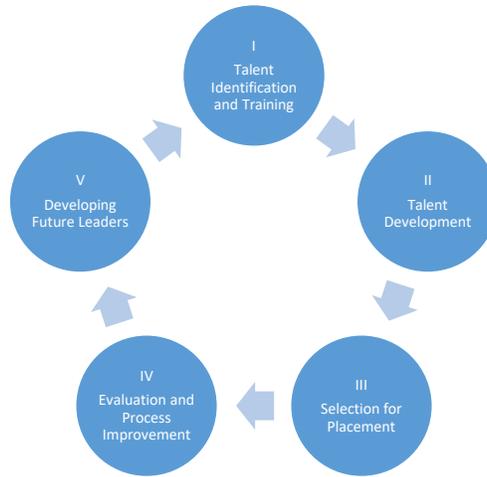


BERKLEY ACCELERATED MIDDLE SCHOOL, INC.

LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION PLAN



Succession planning should be a proactive rather than reactive approach to school leadership transition. Succession planning works best when Board members and the School Leaders collaborate in advance to create the conditions for a successful leadership transition, whether or not it is expected in the near future

ACTIONS OF THE BOARD AND CURRENT SCHOOL LEADER:

- Establish clear standards for school leadership that can guide in the selection of future principals
- Ensure that school leadership standards and principal evaluation systems emphasize leaders' responsibilities to develop teacher-leaders and future school leaders.
- Support the professional development of current and future school leaders.
- Develop tools to better predict who has the potential to succeed as a principal.
- Carefully screen a pool of future school leaders and provide them with stretch assignments that will test their skills and broaden their horizons.
- Hold current principal accountable for identifying and developing a member of the staff who could lead the school to a higher level of effectiveness.
- Take responsibility for developing at least one person in the school who is ready to step up as principal.
- Insist that assistant principals engage in and master all aspects of school leadership, with a particular focus on curriculum and instruction
- Use annual performance reviews to identify teachers with leadership potential, have conversations with those teachers to encourage them to pursue a career as a principal and create expanded leadership opportunities for them within the school.
- Identify the natural leaders in the building — the teachers to whom other teachers gravitate and from whom they take their lead — and give them opportunities to grow.

COMMUNICATION PLAN

In the event of a departure of the current School Leader, the Board Chairman will be the main point of contact. The Board Chairman will call an emergency board meeting to notify all the board members and discuss the next steps. Once the plan of action has been determined, a message from the Board Chairman should be sent to the school's key stakeholders detailing the plan.

INTERIM SCHOOL LEADER

The Board needs to decide who will be the Board Designee to perform the School Leader's essential duties while the board conducts a search for a new School Leader.

- The Interim Leader will be an assistant principal associated with BAMS with at least three years of Highly Effective evaluations. At the end of the Interim year, the Board will decide to offer the Interim Leader a permanent contract or not based on evaluation.
- If there is not an assistant principal associated with BAMS with at least three years experience and Highly Effective evaluations, the Board will complete an executive search through a search committee.

RATIONALE: ADVANTAGES OF PROMOTING FROM WITHIN

Top-performing school districts tend to promote from within. Creating the capacity for succession planning and growing leaders from within contributes to the overall health of the organization because it focuses on recognizing and increasing the value of the people in the organization. An emphasis on growing leaders as a best practice is consistent with private sector management and succession planning literature. To find principals who can lead and improve student learning, a school system must be able to identify teachers who have demonstrated leadership capacity and are increasing academic achievement, intellectual development, social growth and responsible behavior for all groups of students. The identification of talented educators with a high potential to be future principals becomes an important incentive in making evaluations for all staff more open and honest; holding teachers accountable for academic, intellectual, behavioral and character development in students; differentiating between teachers who are excellent instructors and those who are not; and determining whether the high-performing teachers have demonstrated leadership with other teachers. Professionalism is about administrators and teachers taking pride in the continuous improvement of their knowledge and skills as educators and in the success of their students. Professionals stay current with the education literature and are always seeking out new ideas to better themselves and their colleagues in order to advance the success of their students. When this is the norm in a school's culture, teachers naturally begin to obtain the knowledge and skills that will enable them to aspire to become good leaders. Successful districts take ownership of "growing their own" future leaders, rather than expecting to obtain ready-made leaders "off-the-shelf" from university programs or other districts. Highly effective districts, including many recipients and runners-up for the Broad Prize, have long-standing policies of growing their own leaders.

