

Principal and Vice-Principal Selection Process

2025-2026
Candidate Information Session

September 15th, 2025



Land Acknowledgement

I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge that the majority of us are meeting today on the unceded and unsurrendered homelands of the Algonquin Territory and would like to thank the Algonquin Nation for their enduring presence, and their stewardship of this land, as we move toward reconciliation and the celebration of Indigenous brilliance.



Agenda

- Opening Remarks
 - Associate Director: Brett Reynolds
- Changes for 2025/2026
- Steps in the 2025/26 P/VP Selection Process
- P/VP Academy / Mentoring Program
- Chat will remain closed until - Q&A at the end
- Slides and recording posted to Careers Page



Changes for 2025-2026

- Hiring for all four (4) administrator roles
 - Secondary VP, Elementary VP, Secondary Principal, Elementary Principal
- In person interviews - considerations for applicants residing outside the Ottawa area
- Moving to a single process - one opportunity to apply in 2025-2026
- If you are seeking a Winter/Spring 2026 **OR** Fall 2026 placement - will be required to apply
 - Placements / Transfers - November 2025 - existing staff / interns
 - Elem VP intern list = exhausted
 - Anticipating a number of Elem P retirements
 - Reassess at conclusion of 2025-2026 process - Feb 2026
 - Fall 2026 placements - by end of April 2026
- Next opportunity to apply - Fall 2026



Before you Apply: What Qualifications do I need?

Before you apply, ensure you have the required qualifications:

Vice-Principal Candidates

- Part 1 of the Principal's Qualification Program (PQP) completed at the time of application. All PQP requirements (PQP1, 2 and practicums) completed prior to your appointment.

Principal Candidates

- Principal's Qualification Program (PQP1 and PQP2) completed and reflected on your Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) record
- **Minimum of three (3) years of experience as a Vice-Principal**

Virtual PQP Info sessions for OCDSB employees conducted throughout the year.



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Before you Apply: Intern List

What am I applying for?

- Not applying to a specific position / location
- Not a specific number of positions available
- Successful applicants will be added to the eligibility list
 - Intern list or a “pool” of successful applicants
 - Not directly “competing” with other candidates
- Ability to indicate which panel you wish to be considered for - can select both
- Remain on the list for a period of up to 3 years
- Placements occur as vacancies arise (typically very quickly) - work with external candidates where relocation is a factor



Before you Apply : Considerations

- **Ontario College of Teachers (OCT)** - certified and in good standing.
- **Employee File** - performance appraisals (TPAs / PPAs), attendance, disciplinary record.
- **Readiness** - placements may occur as early as February. Candidates are encouraged to seek support through the process from their Principal and Superintendent to determine readiness.
- **Returning Candidates** - Feedback provided through the debrief.
- **Relocation** - placements will occur anywhere throughout the OCDSB's catchment area. May occur immediately (internal). Work with external candidates who need to relocate.
- **Leadership Competencies** - self assessment.



Assessment - Core Leadership Competencies

- The OCDSB has established [8 core leadership competencies](#)
 - Allowing for better identification and development of current & future P/VPs/Management Positions/Leaders in our District
- **Form the foundation for the OCDSB's:**
 - selection processes
 - leadership development programs
 - succession planning initiatives
 - Assessed on all 8 competencies throughout the process



Core Leadership Competencies

Decision Making	problem solving, judgement, analytical & critical thinking, innovation, risk management
Communication	written, verbal, presentation skills
Leading People	developing, directing & motivating others, managerial courage, negotiation skills
Emotional Intelligence	interpersonal skills, teamwork, collaboration, networking & relationship building, political acuity, conflict management
Equitable & Ethical Leadership	valuing and championing diversity, equity & inclusion, integrity, trust
Strategic Perspective	managing vision & purpose, strategic thinking, results orientation, adaptability
Planning & Organizing	initiative, accountability, perseverance, priority setting
Functional & Technical Knowledge	instructional practices, pedagogy, curriculum, resource & fiscal management



Commitment to Equity / Ethical & Equitable Leadership Competency

The OCDSB is committed to equity for all students and staff and to delivering the highest quality education through a qualified workforce that reflects the diversity of the students and community we serve.

