Administrative Guide:
Hiring and Staffing Procedures

AA/EEO Employer

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A. Introduction

Diversity in Hiring
The Cambridge Public Schools seeks to hire diverse teaching, administrative, and support staff. As a district we are committed to ensuring that our staff population is reflective of the wonderful diversity of our student population. Toward that end, it is expected that all administrators will make every effort to interview and hire diverse candidates. The Human Resources Department will continue to collaborate and support administrators with these efforts.

B. Overview

Responsibility for Hiring
Every position has a designated hiring administrator. Hiring recommendations will only be accepted from the designated hiring administrator. **The superintendent retains the discretion to waive the standard hiring process when it is determined to be in the best interest of the school district, provided such action remains in compliance with all relevant employment laws and collective bargaining agreements.**

- **Executive Leadership Team:** The Human Resources Department will lead the interview process in collaboration and consultation with the Superintendent.
- **Principals:** The Human Resources Department will lead the interview process for each school community in collaboration and consultation with the Superintendent.
- **Unit B:** Assistant Principals, Coordinators, Directors and Deans hiring will be conducted by the assigned Assistant Superintendents.
- **Administrative Staff:** All other administrative staff hiring will be conducted by the appropriate department head.
- **Departmental School-Based Staff:** Departmental School-Based Staff (OSS, VPA, Food Services, Multilingual Learners, etc) hiring will be conducted by the appropriate department head in collaboration with the assigned principal.
- **All Other School-Based Staff:** Principals are responsible for the hiring of all other School-Based Staff.
  - If a position is shared between schools, both Principals must be in agreement with the recommendation for the preferred candidate. If both parties are not in agreement, please reach out to the Human Resources Department for assistance.

Timelines
All CPS hiring administrators are urged to promptly submit a requisition to post a position as soon as they receive an employee's separation notice. This proactive measure is essential to ensure that we can initiate the recruitment process without delay. Additionally, in order to access the broadest pool of highly qualified, diverse candidates, screening and interviewing candidates should commence immediately following the close of the posting period.

Our goal is to have job postings begin in early February for the following school year, based on anticipated leaves, retirements, and resignations. Posting continues as additional vacancies occur. **It is expected that all hiring is completed prior to summer vacations being taken except in instances of late resignations**.

C. Hiring for all Vacant Positions

Summary of Steps to Fill a Vacant Position

In the sections below, you will find details and support for each of these steps.
Step 1: Submit a Requisition in TalentEd
Step 2: Requisitions are approved by Position Control (Budget Office)
Step 3: Submit Job Description
Step 4: Position is Posted by HR
Step 5: Select Interview Committee
Step 6: Select Candidates to Interview
Step 7: Conduct Interviews & Performance task
Step 8: Conduct Reference checks
Step 9: Submit Hiring Recommendation via TalentEd
Step 10: Job Offer sent by HR
Step 11: Onboarding & Orientation by HR and Direct Supervisor

Step 1: Submit Requisition in TalentEd
To initiate the posting of a vacant position, the Hiring Administrator must first complete an online staff requisition form in [TalentEd](). A staff requisition must be used to post any vacant position, regardless of whether the position is part-time, grant-funded, SIP-funded, intended to be filled for only a portion of the year, or intended to be filled by a retired teacher, etc.

Step 2. Requisitions are approved by Position Control (Budget Office)
Requisitions may be denied or returned for revision if information is incorrect or incomplete. Should you need assistance completing the requisition form, please contact your assigned financial analyst.

Step 3. Submit the Job Description

Job description

- Job descriptions for **existing licensed positions** should be emailed to Rasheeda Abdul-Musawwir ([rabdul-musawwir@cpsd.us]()) for posting.
- Job descriptions for **existing unlicensed positions** should be emailed to Anne Marie Picanco ([apicanco@cpsd.us]()) for posting.
- Job descriptions for **assistant principals, principals, and other administrators** have been standardized and those are filed in the human resources department.
- Job descriptions for any **newly created positions, including salary schedules,** will be created by the Human Resources Department, with feedback provided by the hiring administrator.

