

MERIDEN PUBLIC SCHOOLS



CERTIFIED STAFF HIRING PROCEDURES MANUAL

May 2018

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Introduction

The hiring of effective educators for all positions in a school system is one of the most important levers for increasing student achievement. A well planned, structured and consistent hiring process will help a district make the best choices when hiring for specific positions.

THE MPS HIRING PROCEDURES MANUAL HAS BEEN UPDATED TO:

1. Reinforce what our current practices are and enhance the process with new practices
2. Ensure consistency in hiring practices amongst the different administrators
3. Provide a hiring procedures roadmap for administrators and hiring teams
4. Help reduce any risk we would incur due to inconsistent hiring practices
5. Implement changes in hiring practices as suggested by counsel
6. Embed the district vision and goals into our hiring practices

Please note that all internal candidates that apply for teaching positions within the internal posting time frame must have an interview. Please refer to the contract or call the Personnel Office if you have questions regarding this process.

WHY IS HIRING IMPORTANT?



The single most influential factor in determining student achievement is the teacher in the classroom.

~ DuFour

WHY ARE HIRING PROCEDURES IMPORTANT?

"A Harvard Business School study determined that more than 75% of turnover could be traced back to poor hiring practices. The leading contributor to turnover is often not what happens after the employee is hired, but rather the process leading up to it."

~ McKenna, 2004, *Behavior-based Interviewing*, National Petroleum News, p.16

EQUAL OPPORTUNITY EMPLOYMENT POLICY

The Board of Education complies with all applicable federal, state and local laws prohibiting the exclusion of any person from any of its educational programs or activities, or the denial to any person of the benefits of any of its educational programs or activities because of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, or gender identity or expression, subject to the conditions and limitations established by law. The Board of Education will not make employment decisions (including decisions related to hiring, assignment, compensation, promotion, demotion, disciplinary action and termination) on the basis of race, color, religion, age, sex, marital status, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, or gender identity or expression, except in the case of a bona fide occupational qualification.

It is the policy of the Board of Education that any form of discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, pregnancy, genetic information, gender identity or expression, or any other basis prohibited by state or federal law is prohibited, whether by students, Board employees or third parties subject to the control of the Board. The Board's prohibition of discrimination or harassment in its educational programs or activities expressly extends to academic, nonacademic and extracurricular activities, including athletics. It is also the policy of the Board of Education to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints alleging any discrimination on the basis of protected characteristics such as race, color, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, marital status, national origin, disability (including pregnancy), or gender identity or expression.

For the purposes of this policy, "genetic information" means the information about genes, gene products, or inherited characteristics that may derive from an individual or a family member. "Genetic information" may also include an individual's family medical history, the results of an individual's or family member's genetic tests, the fact that an individual or an individual's family member sought or received genetic services, and genetic information of a fetus carried by an individual or an individual's family member or an embryo lawfully held by an individual or family member receiving assistive reproductive services.

For the purposes of this policy, "gender identity or expression" means a person's gender-related identity, appearance or behavior, whether or not that gender-related identity, appearance or behavior is different from that traditionally associated with the person's physiology or assigned sex at birth, which gender-related identity can be shown by providing evidence including, but not limited to, medical history, care or treatment of the gender-related identity, consistent and uniform assertion of the gender-related identity or any other evidence that the gender-related identity is sincerely held, part of a person's core identity or not being asserted for an improper purpose. Approved 11/17/2015

Minority Teacher Recruitment Policy

The Meriden Board of Education recognizes that diversity of individuals and cultures is increasing within our community, state and nation, and that this diversity should have an important bearing on all aspects of the school district's activities. Further, the State of Connecticut has determined that the educational interests of the state require efforts by each school district to provide educational opportunities for its students to interact with teachers from other racial and ethnic backgrounds in order to reduce racial and ethnic isolation.

The Meriden Board of Education believes that the diversity of individuals and cultures should be recognized in the recruitment and assignment of personnel. A diverse teaching staff helps to promote an intellectually and culturally dynamic environment, which enables all students to gain an increased awareness and appreciation of the world to which we are all connected.

The schools shall engage in fair and sound personnel practices in the appointment of all district employees. The Superintendent shall be responsible for establishing recruitment, selection and appointment procedures.

To this end, the Board of Education shall develop and implement a written plan for minority teacher recruitment. The administration is directed to make a serious effort to: 1) attract highly qualified minority teacher candidates; and 2) work towards the goal of achieving a diverse and highly qualified teaching staff.

Recruiting a Diverse Teaching Staff

The Research

Maintaining a teaching staff that reflects the diversity of students is a worthwhile goal, one that many districts and boards of education endorse. As noted in the 2014 National Association for Education report titled, *Time for Change: Diversity in Teaching Revisited*, educators who share similar experiences with their students and communities bring more “favorable views of students of color, including more positive perceptions regarding their academic potential”, in addition to being great role models for their students of color. (Dilworth & Coleman, 2014).

