

SCHUYLER R-1 SCHOOL DISTRICT

Standard Hiring Procedures

The development of a *Standard Hiring Procedures* is an important personnel step for a school district. The *Standard Hiring Procedures* should be developed and directed by the Superintendent or Director of Personnel, with the district's administrators. When the *Standard Hiring Procedures* is an agreed plan of operation the Superintendent and administrators can

move through the hiring process with confidence.

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PHILOSOPHY

The Schuyler R-1 School District seeks to hire the best available teachers, administrators and teaching assistants. Vacant positions are filled competitively unless a specific individual has a legal or contractual right to the position.

There should be neither favoritism nor discrimination shown to any candidate on the basis of experience, previous salary or any reason prohibited by State and Federal Laws.

Building administrators and teachers are key partners in the instructional staff hiring process. Administrators and teachers carry the responsibility for supervision of new employees and ultimately determine the success of the employee and the success of the school program.

Standard Hiring Procedures:

1. Should reflect the philosophy of the Superintendent of Schools and the district's administrative team, and Board Policy;
2. Should treat applicants with sensitivity and respect; and
3. Should minimize the potential for legal challenges.

Some Thoughts on the Standard Hiring Procedures

1. The Standard Hiring Procedures should be reviewed by the School Attorney when first developed and then whenever significant changes are proposed.
2. The Standard Hiring Procedures should reflect what works for our district as it relates to the size of the administrative staff, the level of teacher involvement in the hiring process, and other District-specific factors.
3. The Standard Hiring Procedures should be revised as needed, with the assistance of the School Attorney, and reviewed with administrators at the end of the spring/summer hiring cycle and again at the start of the spring/summer hiring cycle.

ADVERTISEMENT OF INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF POSITION VACANCIES

The Superintendent will advertise all instructional staff position vacancies in accordance with Board Policy.

A vacancy in a certification area will be advertised online at www.moteachingjobs.com.

When vacant positions are advertised, an announcement of vacancies shall be posted in all school building offices and faculty rooms by the building principals.

Copies of standard vacancy notices are found in Appendix A.

All vacancies should be posted for a minimum of ten (10) school days before the Superintendent may recommend a qualified applicant to the Board for employment. In an emergency situation the Superintendent may temporarily employ an applicant prior to the expiration of the posting. The temporary applicant may be considered along with other applicants for the position after the ten days. However, in order to hire a Board member's spouse, the position must have been advertised. (Refer to Policy 0342 – Nepotism, Conflict of Interest and Financial Disclosure.)

All instructional staff position vacancies will be advertised except in the following instances:

1. If another position in the same area of certification becomes vacant during the interview process or becomes vacant within thirty (30) days of the most recent interviews for a similar vacancy, and the hiring team deems the second, (third, fourth, etc.) ranked candidate(s) to be of the same high qualifications as the candidate who filled the first vacancy, then the new vacancy may be filled without readvertisement of the position at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.
2. If a current long-term substitute is available to fill a long-term substitute vacancy in the same certification area, for the same or a different person, then the current long-term substitute may be continued without advertisement of the position at the discretion of the Superintendent of Schools.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

All inquiries, regardless of the qualifications or characteristics of the inquirer, regarding the possibility of joining the professional staff are to be **POSITIVELY ENCOURAGED**. All applicants must submit a completed application, a letter of application stating interest in applying for the position, a copy of a latest transcript(s), evidence of a Missouri Teaching Certificate or eligibility thereof, no less than 3 but no more than 4 recent letters of recommendation, and a resume.

Application Accessibility

Application packets are available on the School District's website and at the District office.

A summary of the application procedure, for use by office staff, is found in Appendix B. A copy of the current teacher application is found in Appendix C.

Application by Current Staff

Current staff members applying for a position need not complete the entire application procedure. Current staff may instead submit a letter of interest to the Superintendent stating the position in which they are interested and their reasons for applying. They should be encouraged to update their file with course work, community service, references and other support materials. The update of the file is not required and is the employee's option, but will be considered if submitted.

SCREENING OF CANDIDATES

Courtesy Interviews

Courtesy interviews are not permitted. The hiring administrators may not interview any candidate who does not meet the standards required by the District and the position requirements. Candidates who meet the minimum requirements may not be granted an interview if multiple other candidates for the position are more qualified than those who have only the minimum requirements.

Background and Experience of Candidates

It is important that the screening team seek candidates with broad ranges of experience, the required certification and/or willingness to obtain certification in more than one area, and the willingness and ability to teach students of diverse abilities at different grade levels. These characteristics are extremely important in light of factors such as the Missouri Learning Standards, shifting enrollments at grade levels, shifts in curriculum to different grade levels, and shifts in curricular emphasis in some programs.

Reference Checks

For all applicants, prior to scheduling of an initial interview, the hiring administrator must:

1. Receive at least one positive reference from a school administrator, or cooperating teacher of an applicant, who has direct knowledge of the candidate's abilities.
2. Be in the possession of the candidate's completed application and have or make arrangements to have, ALL supporting documents in hand prior to an interview. (NOTE: If the candidate's college placement papers did not accompany the application, the hiring administrator must order, receive and review them prior to an interview.)