OCDSB employees serve students, colleagues, families and community partners. We invite people of all abilities, orientations, faiths, ethnicities, races, genders and ages to join us as we create learning and working spaces that honour the unceded and unsundered land of the Algonquin people, and respect, value and increasingly reflect the diversity of Ottawa. Your lived experience is an essential contribution to deliver the education every student deserves with dignity.

Relevant Policies / Procedures (available publically):

- [P.147.GOV - Human Rights Policy](#) - January 2022
- [P.146.HR - Equitable Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion](#) - April 2021
- [PR.700.HR - Equitable Recruitment and Hiring Procedure](#) - March 2022
- [Indigenous, Equity and Human Rights Roadmap](#) - Rev. December 2022
- [PR.696.SCO - Fostering Gender Identity, Gender Expression and Sexual Orientation Inclusive Schools](#) - February 2022
- [PR.628.SCO - Student Dress Code](#) - Rev. May 2022
- [P.032.SCO - Safe Schools \(Managing Student Behaviour\)](#) - Rev. 2022



Steps in the Selection Process

1. Application
2. Leadership Portfolio Submission
3. Portfolio Review Meeting (virtual)
4. Reference Collection & Verification
5. Case Study
6. Presentation & Panel Interview (in person)
7. Candidate Debriefs



Accommodations

Accommodations

If you require accommodations at any point in the selection process, please send an email to SystemLeadershipPositions@ocdsb.ca at any time.



STEP 1 - Helpful Application Documents

Application Documents:	Resource Materials:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Job Posting● Selection Process Application Guide (coming soon)● Selection Process Timelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● OCDSB Strategic Plan 2023-2027● Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF)● OCDSB Principal & Vice-Principal Core Competencies

*All documents located on the [OCDSB's P/VP Careers Page.](#)



STEP 1 - Application

In order to be considered, all interested applicants are required to complete:

→ Application Form

- Notice of Intent to Apply Form
- Resume (external candidates only)
- Copy of PPA or TPA (external candidates only)
 - Reference letter in lieu of appraisal

2025-2026 Application Deadline = Monday, September 29, 2025 at 5:00 pm.



STEP 1 - Application Notice of Intent to Apply Form

Designed to facilitate a conversation with your current supervisor(s) and to give formal notice of your intent to apply for a P/VP position. Should be reflecting upon the following:

Previous Conversations:

- Feedback through school visits / performance appraisal process

Recent acting assignment:

- Consider gaining experience in the role prior to putting name forward, to increase chance of success

Principal Candidates: < 3 years of VP experience:

- Discuss readiness with SOE. Recommendation for 3+ years of experience as a VP before applying.

References:

- Required to submit current supervisor as a reference. Encouraged to discuss any concerns RE: a positive reference. Concerns related to obtaining a positive supervisory reference can be directed to SystemLeadershipPositions@ocdsb.ca.

General Readiness:

- Leadership competencies, areas of strength and development, feedback from a previous process (for returning candidates) and general readiness to assume a leadership position.



STEP 1 - Application Notice of Intent to Apply Form

Notice of Intent to Apply Form:

- Required for all candidates - internal / external
- Separate forms for VP and Principal Candidates
- **VP Candidates** - conversation and signature from Principal/Supervisor, signature from SOE (or equivalent) as acknowledgement
- **Principal Candidates** - conversation and signature from **both** Principal/Supervisor and Superintendent (or equivalent)
- Signed by your Principal and Superintendent (or equivalent)
- Required to be: uploaded directly to the Application Form
- Give yourself some time for review / signatures



STEP 1 - Application

External Candidates ONLY

In addition to the previous documents, External candidates are required to submit the following documents (uploaded directly to the application form):

1) Copy of their current resume

2) Current Performance Appraisal - within the last 5 years

Principal Candidates - most recent vice-principal performance appraisal (VPPA)

Vice-Principal Candidates - most recent teacher performance appraisal (TPA)

What if I don't have one within last five (5) years?

