

North Providence School Department Staff Hiring Policy	Approved: 2/26/2020

I. INTRODUCTION

The State of Rhode Island has placed responsibility for the hiring, retention and assignment of instructional staff with the Superintendent of Schools (“Superintendent”). The Rhode Island Department of Education (“RIDE”) has enacted the Basic Education Program Regulation (“BEP”) which provides mandatory criteria for hiring, retention and assignment of instructional staff. The BEP requires the North Providence School District (“District” or “LEA”) to select and retain only the most highly effective staff and to base assignments on student need and qualifications. RIDE has determined that the management of the Human Capital System is “essential to the mission of implementing a statewide system of public education.”¹

The Superintendent and site-based administrators have a statutory responsibility to comply and implement state law as well as the Department of Education’s rules and regulations.² The Superintendent may delegate his/her duties under this policy to a designee to act in his/her place.

Continuous improvement of student learning shall be the primary reference point for all decision-making regarding personnel assignment and evaluation. In order to effectively meet these functions, the LEA shall maintain control of its ability to recruit, hire, manage, evaluate, and assign its personnel³ to ensure the selection and hiring of highly qualified, effective, staff that best meets the needs of students.

The District holds a strong commitment to hiring a diverse pool of candidates for positions across each Equal Employment Opportunity job category. The Director of Human Resources serves as a resource for District administrators in identifying screening committee members who demonstrate excellence in building a diverse culture. Such efforts rely heavily on community participation through site-based School Improvement Teams (SIT). The SIT teams serve to bring critical community input into the education process. The District therefore seeks to include present and former SIT team members in the screening process where practicable.

II. POLICY

¹ BEP G-15-1.2(c).
² R.I.G.L. 16-2-9(3), (14), (15) ,16-2-11(a)(4) and 16-2-11.1
³ BEP G-15-2.2(a).

The District shall regard a highly qualified, effective applicant as one who fulfills all Federal, State and District laws, rules, regulations and requirements for the position. The District shall be committed to hiring the most highly qualified and effective applicant available for vacant positions consistent with budget requirements and those applicants who best meet the needs of the students and the District.

Such hiring shall be performed consistent with the accompanying protocols and in conformance with applicable federal and state law, rules and regulations.

A. Appointment of Principal/Assistant Principals.

Pursuant to R.I. Gen Laws 16-2-11(a)(6) the Superintendent or designee shall directly appoint principals and assistant principals for each public school within the District at levels of compensation in accordance with the District's compensation policy.

B. Appointment of Administrators and other Personnel not assigned to individual schools.

Pursuant to R.I. Gen Laws 16-2-11(a)(7) the Superintendent or designee shall directly appoint all other non-school site administrators and other personnel at levels of compensation in accordance with the District's compensation policy.

C. Appointment of School Site Personnel other than Principals.

Pursuant to R.I. Gen Laws 16-2-11.1 the Superintendent or designee shall consider appointment of all teachers, athletic coaches, instructional or administrative aides, and other personnel assigned to the school sites, consistent with District personnel policies, collective bargaining agreements, and based upon the recommendation of the relevant site-based administrator.

School Principals' recommendations for appointment shall be consistent with this staff hiring policy, as well as other relevant policies and protocols established by the School Committee and protocols as established by the Superintendent or designee.

D. Reporting Appointments to the School Committee.

The Superintendent or designee shall report all appointments to the School Committee on a monthly basis.

E. Template Contract and Compensation

In furtherance of this policy, the Superintendent shall submit template employment contracts to the School Committee from time to time, for its approval. Such employment contracts as applicable, shall be utilized by the Superintendent when appointing personnel in the District. The Superintendent is explicitly authorized to

execute said contracts for initial hiring and renewals of employment on behalf of the District⁴ and such contracts shall be valid and binding as if entered into by vote of the School Committee.

Additionally, the Superintendent shall set levels of compensation and benefits within budgetary parameters consistent with this Staff Hiring Policy and the District Compensation Policy. Job postings for all administrative positions will state a salary range not to exceed the budgeted amount of said position, unless otherwise approved by the School Committee.

DISTRICT HIRING PROTOCOL

I. General

Every position in the District, which in the judgment of the Superintendent or designee, must be filled to meet the needs of the District, shall be filled by a candidate with the knowledge and skills that best matches the needs of students and the District.

Recruitment may be directed both to those not currently employed by the District and to those currently employed by the District in other positions. Consideration of internal and external candidates may allow the District to place the most effective and experienced staff in the locations and positions where they are most needed in compliance with State and Federal Law as well as the BEP.⁵

Consistent with applicable law, regulation, and terms of applicable collective bargaining agreements (if any), all applicants shall be given appropriate consideration when filling vacant positions. The Superintendent or designee is the responsible authority for appointment of all such personnel.

a. Advertising for Position

All posted vacancies which do not result in appropriate applicants from within the North Providence School Department's staff, may be made available to be filled by appropriate public instrumentalities. Such efforts may include, but are not limited to, advertising in a paper of general circulation, placement instrumentalities through the internet, or through other community outreach efforts that support the District in recruiting a diverse pool of candidates across each Equal Employment Opportunity job category.

b. Applications, Descriptions & Postings

Upon approval of the Superintendent or designee, the District Human Resources department shall promulgate appropriate form applications, functional job descriptions and job postings (where appropriate) for each position in the District.

