

Lakeland Joint School District #272

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**LJSD Vision: A community committed to academic excellence ...
dedicated to student success.**

Date: September 12, 2025

To: Members of the Board

From: Brook Cunningham, HR Director

Re: Hiring Process Changes

Hiring Process Changes

Dear Members of the Board,

To ensure we continue hiring the very best employees for our School District, we are updating our hiring practices. The following changes have been implemented:

- **Position Postings:** Building Administrators and Directors are now required to post all positions either district-wide (internally) or externally. In-building only postings will no longer be permitted.
- **Interview Process:** To streamline hiring, only one interview panel will be convened for each position. This panel will consist of key stakeholders relevant to the role. Having a single panel ensures consistency, allows all members to hear the same information at the same time, and helps prevent conflicting recommendations.

During this review, we also found that the current Board policy on hiring is outdated and not fully aligned with our procedures. Administration will work with the Policy Committee to update the policy and will bring a recommendation forward for Board approval.

Thank you for your support as we refine our processes to better serve our district and community.

Steps to Hire a Certified Employee

Separation Occurs or New Position is Needed

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- ☐ Resignation, Retirement Announcement or Confirmation of Termination or Non-Renewal must be received by Human Resources OR
 - ☐ New Position is needed because of increased enrollment, change in programs, identified student need, etc.
 - ☐ **CONSIDER:**
 - ☐ For Certified Non-Renewal or Termination - has the 10-day period for appeal/rebuttal expired?
 - ☐ Will you rehire into the position as-is, or will you be changing the assignment and/or FTE?
 - ☐ Before opening the position, do we need to reassign certified staff within the building to different grade levels or content areas?
 - ☐ If the position to open is in the same classification type that your team has interviewed for within the last two weeks (10 business days), you may still use those interviews as the candidate pool for selection, rather than following all the steps below. If the interviews were held over 10 days prior, the entire interview process must be repeated.

Create a Job Request (With HR Staffing Form)

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- ☐ Access the form on the LJSd website under Staff Links> Forms> "[HR-Staffing Changes/Requests](#)" form (Link at Bottom of this doc also)
 - ☐ Replacing the position as-is? Be sure to include the name of the person being replaced.
 - ☐ Changing the Assignment and/or FTE? Be sure to include the Title, person replaced, and FTE of the modified position and in the **Additional Info for HR & Superintendent/CFO**, include a statement about why you are requesting the change (i.e. Increase FTE due to student enrollment)
 - ☐ New Position? Be sure to include the Title, FTE and in the **Additional Info for HR & Superintendent/CFO**, include a statement about why the new position is needed (i.e. SWD needs exceed current staffing resources.)
 - ☐ When all routers have reviewed the position, you will receive notification that the position has either been Approved or Denied.
 - ☐ If Approved, move on to *Post In-Building*. You can also find a Guest Teacher/Substitute for the position at this point, if needed. If Denied, HR will contact you for next steps.

Posting

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- ❑ During the school year, and after the Voluntary and Involuntary Transfer process has taken place ([Board Policy 5220](#)) all certified positions must be posted In-District, via Frontline, for a minimum of 2 school days (*5 weekdays in Summer, unless it is within 2 weeks of start of school year*). Day 1 begins when the posting is made before 1:00 pm on a school day. **The building principal may email in-building to notify current staff of the in-district posting.**

- ❑ ALTERNATIVE: A Principal may shorten this 2-day posting period by contacting all certified staff in person that have the needed endorsement to see if they are interested in the position. Contact HR for a list of staff who hold the needed endorsement.

❑ CONSIDER:

- ❑ When a position is open for the NEXT school year, Category 1 employees must wait until the position is posted Out of District before they can apply.
 - ❑ Guest teachers must wait until the position is posted In- and/or Out-of-District before they can apply.
 - ❑ Interested employees without the needed endorsement: Contact HR for instructions.
 - ❑ An employee wishing to increase their FTE may only be considered after
 - ❑ No employee with the equivalent FTE to the posted position is qualified AND
 - ❑ No employee with the equivalent FTE to the posted position is interested
 - ❑ At the conclusion of the In-Building posting period, move to *Review List of In-Building Applicants*
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Review Applications = Pre-Screening Committee

