perform specific, recurring tasks required to maintain electronic records such as calendars, directories, spreadsheets, and databases, and/or to produce various items such as correspondence, memos, publications, manuscripts, reports, or forms, in draft or final form according to most recent data. Production usually includes steps such as: selecting and adhering to the proper format; determining the spacing and arrangement of material; making entries to and retrieving data from electronic records; and checking references, distribution requirements, grammar, punctuation, and spelling. The services performed facilitate the work of the originators of the documents or the users of the data maintained.

At Level 5-2 the purpose of the work is to collect, select, organize, and provide information in oral or written form. This may involve telephone conversations, electronic mail, reports, on-line

databases, etc. The work is performed in accordance with established rules, regulations, procedures, and office automation practices. The work affects the way in which other employees document, store, receive, or transmit information, and increases the availability and usefulness of the information involved.

The appellant's position meets Level 5-1. Like Level 5-1, he performs specific, recurring tasks in maintaining electronic records such as directories and registration databases, and produces various reports, publications, e.g., parent newsletter, memos and correspondence. Production includes many of the steps listed under Level 5-1. Like that level, the office automation services he provides supports the originators of documents, and information in the databases that he maintains is particularly useful to the school's administrators, e.g., secretary, cultural assistant, vice-principal, in carrying out their responsibilities.

The position does not meet Level 5-2. While the appellant uses electronic mail and on-line databases, unlike Level 5-2 the purpose of his work is not to collect, select, organize and provide information in oral or written form. Although his work is performed in accordance with established automation practices, his duties do not affect the way other employees store, receive and transmit information.

This factor is evaluated at Level 5-1 and 25 points are credited.

Factor 6, Personal contacts, and Factor 7, Purpose of contacts

Factor 6 and Factor 7 are evaluated relative to each other. The nature of the contacts, credited under Factor 6, and the purpose of those contacts, credited under Factor 7, must be based on the same contact. Credit for Factor 6 and Factor 7 is determined by reference to the chart contained in the guide.

Personal contacts

At Level 1, personal contacts include employees within the immediate work unit or related support units such as points-of-contact and document originators. In contrast, Level 2 personal contacts include employees at various levels throughout the agency who are involved in or affected by integrating or changing automated office procedures.

The appellant's personal contacts meet Level 1. His regular and recurring contacts for office automation duties are primarily with employees of the school. He does not have contacts with employees at various levels throughout the agency as described at Level 2. If occasionally contact is needed with agency personnel at other levels outside the school, the contact is generally made on his behalf by other administrative staff in the school office.

This factor is evaluated at Level-1.

Purpose of contacts

At Level A, the purpose of contacts is to exchange information about the assignment or methods to be used to complete the assignment. For example, to clarify terminology, determine priorities or projects, discuss additions or revisions, or discuss equipment capabilities. In contrast, the purpose of Level B contacts is to plan, coordinate, and integrate work processes or work methods for office automation between and among related work units.

Like Level A, the purpose of the appellant's contacts is to exchange information about assignments or work methods with employees in the immediate work unit. The appellant makes contacts to determine assignment priorities, discuss project revisions and software capabilities. Unlike Level B, the appellant's contacts are not made to plan, coordinate, and integrate office automation work processes and methods between and among related work units.

This factor is evaluated at Level A.

By application of the chart in the guide, a combination of Level 1 and Level A results in crediting a total of 30 points for Factors 6 and 7.

Factor 8, Physical demands

The factor covers the requirements and physical demands placed on the employee by the work assignment, including the physical characteristics and abilities required.

Level 8-1 is the only level for this factor described in the guide. At that level, the work is sedentary and requires no special physical demands. The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 8-1. Like that level, his work is basically sedentary and requires no special physical demands.

This factor is evaluated at Level 8-1 and 5 points are assigned.

Factor 9, Work environment

This factor covers the risks and discomforts in the employee's physical surroundings, or the nature of the work assigned and the safety regulations required.

Level 9-1 is the only level for this factor described in the guide. At that level, the work involves minimal risks and observance of safety precautions typical of office settings. The appellant's position meets but does not exceed Level 9-1. Like that level, his work involves minimal risks and observance of safety precautions typical of office settings.

This factor is evaluated at Level 9-1 and 5 points are credited.

Summary of FES factors

<i>Factor</i>	<i>Level</i>	<i>Points</i>
1. Knowledge required by the position	1-3	350
2. Supervisory controls	2-3	275
3. Guidelines	3-2	125
4. Complexity	4-2	75
5. Scope and effect	5-1	25
6. and 7. Personal contacts/purpose of contacts	1-A	30
8. Physical demands	8-1	5
9. Work environment	9-1	<u>5</u>
<i>Total</i>		890

A total of 890 points falls within the GS-5 range (855-1100) on the grade conversion chart in the OAGEG. Therefore, the appellant's office automation duties are graded at the GS-5 level.

Evaluation of general clerical support duties

The GLGCAW uses two classification factors to evaluate the work of a position: (1) *Nature of assignment* which includes the knowledge required and complexity of the work, and (2) *Level of responsibility* which includes supervisory controls, guidelines, and contacts.

