Greater Essex County District School Board

Policy: Promotion Process - Selection of Principal and Vice-Principal

Reference No: P-HR-01

The Greater Essex County District School Board believes in selecting the best possible candidates for principals and vice-principals.

To provide high quality educational leadership the Board recognizes the “Ontario Leadership Framework” as a summary of the leadership practices required for these positions.

The Board assigns the responsibility for the selection and appointment of principals and vice-principals to the Director of Education.

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1. The Director of Education will notify the Board of the names of candidates placed in the pools and appointed to the positions of principal and vice-principal prior to publication.

2. It is the responsibility of any participant in the selection process whose relationship to any candidate places the participant in a conflict or perceived conflict of interest (i.e. spouse/partner, child/parent) to declare this and ask to be removed from the process immediately.

3. The policy, regulation and administrative procedure regarding the selection of principals and vice- principals are public information.

4. A person's candidacy and the information and records with respect to such candidacy are confidential.

5. The names of selected candidates are public information.

6. The submission of an application by a candidate shall be consent to both release such information as required for the purposes of the process and to contact relevant persons.

7. Alignment of the Board's Strategic Priorities related to justice, diversity, equity and inclusion and the Ontario Leadership Framework – School-Level Leadership is essential to the selection and appointment, of principals and vice-principals.

SCHOOL-LEVEL LEADERSHIP

Leadership is the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organization's vision and goals.

Setting Directions

Building a shared vision

School leaders:
- establish, in collaboration with staff, students, and other stakeholders, an overall sense of purpose or vision for work in their schools to which they are all strongly committed
- build understanding of the specific implications of the school's vision for its programs and the nature of classroom instruction
- encourage the development of organizational norms that support openness to change in the direction of the school's vision
- help staff and diverse stakeholders understand the relationship between the school's vision and board and provincial policy initiatives and priorities

Identifying specific, shared short-term goals

School leaders:
- facilitate stakeholder engagement in processes for identifying specific school goals
- build consensus among students, staff, and diverse stakeholders about the school's goals
- ensure the goals are clearly communicated to all stakeholders
- regularly encourage staff to evaluate their progress toward achieving the school's goals
- encourage staff to develop and periodically review individual goals for professional growth, as well as the relationship between their individual goals and the school's goals
- refer frequently to the school's goals when engaged in decision making about school programs and directions

Creating high expectations

School leaders:
- have high expectations for teachers, students and themselves
- devote additional effort to creating high expectations among staff for the achievement of students who have traditionally struggled to be successful at school
- encourage staff to be innovative in helping students meet those expectations
- encourage staff to assume responsibility for achieving the school's vision and goals for all students
- make their expectations known through words and actions

Communicating the vision and goals

School leaders:
- use many different formal and informal opportunities to explain to stakeholders the overall vision and goals established for the school
- demonstrate to all stakeholders the use of the school's vision and goals in day-to-day actions and decision making
- regularly invite different stakeholder groups to discuss how their work furthers the school's vision and goals

Building Relationships and Developing People

Providing support and demonstrating consideration for individual staff members

School leaders:
- recognize the accomplishments of individual staff members
- consider staff members' opinions when initiating actions that affect their work
- build upon and respond to individual staff members' unique needs and expertise
- treat individuals and groups among staff equitably

Stimulating growth in the professional capacities of staff

School leaders:
- encourage staff to reflect on what they are trying to achieve with students and how they are doing it
- lead discussions about the relative merits of current and alternative practices
- challenge staff to continually re-examine the extent to which their practices support the learning of all their students
- facilitate opportunities for staff to learn from each other
- suggest new ideas for staff learning
- encourage staff to develop and review their own goals for professional growth and the relationship of those goals to school goals and priorities
- encourage staff to try new practices that are consistent with both their interests and school goals

Modelling the school's values and practices

School leaders:
- are highly visible in their schools
- are easily accessible to staff, parents and students
- have frequent, meaningful interactions with teachers, students and parents in order to further the school goals
- demonstrate the importance of continuous learning through visible engagement in their own professional learning
- exemplify, through their actions, the school's core values and its desired practices

Building trusting relationships with and among staff, students and parents

School leaders:
- model responsibility, integrity and thoroughness in carrying out tasks
- act in ways that consistently reflect the school's core values and priorities in order to establish trust
- demonstrate respect for staff, students and parents by listening to their ideas, being open to those ideas, and genuinely considering their value
- encourage staff, students and parents to listen to one another's ideas and genuinely consider their value
- establish norms in the school that demonstrate appreciation for constructive debate about best practices
- demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for students, staff and parents
- encourage staff, students and parents to demonstrate respect, care and personal regard for one another

Establishing productive working relationships with teacher federation representatives

School leaders:
- include federation representatives in processes for establishing goals for school improvement
- encourage federation representatives to keep their members well informed about their work with school leaders
- encourage federation representatives to collaborate in determining how to implement labour contract provisions in ways that support school improvement work

Developing the Organization to Support Desired Practices

Building collaborative cultures and distributing leadership

School leaders:
- model collaboration in their own work
- foster mutual respect and trust among those involved in collaboration
- encourage the collaborative development of group processes and outcomes
- help develop clarity about goals and roles related to collaborative work
- encourage a willingness to compromise among collaborators
- foster open and fluent communication toward building and sustaining professional learning communities
- provide adequate and consistently available resources to support collaborative work
- involve staff in the design and implementation of important school decisions and policies
- provide staff with leadership opportunities and support them as they take on these opportunities