Step 4. Position is Posted by HR
Once Position Control has approved the requisition and HR has received the corresponding job description, HR will post the position on the CPS website.

Additional Posting Locations
Hiring administrators should collaborate with the Human Resources department to identify role-specific job boards, mailings, or other mechanisms and outreach to advertise job postings.

Posting Periods
- **Regular Posting Periods:** Positions are typically posted for a minimum of ten (10) days.

- **Expedited Posting Period:** Positions which are posted during the period of July 1-September 30th are posted for an expedited hiring period of five (5) days. Teacher positions may also be eligible for expedited hiring throughout the year in the case of:
  - An educator shortage areas (e.g. science, math, world languages, special education, bilingual education, etc.) as determined by the Superintendent.

Step 5. Select Interview Committee

Purpose
The interview process is designed to be a collaborative effort in which members of the interview committees are representative of the school community. The hiring administrator will carefully consider the input of the interview committee and other factors before making a final hiring recommendation. The final hiring decision will be at the approval of the Superintendent or designee.

Hiring Administrators are encouraged to organize their interview committee(s) early, so that preparations are in place to move forward quickly with the screening and selection process when the posting period ends.

Participants
Every effort should be made, *including making considerations for the time of day to include working families,* to have diverse representation on the interview committees. Please refrain from using the same individuals on multiple interview committees. Each interview committee should include a representative cross section of individuals from the school community. A list of possible representatives are below:

- Parent/Family/Caregiver
- School Council Member
- Classroom Teacher
- Specialist Teacher and Coordinator/OSS-EL Department Representative (OSS, EL)
- Curriculum Coordinator
- Equity Department Representative
- Support Staff Representative(s); Family Liaison

- Student(s) as appropriate
- Community Partner/Out-of-School Time, as appropriate
- For Assistant Principal and Dean roles: Assistant Superintendent
- For principal and district positions: principal and Executive Leadership Team representative

Step 6. Select Candidates to Interview

All hiring administrators are urged to carefully review candidate applications and select individuals for interviews who meet the minimum requirements and/or needs for your school or

department as outlined for each position. This practice will not only strengthen our recruitment process but also ensure that we continue to attract and retain top talent. Here's why adhering to this principle is paramount:

Efficiency in Selection Process: By only considering candidates who meet the minimum requirements and/or needs, we streamline the selection process. This allows us to focus our time and resources on individuals who have the necessary qualifications and experience to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.

Respect for Candidate's Time and Effort: Inviting candidates who meet the minimum requirements and/or needs for an interview demonstrates respect for their time and effort. It prevents unnecessary interviews for individuals who may not have a realistic chance of being selected for the role.

Maintaining Integrity and Fairness: Adhering to minimum requirements and/or needs maintains the integrity and fairness of our hiring process. It ensures that all candidates are evaluated based on a consistent set of criteria, fostering transparency and trust in our recruitment practices.

Optimizing Candidate Experience: Providing a positive candidate experience is crucial for our employer brand. Inviting only qualified candidates for interviews enhances their experience by demonstrating that we value their qualifications and are committed to a fair and efficient selection process.

Enhancing Quality of Hire: Selecting candidates who meet the minimum requirements and/or needs increases the likelihood of hiring individuals who possess the skills, knowledge, and experience necessary to excel in the role. This ultimately contributes to the overall quality of our workforce and organizational success.

Step 7. Conduct Interviews and Performance Task

Interview Committee Signs Forms
The following forms need to be completed in order to submit a recommendation for hire:

❏   Hiring Administrator Interview Packet

❏   Interview Committee Member Packet

As a district we have implemented a new candidate feedback process. We will no longer rank candidates, but place candidates in one of the four following categories:
- Highly Recommend
- Recommend
- Recommend with Reservations
- Do Not Recommend

This process will emphasize the following:

Clarity and Consistency: Using a structured rating system ensures clarity and consistency among the interviewers. It provides a clear framework for evaluating candidates based on predetermined criteria, reducing ambiguity and subjective biases in the assessment process.