- ☐ AFTER the closing date of the position (see below for Open Until Filled positions), email HR Director to close position online, include Pre-Screening Spreadsheet. (The position cannot remain open to gather further applicants if interviews have been scheduled).
 - ☐ Priority should be given to:
 - ☐ Applications with "Complete" or "Pending" status
 - ☐ Applications with "Incomplete" status where applicant is a current employee
- ☐ Pre-Screening Committee Requirements:
 - ☐ A minimum of two employees must be on the Pre-Screening Committee, one should be an immediate supervisor to the position open - review with an overall eye on the required job qualifications so as not to bias the candidates before interviews.
 - ☐ Pre-Screen staff team members may sit in on an interview team, but be careful to avoid bias and prejudgment.
 - ☐ REVIEW all online anonymous REFERENCES - these are a very good source of pre-screening input. If any are not complete, please ask HR Assistant to resend the requests.
 - ☐ Documentation must be submitted to justify the candidates for interview - email HR Director
 - ☐ Documentation must justify how/why applicants were included or denied recommendation to the Candidate pool, all indicators being equal.
 - ☐ [Required Template](#)
- ☐ Unless there are not enough qualified candidates, it is recommended 3-5 candidates are chosen for interview pool.
- ☐ OPEN UNTIL FILLED: Review applications for these positions at least weekly. Give at least 24 hours online before closing position by changing to a specific closing date for the position.
- ☐ **CONSIDER:**
 - ☐ Look for the **Notes** section on each applicant Summary document, and if included, follow any listed instructions.
- ☐ After you determine applicants to interview, then move on to *Set Interview Team*

Set Interview Team & Materials

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- ☐ Identify interview team - your team must include a diversity of perspectives with the following as examples:
 - ☐ Immediate Supervisor/Admin/Director
 - ☐ Colleagues
 - ☐ Classified staff that will work with employee
 - ☐ At least one parent and/or student on interview team (if not possible, explain reason to Superintendent).
 - ☐ Identify questions and prompts
 - ☐ [All Interview Materials and Documents HERE:](#)

- ☐ Interview ?'s - coincide with appropriate Record Sheet
- ☐ Writing Prompts (provided to candidates prior to scheduled interview)
- ☐ Develop a [Forced-Choice Matrix](#) from your Candidate pool
- ☐ Develop [Interview Team and Schedule Template](#)
- ☐ ALL interviews must contain a minimum of one team and when time allows a second layer. Some examples of a second exercise could be:
 - ☐ Writing Prompt
 - ☐ Teaching/Pedagogical Demonstration (approx 10-15 min)
 - ☐ Scenario-based Questions
 - ☐ Hands-on Demonstration
 - ☐ Other appropriate interview tasks
- ☐ Correspond with interview team via email to provide the Interview Schedule and let them know which Interview Team they will sit on, then move on to *Schedule Interviews*
- ☐ Reminder: All information must remain confidential
- ☐ Interview packet guidelines:
 - ☐ Provide Interview Protocol, Forced Choice Matrix & Interview questions
 - ☐ Application packets for all candidates being interviewed must be provided to the interview panel.
 - ☐ If prior interview materials / exercises were sent to the candidates prior to interviews, those responses will also be provided to the interview panel.

Schedule Interviews

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- ☐ Supervisor or Admin Assistant contacts applicants to set interview date and time(s)
 - ☐ Finalize your [Interview Team and Schedule Template](#)
 - ☐ Notify the HR Dept with the interview date/times, and the applicants to be interviewed; HR will notify all other applicants that interviews are scheduled via an email from HR dept.
Admin/Supervisors/Pre-Screening Committee are in no way required to explain/justify their rationale to applicants not chosen for the Candidate pool. This communication only should come from the HR dept, except in cases of in-building staff. Admin/Directors may discuss the rationale for not recommending In-building applicants to the Candidate pool, if appropriate and the conversation leads to professional growth for the employee.

Conduct Interviews

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- ☐ Ensure the LJSJ Interview Protocol sheet has been presented and discussed with all interview team members. This includes that ALL interview team members have taken the oath of confidentiality
 - ☐ Conduct interviews, then move on to *Contact References*

- ❑ ALL interview materials must be returned to HR at the conclusion of interviews. All record sheets and materials should be returned to HR, not disposed of at the building.

Contact References

- ❑ Review the Online References first. If the previous supervisor has already provided an online reference, you can still contact them with additional questions based on the interview.
- ❑ We must have at least three references on file, which can include the online anonymous reference forms. Principals must contact AT LEAST ONE REFERENCE BY PHONE, preferably the current or most recent supervisor. If the previous supervisor has already completed an Online Reference, you can still contact them with additional questions based on the interview. You may contact others that were not listed by the applicant.
 - ❑ EXCEPTION: If the top applicant is a current Guest Teacher, additional reference phone calls are NOT required; a reference from a current employee will suffice.
- ❑ Once reference checks are complete, move to *Verify with Superintendent*.
- ❑ **NOTE:** If none of the candidates prove to meet your qualifications and skill set required, or do not fit into your climate/culture expectations on your team, you may choose to reopen the position.

