

Principal Appointment - An NZPF Position Paper

Rationale

Research is quite clear that the quality of leadership in a school is central to the progress of that school.

The single most important task any Board of Trustees has to do is that of appointing their new principal. It is important that Boards act professionally displaying all the traits of a "good employer" when appointing a principal. It is important that Boards of Trustees seek the guidance of a respected practicing principal right from the beginning of the process.

It is the belief of the NZPF that the respected, practicing principal giving guidance to the Board be someone who has a tried and respected background in principalship. This person should be involved in the whole appointment process.

Criteria for Advisory Principal are as follows:

An understanding, empathy and knowledge of the needs of the type of school and community involved.

- Recent principal experience and no conflict of interest
- Boards are recommended to contact the local principals' association to confirm the professional suitability of the proposed principal advisor.

The following are guidelines to consider when making an appointment of a principal.

- The appointment of a principal gives an opportunity for the Board to reflect on the culture of their school. The Board is advised to talk with staff, community and students as to the desirable qualities of the person to be appointed. These qualities should dovetail with the existing school culture. It may well be that all wish to see a change in school culture (the way we do things around here).
- As mentioned above every Board should appoint an Advisory Principal to assist them through the whole appointment process. This should occur before the job is advertised.
- The incumbent principal should not be involved in the appointment process.
- The advisory principal should not vote in the final appointment.

- The professional help provided should be paid on a professional basis. A fair hourly rate would be in the range of \$ 50 – 55 per hour plus disbursements (kilometers, tolls).
- The confidentiality of the process will reflect the credibility of the Board. Appointment panel members need to understand the importance of this confidentiality. Widening the appointment processes to include staff and community compromises confidentiality.
- The confidentiality of the appointment process continues until the successful applicant has been notified and accepted and the unsuccessful applicants informed.
- Notwithstanding the previous point, some aspects of the process will remain confidential permanently.
- It is important to discuss the skills, qualifications that you will be looking for. Who would be the ideal person for this position?
- Develop the package of information that you intend to send out to applicants. Remember that this may be the first contact that applicants will have with your Board and thus your school.
- Develop a timeframe for appointment with the Advisory Principal. Remember the Collective Employment Agreement requirements – they apply to your Board. Share the expected timeframe for appointment by placing the timeframe in each application packages.
- References should be expected from short listed candidates only.
- Be prepared to re-advertise if applicants are considered unsuitable. Both your school and a person's career is at stake here!
- Interviewees' expenses should be reimbursed.

APPOINTMENT OF PRINCIPAL

Checklist/Time Frame for Appointment

		Action	Date
1	Confirm previous Principal's resignation		
2	Appoint Advisory Principal		
3	Appointment Team meets Advisory Principal		
4	Discuss requirements		
5	Draft, finalise & fax Gazette/Eduvac Ads		
6	Prepare Person Specification, Job Description, Appointment Criteria, Description of school. Collate as package for applicants		
7	Check package contents (Advisory P)		
8	Form Appointments Committee (whole Board?)		
9	Eduvac Ad published		
10	Gazette Ad published		
11	Record names of all seeking package/information		
12	Applications close		
13	Acknowledge all applications. Indicate time line for Appointment process		
14	Appointments Team read all applications. Note qualities of Applicants		
15	Meet and prepare shortlist		
16	Send for Referees' Reports (fax)		
17	Finalise shortlist. Return unsuccessful CVs with covering letter		
18	Telephone reference checks (set format)		
19	Contact final group of candidates for interview		
20	Finalise interview questions and format		

21	Interview day		
22	<p><u>If appointment made:</u></p> <p>A. Contact successful applicant by phone B. Immediately contact unsuccessful shortlisted applicants by phone C. Letters to all concerned and CV's returned</p> <p><u>If no appointment made:</u> either</p> <p>A. return to shortlist B. advertise again</p>		
23	Ratify Principal's Appointment at a full Board Meeting		
24	At the conclusion of the process, or after any request for a review of the appointment process has been completed, all confidential papers relating to the unsuccessful candidates shall be destroyed by the Board.		

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Reviewed:

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