DEFINE THE SEARCH (IF NEEDED)

The Board will determine the job description and qualifications of the School Leader. The School Leader Job Description will include but is not limited to the following:

- Reports to BAMS School Governing Board
- Supervises all school personnel, directly and/or indirectly
- To serve as the chief administrator of a school in developing and implementing policies, programs, curriculum activities, and budgets in a manner that promotes the educational development of each student and the professional development of each staff member.
- General Planning: conceptualizes the broad goals of the school and plans accordingly to ensure that procedures and schedules are implemented to carry out the total school program.
- General Coordination: ensures that the school program is compatible with the legal, financial and organizational structure of the school system. The School Leader defines the responsibilities and accountability of staff members and develops plans for interpreting the school program to the community.
- Enhancement of Personnel Skills: provides activities which facilitate the professional growth of the school staff and enhance the quality of the instructional program.
- School Objectives: identifies the annual objectives for the instructional, extracurricular, and athletic programs of the school.
- Curriculum Objectives: ensures that instructional objectives for a given subject and/or classroom are developed, and involves the faculty and others in the development of specific curricular objectives to meet the needs of the school program. The School Leader provides opportunities for staff participation in the school program.
- Establishes Formal Work Relationships: evaluates student progress in the instructional program by means that include the maintaining of up-to-date student data. The School Leader supervises and appraises the performance of the school staff.
- Facilitates Organizational Efficiency: maintains inter-school system communication. The School Leader maintains good relationships with students, staff, and parents.
- New Staff and Students: orients and assists new staff and new students and provides opportunities for their input in the school program.
- Community: encourages the use of community resources, cooperates with the community in the use of school facilities, interprets the school program for the community, and maintains communication with community members.
- Supplies and Equipment: manages, directs, and maintains records on the materials, supplies and equipment which are necessary to carry out the daily school routine. The School Leader involves the staff in determining priorities for instructional purposes.
- Services: organizes, oversee, and provides support to the various services, supplies, material, and equipment provided to carry out the school program. The School Leader makes use of community resources.

SEARCH COMMITTEE (IF NEEDED)

The Board will decide whether a Search Committee is needed. The Search Committee will be comprised of at least 2 Board Members (including the Chairman) and 3 School Staff Members. The Search Committee, may also be used as the Hiring Committee. Note: If more than 2 members of the Board are involved in search meetings, these meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law and must be open meetings. The Board Chairman will serve as the Head of the Search Committee. The Board Chairman will oversee the search and ensure that involved persons are well trained and well prepared for their task.

The Board Chairman ensures that members involved in the search adhere to certain requirements:

- Read and agree in writing to be guided by the Charter Application, vision, and mission of the school in the interview process.
- Agree on the minimum qualifications for candidates selected to be interviewed.
- Affirm a commitment to locating and considering for employment a wide pool of applicants, including qualified minority persons, women, veterans, and disabled individuals.
- Draft and agree on a written job description for the position to be filled.
- Agree on the scope of the search (i.e., internal, local, state, or national.)
- Establish a deadline for the recommendations of the committee.
- Affirm confidentiality and communication guidelines regarding candidates Job Posting The job will be posted both internally & externally. The job position can be advertised or posted in various locations, depending on the scope of the search. The wording of the job posting should include the vision and mission statements of the school along with a job description. This juncture is also a great time for the Board to review and firm up the administrative structure and organizational chart of the school.

HIRING COMMITTEE

The Hiring Committee will be comprised of 2 Governing Board members and 3 School Staff Members, chosen by the Board. The Hiring Committee may be the same as the Search Committee. Note: If more than 2 members of the Board are involved in hiring meetings, these meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law and must be open meetings.

REVIEW APPLICATIONS

Applications will be reviewed by the Board. The Board should review resumes and rate applicants based on the agreed upon selection criteria for the position. A rating form is useful and provides a consistent checklist for Board members to use in evaluating candidates. Board members should be mindful of the tendency to approve of applications that look like their own credentials. Boards should be open to viewing the experience and education of candidates whose background is different from the majority experience. Applicants that do not meet the minimum established criteria should be screened out immediately, keeping in mind that all documentation on candidates may be subject to an open records request. Notification to candidates no longer under consideration should be sent by the Chairman as promptly as possible. Candidates can reasonably be rejected on grounds such as the following:

- Does not have required degree
- Withdrew candidacy
- Not enough experience
- First choice declined
- Second choice
- Third choice
- No teaching or administrative experience
- Not aligned with vision and mission
- Education not complete
- Inadequate communication skills

- References weak
- Poor writing sample
- Poor teaching demonstration
- Failed background check

The remaining candidates may be grouped as strong candidates and as possible candidates with more information needed. After the initial review of resumes, the Board may decide to solicit additional material, including written references or other background. This process can be conducted via telephone interviews. Internal candidates should generally receive the same consideration as all other candidates.

