

Maintaining high standards for hiring, personnel management, and professional development are required to sustain a successful school building and district. Policies and procedures for posting, interviewing, hiring, and retaining instructional and non-instructional staff members is crucial. By creating, implementing, and following through with an effective systems approach, hiring new instructional and non-instructional staff will be fruitful in finding the best candidates.

An effective systems approach will ensure new hires are qualified, motivated and will bring something to the table to further the team. When hiring an instructional staff member or a non-instructional staff member, there are key considerations to keep at the forefront of the interview, such as identifying what the candidate already knows about the district, getting a feeling for how much they looked into the district itself, and what they can bring to the district. Asking key questions to identify the candidates' methods for connecting with the students in their classrooms, the families of their students, as well as the greater school community is instrumental in recognizing their strengths and weaknesses when it comes to communication. Ideal candidates will meet the required qualifications, certifications, have a strong knowledge base of content, and be able to pinpoint why they are the best fit, what they can bring to the position, and why they want to be a part of the community. By creating these predetermined sets of questions, format, time frames and expectations, committee style interviews are able to use more valuable information from the many stakeholders to make the best selection.

Identifying who sits on an interview committee and who decides depends on the structure and size of the school district. Human Resource Departments or Superintendent's may have the final say, but often building principals, teachers, related staff, students and community members

may have the opportunity to provide input. Depending on the position opening and the setup of the district, many stakeholders may be beneficial to the selection of a new candidate.

When hiring, knowledge of typical district contracts is essential. Filling a vacancy with a brand new hire, may have the least barriers, as hires transferring from other districts must provide their home districts with a 30-day notice, and civil service positions have guidelines and restrictions.

There is a variety of professional development options building and district leaders can employ to promote growth amongst all of their employees. New Teacher Orientations, Mentoring Programs, Social Hours, Team Building Activities, and many others provide instructional leaders the opportunity to develop teachers and staff of all skill levels. Leaders must monitor and assess the effectiveness of each development opportunity in order to ensure success. Leaders can implement detailed accounts of activities, feedback sessions and paid time for veteran staff.

In my experience with hiring internal candidates, the decisions were based off certifications, experience and past performance. This allowed us to narrow down the available candidates, prioritize prior experience and past performance to fill positions in a K-12 program.