



June 15, 2016

TO: Jennifer Cheatham, Superintendent of Schools

FROM: Deirdre Hargrove-Krieghoff, Executive Director of Human Resources

RE: Employee Handbook - Hiring/Transfer Language

After the initial Handbook discussions one open item around the issue of filling vacancies in the support units remained. We were directed to continue to meet to try to reach consensus on this item.

Originally, we had recommended that the language in the Handbook with regard to vacancies state as follows:

*Vacancies shall first be filled by employees in surplus. The District has the right to determine and select the most qualified applicant for any position. The term applicant refers to both internal and external candidates for the position.*

*The District retains the right to determine the job qualifications needed for any vacant position. Minimum qualifications shall be established by the District and equally applied to all persons.*

The rationale for this language change is that it is essential that the District has the ability to hire the most qualified candidate for any vacant position—whether an internal candidate or an external candidate. This language is currently used for transfers in the teacher unit. Thus, it creates consistency across employee groups.

By providing the District with the flexibility of considering both internal and external candidates simultaneously the District can ensure that it is hiring the most qualified individual for any vacant position. It also gives the District opportunities to diversify the workforce by expanding the pool of applicants under consideration. This change would come with a commitment to provide stronger development opportunities for internal candidates who seek pathways to promotion.

Local 60, the employee association for the members of the custodial unit had concerns regarding this language. It opined that the District has not provided the requisite training that would put employees in a better position to promote through the organization and until this training piece has been implemented such a change would be unfair to the employees. The District needs to formalize career ladders. The change would impact morale by not rewarding employee seniority and tenure in the District.

After further extensive conversations with Local 60 we were unable to reach consensus. We are recommending that the original proposed language be applicable to all support units other than custodians and food service. We recommend the following language for the custodial unit.

*Vacant positions in Grades 1-11 shall, whenever practical, be filled by the promotion or transfer of bargaining unit employees. Minimum qualifications, performance and experience shall be established by the District and equally applied to all persons. Positions will be filled on the basis of skill and ability as determined by the District. When such qualifications are relatively equal between employees, the senior employee making application shall be promoted or transferred.*

*For vacant positions in Grades 12 – 16 the District has the right to determine and select the most qualified applicant for any position. The term “applicant” refers to both internal candidates and external candidates for the position. The District retains the right to determine the job qualifications needed for any vacant position. Minimum qualifications shall be established by the District and equally applied to all persons. Posted positions will be filled on the basis of qualifications as determined by the District.*

We would recommend similar language for the Food Service unit with the only modification being the designated pay grades. Under this proposal the language remains the same for hiring for the lower level positions but gives the District the ability to consider external candidates for the higher level/lead positions. Local 60 has proposed that the District only look at internal and external candidates simultaneously for positions at the highest pay grade. We believe our recommendation is a good compromise taking into consideration the desire for employees to move up in the District but also the need to have really strong employees in those higher level positions. The District is still committed to and has commenced developing training to assist employees in increasing their skills in order to advance into other positions if they so choose.