

## Appointments Policy

### Purpose

Northern Health School (NHS) is committed to appointing the most suitable candidate for each vacancy, promoting transparent and legally compliant recruitment practices to ensure that all appointments are based on merit and selection criteria that is relevant to the position.

Procedures to be followed when making appointments are contained in the NHS Procedures manual.

### Principles

- a) Northern Health School is an equal opportunities employer.
- b) The Northern Health School Board will abide by all relevant legislation and collective employment agreements when employing staff.
- c) The appointment of the Principal is the responsibility of the Board, who will be steered by the NZSTA Guidelines for Board of Trustees' Principal appointments (see Appendix).
- d) Appointments to senior management positions (Assistant Principal, Deputy Principal) will be made by a formally constituted subcommittee of the Board and confirmed by the full Board.
- e) The Principal is delegated to make appointments to all other positions on behalf of the Board in accordance with NHS appointment procedures.
- f) Staff appointments will be made within budgeted resources and appropriate approval must be obtained prior to commencement of recruitment.
- g) As a matter of routine all staff and volunteers are police vetted at the time of appointment / engagement and triennially thereafter.
- h) All necessary pre-employment checks will be completed prior to an offer of employment being made (police vetting, reference checking, ability to work in New Zealand, teacher registration etc).
- i) Reimbursement of actual and reasonable expenses incurred by applicants will be by negotiation with the principal, or in the case of the Principal's appointment, the Board Presiding Member, and in line with existing Collective Agreements.

Adopted	August 2024
Presiding Member	_____
Review Date	August 2027

## APPENDIX: Principal appointment procedures

In appointing a new principal, the over-riding purpose is for the Board to make the right decision. For this reason, the process should not be hurried. That there could be a gap between the last day of the departing Principal and the first day of the new Principal will not influence the appointment timeline. In such an eventuality, one (or more) Assistant / Deputy Principal(s) will be asked to step to an Acting Principal (Acting Co-Principal) role(s).

In appointing a Principal, the Board will be steered by the NZSTA *Guidelines for Boards of Trustees Principal Appointment*.

### 1. People involved in a principal appointment

- The full Board will be involved in the appointment process.
- The Board will utilise an independent external adviser who possesses both Principal and Board experience.
- NZSTA will be approached to provide a list of recommended external advisors.
- The incumbent Principal may provide advice and support for developing relevant documentation but will not be involved in appointment discussions or the decision-making process, other than as an applicant's referee.
- All principal appointment discussion will occur in public-excluded sessions of Board meetings. The incumbent Principal, and the staff representative if s/he is or may be considering applying for the position, will absent themselves during these times.

### 2. Involvement of staff

- All staff members will be consulted regarding the personal attributes, skills and experience they see as essential and desirable for the NHS principal.
- With guidance from the external advisor, one of the following processes will occur when conducting the consultation with staff:

Process A	Process B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Before the Principal position is advertised the Board will seek staff views on the essential and desirable personal attributes, skills and experience.</li><li>- The views of staff will be used in developing advertisements for the position.</li><li>- The essential and desirable personal attributes, skills and experience will be listed in the information pack.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Before shortlisting the Board will seek staff views on the essential and desirable personal attributes, skills and experience.</li><li>- The views of staff will be factored in when deciding the shortlist for the position.</li><li>- In completing the application form, applicants will reveal personal attributes, skills and experience that they consider they can offer if appointed to the position.</li></ul>

- The Board may seek the current Principal's thoughts on the draft essential and desirable personal attributes, skills and experience, job description and proposed advertisements.

### 3. Confidentiality

- Everyone involved with the Principal appointment will treat every application and accompanying referee's reports, both written and verbal, as strictly confidential.
- For reasons of privacy, short-listed applicants will not be required to address staff member and/or student groups as part of the decision-making process.

### 4. Who does what?

- Receipt of all applications will be acknowledged as decided ahead of time.
- Specific responsibilities in the process prior to the short-listing stage will be assumed by the external advisor, Board Presiding Member and, if necessary, individual Board members. The external advisor and/or Presiding Member will maintain a clear record of process and actions.

## **5. Advertising the position**

- A principal's application kit for applicants will be prepared before the position is advertised. The kit will be sent to prospective applicants on request by email. The kit will include:
  - a covering letter from the Board's Presiding Member
  - an application form
  - description of the school
  - the essential and desirable personal attributes, skills and experience; this can be a separate document or a part of the application form
  - a job description
  - the current annual report
  - the school's latest e-Tap report
  - NHS strategic and annual plans
  - Board members' profiles
  - referee report template with email address details for referees to send reports electronically
  - contact person details and appointment timeline
- The application form will include sections where (1) three referees are nominated who can specifically comment on an applicant's personal attributes, skill-set and experience (2) any disclosure statement is included, and (3) qualifications and relevant experience are detailed.
- Referee report template questions will focus specifically on each applicant's suitability for the Principal position focussing on their personal attributes, skill-set and experience together with their proven ability to lead and manage NHS through fulfilment of the job description.
- Applicants will be expected to include a covering letter and curriculum vitae with their application.
- The vacant Principal position will be advertised in two consecutive Education Gazettes with the closing date for applications being no less than seven days after the second Education Gazette's publication date.
- The position will be placed in the Education Gazette's featured paid print display advertisement section in addition to the standard no-charge section. In the standard no-charge section, the advertisement will be inserted in the Primary/Intermediate (Years 1-8), Area/Composite (Years 1-15), and Secondary (Years 7-15) sections.
- The Board may decide to advertise the Principal position in other media.