Verify with appropriate District Office Personnel

- ❑ Discuss your recommendation with the appropriate District Office Personnel BEFORE making an offer to the top applicant.
- ❑ Provide information about your findings:
- ❑ Number of applicants with require certificate/endorsement.
- ❑ Qualities you've identified in the top candidate(s); ability to fit into your building/dept climate and culture; ability to adhere to our non-negotiables.
- ❑ Title of the reference you contacted by phone, and a summary of your discussion
- ❑ With approval, move to *Offer*.

Offer

- ❑ With Superintendent approval, contact the top applicant and offer the position. ***Please Note: Contract is contingent upon Board approval.**

- ☐ If accepted, determine the start date. Allow ONLY 24 hours for a response from the candidate if they say they need to think about the offer.
- ☐ If not accepted, return to *Contact References* for the next applicant.
- ☐ If no qualified or interested applicants, contact HR to re-open the position with a new closing date, or open until filled. Also talk with HR about any substitute staff needs.
- ☐ When an offer is accepted, contact all other interviewees by phone to notify them that the position has been filled. You must talk with them in person; a message indicating they did not receive the position is not professionally appropriate.
 - ☐ Specifically state the following phrases - remember less is more in this stage.
 - ☐ We thank you for your time in the interview process, but we did offer the position to someone else and they have accepted it.
 - ☐ "Their qualifications and skill set more closely align to what we need in the position at this time."
 - ☐ Share a positive sentiment or something they said/did during the interview process that stood out.
 - ☐ Thank them for their interest in our District.
 - ☐ Note the time/date you made this notification on the "HR-Staffing Changes/Request" form to hire the recommended candidate.

**Complete the Rec to Hire
Form**

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- ☐ Fill out the "[HR-Staffing Changes/Request](#)" form to recommend the new hire
 - ☐ You will receive an email confirmation when HR has processed the Job Recommendation. HR will contact the individual regarding any follow-up items.
 - ☐ If hiring from In-Building, return to [Separation Occurs or a New Position is Needed](#) and repeat the hiring process.

Steps to Hire a Classified Employee

Separation Occurs or New Position is Needed

- ☐ Resignation, Retirement Announcement or Confirmation of Termination must be received by Human Resources OR
- ☐ New Position is needed because of increased enrollment, change in programs, identified need, etc.
- ☐ **CONSIDER:**
- ☐ Will you rehire into the position as-is, or will you be changing the assignment and/or work hours?
- ☐ If there are no interested In-Building applicants, will you post In-District Only or In- and Out-of-District?

Create a Job Request (With HR Staffing Form)

- ☐ Access the form on the LJSB Website under Staff Links> Forms & Requests> ["HR-Staffing Changes/Request form"](#)
- ☐ Replacing the position as-is? Be sure to include the name of the person being replaced.
- ☐ Changing the Assignment and/or FTE? Be sure to include the Title, person replaced, and FTE of the modified position and in the **Additional Info for HR & Superintendent/CFO**, include a statement about why you are requesting the change (i.e. Increase FTE due to student numbers or new program, etc.)
- ☐ New Position? Be sure to include the Title, FTE and in the **Additional Info for HR & Superintendent/CFO**, include a statement about why the new position is needed (i.e. SWD needs exceed current staffing resources.)
- ☐ When all routers have reviewed the position, you will receive notification that the position has either been Approved or Denied.
- ☐ If Approved, move on to *Post In-Building*. You can also find a Guest Teacher/Substitute for the position at this point, if needed. If Denied, HR will contact you for next steps.

Posting

- ☐ During the school year, all classified positions must be posted In-District, via Frontline, for a minimum of 2 school days (*5 weekdays in Summer, unless it is within 2 weeks of start of school year*). Day 1 begins when the posting is made before 1:00 pm on a school day. **The building principal may email in-building to notify current staff of the in-district posting.**

- ☐ The employee must complete the Internal Applicant section on the LUSD website under Employment - this will take them to the Internal section of the Online Application in Applitrack.

