Principal Hiring Scorecard

A high-quality principal hiring process has far-ranging impacts on the leadership and student learning in a given school. The principal hiring should be fair, rigorous, and data-driven, and its results should inform new principal induction and mentoring processes.

The first step in developing a strong principal hiring process is to identify the strengths and areas of growth for your district’s current principal hiring process. What elements of the process does your district currently do well? What aspects can your district improve upon? To find out, take the following survey.

# Survey

***Instructions:*** For each question, please circle the response that best describes the principal hiring process in your district. There are no right or wrong answers.

When you have finished, use the scoring guide at the end of the survey to access the quality of your district’s principal hiring process.

1. **Outside Recruitment**
	1. There is no central source for handling the recruitment process, and recruitment is typically done through word of mouth and with advertisements in the local newspapers. We primarily publicize openings in one or two venues.
	2. We have a principal recruitment plan that is coordinated by a single office or officer. The district uses word of mouth and print advertising to publicize openings, but it also publicizes through school/district and state education agency websites and state postings at universities or colleges. We use a mix of methods (more than two or three), and we publicize within our athletic conference and the state.
	3. We have a principal recruitment plan that is coordinated by a single office or officer, and we conduct a targeted search based on school/district leadership needs. The district uses a mix of methods to publicize openings, including word of mouth, print advertising, websites, and job fairs. We publicize within our athletic conference, across the state, and occasionally at national levels.
2. **Internal Recruitment**
	1. We encourage candidates within the district or school to apply for open positions. All candidates, of course, must meet basic qualifications. We do not have a structured process in place to build teacher-leader or assistant principal skills and knowledge to prepare them to become principals. We provide incentives to assistant principals and teachers so that they are encouraged to obtain their administrative licenses.
	2. We encourage candidates within the district or school to apply for open positions, and all candidates must meet basic qualifications. We have trained current principals to mentor assistant principals and teachers to build their skills as leaders, but we do not have performance evaluation processes in place to determine whether or not new leaders are capable and effective. Special leadership positions or additional responsibilities are not available to new leaders. We provide incentives to assistant principals and teachers so that they are encouraged to get their administrative licenses.
	3. We encourage candidates within the district or school to apply for open positions, and all candidates must meet basic qualifications. We provide incentives to assistant principals and teachers so that they are encouraged to get their administrative licenses. We also have a “grow your own” leadership program that includes mentoring from principals or other leaders, evaluation of new leaders’ skills and competencies, and formalized opportunities to lead schoolwide efforts.
3. **Recruitment Effectiveness**
	1. As a result of our recruitment efforts, we receive less than 10 applications per opening. Typically, 1 or 2 of these applications are viable or high quality.
	2. As a result of our recruitment efforts, we receive 10–15 applications per opening. Typically, 3 to 5 of these applications are viable or high quality.
	3. As a result of our recruitment efforts, we receive 10–15 applications per opening. Typically, 5 or more of these applications are viable or high quality.
4. **Pace of Initial Candidate Review**
	1. After applications are received, they are reviewed in one or more weeks.
	2. After applications are received, they are reviewed within a week or so.
	3. After applications are received, they are reviewed within a day or two.
5. **Quality of Initial Candidate Review**
	1. The initial review typically is conducted by one person. Criteria for the review may or may not be specified. Documentation of the review may or may not occur.
	2. The initial review typically is conducted by two or more people, who independently review candidate credentials. Criteria used for the review are not specified. Documentation of the review may or may not occur.
	3. The initial review typically is conducted by two or more people, who independently review candidate credentials. Reviewers use the same criteria when reviewing candidate credentials. Documentation of the review process occurs and records are kept.
6. **Breadth of Information Used for Review**
Following is a list of documents or processes used to evaluate principal candidates:
7. Résumé
8. Cover letter
9. Letter of recommendation
10. Transcripts
11. Certification
12. References
13. Writing sample
14. Telephone interview by district/school personnel
15. In-person interview by district staff
16. In-person interview by school staff and/or community members
	1. My district relies primarily on items 1–5 of the above measures to assess principal candidates.
	2. My district primarily relies on items 1–8 of the above measures to assess principal candidates.
	3. My district primarily relies on items 1–10 to assess principal candidates.
17. **Selection of Candidate Reviewers**
	1. Candidate reviewers do not receive any training. They are intelligent people, after all. They know how to hire people and know what a good school leader must do.
	2. Candidate reviewers receive some training about the hiring process and the legalities of that process. However, training does not include discussion of criteria for assessing candidates or hiring priorities.
	3. Candidate reviewers receive some training about the hiring process and the legalities of the process. Training also includes discussion of criteria for assessing candidates and hiring priorities. We establish some reliability among the candidate reviewers to ensure that they are on the same page.
18. **Fairness of the Review**
