



Policy 104, 304 & 304.1

Administrative Regulations - Hiring Practices

Equal Opportunity Act & Employment Overview

The Plum Borough School District is dedicated and has established a firm commitment to providing equal employment opportunity to its staff and to applicants for positions in the District. We believe education enhancement requires consistently fair and equitable educational and employment practices without regard to sex, race, creed, religion, color, national origin, honorably discharged veteran or military status, sexual orientation, including gender expression or identity, the presence of any sensory, mental or physical disability, or the use of a trained dog guide or service animal by a person with a disability. The Plum Borough School District is committed to nondiscrimination in employment practices.

The following forms of employment equity are consistent with the principle of nondiscrimination in the protection of individual rights.

1. *Examination of policies to be certain that they are scrupulously nondiscriminatory* in principle and in practice, followed by corrective action where needed. Included would be a review of recruitment practices to ensure all qualified candidates for a position an opportunity to be considered fairly; to eliminate stereotyping assumptions, such as a belief that women with young children will be unable to devote themselves adequately to their profession; and to provide adequate internal grievance procedures for those who perceive that they have been the victims of discrimination (Policy 104).
2. *Examination of policies and procedures that, while facially neutral, have an adverse impact on women or minorities.* Whenever possible, they should be eliminated or replaced by less exclusionary policies designed to accomplish the same legitimate purpose. The goal is to do away with gratuitous barriers to the fair consideration of women and minorities. Examples would be the narrowing of anti-nepotism policies (Policy 304.1).
3. *Race or sex-sensitive selectivity.* Awareness of race or sex in the appointment and retention process reaches a more difficult concept. We must ensure that the call for diversity does not itself lead to a violation of individual rights. It also raises the question of what types of considerations may appropriately be taken into account in the development and application of assessment criteria (Policy 304).

We may want to achieve a certain heterogeneity that may be beneficial to the stated purpose of the District. Institutional diversity may, in itself, be an appropriate goal. Under certain circumstances, it can be sound policy to avoid appointing large numbers of faculty from a single institution, apart from the merits of individual candidates, and an age mix may also be sought in a manner consistent with nondiscrimination principles.

Employment equity may thus permit the inclusion of sex or race among a number of characteristics assessed in a potential candidate - along with his or her teaching expertise, area



of specialization, academic credentials, and so on. Sound academic practice requires that these criteria provide the basis for a complex assessment of relative merit and not merely establish a large pool of minimally qualified candidates. Nonetheless, it is frequently the case that the selection process produces a group of two or more highly rated candidates who are viewed as approximately equivalent. In such circumstances, and in the interests of diversity, employment equity considerations might control the final selection. This type of selectivity is still consistent with the principle of nondiscrimination in that, as a matter of faculty judgment, the decision may be made that more males are needed in a predominantly female department or more minorities at a predominantly white department. It should be kept in mind, however, that what is permissible or desirable in race- or sex-sensitive selectivity in the appointment process differs from what may be permissible in subsequent personnel decisions.

Despite recognition of past and continuing discrimination in K-16 education and the slow progress in achieving a more diverse workplace, the District does not support employment equity that would set rigid quotas in the appointment of staff members. We recognize that special efforts may be needed to attract and retain women, minority and diverse staff members.

The District recognizes that a fundamental commitment to nondiscrimination and equal opportunity requires the careful development and vigorous implementation and monitoring to meet the needs and standards of the academic community. In line with the types of employment equity standards described above, our practices may include a wide range of lawful and academically sound practices to overcome the effects of past or present barriers to equal employment opportunity. We believe that such practices are essential not only to ensure that equal opportunity is realized, but also to remove those vestiges of past discrimination that would otherwise perpetuate indefinitely the disadvantages of unequal treatment.

Equal Opportunity Employer Actionable Items

1. Annually review our recruitment plan. Advertise vacancies and new positions in appropriate professional publications, newsletters, organizations, job boards and post secondary institutions associated with women, minorities and diverse individuals.
 - a. Consider advertising on LinkedIn, Indeed, targeted social media accounts, the NAACP job board, traditional minority student universities, etc.
2. Post clear job descriptions of vacant positions, including responsibilities and expectations.
3. The Human Resources Department will seek out minority and women's caucuses of professional organizations for suggestions of candidates.
4. Create partnerships with local universities and other post secondary schools as a conduit for applicants.
5. Permit optional questions for self-identification purposes in our online application management system (TalentEd).

Board of School Directors

Teaching and staff positions will be created, established and filled by the Board of School Directors in order to provide education programs and other supporting services, consistent with the needs and the resources of the community.



In seeking approval for the creation of new positions, the Board shall give primary consideration to the:

1. Overall direction and vision of the District;
2. Student enrollment of the District;
3. Number of students enrolled per class/course;
4. Special needs of the students;
5. Equity of resources throughout the District;
6. Operational needs of the District;
7. Financial resources of the District; AND
8. Student opportunities in the pursuit of particular passions and interests.

The Board expects the Superintendent to be responsible for recommending new or additional professional positions. The Board reserves the right for final determination as to the number and kind of professional positions deemed necessary for the effective and efficient operations of the District. A rationale will be provided by the Human Resources Department designee in determining staffing needs and candidate recommendations. This may include filling vacant positions, creating new positions, requests for additional staffing and final candidate credentials. The Superintendent recommends candidates to the School Board. The School Board hires and terminates individuals.