Nature of assignment

At the GS-4 grade level, work consists of performing a full range of standard clerical assignments and resolving recurring problems. Work consists of related steps, processes, or methods which require the employee to identify and recognize differences among a variety of recurring situations. The work requires some subject-matter knowledge of an organization's programs and operations; or a type of business practice; or a body of standardized rules, processes or operations to determine what is being done, why the action is being taken, and how it must be accomplished. Illustrative of work at the GS-4 grade is performing a variety of recordkeeping, reporting, and informational duties in support of an organization's security program. The employee compiles, maintains, and updates data, lists and reports, applying knowledge of the organization's rules and procedures.

At the GS-5 grade level, work consists of performing a full range of standard and nonstandard clerical assignments and resolving a variety of non-recurring problems. Work includes a variety of assignments involving different and unrelated steps, processes, or methods. The employee must identify and understand the issues involved in each assignment and determine what steps and procedures are necessary and the order of their performance. Completion of each transaction typically involves selecting a course of action from a number of possibilities. The work requires extensive knowledge of an organization's rules, procedures, operations, or business practices to perform the more complex, interrelated, or one-of-a-kind clerical processing procedures. Illustrative of GS-5 grade level work, is providing specialized clerical assistance to customs

inspectors by examining documents for completeness, discrepancies, and other special requirements, and applying knowledge of pertinent guides as well as substantial knowledge of the functions of other divisions and branches.

The appellant's position meets the GS-4 grade level. Like that level, he performs a full range of standard clerical assignments, resolving recurring problems, and recognizing differences among a variety of recurring situations in order to take the most appropriate action. These include signing in visitors and providing badges, filling out student tardy slips, maintaining the school's Community Facility User Log, scheduling and maintaining bus transportation logs, helping to maintain and post information to faculty and staff personnel folders, maintaining and updating various lists and information for reports, and receiving and updating DoDEA publications and regulations. These duties require some subject-matter knowledge of the school's policies, programs, and standardized operating rules and processes in order to understand what steps to take and how tasks must be accomplished. The position favorably compares to the illustrative work example discussed at the GS-4 grade level.

The position does not meet the GS-5 grade level. Unlike that level, the appellant's work does not consist of performing a full range of standard and nonstandard clerical assignments, and resolving a variety of non-recurring problems. His assignments are limited to standardized clerical tasks covering a range of recurring problems. In contrast to the GS-5 grade level, his general clerical support duties involve related steps and procedure and do not involve selecting the best course of action from a number of possibilities. While he must have knowledge of the school's operating rules, the record shows that he is not tasked to routinely perform the more complex, interrelated, or one-of-a-kind clerical processing procedures.

Therefore, this factor is credited at the GS-4 grade level.

Level of responsibility

At the GS-4 grade level, the supervisor provides little assistance with recurring assignments. The employee uses initiative to complete work in accordance with accepted practices. Unusual situations may require the assistance of the supervisor or a higher level employee, and the completed work may be reviewed more closely. Procedures for doing the work have been established and a number of specific guidelines are available. Due to the number and similarity of guidelines and work situations, the employee uses judgment in locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines, references, and procedures. The employee has contact with co-workers and those outside the organization to exchange information, and in some cases to resolve problems in connection with the immediate assignment.

At the GS-5 grade level, the supervisor assigns work by defining objectives, priorities, and deadlines and provides guidance on assignments which do not have clear precedents. The employee works in accordance with accepted practices and completed work is evaluated for technical soundness, appropriateness, and effectiveness in meeting goals. Extensive guides in the form of instructions, manuals, regulations, and precedents apply to the work. The number and similarity of guidelines and work situations require the employee to use judgment in locating and selecting the most appropriate guidelines for application and adapting them according to

circumstances of the specific case or transaction. A number of procedural problems may arise which also require interpretation and adaptation of established guides. Contacts are with a variety of persons within and outside the agency for the purpose of receiving or providing information relating to the work or for the purpose of resolving operating problems in connection with recurring responsibilities.

The position meets the GS-4 grade level. Like the GS-4 grade level, the supervisor provides little or no assistance with recurring assignments, and the appellant exercises initiative to complete work by following accepted practices. For unusual situations he seeks guidance from the supervisor or a higher level administrative employee. The appellant uses a number of specific guidelines, e.g., office procedural guides and desk notes, to perform his work. However, due to their number and similarity, he uses judgment in locating and applying them. Similar to the GS-4 level, the appellant has contact with co-workers in the school office, and sometimes outside the office to exchange information and resolve problems relating to the immediate assignment.

The appellant's position does not meet the GS-5 grade level. Given the nature and context of the appellant's assignments which are standard and recurring, unlike the GS-5 grade level there is no need for the supervisor to define the objectives, priorities, and deadlines, and no need for reviewing completed work for technical soundness. Moreover, clear precedents are available for the appellant's assignments. In contrast to the GS-5 level, extensive guides are neither available nor required to perform the appellant's standard procedural assignments. Unlike the GS-5 level, the appellant's contacts are limited to persons in the immediate office/school, and do not involve contacts with individuals outside the agency.

Therefore, this factor is credited at the GS-4 grade level.

Summary

By application of the grading criteria in the OAGEG the appellant's office automation duties equate to the GS-5 grade level. By application of the criteria in the GLGCAW the appellant's general clerical support duties meet the GS-4 grade level. Therefore, based on application of mixed grade principles, the final grade of the appellant's position is GS-5.

Decision

The appellant's position is properly classified as Office Automation Assistant, GS-326-5.