



**PETALUMA  
CITY SCHOOLS**

**EMPLOYEE SELECTION PROCEDURE  
HANDBOOK**

Updated 12/12/23

## **Recruitment and Selection**

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance in the hiring of all positions for Petaluma City Schools, with the exception of administrative appointments for hard-to-fill positions. The employment process in the District is designed to recruit and select the most qualified individual for each position. It has been planned to operate in a fair and equitable manner, consistent with state and federal law. The provisions contained herein are to be understood within the context of the negotiated agreements with PFT and CSEA, as well as existing Board Policies.

## **Confidentiality**

Everyone involved in the hiring process should be aware of the sensitive nature of the endeavor. It is vitally important that absolute confidentiality, with regard to all aspects of the hiring process, be maintained.

All employees who participate on an Interview Panel will sign a confidentiality agreement at the beginning of the process.

\*This handbook replaces AR 4111, 4211, and 4311, which have been deleted.

## **Hiring Protocol**

### **1. Establish Vacancy**

The Lead Administrator will work with Human Resources and Business Services to identify the specific position, hours, and funding source(s) for which a vacancy notice is to be published.

### **2. Develop and Post Vacancy Notice**

**Classified Vacancies:** A vacancy notice will be circulated within the District and posted on appropriate sites on the Internet. Any CSEA bargaining unit member who applies and meets the minimum qualifications for the position will be interviewed alongside outside applicants.

**Certificated Vacancies:** A vacancy notice will be circulated within the District and posted on appropriate sites on the Internet. Human Resources will contact current PFT members who have submitted a Certificated Employee's Application for Transfer. Any PFT bargaining unit member who applies and meets the minimum requirements for the position will be interviewed alongside outside applicants.

Human Resources will email a list of all advertised positions to district staff at the end of each week.

### **3. Lead Administrator**

The District employee who serves as Lead Administrator of the Interview Panel has several responsibilities, which include:

- a. organization of the Interview Panel under the guidance of the Human Resources Department
- b. training the Interview Panel in the interview process
- c. clear and timely communications with Human Resources concerning necessary "tools", e.g., technology, room reservations, rating sheets, application packets, paper and pencils, etc.
  - i. Human Resources will reserve a room for the Interview Panel if the paper screening or interviews will be held at the District Office.
  - ii. Human Resources will reserve any technology required by the Interview Panel if the paper screening or interviews will be held at the District Office.

### **4. Organization of Interview Panel**

The Lead Administrator is responsible for working with Human Resources to organize the Interview Panel and present the panel with the Employee Selection Procedure Handbook. Human Resources and the Lead Administrator will determine the number and make-up of the panel members. In certain instances, one or more parents and/or students may also be involved.

For school site-level positions, the composition of the Interview Panel will be determined by shared decision-making with the school site staff. The Interview Panel for Classified vacancies should include at least one CSEA member. The Interview Panel for Certificated vacancies should include at least one PFT member and may include CSEA member(s) on the Interview Panel for non-Special Education vacancies. The Interview Panel for Special Education vacancies will include at least one CSEA member.

The employee vacating the position will typically not be a member of the Interview Panel.

### **5. Position Criteria**

Position criteria shall be based on job descriptions, District Mission Statement, and input from the Interview Panel. The criteria will form the basis for paper screening and oral interview questions.

## **6. Interview Questions**

The Interview Panel will develop interview questions based on the position criteria. The panel will also determine what type of simulation activity and/or writing prompt will be used as part of the interview.

## **7. Classified Testing**

Applicants for certain classified positions will be required to pass the appropriate test(s) prior to accepting a position. Tests may be completed before, during, or after the interview process.

## **8. Paper Screening**

The initial paper screening will be done by District Office administration and/or appropriate District staff to ensure that all candidates meet the qualifications for the position. Applicants not meeting position qualifications may not have their candidacy considered by the Interview Panel. Incomplete or inaccurate applications may not be considered. Paper screening may include initial reference checks. Candidates with unsatisfactory reference checks will not be considered in paper screening.