- letter of reference from current supervisor, or
- letter from last year's direct supervisor if you have changed schools

Internal candidates - not required. Can request a TPA/VPPA to gain feedback.



STEP 1 - Application

External Candidates ONLY

EXTERNAL CANDIDATES ONLY:

Professional Letter of Reference (in lieu of current TPA/PPA)

- Should be based on:
 - ✓ OCDSB Principal & Vice-Principal Core Competencies
 - ✓ Ontario Leadership Framework (OLF) including PLRs
- Shows your readiness to assume the role.
- Includes details about your leadership and instructional practices.
- Uploaded directly to the application form.



Voluntary Self Identification Survey

Applicants will have the opportunity to complete a Voluntary Self Identification Survey.

- Confidential - only aggregate data used
- Secure platform to ensure privacy - Qualtrics
- Not shared with the assessors

Only used for the purpose for which it is collected:

- inform the OCDSB's future recruitment practices
- to remove / examine barriers in our process
- ensure that the P/V/P Selection Process is aligned with the District's
 - ***Equitable Recruitment, Hiring and Promotion Policy*** ([P.146.HR](#))
 - ***Equitable Recruitment & Hiring Procedure*** ([PR.700.HR](#)), and
 - ***Indigenous, Equity & Human Rights Roadmap*** ([updated 2022](#))
- Inform the District's Leadership Development initiatives.

Applicants will be notified when the survey is available for completion.



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

All applicants will be contacted no later than **Wednesday, October 1, 2025 at 5:00 pm** regarding next steps in the process as follows:

- 1) **Minimum qualifications have been met** - will be proceeding to the leadership portfolio portion of the process.
- 2) **Minimum qualifications have not been met** - will not be proceeding.
- 3) **Returning applicants** - whether or not a leadership portfolio submission is required based on previous participation in the process (**VP Candidates only**)



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

If you advance to the portfolio submission stage, your leadership portfolio must include:

- ✓ Statement of Qualifications (OCT)
- ✓ Resume (3 pages)
- ✓ 3 Statements of Leadership Experiences
 - (2 pages for each statement)



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

1) Statement of Qualifications:

- Download your registered member information from Ontario College of Teachers website www.oct.ca.

Should reflect the minimum qualifications:

- **Principal Candidates** - Full Principal's Qualification Program (PQP)
- **Vice-Principal Candidates** - Part 1 of the Principal's Qualification Program (PQP), with all PQP requirements complete prior to your appointment date.



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

2) Resume - Breadth

- Up to 3 pages, Arial 12 font
- Make best use of the 3 pages to give assessors an overview of what you have done
- Ability to expand on specific experiences in leadership statements / portfolio review meeting
- Include committee / community / volunteer work (beyond instructional practice) - what is unique about you and your lived experience
 - Beyond the classroom - VP candidate expectation
 - School level leadership - Principal candidate expectation



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

3) Statements of Leadership Experience - Depth

Opportunity to demonstrate your leadership philosophy and practice with 3 specific examples (max 2 pages each) where you have demonstrated the following:

- ✓ instructional leadership
 - ✓ interpersonal leadership (as a leader of people)
 - ✓ operational leadership (eg. complex project/initiative)
-
- Explain how these have prepared you for this role.
 - Should reflect criteria in OLF and Principal & Vice-Principal Core Competencies.



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

Statements of Leadership Experience

- Maximum 2 pages each, Arial 12 font, standard page margins
- Spacing convention up to candidates (single, 1.5 or double spacing is allowed)
- Do not have to be paragraph / essay style
 - Graphics/charts (caution - haven't served candidates well in the past)
- Try to use one solid example for each
- Illustrate your accomplishments "I" versus "we"
- Think of stories you have to tell, what you learned from it
- Rich leadership examples - try to draw from current experience (balance)
- Keep the competencies in mind (this is how you are assessed)



STEP 2

Leadership Portfolio Submission

Submission Requirements

- Due no later than **12:00 pm (noon)** on **Wednesday, October 8th, 2025** by email to SystemLeadershipPositions@ocdsb.ca.
- Leadership & Staff Development (L&SD) staff will verify that the required documents are included.
- Additional documentation will not be given consideration.



