SCHOOL LEADER HIRING GUIDE

> Great vision **without great people** is irrelevant.[1]
> — Jim Collins

SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM RESOURCE

ILLINOIS PRINCIPALS ASSOCIATION
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SCHOOL LEADER COLLABORATIVE

ilprincipals.org

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Jim Collins' research from more than 20 years ago remains unscathed. The success of an organization is dependent on getting the right people in the right seats — **the hiring process**.

Those who build great organizations make sure they have the **right people on the bus** and the right people in the key seats before they figure out where to drive the bus. They always **think first about who** and then about what. When facing chaos and uncertainty, and you cannot possibly predict what's coming around the corner, your best "strategy" is to **have a busload of people who can adapt to and perform brilliantly no matter what comes next**. Great vision without great people is irrelevant.[2]

— Jim Collins

School Leader Talent Management System (SLTMS)

The School Leader Hiring Guide is one of many resources developed by the School Leader Collaborative (see back cover) to support districts in the development of a School Leader Talent Management System (SLTMS) — a capacity-building approach to improving the quality of school leadership.[3] The SLTMS is composed of three main actions — **develop**, **hire**, and **grow** effective school leaders, all within the interplay between the individual context of the school leader and the school, community, and political contexts of the learning organization.
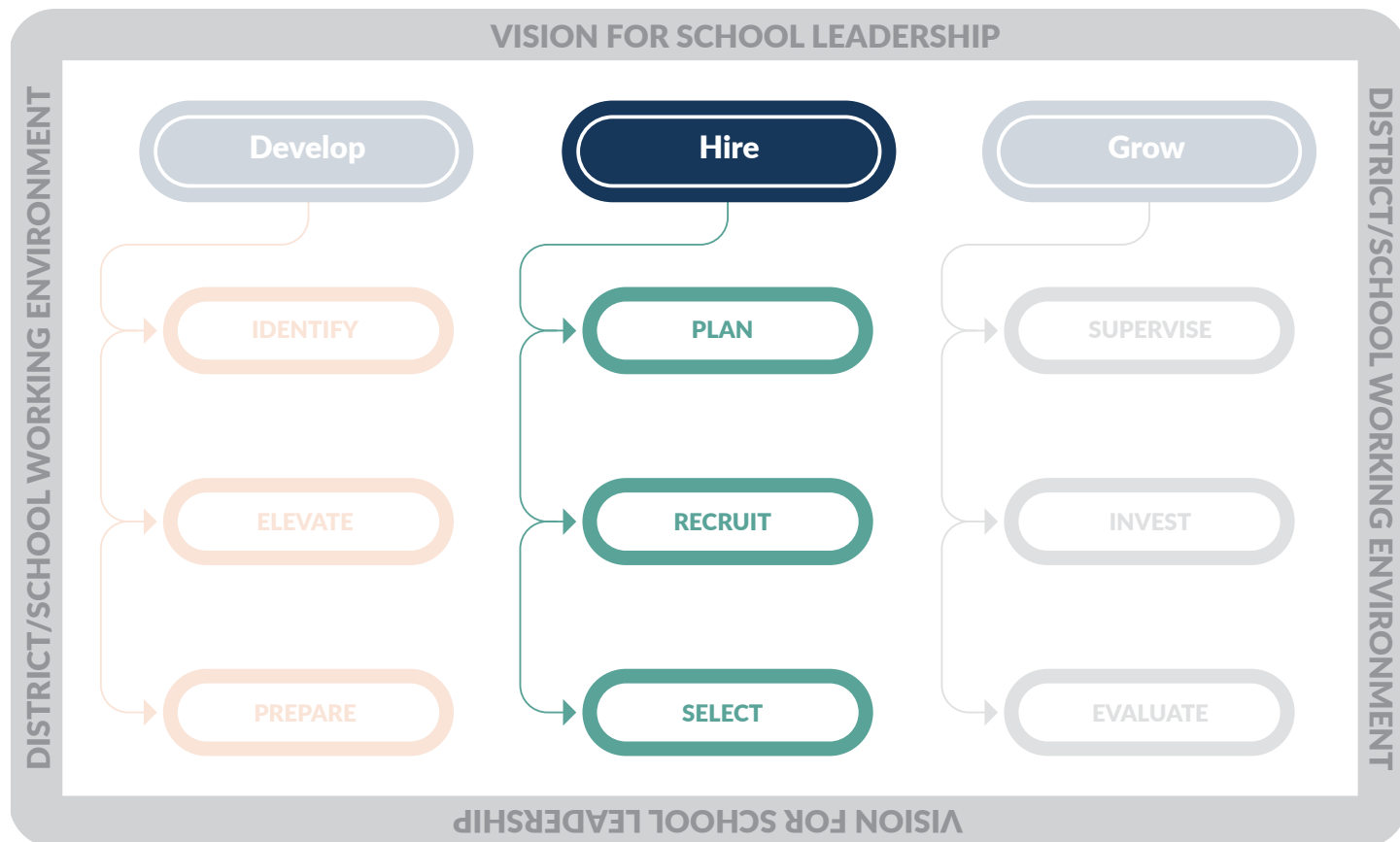
This School Leader Paradigm resource focuses on the **hire** action of the SLTMS. It outlines best research-based practices and provides resources for a district to **create a hiring process tailored to their specific needs** — all aligned to the School Leader Paradigm.

The School Leader Paradigm is a groundbreaking framework designed to empower school leaders for success.[4] Developed by the School Leader Collaborative, it includes leadership intelligences needed to self-actualize (becoming) as a learning leader while simultaneously focusing their work of building and sustaining culture, systems, and learning (doing) in their organization. Aligned to the Professional Standards for Educational Leaders (PSEL), the School Leader Paradigm zeroes in on the exact behaviors and skills needed to lead learning organizations.

The School Leader Paradigm distinguishes the critical, research-based competencies and attributes individuals must account for when working to grow, or become, a school leader — the "Becoming" side — Personal, Social, and Systems Intelligences. The "Doing" side of the framework identifies the behaviors school leaders must do to lead learning organizations. Culture sets the foundation, systems support the culture, and learning shows the belief. Masterful leadership is accelerating this convergence to impact learning as early as possible in the leader's tenure. School leaders create, nurture, and sustain learning organizations by setting culture, developing systems, and fostering the learning of all those they serve.
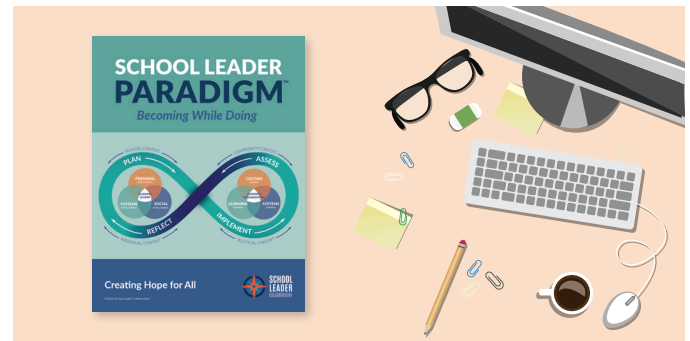
Embedded within the shape of the School Leader Paradigm (an infinity loop) is a cycle of inquiry, which symbolizes the continuous cycle of planning, implementing, assessing, and reflecting. This process ensures school leaders are always growing and adapting to meet the needs of their schools. The infinity loop accounts for the two sides of leadership — the learning leader and the learning organization. While the leader and the organization can be described separately, the two are inextricably connected.

The School Leader Paradigm recognizes that effective leadership operates within four crucial contexts: the individual leader, the school environment, the broader community, and the political landscape. Each context plays a vital role in shaping a leader's approach and driving change throughout a school leader's journey.

The School Leader Paradigm emphasizes the importance of robust preparation, ongoing professional development, and comprehensive support systems. By fostering continuous growth, the School Leader Paradigm aims to keep leaders in their positions longer and accelerate their impact.

For more details on the School Leader Paradigm, visit **ilprincipals.org.**

SCHOOL LEADER PARADIGM™ *Becoming While Doing*
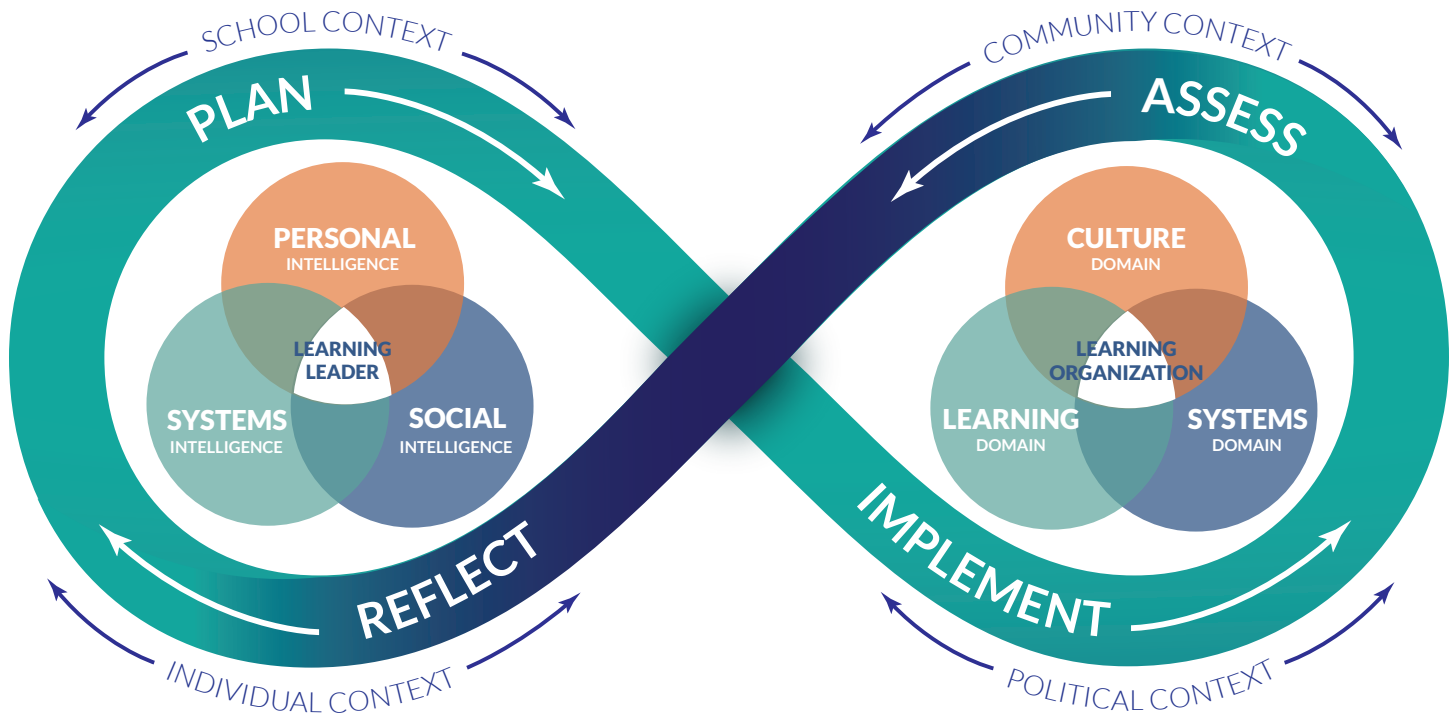
PERSONAL INTELLIGENCE	SOCIAL INTELLIGENCE	SYSTEMS INTELLIGENCE	CULTURE DOMAIN	SYSTEMS DOMAIN	LEARNING DOMAIN
Wellness Ethical Fit/Healthy Optimistic Self-Aware	**Service** Empathetic Trustworthy Generous Protective	**Mission/Vision Strategic Planning** Analytic Strategic Articulate Visionary	**Relationships** **Student Centeredness** **Wellness** **Equity** **Traditions/Celebrations** **Ethics** **Global Mindedness**	**Vision/Mission** **Communication** **Collaborative Leadership** **Data Literacy** **Strategic Management** **Safety** **Operations**	**Reflection and Growth** **Result-Orientation** **Curriculum** **Instruction** **Assessment** **Innovation** **Human Capital Management**
Growth Mindset Humble Reflective Intentional Accountable	**Community Building** Relational Collaborative Connective Conciliatory	**Operations and Management** Responsible Transformative Responsive Methodical			
Self-Management Organized Balanced Way of Being Self-Confident	**Capacity Building** Empowering Guiding Resourceful Facilitative	**Teaching and Learning** Diagnostic Knowledgeable Pedagogic Evaluative			
Innovation Creative Adaptive Resilient Courageous	**Influence** Attentive Communicative Motivational Catalytic	**Cultural Responsiveness** Visible Affiliative Advocative Global			

Hiring a new school leader is one of the most critical decisions that a learning organization can make. Taking the time to develop a strong recruitment and selection process is essential to a successful search. When done well, the process results in a strong, diverse applicant pool, candidates whose talents match the needs of the school and district, and enhances leadership succession.[5]

When a vacancy occurs, planning begins immediately. One of the first things a district must ask is, "Do we have enough time before the start of the school year to effectively hire a new leader?" Ideally, a thorough search would take three to six months, but it is not unusual for districts to have openings in late spring/early summer, limiting the time to conduct a comprehensive search. In these cases, districts often make the mistake of trying to fill a position too quickly, possibly resulting in a weaker leader or a poorer match for the school. When central office determines there is not enough time, there are other options to consider such as hiring an interim from within the district or a retired school leader until an in-depth search can be completed.

Districts may avoid some of these timing challenges by planning for vacancies. Vacancy forecasting is the use of historical data of current school leaders to project who may be leaving due to retirements, personal reasons, or involuntarily. Central office must also take into consideration the growth or lack of growth in a district, which may impact the number of leadership positions.[6] In addition, succession planning involves identifying individuals with the skills and potential to perform in these future leadership roles.

Once the district has decided to move forward with a search, the next step is to announce the vacancy and engage appropriate stakeholders in conversations about the district's goals and plans for the transition. Leadership change can be difficult, and without discussions about what this means, the school and community may not be ready to welcome a new leader. It is important for central office to provide clarity regarding the following questions:

- Which stakeholders should be involved in the hiring process and how should they be involved?
- How centralized will the hiring process and decision making be?
- What types of recommendations will the hiring committee make — rank order of finalists, single name, no hire, etc.?
- How will the district level administrator or board use the recommendations?
- How will support from high-level leaders be communicated to the hiring committee?
- How much money should be allocated for recruitment and hiring?
- How much time should be allocated for recruitment and hiring? **(Sample Search Timeline)**
- What are the specific steps and tasks in a school leader search?[7]

In addition, to develop an accurate job description for the position, it is essential for the district to define and identify areas in which the school leader has authority to make decisions and areas in which they are in a more supportive role. It would be unrealistic to hold leaders accountable for decisions they do not have the authority to make. For example, in a district with multiple people responsible for student learning (principal, district curriculum director, Title I Director), who has final say over how and what will be taught? Or a school shares staff with other buildings, who is responsible for those individuals? Without clarity around authority and the support a district will be supplying

PLAN Best Practices

District
- ☐ Employ vacancy forecasting to predict future needs.
- ☐ Conduct pipeline analysis to understand current talents in the district.
- ☐ When a vacancy occurs, establish realistic recruitment and selection timeline and budget for the search.
- ☐ Initiate planning to announce the vacancy and engage appropriate stakeholders in conversations about the district's goals and plans for the transition.
- ☐ Define and identify areas the school leader has authority to make decisions and areas they are in a supportive role.
- ☐ Establish clear behavior expectations for those involved in the search.

Search Committee
- ☐ Select members based on their skills, expertise, and commitment to equity.
- ☐ Ensure the committee is representative of the school's diversity.
- ☐ Assign duties for the hiring process (manager, chair, minutes taker, etc.).
- ☐ Provide training and ongoing support to the committee as needed.

Setting Priorities
- ☐ Complete a needs assessment to determine essential school leader attributes and essential behaviors needed for the position.
- ☐ Seek input from stakeholders.
- ☐ Identify the Individual, School, Community, and Political contexts of the school.
- ☐ Identify 2-3 Domain/Dimension search priorities.
- ☐ Create a unique leader profile.

Application Materials
- ☐ Develop a thorough job description to clarify expectations and priorities.
- ☐ Create a comprehensive job announcement and corresponding user-friendly website to provide information and outline the application process to perspective candidates.
- ☐ Use a variety of methods to collect as much information as possible about each candidate for the initial screening.

Sample Search Timeline

Search Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Search Committee Training Agenda

Search Committee Agenda Template

Search Committee Ground Rules and Norms

School Data Worksheets

Sample Stakeholder Survey

School Leader Paradigm Leadership Contexts (see IPA website)

Search Priorities

School Leader Job Announcement Template

School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions

School Leader Domain & Dimensions Self-Assessment

PLANNING
RESOURCES

the new administrator, the school leader may fail to make leadership decisions that they can and should be making. School leadership is dependent on not only knowing and understanding where the leader has authority, but also where they need identified support from the district office or elsewhere.[8]

As the district plans for a search, keep in mind the school leader hiring event is an opportunity to build relationships with the candidates and all stakeholders involved in the search. The first domain in the School Leader Paradigm is Culture, and the first dimension is Relationships. There is a reason for this. Even though today's district and school leaders are focusing on increasing student achievement and supporting and growing leaders and teachers, it would be impossible to achieve this without strong relationships. Relationships are the undercurrent to what happens and does not happen at the district and school levels. Therefore, it is critical for districts to develop some basic relationship building tips for those participating in the search **(Search Committee Roles and Responsibilities)**.

By establishing high expectations for behavior by all those involved in the search, the district builds internal relationships among stakeholders and with the candidates as well. Individuals treated with kindness and respect, even if they were not selected for the position, generally speak well of these organizations, raising external awareness of the district. Over time, the word gets out, and these are the districts where educators want to work (which supports passive recruiting).

Search Committee

After deciding to move forward with the search and clarifying the process and position, a search committee is formed. A search committee is typically responsible for identifying search priorities, writing the job description and job announcement, recruiting for the position, evaluating applicants, participating in the interview process, and recommending a final candidate(s) for the position to the Superintendent and/or Board of Education.

Great care should go into development of this committee. As a general rule of thumb, four to five members is ideal, but should be based on your needs — large enough to include diverse views but still manageable. The make-up of the committee will vary based on the leadership position opening. For example, principals work with a variety of

stakeholders both internally and externally, so the committee might represent several of these stakeholder groups (teachers, professional staff, students, parents, community members, etc.). A search committee for a dean's position may be smaller and represent fewer stakeholder groups.

Consider the following questions when creating a committee:

- Who has strong vocal opinions about the hire?
- Who makes good judgements about personnel?
- Whose involvement is important to make the new leader successful?
- How do we ensure our committee is representative of the demographic make-up of our school and community?
- Which people can provide a diversity of opinion or perspective on school leadership and direction?
- Who can work toward consensus with others?[9]

Also think through the various positions that will need to be filled to ensure a successful search. The following positions are common:

Search Manager (may or may not be a voting member of the search committee)
This individual is normally someone from the district's Human Resources office trained in district policies and procedures. The search manager ensures a fair and equitable search and oversees the documentation of all search proceedings (agendas, minutes of meetings, correspondence, applications, selection documents, etc.). Documentation of all search proceedings is critical for several reasons. In addition to assisting with compliance requirements, documentation helps avoid litigation. After a search is completed, these documents may also serve as a source for feedback about what went well and where improvements to the hiring process are needed.

Search Committee Chairperson
The search committee chairperson works closely throughout the search process with the search manager to ensure the search is handled in accordance with district policies and procedures and in a timely manner. As liaison to the Superintendent/Board, the search committee chairperson is responsible for keeping them informed throughout the search process and seeking approvals as needed.

The search committee chairperson is the voice of the committee (to ensure confidentiality) when communicating with constituents. In addition, this individual is the face of the district, setting the tone for the entire search, and serving as its ambassador to the candidates. Responsibilities include planning meetings, effectively leading in-person/virtual meetings and interviews, and championing diversity and inclusion.[10] Strong leadership skills are crucial in this role. The search committee chairperson keeps the committee focused and engaged throughout the process, and they are well-skilled in leading groups in effective decision making.

The ideal search committee chairperson should be respected by all stakeholders and recognized as a strong leader, consensus builder, and effective communicator. It is also critical that this individual has the time and dedication to see the search through to completion.[11] Serving as search committee chairperson will require several hours per week over the course of three to six months, so it is important to share this information along with the specific responsibilities with a prospective individual. Because of the time commitment, districts tend to use a current employee as search committee chairperson, which allows the district the ability to provide release time to take on these responsibilities.