Differentiation of Candidates: The four buckets allow for nuanced evaluation of candidates' strengths and weaknesses. This differentiation helps hiring administrators prioritize candidates based on their qualifications, skills, and fit for the role, making it easier to identify top contenders.

Facilitates Decision-Making: Categorizing candidates into distinct categories facilitates decision-making during the selection process. It allows the interview committee to focus their discussions on candidates who are highly recommended or recommended, while also acknowledging reservations about certain candidates and considering potential red flags.

Provides Constructive Feedback: The rating system encourages interviewers to provide specific feedback for each candidate, including areas of strength and areas needing improvement. This feedback can be valuable for candidates and can inform their professional development efforts, regardless of the hiring outcome.

Promotes Transparency: A structured rating system promotes transparency in the hiring process by clearly communicating the rationale behind each candidate's evaluation. It helps ensure that hiring decisions are based on objective criteria and relevant considerations rather than personal biases or preferences.

Streamlines Post-Interview Discussions: Having predefined rating categories streamlines post-interview discussions among members of the interview committee. It allows for more focused conversations on candidate qualifications, performance in the interview, and potential concerns, facilitating consensus-building and decision-making.

Supports Documentation: Using a standardized rating system helps in documenting the evaluation process and justification for hiring decisions. This documentation can be valuable for legal compliance, audit purposes, and future reference in case of disputes or inquiries.

Interview Questions
Role appropriate questions must be developed in advance, as outlined in the linked documents below.

It is important to use the same interview questions for all candidates who are being considered for the vacant position. This will ensure that each candidate is evaluated consistently and fairly, based on the same criteria.

- Guidance for Developing Interview Questions
- Sample Interview Questions Bank

Performance Tasks

Candidates may complete a writing sample or the following suggested performance tasks as part of the interview process, including:

- Data task
- Model lesson (Top 2 or 3 candidates)

Additional Expectations: Interviews for Assistant Principals and Deans

There are additional expectations for interviews for Assistant Principals and Deans.
- The assigned Assistant Superintendent will co-facilitate the interview process with the Principal.
- The Assistant Superintendent and Principal will pre-screen the applicants to ensure that all applicants that receive an interview meet the minimum requirements and qualifications for the position.
- The interview process will have two phases:
    - Phase 1: School-level interview with the interview committee led by the Principal and Assistant Superintendent.
    - Phase 2: District level interview with the Superintendent and/or Chief of Academic and Schools.

The Superintendent will then make the final decision about who will be hired.

Additional Expectations: Interviews for Principals

The hiring process for Principals will follow a clearly delineated process outlined below in six phases:

- **Phase One:** Human Resources will gather information via the survey from stakeholders on what characteristics they value in their next leader as well as obtain names of individuals interested in serving on the interview panel.
- **Phase Two**: Chief Talent Officer will hold two sessions at the applicable school with stakeholders to share data from the survey as well as outline the principal selection process.
- **Phase Three:** There will be a review of applications and resumes by the Human Resources Department. The candidates who meet the minimum qualifications are then invited to participate in a preliminary interview facilitated by the Human Resources Department. Successful candidates will be advanced to the next phase of the principal selection process.
- **Phase Four:** An interview with a panel of community, school, and district representatives
- **Phase Five:** Interviews with the Superintendent, Chief of Academics and Schools, and the Executive Leadership Team of the top candidates, not to exceed three.
- **Phase Six:** The Human Resources Department will host a Community Q and A at applicable school with the candidate(s) that the Superintendent and Chief of Academics and Schools choose. During the Q and A, the community will be able to engage with the candidates and ask questions. Participants will take a survey to share their feedback about each candidate.

The Superintendent will then make the final decision about who will be hired.

