

EXTERNAL VICE PRINCIPAL AND PRINCIPAL  
**TRANSFER AND PROMOTION**  
**PROCESS**



Revised December 2025

***Attract, inspire, develop,  
support, retain, know,  
and care about our leaders.***



## Letter from the Director of Education

Dear Colleagues,

Congratulations on your decision to become part of the dynamic leadership team of principals and vice principals, who help to Ignite Learning in the DDSB.

Your decision to apply for a leadership position in the DDSB demonstrates your dedication and commitment to working collaboratively with the various school community members that support and ensure the success of all students. It also exemplifies a commitment to engaging in reflective practices and growth development through professional learning, in order to provide effective school leadership in diverse communities, during rapidly changing times.

Being a leader in the DDSB is more than moving through the formal process and final outcome of the hiring process. Regardless of the path that your career will follow, leadership comes in a variety of styles, and is founded on strong, trusting relationships, a willingness to work with staff, students and community members in order to build solid leadership practices that will support all of the success and well-being of our students in the DDSB. As a system, we will work with and rely on your leadership as we collectively focus on centering the lived experiences of our students and staff, and to integrate our work on human rights and equity, Indigenous rights and a safe and respectful workplace in everything that we do.

As you enter this process, you are encouraged to draw upon your considerable experiences, to focus on how you will support and advocate for all students and staff for success, through your instructional leadership, and a focus on leadership for learning. As a leader, you are a change agent who will impact and influence students, staff, parents/ caregivers and the community.

Thank you in advance, for making the important decision to pursue a leadership position within the DDSB. The journey that you have begun, I believe, will be both professionally and personally rewarding, and will be important for our students in the DDSB, as we work together to continue to Ignite Learning.

All the best,

*Camille Williams-Taylor*

Camille Williams-Taylor  
Director of Education  
Durham District School Board

# External Vice Principal/Principal Transfer and Promotion Durham District School Board Process

## Phase 1

1

- Application Package: Cover letter, resume, Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certificate (indicating completion of at least Principal's Qualification Program (PQP) Part 1). Visit [ddsb.ca](http://ddsb.ca) for updated details on promotion process cycle.
- Grant permission to contact three professional references, including most recent/current supervisor. Note: Professional references are contacted within Phase 3.
- Recent performance appraisal (within the last three years preferred). If out-of-date, request one from your supervisor.
- Voluntary Equity Self-Identification
- Submit application on [Apply to Education](#) website.
- Leadership subcommittee reviews application packages to determine recommendations to proceed to Phase 2. Applicants for the position of principal must currently be in a principal role.
- Successful candidates are directed to Phase 2.

## Phase 2

2

- Complete the [Self-Reflection Tool for Aspiring School Leaders](#)
- Preliminary leadership conversation (virtual meeting)
- Administrative Council to determine recommendation to proceed to Phase 3 and candidate notified.

## Phase 3

3

- Leadership portfolio
  - Leadership interview
  - Professional reference check
  - Criminal record check
  - Attestation of employees/potential employees of the DDSB
- Administrative council makes final determination of successful candidates and candidates are notified.

## Phase 1: External Vice Principal/Principal Transfer and Promotion

### The Application Process and Evidence of Best Practice, Indigenous Rights, and Human Rights in Decision Making

#### Success criteria:

- Contributes to the building and communicating of a shared vision and models commitment to the school's vision, values, and practices.
- Uses relevant qualitative and quantitative data to establish and monitor goals aligned with initiatives in the School Achievement Plan and contributes to the development of a positive and inclusive school climate.
- Facilitates team effectiveness by valuing all members, ensuring meaningful collaboration and building trusting relationships with staff, students, and parents/caregivers.
- Actively participates in, creates, and helps sustain a professional learning community.
- Mentors new teachers and is a role model for colleagues.
- Actions commitment to individualization of student programming and identifies and addresses barriers to achievement and well-being.
- Monitors progress in student learning and school improvement.
- Advocates for and supports all learners.
- Builds capacity by sharing and encouraging others to take on leadership roles.
- Understands and implements all school and organizational policies and procedures.
- Demonstrates familiarity with the DDSB Multi-Year Strategic Plan.

#### Application Package Requirements

1. Visit [ddsb.ca](https://ddsb.ca), About DDSB, Careers, Principal and Vice Principal Opportunities.
2. Documents must be uploaded on the Apply to Education link.
3. Complete the personal information section, upload all required documentation to the profile and click submit. Only apply to both panels, if you have experience in both.

Interested principals, vice principals, and teachers are required to submit the following documents for consideration:

#### 1. Cover Letter

#### 2. Resume

Successful resumes should not exceed three pages in length and will include:

- Education
- Professional experience
- Professional development

- Committee involvement and related professional experience
- Professional references (three)
- Accomplishments/awards, professional associations, self-identification survey (optional)

### **3. Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) certificate (of Qualification and Registration) and Principal Qualifications**

A copy of your OCT certificate that indicates:

- Teaching certification in good standing
- Completion of Principal Qualification Program, Part 1 (Part 2 must be completed by September).