STEP 3

Portfolio Review Meeting

Applicants invited to submit a Leadership Portfolio will participate in:

- a 30 minute **virtual** portfolio review meeting
- Conducted on either **October 27th or 30th, or November 3rd, 2025**
- 2 person assessment team: Superintendent and experienced Principal.
- Probing conversation regarding your resume & leadership statements.
- Tone is more informal and conversational, no structured questions
- Assessed based on the OCDSB's P/VP core competencies
- VP candidates will be notified on **November 10th** RE: proceeding to next phase
 - Not proceeding = offered an opportunity for a debrief meeting on November 21st (**NEW**)
- Principal Candidates will automatically advance to next phase



STEP 4

Reference Collection & Verification

Professional References

- Candidates are required to speak to their references in advance regarding their intent to apply to the Selection Process.
- Those successful in the Portfolio Review portion of the process will be asked to provide the names of their professional references via an online form.
- References will be contacted starting **November 19th, 2025** for new applicants and for returning applicants who provide updated reference information.



STEP 4

Reference Collection & Verification

Professional References - via online form for those successful through the Portfolio Review Meeting.

Principal Candidates – 6 references

2 supervisors **(including current)**

2 community members and/or parents (maximum 1 parent)

2 other staff members you have mentored or coached

Vice-Principal Candidates – 4 references

2 supervisors **(including current)**

2 community members and/or parents (maximum 1 parent) and/or

other staff members you have mentored or coached



STEP 4

Reference Collection & Verification

Examples of references:

Community Groups

- Boys & Girls Clubs, Ottawa Police, member of an affinity group, Multicultural Liaison Officer (MLO), School Council member, community group you are involved in outside of school - volunteer hockey coach etc.

Other Staff Members (you have mentored/coached)

- Teachers, ECEs, EAs, OAs, LTMs, multi-disciplinary team etc
- Can be informal mentoring, such as influencing and collaborating with others, ie. explain how you helped others grow as professionals, building capacity in others (example - if you were an NTIP school contact)

Select referees who have reviewed your resume and statements of leadership experience and can provide strong oral and written support for your applications.



STEP 5

Case Study

Written Exercise

Candidates will receive case study topic by email by:
12:00 pm on Monday, November 17th, 2025

- Written submissions due back to L&SD by:
12:00 pm on Tuesday, November 18th, 2025
- Assessed by superintendents & experienced principals - work independently to complete assessments
- Candidate ID Numbers assigned to allow for anonymous assessments.
- Will be assessed based on OCDSB Principal & Vice-Principal core competencies.



STEP 5

Case Study

Case Study Continued...

- Provided with a Case study topic based on an authentic scenario
 - something that a P/VP could come across in the role.
- Required to provide a written response - **maximum 3 pages, Arial 12 font, format/spacing up to applicant**
- Think in terms of immediate, short-term and longer term.

Candidate Question:

Any advice for external candidates who may not be familiar with OCDSB policies / procedures?



STEP 6

Panel Interview / Presentation

January 15th, 16th & 19th, 2026

- IN PERSON - Confederation Education Centre

Interview / Presentation Assessment Team:

- 1 Chair - Superintendent / Associate Director
- 2 experienced principals

Interview and Presentation will be assessed based on OCDSB Principal & Vice-Principal core competencies.



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STEP 6

Panel Interview / Presentation

Interview / Presentation Components

✓ Interview Question Review

- 15 minutes to review the questions in advance
- Typically 5 questions

✓ Presentation

- Topic emailed 48 hours in advance
- Opportunity to prepare a slide presentation (Google Slides / PowerPoint)
- 10 minutes for presentation + 5 minutes for assessment team to ask questions

✓ Panel Interview (30 minutes)

- Can bring in your notes from your 15 min question review



STEP 6

Panel Interview

Interview Preparation:

Consider the following when preparing:

- Think of specific examples of your leadership experiences.
- Include sufficient details to answer questions thoroughly.
- How you demonstrate the personal leadership resources of the OLF and the OCDSB Principal and Vice-Principal core competencies throughout your responses
- Assessors won't have access to previous portions of the process
- ie - Case study / Resume / Portfolio Review



Behavioural Questions

Expect open ended questions:

Tell us about

Describe a time when you.....

