



January 26, 2015

To: Jennifer Cheatham, Superintendent of Schools  
From: Deirdre Hargrove-Krieghoff, Executive Director of Human Resources  
RE: Proposed changes to Teacher recruitment, screening and selection

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In continuing the work of developing a thriving workforce, we are in the process of redesigning our recruiting, screening and selection activities to support finding high quality, diverse candidates as early as possible and support improved hiring decisions at the school level.

The current board employment policy (#8005) covers employment and hiring of all employees and is very detailed. The redesigned teacher hiring process will include an approach that is competency-based, ensuring that principals will be provided a set of more qualified teacher candidates that better match the needs of their individual school.

We would like to move forward with implementation of all design activities and are recommending that the Board of Education waive the provisions of Board Policy 8005 (Employment) as applied to the application, screening, interviewing and hiring processes for principals and assistant principals, teachers and other professional staff for the 2015-2016 school year.

The following provides the recommended approach, which will be finalized in mid-February, we will take with the recruiting, screening and selection of said candidates:

**TEACH Madison**  
**Confidential Draft as of 2/2/15**

**Background**

TEACH Madison is an effort to revamp teacher recruitment, screening and selection at MMSD. This endeavor has been designed with the critical input of principals, teachers and district leaders to build a higher quality and more diverse candidate pool by accomplishing the following:

- **Enable earlier hiring** - We are working to improve the timing of external offers from August to April 2015
- **Prioritize and cultivate high-potential candidates** - We will identify high potential candidates earlier in the hiring process, and will begin tracking the yield and retention of our high potential candidates.
- **Increase the number of diverse teacher hires** – With strategic receptions, network recruiting and outreach, we intend to improve the diversity of our teacher hires from 14% in 2014 to 25% in 2015.
- **Simplify teacher screening requirements**, while ensuring a competency-based screening process – we will make the teacher screening process more rigorous, while protecting principal time to focus on only the most important parts of the screening process.

- **Support better hiring decisions at schools** by providing more robust candidate information – we will expand principal access to all eligible candidates, and enable principals to share candidate feedback with each other.

The work began in the fall of 2014 with individual meetings between HR Analysts and MMSD principals to discuss their anticipated hiring needs and to get their input on teacher competencies and screening activities. As a result of those conversations and subsequent meetings with a Design Team, the Teacher Advisory Group, the Superintendent’s Human Resource Advisory Council (SHRAC) and other key stakeholders, we are now considering several key changes to our teacher hiring this year:

**1. Introducing new screening and selection processes**

Screening activities will be based on a set of competencies that have been identified by district teachers and principals; said competencies will support the hiring of high quality, qualified candidates, and assist with placement of the most effective teachers with the highest needs students.

**Proposed Changes:**

- The new interview process will include two rounds of screening. The first round will be completed by HR and includes a streamlined application that makes it easier for candidates to apply, and three essay questions, followed by a performance-based phone interview (including real-life scenarios that a typical teacher might encounter) to provide more rigor to the initial screen. Those who pass the first round will be eligible for consideration at the school level.
- Principals are working with the HR staff to calibrate first round screening based on those competencies which are deemed as minimum qualifications to teach in Madison.
- HR analysts will work individually with each principal and support them by identifying a slate of candidates tailored to meet each school’s needs. However, principals will have the ability to search through all candidates who pass the first round of screening to select alternate candidates as they see fit. This is a new opportunity that principals have not previously been able to access.

**2. Surplus Placement**

The Surplus placement process will be pushed earlier in the year to enable the district to open vacancies earlier, and will include a window for principals and teachers to meet each other and provide increased input on the final placement decision.

**Proposed Changes:**

- Principals will submit their staffing reports, surplus forms and vacancy notices as planned on March 13, 2015.
- Once principals submit their information, HR will analyze the total number of surplus teachers and teacher preferences. Teacher preferences will be considered within the context of school needs. HR will include the following among its considerations:
  - Minimize surplus placements at Intensive Partnership schools
  - Schools should not have the majority of placements filled by surplus teachers
  - Past trends in surplus placements will be considered
  - Past performance as provided in teacher evaluation is considered to ensure equitable distribution of high performing teachers wherever possible

- HR will use its analysis, and its customer needs assessment conversations with principals to identify a first set of possible matches between surplus teachers and schools.
- During the week of March 23<sup>rd</sup>, principals have the opportunity to interview teachers and provide additional input into potential placements. Where interviews are possible, both the teachers and the principals will be able to provide input.
- HR will finalize the placement decision, and notify teachers and principals on April 1, 2015.