⁴ R.I. Gen Laws 16-2-9(a) (14), (18), (23).

⁵ BEP G-15-2.2(b)(1), see also Commissioner of Education Letter to Superintendents dated October 20, 2009 re: Basic Education Program Regulations and Seniority Based Teacher Assignments.

A North Providence School Department application shall be deemed to be complete upon receipt of a letter of interest, resume, three professional letters of reference, District application, signed criminal background check release of liability form, and evidence of applicable certification(s), required education and other requirements as listed within the job posting.

Candidates shall send a letter of interest for each vacant position for which they wish to be considered whether their application is currently active.

Any candidate who is a current resident of the Town of North Providence, or a successfully evaluated substitute in the District, and who meets the qualifications of a publicly advertised vacancy, shall be given consideration for such vacancy in the North Providence School Department. Such candidates shall be afforded the courtesy of one interview per year for a position in the District.

c. Equity and Objectivity

Job-related criteria for the advertised vacancy must be developed at the outset of the search and approved by the Superintendent or designee. All postings shall include required and preferred qualifications (when appropriate) which will be the basis for determining if a candidate is minimally qualified for the District to consider his/her candidacy.

The screening committee will design interview questions that provide a fair and objective evaluation of each candidate in advance of committee interviews and must be approved by the Superintendent or designee. Candidate evaluations may include interview site visits, reference checks and any other method of candidate evaluation considered appropriate by the Superintendent or designee. All candidates being considered will be evaluated in the same manner and asked the same set of questions.

The committee will use only job-related reasons to advance candidates or exclude candidates from advancement in the search process. Objective criteria should be applied consistently with all candidates. Any subjective criteria must be related to the position in question.

All screening committee members must exercise their judgment to avoid having a single member of the committee overly influence the inclusion or exclusion of a candidate.

II. Screening Committee for Appointment of School Principals, Administrators, and other Personnel not Assigned to Individual Schools

A screening committee appointed by the Superintendent or designee will consist of at least one parent, one staff member and an administrator who may be the successful candidate's immediate supervisor. The committee will screen the applications and conduct candidate evaluations under the directions of the Superintendent or designee, using guidelines established by the Superintendent or designee, for each vacant position.

Preferably, any certified staff member utilized as a member of the screening committee will be selected from a pool of volunteers who presently or formally participated on a SIT team. Certified staff members will be selected by a lottery from volunteers. The Superintendent or designee will conduct the lottery.

Preferably, the parent member of the screening committee will be selected from a pool of volunteers who presently or formally participated on a SIT team. Parent volunteers will be selected from the Parent Teacher Organization membership (PTO) If a vacancy occurs at a school for which no parent volunteer is available, a volunteer from another school may be selected. The lottery will be conducted by the Superintendent or designee.

In schools where no PTO exists, the principal/designee will formulate a list of parents who are active volunteers in school activities and events. These parents will serve as the volunteer pool for the hiring process. The lottery will proceed as above.

Alternatively, the Superintendent or designee may, at his/her discretion, elect to employ a District-wide hiring procedure as follows:

- The Superintendent or designee will select the appropriate number of District-wide teams to conduct the initial candidate evaluations.
- The teams will be comprised of principals, parents, teachers, and may include a central office administrator(s)/Director(s), preferably representing SIT teams.
- Parents and teachers shall be selected from the school volunteer pools where vacancies exist.

As an outcome of any interviews, the presiding administrator shall prepare a brief narrative, summarizing the results of the interviews as well as the names of the candidates being forwarded to the Superintendent for further consideration. This narrative must be aligned with the initial directives and guidelines established by the Superintendent or designee and charged to the screening committee prior to the interviewing process. The administrator's decision shall be based upon his/her best independent educational judgment in conformance with state and federal law.

The Superintendent or designee shall interview the top two candidates. A list of questions shall be developed to be asked at this level of interview. In addition, the Superintendent or designee may ask other relevant questions. The Superintendent or designee may also conduct additional interviews, site visits, reference checks, and any other method of candidate evaluation considered appropriate by the Superintendent or designee.

If the Superintendent rejects the administrator's recommendation, the administrator shall review all other applicants for the position and present additional candidates. If the administrator concludes that the remaining candidate(s) do not possess the qualities required by the school site, the Department of Human Resources may re-advertise for the position or may elect for the committee to interview any other applicant whether or not recommended by the screening committee team.