Screening of Applicants Not Granted Interviews

All applicants shall be notified in writing by the hiring administrators as soon as reasonable regarding the status of their application. If there is an indication that the interview process may not yield a successful candidate, then the notification in writing should be sent only to those candidates who will not be considered under any circumstances (i.e. bad reference, lack of certification, unqualified, etc.) The notification in writing to applicants not chosen for an interview shall be in the form of a personalized letter in a standard format (see: Appendix D).

NOTE: A notification in writing need not be sent to persons who did not submit the District's application.

A copy of the notification in writing shall be attached to the application material submitted, placed in the file and the file returned to the District Office.

Screening of Applications from the Current Staff

Candidates who are current employees of the District shall be given careful consideration in the screening process.

Following the review of all applications, the hiring administrator shall inform applicants who are current staff members of one of the following:

1. The staff member will not be considered for the position and the reason(s) therefore..
2. The staff member will be considered for the position and will be interviewed.

INTERVIEWS

The interview team(s) shall interview not less than five candidates for each vacancy unless the Superintendent agrees that there are fewer than five qualified applicants in the pool of applicants. If there is more than one vacancy in analogous positions (same certification), an appropriate number of additional candidates must be interviewed unless the Superintendent agrees that there are too few qualified individuals in the pool of applicants to increase the number of individuals who receive an interview.

NOTE: A candidate should not be interviewed unless his/her application is complete INCLUDING POSITIVE PROOF OF CURRENT MISSOURI STATE CERTIFICATION (or written verification of eligibility). No candidate will be interviewed without a complete application.

Arranging the Interview

When arranging the interview, the candidate should be made aware of the following when contacted by the District's representative:

1. Correct spelling of the hiring administrator's name.
2. Address and location of the District.
3. Date, time and place of the interview.
4. ANY SUPPORT MATERIALS MISSING FROM THE CANDIDATE'S APPLICATION and the required arrangements for receipt of the missing support materials prior to the interview.
5. Approximate length of the interview.
6. With whom (s)he will interview (administrator, team).
7. The projected starting date for the position.

Scheduling the Interview

If possible, all candidates should be scheduled for interviews over a short period of time, preferably on the same day.

Interdisciplinary Interviewing Team

In filling certified positions an interdisciplinary team including administrators, teachers, and in some cases other certified personnel, shall be used to interview candidates for each position.

1. Service by teachers on an interview team is voluntary. However, the coordinating administrator should insure the existence of an interdisciplinary team, or with respect to elementary position interview teams, a multi-grade level in team.

2. The interview team should not have members who are personal friends or relatives of any of the candidates being interviewed. Interview team members are required to consider candidates in a nondiscriminatory manner, in compliance with District policies regarding equal opportunity employment and nondiscriminatory hiring practices. The hiring administrator shall discuss this issue with the interview team. Members of the interview team should be asked to forgo participation on the team if they cannot approach all the candidates objectively.
3. To the greatest extent possible, the same team must interview all candidates for the same position.
4. Prior to the interviews, the hiring administrator **MUST** meet with the interview team to review:
 - (a) The professional role of the interview team.
 - (b) The advisory role of the interview team.
 - (c) The need for confidentiality.
 - (d) Equal treatment of all candidates
 - i. Same introductory statement
 - ii. Same format (See: Appendix E)
 - iii. Same questions (See: Appendix F) and below)
 - (e) Non-discrimination (See: Appendix G)
 - i. Consistency of questioning
 - ii. Absence of jokes, innuendo and inappropriate lines of questioning during the interview
 - (f) Employment criteria
 - (g) Consideration for the position
 - i. Special skills or characteristics sought
 - team skills
 - team match
 - academic concentration
 - teaching style
 - ii. Specific questions to be asked and the responses being sought (See: Appendix F)
 - (h) Completion of the interview rating forms (See: Appendix H)
 - (i) Ranking of the candidates
 - (j) Follow-up meeting of the interview team
 - (k) Security of confidential material and statements

- (l) The hiring administrator should review the questions to be asked by the interviewing team. It is recommended that questions be used from the approved question list (Appendix F).
5. If asked about salary during the interview, the hiring administrators may state only the starting salary or the salary range for a position. The Superintendent shall discuss salary with the candidates.
6. After each interview, the members of the team will promptly and independently complete the interview rating form for each applicant. The candidates shall be rated against the interviewers' expectations of the ideal.
7. Following the interviews of all the candidates the members of the interview team (or the hiring administrator) will review candidates and share the results with the Superintendent.
8. The hiring administrator will collect and hold confidential the list of questions, interview rating forms and ranking of all interviewers in case of any claims of discrimination in the hiring process.