## **6. Short-listing, interviewing and decision-making**

- Unless anyone is unavoidably absent, or is applying for the position, all Board members except the current Principal will be involved in the short-listing, interview and decision-making processes.
- Only full Board members will have voting rights in the final decision.
- An additional staff member will also be on the panel to provide an extra staff voice. This staff member will not have voting rights.

- In the event there is currently no Māori person on the Board, such an appropriate person shall be invited by the Board to join the interview panel with full voting rights. If this person is the additional staff member s/he will have voting rights.
- If the staff trustee is an applicant for the Principal position, two staff members will be organised to provide a staff voice. These staff members will not have voting rights.
- If there is a Board student representative they will be involved in the short-listing, interview, and decision-making processes and have full voting rights. If there is no Board student representative, the Board may decide to co-opt a student to provide a student voice but they will not have voting rights.
- While non-Board participants do not have voting rights they fully participate in discussion during the short-listing, interview, and decision-making processes. They can also be allocated questions to ask short-listed applicants during the interview.
- The external advisor will be present at the interviews but will not have voting rights.
- The Board should consider whether they need to meet the shortlisted applicants before or after the interview, prior to the appointment being made.
- Prior to short-listing, applicants can arrange to visit the school and talk to the Board's Presiding Member and/or the current Principal. This will be done at the applicant's expense.

#### **6A Determining the short-list**

- All Board members will consider each application and accompanying three referee reports.
- With the guidance from the external advisor, one of the following processes will occur to determine the short-list:

Process A	Process B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Board will decide a short-list totalling no more than five applicants.</li> <li>- The external advisor or Board Presiding Member will contact the short-listed applicants advising them of this, and the time and place of interview.</li> <li>- The school will make required travel and accommodation arrangements and communicate these.</li> <li>- Using prepared questions, at a pre-arranged time there will be a teleconference involving the full Board with no fewer than two of the three referees for each of the short-listed applicants.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Board will decide a long-list of no more than eight applicants.</li> <li>- Using prepared questions, the external advisor or Board Presiding Member will make telephone contact with no less than two of the three referees for each of the long-list applicants. The information will be shared with the Board.</li> <li>- The Board will then reduce the long-list to a short-list totalling no more than five applicants.</li> <li>- The external advisor or Board Presiding Member will contact the short-listed applicants advising them of this, and the time and place of interview.</li> <li>- The school will make required travel and accommodation arrangements, and communicate these.</li> </ul>

- The Board may decide to conduct psychometric testing / cognitive testing of short-listed applicants. If so, this will be at the Board's expense and information detailing this will be included in the application kit.

## **6B Formulating the interview questions**

- With the guidance from the external advisor, a set of questions will be developed for the interview. These will be sent out to the appointment panel ahead of time to allow for adequate preparation.
- Each short-listed applicant will be asked the same set of questions. Arising from their answers, supplementary questions may be asked.
- In addition to learning a little about each person, the questions should focus on each applicant's suitability for the Principal position specifically aimed at their personal attributes, skill-set and experience together with their proven ability to lead and manage NHS through fulfilment of the job description.
- Each applicant may be required to make a brief prepared presentation on a topic relevant to NHS decided by the Board.

## **6C Interview**

- A suitable venue will be organised for the interviews with particular regard to privacy.
- The aim of the interview questions is to bring out the best in each applicant. It is the Board's responsibility to do its utmost to put the applicant at ease. Consideration should be given, but not limited to providing a glass of water, placement of chairs, whether tables will be used.
- The external advisor will be present at the interview but will not ask questions.
- The applicants will be given the opportunity to ask questions.
- At the conclusion of the interview the Board Presiding Member will indicate when a decision is likely to be communicated.

## **7. Decision**

- The external advisor will not have voting rights but will guide the Board in the best practice process to help it make a decision.
- The Board will make every attempt to make a unanimous decision. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached, an appointment can still be made provided that there is no more than one voting Board member who preferred one of the other short-listed applicants. If this Board member was strongly against appointing the applicant preferred by the other Board members no appointment should be made and the position re-advertised.
- If deemed helpful in making a decision, the Board will again contact one or more nominated referees for one or more applicants. This may be necessary arising from answers provided or not provided at the interview.
- The Board may need to follow up specific issues with applicants.
- If the Board is not satisfied that any of the short-listed candidates are suitable, it will not appoint and will re-advertise the position.
- Board members are to make themselves available at a pre-determined time in a following day should there be a need to reconvene to finalise a decision to appoint or not appoint.

## **8. Communicating the decision**

- The Board Presiding Member will offer the position by telephone to the successful applicant as soon as it is practicable. If the offer is accepted, a formal offer in writing will be sent by courier to the successful applicant.
- Upon receipt of an acceptance in writing, the Board Presiding Member, or in his/her absence a nominated Board member, will:
  - Contact the incumbent Principal advising him/her of the newly appointed Principal.
  - Telephone the unsuccessful short-listed applicants
  - Arrange for formal letters to be sent to unsuccessful applicants, both those who were short-listed and those who were not. The name of the newly appointed Principal will not be included in these letters.
  - Arrange for an email to be sent to all staff members advising them of the name of the newly appointed Principal. As soon as possible and with the consent of the newly appointed Principal, a brief one-page maximum size resume will be shared with staff members.
- As soon as possible, publicise the newly appointed Principal on the NHS website and arrange a press release.
- By email, advise all NHS stakeholder agencies of the new appointment.

#### **9. Finally**

- Material supplied by unsuccessful Principal applicants and referees' reports will be destroyed after 91 days. Until this date, the Board Presiding Member will hold this material securely.
- Material supplied by the successful applicant will be included on their personal file.