Search Committee Members
Together, the district, search manager, and search committee chairperson select individuals to serve on the search committee. When inviting individuals to participate on a search committee, it is important for them to understand and commit to the roles, responsibilities, and timelines of the search team before accepting an invitation to join **(Search Committee Roles and Responsibilities)**.

Search Support Staff (not a voting member of the search committee)
Districts should also take time to consider supports the search committee may need throughout the process such as:
- Recorder: Attends all meetings and interviews and records minutes for documentation and search purposes.
- Tech Support: Provides technical support to the team throughout the search — development of website, online applications, social media needs, etc.
- Administrative Assistant: Assists with organizational tasks — schedules rooms for meetings, orders food, coordinates tech support, handles travel arrangement for candidates, copying, etc.

Recruiters (may or may not be a member of the search committee)
It is not unusual for larger districts to have an individual from Human Resources serve as a designated recruiter for all personnel needs. Recruiters attend job fairs, work with universities, professional organizations, and hiring agencies to identify potential candidates. They also assist with online recruitment efforts.

For most school districts, it is usually a member of the district's administrative team. In some cases, it may be appropriate to have a member(s) of the search committee assuming this role. For example, the chair of the search who is very familiar with the position and the district may be a more suitable choice.

Training
Training is essential to ensure each member of the search team understands the need for confidentiality, responsibilities, the federal and state laws governing equal employment opportunity, and the Illinois Open Meetings Act and how it impacts the search process **(Search Committee Training Agenda)**.

Working Procedures
Teams should establish working procedures including agendas and minutes for every meeting **(Search Committee Agenda Template)** and develop norms to clarify the expected behavior of individuals and procedures for resolving conflict **(Search Committee Ground Rules and Norms Protocol)**. The development of a search timeline with critical search dates established and agreed upon by committee members is essential. Building off the already created **Sample Search Timeline**, the committee adds anticipated search committee meeting dates and tentative dates for each round of screenings. After the search is completed, the committee should meet one more time to celebrate and reflect on the search process to identify what went well and possible improvements.

Setting Leadership Priorities
For a school to perform to its highest potential, great care should be taken to ensure a good match between the new hire and the position. Therefore, the next big task of a search committee is to set priorities for the hire. Priorities help develop the

job description and identify essential school leader attributes and behaviors needed for the position. Completing a needs assessment of the school and the position will result in two to three priorities and a profile of the leadership position. It also focuses recruitment efforts and is a critical component of the selection process to ensure a good match between the candidate and the school.[12]

The Collaborative has developed several self-assessment tools to assist in the development of priorities — collecting and analyzing basic, currently available data about the school — student achievement, student demographics, teacher data, process data, culture data (5 Essentials, culture/climate surveys), etc. Many schools already have data dashboards that can quickly summarize this information for search teams. For other schools, School Data Worksheets are available to assist with compilation of available data.

Search committees should also consider engaging various stakeholder groups in the identification of priorities (Sample Stakeholder Survey). Their input assists the committee in aligning priorities among the various stakeholder groups. It also pulls the school community together and builds trust.

Understanding context is also crucial to leadership effectiveness and sustainability. Districts need to pay attention to the interplay between the individual context of the school leader and the school, community, and political contexts of the learning organization. Although each of the four contexts (Individual, School, Community, and Political) plays a separate role within the School Leader Paradigm, the intersectionality and influence can make or break a leader's ability to persist and effectively lead ongoing improvement.[13] Success is dependent on the school leader's capabilities and ability to function within the school, community, and political contexts.[14] Use the School Leader Paradigm Leadership Contexts (available on the IPA website) to assist in understanding the contexts and aid in further development of priorities for the hire.

Once teams have had an opportunity to review school data, contexts, and stakeholder feedback, work can begin on developing priorities using Search Priorities which culminates with the creation of a unique school leader profile for the position. Remember what Jim Collins said in his book Good to Great, "If you have more than three priorities, you don't have any."[15] Selected priorities drive the development of the school leader profile for the position, application materials, recruitment efforts, and play a critical role in the selection process.

Job Announcement & Application Materials

Search materials generally include a job description, job announcement, school and district profiles, and an application form. Although most districts have standardized job descriptions for leadership positions, a review should be conducted to ensure it is accurate for the position. It is not unusual for the search team to make edits to the job description. The team may elect to include additional information about the position based on the priorities they have identified.

The job announcement is often the first recruitment document potential candidates will see, shaping first impressions of the school and district. Think of the job announcement as an ad. You are selling your school and your district. Your goal is to attract as many applicants as possible. Prospective candidates will be drawn to your district and school based on several factors:

- Community characteristics and facilities — The location of your school may be a major driver in what type of talent you can attract, so make sure to highlight the strengths of your community and school in your job announcement. Showcase local culture, community engagement and support, housing opportunities, and access to healthcare, shopping, internet, child-care services, etc. Put a positive spin on what might be perceived as a negative. For example, "Enjoy all the benefits of small-town living with access to all the amenities of a bigger city just 30 minutes away."
- Pay range and benefit package
- School performance
- Special programs or other unique characteristics of the school
- Job supports available not only in first year but throughout one's career with the district. Such supports could include the following:
  - Transition and succession planning
  - Mentoring
  - Coaching
  - Professional learning opportunities
  - Professional learning communities
  - Memberships in professional organizations

such as the Illinois Principals Association
- District instructional priorities
- District or school governance approaches, such as site-based management
- District and school academic, athletic, or other rankings[16]

The job announcement should describe the vacancy — job title; short overview of the district, school, and community; school priorities; a summary of job duties and responsibilities; required qualifications; background check requirements; working conditions; how to apply; deadline for applying; contact information; website links; pay ranges; and benefits **(School Leader Job Announcement Template)**. If the position requires specific qualifications such as being bilingual, make sure and list these requirements. Also include information about mandated background checks and how they will be handled.

How much detail you include in your job announcement depends on the position and anticipated current pool of possible applicants. For example, you may have a leadership position opening that you know will attract many applicants. In this case, you might want to be more specific about the minimum qualifications. In contrast, you may have an opening that you know will attract fewer applications. In this case, keep your list of required qualifications as minimal as possible to generate a larger applicant pool. Although applicants might not have some of the qualifications the team would prefer, always consider growth potential and coachability.

If the district offers any type of incentives or additional compensation for specific duties or fulfillment of professional and/or school goals, include this information in the job announcement. For example, many secondary schools require principals to attend and supervise major school events resulting in a significant impact on work/life balance. Some districts assign these duties to another employee such as the athletic director or program director, lessening the time the principal spends at school — a major benefit and recruiting tool. Other districts have balanced this responsibility by rotating supervision responsibilities among all district administrators.

Taking time to create a user-friendly job website to highlight the strengths of the school and district can serve as a great recruitment tool. It is also a place to include additional information about the position including the formal job description — a detailed document used to define the tasks, duties, and responsibilities of the position.

The application form and requested materials are an opportunity to gather as much info as possible about the applicant for the initial screening by the team. For example, if you are asking candidates to include an application letter, consider requesting additional information about their background and preparation for the position. By doing so, instead of the generic "I'm applying for the position of ..." statements, you now have an application letter that provides additional screening information. The following are examples of possible requests:
- Should you be selected for this position, please tell us about the person who will be joining our leadership team.
- Tell us about you, your education, and experiences and how they relate to this position.
- Please describe your experiences and personal strengths that qualify you for this position. What skills, knowledge, and abilities would you bring to our district and school programs?

For districts wishing to focus on the identified priorities for the search, additional questions aligned to each Domain and Leadership Dimension of the School Leader Paradigm can be found in **School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions**.

Districts may also wish to gather additional information about an applicant's knowledge and skills as part of the application process to help match school and district priorities to applicants' abilities. A self-assessment such as the **School Leader Domain & Dimensions Self-Assessment** is a way for districts to garner more knowledge about applicants' leadership skills in the School Leader Paradigm Domain/Dimension areas. Another common practice is asking applicants to submit digital portfolios to demonstrate their abilities such as school improvement plans, student handbook, weekly newsletters, meeting agendas, communications with parents and community, etc.

When asking for professional references or letters of recommendation, refer to the established priorities as a reminder of exactly what you are looking for in a candidate. The priorities determine who you

need to talk to in order to assess the candidate for the position. When hiring for a school leadership position, consider asking candidates to provide a letter/list that includes a supervisor, someone who reports to them, a peer, and a parent and a community member who can speak to their leadership qualities. Ask references to speak to qualities that reflect the candidate's abilities to address the search priorities. On the job application form, make it clear when references will be contacted and ask permission to contact. If the references provided do not include the applicant's current or most recent employer, the applicant should be asked for permission to contact that individual for a job reference. Keep in mind that it is common for individuals to request that references not be contacted until they become a final candidate to protect their relationship with their current district. This is normally allowed, but follow-up with candidates and reiterate that if they become a finalist, references will be contacted.

Another thing to consider is how long to leave the application window open. Check with Human Resources and the current district employment contract to identify any legal requirements. Some districts prefer to set a final date for materials to be submitted and refuse to accept applications after the deadline. This might be beneficial for filling a highly desired position where the district knows it will have plenty of qualified applicants for the job. Others prefer leaving the window open until the job is filled, or leaving the job open until filled but stating that reviews will begin on a certain date. This allows more flexibility. If the first round of recruitment fails to produce a significant number of qualified applicants, the district does not have to go through the process of reposting the job. They would simply need to rethink their recruitment efforts.

Many school districts now use secure online programs to gather applications, but it is still common for districts to ask applicants to mail a resume, application letter, transcripts, proof of certification, and a reference list or letters of recommendation directly to the district. If you are using an online process, provide the link in the job announcement. The online program should be easy to use, especially when it comes to uploading documents. Simplify the application process as much as possible. Test the site before launching to evaluate how user-friendly it is and the amount of time required to complete an application.

What's your tagline?

The job announcement is often the first recruitment document potential candidates will see, shaping first impressions of the school and district. Think of it as an ad. Your goal is to attract as many applicants as possible.

RECRUIT

One of the biggest factors impacting the size and quality of an applicant pool for a position is how well the district engages in effective recruitment efforts. Some districts don't think about recruitment until a leadership opening occurs. Proactive districts are always engaged in passive recruiting which helps build relationships, references, and raise awareness about the district. When an opening occurs, districts move to active recruiting and engage strategies to raise awareness about a school leader opening.[17]

Sample School Profile

RECRUIT Best Practices

Passive Recruitment Strategies[18]
- ■ Increase pipeline development efforts.
- ■ Develop an internal, district leader tracking system to identify teacher-leaders and assistant principals, deans, etc., identifying their school/district leadership responsibilities, degree and certifications earned, performance evaluation results, etc.
- ■ Build partnerships with leadership preparation programs, professional associations for school leaders, and colleagues in the region and around the state.
- ■ Volunteer to conduct mock interviews at universities as an opportunity to promote the school and/or district.
- ■ Create strong relationships with the local press, community organizations, and use social media to promote the school or district.
- ■ Maintain an accurate, easy-to-use, and appealing website.
- ■ Encourage and support district educators to share innovative practices at professional conferences; with local businesses, government, and community groups; and on social media outlets.
- ■ Build a reputation of being a quality district that is supportive of staff and a great place to work.

RECRUITING RESOURCES

Active Recruitment Strategies[19]

- ☐ Allocate time and funding to candidate recruitment.
- ☐ Develop a thorough job announcement, the ad used to capture prospective applicants' attention.
- ☐ Develop marketing tools to support recruitment efforts. These materials are often included on the online job posting site but are also available in print to use in face-to-face recruitment efforts. Tools may include:
  - School and district website.
  - School and district profile document summarizing the school and district – student performance (academic and nonacademic), staffing, financial situation, recent achievements, and current priorities. It may also include information about the community. (Sample School Profile)
  - Targeted marketing messages.
  - Talking points for recruiters and principals to deliver a clear, concise, consistent message about the position.
  - Recruitment brochure to link online and share at job fairs and other events.
- ☐ Plan targeted personal and in-person outreach:
  - Ask for referrals from principal supervisors, principals, teachers, professional contacts.
  - Ask supervisors, principals and teachers to use their social media and other connections to recruit candidates.
  - Identify and recruit high-performing school leaders. Ask them to recommend high-performing colleagues, too.
  - Contact local university preparation programs for alumni recommendations and connections with high-performing graduates.
  - Recruit at relevant conferences attracting high-performers with experience.
  - Organize representatives to speak at nearby university leadership preparation programs.
  - Post positions on university preparation program job boards for current students and alumni in your region and nationally.
  - Post positions where you can reach people who are underrepresented in your educator force, keeping your diversity goals in mind.
  - Attend state and local job fairs.
- ☐

- ☐ Plan online advertising and outreach.
  - Post positions prominently on website home and jobs pages. Includes brochure link, application, videos, etc.
  - Post on your website news page or news feed.
  - Blog about job openings.
  - Send e-blast to staff, parents and others who are on your district and school email dissemination lists.
  - Search national resume databases.
  - Advertise on job search websites. Check search engines for ones with the most hits/applicants.
  - Post about jobs on all current social media.
  - Pay for digital advertising on local news websites or social media.
  - Host webinars to share details. Use contact information (shared to join webinar) to follow up with participants.
  - Post on selective program job pages.
  - Seek local media coverage. Ask about free job listings on radio, TV, local papers, job organizations.
  - Write an op-ed, sharing leader/teacher/student stories.
  - Advertise in publications (digital and print) for educators, local and national.
  - Post at local colleges, religious institutions, recreation centers, and community centers.
  - Coordinate with state and local unions to spread the word.
- ☐ Operate with equity in recruitment to ensure a diverse candidate pool.
- ☐ Evaluate the effectiveness of each type of recruitment tool used after the search is completed.

SELECT

The selection process is one of the most important components of the hiring process for a district to get right. A great hire has the potential to propel a school forward, so taking the time and effort to design a method to find the "right fit" is crucial.

The selection of a candidate to fill a school leader opening involves several stages of screening. The Selection Process Summary Chart outlines five possible stages and a menu of tools for districts to use and modify, all aligned to the School Leader Paradigm. The following provides additional guidance in the development of the selection process.

SELECT Best Practices

- Ensure selection procedures are aligned to a set of research-based leadership performance standards or competencies[20] (School Leader Paradigm).
- Structure a hiring process that includes screening and interviews, and in some cases, incorporates authentic tasks to assess competencies.
- Use stakeholder panels to provide a wider perspective for evaluating candidates.
- Create protocols for all interview activities to ensure fairness and consistency in the hiring process.
- Ensure the selection process is conducted in a timely manner.
- Maintain candidate engagement throughout the hiring process by communicating promptly and frequently, and keeping applicants informed about the next steps.

Application
Screening Checklist

Sample Consolation
Notification Letter

Application Quality
Screening

Search Committee
Facilitation Tools

Search Committee
Application Rating

SLP Sample Interview
Questions

First Interview
Structured Questions
Protocol

Conducting Effective
Virtual Interviews

Search Committee
Interview Quality
Screening

Search Committee
Rating and Ranking

Sample Authentic
Tasks

Stakeholder
Feedback

Background and
Reference Checks

Reference Check
Protocol

IPA Model Principal
Contract

SELECTING
RESOURCES

Selection Process Overview

Event	Process
STAGE 1 SCREENINGS	
Initial Screening	1. Search manager verifies submission of required documents and notifies the applicant of materials received and any missing documents within 2-3 days **(Application Screening Checklist)**.
Qualifications Screening	1. Search committee chairperson and search manager review each candidate's submitted materials to determine if the candidate meets the minimum requirements for the position **(Application Screening Checklist)**. 2. Search manager notifies individuals with incomplete files or not meeting minimum requirements **(Sample Consolation Notification Letter)**.
Application Materials Quality Screening	1. Search committee chairperson and/or committee members review each candidate's materials **(Application Quality Screening)**. 2. Reviews are shared and discussed with the entire search committee **(Search Committee Facilitation Tools)**. 3. Search committee members individually review and rate candidates' applications **(Search Committee Application Rating)**. 4. Search committee members share ratings and rankings and discuss candidates. 5. Search committee, through consensus, determines candidates for the next round of screening **(Search Committee Application Rating)**. 6. Search manager calls and sends consolation notification letter to those not moving to the next round of screening **(Sample Consolation Notification Letter)**.
STAGE 2 FIRST INTERVIEW	
Quality Screening	1. Search Committee develops an interview protocol with preestablished questions **(School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions, First Interview Structured Questions Protocol)**. 2. Search committee members work in groups of 2-3 to interview candidates using the developed protocol (in-person, phone, or virtual) **(Conducting Effective Virtual Interviews)**. 3. Interviewers complete **Search Committee Interview Quality Screening** for each candidate. 4. Interview teams share collected information with entire search committee **(Search Committee Facilitation Tools)**. 5. Each committee member individually rates each candidate's responses **(Search Committee Rating and Ranking)**. 6. Committee members share ratings, discuss, and using consensus, score and rank each candidate **(Search Committee Rating and Ranking)**. 7. Search manager calls and sends consolation notification letter to those not moving to the next round of screening **(Sample Consolation Notification Letter)**.
STAGE 3 SECOND INTERVIEW	
On-site interview	1. Search committee creates an on-site interview agenda for finalist interviews, which is shared with each candidate. 2. Search committee works with district personnel to coordinate the on-site interviews, which includes communication with each candidate to ensure they have a positive interview experience. 3. Interview protocols for all on-site interview activities are created to ensure fairness and consistency in the hiring process with search committee members serving as facilitators for all sessions **(School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions, Sample Authentic Tasks)**. 4. Feedback from stakeholders is collected from each stakeholder session **(Stakeholder Feedback)**. 5. Search committee members complete **Search Committee Interview Quality Screening** for each session attended.
Quality Screening	1. Feedback from committee members and stakeholder groups and results from completed authentic tasks are collected. 2. All data is shared with search committee members for review. Committee engages in evidence-based discussions of the data, and clarification is provided as needed **(Search Committee Facilitation Tools)**. 3. Search committee members individually rate and rank candidates **(Search Committee Rating and Ranking)**. 4. Search committee members share ratings and using a consensus decision-making process, the committee rates and ranks candidates using **Search Committee Rating and Ranking**. 5. Formal recommendation(s) is made as requested to the district.
STAGE 4 CHECKS	
Reference and Background Checks	1. The district conducts background checks as required and with permission from candidates, completes reference checks **(Background and Reference Checks, Reference Check Protocol)**. 2. District reviews references and background check data to determine if recommendations from Stage 3 remain the same or need to be revised.
STAGE 5 FINAL	
Complete Selection	1. District makes final selection and issues an offer **(IPA Model Principal Contract)**. 2. The district and selected candidate negotiate and finalize the contract (signing of the contract). 3. Calls are made and consolation notification letters are sent to individuals not selected **(Sample Consolation Notification Letter)**.

*** In the case of a failed search, the district must decide whether to keep the search open, start a new search, or hire an interim.

Interview Protocols

To ensure fairness and consistency, the search committee should create structured protocols for all candidate interviews (Stages 2 and 3). A protocol ensures that the interview experience is the same for every candidate, which helps reduce bias. It allows the committee to focus on the identified priorities of the search, which results in a more precise comparison between candidates and increases the likelihood of selecting the most qualified person for the position. For an example, see **First Interview Structured Questions Protocol**.

First Interview

First interviews (in-person, phone, or teleconference) are conducted to collect additional information about candidates to identify individuals for possible second interviews. These interviews are simply information gathering and can be conducted by search committee members working in groups of two or three. The search committee begins by considering what additional information they would like to learn about the candidates. Then, develop an established list of initial questions and follow-up questions based on identified priorities that will be asked of each candidate. To keep the interview within the one-hour timeframe, consider identifying three to five "must ask" questions and then a few "if time permits" questions. Individuals conducting the interview should not deviate from this list to ensure fidelity across all interviews.

The **School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions** provides possible interview questions for search teams to utilize when developing interview protocols for all stages of the selection process. These questions are aligned to the Paradigm providing focused questions for each of the Domain Dimensions, thus allowing committees to tailor their interview protocols to priorities of the search. Although these questions were reviewed during the development of application materials, the search committee should revise their list based on what is now known about the candidate pool. For the first interview, the following questions will help guide the selection:

- What are the priorities for this hire based on school needs and context?
- What information can we gather from a one-hour interview to give us additional information that we need to advance candidates to the finalist stage?
- What interview questions are essential "must

ask" or optional "if time permits?"

For committees conducting interviews via teleconference, the same interview protocol can be used but keep the interviewing team small (2-3) to ensure everyone can be seen and heard **(Conducting Effective Virtual Interviews)**.

