

Ministry Consultation - Hiring Practices

The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback on the government's proposed changes to hiring practices.

The Ministry's Key Goals:

1. **Student Achievement:** Success and well-being of every child.
2. **Protecting Front Line Staff:** The planned changes are to be managed through attrition protection for teachers.
3. **Fiscal Responsibility:** Delivering services in an effective and efficient manner.
4. **Evidence-based Decision Making:** Grounded in sound policy, inter-jurisdictional scans, and empirical research.
5. **Diverse teaching staff:** Enhance the quality of student education through a diverse teaching staff.

1. What are the implications of the proposals on hiring practices of teachers in Ontario in relation to the five key goals?

General

- The OCDSB supports the proposed move away from the current hiring restrictions contained in Regulation 274;
 - The OCDSB supports hiring practices that are fair, consistent and equitable;
 - The OCDSB does not support any restrictions that impede its ability to hire the best candidates based on needs of students; and
 - The OCDSB welcomes the removal of barriers to equitable hiring practices that will facilitate/promote increased diversity in teaching staff.
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- OCDSB, like many other boards, has advocated for the repeal of Regulation 274 – Hiring Practices based on interference with school boards' ability to make hiring decisions based on who is the best candidate for the position;
 - The proposed changes, insofar as they will remove the strict seniority hiring requirements set out in the Regulation, will support student achievement and support school boards' efforts to increase the diversity of teaching staff;
 - School boards support fair, transparent and equitable hiring practices, and do not support restrictions on rights as an employer to make hiring decisions that are in the best interests of students; and
 - The removal of the requirement to maintain and monitor the two lists, and the associated requirements related to each, will help to alleviate some of the administrative burdens that the regulation imposed on school districts when it was introduced, resulting in more efficient and effective use of resources.

2. Regarding this proposal, what issues will need to be considered for implementation?

- Primary consideration should be given to the role of schools boards as the employer, and interfere as little as possible with the employer's right to make fair and effective hiring decisions based on local needs;
- General guidelines, based on guiding principles such as transparency, fairness, equity, could be incorporated into a PPM, without limiting or interfering with specific hiring processes at the board level;
- Regulation 274, through its current requirements, has inadvertently contributed to the current lack of availability of OTs, in part due to pressure OTs feel to be on multiple school board lists; and
- Changes should address/remove challenges associated with providing instructional continuity in the classroom where multiple postings are required.
- Suggestions for a PPM on Fair and Equitable Hiring Practices:
Ensure that every school board has a hiring policy, procedure and process that is equitable, transparent and monitored and must include the following principles:
 - a) A posting protocol for vacant positions, including timelines;
 - b) Hiring teams that are trained in and value equity and diversity, conscious and unconscious bias, equitable hiring practices;
 - c) An interview or similar process for every vacancy, including unbiased and consistent criteria and rubrics to evaluate applicants;
 - d) Candidate debriefing upon request;
 - e) Periodic review/auditing of the process; and
 - f) Board procedures that address conflict of interest concerns (e.g. reporting relationships with family members), whistleblowing, complaints procedure to address concerns related to discriminatory practices or decisions.

3. Are there alternative approaches that you would like to put forward that would achieve the government's five key goals?

- Rescind Regulation 274 and do not replace with new regulation; and
- Develop (in consultation with OPSBA, local boards, federations, and unions) a PPM that sets out guiding principles for hiring – equity, fairness, transparency

4. Are there any other comments you would like to provide, keeping in mind the five key goals?

- Regulation 274 has disadvantaged teachers who are new to the profession, and has become a deterrent to entering the profession (6 years post-secondary, followed by a minimum of 16 months as an OT/LTO to qualify for permanent employment), except for hard to fill assignments (FSL, technology).