

Christine Duncan Heritage Academy

Hiring Protocol

Purpose

Christine Duncan Heritage Academy (CDHA) is committed to hiring highly qualified employees who possess the professional qualifications, licensure, and personal characteristics necessary to support the school's mission and students. This protocol establishes a consistent, transparent, and collaborative hiring process for all certified and non-certified positions.

Step 1: Initial Expression of Interest

Individuals seeking employment with CDHA may submit a letter of interest, résumé, or employment application.

Upon receipt of these materials, either the Executive Director or the Principal will notify the administrative hiring team that a potential candidate has expressed interest in employment.

The Executive Director or Principal will conduct an initial pre-interview to:

- Discuss current employment opportunities.
- Determine whether the candidate's education and experience match available positions.
- Review unofficial transcripts and educational qualifications.
- Explain New Mexico licensure requirements.
- Direct the candidate to the New Mexico Public Education Department (NMPED) licensure website to determine the appropriate license or endorsement needed.
- Explain the remainder of the hiring process.

If both the school and candidate wish to continue, the candidate will proceed to the formal interview process.

Step 2: Scheduling the Formal Interview

Formal interviews are typically coordinated by the Principal, the Curriculum and Instruction Director or the Special Education Director.

Responsibilities include:

- Scheduling interviews.
- Coordinating the interview committee.
- Preparing standardized interview questions.

Interview questions should consist of no more than fifteen (15) standardized questions and be used consistently for all candidates interviewing for the same position.

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Step 3: Interview Committee

The interview committee generally consists of the Curriculum and Instruction Director, Instructional Coach and the Special Education Director. Depending on the position, the committee may also include the Executive Director, classroom teachers, or other staff members with relevant expertise.

The Principal generally does not participate in the formal interview process. This allows the Principal to remain neutral and available to assist later in the hiring process, particularly with licensure issues, endorsement requirements, and completion of Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) background check documentation.

Each committee member independently scores candidate responses using a standardized interview rubric.

Step 4: Committee Deliberation

Immediately following each interview, committee members review rubric scores, discuss the candidate's qualifications, and evaluate the candidate's overall fit with the school's mission and culture.

When multiple candidates are interviewed for the same vacancy, the committee will meet after the final interview to compare scores, discuss qualifications, and reach consensus regarding the candidate to whom an offer should be extended.

Step 5: Conditional Offer of Employment

Once the hiring committee reaches consensus, the Executive Director will extend a conditional offer of employment to the selected candidate. The offer is contingent upon successful completion of all employment requirements.

The Executive Director will direct the candidate to Human Resources to complete the onboarding process.

Step 6: Human Resources Review

The candidate will meet with the Assistant Business Manager in the Finance Office/Human Resources Office to complete all required employment documentation.

Human Resources will verify required forms, educational credentials, New Mexico licensure and endorsements, conduct employment reference checks, verify employment eligibility, and complete all required personnel documentation.

Step 7: Background Checks and Licensure Verification

Employment at CDHA requires successful completion of all required background investigations. Candidates may not begin work without a positive background check.

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Candidates must successfully complete:

- Any criminal background check required for New Mexico educator licensure.
- An Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) background check required for all individuals assigned to work on APS campuses.

The Principal will complete any APS background check documentation required by APS.

Upon receipt of the completed APS background check, the Principal or the Executive Director will review the results. If no issues of concern are identified, the Principal or Executive Director will sign the APS background check documentation indicating approval for employment. If concerns are identified during the review, the candidate's eligibility for employment will be evaluated before any final hiring decision is made.

If licensure or endorsement deficiencies are identified, the Principal will work directly with the candidate to resolve licensure issues, obtain appropriate endorsements, and ensure compliance with NMPED requirements whenever possible.

Failure to obtain required licensure, successfully complete required background checks, or receive administrative approval following review of the APS background check may result in withdrawal of the conditional offer of employment.

Step 8: Final Employment Approval

Once Human Resources verifies that all licensure requirements have been met, APS background clearance has been received, employment references have been satisfactorily completed, and the candidate is fully eligible for employment, Human Resources will notify the Business Manager. All employment eligibility requirements and nepotism policies will be followed.

The Business Manager will prepare and issue the official employment contract. Employment officially begins only after the contract has been executed and all employment requirements have been satisfied.

Step 9: Alternate Candidate Selection

If a selected candidate declines the offer, fails to satisfy licensure requirements, does not successfully complete background investigations or reference verification, or is otherwise determined to be ineligible for employment, the hiring committee may recommend the next qualified candidate or reopen the position and begin the hiring process again.

Guiding Principles

- Provide equal employment opportunities.
- Hire highly qualified professionals.
- Maintain confidentiality throughout the hiring process.

Adopted on July 21, 2026

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- Use consistent interview procedures.
- Make hiring decisions through collaborative committee review.
- Ensure all legal, licensure, and background requirements are satisfied prior to employment.

*All available positions will be advertised through ACES Employment Services and posted on the school's website.