### 3. Internal Transfers

Internal transfers are now considered for posted vacancies at the same time as external candidates in support of ensuring the right selection based on school need.

#### Proposed Changes:

- Teachers considering a transfer to another school in the coming school year will be invited earlier to submit an application and complete the first round of screening in February and March of 2015, as opposed to May of 2015.
- All 2015-2016 vacancies will post following surplus placement (tentatively planned for April 1). At that time internal teachers will have an opportunity to apply directly for vacancies.
- All internal transfer applicants will receive a first round interview through HR, at which point a slate of candidates will be provided to principals for review. Teachers will be considered for any vacancies for which they apply. However, principals will be able to choose which internal teachers to interview from the pool of teachers who meet the minimum competency-based qualifications.
- Principals will receive candidate information and decide which candidates to interview at the school level.

### 4. Early Hiring

The district will complete early hiring in February and March for as many positions as possible to improve the district's ability to hire, select and place the best candidates from each pool, and will make every effort to place these teachers with the highest needs schools

#### Proposed Changes:

- The HR team will analyze past vacancy, surplus placement and transfer trends to understand the best way to protect surplus placement possibilities, while enabling earlier hiring at the school level.
- Based on their analysis and input from the budgeting team, the HR team will identify predicted positions available for early hiring.
- Teachers will be screened using revised screening activities, and may serve as a pilot for teacher screening to take place at the school level later in the spring.
- HR will track the yield of offers accepted and ultimate retention in the role.

#### Proposed Timeline of Activities

<u>Week of:</u>	<u>Activities:</u>
Jan 19	Updated teacher application goes live
Jan 26	Begin vetting proposed plans
Feb 2	Continue vetting plans with stakeholders – reach a go or no-go decision for surplus changes
Feb 9	HR staff trained on interviewing protocols

<b>Feb 9</b>	Notify principals of any process changes for the current year
<b>Feb 16</b>	Early Hiring interviews begin
<b>Feb 23</b>	Principals begin training on new hiring processes
<b>Mar 9</b>	Mar 13 principals submit surplus decisions, vacancies and surplus preferences
<b>Mar 16</b>	HR Analyzes surplus forms, openings and teacher preferences
<b>By Mid-April</b>	Final surplus placement decisions released earlier than previous years
<b>By Mid-April</b>	Vacancies go live following surplus placements
<b>By Late April</b>	HR completes first round interviews for internal transfer requests as needed
<b>By early May</b>	Principals begin second round interviews
<b>May to June</b>	Principals make final selection decisions

### Key Dependencies

- **Timing of the Staffing Process** - if the staffing workbooks are distributed or returned later than planned at the school level, then the timeline for surplus placement is also delayed.
- **HR staff capacity and planning** - The HR team will spend significant time planning for new processes to ensure successful implementation. Key to this effort will be a shared and confidential work space and a routine of meetings that enable the HR team can visually track the status of candidate hiring and surplus placement, and plan for candidate slates throughout the hiring cycle.
- **The principals' context and capacity** - there are three key timeframes when principals might engage in the new processes; training in late February, surplus interviews in March,, and second round interviews at the school late April and early May. (HR analysts have met with Principals and understand each school demographics, known vacancies and overall school need. The analysts will prepare a slate of qualified candidates, based on competencies and school need, to ensure Principals are interviewing the top candidates for their school).
- **Vacancies posting right before spring break** - Teachers may have a concern about the timing for vacancy posting. The positions will stay open for two weeks so that teachers will be able to apply during the break or during the week following.
- **Accessibility of technology** - The changes in process will require easy-to-use technology supports so that principals can easily access and share feedback from interviews, and can easily search through candidate applications.