### **4. Performance Appraisal**

Recent performance appraisal within the last three years. If out-of-date, request an updated one from your supervisor.

### **5. Attestation of Employees/Potential Employees of the DDSB**

All candidates are required to complete an attestation in regards to the Ontario Human Rights Code, the Occupational Health and Safety Act, and the Education Act. Please complete this form on [Apply to Education](#).

### **6. Promotion Process form** (separate attachment)

### **7. Voluntary Equity Self-Identification**

The DDSB is committed to ensuring that our hiring practices are bias-free and promote equitable representation of our diversity at all levels of the system. Your participation in responding to these questions is voluntary and not required for completion of this application. The [DDSB Voluntary Equity Self-Identification form](#) is located under About DDSB, Careers, Principal and Vice Principal opportunities on the DDSB website.

Application packages will be reviewed by the leadership subcommittee.

The DDSB is dedicated to creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for all. We are committed to reflecting the diverse communities we serve and encourage applications from candidates who bring a variety of experiences and backgrounds. We adhere to fair, transparent hiring practices and are committed to equity and accessibility throughout the recruitment process. If you need accommodation during the application process, please let us know, and we will work with you to meet your needs.

# Phase 1: Leadership Subcommittee

## Review for Recommendation

External Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Board: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Position: \_\_\_\_\_

### Position Sought:

Elementary principal

Secondary principal

Elementary vice principal

Secondary vice principal

### Phase 1 complete

### Leadership Subcommittee Recommendation

Recommendation to proceed

Not yet recommended to proceed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Superintendent of Education Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Phase 2: Preliminary Leadership Conversation

Phase 2 consists of completion of the self-reflection tool and a preliminary candidate conversation. Complete the self-reflection tool prior to the conversation. Be prepared to potentially speak to the summary page.

### Meeting with the Superintendent:

- I can demonstrate leading from an anti-oppressive stance and making decisions based on anti-oppression principles.
- I have quality experiences to share in the core leadership capacities.
- I have used data (quantitative and qualitative) to inform next steps in school planning.
- I can describe how I have facilitated collaborative teams to support the school's vision and inform next steps in school improvement planning.
- I can describe my strategic use of resources to support my school's vision.
- I can share an example of a critical conversation that focused on school improvement and included other school community members.
- I can share examples of how I have moved the instructional program forward and addressed barriers to student learning/achievement/well-being.

### Superintendent Guiding Questions

Why do you want to become a principal/vice principal in the DDSB? Why you? Why now?

Reflecting on your own career and personal strengths, what will you bring to the role that will benefit a school (students, staff, and community)?

Walk us through a leadership/change initiative that you led and believe had the greatest impact. What impact did this initiative have? Explain how it relates to the Leadership Guiding Principles.

If this is not your first time going through the process, what feedback did you receive in your debrief and what have you done with this feedback?

How has it impacted your leadership?

\*The conversation may include a scenario question.

## Phase 2: Leadership Subcommittee

### Review for Recommendation

External Candidate: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Board: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Position: \_\_\_\_\_

**Position Sought:**

Elementary principal

Secondary principal

Elementary vice principal

Secondary vice principal

**Preliminary candidate conversation complete**

**Administrative Council Review Recommendation**

Recommendation to proceed

Not yet recommended to proceed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisory Officer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## Phase 3: Leadership Portfolio Requirements

Candidates who receive approval to proceed must submit a leadership portfolio including:

### 1. Personal Leadership Vision Statement

The Multi-Year Strategic Plan outlines priorities of the DDSB.

Submit a written statement outlining the personal attributes and professional experiences that will make you an effective school leader, and which will allow you to Ignite Learning as a vice principal or principal.

A successful statement will:

- Outline and expand on your core beliefs.
- Clearly articulate your beliefs and priorities as an educational leader.
- Align to the strategic priorities of the Multi-Year Strategic Plan.
- Demonstrate effective written communication skills.
- Be a maximum of 600 words (11 point font size minimum).

### 2. Leadership Actions

A foundation for inclusive excellence:

- We recognize and uphold distinct Indigenous rights
- We affirm and uphold human rights
- We care about and strive to know each other

The DDSB's Guiding Principles are rooted in anti-oppression, equity and our responsibilities to uphold Indigenous rights and human rights for everyone. By truly knowing each other, we can better understand the unique experiences and perspectives that enrich our communities.

Guiding Principles:

1. Anti-Oppressive Leadership: Integrate Indigenous rights, human rights, anti-oppression, equity, and intersectionality, with a focus on addressing all forms of discriminatory and racist barriers.
2. Knowing and Caring About People
3. Meaningful Learning
4. Moving Your School Forward
5. Responsibility and Accountability for Learning

Submit three written statements (for Meaningful Learning and another leadership guiding principles of your choice) reflecting on how you have demonstrated specific leadership competencies within each leadership guiding principle. Maximum 600 words each (three statements, totaling 1800 words).