- ☐ **CONSIDER:**

- ☐ Guest teachers must wait until the position is posted In- and/or Out-of-District before they can apply.
 - ☐ At the conclusion of the In-Building posting period, move to *Review List of In-Building Applicants*
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**Review Applications =
Pre-Screening Committee**

- ☐ AFTER the closing date of the position (see below for Open Until Filled positions), review all applications.
 - ☐ Priority should be given to:
 - ☐ Applications with "Complete" or "Pending" status
 - ☐ Applications with "Incomplete" status where applicant is a current employee
 - ☐ Pre-Screening Requirements:
 - ☐ A minimum of two employees must be on the Pre-Screening applicants; one must be an immediate supervisor to the position open.
 - ☐ Documentation must be submitted to HR to justify the candidates for interview prior to interviewing.
 - ☐ Documentation must justify how/why applicants were included or denied recommendation to the Candidate pool, all indicators being equal. Submit documentation list to HR Assistant along with date/time for candidates for interview.
 - ☐ OPEN UNTIL FILLED: Review applications for these positions at least weekly. Give at least 24 hours notice before closing position by notifying the HR Assistant to change to a specific closing date for the position.
 - ☐ **CONSIDER:**
 - ☐ Look for Notes section on each applicant to preview any pertinent notes from prior interviews or experience in our district.
 - ☐ After you determine applicants to interview, then move on to *Set Interview Team*
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**Set Interview Team &
Materials**

- ☐ Identify interview team - your team must include a diversity of perspectives:
 - ☐ Immediate Supervisor/Admin/Director
 - ☐ Colleagues
 - ☐ Certified staff that will work with employee
 - ☐ At least one parent and/or student on interview team (if not possible, explain reason to HR Director).

- ❑ Identify questions and prompts
 - ❑ [All Interview Materials and Documents HERE](#):
 - ❑ Formal Interview ?'s - coincide with appropriate Record Sheet
 - ❑ Informal Interview ?'s
 - ❑ Writing Prompts (if applicable)
- ❑ Develop a [Forced-Choice Matrix](#) from your Candidate pool
- ❑ Develop [Interview Team and Schedule Template](#)
 - ❑ ALL interviews must contain a minimum of one team and a scenario or exercise
 - ❑ Writing Prompt
 - ❑ Teaching/Pedagogical Demonstration (approx 10-15 min)
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- ☐ Conduct interviews, then move on to *Contact References*
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Contact References

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- ☐ Review the Online References first. If the previous supervisor has already provided an online reference, you can still contact them with additional questions based on the interview.
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 - ☐ EXCEPTION: If the top applicant is a current employee or Guest Teacher, additional reference phone calls are NOT required; a reference from a current supervisor will suffice.
 - ☐ Once reference checks are complete, *contact the appropriate District Office Personnel for approval.*

Verify with appropriate District Office Personnel

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- ☐ Discuss your recommendation with the appropriate District Office Personnel BEFORE making an offer to the top applicant.
 - ☐ Provide information about your findings:
 - ☐ Number of applicants with require certificate/endorsement.
 - ☐ Qualities you've identified in the top candidate(s); ability to fit into your building/dept climate and culture; ability to adhere to our non-negotiables.
 - ☐ Title of the reference you contacted by phone, and a summary of your discussion
 - ☐ With approval, move to *Offer*.

Offer to TOP Candidate & Notification to Others

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- ☐ No offer is finalized until the Board approves the hire at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting - relay to the candidate when offering the position.
 - ☐ With Superintendent approval, contact the top applicant and offer the position. Specifically state the following phrases:
 - ☐ Thank them for the time in the interview process.
 - ☐ Let them know that their qualifications and skill set aligned to what we need in the position.
 - ☐ Share a positive sentiment or something they said/did during the interview process that stood out.

- ☐ If they need any questions answered before they accept the position (starting pay, etc.), refer them to the HR Director.
- ☐ Note the time/date you made this notification on the Rec to Hire form.
- ☐ Typically we will give them a maximum of 48 hours/2 days to accept the offer before we move on with another candidate.
- ☐ If accepted, determine the start date.
- ☐ If not accepted, return to *Contact References* for the next applicant.
- ☐ If no qualified or interested applicants, contact HR to re-open the position with a new closing date, or open until filled. Also talk with HR about any substitute staff needs.
- ☐ When an offer is accepted, contact all other interviewees by phone to notify them that the position has been filled. You must talk with them in person; a message indicating they did not receive the position is not professionally appropriate.
 - ☐ Specifically state the following phrases - remember less is more in this stage.
 - ☐ We thank you for your time in the interview process, but we did offer the position to someone else and they have accepted it.
 - ☐ Their qualifications and skill set more closely align to what we need in the position.
 - ☐ Share a positive sentiment or something they said/did during the interview process that stood out.
 - ☐ Thank them for their interest in our District.
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Complete the Rec to Hire Form

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- ☐ Complete a Rec to Hire in the [HR-Staffing Changes/Request form](#)
 - ☐ You will receive an email confirmation when HR has processed the Job Recommendation. HR will contact the individual regarding any follow-up items.
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