

**Administrative Procedure 4005**

***Assignment and Selection of Principals***

**Preamble**

The Board of Education recognizes that one of its most important functions in support of student achievement is the assignment and selection of principals. Principals are appointed to the district and will be assigned by the board to the position that the board feels is an appropriate match to the needs of schools and of the district. The board also recognizes the benefits of changing the assignment of principals over time in order to expand their experience as well as to provide schools with the expertise and leadership provided by the principals of other schools in the district. In the case of a principalship vacancy, the board will determine if it will assign a principal from a different school or advertise for the principalship and then assign the selected candidate to the school.

**Policy Statement**

The board believes that the first consideration in the assignment of principals must be for the educational leadership needs of the district and its schools in support of student achievement. The board also believes that consideration must be given to the benefits that a change in assignment will provide individual principals in the district and of the expertise and leadership that such principals will bring with them. In the assignment of a principal to a school, therefore, the board will consider principals who are currently in the district. Once assignments of current principals have been finalized, the board believes that remaining vacant principalships will be advertised with appropriate input from representatives of staff, parents and the school community during the selection process.

**Guiding Principles**

1. Principalships are considered to be district appointments with assignments to a school as determined by the board. Principals are key educational leaders in the schools and within the district.
2. As vacancies occur, processes will be in place which allow the board the opportunity to make any change in assignment the board feels is appropriate prior to determining that a competition is to be held.

3. In addition to the opportunities provided through vacancies, the board will consider other options for principals to gain experience in other schools. To this end, a review of assignment and career plans will take place with principals annually or more frequently at the request of the principal or the superintendent.
4. The board will consider the impact of more than one administrative change from schools with an administrative team of two or more members. The board recognizes that it may not be beneficial to the school community for the entire administrative team to be transferred out of the school in the same school year.
5. Competition for principalships will be open to all internal and external candidates. Only in exceptional circumstances will the Board restrict a competition to internal candidates.
6. Appropriate involvement of representatives of staff, parents and school community will be included when a competition for a principalship takes place.
7. Whenever possible, filling of vacant principalships will follow the step by step approach outlined in this policy. The board may waive the stipulations of some or all steps of this policy should it deem such action appropriate to the circumstance.

#### **Administrative Procedures for the Assignment of Principals**

1. The board will use the document “District Criteria for Principals” (see Appendix 1) and other criteria provided by the schools in implementing the processes for assigning and selecting principals.
2. Each year as part of their Annual Growth Plan review, principals will submit a Career Plans Form indicating their interests for possible administrative placement in the following year. This may include requests for assignment to different schools, levels, or an indication of interest in opportunities in a different district. In addition, Principals will be asked to share retirement plans for the subsequent year with the superintendent by January 31, or as soon as possible, to insure a timely selection of another administrator to fill their position. Reassignment date may either be mid-year or year-end as determined by the Superintendent.
3. At any time during the year, principals may request a meeting with the superintendent and/or other senior district staff to discuss career aspirations or to elaborate on information provided in their Career Plans Form. Principals may normally be considered for a reassignment based on operational needs of the district and/or if they have been in their current assignment for more than 5 years.
4. As part of the district’s preparation for administrative changes in the coming year, principals who are being considered for a change in assignment will be consulted as early as possible in the planning cycle. It is important to note that this consultation can occur at any time during the

year but all consideration will be given to appropriate and early consultation. This consultation will occur prior to a decision being made by the superintendent.

5. The Board will be provided with information by the superintendent as a result of consultation with principals. Those principals being considered for a reassignment will be so informed prior to a decision being made by the Superintendent. All principals moving into a new assignment will be provided with a written rationale for the change and may request to meet with the board and the superintendent to discuss the proposed change in assignment.
6. Due to time constraints or emergent factors, the board may from time to time create a term principalship of specified duration, and appoint a person the board determines to be best suited to the role pending the full processes contemplated by this policy. Such process will take place within 6 months of the beginning of the term appointment.
7. After the process outlined in Steps 1 to 5 has been completed and in the absence of the need for Step 6, a principal vacancy will exist in a school. The superintendent and/or other senior district staff will normally request input from staff (CUPE, PVPA, CDTA) and the PAC of the school and discuss any specific concerns or priorities that the staff or PAC may have in regard to the vacant principal position. For vacancies at senior secondary, students may also be involved in the consultation.
8. Once any reassignment of current principals has taken place, the remaining vacancies will be advertised. Principalship competitions will be normally open to internal and external candidates. Principal appointments will be to the district with initial assignment indicated (e.g., SD71 Comox Valley is searching for a secondary school principal with the initial assignment being the XYZ Secondary School).
9. Selection process timeline will be included in the posting information to inform applicants of approximate dates for short- listing, interviews and final decision.
10. After the cut-off date for applications, one (1) representative from the DPAC, one (1) representative from the CVSAA (a current principal), one (1) representative from the CDTA and one (1) representative from CUPE will be invited to participate in a selection committee process with trustees, the director of human resources and other senior district staff.

**Note:** The director of human resources will coordinate the process and provide guidelines to the selection committee members regarding such issues as confidentiality, conflict of interest, thoroughness, and objectivity.