The primary reason for diversifying our teaching staff is to improve student performance. Ana Maria Villegas and Jacqueline Jordan Irvine’s analysis of research supports this claim that student academic achievement increases when students of color are taught by teachers of similar backgrounds (2008). In this study, they find empirical data to support that students of color achieve higher graduation rates, score better on standardized tests, and receive higher college matriculation rates when taught by teachers of color. In their review of the research, Villegas and Jordan found five practices that successful teachers of color use when teaching (2010). These teachers had high expectations for students, used culturally relevant teaching, developed trusting and caring relationships with students, confronted issues of racism through teaching and served as advocates and cultural brokers (p.180, Villegas & Jordan, 2010). The benefits of a diverse workforce are well supported by the research. However, despite policy efforts to diversify the teacher workforce in over 36 states dating back to the 1990’s, it remains one of the most elusive goals in our nation's educational system.

Train Your Committee

ASK THESE QUESTIONS

- Is this the best candidate?
- Would you want this person to teach your own child?

**IF THE POOL DOES NOT
CONTAIN THE CANDIDATE
THAT ANSWERS THESE
QUESTIONS, GET A NEW
POOL!**

PROFESSIONALISM

- The procedure we use for hiring is the beginning of the relationship with our employees.
- We expect our employees to be professional, so our process needs to be professional.
- Stress confidentiality with the interview team.
- Provide a comfortable, non-intimidating atmosphere.

TRAINING THE INTERVIEW TEAM

- Process and Timeline
- The committee is advisory.
- Decide on interview questions & expected answers.
- Consensus vs. Unanimous
- Confidentiality
- Discussion occurs after all candidates are interviewed.

SCREENING APPLICATIONS

- Administrator(s) screens and selects candidates to be interviewed.
- To be interviewed, candidate must be appropriately certified for the position in Connecticut.
 - Check Certification 4 Ways:
 - Copy of Certification in Applitrack
 - <http://sdeportal.ct.gov/CECSFOI/FOILookup.aspx>
 - Call Certification Office at 860-713-6969
 - Need SS# or EIN# of person
 - Or approved by Central Office

Must have all required paperwork in Applitrack. (Applitrack no longer accepts incomplete applications.)

- Completed Signed Application in Applitrack
- Cover Letter
- Resume
- Three Letters of Reference
- Transcripts
- Certification Copies

SCREENING COVER LETTER

- Should be the candidate's best writing
- Pertinent information that should be included:
 - Date
 - Current Address
 - How candidate became aware of the position
 - Candidate's interest in the district
 - Which position the candidate is interested in
 - Certification information
 - Experiences and skills
 - Clear contact information

SCREENING RESUME

- Professional
- Experiences clearly articulated
- No gaps in dates of employment that are unexplained
- Statements are validated by other paperwork or can be confirmed by a basic background check.
- Resume includes:
 - Contact information
 - Job objective
 - Certification
 - College degree(s)
 - Teaching experience
 - Other work experience
 - Association memberships
 - Awards
 - References and credentials
- Should not include:
 - Photo, age, gender, race, marital status, family information, children, physical description

QUESTIONS TO ASK YOURSELF AS YOU READ A RESUME & PACKET

- What has this person actually accomplished?
- What training has this person received?
- What will they add to our school, our district?
- Is there evidence of excellent interpersonal skills?
- Do I want this person teaching in our school?
- Is there an attention to detail that I can detect?
- Are the references current? Dates on their letters?
- How is the candidate described in the letters?
- Are there consistencies between the resume and the letters of reference?
- Transcripts – courses dropped, performance, student teaching grade
- Is this person a team player who values positive relationships?
- Is there evidence this person possesses a high degree of emotional intelligence?

Interview

- Administrators will schedule interviews.
 - This starts the interview process.
- Notify candidates in writing/email to confirm date, time, location, and process.
- Team – arrive 15 minutes prior to the interview
 - Review questions
 - Divide up questions
 - Review process
- Clean environment
- Water, pad, pen for candidates
- Food for interview team, if needed
- Name plates for team members
- Greeter for candidates
- Introduce candidate to team

THE "DO'S" OF INTERVIEWING

- **DO ASK THE SAME QUESTIONS OF EVERY CANDIDATE!**
 - Follow-up & probing questions can vary
- Do make the candidate feel at ease.
- Do ask open-ended questions rather than close-ended or leading questions.
- Do let the candidate do most of the talking.
- Do be careful of your non-verbal communication.
- Do be aware of your own bias and preference.
- Do pause after a candidate appears to have finished a response.
- Do fill out Plus/Delta sheets before next interview.