It is important for all interviewers to take detailed notes to provide feedback to the search team. Feedback forms should be completed as soon as possible after the interview while information is fresh. Keep in mind that each participant will have a different perspective about the experience, so it is good practice to have a non-participating district staff member taking copious notes at all sessions. Recording the sessions can also help when disagreements about what was said occur. If the district decides to record, permission must be attained from the candidate.

Second Interview

Second interviews are generally held on-site, take place over the course of one or two days, and involve various stakeholders in the process. The face-to-face interview is an opportunity to gather additional information about the candidates including their experiences, skills, abilities, and limitations as related to identified search priorities. For the candidates, it is a chance to learn more about the school and district to determine whether the school and district are a good fit for them.

On-site screening activities vary from district to district but should be based on district policies and procedures and the needs of the search. Consider the following questions in determining what activities should take place and who should be involved:

- How do we wish to present district and school strengths and challenges to the candidate?
- What school or district activities are most important and symbolic of our organization? Which do we wish candidates to see?
- What are the gaps in our knowledge about each candidate, and how can we create opportunities to close these gaps?
- What district, school, and community members' support for candidates is important to the future success of the school principal? Which of these stakeholders, therefore, should participate in the on-site screening?[21]

Possible on-site screening activities include:
- Interview with Search Committee
- Interview with selected panels: teachers, staff, students, parents, community members, etc.
- Candidate presentation
- Interview with district office personnel (superintendent, assistant superintendents, school leader supervisors, directors, etc.)
- Interview with current school leader and/or other school leaders in the district
- Interview with superintendent
- Interview with board
- Tour of building and facilities
- Opportunities to visit classrooms
- Tour of the community
- Completion of authentic tasks

When selecting on-site activities, it is common to include stakeholders in the process. Involving stakeholders builds district culture. By doing so, districts say, "We value your input!" and demonstrates a commitment to transparency. Stakeholder feedback can also provide a wider perspective for evaluating candidates.

Great care should be taken in the design of these stakeholder sessions, and they should always be facilitated by a search committee member(s). For example, districts may wish to host open question and answer sessions for candidates and stakeholders — faculty, staff, students, parents/guardians, and community members, but these types of unscripted sessions may not go as well as intended. Individuals with specific agendas may dominate the conversation even with well-trained facilitators. As an alternative, consider having candidates present a short summary of their background, their leadership style, and how they plan to address school priorities. Questions are limited to inquiries about the presentation with opportunities for the candidates to ask questions of the stakeholders.

Another alternative to an open session is selecting panels of stakeholders to participate. In determining panels, the committee should consider what district, school, and community members' support for candidates is important to the future success of the school leader, and which of these stakeholders, therefore, should participate in the on-site screening. With a search team member serving as the facilitator, each panel would be asked to develop a list of questions for the search committee to review and

approve, ensuring consistency and avoiding panel members asking illegal or inappropriate questions.

Whatever method is used, it is important to follow-up with stakeholders and collect their feedback about the candidates. Utilizing a form like **Stakeholder Feedback** is an easy way to collect feedback to share with the search committee.

The on-site screening is also a chance for the district to assess candidate's skills in particular areas. Writing samples, data analysis, budget, and classroom observation tasks are becoming common practices being used by districts. These authentic tasks can provide additional measures for evaluating candidates beyond the typical interview process and may help identify future professional development needs for newly hired leader. Examples of these types of authentic tasks can be found in **Sample Authentic Tasks**.

Once on-site activities have been determined, the search committee works closely with the district office and school leadership team to coordinate and ensure a successful on-site experience. Tasks are assigned and interview protocols developed for every on-site activity to guarantee that all candidates have equal opportunities to compete for the position. In planning the agenda for the day, be sure to include transition times and break times for the candidates to gather their thoughts, eat, and rehydrate.

One of the major tasks of the search committee will be to determine what questions to ask and who should ask it. Once again, the search committee should review the **School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions** to develop interview protocols based on what they have learned about the candidates in Stages 1 and 2. The following questions will help guide the selection:
- What are the priorities for this hire based on school needs and context?
- What information can we gather from the on-site interview to give us additional information that we need to advance candidates to the "recommend for hiring" stage?
- What interview questions are essential "must ask" or optional "if time permits?"
- Are there any questions we want to share with candidates to help them prepare for the interview? Instead of ambushing candidates with questions during the interview that force them

to respond with off the cuff responses, consider giving them questions in advance. This allows the search committee to see the individual's ability to reflect, prepare, and cogently communicate their thinking.[22]

Once questions are selected, the committee determines who should ask the questions – the search committee, a stakeholder panel, superintendent, etc. By utilizing other stakeholders as interviewers, it builds culture and takes some of the weight off the search committee's back — that feeling of having to ask every question. For example, a panel of teachers could ask questions about how the candidate would engage teachers in discussions about instruction. Protocols for these questions ensure consistency, and the committee/district will need to prepare interviewers by providing training regarding confidentiality, their responsibilities, and the federal and state laws governing equal employment opportunity. Throughout the interview, search team members should take detailed notes on candidates' responses **(Search Committee Interview Quality Screening)** for each session they attend. A district staff member should be appointed to keep thorough notes as well. Recording the sessions can also help when disagreements about what was said occur. If the district decides to record, permission must be attained from the candidate.

Candidates' Experience

First and second interviews are a pressure-filled experience for the candidate. Districts can help alleviate some of that anxiety by ensuring that all candidates are well informed and prepared for the interview. The following are suggestions for orienting the candidate to the interview process:

- Provide all candidates with a district contact person to coordinate the interview, usually the search manager or chair. This individual is responsible for orienting each candidate; answering questions about the interview process; checking for any needed physical assistance needed or any dietary restrictions; assisting in arranging travel — ground or air transportation, hotel accommodations, meal/travel reimbursements, etc.
- Provide all candidates with the interview agenda, including approximate times for each agenda item. Also include the names and titles of everyone they will be meeting with during the

process. For on-site interviews, identify who will be serving as their host for the day, ensuring they get from activity to activity in a timely manner. This might be a member of the search committee, a staff member, or consider utilizing a student leader.
- Provide a list of any interview questions the search committee has decided to share with the candidate to help them prepare.
- If candidates are making any formal presentations, inform them about the requirements of their presentation, the audience, and length of presentation. Check to see what equipment they might need — laptop, white board, copies of handouts, etc.
- Provide relevant information about the school, district, and community. This is an opportunity to highlight the strengths of the school community. For example, some districts work with local community organizations to include a "welcome folder" for candidates. In addition to key information and highlights about the school and district, info about the community is included such as brochures, housing/real estate info, social media sites, etc.
- If the district will be recording interviews, notify the candidate and get permission to do so.

Consensus Building

In Stages 2 and 3, search committees are encouraged to use a consensus decision making process to determine candidates moving to the next round of screening. Consensus does not mean complete agreement, but that everyone is comfortable with the decision. They can live with it; they will support it and their colleagues in implementing the decision; and they will do absolutely nothing to hinder the execution of the decision.

The Search Committee Chair usually serves as the facilitator for this process. Once committee members have all the available interview data, discussions begin by highlighting strengths and weaknesses of each candidate with each member sharing their thoughts **(Search Committee Facilitation Tools)**. The facilitator separates areas of agreement and disagreement and then begins to narrow down choices. If there are any disagreements or points that need clarification, take the time to go back and review application materials and interview data. Form a proposal when it looks like consensus is likely. Test

it by asking, "Can everyone live with it?" If everyone accepts the proposal, you have consensus. If not, more discussion is needed. Identify disagreements and doubts and seek comprises or new solutions. Repeat the process until consensus is reached.

In the case of a failed search (no one was recommended for the position), the district must decide whether they will keep the search open, start a new search, or hire an interim. One option would be for the district to ask the search committee to go back and review candidates making it to Stage 2 but not selected for a second interview. If the committee feels there are viable candidates, the committee proceeds with second interviews. If not, then the district must decide the next course of action — open a new search or hire an interim. Districts should proceed with caution. Time will be the biggest factor impacting this decision. It might be better to hire an interim until a thorough search can be completed than rush the hiring process and possibly end up with an incompetent leader.

Reference Checks, Background Checks, & Sexual Misconduct Disclosure

Required reference and background checks are a critical component of the screening process. When and by whom these checks are completed is a district decision. Some districts prefer to complete checks before any type of interview, others after finalists are determined, and some after the committee makes its recommendation(s) for hire. In many districts, the Human Resources office conducts the checks. In others, it is the responsibility of the search committee manager or chair and/or the committee. Documentation of completed reference and background checks should be kept in each candidate's folder **(Background and Reference Check, Reference Check Protocol)**. In Illinois, the requirements continue to evolve, so be sure to keep up to date on required checks and changes to district policies and procedures.

Contract

Once the district finalizes its decision, the appropriate district designee verbally contacts the selected candidate to extend an informal offer. This allows the candidate time to review the terms of employment before accepting the position. This is also an opportunity for negotiation between the two parties.

Districts can make their offers much more attractive

by considering adding incentives beyond the typical salary and benefits package. Providing professional development supports such as mentoring, school leader professional learning communities, attendance at leadership conferences and workshops, membership in the Illinois Principals Association and a national association (NAESP, NASSP, ASCD, etc.), higher education courses, etc. can make a job offer a much more appealing package.

Keep in mind that for individuals, it is not always about the money. In putting together an offer, districts should think about nonmonetary benefits that would entice individuals to the position. For example, consider revisions to the job description that might provide more work/life balance such as reduction in supervision requirements, summer flex time, attendance at fewer board meetings, etc.

After a verbal acceptance, the district then makes a formal offer which includes a formal written letter to describe the details of the position (title, working schedule, start date, compensation, employee benefits, etc.) along with a formal contract to be signed by the new hire. The Illinois Principals Association has created a sample contract for districts to customize for their own needs **(IPA Model Principal Contract)**. Once the contract is signed, phone calls are made and consolation letters to the other finalists.

Management of Search Documents

Management of application submissions and screening documents is critical to ensure a fair hiring process. The district should appoint a district employee, trained in the district's personnel management protocols, to serve as search manager. Each candidate should have an individual file (hard copy or electronic) which includes the following:

- Application checklist with all required materials to be submitted (Application Screening Checklist)
- Completed application form, application letter, other required documents, and other materials collected during the hiring process
- Correspondence (letters, emails, phone log, etc.) between the candidate and district about the hire
- Rating forms used by the search committee

These files along with all district and search committee documents should be securely maintained for no less than three years after the hire.

Do you want your school to perform at its highest potential?

Hiring a new school leader is one of the most critical decisions that a learning organization can make.

NEXT STEPS

After the selected candidate has accepted the position (signed contract) and phone calls and consolation letters have been sent to other finalists, it is time to celebrate.

Districts may wish to keep the search committee involved in the transition of school leadership process. For example, they may ask committee members to:

- Serve on the transition team responsible for establishing a timeline for the transition and a succession plan. Resources available from the Illinois Principals Association can assist with this task **(School Leader Entry Plan and School Leader Calendar)**. The **New School Leader Induction Checklist** is available in the resources section to help get you started with the transition process.
- Host a district-wide welcoming reception for the new hire. This is an excellent opportunity to recognize and thank the search committee and all those involved in the search process.
- Introduce the new hire to community members and organizations.
- Provide relocation assistance if the new hire is moving into the community.
- Take time to debrief and identify what worked well and what needs improvement as part of a district's commitment to continuous improvement. Search teams can use the **Search Committee Reflection** to engage in these discussions and provide feedback to the district.

Individuals participating in stakeholder panels are another source of feedback. Again, simple prompts such as "What went well?"; What didn't go well?"; and "What can be improved?" can produce rich data for the district to examine.

The district may also wish to collect feedback from applicants. Using an online site for individuals to anonymously respond, a simple survey could easily provide districts with valuable feedback data. For example, "How did you hear about the position?" could provide insights into current recruitment strategies. Asking, "How easy was it to apply?" might assist in further development of a district's online application process. A district might question applicants about how well the district interacted with them to improve communication. Simply asking

open-ended questions about what worked well and suggestions for improvement can generate insightful data about the overall hiring process.

Collect and review the feedback from search participants and use it to improve the hiring process by asking tough questions such as:
- Was the hiring process implemented with fidelity?
- Which recruitment efforts were successful and which ones were not?
- Are we getting quality applicants?
- Did the screening process lead to a pool of viable candidates for the position?
- How did our pipeline development efforts impact the applicant pool?
- Was the search a success in terms of priorities?
- What needs to improve?

Through this process, districts identify areas for opportunity and develop improvement goals and plans, continuing to strengthen the hiring component of the School Leader Talent Management System.

With the right school leader in the right seat, the hiring process is complete. The district can now focus on growing and retaining these individuals by providing the resources and learning supports they need throughout their careers.

Next Steps Best Practices

- Recognize (publicly) and celebrate the work of the search committee and others involved in the hiring process.
- Host a district-side welcoming reception for the new hire.
- Engage in a review of the hiring process to identify what went well and what did not and develop a plan for improvement for future searches.
- Begin to plan for the transition of school leadership by developing a transition team to devise an onboarding plan of action to support the new school leader.

School Leader
Entry Plan

School Leader
Calendar

New School Leader
Induction Checklist

Search Committee
Reflection

NEXT STEPS
RESOURCES

Need resources?

The following pages contain the resources mentioned throughout this guide. They are available as individual pdf files on the IPA website.

Sample Search Timeline

Days	Tasks	Notes
1-10	Succession Planning	
11-15	Search Committee Selection	
16-20	Search Committee Training	
21-30	Setting Leadership Priorities • Complete organization self-assessments • Identify leadership priorities	
31-40	Development of Application & Recruitment Materials • Job description • Job announcement • Search Website development • Development of recruitment materials	
41-70	Recruitment Activities	
71-100	Selection • Initial screenings • Interviews • Job offer • Job offer accepted	
101-120	Next Steps • Contract • Onboarding • Search reflection	

Search Committee Roles and Responsibilities

Working collaboratively, the role of the search committee is to define the leadership needs of the school and develop and implement a transparent and orderly search process concentrated on recruiting, assessing, and recommending the strongest possible candidate(s) to the superintendent and board of education.

Specific responsibilities include:
- Establish committee norms to clarify expected behavior, how work will get done, and how conflict will be handled.
- Maintain confidentiality.
- Serve as a liaison to the designated stakeholder group keeping them informed with pre-approved communications.
- Conduct a needs assessment to identify search priorities for the position.
- Develop a job description that accurately reflects the roles, responsibilities, and priorities of the position along with the required qualifications for the role.
- Craft a selection process with a clear commitment to equity.
- Create a job announcement and recruitment plan to attract strong applicants to the position and build the applicant pool.
- Serve as a recruiter.
- Screen applicants throughout various stages of the search process.
- Conduct interviews.
- Serve as a host to candidates during the on-site interviews.
- Make a final candidate recommendation(s) to the superintendent and board of education. Note this is only a recommendation, the board will make the final decision.
- Assess the effectiveness of the search process (upon completion) identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- Assist the district with the leadership transition plan.

Time Commitment
- 2-3 months
- Required time will vary as needed (see search timeline).

District Relationship-Building Norms for Searches
- Treat everyone with kindness and respect.
- Allow others the opportunity to share their thoughts.
- Listen to what others are saying.
- Be honest and transparent.
- Respect the time and commitment applicants, search committee members, and other stakeholders have made to the process.
- Treat all candidates as if they are your #1 choice and make them feel like they are your top priority.
- Respond to candidate inquiries in a timely manner (within 24 hours) and ensure their questions are answered.
- Inform applicants of their status throughout the process.
- Notify a candidate immediately if not moving forward in a search (personal phone call first, written notification second).
- Keep all search and screening information and processes confidential.

Search Committee Training Agenda

Welcome and Introductions
Each team member introduces themselves and identifies the stakeholder group they represent.

Fears and Hopes Protocol (Icebreaker Activity)[23]
This activity helps the group understand individual expectations and concerns, fostering a sense of shared ownership. Though team norms will be formally created during the first official committee meeting, this serves as a foundation for the discussion.
Instructions:
1. The group leader asks members to reflect and write answers to:
   • What are your hopes for this search process?
   • What are your fears about this process?
2. Allow time for quiet reflection and writing.
3. Each participant shares their hopes and fears aloud. The facilitator lists them on separate sheets of poster paper, ensuring they are recorded verbatim without editing, commenting, or judging.
4. Encourage the group to reflect on the lists.
   • If modifications are needed, the facilitator will make them.
   • If hopes require collective efforts to realize, or fears require special efforts to address, the facilitator will highlight these and invite suggestions for actionable steps.
5. Conclude by emphasizing:
   • Keep these hopes and fears in mind as we proceed with today's training. At our first official meeting, we will develop team norms or ground rules. Reflect on this question: What norms will we need to achieve our hoped-for outcomes while addressing our fears?

Charge to the Search Committee
The search committee's role is to collaboratively:
• Define the school's leadership needs.
• Design and implement a transparent, orderly search process for the [position] at [school name].
• Focus on recruiting, assessing, and recommending the strongest candidate(s) to the superintendent and board of education.

Key Topics to Review
1. Roles and Responsibilities **(Search Committee Roles and Responsibilities)**
2. Confidentiality
3. Federal, State, and Local Laws (Equal Employment Opportunity policies)
4. Illinois Open Meetings Act
5. Diversity Training
6. District Hiring Process
7. Effective Interviewing Techniques
8. How to Evaluate Candidates Objectively
9. Forms and Documentation

Q & A

Next Meeting Details
Date, Time, Location, Meeting Objectives, Team Norms/Ground Rules, Search Timeline

Sample Search Committee Agenda Template

Date

Time

Location

Meeting Facilitator

Meeting Objectives

Materials Needed

Time Needed	Agenda Item	Notes
5 minutes	Welcome Review Meeting Objectives	Welcome
10 minutes	Next Steps	

Next Meeting Details
Date, Time, Location, Meeting Objectives

Search Committee Ground Rules and Norms Protocol[24]

Ground Rules, or Norms, are important for a group that intends to work together on difficult issues, or who will be working together over time. They may be added to, or condensed, as the group progresses. Starting with basic Ground Rules builds trust, clarifies group expectations of one another, and establishes points of reflection to see how the group is doing regarding process.

Time: Approximately 30 minutes
1. Do a quick review of the outcomes of the Hopes and Fears Protocol activity and key points from the search committee training.
2. Each participant should write down what he/she needs to work productively in a group, giving an example of one thing the facilitator needs, i.e., "to have all voices heard," or "to start and end our meetings when we say we will." This is to help people focus on process rather than product.
3. Each participant names one thing from his/her list, with no repeats, and as many circuits as necessary to have all the ground rules listed.
4. Ask for any clarifications needed.
5. If the list is more than 10 Ground Rules — ask the group if some of them can be combined to make the list more manageable. Sometimes the subtle differences are important to people, so it is more important that everyone feel their needs have been honored than it is to have a short list.
6. Ask if everyone can abide by the listed Ground Rules. If anyone dislikes or doesn't want to comply with one of them, that Ground Rule should be discussed and a decision should be made to keep it on the list with a notation of objection, to remove it, or to try it for a specified amount of time and check it again.
7. Ask if any one of the Ground Rules might be hard for the group to follow. If there is one or more, those Ground Rules should be highlighted and given attention. With time it will become clear if it should be dropped or needs significant work. Sometimes what might appear to be a difficult rule turns out not to be hard at all. "Everyone has a turn to speak," is sometimes debated for example, with the argument that not everyone likes to talk every time an issue is raised, and others think aloud and only process well if they have the space to do that. Frequently, a system of checking in with everyone, without requiring everyone to speak, becomes a more effective ground rule.
8. While work is in progress, refer to the Ground Rules whenever they would help group process. If one person is dominating, for example, it is easier to refer to a Ground Rule that says, "take care with how often and how long you speak," than to ask someone directly to stop dominating the group.
9. Check in on the Ground Rules when reflection is done on the group work. Note any that were not followed particularly well for attention in the next work session. Being sure they are followed, refining them, and adding or subtracting Ground Rules is important, as it makes for smoother work and more trust within the group.

Examples of Team Norms[25]

Team Communication Norms
*   We communicate transparently, without any hidden agendas.
*   We don't shoot the messenger.
*   We communicate decisions quickly.
*   We share all the information we have up front.
*   We acknowledge when we lack answers, and we seek solutions collaboratively.
*   We present problems in a way that promotes mutual discussion and resolution.

Team Meeting Norms
*   We circulate meeting agendas at least one business day before each meeting.
*   We come prepared for the topics and materials outlined in the meeting agenda.
*   We discuss problems directly and find solutions instead of playing the blame game.
*   We believe in speaking and listening — balanced participation.
*   We're present in meetings and respect others' time by limiting the use of electronics to emergencies only.