Step 8. Conduct Reference Checks

Hiring administrators must conduct direct reference checks prior to submitting hiring recommendations. Documentation of successful reference checks must be included in the hiring packet. It is mandatory for

hiring administrators to conduct a **minimum of three reference checks** for each candidate you are recommending for hire. For your convenience, you may use this form that is included in the hiring administrator's packet or similar form you may have created to conduct your reference checks. Should you use your own set of questions to conduct the reference checks, please be sure that your questions address many of the following:

- **Confirmation of Employment History**: The reference should be able to confirm the applicant's employment dates, job titles, roles, and responsibilities at previous positions.

- **Performance Evaluation:** The reference should provide insights into the applicant's performance, including their strengths, areas for improvement, and overall contribution to the organization.

- **Work Ethic and Reliability**: The reference should be able to speak to the applicant's work ethic, reliability, punctuality, and ability to meet deadlines and fulfill job responsibilities.

- **Interpersonal Skills**: The reference should provide feedback on the applicant's interpersonal skills, communication style, ability to work collaboratively with colleagues, and interactions with clients, customers, or stakeholders.

- **Problem-Solving Abilities:** The reference should be able to comment on the applicant's problem-solving skills, decision-making abilities, and capacity to handle challenges and adapt to changes in the work environment.

- **Leadership Potential** (if applicable): If the applicant held leadership roles or demonstrated leadership qualities, the reference should provide insights into their leadership style, effectiveness, and ability to motivate and inspire others.

- **Cultural Fit:** The reference should assess the applicant's alignment with the organization's values, mission, and culture, as well as their ability to contribute positively to the work environment.

- **Professional Conduct and Integrity:** The reference should comment on the applicant's professional conduct, ethics, integrity, and adherence to workplace policies, standards, and codes of conduct.

- **Reasons for Leaving Previous Positions:** The reference may be able to provide information about the applicant's reasons for leaving previous positions, as well as any factors that may have contributed to their departure.

- **Overall Recommendation:** Based on their experience working with the applicant, the reference should be able to provide an overall assessment of the applicant's suitability for the role and whether they would recommend hiring the applicant.

It's important to conduct reference checks professionally, respectfully, and in accordance with legal and ethical guidelines. References should be contacted with the applicant's consent, and the information shared should be relevant to the job requirements and hiring decision. Additionally, it's essential to verify the credibility of the reference and corroborate information obtained from multiple sources **when possible**.

Step 9. Submit Hiring Recommendation

The hiring administrator must submit a recommendation for hire via TalentEd. The complete hiring packet ("Hiring Administrator Interview Packet" & "Interview Committee Member Packet") must be submitted under the applicant folder on TalentEd. Under no circumstances should a job offer be extended to any candidate before approval of the hiring recommendation has been received from the Office of Human Resources.

Recommendations for hire for any position for the SY23-24 and beyond will be submitted via TalentEd. This process will centralize hiring documents and maintain an efficient workflow for hiring and onboarding new candidates.

The steps for submitting hiring documents via TalentEd are as follows:
i. Log into TalentEd
ii. Select Application Manager
iii. Select the Candidate to Hire
iv. Select Blue Folder
v. Tab: Docs, Select 'HR Documents'
vi. Upload All Hiring Documents as one .pdf (via Kami)
vii. Tab: Interview, Select 'Recommendation for Hire'

Resource: A video recording of the process on TalentEd can be found here: TalentEd Hiring Process - Recording

Step 10. Job Offers
Offers
Once the hiring recommendation is approved, HR will notify the hiring administrator and also send a formal job offer letter, including a salary based on documents provided to date, and employment packet to the successful candidate via our online TalentEd system. The hiring administrator may contact the candidate after approval to preliminarily offer the job. All job offers are contingent upon satisfactory completion of a CORI/SORI, fingerprint background check, and any other required employment paperwork.