The Department of Human Resources shall verify the candidate's past employment, educational experience, references, and certifications.

The Superintendent or designee shall appoint the successful candidate. The Superintendent or designee's decision shall be based upon his/her best independent judgment in conformance with state law⁶.

The Superintendent may appoint an internal administrative transfer or promote an assistant principal to building administrator without advertising or conducting interviews for the position.

III. Appointment of School Site Personnel other than Principals.

The Superintendent shall consider appointment of all teachers, athletic coaches, instructional or administrative aides, and other personnel assigned to the school sites, consistent with District personnel policies, collective bargaining agreements, and based upon the recommendation of the site-based administrator.

A screening committee appointed by and including the Principal or designee will consist of at least one parent, one staff member, one member of the SIT team who is not employed in the District (preferably), and an administrator. The committee will screen the applications and conduct candidate evaluations under the directions of the Principal or designee, using guidelines as established by the Superintendent or designee and this protocol for each vacant position.

Preferably, any certified staff member utilized as a member of the screening committee will be selected from past or present SIT team volunteers. Certified staff members will be selected by a lottery from volunteers. The Principal or designee will conduct the lottery.

Preferably, the parent member of the screening committee will be selected from a pool of volunteers who presently or formally participated on a SIT team. If a vacancy occurs at a school for which no parent volunteer is available, a volunteer from another school may be selected. The lottery will be conducted by the Principal or designee.

In schools where no PTO exists, the principal will formulate a list of parents who are active volunteers in school activities and events. These parents will serve as the volunteer pool for the hiring process. The lottery will proceed as above.

If the Principal does not sit on the screening committee interviews, the Principal shall interview the top three candidates. A list of questions shall be developed to be asked at this level of interview. In addition, the Principal may ask other relevant questions.

As an outcome of any interviews, the Principal shall prepare a brief narrative, summarizing the results of the interviews as well as the name of the candidate being forwarded to the Superintendent or designee for further consideration. This narrative must be aligned with the initial directives and guidelines established by the Superintendent or designee and charged to the screening committee prior to the interviewing process. The

⁶ *R.I. Gen Laws 16-2-11.*

Principal's decision shall be based upon his/her best independent educational judgment in conformance with state law.

If the Superintendent rejects the Principal's recommendation, the Principal shall review all other applicants for the position and present additional candidates. If the Principal concludes that the remaining candidate(s) do not possess the qualities required by the school site, the Department of Human Resources may re-advertise for the position or may elect for the committee to interview any other applicant whether or not recommended by the screening committee team.

The Department of Human Resources shall verify the candidate's past employment, educational experience, references, certifications.

The Superintendent or designee shall appoint the successful candidate. The Superintendent or designee's decision shall be based upon his/her best independent judgment in conformance with state law⁷.

IV. Appointment of District Substitutes

An advertisement for substitute teachers, administrators, nurses, administrative assistants, paraprofessionals custodians, and crossing guards will take place as needed and in accordance with section I of the District Hiring Protocol. The Superintendent or designee will determine the number of substitutes needed for each job category.

Substitutes will be evaluated by the building level administrator using a District approved evaluation instrument. Substitutes who make themselves available in the North Providence School District and receive successful evaluations, will be given priority hiring for vacancies that may develop. Substitutes will be rotated through all the schools in the District with input from building administrators.

V. Criteria for Hiring

When hiring, promoting or transferring non-administrative staff members, the administrator shall consider:

1. Qualifications which shall include experience in an actual job held, including special qualifications that may be required or educationally desirable for a position and must be student focused.
2. Certifications held.
3. Professional development each applicant has engaged in.
4. Participation on professional/district level/school level committees.
5. Work history with the District including but not limited to: attendance, effectiveness within various student populations, student achievement/results, and recent experience in relevant subject matter.
6. Results of evaluations.
7. Successful interview.
8. Discipline history.

⁷ *R.I. Gen Laws 16-2-11.*

- 9.** Laid off status and work experience will be used as a tiebreaker in the event that two candidates are deemed by the Superintendent or designee to be equally highly qualified and highly effective.
- 10.** Other relevant data pertinent to the position.
- 11.** When all qualifications, as noted in items 1 through 10 above are equal, seniority shall prevail.
- 12.** Any decision of the Administration regarding an assignment or transfer or promotion is subject to the grievance process, if required by the relevant collective bargaining agreement.
- 13.** If only one person applies for a position, he/she will be vetted through the above process. If the District determines that the sole candidate is not suitable, then the District may advertise externally.
- 14.** Other requirements as set out in the relevant collective bargaining agreement.

VI. Forms and Format for Hiring, Promotions and Transfers

The Director of Human Resources shall promulgate, with the approval of the Superintendent or designee, appropriate forms and other materials, consistent with district policy and protocol, for use by screening committees and appointing administrators in the hiring, promotion and transfer process.

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