- We begin and end meetings on time.
- If we have something to say, we say it immediately instead of waiting.
- For virtual meetings, each virtual teammate participates fully in each meeting they're asked to attend. The team gives equal regard to remote and co-located individuals.

Brainstorming Norms
- All ideas are good ideas, and each contributor has value.
- Stay focused on the topic. We channel our energy into discussions that propel us forward.
- We build on the ideas of others instead of shutting them down.
- Judgment of ideas takes a backseat during brainstorming.
- We keep resource constraints in mind.

Conflict and Disagreement Norms
- Personal attacks are a no-no.
- We debate ideas in search of better solutions.
- We don't throw each other under the bus.
- We raise issues with the appropriate people instead of whispering behind their backs.
- We don't just say — we reason. We don't say, "District says so" — instead, we provide constructive feedback or information.

Project and Work Norms
- We expect confidentiality around our operations.
- We all own our decisions.
- We are always trying to improve how we conduct our work to achieve the district's objectives.
- We share accountability for our committee's performance.
- We adjust our priorities to address critical issues that affect our search.
- We respect and meet deadlines.
- We raise issues that affect committee performance, even if they're outside our usual turf.
- We ask for clarification and district support when needed.

General Conduct Norms
- We follow up on requests or questions.
- We arrive on time for meetings and events.
- We acknowledge our mistakes.
- We don't shy away from asking for assistance when necessary.
- We accept constructive feedback.
- We do what it takes to meet team goals.
- We produce quality, consistent work.
- We stick to the playbook when it comes to our processes and procedures.
- We're polite.
- We complete all assigned tasks on time.
- We accept responsibility for the outcome of the search.
- We do our best to achieve our goals and do our part to help in the success of the search.

How can you set the tone for your search?

By establishing and following a common understanding of how individuals will interact and function, members feel more comfortable sharing their viewpoints, resulting in better decision-making and outcomes for the search.
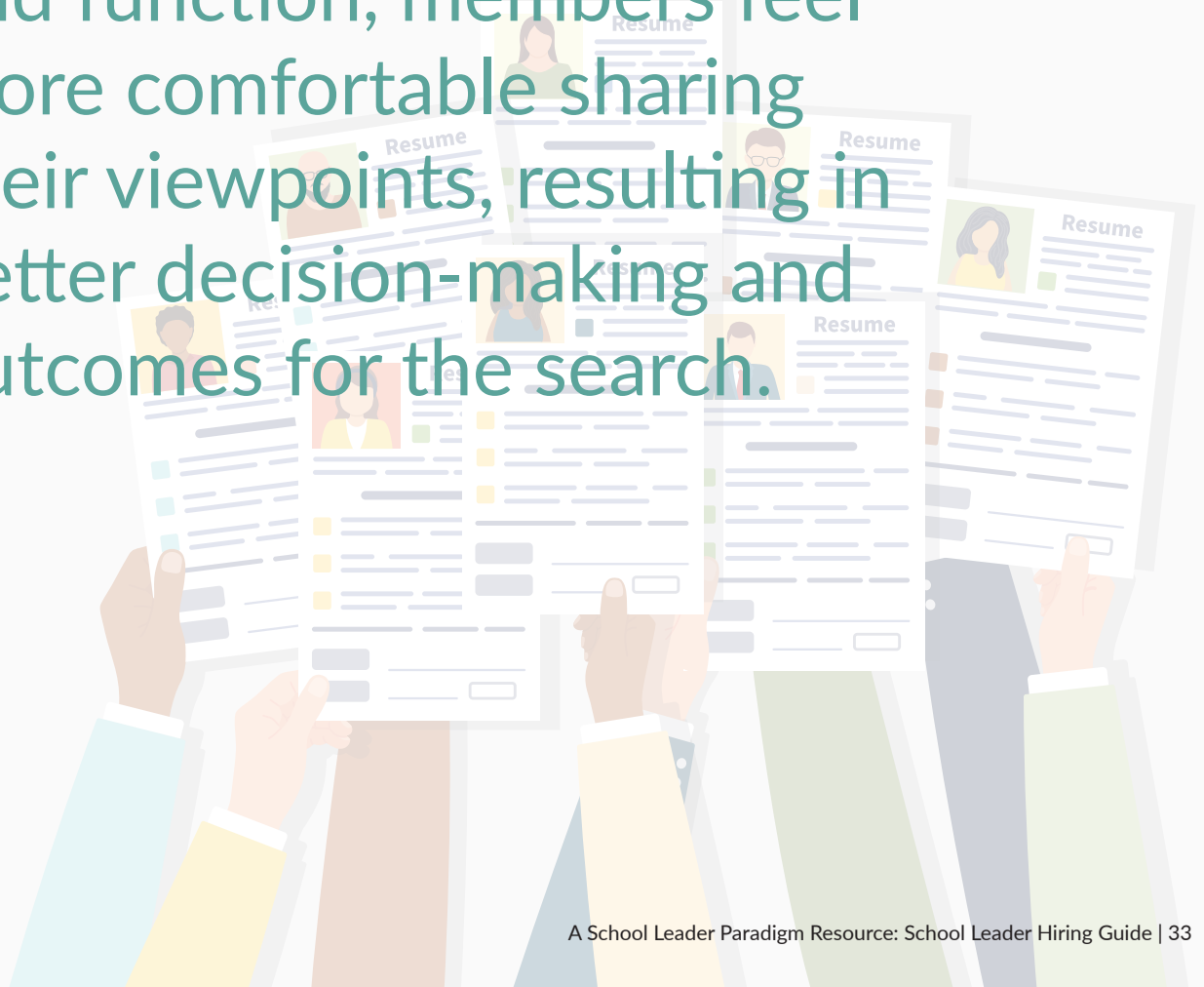
School Data Worksheets
School Achievement Data

Organization _____ Year_____

Data Sources	3 Years			Strengths	Areas for Growth
Grade K: Readiness State Assessment (KIDS)					
Grade K: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade K: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade K: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					
Grade 1: ELA State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 1: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 1: Math State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 1: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 1: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					
Grade 2: ELA State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 2: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 2: Math State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 2: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 2: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					
Grade 3: ELA State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 3: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 3: ELA DLM					
Grade 3: Math State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 3: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 3: Math DLM					
Grade 3: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					
Grade 4: ELA State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 4: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, NAEP, etc.)					
Grade 4: ELA DLM					
Grade 4: Math State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 4: Math DLM					
Grade 4: Science National Assessment (NAEP)					
Grade 4: Science DLM					
Grade 4: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					
Grade 5: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 5: ELA DLM					
Grade 5: Math State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 5: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 5: Math DLM					
Grade 5: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					
Grade 6: ELA State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 6: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 6: ELA DLM					
Grade 6: Math State Assessment (IAR)					
Grade 6: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)					
Grade 6: Math DLM					
Grade 6: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)					

School Data Worksheets
School Achievement Data

Organization _____ **Year** _____

Data Sources	3 Years		Strengths	Areas for Growth
Grade 7: ELA State Assessment (IAR)				
Grade 7: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)				
Grade 7: ELA DLM				
Grade 7: Math State Assessment (IAR)				
Grade 7: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, etc.)				
Grade 7: Math DLM				
Grade 7: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)				
Grade 8: ELA State Assessment (IAR)				
Grade 8: ELA National Assessment (STAR, MAP, PreACT, PSAT 8/9, NAEP, etc.)				
Grade 8: ELA DLM				
Grade 8: Math National Assessment (STAR, MAP, PreACT, PSAT 8/9, NAEP, etc.)				
Grade 8: Math State Assessment (IAR)				
Grade 8: Math DLM				
Grade 8: Science State Assessment				
Grade 8: Science DLM				
Grade 8: Science National Assessment (NAEP)				
Grade 8: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)				
Grade 9: ELA National Assessment (PreACT, PSAT 8/9, etc.)				
Grade 9: Math National Assessment (PreACT, PSAT 8/9, etc.)				
Grade 9: Freshmen on Track				
Grade 9: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)				
Grade 10: ELA National Assessment (PreACT, PSAT 10, etc.)				
Grade 10: Math National Assessment (PreACT, PSAT 10, etc.)				
Grade 10: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)				
Grade 11: ELA National Assessment (SAT, PSAT, etc.)				
Grade 11: ELA DLM				
Grade 11: Math National Assessment (SAT, PSAT, etc.)				
Grade 11: Math DLM				
Grade 11: Science State Assessment				
Grade 11: Science DLM				
Grade 11: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)				
Grade 12: ELA National Assessment (NAEP)				
Grade 12: Math National Assessment (NAEP)				
Grade 12: Science National Assessment (NAEP)				
Grade 12: Language Proficiency (ACCESS)				

Other Student Achievement Data:

What does your School Report Card tell you about student proficiency and growth in these areas?
- ELA Proficiency
- ELA Growth
- Math Proficiency
- Math Growth
- Science Proficiency

Questions:
- What trends do we see across the three years?
- What organizational improvement initiatives have been implemented to address areas of concern?
- Are they working?

School Data Worksheets
Student Demographics/Behavior Data

Total Number of Students	

Racial/Ethnic Diversity	3 Years		
White			
Black			
Hispanic			
Asian			
Am. Indian			
Two or More			
Pacific Islander			
Not Reported			

Additional	3 Years		
Low Income (%)			
IEPs (%)			
Homeless (%)			
English Learners (%)			
Student Attendance (%)			
Student Mobility (%)			
Chronic Absenteeism (%)			
Chronically Truant (%)			
Drop Out Rate (%)			
Graduation Rate (%)			
# Discipline Referrals			
# Suspensions			
#Expulsions			

Questions
- What trends are you seeing across the 3 years?
- What school improvement initiatives have been implemented to address areas of concern?
- Are they working?
- Are you anticipating any shifts in demographics over the next year or two?

School Data Worksheets
Teacher Data

Total Number of Teachers	

Racial/Ethnic Diversity	3 Years		
Male			
Female			

Racial/Ethnic Diversity	3 Years		
White			
Black			
Hispanic			
Asian			
Am. Indian			
Two or More			
Pacific Islander			
Not Reported			

Additional	3 Years		
Teacher Retention			
Bachelor's			
Master's			
Teacher Attendance			
Evaluation: % Rates as Proficient or Excellent			
Student/Teacher Ratio			

Questions
- If you compare this data with the previous two years, what trends are you seeing in teacher data?
- Are you anticipating any shifts over the next year or two such as retirements, reduction of staff, etc.?
- How are you identifying school-wide and individual professional development needs?

School Data Worksheets
School Process Data

(The policies, procedures, and systems in place that define how the school does business including programs, curriculum, instruction and assessment strategies, interventions, and other used to help students learn.)

Data Sources	Strengths	Areas for Growth
School Improvement Process		
MTSS/RTI		
New Teacher Induction Program		
Student Mentoring Program		
Other:		

Notes:

Review of Perception Data

Data Sources		Strengths	Areas for Growth
5Essentials Survey or whatever climate survey your district uses	Effective Leaders		
	Collaborative Teachers		
	Ambitious Instruction		
	Supportive Instruction		
	Involved Families		
Other:			
Other:			

Notes:

School Data Worksheets
Review of School's Current School Improvement Goals

Goal	Status

Notes:

Review of School's 5-Year Goals

Goal	Status

Notes:

Are we hiring for today, or building for tomorrow?

The school leader hiring event is an opportunity to connect, collaborate, and build lasting relationships with candidates and every stakeholder involved.

Sample Stakeholder Survey

The search committee for the position of [position name] at [name of school] is seeking stakeholder input to identify top priorities for this search. Priorities assist in the development of the job description and helps the search committee focus its recruitment efforts. Identified priorities are also a critical component of the selection process to ensure a good match between the candidate and the school. Thank you for taking time to complete this short survey. Please identify your stakeholder group (choose one):

- ■ School administrator
- ■ Teacher
- ■ Paraprofessional (teaching assistant)
- ■ Professional staff (administrator, counselor, psychologist, social worker, etc.)
- ■ Staff (administrative assistant, custodial/maintenance worker, food service worker, etc.)
- ■ Student
- ■ Parent/Guardian
- ■ Community member
- ■ Other – please identify

The job of a school leader is very complex, but it can be broken down into three main domain areas:

- ● **Culture:** Building a student-centered climate and culture;
- ● **Systems:** Developing sustainable student-centered systems; and
- ● **Learning:** Improving learning for students, adults, and the entire school as a whole.

Step 1: Priority rank the three domain areas using the following scale:
1. Highest priority for the school.
2. Second highest priority for the school.
3. Third highest priority for the school.

Step 2: Identify your top three dimensions (essential behaviors) in each domain you feel should be a priority for the new leader.

Step 3: Provide additional information you would like the committee to consider as they identify priorities.

☐ CULTURE DOMAIN

The organization's efforts to create, foster, and sustain a student-centered climate and culture where all adults strive to build positive and unconditional relationships with all students, while ensuring equitable access and opportunities to high-quality programs.

☐ Relationships
Focuses on developing and strengthening internal, personal, and external relationships that support the school's mission and vision and creates an environment where a diversity of ideas and opinions can be shared, appreciated, and respected.

☐ Student Centeredness
Cultivates an educational environment that addresses the distinct academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students and conveys high expectations, support, and mutual respect among all staff and students.

☐ Wellness
Fosters and supports a culture of physical, mental, and social-emotional wellness for the entire school community.

☐ Equity
Focuses on creating an environment that accentuates fairness by collaboratively developing and implementing a clear vision of equity for all stakeholders in which individual differences are recognized and accommodated to eliminate and prevent inequities.

☐ Traditions/Celebration
Nurtures an environment that models and builds a culture of mutual respect and recognizes, celebrates, and honors all students, staff, and community for their achievements and service to others.

☐ Ethics
Cultivates an environment in which each individual demonstrates and exemplifies ethical behaviors, values, and respect for others.

☐ Global Mindedness
Creates an environment that builds, models, and endorses a global-minded perspective for all stakeholders through the promotion of cultural diversity, partnerships, and community connections.

☐ SYSTEMS DOMAIN

The organization's efforts to assess a learning organization's current systems, initiate a cycle of inquiry focused on dismantling historically inequitable systems, and engage stakeholders in a collective effort to establish sustainable student-centered systems.

☐ Vision/Mission
Fosters an environment in which the school's vision and mission drive the strategic alignment of organizational decisions and resources.

☐ Communication
Utilizes a collaborative process to ensure safe and meaningful communication with and among all stakeholders that supports the school's vision and mission.

☐ Collaborative Leadership
Builds a culture of professional learning, mutual trust, and shared responsibility by focusing on empowering and supporting others as leaders.

☐ Data Literacy
Promotes a data-driven culture of decision-making for continuous improvement.

☐ Strategic Management
Employs a process of setting goals aligned to the school's mission and vision, developing plans for meeting those goals, mobilizing the resources needed for implementation, and evaluating the results of those actions in order to determine next steps as part of a model of continuous improvement.

☐ Safety
Establishes expectations, processes, and procedures to ensure the physical, mental, and emotional safety of all stakeholders.

☐ Operations
Manages system's logistics to leverage the educational, operational, and financial affairs and resources of the school to effectively balance operational efficiencies and student learning needs.

☐ LEARNING DOMAIN

The organization's efforts, to create and sustain a culture of ongoing reflective, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning for students, adults, and the entire learning organization as a whole.

☐ Reflection/Growth
Nurtures a culture of self-reflection that allows each stakeholder and the school to achieve peak performance.

☐ Result-Orientation
Cultivates an environment in which high, data-driven expectations of results for student learning are embraced and drive organizational and personal growth.

☐ Curriculum
Ensures a learning-focused curriculum that is comprehensive, rigorous, aligned, and focuses on a high level of personal and academic achievement for all students.

☐ Instruction
Collaboratively develops an effective, research-based instructional program with nonnegotiable expectations for all teaching staff that produce a high level of personal and academic achievement for every student.

☐ Assessment
Fosters a learning environment that utilizes data to monitor student progress, improves the instructional process and learning environment, and ensures high levels of personal and academic growth for all students.

☐ Innovation
Creates an environment that supports creative thinking and risk-taking in order to generate knowledge and insight through nontraditional ways.

☐ Human Capital Management
Focuses on developing processes and procedures that assist with the recruitment and selection of talent and the ongoing strategic management of talent for organizational improvement.

Search Priorities

Identifying priorities begins with each individual search team member isolating their own priorities. This assessment is broken down into the School Leader Paradigm Domains — Culture, Systems, and Learning. Each domain is further broken down into seven dimensions.

1. Review the definitions of each domain and their seven dimensions on the following three pages.
2. After search team members review available school data (School Data, School's Contexts, Stakeholder Surveys, etc.), **each team member** will identify 1-3 priority dimensions in each domain and rate (do not rank) them accordingly and provide a justification for each rating. For example, you may have identified three priorities, but you may have rated them all as level 2 priorities. Please note that a team member may have none or only one or two priorities in a domain.
   1 = This is a high priority for the school.
   2 = This is important.
   3 = This is somewhat of a priority for the school.
3. Search committee members share their priorities and justifications with the entire team.
4. The **team**, through consensus building, then develops a unique leader profile using the following process:
   • Based on a thorough needs assessment, as a team, rank the 3 domains in terms of priority (1 being the highest priority).
5. Use the four categories below to generate the key hiring priorities for the position.
6. Use this profile to develop the job announcement, job description, recruitment materials, and screening tools.

Culture	Systems	Learning

Our priority **Culture** dimensions are...	Our priority **Systems** dimensions are...
Our priority **Learning** dimensions are...	Our district/school needs ...

Search Priorities CULTURE DOMAIN

The organization's efforts to create, foster, and sustain a student-centered climate and culture where all adults strive to build positive and unconditional relationships with all students, while ensuring equitable access and opportunities to high-quality programs.

Dimension	Priority Rating	Justification
Relationships Focuses on developing and strengthening internal, personal, and external relationships that support the school's mission and vision and creates an environment where a diversity of ideas and opinions can be shared, appreciated, and respected.		
Student Centeredness Cultivates an educational environment that addresses the distinct academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students and conveys high expectations, support, and mutual respect among all staff and students.		
Wellness Fosters and supports a culture of physical, mental, and social-emotional wellness for the entire school community.		
Equity Focuses on creating an environment that accentuates fairness by collaboratively developing and implementing a clear vision of equity for all stakeholders in which individual differences are recognized and accommodated to eliminate and prevent inequities.		
Traditions/Celebration Nurtures an environment that models and builds a culture of mutual respect and recognizes, celebrates, and honors all students, staff, and community for their achievements and service to others.		
Ethics Cultivates an environment in which each individual demonstrates and exemplifies ethical behaviors, values, and respect for others.		
Global Mindedness Creates an environment that builds, models, and endorses a global-minded perspective for all stakeholders through the promotion of cultural diversity, partnerships, and community connections.		

Search Priorities **SYSTEMS** DOMAIN

The organization's efforts to assess a learning organization's current systems, initiate a cycle of inquiry focused on dismantling historically inequitable systems, and engage stakeholders in a collective effort to establish sustainable student centered systems.

Dimension	Priority Rating	Justification
Vision/Mission Fosters an environment in which the school's vision and mission drive the strategic alignment of organizational decisions and resources.		
Communication Utilizes a collaborative process to ensure safe and meaningful communication with and among all stakeholders that supports the school's vision and mission.		
Collaborative Leadership Builds a culture of professional learning, mutual trust, and shared responsibility by focusing on empowering and supporting others as leaders.		
Data Literacy Promotes a data-driven culture of decision-making for continuous improvement.		
Strategic Management Employs a process of setting goals aligned to the school's mission and vision, developing plans for meeting those goals, mobilizing the resources needed for implementation, and evaluating the results of those actions in order to determine next steps as part of a model of continuous improvement.		
Safety Establishes expectations, processes, and procedures to ensure the physical, mental, and emotional safety of all stakeholders.		
Operations Manages system's logistics to leverage the educational, operational, and financial affairs and resources of the school to effectively balance operational efficiencies and student learning needs.		

Search Priorities **LEARNING** DOMAIN

The organization's efforts, to create and sustain a culture of ongoing reflective, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning for students, adults, and the entire learning organization as a whole.

Dimension	Priority Rating	Justification
Reflection/Growth Nurtures a culture of self-reflection that allows each stakeholder and the school to achieve peak performance.		
Result-Orientation Cultivates an environment in which high, data-driven expectations of results for student learning are embraced and drive organizational and personal growth.		
Curriculum Ensures a learning-focused curriculum that is comprehensive, rigorous, aligned, and focuses on a high level of personal and academic achievement for all students.		
Instruction Collaboratively develops an effective, research-based instructional program with nonnegotiable expectations for all teaching staff that produce a high level of personal and academic achievement for every student.		
Assessment Fosters a learning environment that utilizes data to monitor student progress, improves the instructional process and learning environment, and ensures high levels of personal and academic growth for all students.		
Innovation Creates an environment that supports creative thinking and risk-taking in order to generate knowledge and insight through nontraditional ways.		
Human Capital Management Focuses on developing processes and procedures that assist with the recruitment and selection of talent and the ongoing strategic management of talent for organizational improvement.		