Candidates to be interviewed will be selected by the Interview Panel according to a pre-determined ranking process. The Interview Panel will be given the opportunity to paper screen all qualified candidates and give their ranking to the Lead Administrator for consideration. The ranking sheet of the Lead Administrator should clearly reflect the top-ranked candidates selected for an interview and take into account any feedback provided by members of the Interview Panel. The final selection of candidates to be interviewed should reflect the general consensus of the paper screening results.

## **9. Oral Interview: The Process**

It is the responsibility of the Lead Administrator to ensure that a consistent interview process takes place for each candidate. Prior to asking a candidate to answer any interview questions the Lead Administrator should see to it that the candidate is as relaxed and comfortable as possible. The process of setting the candidate at ease begins with the initial greeting prior to entering the interview room. The Lead Administrator should take whatever time is necessary to converse with the candidate. Once inside the interview room the Lead Administrator should take some additional time to allow for introductions prior to beginning the formal interview process.

The general guidelines for interviews in the District include:

- a. The candidate should be given a copy of the interview questions preceding the interview for review or at the start of the interview.

- b. Only established questions may be asked. The same questions must be asked of each candidate. If a candidate does not understand a question, it may be restated or paraphrased. The lead administrator may ask follow up questions or provide information for purposes of clarification.
- c. It is illegal to ask questions related to the following areas:
  - i. Race
  - ii. Age
  - iii. National ancestry
  - iv. Marital status
  - v. Political party membership or activity
  - vi. Gender
  - vii. Sexual orientation
  - viii. Religious affiliation
  - ix. Citizenship
  - x. Physical characteristics (except when directly related to job performance)
  - xi. Union activities
- d. Sample Lesson: For teacher candidates, a sample lesson of at least 15 minutes, taught to students, may be part of the interview.

## **10. Rank Candidates/~~Check References~~/~~Offer of Employment~~**

After the completion of interviews, the interview panel will discuss suitability of the candidates for the position. Each member will share their ranking of the candidates with the panel for discussion. While the Interview Panel's comments, counsel and input may be pivotal, only the ranking sheet and recommendation of the Lead Administrator will be used to determine the top candidates. All completed, signed interview ranking sheets, interview questions, and Interview Panel notes must be returned to the Lead Administrator immediately following the conclusion of the interview process.

## **11. Cabinet Interviews for Management Positions**

Management positions will typically undergo a second round of interviews with Cabinet members and the Lead Administrator. The Interview Panel will forward suitable candidates to be considered for second round interviews. Cabinet will develop comprehensive and technical interview questions and performance tasks. Following the Cabinet level interview, Cabinet members will advise the Superintendent on each candidate and provide candidate rankings and comments. The Superintendent will utilize information provided from the Interview Panel and the Cabinet interview panel to establish a ranked order for the candidates. Additional reference checks, if required, will be conducted by the Superintendent or designee beginning with the top-ranked candidate. All information provided to the Superintendent will be used to select the final candidate.

## **12. Check References/Offer of Employment**

Following the oral interview process and prior to any offer of employment, reference checks are made by the Lead Administrator or Human Resources. At least two references should be checked, including the immediate supervisor where possible. Only the District reference form should be used for reference checks. The Lead Administrator will make the final employment selection from the top candidates based on the outcome of the reference checks.

In the case of second round Cabinet interviews and reference checks, the Superintendent or designee will contact the selected candidate with a formal offer of employment.

Once reference checks are completed, the Lead Administrator should return the interview materials to Human Resources with an appropriate request for hire. All offers of employment should be made by Human Resources, or by the Lead Administrator under direction of Human Resources. If the Lead Administrator makes an offer of employment, the candidate should be told that Human Resources will contact him/her to make a formal offer of employment and provide information regarding salary placement, work hours, fingerprinting, etc.

## **13. Review Procedure**

All hiring-related documents, including scores for paper screening and the interview rating sheets are legal documents. Candidates have a legal right to access all hiring-related documents. It is important that all scores be based upon the criteria identified for the particular position. In cases of all regulatory or judicial review, such correlation will be the chief defense of the District against possible claims of discriminatory, arbitrary or capricious decision-making.