



SAMPLE MATERIAL

Suggestions for the Conduct of Personnel Committee Meetings

Young Scholars' Academy for Discovery and Exploration, New York

Topic: Turning Around Chronically Low-Performing Schools

Practice: Committed Staff

Personnel committees, which oversee the hiring process for teachers, can benefit from organized hiring procedures. Well-defined and organized procedures can also help simplify the complex staffing process for new and restructuring schools. These guidelines, used at Young Scholars' Academy for Discovery and Exploration, outline how to conduct personnel committee meetings that comply with the New York City Department of Education's established regulations for hiring. Included are conduct standards for school leaders and suggested ways to choose staff that are a good fit for the school's needs. This document can be helpful to administrators in newly restructured schools because it offers suggestions about the process that they could follow in their own staff recruitment efforts.

Suggestions for the Conduct of Personnel Committee meetings:

It is in everyone's interest that Personnel Committee meetings for new schools, conducted under Article 18D of the Contract, be fair, organized, and achieve their primary purpose – to put in place a full staff which understands and believes in the mission/vision of the school and has the capacity to carry that out. The following process will help to achieve those goals:

1. The school leader should act as the de facto head of the Personnel Committee.
2. The leader should collect all specific applications for positions covered by the UFT contract – teachers, secretaries, guidance counselors, social workers, UFT paras.
3. Staff criteria has been approved already by the UFT. The leader, with some assistance, should carefully consider the resumes of those applying for positions and determine if they meet the qualifications set out. There should be two piles of resumes/applications – those who meet the qualifications and those who do not (with specific indications of why they are not qualified).
4. The school leader, with others, should do a preliminary check of references of those who qualify under the criteria.
5. The leader should schedule the first meeting of the Personnel Committee, at the convenience of its members, soon after the deadline for submission of applications centrally has expired. The meeting should be procedural in nature.
6. The leader should present the Personnel Committee members with packets of information, including:
 - A summary of the school's basic concepts (perhaps the Executive Summary from the Proposal)
 - A Personnel Committee Worksheet which lists the approved criteria, a column for meets/does not meet, and a column for additional comments
 - Three or four questions to be asked of all applicants and which are cross-referenced to the criteria
 - A list of the specific positions which are being sought (teachers, guidance counselors, social workers, secretaries, UFT paras)
 - Copies of resumes of applicants who appear to meet the criteria
 - A proposal for the interview process (perhaps a maximum of 15-20 minutes per interview with applicants scheduled every 25 minutes)

7. The leader should go over the packet with the members, answer questions, ask if there are proposed revisions, and have the full process approved by consensus.
8. There should be a specific offer to any member of the committee to look through the applications which had been rejected for not meeting the criteria (or not being from certified teachers, or not seeking a position which is being sought currently). If a member believes that another candidate should be interviewed, that applicant should be scheduled.
9. If there is only one qualified applicant for a specific position, the Committee **may** determine that no interview is necessary.
10. The first Committee meeting should take no more than an hour. At its conclusion, everyone should be clear on which applicants will be scheduled for interviews, how the interviews will be conducted, when/where the interviews will take place, and how decisions will be made.

The second and probably final Personnel Committee meeting should be scheduled after school hours on a day convenient to the members of the Committee.

1. The school leader needs to notify each applicant who is to be interviewed of the time/date/location of the interview. It is important both to write and to make personal contact either by telephone or email. Each applicant should receive both the Executive Summary of the school proposal and the criteria. Applicants who are not being offered interviews should be informed of that fact.
2. The school leader should continue to chair the meeting.
3. The leader should ask for volunteers to ask each of the common questions to be asked of the applicants. Follow up questions are acceptable, but the time frame for the interviews should be respected.
4. After each applicant has been interviewed, the Committee members should complete their worksheets and there should be a short discussion of the candidate's qualifications. It would be helpful to complete a worksheet by consensus which represents the full Committee's view.
5. At the conclusion of the interviews, the Committee should seek to reach a consensus on the applicants to be offered positions.
6. For "impacted" schools – that is, those which are replacing schools which are being closed or "phased out" (taking in no incoming students) – the requirement is to take at least 50% of the staff from the impacted school **if there are a sufficient number of applicants and if they are qualified**. If there are more qualified candidates from an impacted school than there are openings in a specific

discipline, the candidate with the greatest seniority is to be selected. **Seniority need not be considered for any other positions.**

7. You need not fill all positions. If you do not have qualified applicants for a specific position, you should continue to seek potential staff members. It is more important to find the best people than to fill every position immediately.
8. Keep a list of possible alternative candidates for positions which have been filled. Unexpected circumstances often cause unanticipated vacancies.
9. Keep all materials. It is possible that rejected candidates could file a grievance, although that is rare, and you will need evidence of the Committee's deliberations.
10. Send letters both to those who are being offered positions and those who are not.