Salary discussions
Candidate questions regarding their individual starting salary and benefits should be referred to HR, as these areas may vary based on union contract provisions. Union contracts, which include salary schedules, are posted on the CPS website, and candidates may be referred to that source for general information.

Notifying Unsuccessful Candidates
Although HR sends out automatic emails to all applicants via TalentEd when positions are closed out, as a matter of courtesy, it is recommended that hiring administrators personally contact all applicants who were interviewed but not recommended for hire to advise them of their candidacy status.

Step 11. Onboarding

Upon accepting the initial Job Offer, all new hires will be assigned a Clerk Specialist in the Human Resources Department to provide 1:1 support with the onboarding process. The Benefits Manager will reach out to eligible new hires to discuss available benefits and assist with enrollment.

*Note: New employees can not begin working until the Principal/Administrator has received notification from Human Resources that the employee has been cleared to begin working. If notification is not received, the Principal/Administrator must check with HR before allowing someone to begin working.

D. Other Staffing Actions

Service Agreements

A Service Agreement is a contract between an administrator and a service provider for a specific work project or assignment which will be accomplished during a specified timeframe at an agreed on rate of pay.

A service agreement is used when you wish to compensate an individual for work that is temporary in nature and is not typically performed by permanent employees. Service agreements are intended to be used to compensate individuals for a variety of temporary work assignments, including after school tutors, workshop presenters, before school supervision, athletic coaches, etc., which occurs outside of regularly scheduled work hours.

It is important to note that service agreements should not be used for union positions or to hire a person to perform a function, job or work normally performed by a union member during the regular work day, even if the individual is a retired teacher.

If compensation under a Service Agreement will equal $1,000 or more, the service agreement must be posted in advance (https://www.cpsd.us/teachers_staff). Compensation for certain duties are specified in the collective bargaining agreements and must be used when setting the compensation for the service. These contractual rates also apply to grant-funded service agreements.

>>>>*Additional details can be found in the Service Agreements Administrative Guidelines (revised August 2022)*

Changes in FTE, Assignments, Position, Location

Administrators must complete and submit an online Staff Requisition via TalentEd in the event of any change in an existing employee's status. This includes in the event that the administrator assigns a teacher to a less than full-time position (less than 1.0 FTE), a teacher's work schedule increases from part-time to full-time, there is a change in a teacher's assignment (e.g., teaching a different grade or subject), or there is a change in the staff member's work hours or work location. All part-time positions must be approved on an annual basis.

Teacher Reassignment, Voluntary & Involuntary Transfers, Contract Non-Renewal
Teacher Reassignments
If a Principal wishes to reassign an existing teacher in their school to a vacant position, a Staff Requisition should be completed and submitted. By contract, to the extent possible, changes in grade assignment in the elementary schools and in subject assignment in the high school should be voluntary. However, the final decision is up to the Principal.

Specialist teachers such as those in the Office of Student Services, Bilingual Education, Art, Music. Physical Education, and World Languages may be reassigned at the discretion of the department administrator based on staffing needs or other factors.

Voluntary Transfers

Teachers who are members of CEA Unit A may send notice to HR by February 15th to be eligible for a voluntary transfer the following school year. Those meeting this requirement may apply and be interviewed for open positions, and if selected by the hiring administrators, may transfer into the position.

Involuntary Transfers

Involuntary transfers typically result from budget or staffing reductions based on shifts in student enrollment, changes in program structure, etc. The identification of professional status teachers who may be deemed involuntary transfers, if any, will be determined as the budget process evolves. In the event there are teachers who require an involuntary transfer, principals with openings in a teacher's area of certification will need to give them priority for placement above external hires in accordance with state law. Additional information will follow as required.

Teacher Contract Non-Renewal

Non-professional status teachers (those in their first three years of employment or who have not obtained licensure) are subject to have their employment terminated at the end of the current school year. Hiring administrators should notify the Chief Talent Officer of any non-professional status teacher who they do not wish to reappoint the following year.

