

I have worked as a classified employee for over 20 years in the Oakridge School District. I am considered "Crew Leader" as an education assistant at the College and Career Center.

I am outraged that this position is somehow considered to be a lesser job, not deserving unemployment compensation when I am "laid off" for summer months.

I know of no other occupation in which a person is laid off and denied their rightful benefits. Often, when we leave school in June, we do not know if we will even *have a job* to come back to. Is that fair and right?

I know construction workers, firefighters, and others who work "seasonally" and are allowed to apply for unemployment, yet classified school employees are held to a different standard. Why? Many of us need to work to support our families. While laid off we are looking for summer employment, often at minimum wage, and prospective employers are reluctant to hire us because they believe we have a job to go back to.

Many classified employees spend summers cleaning houses, mowing lawns, or providing childcare because they need income and unlike teachers- do not receive a check for the months that they don't work.

It is time for classified school employees to be treated with the respect they deserve- repeal the laws that prohibit myself and my co-workers from collecting unemployment benefits when we are laid off.

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