School Leader Job Announcement Template

[NAME of SCHOOL DISTRICT]
[position and school]
[Strong recruitment message to introduce the position, school, and district.]

Job Title:
Department:
Reports to:
Start Date:
Minimum Qualifications:
Preferred Qualifications:
Position Summary:
- Under the general supervision of the [position], the [position] serves as the learning leader of [name of school] – a leader who uses personal, social, and systems intelligences to transform a school into a learning organization through a mindset of growth, service, and cultural responsiveness.
- [Overview of school priorities]

Essential Leadership Behaviors (select based on your priorities):

CULTURE DOMAIN

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LEARNING DOMAIN

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Assessment
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Innovation
Creates an environment that supports creative thinking and risk-taking in order to generate knowledge and insight through nontraditional ways.

Human Capital Management
Focuses on developing processes and procedures that assist with the recruitment and selection of talent and the ongoing strategic management of talent for organizational improvement.

Professional Supports Provided:
- Induction program including 2-year mentoring
- Professional development opportunities to support growth goals
- Membership in Illinois Principals Association and Fall Conference Registration
- Districtwide school leader professional learning community to support professional growth

Terms of Employment:
Evaluation: [Name of district] has adopted the School Leader Evaluation Plan that helps school leaders grow their leadership dispositions and the skills necessary for them to do their work effectively throughout their career continuum (Aspiring to Launching to Building to Mastering). Additional information about the plan can be found at ilprincipals.org/school-leader-evaluation.

Compensation:
- Salary:
- Retirement:
- Insurance:
- Travel:

Background check information:

Position Website:

How to Apply:
- [Please send ... to...]
- [Applications are currently being accepted for this exciting leadership position via ...(link)]

Deadline for Application:

School District Website:

School Website:

Report Card Link:

Contact Information:
If you would like additional information about this position or have questions about the application process, please contact:
[Name]
[Position]
[Phone]
[Email}

Additional Notes:
Interviews will be scheduled ...

Information About Surrounding Community:

What is more important than having effective leaders?

Nothing — and it takes both passive and active recruitment strategies to make it happen.

GENERAL

- Tell us about you, your education and experiences and how they relate to this position.
- Please describe your experiences and personal strengths that qualify you for this position. What particular skills, knowledge and abilities would you bring to our district and school programs?
- What kinds of recent training experiences have you had that make you a strong candidate for this position?
- Should you be selected for this position, please tell us about the person who will be joining our leadership team.
- What do you see as your role in working with the superintendent and administrative team?
- Please describe your learning style and your leadership style.
- Tell us why are interested in making a change from your current position.
- Tell us why you are interested in this school.
- What accomplishment are you most proud of?
- What is the hardest decision you have had to make in your career?
- Tell us about your current school. What were particular challenges the school faced?
- If you were to be selected as the principal, what are three specific areas where you will need support as a new principal in order to be successful and effective?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- You know some principals are more successful than others. What are the key characteristics of a successful principal?
- Specifically, what do you define as your three most important responsibilities as the (elementary, middle school, high school, etc.) principal? How would you ensure that each of the three was achieved? What other responsibilities beyond the three identified would be important to you?
- What is an emerging issue in education that will impact your role as a building leader? How will you prepare yourself to meet this issue?
- What are your three best leadership qualities? Describe at least one situation in which one of these qualities was exemplified.
- What do you feel are your greatest assets, skills, and talents that you would personally bring to this school to enhance its academic program and school community?
- What do you consider to be the essence of good leadership?

SITUATIONAL QUESTIONS

- Please discuss the strategies you would use when:
  - A parent you are meeting with begins to exhibit a great deal of anger.
  - A teacher has clearly violated a policy or procedure.
  - Two teachers share with you a concern about another teacher's classroom management practices.
  - Planning your opening day staff meeting as a new building leader.
  - A student reports to you that another student is harassing her.
  - The athletic director reports to you that several starting basketball players were at a party last weekend (and the state tournament is this weekend.)
  - A teacher shares with you she has evidence a student cheated on an assignment.
- Tell us about a difficult conflict-resolution situation that you had to deal with. Who was involved, and what methods or strategies did you use to resolve the conflict?
- Follow-up question: Ask about conflict-resolution strategies for student, teacher, and parent-teacher conflicts.
- A parent calls and is concerned that their child is in a class "one of those" students (special education) and continues to disrupt the learning opportunities of this child. She wants "that child" removed. Share with us how you would address this situation.
- A parent calls you, extremely angry, to tell you that she has spoken with her son's teacher on several occasions about the instructional practices in the room. She wants to observe the teacher in the classroom by becoming a volunteer. What do you do?
- A parent calls you, extremely angry, to tell you that he has spoken with his son's teacher on several occasions about the instructional practices in the room. He says the teacher is nice enough on the phone but simply ignores him in practice. He is demanding to have his student moved to another classroom. What do you do?
- The parent of an ESL student comes to school very upset, saying that the bus driver told students they would get a bus ticket if they spoke Spanish on the bus. How would you handle that?
- A natural parent tells you that she and her husband are separated or divorced; she does not want her spouse/ex-spouse to contact the child(ren). Explain your actions under both circumstances.
- After going through several interventions and discipline steps, a student with chronic discipline problems receives short term suspension for fighting on the playground. The parent denies there is a problem and disagrees with the suspension, telling you that you can't discipline the student without parent approval. How would you respond?
- During the day you made a judgment call based on detailed input from a teacher and administered disciplinary action to a student. The next day the child's parent arrives in an extremely hostile mood and wants to discuss the actions of the previous day. During the discussion with this parent, you realize the parent's point is correct. Share with us what actions you would take.
- You've just come back from a holiday and one of your staff has not returned. They are out sick for another week. You find out they are on a ski trip. What do you do?
- It is early May, and a mom is in the lobby with her child. She wants to sit in every 4th grade classroom in order to determine the appropriate teacher for her child for the next school year. What would you do?

CLOSING QUESTIONS

- Why should we hire you?
- What would you bring to this school/position that is unique?
- What makes you stand out as a candidate for this position?
- What interests you in this position?
- What information did we not hear from you during this interview you would want us to know as we begin making our decision?
- What else would you like us to know about you as we make our decision?
- How will you make a difference?
- What questions do you have for us?
- Are there any questions that we did not ask you but you wish that we had? If so, what are they?
- Are there any final comments regarding your pursuit of this position that you would like to share with us?

Questions Adapted From:

1. Association of Washington School Principals. (2024). Sample interview questions. Retrieved from https://awsp.org/docs/default-source/interview-documents/sampleinterviewquestions.pdf?sfvrsn=2
2. Chicago Public Schools. (2024). Sample principal interview questions. Retrieved from https://www.cps.edu/globalassets/cps-pages/careers/school-leadership/principal-quality/principalship/schoolprincipalinterviewquestions.pdf
3. Clifford, M, Baxter-Lauffer, H., Warthan, D., Knights, T., Borwn-Sims, M., & Meyer, C. (2018). Guidebook to Competency-Based Leadership Hiring. Retrieved from https://osse.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/osse/publication/attachments/Guidebook%20to%20Competency-Based%20Leadership%20Hiring.pdf
4. George W. Bush Institute. (2019). Principal Recruitment and Selection Guidebook. Retrieved from https://gwbcenter.imgix.net/Publications/Resources/gwbpc-recruitment-and-selection-rel2.pdf.

CULTURE DOMAIN →

School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions

Probably nothing is more important to students, staff, and parents than the culture of the school. What are the attributes of school culture that are important to you? How would you as the leader establish or enhance the school culture for faculty and students?

RELATIONSHIPS
- How do you know you are doing a good job of listening to someone?
- If hired, how will you go about learning about your school, colleagues and community?
- How would you go about establishing positive relationships with students, staff, parents and the community?
- What are the first 3 things you would do as a new principal to engage the community at your school?
- What techniques do you use in developing a rapport with colleagues? With staff? With parents? With students? With community members?
- How do you nurture good relationships with teachers and parents?
- As principal, what might we see you doing to build a relationship of trust with teachers, parents, and the district administrative team?
- If we had a panel of parents, teachers and students here from your current school and they were asked what they like most about you, what would they say? What might they say they like least about you? What would they say are your strengths and weaknesses?
- Our staff is accustomed to an involved and supportive principal. What would "visibility" and involvement mean to you in your school as principal?
- As the leader of our school, what strategies/actions would you employ to keep the school, principal and students visible to the community? What are key messages you would want to promote?
- How will you encourage parents and other community members to become involved and participate in your school? How would you develop and maintain effective working relationships with students, staff and the community?
- Describe the various groups you are responsible to and how you would develop and maintain an effective working relationship with each group.
- Give us examples of how you involved parents in your school or classroom and what you have done to gain community support for your school.
- Our parents often have emotional, social and economic needs. What skills and experiences do you bring that will help them develop more effective parenting skills?
- Engaging parents as meaningful partners in the learning of their child is critical to a high achieving school. How would you effectively engage parents in this important work? How would you modify your efforts to engage parents based on the diversity of the student population?
- What are ways you will use to get to know the patrons of the district?
- What role should parents play in your school?
- How would you deal with conflict between two staff members or a staff member and parent?

- Have you resolved a conflict between adults on campus? What was the conflict and how did you resolve it? If not, how would you resolve a conflict between adults on campus?
- What steps do you take to de-escalate angry parents?
- What could you tell us that would convince us that as a principal you would be a key player in creating a positive school climate? How do you motivate students and staff to take an active role in creating a positive school climate?
- What factors most affect positive school climate in a [grade level] school? How do you motivate students to take an active role in creating a positive school climate?
- How do you ensure an atmosphere of trust and openness to foster risk taking and change? How do you balance transparency and openness with confidentiality?

STUDENT CENTEREDNESS
- What kinds of interaction would we see between you and our students?
- Tell us about one student in your career that stands out in your mind. Why does this student stand out?
- Can a leader exhibit too much empathy for a student?
- At the end of your career, what do you think your students would say about you as a leader?
- Tell us about a time when you had to resolve a difficult situation with a student. Please tell us the situation, the actions you took and the results.
- What do you believe would make a good teaching and learning environment for teachers and students?
- What are effective strategies of ensuring each student and parent is fully engaged in this school?
- How have you demonstrated advocacy for all students?

WELLNESS
- How do you balance the many demands and multiple roles of the principal position?
- How would you provide motivation, encouragement and support to a team of hard working and dedicated professionals confronting enormous challenges?
- How do you cultivate and facilitate support for social and emotional wellness for students and staff?

The learning leader's efforts to create, foster, and sustain a student-centered climate and culture where all adults strive to build positive and unconditional relationships with all students, while ensuring equitable access and opportunities to high-quality programs.

EQUITY

- What would you do to make this school a welcoming and safe environment for students of diverse backgrounds? What strategies would you use to reach out to minority students, especially those from our _____ and/or _____ communities? How would you shape a sense of community among a diverse group of students?
- Please describe the diverse ethnic populations with whom you have worked. What kinds of challenges and successes have you had in working with diverse populations in your schools?
- Well over __% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunches. Additionally, we possess a significant level of ethnic diversity. What strategies would you implement to ensure that each student and his/her parent are fully engaged in the school?
- What leadership skills and experiences do you bring to our ELL students and their parents?
- What is the impact of inclusion on the school community?
- Traditions/Celebrations
- As a leader, how do you build a culture of mutual respect?
- As the school leader, how would you recognize, celebrate, and honor all students, staff, and community for their achievements and service to others?
- Some traditions and celebrations are often considered "sacred cows" you don't dare touch in schools. If you felt a certain tradition or celebration was no longer a positive experience for some students, how would you go about trying to change it?

ETHICS

- The most challenging ethical dilemmas you face as a leader are the "right v. right" type -both courses of action have positive and negative elements. What is your framework for deciding these sorts of dilemmas? Please give us an example.
- What is your professional code of ethics?
- What do you value and prioritize?

GLOBAL MINDEDNESS

- What do you see as the greatest challenges facing [building level] students?
- Technology has made the world smaller through the possibilities it has created for people to interact with each other worldwide creating what has been termed a "global village." As a school leader, how do create an environment that builds, models, and endorses a global-minded perspective?

SYSTEMS DOMAIN →
School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions

VISION/MISSION
- How would you, in one sentence, describe the vision for your school?
- How do you currently support that vision as a leader?
- What is the role of a mission statement? What should be the key elements of a good mission statement?
- Tell us about how you strategically communicate the mission and vision to the school staff. How do you ensure that the messages are being received?
- What would be your process for developing the vision of your new school?
- Who would you involve and how?
- How would you involve parents in developing and achieving the vision for your school as the principal?
- What is your vision of this school in five years?
- What are your future career aspirations? What do you see yourself doing in five years? 10 years?
- How would you measure the success of this school?
- What would be your short- and long-term goals for this school?
- Your first 30 days at the start of school — what would be your priorities, areas of focus, things to learn and do?
- What do you hope to accomplish the first year as principal here?
- After your career as a principal, what do you want people to remember most about you? (What do you want to be remembered for?)
- If hired, what would you do between now and the end of June? during the summer? the first six weeks of new school year?
- If hired, what are some immediate steps you would take to insure a smooth and effective transition into this position?
- What would you do to help make a smooth transition to this new position?
- Your first several weeks in this new position will be important to your success. What are some of the things you would pay attention to and do in your first four weeks? Why?
- Tell us about how the teachers in your previous school worked together and collaborated. Have you played a role in this collaboration? If so, tell us about the situation, your role and what happened.
- Have you had to develop a shared vision for a school in which multiple visions existed? How did you go about it? Please describe the process. Follow-up question: Based on your knowledge of this school and district, what changes, if any, should occur to meet this vision for learning?
- If you were to take us on a tour three years from now, what would you say is significant about the educational program and philosophy of the school?
- How would you express your understanding of what our school stands for? How does this idea fit with your personal education philosophy?

COMMUNICATION
- Effective buildings have effective communication. What communication strategies would you initiate with teachers? classified? students? parents?
- How would you organize your administrative team so as to ensure effective communication and administration of the school?
- An effective principal maintains excellent communication with the parent community. What have you done to connect with and involve parents in your school? In your answer, please include how you involve parents from low income and minority populations.
- Social media has become a way for schools to communicate with different constituencies (staff, students, parents/guardians, community). Please share your experiences in using social media as a communication tool. How would you use it in your role as [principal, AP]?
- Suppose you have a new idea for parent-school communication that you want to try. How would you go about it?

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP
- What is your leadership style?
- How would others describe your leadership style?
- How do you communicate your expectations and priorities to your staff?
- Please describe the decision-making process we might see in your school and who would be involved in decision making?
- Give us an example of how you, as a leader, have involved staff in a decision-making process about a complex issue and what your main considerations were in establishing such a process.
- Describe the steps you would take to build and maintain teamwork and collaboration among all staff to ensure a team approach to improving student learning/achievement.
- Tell us about a time when you took responsibility for developing and/or leading a teacher team at your school. Please tell us the situation, the actions you took, and the result. What things did the team do well/not do well? How did you go about building their capacity? What did the teacher team accomplish? What did you learn from leading this team?

DATA LITERACY
- Do you consider yourself data literate? What are your areas of strength? What are your areas for potential growth?
- What is the purpose of data?
- Give us an example of how you used data in a decision-making process.
- Give us an example of a time when you used data to identify and solve a specific problem or issue related to student achievement. Please tell us what data you used, what the problem was, what actions you took and the results/outcomes.
- What data do you believe is most informative for monitoring the progress of students in your school?
- What data do you believe is most informative for monitoring instructional practices in your school?
- Describe your knowledge and experience in using data to inform decisions. What are the upsides and downsides of data use?

The learning leader's efforts to assess a learning organization's current systems, initiate a cycle of inquiry focused on dismantling historically inequitable systems, and engage stakeholders in a collective effort to establish sustainable student centered systems.

STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT

- How will you go about doing a "needs assessment" for your new school? Who would you involve in doing the needs assessment?
- What other things will be essential for you to do in your first 90 days at the school?
- What would you do in your first 30 days to assess the school's strengths and weaknesses? From that, how would you establish your priorities for your first year as principal/AP?
- What are the most important first steps that a principal should take in a new district?
- What expectations would you set for your first 100 days?
- Imagine that you receive this position. What will be your initial steps to assume leadership with the staff and with parents between now and the end of August? What would be your key activities during your first year?
- When bringing about a change in your school, what process would you employ? What are vital parts of the change process? Give an example of a change effort you initiated and what did you learn from that effort?
- Tell us about a time when you had to juggle multiple priorities and still accomplish a goal. Please tell us the situation, the actions you took, and the results.
- How would you organize your work time as a school leader between leadership and management responsibilities?
- Every day when you come into your office in the morning, you have 30 emails waiting in your box. How would you prioritize them without losing too much of your day dealing with email?
- How important are deadlines for you? How do you feel when others do not meet deadlines?
- Describe how you organize your workday and week.
- What does a typical day look like?
- If we could shadow you for a day as a principal/AP, what would we be likely to see? How would you/do you typically structure your time, activities and priorities?
- Please describe your experience in developing a schedule of classes for a school. Who or what should be involved, and when should the process begin? How do you address multiple, competing priorities in scheduling?

SAFETY

- What steps would you take to support a safe learning environment at the campus?
- Give us your vision of a school-wide management/discipline program. Where do you see the assistant principal's/principal's role in this system?
- Please describe the process you have used to manage student discipline from minor infractions to students who have chronic discipline problems.
- What is the role of principal in dealing with student discipline problems in the class, bus, playground, etc.? How do you handle inappropriate behaviors? Give us a specific situation—possibly using a repeat offender with escalating problems as an example.
- How do you investigate and handle an allegation of a rule violation at school?
- What interventions or progressive steps do you use with repeat offenders?

- What is your main goal with student discipline and to what extent do your student discipline procedures involve others? (teachers, parents, counselors)
- What are key points to keep in mind when considering discipline or suspension for a special education student?
- Describe effective efforts to ensure you have a safe and civil school.
- The personal safety of students and staff is very important. What are some key considerations when designing a school safety plan?
- What do you consider to be the key elements of establishing and maintaining a safe and secure learning environment?
- What elements should be in a strong disaster/emergency plan? How will you assure that the process is understood?
- What are some of the most difficult safety problems encountered with extra-curricular activities and how do you address these?
- How do you keep your school, staff, and students safe on social media?
- How would you handle a case involving cyber bullying?
- Part of your job as [principal, AP, AD] is overseeing all aspects of the extra-curricular programs we offer. How do you manage this?
- Tell us about a difficult student-discipline situation that you have dealt with. What lessons do you take from this situation? Would you say that you use this method often?

OPERATIONS

- What experience have you had with budget allocations and expenditures for the building?
- What experience do you have in managing budgets?
- What is the most difficult budget decision that you have had to make?
- Give us an example of how you have allocated resources to your key priorities.
- Do you have experience with fundraising? Grant writing? Please share specifics and the impact on student achievement and the school community.
- How would you go about supporting curriculum and staff development with a small building budget and little monetary support from the district level?
- If you were given $50,000 to spend at our school, what priorities would you use to determine how you would spend the money?
- Your school has inadequate resources, and you determine that your students need more. What do you do?
- We are beginning a process to build a new _____ school. What do you see as your role in supporting the project?
- How would you go about assigning staff to positions?
- What do you think the purpose of staff evaluations should be?
- What is your role in staff evaluations?
- What would you do if you had a teacher not meeting district instructional expectations?
- How would you handle facility management?
- An unexpected shortfall of 20 percent in the budget has occurred, and you are asked to take a 10 percent cut across the board. What do you do?

LEARNING DOMAIN →

School Leader Paradigm Sample Interview Questions

REFLECTION & GROWTH

- How has your school improved in terms of student achievement?
- What are the three most critical things you would do in a school to accelerate school growth and ensure that every child is learning?
- What do you think is the best way to prepare students for reaching proficiency on our state standardized tests, especially those who are not currently meeting this challenge? Cite any relevant research you have read.
- What direct impact have you had on your school's results?
- How would you model your own professional growth to your teachers?
- Tell us about a time you had to make a difficult decision and you knew whatever you decided, some people would be unhappy. What alternative approaches might have been taken, and why was this approach chosen?
- Discuss a time when your leadership approach did not appear to work. What happened and how did you adjust?
- What criteria will you use to judge your success as a principal, and why are these criteria most important?

