



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL
BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEEEDUCATION REQUIREMENTS FOR APPLICANTS
TO VICE PRINCIPAL AND PRINCIPAL SHORTLIST

*"We put not obstacle in anyone's way, so that no fault may be found with our ministry."
Second Corinthians 6:3*

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Meeting Date

October 5, 2023

Lynda Coulter, Executive Superintendent, Human Resources, Equity and Leadership
Margherita Di Fonzo, Senior Coordinator, Academic Services and Recruitment

RECOMMENDATION REPORT

Vision: *IN GOD'S IMAGE: Growing in
Knowledge, with Justice and Hope.*

Mission: *Nurturing the faith development and academic
excellence of our Catholic learning community through the
love of God, neighbour, and self.*



Brendan Browne
Director of Education

Adrian Della Mora
Associate Director of Academic
Affairs & Chief Operating Officer

Derek Boyce
Associate Director of Corporate
Services and Chief Commercial Officer

Ryan Putnam
Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report revisits the Board's mandatory requirement of the commencement of a master's degree for application to the position of vice principal, and the completion of a master's degree within three years of the appointment to the position of principal within the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB).

The report recommends that the education requirements for the position of principal and vice principal as outlined in regulation 176/10 of the *Ontario College of Teachers' Act* be incorporated into all future postings to address the continued shortage of qualified applicants.

The application of the education requirements as outlined in the regulation will remove the current barrier to those seeking school leadership and will enable a greater number of candidates to interview for vice principal. It will also address system succession planning needs associated with anticipated administrator attrition rates as our analysis reveals that 19% of current elementary and secondary administrators are eligible to retire within 5 years.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 10 hours.

B. PURPOSE

This report recommends the application of the education requirements outlined in regulation 176/10 of the *Ontario College of Teacher's Act* be followed in all future TCDSB principal and vice principal postings for shortlists.

There is an urgent need to increase the number of applicants for these administrative positions considering projected attrition trends and a concern relating to the work intensification.

C. BACKGROUND

1. In the past, the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) has required all applicants to commence a masters' degree to be granted an interview for the position of vice principal. Further, a vice principal must have completed a

- master's degree within three years of the appointment to the position of principal.
2. Over the last five to ten years, the cost and time commitment associated with the completion of a master's degree while fulfilling teaching and/or administrative duties have become a barrier to talented teachers seeking to become school leaders.
 3. Regulation 176/10 *Teachers' Qualifications, Ontario College of Teachers' Act* outlines the College's education requirements for principals. In addition to a post-secondary degree (undergraduate degree), certification in three divisions (primary, junior, intermediate, senior), and five years of teaching experience, candidates must hold **any one** of the following:
 - a. Two specialist or honour specialist qualifications
 - b. One specialist or honour specialist qualification and successful completion of at least one half the number of graduate post-secondary credits required to qualify for a master's degree...
 - c. A master's degree for which the candidate was required to complete at least 30 graduate post-secondary credits or their equivalent or a doctorate...
 - d. Successful completion of at least 30 graduate post-secondary credits or their equivalent....
 4. Candidates who meet the above noted education requirements are eligible to take the Principals' Qualification Program parts one and two offered by CPCO.
 5. The Board requires applicants for placement on a vice principal shortlist to have completed the Principals' Qualification Program part one, while applicants for placement on a principal shortlist must have completed both parts one and two of the Principals' Qualification Program.
 6. In comparison to the regulation's education requirements for principals, s. 35 of regulation 176/10 requires supervisory officers to hold a master's degree.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. Table 1 below lists the number of elementary and secondary principal retirements in the past four (4) years, and the subsequent need to place acting principals into elementary and secondary schools.

Table 1

| Year | ES Principal retirements as of June 30 of the academic year | SS Principal retirements as of June 30 of the academic year | ES and SS Acting Principals or Retired Administrator during the academic year |
|-----------|---|---|---|
| 2019-2020 | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| 2020-2021 | 8 | 9 | 3 |
| 2021-2022 | 22 | 9 | 8 |
| 2022-2023 | 22 | 10 | 1 |

Note: *Table 1 highlights the fact that retirement rates and administrator leaves are creating a need for additional shortlisted candidates.*

2. During the past two school years, the Board's principal and vice principal short lists have had to be replenished four times. The process to replenish the short lists is not only time consuming and labour intensive but has also not resulted in drawing enough qualified applicants to meet the needs of the system. Currently all four of the Board's short lists require replenishment as temporary and permanent vacancies remain following last spring's staffing process. A fall posting seeking applicants for all four principal and vice principal shortlists is expected to be issued shortly.
3. A demographic analysis of the number of current administrators who will be eligible to retire within the next 5 years reinforces the importance of succession planning.

Of the total number of administrators (Principals and Vice Principals)
19% are eligible to retire (Service Factor of 85) as of September 30, 2023:

- 69% of these administrators are from the elementary panel and
- 31% are from the secondary panel.
- 70% are females and
- 30% are males.

4. During the spring of 2023, elementary school teachers were asked to share what barriers they felt were preventing them from seeking formalized leadership opportunities. A great many teachers spoke about the fact that having to obtain a master's degree was problematic for them in terms of financial investment and work-life balance trade-offs.

"I would love to seek further leadership opportunities (Vice Principal, then principal) but I do not have a master's degree. This is a huge barrier for myself, as well as other wonderful employees with excellent leadership potential.... The cost of a master's program as well as the time it takes to complete is a huge barrier for all, but especially impacts women and people of colour. This requirement is not the norm at other school boards."

".... I feel like the system is designed to benefit the childless or men who are not taking on family responsibilities. This essentially cuts women with children out of leadership opportunities. Also, I think the board values educational degrees over experience. 20 years plus of teaching experience is far more valuable than barely any classroom experience and a master's degree...."

"The requirement for a master's degree is a barrier for many. Obtaining a master's degree is costly and for some staff (when coupled with high cost of living, lack of pay raises, etc) creates a real financial barrier...."

5. Similar comments were made by secondary school teachers surveyed in January 2021:

"Emphasis on a master's degree, rather than experience and leadership qualities leads to the promotion of those who are qualified on paper but who may otherwise be unsuitable while preventing experienced teachers who would be excellent administrators from considering the jump to a VP role."

"The requirements and financial stress of spending potentially tens of thousands of dollars to qualify for a position that truly needs more hands-on training rather than academic advancement is a huge roadblock in my opinion...."

It's clear from the data, that among this group of educators, the Board's master's degree requirement was seen as a barrier to formal leadership. This is likely to be especially true for those educators who have school-aged children at home, caring for elderly family members, or for those individuals who may not have the financial ability to pay for graduate studies.

E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

The Human Resources Department will monitor and assess the recommendation in this report through on-going collaboration with the Executive Superintendent of Human Resources, Equity and Leadership.

F. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the education requirements as outlined in regulation 176/10 of the *Ontario College of Teachers' Act* for all future TCDSB shortlist postings for vice principals and principals.