SELECTION OF CANDIDATES TO INTERVIEW

The Board will select candidates to interview based on the predetermined qualifications. After candidates have been identified, an interview schedule for the Board should be drawn up by the Chairman. A copy of the candidate's resume and any supporting documents, such as recommendation letters, should be provided in confidence to all individuals who will meet with the candidate. The Board Chairman should ensure a consistent structure for candidates' evaluations by interviewers. The Chairman should also let the candidates know when a decision is expected to be reached and how they will be notified.

INTERVIEW OF CANDIDATES

The Hiring Committee would interview all candidates selected by the Board, and subsequently, make a recommendation to the Board. Interviewing candidates is one of the most important stages in the search and selection process. Two very important things are taking place at this stage: the Board is assessing candidates, and the candidates are assessing the position and the charter school. The Board will devise a list of core questions based on the job-related criteria that will be asked of all candidates. A consistent interview structure for every candidate allows the Board to make the best comparisons, ensures that each candidate is treated fairly, and minimizes unconscious biases. Note: If more than 2 members of the Board are involved in interview meetings, these meetings are subject to the Sunshine Law and must be open meetings. Interviews of candidates are NOT a valid reason to resolve the Board into Executive Session. The questions should be aimed at discovering what the candidate can bring to the position and the school, and must be limited to issues that directly relate to the job to be performed. There are inquiries that are not permitted because they request or allow use of information that may lead to an unfair or biased decision

SELECTION OF FINAL CANDIDATE

References must be checked before an offer is made, including verification of degrees obtained by the applicant. It is expected that letters of reference will be part of the application. If references are not needed for initial screenings, they should be checked after the candidate is interviewed. A background check available through the Florida Bureau of Investigation is also indicated for all final candidates. The state offers an online background check process. The FLDOE should also be contacted to determine whether a candidate appears on the FLDOE "red flag" list. In addition, the candidate should be asked if there are any previous employment agreements still in effect that would impact his or her candidacy. Selection of the final candidate is decided by a majority vote of the Board. After the Board has fully discussed the evaluations of all of the candidates, the Board will make a recommendation to the Chairman. This recommendation is usually done in memo form and should include the names of

candidates, ranked or unranked. It reviews the search process, including criteria for evaluation, and discusses the strengths of and concerns about each candidate. The Sunshine Law requires that the list of final candidates be made public at least 14 days prior to hiring, and no offer of employment can be made until the 14 days has passed. Once the Board has made a hiring decision, the offer letter should come from the Chairman, who should be the primary contact on behalf of the school with the candidate. In addition, the Chairman should be the “one voice” of the school in employment negotiations on behalf of the Board. The Board will communicate with legal counsel prior to making an offer of employment in order to avoid any unintended contract or employment at will issues. Once the successful candidate is identified, the Board Chairman should be authorized by the Board to make the offer of employment, write the written offer, and sign the employment contract. The Board may negotiate the specific terms of the employment contract in Executive Session, but then will vote on the contract in regular session.

RECORD KEEPING

It is a best practice for the charter school to maintain summary information about the search process, the applicants and the hired personnel. The Chairman and Secretary are responsible for ensuring that complete records are kept during the search. As a best practice, search files should be kept for two years from the dates of appointment of the candidate selected.

The search files should include the following:

- Position description;
- Actual dated copies of announcements, advertising, and other solicitations for applications and nominations;
- Applications, nominations, correspondence, evaluations, references, and a record of verbal contacts with or about applicants or nominees;
- Minutes for all search related meetings to include selection criteria, decision making, and voting;
- Evaluations of candidates at each step of the interview process, including evaluations of candidates who are interviewed and reasons why candidates were not referred for selection.

EVALUATION PROCESS

The new School Leader will be subject to the School Leader Evaluation Plan.