Recruit & Hire Process

Applications are accepted for open positions or anticipated positions only. The Administration has the right to consider external candidates for each position. The most qualified candidate will be appointed to the position.

In order to be considered a candidate for professional employment, an applicant must submit the following items:

- Resume & cover letter
- Professional application
- Pennsylvania certifications and/or license
- Post secondary transcripts
- Three (3) professional recommendations
- Criminal Background Check (Act 34)
- Child Abuse Clearance (Act 151)
- FBI Fingerprint Check (Act 114)
- DD214 Form, if military service is applicable

The Plum Borough School District does not consider an individual a candidate for employment until all the required items have been received by the School District.

Vacancy

It is the responsibility of the position's immediate supervisor to provide to the Human Resources Department information relevant to the vacancy assignment, as well as the qualifications for the position. A posting system shall be used to make all those who are presently employed by the



District aware of any vacant positions by union rights and protocols. Targeted advertising will be implemented for external opportunities.

New Positions

Only the Board can create a new position.

Application Review

Only applications submitted via TalentEd will be considered for employment. The Human Resources Department will review all complete applications and select a representative percent of the applications as candidates for employment based on education, training, experience and skills as they relate to the position. Only the Assistant to the Superintendent of the Human Resources Department will select applicants to be interviewed. The Assistant to the Superintendent of the Human Resources Department will coordinate and collaborate with the building Principals and Central Administration to determine the candidates who may be considered for initial interviews. The preliminary screening process shall include, but not be limited to, the following: Pennsylvania Department of Education Certification(s); Cumulative grade point average and/or grade point average in major area of concentration; institution of study; candidates demonstrating a minimum of 3.0 grade point undergraduate or graduate average will be given preference for a position within the District; Professional reference forms or letters of reference; Training and experience relevant to the qualification requirements; Evidence of leadership and service to others; Review of the National Teacher Exam scores(s) (Praxis), if applicable; and any other criteria deemed appropriate and necessary.

Interviews

Only Administrators and Board members who have received training on *Diverse Hiring Practices and Best Practices of Interviewing* are able to participate in interviews. Interviews may consist of questions/answers, work demonstration, written prompts, assessments, presentations, mock lessons, et cetera. Interviewers must be available to interview all candidates if they are recommending candidates to advance to the next step in the process. During all interview sessions, the same basic questions will be asked each candidate, though follow-up questions may be asked to clarify the candidate's response(s). The candidate's interviews will be evaluated using a standard form rating each person on the same identified criteria. A simple rating scale of 3-2-1 (3-Yes, I would hire; 2-maybe; 1-No, I would not hire) shall be scored by each interviewer and applied to each question. The candidates with the highest aggregated scores will advance to the next stage in the process. The Human Resource Department will develop every interview question, writing prompt, exercise, presentation, et cetera. These activities and the Wonderlic results carry significant weight when advancing candidates through the process. A minimum standard will be established by the team prior to the interviews to determine which candidates will be considered to fill an open position. The team consensus will determine which candidate will be recommended to the Superintendent and Board of Directors for consideration. Every final interview must have multiple candidates. At the midpoint of the interview process a minority candidate must be included. If no minority candidate has applied for the position or has made it to the midpoint in the process, the District will extend the vacancy or re-start the recruit and hire process. If after an extension and/or re-start, a minority candidate has not made it to the midpoint stage, the process shall continue and the Board must be notified of the District's failed efforts to recruit minority candidates. Board members can participate in any final interview with



Superintendent notification, and should participate in all final Administration interviews. In an effort to reduce nepotism and favoritism, and to seek diverse thinking and ideas, any Administrator or Board Member involved in the interview process *must* disclose to the Superintendent if s/he personally knows the candidate, is related to the candidate, or has been approached by another in an effort to secure the candidate's employment in the District.

The number of interview rounds per job classification is as follows:

1. Long term substitutes, seasonal or temporary employees (less than 1 year) – one (1) interview
2. Coaches, part-time employees, and classified staff – no less than two (2) interviews
3. Teachers – no less than three (3) interviews & Wonderlic test
4. Administrators – no less than three (3) interviews & Wonderlic test

Administrative Recommendations and School Board Appointment

Appointments should be made on the basis of individual merit. Careful consideration should be given to the criteria traditionally used for merit to be certain that they serve to further academic and department excellence. It is especially important to reconsider any facially neutral policies that have an adverse impact on employment equity efforts that is disproportionate to their contribution to the determination of merit. A greater commitment, psychologically, ideologically, and materially, to the basic principles of employment equity, and to the implementation and monitoring of such practices, so as to approach real equality of opportunity. If a consensus cannot be reached by the interview committee, the Superintendent will determine the recommended candidate for Board consideration.

Confidential Telephone Reference Checks

The Assistant to the Superintendent is responsible for conducting confidential telephone reference checks of those candidates identified as finalists. The confidential telephone reference check form will be completed in its entirety and included in the candidate's pre-employment application file. Whenever possible, at least two (2) confidential telephone reference checks will be completed with each candidate's current and/or former supervisor(s).

Declination Notification

All candidates not recommended for consideration as a result of the interview process will be notified by email or mail that they are no longer being considered for employment.

Emergency Situation

Steps in the hiring process may be bypassed in an emergency situation. When the situation occurs, the Board *must* be informed of the circumstances which existed to deem this necessary.