THE "DON'TS" OF INTERVIEWING

- Don't phrase questions in a way that suggests the answer.
- Don't rely on first impressions.
- Don't compare candidates with each other.
- Don't discuss candidates until all interviews are complete.
- Don't make the "halo effect" error.
 - a perceptual bias where we assume that a person has many positive qualities if they have one positive quality
- Don't ask trick questions.
- Don't ask questions that violate the candidate's civil rights.

BEHAVIOR-BASED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

- "Skillful questioning during the interview, however, can reveal behavior patterns that indicate with high predictability whether the candidate can, or would, perform the job required." (Beebe, 1996)
- Past experience/behavior can be indicative of future success.
- Samples:
 - Give me an example of when you showed initiative and took the lead.
 - Describe a lesson you taught that required students to think critically.
 - As opposed to:
 - What is your philosophy on teaching critical thinking skills?
 - Describe a situation in which you were able to use your interpersonal skills to diffuse a contentious situation.
- Select interview questions around this concept.

CONDUCTING LEGAL INTERVIEWS

● LEGAL

- Age: Proof of age implies a preference
-
- Family: None Family: All inquiries
-
- Handicap: Concerning specified sensory, mental questions that divulge a condition
- or physical handicaps which reasonably relate
- to job performance
-
- Citizenship: Applicants eligibility for Employment – I9
-
- Height & Weight: none inquiry
-
- Marital Status: none
-
- Military: Questions about education, training, of discharge
- experience
-
- Name: Name applicant is known by by court order or marriage/divorce
-
- National Origin: questions about bilingual or origin, birthplace
- multilingual abilities if they are a requirement of the job
-
- Organizations: questions about organizations unless that they list all memberships
- it concerns a protected class (race, creed, etc.)
-
- Race: none
-
- Relatives: names of relatives already employed by by the district the district
-
- Religion or creed: none inquiry
- Sex: none

ILLEGAL

- Age: Any question which
- Handicap: General
- Citizenship: any inquiry
- Height & Weight: any
- Marital Status: any inquiry
- Military: type or condition
- Name: If name has changed
- National Origin: ancestry,
- Organizations: requiring
- Race: any inquiry
- Relatives: If not employed
- Religion or creed: any
- Sex: any inquiry

INTERVIEWING

Areas Questions Should Cover

- Knowledge of subject matter
 - Knowledge of child development
 - Knowledge of individual student needs
 - Differentiation of instruction
 - Instructional strategies
 - Classroom management
 - Communication
 - Instructional planning
 - Assessment of student learning
 - Professional commitment and responsibility
 - Emotional Intelligence
-
- QUESTION BANK ON INTERNET

<http://www.meriden.k12.ct.us/Content/Employment.asp>

Candidate Name _____

Date of Interview _____

PLUS/DELTA SHEET

+



FURTHER PROBING QUESTIONS FOR NEXT ROUND:

AFTER THE INTERVIEW

- Don't rush the process
- Plus/Delta sheets completed
- Consensus reached by committee
 - Question is: Are we comfortable moving forward with these people?
 - Consensus is not win/lose, it is win/win.
- Once finalists are chosen, complete "Administrators' Hiring Checklist" and complete Personnel Recommendation Form.
- Administrators cannot offer employment or promise employment to any candidate.
 - Inform Candidate they are recommended to meet with Superintendent for final interview

Unsuccessful Candidate Script

Calls to the unsuccessful candidate can be challenging for both the person calling, and the person receiving the call. Although the candidate was unsuccessful in securing this position, there is always the possibility that the candidate will re-apply for another position in our district. How we treat unsuccessful candidates will impact our reputation as a district.

As such, it is critical that we afford each candidate the respect and professionalism he or she deserves. In order to do so, the following script should be considered when calling to inform them of your decision:

Administrator:

“Thank you for taking the time to complete the application and interviewing with us. After an extensive discussion by the interview committee, we have decided to choose another candidate for the position. We want to thank you for your interest in the Meriden Public Schools and for your time and effort in interviewing with our committee.

If the candidate seeks feedback from you, please be advised of the following:

- Speak only about the candidate, and not about the performance or qualifications of any other candidate
- Offer pointed feedback. Statements such as, “The committee really liked you” isn’t feedback. Statements such as, “committee members had a questions about the depth of your answer regarding restorative practices” or “your response to the question on data driven decision making did not relay strong experience in this area to the committee”.

The language below can be drafted in a letter to be sent to the unsuccessful candidate if you are not able to reach him or her by telephone: Two (2) telephone calls on two different days should be attempted prior to sending a letter/email

Thank you for taking the time to interview with us for the (insert job title). We have selected another candidate to move forward for an interview with the superintendent. The interview committee felt that the candidate we are moving forward better meets our needs as a school community. We wish you the very best in your in future endeavors.