Formal letters of notice to those teachers whose contracts will not be renewed are prepared by the Office of Human Resources and provided to administrators for distribution by hand. Administrators are advised in advance of the teachers affected, and should arrange to communicate this information to the teacher in a sensitive manner.

Grant and/or School Improvement Funded Positions

If a teaching or other position is fully or partially funded through grants or school improvement funds, the funding will generally end at the conclusion of the fiscal year (June 30).

To carry School Improvement Plan (SIP) funded positions forward into the next school year, Principals must re-identify funding from within their school budget and submit a Staff Requisition to support the position. The Principal should consult with their assigned Budget Analyst to review the status of such positions and determine the specific steps necessary to extend funding into the next fiscal year.

Administrators with positions that are totally or partially funded through Title I or other grant funds should consult with the appropriate grant administrator to determine the level of funding that will be available in the next fiscal year to support continuance of such positions. If a grant-funded or school improvement funded position will not be carried forward, please notify your Budget Analyst and Human Resources Department that necessary staffing actions can be taken.

Positions that are funded by grant or SIP funds are subject to the same contractual and other employment provisions as are general fund positions.

E. Support Staff Hiring and Reappointments

Posting and hiring procedures for paraprofessionals, aides, and professional support staff as the same as those specified in the previous section on hiring.

Reappointing Paraprofessionals and Instructional Aides

Paraprofessionals are instructional aides who work six and a half (6.5) or more hours a day on a regular basis and are CEA Unit E union members. **Hourly instructional aides** are those who work less than 6.5 hours per day, e.g. 3 hours per day. These positions are non-union.

- All hourly instructional aides are appointed on an annual basis – that is, their term of employment ends each June 30, and it is up to the Principal to determine whether they wish to rehire a specific instructional aide. HR sends a letter of notice to all hourly instructional aides (known as an 'end date" letter) in May notifying them that their term of employment will end June 30. Thereafter Principals or department heads may reappoint any instructional aides they choose to rehire for the next school year by completing and submitting a Staff Requisition via TalentEd.
- Paraprofessionals who have been employed three years or less are subject to annual non-renewal, similar to hourly instructional aides. Principals or administrators must notify HR whether or not they plan to reappoint a specific paraprofessional with less than three years of service for the next school year. Those paraprofessionals who are not recommended for reappointment will be issued an end date letter. If a principal or administrator chooses to reappoint a paraprofessional who has received an end date letter, they may do so by completing and submitting a Staff Requisition.
- Paraprofessionals who have been employed for three years or more are generally considered permanent employees.
- **Highly Qualified (HQ) Status for Paras and Aides:** Paraprofessionals and Instructional Aides in Title I schools are required to meet "highly qualified" standards under former NCLB standards. To be highly qualified, instructional aides must have an Associate degree or at least 48 college credits, or have successfully passed the ParaPro assessment exam prior to hire. (Note: Hourly Lunch and Recess Aides are not required to be highly qualified.)

Extended Term Subs (ETS) and Building Subs: Extended Term Substitutes (ETS) and Building Substitutes are appointed annually. To rehire the current Building Sub for the next school year, the Principal should submit a Staff Requisition reappointing the individual. ETS positions must be posted and filled annually as in accordance with the contract. ETS assignments do not carry forward from year to year.

Lunch and Recess Aides, Home Visitor Aides: Two (2) hour Lunch Aides, Recess Aides, and Home Visitor Aides are subject to annual appointment and are issued end date letters by HR, with the exception of a few lunch/recess aides who maintain Civil Service status and whose employment as a result extends from year to year. If a Principal chooses to reappoint a current 2-hour Lunch or Recess Aide for the next school year, they should do so by completing a Staff Requisition.

Food Service Staff: Food service staff (Cashiers and Heads of Kitchen) are Civil Service employees hired through the Food Service department. No staffing action is required by Principals.

Custodial Staff: Custodial staff are hired in accordance with their individual contract provisions, applicable civil service provisions, and internal departmental procedure.