	1. All candidates have to submit the same, basic information about their credentials to be considered for the position. However, we are not very consistent with our use of interview questions or additional methods of evaluating candidates. We do not consistently maintain applicant records.
	2. All candidates have to submit the same, basic information about their credentials to be considered for the position. Interviewers generally ask the same questions of all candidates and generally use the same additional methods for evaluating candidates. We consistently maintain applicant records.
	3. All candidates have to submit the same, basic information about their credentials to be considered for the position. Interviewers ask the same questions of all candidates and use the same additional methods for evaluating candidates. Interview questions and tasks or simulations are determined ahead of time. Our process is structured so that all candidates have the same opportunities to display their skills and abilities. We consistently maintain applicant records.
19. **Candidate’s Match to School**
	1. We hire the same type of candidate regardless of school leadership needs or community characteristics.
	2. We sometimes make efforts to take school leadership needs or community characteristics into account. However, our process does not involve much input from school members or review of school-based or community-based information. When we set priorities for a hire, we may or may not follow these priorities.
	3. We consistently make an effort to consider school leadership needs or community characteristics. Our process intentionally involves priority setting that takes into account the school and community situation. We often review school- or community-based information when setting priorities. When we set priorities for a hire, we generally follow these priorities.
20. **Extent to Which the Candidate’s Use of Data Informs the Hiring Process**
	1. The hiring committee does not consider the candidate’s data use to inform the hiring process. For instance, finalist candidates are not interviewed about their reliance on using data to inform student learning and are not asked to display their knowledge and skill at using data.
	2. The hiring process considers the candidate’s data use, but this usage is not given great weight. Candidates are asked about the emphasis they place on using data and their skill at using data, but there are no assessments as part of the hiring process.
	3. The hiring committee clearly emphasizes the candidate’s use of data. A number of questions in the interview are directed at determining the emphasis that candidates place on using data. Also, candidates are presented with scenarios using data that they need to complete and on which they are rated.
21. **Criteria for the Hiring Process**
	1. We do not have explicit criteria for hiring a new principal. Decision-making staff apply their own criteria and deliberate which criteria are most important.
	2. We have some “home grown” criteria for hiring a new principal, and these criteria are generally accepted by a core group of staff.
	3. We have criteria for hiring a new principal that are tied to national/state standards and based on research on what good principals must know and do. These criteria are written down and applied. The criteria are generally accepted by a core group of staff.
22. **Effectiveness of the Hiring Process**
	1. We do not measure the effectiveness of the hiring process in any meaningful way. We generally do not collect information from candidates about the ease of the hiring process. We do not collect information from schools or others about how well a newly hired new principal is meeting school needs. We do not consider principal performance or retention information when revising our recruitment and hiring process.
	2. We consider information from schools or others on how well the new principal meets school needs and performs on the job. We consider principal performance and retention information when revising our recruitment and hiring process. We do not collect information from schools or others about how well the new principal meets school needs.
	3. We consider information from schools or others on how well the new principal meets school needs and performs on the job. We consider principal performance and retention information when revising our recruitment and hiring process. We generally do not collect information from candidates about the ease of the hiring process.
23. **Alignment to Human Capital Management Systems**
	1. Information gathered during the hiring process is not used to plan induction or mentoring services to new principals. We generally do not offer induction programs, mentoring support, and/or reduced workloads to new principals or to principals who are new to the school or district.
	2. Information gathered during the hiring process is not used to plan induction or mentoring services to new principals. We do offer induction programming, mentoring support, and/or reduced workloads to new principals or to principals who are new to the school or district.
	3. Information gathered during the hiring process is considered when planning induction or mentoring services to new principals. We do offer induction programming, mentoring support, and/or reduced workloads to new principals or to principals who are new to the school or district.

# Scoring

***Scoring Instructions:*** After completing the survey, please calculate your district’s overall score by tallying the number of points for each question. Give your district 1 point for each “a” response, 2 points for each “b” response, and 3 points for each “c” response. Add up these points for your district’s overall score.

**Your district’s score is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

* **If your district’s score is 30 to 39 points:** Wow, your district is doing a terrific job. You should share your practices with other districts.
* **If your district’s score is 25 to 29 points:** Pretty good! Your district may want to focus on specific aspects of improving the recruitment process, the hiring process, or the consistency with which recruitment and hiring occurs.
* **If your district’s score is 13 to 24 points:** Not bad, but could be better. You may want to consider changing your hiring and recruitment processes and adding components/steps to the process.

*Note:* This survey has not been validated, but it is a quick and easy way to gauge your district’s principal hiring process.