Interviews with the Superintendent

The Superintendent will interview at least the top three candidates, unless, in the discretion of the Superintendent, there is reason to interview more or less candidates.

If possible, the top candidates should be interviewed by the Superintendent on the same day all candidates are interviewed initially, unless, in the Superintendent's discretion, the interviews should be conducted on a later date. For this reason, interview dates should be cleared with the Superintendent prior to scheduling in order to determine the availability of the Superintendent to conduct interviews with the top candidates.

REFERENCES

NOTE: A candidate's prior teaching experience is the most important predictor of success even, more important than the interview. Care should be taken to invest adequate time and energy in checking references of candidates, regardless of information believed to be known about a candidate's work experience or work history.

CAUTION: It is psychologically difficult to objectively analyze the remarks of a reference after one has psychologically "bonded" to the candidate.

A minimum of three comprehensive telephone references are required (in addition to the pre-interview reference) for a candidate to be recommended to the Superintendent, unless the Superintendent agrees that fewer are needed. The hiring administrators must have at least one reference from either an administrator who has direct knowledge of the candidate's professional performance or a teacher who had direct supervision of the candidate's student teaching (in the case of an inexperienced teacher). The references must be recorded on the District telephone reference form. (See: Appendix I). It is the responsibility of the hiring administrators to spend sufficient time with the telephone references to obtain a thorough profile of the candidate.

If the candidate has prior teaching experience, the hiring administrator should ask the Superintendent to obtain a telephone reference from a Superintendent in a prior employment district of the candidate. The hiring administrator should not contact the prior Superintendent unless the Superintendent delegates that responsibility to the hiring administrator.

For administrative positions, a visit to the candidate's home school is considered appropriate.

NOTE: References are considered individually identifiable personnel records which are closed records under the Missouri Sunshine Law. Additionally, Board Policy requires that these references are not available to employees when an employee requests to inspect his or her personnel file. For that reason, it is strongly suggested

SELECTION

The hiring administrator/or interview team will discuss the top candidates with the Superintendent.

If, after discussion of the candidates, the hiring administrator and/or interview team and/or Superintendent determine that the candidates do not meet the minimum acceptable standard for recommendation to the Board, the position may be readvertised, in accordance with Board Policy regarding the same, and new applicants may be sought.

If two or more finalists for a position are judged to be equal, additional consideration may be given to the candidate with previous experience in the District.

The Superintendent will determine which, if any, of the hiring administrator's (and interview team's) top candidates is to be recommended to the Board. The Superintendent will not recommend to the Board a candidate other than one of the top candidates without the concurrence of the hiring administrators. If the Superintendent is not satisfied with any of the top recommended candidates, the hiring administrator will be directed to seek, screen and interview additional qualified candidates in accordance with this procedure and applicable Board Policies.

The Superintendent will recommend to the Board the person who in his/her opinion is the best candidate for the position.

When a candidate is called to be offered the job, the hiring administrator shall inform the candidate of the following:

1. Recommendation for employment is subject to Board approval.
2. Scheduled date of Board meeting at which approval will be determined.
3. Starting salary.
4. Starting date.
5. Required attendance at new teacher orientation and the dates.
6. Required inservice training.

Required official support documents to be provided by candidate:

1. Required letter(s) of verification of previous professional employment (only for

experiences being credited on the salary schedule).

2. Required copy of certification (or formal notice of certification status).
3. Required official transcripts of all college work.

Upon acceptance of the job by a candidate, candidates who were not granted an interview, with the exception of District employees who were not granted an interview, shall be notified by letter from the hiring administrator that the position has been filled by another candidate (See: Appendix J).

Upon acceptance of the job by a candidate, all other candidates who were interviewed and/or who are District employees shall be immediately notified by an appropriate letter, mailed on the date the candidate accepts the position, or as soon as reasonably possible, preferably within 24 hours of the candidate's acceptance of the position.

All applications and support materials, with the copy of the letter of non-selection, shall be returned to the District Office to be filed appropriately, as previously set forth herein.

Immediately upon acceptance of the job by the candidate, the hiring administrator shall notify: 1) the Superintendent; 2) the members of the interview team. In the event that the interview team's top ranked candidate is not the candidate the Superintendent may, in his or her discretion, provide an explanation as to why a different candidate will be filling the position, keeping confidentiality of the candidates in mind. The letter, memo or call to the members of the interviewing team shall require them to hold information regarding the hire confidential until the date specified by the hiring administrator, which shall allow for time to notify the unsuccessful candidates.

Upon receipt of the successful candidate's hiring materials from the hiring administrator and the appointment by the Board, the Superintendent shall forward the candidate a letter of confirmation (See: Appendix K).

REQUIRED DOCUMENTATION

For a candidate to be recommended to the Board, the following materials must be provided by the hiring administrators to the Superintendent:

1. Teacher application and all support documents.
2. A minimum of three comprehensive telephone references (in addition to the pre-interview reference) on the District form.
3. Interview rating forms from:
 - a) Hiring administrators.
 - b) Interview team members.