Structuring the organization to facilitate collaboration

School leaders:
- create timetables for teaching that maximize time on task for students
- provide regular opportunities and structures that support teachers in working together on instructional improvement, and establish a system for monitoring their collaborative work
- establish a structure of teams and groups that work together on problem solving
- distribute leadership on selected tasks
- engage teachers in making decisions that affect their instructional work

Building productive relationships with families and the community

School leaders:
- create a school environment in which parents are welcomed, respected and valued as partners in their children's learning
- demonstrate the type of leadership that parents can trust – confident, systematic and attentive
- help develop staff commitment to engaging parents in the school
- work, with staff, directly with families of diverse backgrounds to help them provide their children with support in the home that will contribute to their success at school
- encourage staff to reach out to students with diverse viewpoints and experiences to enrich the classroom experience and help all students feel included
- encourage staff to adopt a broad view of parental engagement and encourage more parents to be involved
- help connect families to the wider network of social services as needed

Connecting the school to the wider environment

School leaders:
- develop and maintain connections with other expert school and district leaders, policy experts, outreach groups, organizations and members of the educational research community

Maintaining a safe and healthy environment

School leaders:
- take measures to secure the school's physical facilities against intruders
- ensure that the physical facility is maintained in a safe, healthy and attractive condition
- communicate standards for non-violent behaviour and uphold those standards in an equitable manner
- empower staff in the school to play a leadership role in promoting a positive school climate and modelling appropriate behaviour
- implement and monitor the use of appropriate disciplinary practices in classrooms and throughout the school
- develop, with the input of staff and students, processes to identify and resolve conflicts quickly and effectively
- provide opportunities for staff and students to learn about effective conflict resolution strategies

Allocating resources in support of the school's vision and goals

School leaders:
- manage efficient budgetary processes
- distribute resources in ways that are closely aligned with the school's improvement priorities
- ensure that sustained funding is directed to the school's improvement priorities
- secure resources as needed to support the instructional work of the school
- revisit and adjust as needed the nature, amount and alignment of resources as priorities for school improvement change
- ensure effective oversight and accountability of resources to support priorities

Improving the Instructional Program

Staffing the instructional program

School leaders:
- recruit and select teachers who have the interest and capacity to further the school's vision and goals
- retain skilled teachers by providing support and time for collaboration, sharing leadership, creating a shared vision and building trusting relationships

Providing instructional support

School leaders:
- actively oversee the instructional program
- coordinate what is taught across subjects and grades to avoid unnecessary overlap while providing needed reinforcement and extension of learning goals
- observe classroom instruction and provide constructive feedback to teachers
- provide adequate preparation time for teachers
- provide advice to teachers about how to solve classroom problems
- provide teachers with the opportunity to observe effective instructional practices among colleagues in their own school as well as in other schools
- participate with staff in their instructional improvement work

Monitoring progress in student learning and school improvement

School leaders:
- assist staff in understanding the importance of student assessment for, of, and as learning
- collaborate with staff during the process of data interpretation
- use multiple sources of evidence when analysing student progress
- give priority to identifying those students most in need of additional support
- incorporate the explicit use of data when making decisions that relate to student learning and school improvement
- examine trends in student achievement over time (one or more years), rather than just at one point in time, when analysing student learning
- collect and use data about the status of those classroom and school conditions that are the focus of the school improvement efforts
- provide conditions for teachers to use data effectively (time, support, partnerships with experts, a culture in which the use of data is valued)

Buffering staff from distractions to their work

School leaders:
- create and enforce consistent, school-wide discipline policies
- minimize daily disruptions to classroom instructional time
- implement a systematic procedure for deciding how best to respond to initiatives from outside the school
- develop, with staff, guidelines to govern the amount of time teachers spend on non-instructional and out-of-school activities
- regularly assess the contribution of all out-of-classroom activities to the learning priorities of students

Securing Accountability

Building staff members' sense of internal accountability

School leaders:
- regularly engage staff in analyzing data on the learning progress of all students
- insist on the use of data that is of high quality (reliable, valid, collected using systematic collection processes, available in its original form, and has been subjected to collaborative interpretation
- promote collective responsibility and accountability for student achievement and well-being
- help staff make connections between school goals and ministry goals in order to strengthen commitment to school improvement efforts
- assess their own contributions to school achievements and take into account feedback from others on their performance
- participate actively in their own performance appraisal and make adjustments to better meet expectations and goals

Meeting the demands for external accountability

School leaders:
- clearly define accountability for individual staff in terms that are mutually understood and agreed to and that can be rigorously reviewed and evaluated
- measure and monitor teacher and leader effectiveness using data about changes in student achievement
- align school targets with board and provincial targets
- provide an accurate and transparent account of the school's performance to all school stakeholders (e.g., ministry, board, parents, community)
- create an organizational structure that reflects the school's values and enables management systems, structures and processes to work effectively within legal requirements

PERSONAL LEADERSHIP RESOURCES

Leaders draw upon the personal leadership resources to effectively enact leadership practices

Cognitive Resources

- Problem-solving expertise
- Knowledge of effective school and classroom practices that directly affect student learning
- Systems Thinking*

*Especially important for system leaders

Social Resources

- Perceiving emotions
- Managing emotions
- Acting in emotionally appropriate ways

Psychological Resources

- Optimism
- Self-efficacy
- Resilience
- Proactivity*

*Especially important for system leaders

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Appendix B: Selection of Principal and Vice-Principal

Profile of a Principal

A summary of leadership practices required to influence organizational members and diverse stakeholders in achieving GECDSB's vision and goals.

Setting Direction

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Building Relationships and Developing People

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Developing the Organization to Support Desire Practices

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Improving the Instructional Program

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Securing Accountability

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Personal Leadership Resources

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