11. Selection committee members will attend a meeting where they will be asked to confidentially review materials from qualified applicants in order to develop a long list and short-list of appropriate candidates. The Superintendent or designate will determine a shortlist of candidates following a review of feedback from the selection committee and the results of reference checks completed by senior district staff.

**Note:** The long-listing and short-listing process will be conducted as thoroughly and as efficiently as possible. The process may require as long as three (3) to four (4) weeks.

12. Shortlisted candidates will be notified by the HR department in a timely manner regarding the interview time and processes.
13. Prior to the interviews, shortlisted candidates may be invited to meet with the superintendent and/or other senior district staff and tour the district and school(s). This process will be coordinated by the HR department.
14. Interview questions for the informal interviews with employee/parent groups will be developed by those group representatives and provided to the director of human resources prior to the interview. Interview questions for the panel interviews will be developed by the director of human resources and senior district staff with input from the selection committee.
15. On interview day, candidates will be interviewed informally with a small number of employee/parent group representatives prior to the panel interview process. The director of human resources will coordinate and attend the informal interviews.

Following the informal interviews, candidate will go through a formal panel interview. The selection committee will act as the Interview Panel and each panel member will be involved in the asking of interview questions. The director of human resources will coordinate the proceedings. At the end of the interviews, the representatives from DPAC, CVSAA, CDTA and CUPE will provide feedback (observations, strengths, challenges, and the most important thing to consider in the final decision making process from their perspective) to trustees and senior district staff, and then will leave the meeting.

Trustees and senior district staff will consider the feedback provided by parent/employee groups and all available information on each candidate, and make a decision on the successful applicant to be recommended to the board for final approval at the next in-camera meeting of the board.

16. The successful candidate will be offered the principalship as advertised. All other candidates will then be informed of the board decision and provided the opportunity to receive feedback on their application from the superintendent or other senior district staff.
17. The director of human resources will inform the selection committee of the board decision on the successful applicant in the competition and then will send an email announcement to all staff in the district with a copy to the president/chair of CVSAA, CDTA, CUPE and DPAC on the result of the competition.

## APPENDIX

### CRITERIA FOR PRINCIPALS

#### Educational Leadership

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The board requires its principals to have a Master's Degree. Further, a principal must have demonstrated during her/his career in Education:

- a commitment to the Principles of Learning and to the Principles of Inclusive Schools
  - a commitment to a consultative, collaborative, teamwork approach involving students, parents, school staff and the community
  - a commitment to supporting the interests of the Board and the District
  - a recent record of teaching excellence and leadership
  - an understanding of the important role a full range of educational programs play in the growth and development of students
  - a strong advocacy for students with special needs
  - a commitment to the concept of a "safe and caring school"
  - the ability to motivate staff and be an advocate for staff development based on school needs
  - a commitment to ongoing personal and professional development
  - strong support for a healthy and effective Parent Advisory Council and School Planning Council
  - the ability to implement a strong community communications program for a school
  - the ability to establish and maintain a positive, cooperative, caring environment in a school
  - the ability to implement and maintain an environment that supports positive student behaviour
  - patterns of successful experience in different educational settings
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### CRITERIA FOR PRINCIPALS

#### Administrative History

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A principal must have demonstrated during her/his career in education:

- effective problem-solving, conflict management and mediation skills in relations with all members of the school community
- friendliness, good humour, flexibility, enthusiasm, accessibility, forthrightness, openness and honesty
- respect for children and others and generate respect in return
- good judgment in assessing the strengths and needs of a school's organization and operation

#### Skills

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A principal must have demonstrated during her/his career in education:

- strong organizational and management skills, including financial planning and control
- skill in dealing with human resources and labour management
- excellent interpersonal, communication and listening skills
- skill in dealing with crisis situations
- skills in establishing and maintaining a close working relationship with all members of the school community
- essential skills in technological literacy
- an understanding of the major components of the educational programs offered in the school to which they are to be assigned
- an understanding of educational processes appropriate to the stage of development of the students in the schools to which they are to be assigned

## **LEARNING COMMUNITY**

### **Students**

Inclusive schools support the diverse needs of all learners. Students share responsibility for learning by:

- Participating actively
- Setting goals
- Evaluating work
- Celebrating success

### **Learning**

We are guided by the Principles of Learning:

- Learning requires the active participation of the learner
- Learning is an individual and a social process
- Learning occurs in varying ways and at different rates

### **Relationships**

Healthy school culture is enhanced by:

- Respecting roles, rights and responsibilities
- Effective communication
- Working collaboratively

## **PRINCIPLES OF INCLUSIVE SCHOOLS**

*"Diversity is the one true thing we all have in common."*

Source Unknown

Inclusive schools acknowledge the uniqueness and enhance the dignity and self-respect of all students.

- The inclusive environment is flexible, providing for age-appropriate placement in neighbourhood schools.
- In inclusive schools, educators seek to understand and support the diverse learning needs of all students.
- The practice of inclusion transcends the idea of physical location and supports student learning in a variety of settings.
- Inclusion requires a flexible learning environment wherein curriculum adaptations and modifications are assumed, thus ensuring curriculum relevance and accessibility for all students.
- Inclusive schools promote collaborative consultation with parents and all educational partners.
- Inclusive schools honour and celebrate the diversity that exists in the school community.