Give us an example of

Outline the steps you took to.....

Questions designed based on real life situations.



Responses

The **STAR** method is an interview preparation technique that helps to organize your thoughts.

- **Situation** - provide a description / give background / explain the situation
- **Task** - talk about the task that you took responsibility for completing or the goal of your efforts. What are you trying to achieve?
- **Action Taken** - what steps did you take? (step by step actions that you personally took to reach the goal / complete the task)
- **Result**- what was the outcome? What would you do differently next time (learning)? What did you achieve? What is your “why”?

OR

- Start with a general statement, add specific examples, summarize with conclusion/outcome.



STEP 6

Panel Interview

Interview - Tips & Tricks

- Think about time management when reviewing / answering the questions
- Robust experiences - use the 30 mins (13 mins left on the table)
- Not looking for you to specifically cite particular policies or procedures
- “I” vs “we”
- External candidates - frame it within how you’ve been operating in your own district, but also show you have some familiarity with OCDSB.
- Speak from the perspective of the P/VP role (put yourself in the role)
- Don’t assume anyone knows what you do - internal candidates!



Summary of Important Dates

Application Deadline - <i>Will be notified on next steps by October 1st, 2025</i>	September 29th, 2025 (5:00 pm)
Leadership Portfolio Submissions	October 8th, 2025 (12:00 pm)
Portfolio Review Meeting (virtual)	October 27th & 30th, and November 3rd, 2025
Notification to Candidates *Debriefs for candidates not successful - Friday, November 21st	November 10th, 2025 (by 5:00 pm)
Case Study	Receive: November 17th, 2025 (by 12:00 pm) Due: November 18th, 2025 (by 12:00 pm)
Reference Checks	November 19th - December 12th, 2025
Presentation & Panel Interviews (in person)	January 15th, 16th & 19th, 2026
Notification re: Successful Candidates	February 13th, 2026
Candidate Debriefs	March 11th & 12th, 2026



STEP 7

Candidate Debriefs

March 11th & 12th, 2026

- Available to all applicants.
 - Those not successful at Portfolio Review - will have already had the opportunity to debrief
- Regardless of whether you proceed to the case study and interview stages or if you are successful / unsuccessful.
- Valuable opportunity - hear directly from the assessors.



Recommendations & Placements

Transfer / Placement Portal

- New P/VPs can indicate their location preferences on the annual Transfer / Placement Portal - future placements/opportunities

Appointments

- Some consideration is given to interns' preferred school configurations, locations and schedules.
- Final placement decisions are based on suitability for the operational and leadership needs of the school.
- Consideration for outstanding vacancies in February.
- Fall appointments will be determined by the end of April.



What Support is Available?

P/VP Mentoring Program

- Principals and vice-principals are paired with **mentors** and will receive formal and informal learning experiences throughout the year.
- The annual **Principal/Vice-Principal Academy** launches at the end of August with five (5) additional sessions throughout the school year.
- The program includes a mix of operational and leadership training, as well as reflection and coaching.
- Allows an opportunity to build a network and connect with experienced P/VPs in the system



Aspiring Leaders Development Program - internal only

OCDSB Secondary / Elementary Contract Teachers

- Exploring VP, Department Head, Instructional Coach roles

Session Dates

In person (Confed) from 4:30 - 7:00 pm as follows:

- Wednesday, October 15th - What is your Leadership Style?
- Wednesday, October 29th - Exploring Leadership Pathways at the OCDSB
- Wednesday, November 12th - Resume / Interview Skills
- Thursday, November 27th - Enhancing your Leadership Competencies

Space still available - [REGISTER HERE](#) by September 16th at 5pm



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Questions?

If you have additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact our the L&SD team at:

- SystemLeadershipPositions@ocdsb.ca
- Kristen Kenopic
Program Manager - Leadership & Staff Development
kristen.kenopic@ocdsb.ca

