

3125 EMPLOYMENT OF TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS

The Board of Education believes that it is vital to the successful operation of the district that teaching staff member positions created by the Board be filled with highly qualified and competent teaching staff members.

The Superintendent shall recruit, screen, and recommend to the Board suitable candidates for district employment. The Board shall approve the employment, fix the compensation, and establish the term of employment for every teaching staff member employed by this district. Approval shall be given only to those candidates for employment recommended by the Superintendent.

Recruitment of highly qualified candidates for every professional staff opening is vital to educational excellence. Accordingly, the Westfield Public Schools shall make every effort possible:

1. To attract outstanding candidates;
2. To query them regarding their talents, abilities and experiences;
3. To interest them in the challenges and opportunities present in the system;
4. To recommend those who best will serve the students.

All personnel recommended for employment shall be put forth by the Superintendent and appointed by the Board of Education.

All persons regardless of race, color, creed, age, religion, handicap, sex, sexual orientation or national origin shall have equal access to all categories of employment in the public school system of Westfield.

The Superintendent may appoint a person to fill a sudden vacancy, subject to ratification of that action by the Board at the next Board meeting, and may appoint substitute teachers in accordance with this policy.

In order to qualify for a teaching staff member position a candidate must:

1. Possess a Standard Certificate issued by the New Jersey State Board of Examiners with an endorsement appropriate to the position he or she is to fill; or

TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS
3125
Employment of Teaching
Staff Members

M

Page 2 of 3

2. Have qualified and applied for such a certificate; or
3. If applying for his or her first teaching position, possess a Certificate of Eligibility or Certificate of Eligibility with Advanced Standing for issuance of a provisional instructional certificate; or
4. Have qualified and applied for such certificate.
5. In the event extenuating circumstances prevent the Board from recruiting a suitable certified candidate in those endorsement areas permitted by State Board rules, qualify for and maintain an emergency certificate appropriately endorsed.

The Superintendent shall require visual proof of any candidate's certification or pending application for certification.

No person will be employed as a teaching staff member who has not submitted notification from the Commissioner of Education of his or her qualification for employment following a criminal history record check, except that a person who has applied for the criminal history record check and has submitted to the Commissioner a sworn statement that he or she has not been convicted of a crime or disorderly persons offense may be provisionally employed for up to six months pending notification. The Superintendent will require evidence of the sworn statement from any applicant who has not received the Commissioner's notification of his or her qualification for employment.

Individuals who provide volunteer teaching services on an intermittent basis are not subject to this criminal history record information requirement. Student teachers are subject to this criminal history record information requirement. An individual shall be permanently disqualified from employment or service in the school district if the criminal history record check reveals a record of conviction for crimes as defined in N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.1 et seq.

Substitute employees, who are rehired annually by the Board, are required to undergo a criminal history record check upon initial employment, provided the substitute continues in the employ of at least one of the districts at which the substitute was employed within one year of the approval of the criminal history record check. A substitute employee later selected for a permanent position within the district does not need to undergo a new criminal history background check provided there is no break in service in the substitute employment. A break in service is when the employee is no longer approved by the employing Board of Education. An employee who has been laid off (dismissed because of employee reduction) and is asked to be re-employed by the district and/or contractor must submit to a new criminal history background check.

TEACHING STAFF MEMBERS
3125
Employment of Teaching
Staff Members

M

Page 3 of 3

The Board or contracted service provider may employ an applicant on an emergent basis for a period not to exceed three months, pending completion of a criminal history records check if the Board or contractor demonstrates to the Commissioner of Education that special circumstances exist which justify the emergent employment as prescribed in N.J.S.A. 18A:6-7.lc. In the event the criminal background check is not completed for an emergent hired employee within three months, the Board or contractor may petition the Commissioner for an extension of time, not to exceed two months, in order to retain the employee.

No criminal history record check shall be furnished unless the applicant provided written consent to the check. The applicant shall bear the cost for the check, including all costs for administering and processing the check. The district will deny employment to an applicant if the applicant is required and refuses to submit to a criminal history background check.

N.J.S.A. 18A:6-5 et seq.; 18A:16-1;
 18A:26-1 et seq.; 18A:27-1; 18A:27-4
N.J.A.C. 6:8-3.2; 6:11-3.1; 6:11-4.2 et seq.;
 6:11-5.1 et seq.; 6:29-3.3

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