Successful reflections often include:

- Concrete examples of how you have demonstrated the skills and capacities of the leadership guiding principle.
- A direct connection to a leadership initiative that you planned and implemented.
- Reflection on the impact and influence of your leadership, be succinct.
- Data to support your success.
- Demonstrated alignment with your leadership vision statement.
- Three statements, maximum of 600 words each (totaling 1800 words).

### **3. Promotion Process Form** (separate attachment)

### **4. Vulnerable Sector Check**

### **5. Voluntary Equity Self-Identification**

The DDSB is committed to ensuring that our hiring practices are bias-free and promote equitable representation of our diversity at all levels of the system. Your participation in responding to these questions is voluntary and not required for completion of this application. The [DDSB Voluntary Equity Self-Identification form](#) is located under About DDSB, Careers, Principal and Vice Principal opportunities on the DDSB website.

### **Submitting Your Completed Profile Package**

Please submit a Portable Document File (PDF) version of your Leadership Portfolio via email to [ddsbpromotionprocess@ddsb.ca](mailto:ddsbpromotionprocess@ddsb.ca)

Please ensure all sections of your leadership portfolio are contained in ONE PDF document file (please no separate pages and NO hyperlinks). Note that hard copies of leadership portfolios are not required and will not be accepted.

**In addition to the above listed five items, please ensure the following items are also included in your Leadership Portfolio:**

- Resume (Including 3 professional references)
- Candidate Reference Form
- Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) Certificate
- Performance Appraisal (within 2 to 3 years)
- Attestation of Employees/Potential–Employees of the DDSB

## Phase 3: Candidate Leadership Interview

The leadership interview consists of a variety of questions and is approximately 30 minutes in length. There may be a scenario question at the beginning of the interview and for vice principal to principal, there may also be a short presentation to prepare. Leadership interview teams are comprised of two or three Superintendents and two principals. Location and time details will be shared with you prior.

### Success Criteria

- Aligns with the DDSB vision and models an anti-oppressive leadership stance.
- Responds with sufficient details to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and experience.
- Infuses own experiences in responses.
- Frames responses, when appropriate, around the DDSB strategic priorities.
- References the Leadership Guiding Principles and demonstrates equitable and inclusive practices throughout responses.
- Models confidence, professionalism, optimism, and resilience.
- Identifies and addresses biases and systemic barriers while managing their own emotional responses and building others to do the same.
- Demonstrates readiness for the role.
- Communicates in an effective manner.
- Focuses on self-learning/reflection and the work/learning of adults.

## Phase 3: Professional References and Verifications

Candidates are required to complete the Candidate Reference form (submitted with the leadership portfolio) providing the names and contact information of three professional references to support their application. Candidates need to select:

- The principal with whom they are currently working.
- Two additional professional references who can speak to the candidate's leadership and readiness for the role.

Please note:

- At least two of the professional references provided will be contacted.
- Superintendents and Trustees can not be listed as professional references.
- Recently retired administrators (within one to two years) may serve as professional references.

Professional references will be asked to comment on the candidate's individual leadership assets, the Leadership Guiding Principles, and their demonstrated equitable and inclusive practices. Professional reference verifiers may probe on areas including evidence and impact of the candidate's work with students, staff, parents/caregivers, and community members; how the candidate builds authentic, trusting relationships, and the candidate's instructional leadership experience and capacity.

Samples of professional reference questions:

- How long have you known the candidate and in what capacity?
- Describe what the candidate has done to demonstrate leadership in the school and/or board.
- Speak about the candidate's instructional leadership capacity.
- How does the candidate contribute to building a positive learning and work environment?
- How does the candidate demonstrate being an equitable and inclusive leader?
- What are the candidate's growth areas?

## Phase 3: Administrative Council Review

### Final Recommendation

**Candidate:** \_\_\_\_\_

Elementary vice principal

Secondary vice principal

Elementary principal

Secondary vice principal

### Administrative Council Recommendation

Vice principal leadership pool placement

Principal leadership pool placement

Not yet recommended to proceed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisory Officer Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

# Final Recommendation

## Final Recommendation

Administrative council makes final recommendations based on the assessment of the candidate's application, leadership conversation, leadership interview, leadership conversation and professional references. Administrative council will determine which candidates have demonstrated readiness for the roles they are seeking. Successful candidates will be placed in the school leadership pool. External candidates who qualify for the leadership pool will not be eligible for permanent placement, until PQP 2 is completed and on their OCT certificate

**Ready for promotion?** If the assessment indicates that the candidate is ready for the role, a memorandum will be shared with the trustees for information and the candidate names will be shared with the system via email.

**Not yet ready for promotion?** Candidates will be notified and can request a debrief meeting to take place within two months of the leadership interview to review recommendations and address growth areas.

## Debrief and Support Feedback

Strengths	Areas of Growth

Next Steps