RESULT ORIENTATION

- Describe your experience in leading or working with groups of teachers and/or administrators in developing and implementing school improvement plans.
- Discuss your understanding of the school improvement plan. What is it? How do you develop it? What key features are included? How do you assess it? Who is accountable for it? What do you do with it at the end of the year?
- Describe key elements of an effective school improvement plan/process.
- School improvement planning and implementation is a critical activity in the quest to improve learning for all students. As the building leader how would this process work in your school? What are the critical elements which need to be included in a school improvement plan?
- What would you do to increase student achievement for each student?
- In trying to reduce our achievement gap, what would some of the first steps you would want to do?

- What steps would you follow if a student was struggling in your school?
- In your current position, what steps have you taken, or advocated for, to close the achievement gaps? Explain.
- What methods do you use to evaluate your school and its programs?

CURRICULUM

- What school-wide ideas have you implemented in the area of curriculum?
- What will you do to ensure the curriculum is taught with fidelity across the school and what will you do to help those teachers who are not teaching it?
- What experience have you had with curriculum development?
- How do you determine if the curriculum is meeting not only state requirements but the future needs of our students?
- How responsive should the school be to community pressure on curriculum?
- Outline an inclusion program for special education and second language learners.

INSTRUCTION

- Tell us about a time when you implemented a new instructional strategy. What was the strategy, the actions you took and the results? Why did you think the strategy was the best solution? How did the strategy align to standards? How was it differentiated to meet the needs of all students, across grade levels?
- Tell us about a time you engaged with a community partner to improve instructional outcomes at your school. Tell us the situation, the actions you took, and the results.
- What does good teaching look like? Mediocre teaching? Poor teaching". How would you work with each?
- Name some best practices in (building level) education. Why are they effective?
- How do you propose to improve "teaching" at our school?
- What elements should be included in a total (building level) instructional program?
- Describe your experiences and skill in promoting school-wide efforts to improve instruction.
- How can you contribute to the improvement of instruction for all staff

members?
- What are some accommodations you feel are appropriate for ESL learners and how would you propose to deliver them? (language assistance, lesson modification, family assistance, understanding culture, etc.)
- Describe the role of a principal in a (grade level) school in working with special education.
- Students with special (remedial and/or gifted) needs are a part of the regular program. What experiences have you had in this area? What successes and problems have you encountered in this process?
- You are the new principal in the building. The building houses neighborhood students, a gifted program and a classroom of special needs students. This results in diversity both in student population and parent involvement. How would you approach this situation? What would your priorities be and why?
- What community resources have you accessed in working with special education students and parents in the past?
- How would you coordinate with the special services itinerant staff (psychologists, SLP, OT/PT) to ensure the needs of our students and staff are met? You have a parent of a child with special needs who never seems to be satisfied with the special services the school is offering her child, despite many attempts by staff to readjust the program in response to the parent's request. How would you manage this situation?
- Our school has implemented an "integrated class" approach to mainstreaming special education students. What is your philosophy and experience with special education services?
- What are key points to keep in mind when developing and implementing a 504 plan?
- What do you see the role of the principal in the IEP process?
- Tell us about a time when you implemented a strategy to involve parents to improve student achievement. Please tell us what you were trying to improve, the actions you took and the results/outcomes.

The learning leader's efforts, as the learning leader, to create and sustain a culture of ongoing reflective, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning for students, adults, and the entire learning organization as a whole.

- To what extent have you studied the research on effective teaching and student learning in reading? What have you read or received training in?
- What is your level of understanding of the K-12 reading model and reading strategies?
- What instructional strategies would you want new teachers to be sure to employ? How would you ensure this usage?
- What do you expect to see in quality lesson plans? How do you use lesson plans as data about performance?

ASSESSMENT
- What is the purpose of assessment?
- What is the role of assessment in monitoring student progress?
- What is the role of assessment in monitoring the instructional process?
- What is the role of assessment in monitoring the learning environment?

INNOVATION
- What are some of the characteristics of effective schools? How will you promote these at school?
- We currently adopted a new [fill in the blank] program. How would you implement an ideal [fill in the blank] program?
- Small schools frequently have split classes. What are some creative solutions to make this practice instructionally sound?
- How do you incorporate innovation into a state-prescribed curriculum?
- Please give us an example of an innovative idea you've been able to implement in your current school. How did you go about doing this? What were the results?

HUMAN CAPITAL MANGEMENT
- Tell us about a specific time when you had to hold teachers and/or staff accountable to improve performance in a specific area. What was the situation you were in, the actions you took and the results? Why was the teacher/staff not performing well? What supports were provided to support the teacher? What happened?
- In your school, you have observed several occasions in which a highly experienced teacher has exhibited poor instructional practices, particularly with students. What is your approach to working with this teacher?
- How would you provide feedback to a teacher who is underperforming?
- Helping teachers improve their practice so they can help students improve their learning is the most important responsibility of the school leader. As the person responsible for the supervision of teaching and learning in your school, how would you help teachers to improve their practice?
- Tell us your experience with using peer coaches to improve teaching?
- What is your opinion about adopting an instructional model for lesson planning and instruction?
- Tell us your views about teacher collaboration.
- How might you create time for teachers to collaborate, and what do you see as your role in guiding collaboration time?
- Describe the steps you would take to build and maintain teamwork and collaboration among all staff to ensure a team approach to improving student learning/achievement.
- What qualities (academic and personal) do you look for in a good teacher?
- How do you observe a teacher's ability to connect with students? What are key skills you look for?
- In supervising and evaluating teachers, what are key skills or strategies you would employ?
- What are you looking for in effective classroom instruction? How would you provide feedback to teachers that will result in professional growth and effective instruction?
- Describe the key teaching strategies and the approaches to learning that are critical to student success in a school with diverse student population.
- How would you work with a teacher who thinks they are doing fine, but you see significant areas of need in their instructional and management practices?
- How would you evaluate teachers and other staff?
- If a teacher was showing definite signs of being ineffective in the classroom, what actions would you take? How has it worked?
- What is the evaluator's responsibility in working with an ineffective teacher? What process would you use?
- What do you hope to accomplish through classroom observations and teacher evaluations? What do you believe is the purpose of staff evaluation? Describe your evaluation process.
- Hiring is one of the most important jobs of a principal. What qualities do you look for when hiring a teacher? What process do you use to see that you hire teachers who exhibit those qualities?
- How would you recruit teachers to this school?
- How would you support new teachers?
- What have you provided in terms of in-service to teachers regarding reading?
- How would you plan to work with your staff to further improve student skills in writing and mathematics?
- What other kinds of PD would you work on with your staff?
- Your first professional development in your building is coming up. How will you prepare and plan for that in-service day?
- How have you assisted teachers in their first year in the school, whether they are veterans or teachers new to the profession? What is important for the new teachers to know and do? What must be in place to assist them?
- How do you determine the learning needs of teachers and then assign staff to support those needs?
- What steps would you follow if a teacher did not comply with your recommendations?
- What should a principal expect from teachers and staff, and what should teachers and staff expect from the principal?
- What are the major qualities you look for when hiring new teachers? Why are these qualities important to you and the school?
- Discuss the relationship between instructional improvement, teacher evaluation, and staff development.
- Describe how you would improve teaching and learning in our school and indicate why your suggested strategies will make sense for this school and community.
- How do you determine what to do on a staff development day?

School Leader Domain & Dimensions Self-Assessment

Candidate Name:

The [name of school district] has adopted the School Leader Paradigm (ilprincipals.org/resources/paradigm) as its leadership framework. The School Leader Paradigm identifies the critical leadership dispositions and essential behaviors school leaders must possess and exhibit to be effective. As part of the application process, the Search Committee would like each applicant to complete a self-assessment of their leadership behaviors broken down by the three domains of the School Leader Paradigm — Culture, Systems, and Learning.

Step 1: Self-assess your leadership behaviors in each domain (Culture, Systems, Learning) and rank the domains using the following rating scale:
1. This is my strongest domain.
2. This is the second strongest domain.
3. This is third strongest domain.

Step 2: Identify your top three dimensions (essential behaviors) in each domain and rank them using the following scale:
1. This is my strongest dimension in this domain.
2. This is the second strongest dimension in this domain.
3. This is third strongest dimension in this domain.

Step 3: Provide any additional information you would like the committee to consider about your leadership behaviors in these domain areas.

☐ CULTURE DOMAIN

The organization's efforts to create, foster, and sustain a student-centered climate and culture where all adults strive to build positive and unconditional relationships with all students, while ensuring equitable access and opportunities to high-quality programs.

☐ **Relationships**
Focuses on developing and strengthening internal, personal, and external relationships that support the school's mission and vision and creates an environment where a diversity of ideas and opinions can be shared, appreciated, and respected.

☐ **Student Centeredness**
Cultivates an educational environment that addresses the distinct academic, social, emotional, and physical needs of all students and conveys high expectations, support, and mutual respect among all staff and students.

☐ **Wellness**
Fosters and supports a culture of physical, mental, and social-emotional wellness for the entire school community.

☐ **Equity**
Focuses on creating an environment that accentuates fairness by collaboratively developing and implementing a clear vision of equity for all stakeholders in which individual differences are recognized and accommodated to eliminate and prevent inequities.

☐ **Traditions/Celebration**
Nurtures an environment that models and builds a culture of mutual respect and recognizes, celebrates, and honors all students, staff, and community for their achievements and service to others.

☐ **Ethics**
Cultivates an environment in which each individual demonstrates and exemplifies ethical behaviors, values, and respect for others.

☐ **Global Mindedness**
Creates an environment that builds, models, and endorses a global-minded perspective for all stakeholders through the promotion of cultural diversity, partnerships, and community connections.

☐ SYSTEMS DOMAIN

The organization's efforts to assess a learning organization's current systems, initiate a cycle of inquiry focused on dismantling historically inequitable systems, and engage stakeholders in a collective effort to establish sustainable student-centered systems.

☐ **Vision/Mission**
Fosters an environment in which the school's vision and mission drive the strategic alignment of organizational decisions and resources.

☐ **Communication**
Utilizes a collaborative process to ensure safe and meaningful communication with and among all stakeholders that supports the school's vision and mission.

☐ **Collaborative Leadership**
Builds a culture of professional learning, mutual trust, and shared responsibility by focusing on empowering and supporting others as leaders.

☐ **Data Literacy**
Promotes a data-driven culture of decision-making for continuous improvement.

☐ **Strategic Management**
Employs a process of setting goals aligned to the school's mission and vision, developing plans for meeting those goals, mobilizing the resources needed for implementation, and evaluating the results of those actions in order to determine next steps as part of a model of continuous improvement.

☐ **Safety**
Establishes expectations, processes, and procedures to ensure the physical, mental, and emotional safety of all stakeholders.

☐ **Operations**
Manages system's logistics to leverage the educational, operational, and financial affairs and resources of the school to effectively balance operational efficiencies and student learning needs.

☐ LEARNING DOMAIN

The organization's efforts, to create and sustain a culture of ongoing reflective, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning for students, adults, and the entire learning organization as a whole.

☐ **Reflection/Growth**
Nurtures a culture of self-reflection that allows each stakeholder and the school to achieve peak performance.

☐ **Result-Orientation**
Cultivates an environment in which high, data-driven expectations of results for student learning are embraced and drive organizational and personal growth.

☐ **Curriculum**
Ensures a learning-focused curriculum that is comprehensive, rigorous, aligned, and focuses on a high level of personal and academic achievement for all students.

☐ **Instruction**
Collaboratively develops an effective, research-based instructional program with nonnegotiable expectations for all teaching staff that produce a high level of personal and academic achievement for every student.

☐ **Assessment**
Fosters a learning environment that utilizes data to monitor student progress, improves the instructional process and learning environment, and ensures high levels of personal and academic growth for all students.

☐ **Innovation**
Creates an environment that supports creative thinking and risk-taking in order to generate knowledge and insight through nontraditional ways.

☐ **Human Capital Management**
Focuses on developing processes and procedures that assist with the recruitment and selection of talent and the ongoing strategic management of talent for organizational improvement.

How can you match school and district priorities to applicants' abilities?

Add a focus question from the SLP Sample Interview Questions to the application form to garner more knowledge about an applicant's leadership skills in priority domain/dimension areas.

NOW HIRING

Principal
Life Elementary School

Life Central School District
BELIEVE • ACHIEVE • SUCCEED

Life CSD is served by three schools:
Life Elementary School (Grades PK-4)
Life Middle School (Grades 5-8)
Life High School (Grades 9-12)

At Life Elementary School, more than 400 children and 60 staff members work collaboratively in a preschool-4th grade setting. As a trauma informed school, staff, students, families, and community members recognize and respond to the behavioral, relational, and academic impact of traumatic stress on those within the school system. In 2023, Life Elementary School was recognized as one of the best schools in the nation when it received the National Blue Ribbon Award for Excellence in Education.

Student Enrollment
415 Students
- White 178 (43%)
- Black 71 (18%)
- Hispanic 83 (20%)
- Asian 29 (7%)
- Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander 3 (1%)
- American Indian 8 (2%)
- Two or More Races 43 (10%)
- Children with Disabilities 47 (11%)
- English Learners 85 (45%)
- Low Income 26 (65%)
- Homeless 19 (4%)

lifecsd.il.us

We are searching for a learning leader to lead our learning organization who...

- Understands how to build a strong culture in a diverse school community.
- Exemplifies collaborative leadership and has excellent communication skills.
- Ensures effective instruction in every classroom by building a shared language of instruction.

For more information:
Lila Smith, Search Chair
000-000-0000
lsmith@lilac.k12.il.us
lifecsd.il.us (district website)
life.il.org (town website)

31% ELA proficiency — State Avg.
31% Math proficiency — State Avg.
57% Science proficiency — State Avg.
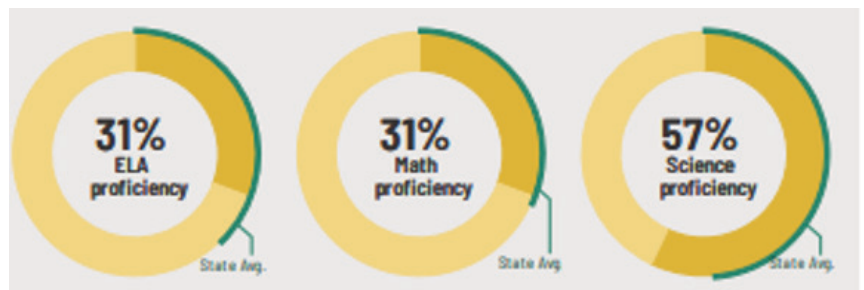
COME JOIN OUR TEAM!

What is the biggest factor impacting size and quality of an applicant pool?

To get a large and high-quality applicant pool, make sure your district engages in effective recruitment efforts.

Application Screening Checklist

Applicant Name:
Telephone:
Email:

Required Material	Date Received	Received By	Date of District Email Confirmation	Notes
Application letter				
Completed application form				
Current professional resume				
Copy of transcripts				
Official transcripts				
Signed background check agreement				
Professional credentials or certification documents				
References/Letters of Recommendation				
[Other]				
[Other]				

Reviewer(s) Name:

Initial Screening:
All required information has been submitted by the deadline.
☐ Yes
☐ No, Date of Review:

Notes:

Qualifications Screening:
Candidate meets the following required qualifications.
☐ [qualification]
☐ [qualification]
☐ [qualification]

Candidate is currently:
☐ Certified for the position by the State of Illinois – Principal Endorsement
☐ Certified for the position in another state
☐ Completing certification requirements

Notes:

Sample Consolation Notification Letter

Dear Mr./Ms. [Applicant's name],
Thank you for your interest in the [name of] position at [name of school]. We deeply appreciate you taking time to apply for the position. However, after reviewing your application materials, the search committee has decided not to move forward with your application.

Though you meet the minimum qualifications for the position, the selection process was highly competitive. We have decided to move forward with candidates whose qualifications better meet our identified priorities at this time.

We want to thank you again for your interest in joining our administrative team, and we wish you the best of success in your future career endeavors.

Sincerely,

Tips for Writing Rejection Notification Letters
- Notify them as soon as a decision has been made that they will not be moving forward in the search process — phone call first followed by a letter. It is becoming acceptable to send rejection notices via email. It speeds up the notification process and does not leave candidates hanging. However, districts should always follow up with a hard copy notification.
- Make sure the letter is short but maintains a professional and polite tone. Include a short explanation as to why they are not moving forward in the search process.
- Be as clear and kind as possible and limit negative feedback or criticism.
- For the initial rounds of screening, three paragraphs are a good rule of thumb. In the first paragraph, thank them for their interest in the position and let them know they have not been selected to move forward in the search. In the second paragraph, include a short comment about the candidate's strengths and a brief reason why they were not selected. If the district might consider them for a different job in the future, include an encouraging sentence indicating this. In the third paragraph, thank them again and wish them well in their future endeavors.
- Provide a more detailed explanation for final candidates. Align non-selection comments to the identified priorities of the search.

Application Quality Screening

Applicant Name:
Telephone:
Email:
Reviewer(s) Name:
Date of Review:

Recommend for First Interview
☐ Yes
☐ No

Educational Background
☐ Very Strong: Ph.D. or Ed.D. in Educational Leadership or closely related field.
☐ Strong: Master's in Educational Leadership or closely related field with licensure coursework completed.
☐ Adequate:
  • Bachelor's degree but master's degree and licensure coursework to be completed before the position start date; or
  • Master's degree in closely related field with licensure coursework to be completed before the position start date.
☐ Weak:
  • Bachelor's degree but master's degree and licensure coursework to be completed after the position start date, or
  • Master's degree in closely related field with licensure coursework to be completed after the position start date.
Notes:

Candidate Meets the Following Preferred Qualifications
☐ [qualification]
☐ [qualification]
☐ [qualification]
Notes:

Leadership Experience
☐ Very Strong: 5+ years of successful school leadership experience as [insert position(s)]
☐ Strong: Less than 5 years of successful school leadership experience as [insert position(s)]
☐ Adequate: Limited school leadership experience
☐ Weak: No experience as a school leader
Notes:

Application Letter
☐ Very Strong: Letter is well written with no errors, describes interest in the position and how qualifications meet the priorities for the search, and provides well developed responses to the application questions.
☐ Strong: Letter is well written, but it is not clear how qualifications meet the priorities for the search. Responses to application questions are satisfactory .
☐ Adequate: Letter is not well written. Candidate provides a vague description of how their qualifications meet the priorities for the search. Responses to application questions are vague.
☐ Weak: Letter is not well written. Letter does not describe interest in the position or address search priorities. Applicant does not respond to application questions or responses are very poor.
Notes:

Letters of Recommendation
☐ Very Strong: Sources are clearly qualified to speak to the candidate's abilities. Letters provide strong support for the candidate and offer detailed examples of leadership knowledge and skills as they relate to the search priorities.
☐ Strong: Letters provide support for the candidate and offer examples of leadership knowledge and skills as they relate to the search priorities.
☐ Adequate: Letters provide support for the candidate and offer examples of leadership knowledge and skills, but do not address the priorities of the search.
☐ Weak: Letters provide unconvincing support for the candidate, offer few examples of leadership knowledge and skills, and do not address the priorities of the search.
Notes:

Applicant's submitted materials demonstrate experience or knowledge in the following established priorities:

☐ Priority #1 – [insert priority description]
Notes:

☐ Priority #2 – [insert priority description]
Notes:

☐ Priority #3– [insert priority description]
Notes:

Applicant ranked themselves as follows on the Domain self-assessment:
1. This is my strongest domain.
2. This is the second strongest domain.
3. This is third strongest domain.

☐ Culture Domain
☐ Systems Domain
☐ Learning Domain

For each domain, the applicant identified the following dimensions (up to 3) as areas of strength:
1. This is my strongest dimension in this domain.
2. This is the second strongest dimension area in this domain.
3. This is third strongest dimension area in this domain.

Culture
☐ Relationships
☐ Student Centeredness
☐ Wellness
☐ Equity
☐ Traditions/Celebration
☐ Ethics
☐ Global Mindedness

Systems
☐ Vision/Mission
☐ Communication
☐ Collaborative Leadership
☐ Data Literacy.
☐ Strategic Management
☐ Safety
☐ Operations

Learning
☐ Reflection/Growth
☐ Result-Orientation
☐ Curriculum
☐ Instruction
☐ Assessment
☐ Innovation
☐ Human Capital Management

Applicant's Strengths:

Applicant's Areas for Growth:

Other Information the Search Committee Should Know:

Search Committee Facilitation Tools

After all candidate interviews are completed, the search committee meets to review information collected and determine individuals for next stage of the hiring process. The interview team summarizes each candidate's responses for the whole committee. If the interview was recorded (with permission), transcripts can be provided to members prior to the meeting. Two facilitation tools are useful for this process:

- **Question Chart** (flipchart paper) — As the interview team summarizes, write a sentence or two about each candidate's response to each interview question in a cell. The display allows the entire committee to compare candidate responses. The process requires committee members to focus on candidates' words rather than general impressions.