ADMINISTRATORS' HIRING CHECKLIST IN INFORMED K12

InformedK12 formerly Chalk HELP SIGN IN

Administrators' Hiring Checklist

Initiated 1 minute ago

Currently on Step 1 of 2

Please fill out the following form and submit it below.

[Download Blank Form](#) [Save progress](#)

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**Meriden Public Schools
Administrators' Hiring Checklist**

Name of Candidate

School

Position

Replacement for

Credentials
Each person who is to be interviewed must have the following on file in Applitrack at the time of the interview:

- Cover Letter/Letter of Interest
- Resume
- Three (3) Letters of Recommendation
- Copies of Transcripts
- Copy of Certification*

*If person is not yet certified, please contact Personnel before sending candidate to Central Office for consideration.

Before Recommending Candidate to Central Office:
When you are ready to recommend a candidate to the superintendent, you need to forward to the Personnel Office the following:

- Plus/Delta Sheets for all candidates interviewed
- Interview Question Sheets from the interviews
- Three (3) references called and entered via online Chalk form
- Completed Personnel Recommendation Form
- This Checklist

*Administrators must not offer employment to any candidate.

Administrator's Name Date

Attachments:

[Add Attachment](#)

https://app.informedk12.com/link_campaigns/administrators-hiring-checklist-electronic-form?token=90de332f-3d44-46b2-8316-350ff4952d5f

HIRING REMINDERS

What needs to be sent to the Assistant Superintendent for Personnel & Talent Development:

- Prior to first interview
 - List of committee members
 - List of candidates being interviewed
 - List of questions being used for interview
 - Timeline and dates/times for training and interviews
- After the last interview
 - Delta sheets & questions sheets for each person interviewed
 - ***These must be saved for 3 years following the interview.***
 - Reference sheets submitted via Informed K12
 - At least one reference must be from a recent supervisor
 - Recommended candidate(s) name(s)

Reminders:

- Only candidates with complete applications or approval from Central Office will be interviewed.
 - Complete Signed Applitrack Application
 - Cover letter, resume, 3 letters, certification, transcripts
 - You can check certification 3 ways:
 - Look at certification in Applitrack
 - <http://sdeportal.ct.gov/CECSFOI/FOILookup.aspx>
 - Call State Certification Office at 860-713-6969
 - You will need SS# or EIN#
 - When in doubt, contact Personnel Office
- Feedback given or attempted to be given to all candidates interviewed.

Washington Middle School
Grade 8 Math

SAMPLE TIMELINE

March 21 – Select Candidates to be interviewed

March 24 – Meet with Committee to pick/review questions and discuss candidates

March 24-29 – schedule interviews

April 7 & 8 – interviews

April 11 – pick finalist(s)

April 1, 2018

Suzy Smith
123 Main Street
Meriden, CT 06451

Dear Ms. Smith:

This is to confirm your interview at Washington Middle School for the seventh grade math position. Your interview is scheduled for Thursday, April 7, 2018 at 3:15 p.m. in the Media Center.

You will interview with a committee that includes:

- Mr. Southland, Principal
- Mrs. Showerda, Assistant Principal
- Mr. Jones, Eighth Grade Math Teacher
- Ms. Thomas, Sixth Grade Math Teacher

Please contact us with any questions at 203-235-6606.

We look forward to meeting with you.

Sincerely,

Ray Southland
Principal

FILL OUT EMPLOYEE REFERENCE SHEET IN INFORMED K12

InformedK12 formerly chalk HELP SIGN IN

Candidate Reference Check Form

Initiated a few seconds ago

Currently on Step 1 of 2
Please fill out the following form and submit it below.

[Download Blank Form](#) [Save progress](#)

~ Page 1 / 2 ~

Meriden Public Schools
Meriden, CT 06450

EMPLOYEE REFERENCE CHECK FORM

Candidate

Position Title

School Position is at

Name of Reference

Current Employment of Reference

Relationship to Candidate

Length of Time Reference has Known Candidate

Date and Time of Contact

Please ask the reference to talk about the candidate in relation to the topics listed below:

- How would you rate the candidate's job performance?**
- Candidate's Strengths/Skills**
- Has the candidate ever been the subject of intensive supervision? What are some target areas for growth (personal and professional) for this candidate?**
- Has the candidate been under consideration for termination or non-renewal for cause proceedings?**

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- Have there been any allegations regarding (name of applicant) which Meriden Public Schools should be aware of?**
- How would you rate the candidate's attendance?**
- Other Items of Special Note/Additional Comments**

Would you hire (rehire) this person if you were in a position to do so?

Yes, without reservation
 Yes, with some reservation
 No

If No, please explain.

Signature of Person Conducting Interview

Date

Attachments:

[Add Attachment](#)

[Submit form / Enviar formulario](#)

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https://app.informedk12.com/link_campaigns/candidate-reference-check-form-electronic-form?token=5a4be772-80c8-4f79-b073-c1ed4220f953