- **Fishbowl Conversation** — If teams of 2-3 interviewed candidates, have each subcommittee talk together summarizing candidate responses and deliberating the merits of each candidate while other committee members watch. After the interview team finishes, encourage the larger committee to ask clarifying questions and challenge individual impressions of candidates.

	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question #5
Candidate A					
Candidate B					
Candidate C					
Candidate D					
Candidate E					
Candidate F					
Candidate G					
Candidate H					
Candidate I					
Candidate J					
Candidate K					
Candidate L					
Candidate M					
Candidate N					
Candidate O					

Search Committee Application Rating

[School & Position]

Columns 2-8: Using scoring from Stage 1 Applicant Quality Screening Tool, candidates should be scored in each area as follows:
1. Weak
2. Adequate
3. Strong
4. Very Strong

Column 9: Total columns 2-8. Provide additional information garnered from application materials.
Column 10: Committee recommendation using following:
N = Not Recommending for 1st Interview
R = Recommending for 1st Interview

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Candidate	Educational Background	Educational Experiences	Priority #1	Priority #2	Priority #3	Application Letter	Letters of Rec	Total Score	Additional Information (preferred qualifications, Domain/Dimension strengths, etc.)	Committee Rec N or R
Candidate A										
Candidate B										
Candidate C										
Candidate D										
Candidate E										
Candidate F										
Candidate G										
Candidate H										
Candidate I										
Candidate J										
Candidate K										
Candidate L										
Candidate M										
Candidate N										
Candidate O										

Notes:

First Interview Structured Questions Protocol

Candidate Name:

Interviewers:
- Lead Interviewer:
- 2nd Interviewer:

Date:

Start Time:
Ending Time:

Welcome. My name is {_____}, and I am a member of the search team for the position of [____] at [name of school]. Joining me is my colleague [name of interviewer]. Thank you for taking time today to interview with us. We are anticipating that this interview will be about one hour in length, and with your permission, we would like to record it. Do we have your permission?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Congratulations on making it through our first rounds of screening. The goal of our search is to find the most qualified candidate to recommend for [position] at [name of school]. Today we will be asking you questions aligned to the priorities outlined in the job announcement to gather more information about your professional knowledge and experiences. Do you have any questions before we get started?

[List 3-5 "must ask" questions based on priorities]

[List "if time permits" questions based on priorities]

As you can see, we are getting close to our one-hour timeframe. Before we finish, do you have any questions for us?

Thank you for interviewing with us. [Explain next steps and timeline in the search process]

Conducting Effective Virtual Interviews[27]

- Select user-friendly software and have a backup if connection cannot be made.
- Dedicate a time and an appropriate space (clean, quiet, professional) for search team members to conduct the interviews.
- Use at least two interviewers but not more than four. Four can be unwieldy and confusing for the candidate. Two keeps the questioning focused and provides two individual perspectives of the interview.
- Use a structured question protocol for interviewers to follow with no deviations. Remind interviewers that they are not allowed to ask personal questions.
- Set time limits. Virtual interviews are normally one hour in length.
- Designate a lead interviewer. This individual's responsibilities include welcoming the candidate, introducing other interviewers, explaining the process, asking the first question, keeping the conversation focused and on-track, and serving as timekeeper.
- Orient the interview team(s). Train the team(s) on how to conduct a virtual interview and the importance of following the structured question protocol. This includes how to use the software, choosing appropriate attire, and ensuring each team member has the times, dates, and locations of each interview. If individuals must participate virtually, provide information for connecting to the interview and remind them to find a quiet and confidential setting. Emphasize the importance of reviewing the candidate's application information before the interview.
- Orient the candidates. Explain to candidates well in advance as what to expect during the interview, who will be participating, how to connect including how to use the software, and a number to call if they are experiencing any difficulties. Ask if candidates require any assistive technology or other supports to ensure they can fully hear and respond to interviewer questions. Remind them of the date and time and the need for the interview to occur in a quiet and uninterrupted space. Districts may elect to share possible interview questions with candidates before the interview in order to help them prepare.
- Record the interview. With candidate permission, districts may record the interviews. Obtain permission from the candidate during the orientation and again at the start of the interview. If the district is unable to record, it is good practice to have someone take detailed notes of the interview.
- Follow up. As soon as possible after the meeting, the search manager or chair should follow up with an email to the candidate thanking them for participating in the interview. In addition, a brief explanation of the next steps and timeline in the search process should be included.

Search Committee Interview Quality Screening

Candidate Name:
Search Committee Member:

Rate each candidate's responses to interview questions using the following scale.
1 = Candidate provided a poor response that missed the key point of the question.
2 = Candidate provided an incomplete answer that had some good elements but was significantly flawed.
3 = Candidate provided a convincing but flawed answer that fall short because of problems with either the content or breadth of the answer.
4 = Candidate's response demonstrated understanding of the question and high competency in this area.

Domain/Dimension	Search Priority? Yes/No	Interview Questions & Responses	Rating			
			1	2	3	4
[i.e., Culture/Relationships]		Question: Response:				
[i.e., Systems/Data Literacy]		Question: Response:				
[i.e., Learning/Instruction]		Question: Response:				

Additional Notes:

Applicant's responses demonstrate experience or knowledge in the following established priorities for this hire based on school needs and contexts (check all that apply):

Search Priority	Search Priority? Yes/No/Unable to Determine	Notes
Priority 1		
Priority 2		
Priority 3		

Personal Characteristics	Search Priority? Yes/No/Unable to Determine	Notes
Is candidate friendly and personable?		
Is candidate respectful and professional?		
Does candidate have a positive attitude?		

Communication Skills	Search Priority? Yes/No/Unable to Determine	Notes
Is the candidate's communication clear and concise?		
Does the candidate listen well and ask questions when appropriate?		
Is the candidate able to articulate their thoughts and ideas effectively?		

Search Committee Rating and Ranking

Columns 2-8: Using data collected (application, references, interview, etc.), each candidate should be scored in each area as follows:

1. Weak
2. Adequate
3. Strong
4. Very Strong

Column 9: Total columns 2-8.
Column 10: Provide additional information.
Column 11: Rank Candidates.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Candidate	Educational Background	Educational Experience	Personal Char.	Comm. Skills	Priority #1	Priority #2	Priority #3	Total Score	Additional Information	Ranking
Candidate A										
Notes:										
Candidate B										
Notes:										
Candidate C										
Notes:										
Candidate D										
Notes:										
Candidate E										
Notes:										
Candidate F										
Notes:										
Candidate G										
Notes:										
Candidate H										
Notes:										
Candidate I										
Notes:										
Candidate J										
Notes:										

Stakeholder Feedback

Thank you for serving as a stakeholder panel member for our search. The search committee will consider your panel's feedback in their selection of an individual(s) to recommend to the superintendent/board. Please complete the following feedback form. Your responses are confidential. We ask for your name in case the committee would like further clarification about your feedback.

Name:
Stakeholder Panel:

Rate each candidate's response to interview questions using the following scale:
1 = Candidate provided a poor response that missed the key point of the question.
2 = Candidate provided an incomplete answer that had some good elements but was significantly flawed.
3 = Candidate provided a convincing but flawed answer that falls short because of problems with either the content or breadth of the answer.
4 = Candidate's response demonstrated understanding of the question and high competency in this area.

Interview Questions & Responses	Candidates		
	1	2	3
Question: Response:			
Question: Response:			
Question: Response:			
Question: Response:			
Question: Response:			
Question: Response:			
Question: Response:			
Average Score			

Applicant's responses demonstrate experience or knowledge in the following established priorities for this hire based on school needs and contexts (check all that apply):

Search Priority	Candidates		
	Candidate 1	Candidate 2	Candidate 1
Priority 1			
Priority 2			
Priority 3			

Personal Characteristics	Yes/No/UTD (Unable to Determine)		
	Candidate 1	Candidate 2	Candidate 1
Is candidate friendly and personable?			
Is candidate respectful and professional?			
Does candidate have a positive attitude?			

Communication Skills	Yes/No/UTD (Unable to Determine)		
	Candidate 1	Candidate 2	Candidate 1
Is the candidate's communication clear and concise?			
Does the candidate listen well and ask questions when appropriate?			
Is the candidate able to articulate their thoughts and ideas effectively?			

Additional Feedback:

Writing Sample Task

Communication is critical to a school leader's success, especially with parent/guardians. School leaders will occasionally find the need to inform the school community about something that happened (or is happening) at the school and will need to respond immediately. In this task, the candidate will draft a short email to parents/guardians regarding a bullying incident that has gathered much attention in a short amount of time.

Candidates are provided with laptop in a quiet room to complete this task.

Directions: Using the provided laptop, draft an email response to this scenario in Word. Your message will be assessed by the search committee.

Scenario: During lunch, a group of students were bullying another student. The scene was viewed by many students before the lunch supervising teachers stepped in to stop the incident. Students will definitely be talking about the incident and probably sharing what happened with their parents/guardians. To get ahead of this, you'd like to send a short email to parents/guardians about what happened and how it was handled before the end of the school day.

Assessing the task — key things to look for: Email is well written, no grammatical errors. No names used. Bullying students involved were appropriately disciplined [or still under investigation] and parents/guardians notified in accordance with district policy. Bullied student is receiving support from school. Reminder included about district bullying policy and zero tolerance policy. If parents have questions, feel free to contact…

Budget Task

Allocating and managing both fiscal and non-fiscal resources to support school and district goals and priorities is an essential responsibility of a school leader. In this task, candidates are asked to respond to a significant cut to their school's budget.

Candidates are provided with a laptop in a quiet room to complete this task.

Directions: Using the provided laptop, draft your response to this scenario in Word. Your response will be assessed by the search committee.

Scenario: The district has just informed school leaders that school budgets will be cut by 10% for the upcoming school year. Outline how you would share this information with faculty and staff and how you would go about accomplishing the cuts.

Assessing the task — key things to look for in response: Collaboration with faculty and staff to address the issue; ideas for generating new resources/supports.

Classroom Observation Task

The school leader, as the learning leader, is responsible for creating and sustaining a culture of ongoing reflective, culturally responsive, and inclusive learning for students, adults, and the entire learning organization as a whole. One of the major tasks of school leaders is to observe and provide feedback to teachers to help them grow their professional practice — leading learning. In this task, candidates are asked to complete a classroom observation exercise to help the search committee get a sense of how they will respond in providing feedback to an actual teacher. Using a teaching video clip (ensures consistency) for the appropriate building level, candidates review the video and respond to the questions. Districts may also wish to use their own classroom observation tools for this task.

Candidates are provided with a laptop in a quiet room to complete this task.

Directions: Complete a classroom observation using the video clip uploaded on the laptop. Provide a response to the following questions using the Word document provided:
- What do you know about student learning in this classroom?
- What do you know about teaching practices in this classroom?
- What feedback would you give to this teacher to improve his/her instructional practice and how would you present it?
- How do your observations of this teacher inform how you might better develop this individual's talent?

Your responses will be assessed by the search committee.

Assessing the task: The search committee identifies task evaluation criteria based on the selected video.

Data Analysis Task — Student Data
Another responsibility of school leaders is to promote and cultivate an environment in which high, data-driven expectations of results for student learning are embraced and drive organizational and personal growth. In these authentic tasks, candidates review data sets and respond to the short-answer questions. To make the task more authentic, districts should utilize their own data.

Directions: This Data Analysis Task is intended to gather information about how you interpret and use data to inform school-level leadership decisions. To complete this activity, carefully review each data set and then respond to the short-answer questions. Your responses will be assessed by the search committee.

Use the 7th grade ELA and Mathematics data to answer the following questions:
1. What percentage of 7th grade students have demonstrated readiness for the next grade level/course in the following areas:
   ☐ ELA
   ☐ Mathematics
2. As you review the data, what are some positive highlights you would like to share with your staffulty?
3. What does the chart tell you about aggregated seventh graders' ELA achievement compared to the district? Math achievement? Explain your answer.
4. Your 7th grade PLC team is interested in examining their students' ELA performance. What do the data indicate about how the subgroups performed differently?
5. To help you understand the seventh graders' performance on the state tests, the district's computer-based data system can provide you with student data from every grade in your district. What data queries would you ask of the system to help you understand the scope and nature of problems and determine courses of action to improve the seventh graders' ELA performance? Be specific about the types of student information that you want to see and explain your choices.
6. What additional information would you like to gather to identify problems with Grade 7 student learning in Math? Be specific about the types of information that you want to gather and explain your choices.

Assessing the task:
- Candidate identifies at least 3 highlights from the data.
- Candidate is able to accurately compare school with district ELA and Math achievement data.
- Candidate is able to accurately compare subgroup ELA achievement data.
- Candidate is able to identify at least 3 data queries and provide an accurate justification for each query.
- Candidate is able to identify at least 3 sources of information and provide an accurate justification for each.

Student Achievement Data Chart
The following chart shows the percentage of students scoring at each of the Performance Levels for the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) — aggregated and disaggregated by subgroups. Each Performance Level is a broad, categorical level defined by a student's overall scale score and used to report overall student performance by describing how well students met the expectations for their grade level/course. Each Performance Level is defined by a range of overall scale scores for the assessment. There are five Performance Levels for IAR Assessments:
- Level 1: Did not yet meet expectations
- Level 2: Partially met expectations
- Level 3: Approached expectations
- Level 4: Met expectations
- Level 5: Exceeded expectations

Grade 7	ELA					Mathematics				
	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5
ALL										
School	26.3%	39.9%	16.1%	14.0%	3.7%	37.9%	24.3%	17.1%	15.8%	4.9%
District	23.3%	32.6%	21.8%	17.6%	4.7%	31.9%	21.5%	18.2%	21.0%	7.4%
State	18.5%	19.0%	24.6%	28.5%	9.4%	14.2%	29.1%	29.8%	23.2%	3.7%
Non-Low Income										
School	14.2%	29.1%	21.2%	26.9%	8.6%	24.9%	17.4%	20.5%	27.4%	9.8%
District	12.1%	19.9%	25.9%	33.7%	8.4%	18.4%	13.2%	20.8%	34.8%	12.8%
State	6.6%	20.2%	32.0%	34.6%	6.6%	9.6%	13.7%	23.8%	37.7%	16.2%
Low Income										
School	34.0%	43.3%	13.0%	9.0%	0.7%	46.4%	28.5%	16.3%	6.8%	2.0%
District	32.7%	42.9%	15.5%	7.1%	1.8%	42.8%	27.6%	16.1%	10.5%	3.0%
State	26.8%	33.0%	27.6%	11.8%	0.8%	26.4%	24.2%	26.4%	19.4%	3.6%
Male										
School	23.0%	36.0%	24.8%	12.7%	3.5%	43.4%	25.6%	16.8%	11.5%	2.7%
District	23.0%	31.7%	23.1%	17.2%	5.0%	37.1%	21.1%	18.0%	18.6%	5.3%
State	14.3%	28.0%	29.5%	24.1%	4.1%	22.0%	20.8%	24.7%	25.5%	7.1%
Female										
School	28.0%	39.2%	12.3%	15.4%	5.1%	33.1%	23.1%	17.5%	19.2%	7.1%
District	22.4%	33.7%	21.6%	17.8%	4.5%	26.6%	22.1%	18.4%	23.4%	9.5%
State	14.0%	30.4%	30.1%	22.3%	3.2%	14.9%	17.1%	24.5%	31.7%	11.8%
White										
School	8.8%	29.4%	23.5%	30.4%	8.8%	20.6%	20.6%	23.5%	25.0%	10.3%
District	9.4%	21.1%	30.0%	32.9%	6.6%	15.1%	16.5%	25.0%	33.5%	9.9%
State	11.4%	14.2%	25.0%	36.7%	12.7%	7.7%	22.2%	33.3%	32.2%	4.6%
Black										
School	34.1%	45.8%	14.0%	6.1%	0.0%	47.2%	31.6%	10.5%	10.6%	0.1%
District	38.5%	44.7%	13.1%	3.3%	0.4%	48.5%	29.2%	13.9%	7.7%	0.7%
State	28.0%	41.6%	22.7%	7.3%	0.4%	31.4%	25.7%	23.8%	16.5%	2.6%
Hispanic										
School	40.5%	36.6%	16.6%	6.3%	0.0%	47.2%	16.8%	20.5%	6.1%	9.4%
District	22.4%	36.8%	23.1%	16.0%	1.7%	36.9%	23.1%	23.1%	16.4%	0.5%
State	19.7%	36.9%	28.6%	13.8%	1.0%	23.2%	25.3%	25.8%	21.4%	4.3%
Asian: Non-reported data or suppressed data due to privacy concerns. Student counts reported are counts out of groups with 10 or greater.										
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander: Non-reported data or suppressed data due to privacy concerns. Student counts reported are counts out of groups with 10 or greater.										
American Indian: Non-reported data or suppressed data due to privacy concerns. Student counts reported are counts out of groups with 10 or greater.										
Two or More Races: Non-reported data or suppressed data due to privacy concerns. Student counts reported are counts out of groups with 10 or greater.										
School	25.8%	26.6%	27.6%	9.5%	10.5%	33.3%	13.6%	15.0%	33.3%	4.8%
District	20.0%	30.7%	25.2%	15.6%	8.5%	32.7%	24.5%	25.0%	10.6%	7.2.0%
State	13.2%	28.4%	29.5%	24.1%	4.8%	18.7%	16.7%	23.6%	29.7%	11.3%

Teacher Data

Directions: The following table represents the kind of data produced by some teacher evaluation systems at the middle or high school level. The table below displays ive math teachers' data by name, teacher certification area, student annual test data, and teacher evaluation ratings.

Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR Level Ratings):
1. Did not meet expectations
2. Partially met expectations
3. Approached expectations
4. Met expectations
5. Exceeded expectations

Teacher Evaluation Ratings:
E = Excellent
P = Proficient
NI = Needs improvement
U = Unsatisfactory

Teacher Name	Certification Area	IAR – Mathematics Levels					Teacher Evaluation Rating			
		1	2	3	4	5	U	NI	P	E
Teacher A	Math	12%	10%	37%	24%	17%			X	
Teacher B	Math	8%	22%	34%	28%	8%		X		
Teacher C	Math	1%	7%	11%	55%	26%				X
Teacher D	Provisional Math	5%	10%	21%	48%	16%			X	
Teacher E	Math	15%	29%	22%	30%	4%		X		

Use the information from the table to answer the following questions. Your responses will be assessed by the search committee.
1. What insights can be drawn regarding student test data and teacher evaluation ratings? Explain your answer.
2. Recent student test data have trended lower in the past few years for Teacher E, a veteran teacher of 15 years. What action can be planned or taken by you?
3. School professional development monies have been cut from your budget. What would be your plan of action to address teaching deficiencies?

Assessing the task:
- Candidate identifies at least 3 insights from the data (e.g., Teacher C appears to be the stronger teacher with 81% of student meeting/exceeding expectations and an excellent evaluation rating; Teachers B and E appear to be the weaker teachers; Teacher is rated as "Proficient but only has 41% of her students meeting/exceeding expectations.)
- Candidate lists at least 3 support structures for Teacher E and these explanations represent best practice research-based strategies (e.g., improvement plan, instructional specialist, mentor.)
- Assessing the task: Candidate lists at least 3 best practice research-based strategies (e.g., PLC, further examination of disaggregated test data to identify areas of strength and improvement followed by development of individual growth plans, teachers observing excellent teachers.)

Background and Reference Checks

Candidate Name:

Required Checks	Date Completed	By Whom	Signature	Results
Identify Verification				
Credentials Verification				
Qualifications				
Verified Employment History				
Background Check (Fingerprint - IL State Police & FBI)				
Illinois Sex Offender Registry Check				
Murder and Violent Offender Against Youth Registry				
Department of Children and Family Services Check				
Faith's Law: Employment History Review (HER)				
Sexual Misconduct Disclosure Form				
Authorization for Release of Sexual Misconduct-Related Information and Current/Former Employer Response Form				

Professional References Check

Name of Professional Reference	Current Position	Relationship to Candidate	Recommend for Hire by Reference Yes/No	Conversation Highlights (Attach completed form for each reference.)

Reference Check Procotol[29]

Candidate's Name:

Reference's Name:
Position:
Organization:
Contact Phone:

Individual Conducting Reference Check:
Position:
Date of Contact:

Hello, my name is [name], and I am [position] at [district name]. Thank you for taking time to talk with me. As I mentioned when I contacted you to set up this meeting, [name of applicant] listed you as a reference for the [position name] position at [name of school]. [Provide a brief overview of the job description and search priorities so the reference will know what the position requires.]

Do you have any questions before we get started?

1. How long and in what capacity have you known the individual?
2. Given the opportunity, would you hire or want to work closely with the candidate again?
3. Can you tell me about how the two of you worked together?
4. What knowledge/skills does this candidate have that will help them succeed in this position?
5. Have you seen the candidate preform a similar role?
6. What is one of this candidate's accomplishments that stands out from when you worked with them?
7. Can you name two or three of this candidate's strengths?
8. What are some areas for growth for this candidate?
9. How would you describe the candidate's work and communication style and how they interact with, manage, and develop others?
10. As I mentioned, we have identified some priority skills we are looking for in candidates for this job. [Explain each of the priority needs and then ask the referrer the following questions):
    - Priority #1 [provide explanation]: How well could the candidate help the school meet that need and in what ways? What difficulties would the candidate have in meeting the need?
    - Priority #2 [provide explanation]: How well could the candidate help the school meet that need and in what ways? What difficulties would the candidate have in meeting the need?
    - Priority #3 [provide explanation]: How well could the candidate help the school meet that need and in what ways? What difficulties would the candidate have in meeting the need?
11. Based on past performance and performance reviews, what suggestions do you have for their future supervisor?
12. What would be the ideal position for them?

THIS AGREEMENT made this _____ day of _____, 20___ by and between the Board of Education, School District No. _____, _____, Illinois ("the Board"), and _____ ("Principal"), ratified by a resolution adopted at the (regular/special) meeting of the Board held on _____, 20____, and as found in the minutes of that meeting.

IT IS AGREED:

        Employment. (name of principal) is hereby hired as principal of _____ school in (name of school district) No. , (city and county), Illinois, and is retained from _____, 20____ to _____, 20____ (Commonly July 1 to June 30, although other dates may be agreed upon between the parties. Contracts may be for a period of up to 5 years. Contracts over 1 year in duration are required to contain performance-based goals, while contracts for 1 year or less are not required to have such performance-based goals.)

        Work Year. The work year of Principal shall include all regular work days during the term of the contract, except that the Principal shall not be required to work on legal school holidays and (list additional school holidays, breaks and other times when the Principal is not required to work).

        Duties. The duties and responsibilities of a Principal in and for this District shall be all those duties incident to the office of Principal as set forth in the job description, a copy of which is attached to this Agreement as Exhibit A, and those obligations imposed by the law of the State of Illinois upon principals. Duties and responsibilities may be revised from time to time with the consensus of the Superintendent and Principal. Such revisions shall become part of this Agreement and shall not be deemed in and of themselves separate Agreements.

        Salary. In consideration of a salary of $_____per year, Principal hereby agrees to devote such time, skill, labor and attention to his/her employment during the term of this Agreement, except as otherwise provided in this Agreement, and to perform faith¬fully the duties of Principal for this District as set forth in this Agreement. The Board retains the right to adjust the annual salary of the Principal during the term of this Agreement, provided that any salary adjustment does not reduce the annual salary below the figure stated in this Agreement. Any adjustment in salary made during the life of this Agreement shall be in the form of a written amendment and shall become a part of this Agreement. It is provided, however, that by so doing, it shall not be considered that the Board has entered into a new Agreement with Principal or that the termination date of this Agreement has been in any way extended.

        Pension. In addition to Principal's salary, the Board shall pay on behalf of the Principal the Principal's total contribution to the Teachers' Retirement System, including contributions to the Teachers' Health Insurance Security (THIS) fund, in the form of an employer-paid pension contribution pursuant to 40 ILCS 5/16-152, et seq. Both parties acknowledge that the Principal did not have the option of choosing to receive the contributed amount directly instead of having such contributions paid directly by the Board to the Teachers' Retirement System. The purpose of such direct contribution is to shelter said amount from federal income taxes pursuant to Internal Revenue Service regulations. (Alternatively, the contract may read: the District will deduct from Principal's salary the appropriate employee contributions to TRS, or the Board shall pay on behalf of the Principal ____% of the Principal's total contribution to the Teachers' Retirement System.)

        Pay Dates. Principal's annual salary shall be paid in equal installments in accordance with the policies, rules and regulations of the Board governing payment of salary to other certificated members of the professional staff.

        Evaluation. Principal shall be evaluated by the Superintendent annually, but no later than March 1st of each year. The evaluation shall be in writing and shall be conducted in accordance with the current laws for principal evaluation and the District developed principal evaluation instrument.

Performance and Improvement Goals. (If a multi-year contract, set forth the required student performance and academic improvement goals. See IPA's guidance for development of these goals. Note that the student performance goals required for multi-year contracts should be aligned to the student performance goals delineated in the District's evaluation instrument.)

License and Endorsements. Principal shall furnish to the Board during the term of this Agreement a valid professional educator license with the required endorsement to act as Principal in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois.

Other Work. With the prior approval of the Superintendent or Board, the Principal may undertake consultative work, speaking engagements, writing, lecturing or other professional duties and obligations, and may accept compensation for such work.

Other Benefits. Unless specifically excluded by the terms of this Agreement, the Principal shall be provided no less than the same benefits given to other certified employees.

Discharge for Cause. Throughout the term of this Agreement, Principal shall be subject to discharge for just cause, provided, however, the Board shall not arbitrarily or capriciously call for dismissal and Principal shall have the right to service of written charges, notice of hearing and a hearing before the Board. If Principal chooses to be accompanied by counsel at such hearing, all such personal expenses shall be paid by Principal. Failure to comply with the terms and
conditions of this Agreement shall also be sufficient cause for purposes of discharge as provided in this Agreement.

Reclassification at End of Contract Term. Any reclassification of Principal at the end of the term of this Agreement shall be as provided by law.

Tenure. Principal shall retain all rights under Sections 24-11 through 24-16 of the Illinois School Code. (Or, if a multi-year contract: Pursuant to State law, the Principal shall retain any contractual continued service credit that the Principal accumulated under Sections 24-11 through 24-16 of the Illinois School Code prior to signing this multi-year Agreement.)

Termination by Agreement. During the term of this Agreement, the Board and Principal may mutually agree, in writing, to terminate this Agreement.

Referrals to Principal. The Board and the Superintendent collectively and individually shall refer promptly all criticisms, complaints and suggestions called to their attention to Principal for study and recommendation.

Professional Activities. Principal shall be encouraged to attend appropriate professional meetings at the local, state and national levels. Within budget constraints and after presentation of vouchered expenses, such costs of attendance shall be paid by the Board pursuant to its policies, rules and regulations.

Vacation. Principal shall receive ___ calendar days of vacation annually on each (date on which the Contract begins) to be used during the months of his/her employment and which shall be exclusive of legal holidays. Vacation shall be taken within 12 months of the year in which it was earned and shall not accumulate beyond this point. (Alternatively: "Vacation shall accumulate to a maximum of ___days.") Vacation shall be subject to use provisions contained in the school district policies, rules and regulations with respect thereto.

Sick Leave. Principal shall be entitled to the same number of sick leave days as are provided to other certified staff. Earned sick leave shall accumulate to a maximum of ___ days and shall be subject to such other provisions as may be contained in school district policies, rules and regulations.

Hospitalization. The Board shall provide (or shall provide $_____ per year toward the) hospitalization and major medical insurance for Principal and the members of Principal's immediate family during the term of this Agreement. The policy shall be attached hereto as Exhibit B. The health insurance coverage as provided herein for Principal shall not change during the term of this Agreement without the written approval of Principal.

Background Investigation. Pursuant to 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9, Boards of Education are prohibited from knowingly employing a person who has been convicted of committing or attempting to commit the named crimes therein. If the criminal background investigation required by Illinois law is not completed at the time this contract is signed, and the subsequent investigation report reveals there has been such a conviction, this contract shall immediately become null and void.

(At this point, insert such other pro¬visions that are applicable and agreed to by the parties. Suggestions as to language can be found under "Optional Clauses.")

Notice. Any notice or communication permitted or required under this Agreement shall be in writing and shall become effective on the day of mailing thereof by registered or certified mail, return receipt requested addressed:

If to the Board, to:

_____
President, Board of Education
(name of school district) No._____

_____
_____ , Illinois

If to the Principal, to:

_____
_____
_____
_____ , Illinois

Applicable Law. This Agreement has been executed in Illinois, and shall be governed in accordance with the laws of the State of Illinois in every respect.

Paragraph Headings. Paragraph headings have been inserted for convenience and reference only, and if there shall be any conflict between any such headings and the text of this Agreement, the text shall control.

Duplicate Original Agreements. This Agreement may be executed in one or more counterparts, each of which shall be considered an original, and all of which taken together shall be considered one and the same instrument.

Superiority of Agreement. This Agreement contains all of the terms agreed upon by the parties with respect to the subject matter of this Agreement and supersedes all prior agreements, arrangements and communications between the parties concerning such subject matter whether oral or written. Unless otherwise indicated, all amendments and modifications made during the life of this Agreement shall supplement and become part of this Agreement and shall not be deemed in and of themselves separate Agreements.

Severability. If any provision of this Agreement is found invalid or is incapable of being enforced, all other provisions contained herein shall nevertheless remain in full force and effect.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have caused this Agreement to be executed in their respective names and in the case of the Board, by its President, on the day and year first written above.

_____
Principal

Board of Education,
(name of district) No. _____, Illinois

_____
President, Board of Education

ATTEST:

_____
Secretary, Board of Education

OPTIONAL CLAUSES

       Extension of Agreement. This Agreement shall be reviewed by the Board, the Superintendent and Principal on or before ____, and this Agreement may then be extended by mutual agreement of the parties for the period of _____ ____ ____ after its termination date, upon such terms and conditions as may be mutually agreed to by the parties.
(Extensions must comply with the newly amended 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8a governing performance-based contracts.)

       Rollover. If Principal does not receive written notice to the contrary from the Board on or before (date) in any year in which this Agreement is in full force and effect, this Agreement shall be automatically extended for one calendar year from its date of expiration (in the event this Agreement has been executed for one year, or) for a period of ____ years, provided Principal has fully satisfied the performance and improvement goals set forth herein (In the event this Agreement has been executed as a multi-year Agreement and will be extended for a multi-year term. Five years is the maximum term permissible for a multi-year contract under 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8a.)

       Notice of Nonrenewal. Notice of intent not to renew this contract must be given by the Board in writing, stating the specific reason therefore. The notice must be given on or before _____ (date, using a date in the spring of the year prior to contract's expiration) of the year in which the Contract expires. The failure of the Board to give notice, along with reasons for nonrenewal, on or before _____ (same date as above) shall result in the automatic extension of this agreement for one additional year. Within 10 days after receipt of such notice of intent not to renew the contract, Principal may request a closed session hearing. Evidence of the specific reason for non¬renewal must be presented by the Board to Principal at the hearing. Principal has the right to present evidence, witnesses and defenses on the grounds for nonrenewal.

       Medical Examination. At least once a year during the term of this Agreement, Principal shall obtain a comprehensive medical examination for which an amount not to exceed $____ shall be paid by the District. A copy of
a certificate issued by the physician certifying the physical competency of Principal shall be delivered to the Superintendent within 10 days after receipt by Principal.

       Disability. Should Principal be unable to perform the duties and obligations of this Agreement, by reason of illness, accident or other cause beyond Principal's control and such disability exists for a period of more than____days after the exhaustion of accumulated sick leave days and vacation days during any school year, the Board, in its discretion, may make a proportionate deduction from the salary stipulated. If such disability continues for_____days or if such disability is permanent, irreparable or of such nature as to make the performance of Principal's duties impossible, the Board, at its option, may terminate this Agreement, whereupon the respective duties, rights and
obligations of the parties shall terminate.

       Dental. The Board shall provide dental insurance for Principal and the members of Principal's immediate family during the term of this Agreement.

       Vision. The Board shall provide vision insurance for Principal and the members of Principal's immediate family during the term of this Agreement.

       Term Life. The Board shall provide for $____of term life insurance for Principal during the term of this Agreement. Principal shall designate the beneficiary of the policy.

       Long-Term Disability. The Board shall pay the premium for a long-term disability insurance policy for Principal to compensate Principal for at least 60 percent of Principal's base salary under this Agreement, after a suitable

qualifying period as may be provided for, and in accordance with any such policy as may be obtained.

Whole Life. The Board shall provide and pay the premiums for a whole life insurance policy on the life of Principal. Principal shall designate the beneficiary of the policy. The face amount of the policy shall be determined by application of the following schedule:

First____ year's service____times annual salary.
 to____years' service____times annual salary.
 to____years' service____times annual salary.
 to____years' service____ times annual salary.

Principal shall become vested in the cash surrender value and ownership of said whole life policy at a rate of____percent per year, with a result that at the end of____years, Principal shall have full ownership of the policy. Vesting computations shall commence effective _____, 20____.

Annuity. The Board, in accordance with applicable state and federal laws, and in accordance with the request of Principal, shall withhold such amount of salary as designated by Principal for payment into a tax-deferred annuity program as selected by Principal.

Automobile and Related Expenses. The Board shall provide an automobile for use by Principal during the term of this Agreement. (The approved use of an automobile for personal and business purposes presents tax consequences for Principal and Board. This clause should be drafted to anticipate those consequences on a fact specific basis. Personal and business use should be defined in the Agreement.)

Transportation Expenses. The Board shall pay annually in____equal installments to Principal the sum of $____ as reimbursement for intra-district transportation costs of Principal. Principal shall furnish his/her own automobile and shall provide a rider or certificate to his/her automobile insurance, naming the Board as "co¬insured" in the amounts of $____per person and $____per accident. Any costs incurred by providing such a rider or certificate shall be paid by the Board.

Mileage. The Board shall pay ___ cents per mile to Principal for vouchered reimbursable mileage expenses incurred by Principal while using Principal's personal vehicle for the conduct of approved school district business. Reimbursement shall be pursuant to the school district's policies, rules and regulations. (Reimbursement over the IRS established rate has tax consequences for the Principal and Board.)

Relocation Expenses. The Board shall reimburse Principal for expenses incurred in relocating Principal and Principal's family, furniture, household goods and related expenses.

Membership Dues. The Board shall pay the cost of Principal's annual membership dues in the following organizations:

* Illinois Principal's Association
* (List others)

Professional Development. The Board shall reimburse the Principal up to the sum of $_____ to be used by the Principal at his/her discretion for professional development. All professional development activities during school hours shall be subject to approval by the Superintendent.

New School Leader Induction Checklist[30]

Key stakeholders (e.g., district, school, local school leader's association members) develop and implement a comprehensive induction plan for beginning school leaders. Use the checklist below as a guide to create your plan. Once onboard, the new leader and district supervisor continue to expand the plan based on the needs of the new leader. The orientation plan:

- Differentiates between key learnings for school leaders before school begins and learnings to address later in the year.
- Identifies essential outcomes, activities, timing, and roles and responsibilities for an evaluation of orientation.
- Focuses on engaging school leaders in authentic learning.
- Coordinates orientation activities to avoid creating conflicting schedules for beginning school leaders (e.g., multiple admin meetings in addition to curriculum trainings).
- Creates and facilitates a plan for orientation that ensures beginning school leaders receive support from office staff and colleagues.
- Allocates resources for orientation including time, space, materials, and funds.
- Ensures school leaders hired after initial orientation activities receive a differentiated orientation tailored to their needs.

CULTURE DOMAIN
Relationships within School, District, and Local Community

Before the school year begins, new school leaders:
- Learn the school and district mission, vision, and culture
- Become familiar with the local community and the assets and needs of students and the community
- Learn the collective bargaining agreements
- Meet with various stakeholder groups
- Learn about the roles, responsibilities, and confidential nature of mentoring, and expectations for participation in various beginning school leader support activities
- Form relationships with other new school leaders
- Meet and work with mentors in their schools
- Receive collaborative planning time to work with job-alike colleagues
- Meet people who hold key roles in supporting school leaders

SYSTEMS DOMAIN
Essential Policies, Procedures and Practices

Before the school year begins, new school leaders receive:
- Human resources policies and procedures and time to complete required paperwork including benefits and association membership
- District evaluation procedures and timelines
- Orientation and familiarization with various collective bargaining agreements
- Training about legal and health/safety issues in the school setting including mandated trainings.
- Strategic plan for the district and the school
- School budget
- Current safety plan
- District specific equity practices
- The Code of Professional Conduct
- Access to and support for using technology
- Calendar of relevant ongoing trainings
- School orientation including staff, resources, and key information
- School procedures
- Student management policies and school or district models of classroom management

LEARNING DOMAIN
Curricula, Instruction, and Assessment Practices and Professional Learning

Before the school year begins, new school leaders receive:
- Curricular training including student and teacher materials, scope and sequence, pacing guides, common assessments, and supplemental resources
- State/district learning standards, state-/district-mandated testing information and schedules
- Connections to support building personnel
- Information on accommodations and services available for their students
- Information about individual learning needs of students they will serve
- Support using data to help themselves, staff and their students monitor student learning and reflect on next steps
- A coordinated, multi-year professional learning plan that provides professional learning opportunities that are intentional, coordinated, and sustained
- Professional development that is targeted, timely, and differentiated to meet the specific needs of beginning school leaders and the buildings and communities they serve
- Multiple avenues of professional learning that are appropriate to the needs of beginning school leaders (e.g., new school leader cadres, PLCs, time with mentors, guided observations of school leader leadership "real time," district and regional school leader networks, cohort-based learning)

Search Committee Reflection

As part of its commitment to continuous improvement, the district would appreciate the search committee taking time to reflect on the completed search and identify what worked well and what needs improvement.

Search Position:
School:
Date Search Completed:

- Number of original applicants?
- Number of applicants meeting required qualifications?
- Overall Quality of Applicants: Did the committee feel the overall quality of the applicant pool was strong? If not, what were the big weaknesses (e.g., education, experience, search priorities, etc.)?
- Did the team feel informed and well-supported by the district? Were there gaps in terms of communication and support?
- Did the committee feel it received the training it needed for conducting the search? Any recommendations for improvement?
- Does the committee have any recommendations for improving recruitment efforts?
- What worked well in the search process?
- What needs improvement?

Endnotes

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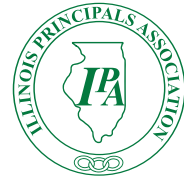
**Council for Leaders
in Alabama Schools**
Dr. Vic Wilson, Executive Director
vic@clasleaders.org
clasleaders.org | 800-239-3616

**Alaska Council of
School Administrators**
Dr. Lisa Parady, Executive Director
lparady@alaskaacsa.org
alaskaacsa.org | 907-586-9702

Illinois Principals Association
Dr. Jason Leahy, Executive Director
jason@ilprincipals.org
ilprincipals.org | 217.525.1383

**Indiana Association of
School Principals**
Dr. Todd Bess, Executive Director
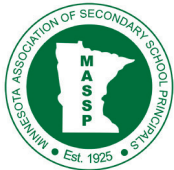tbess@iasp.org
iasp.org | 317.891.9900

**Maine Principals'
Association**
Dr. Holly Blair, Executive Director
hblair@mpa.cc
mpaprof.org | 207-622-0217

**Minnesota Elementary School
Principals' Association**
Michelle Krell, Executive Director
michelle@mespa.net
mespa.net | 952-297-8670

**Minnesota Association of
Secondary School Principals**
Robert Driver, Executive Director
bob@massp.org
massp.org | 612.361.1510

**Missouri Association of
Elementary School Principals**
Dr. J. Anderson, Executive Director
janderson@maesp.com
maesp.com | 573.638.2460

**Missouri Association of
Secondary School Principals**
Clark Mershon, Executive Director
cmershon@moassp.org
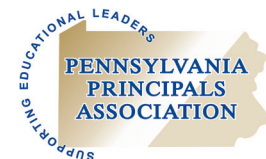moassp.org | 573.445.5071

**New Jersey Principals and
Supervisors Association**
Karen Bingert, Executive Director
njpsa@njpsa.org
njpsa.org | 609.860.1200

**School Administrators
Association of New York State**
Jennifer Carlson, Executive Director
jcarlson@saanys.org
saanys.org | 518.782.0600

**Pennsylvania Principals
Association**
Dr. Erich C. Eshbach, Executive Director
eshbach@paprincipals.org
paprincipals.org | 717.732.4999

**Association of Washington
School Principals**
Dr. Scott Seaman, Executive Director
scott@awsp.org
awsp.org | 360.357.7951

**Association of Wisconsin
School Administrators**
Jim Lynch, Executive Director
jimlynch@awsa.org
awsa.org | 608.241.0300

SCHOOL
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