

Principal Selection Process - What to Expect?

What qualifications do I need to apply for a principal position with DCPS?

Candidates for principal positions with DCPS have a variety of past professional experiences that have prepared them for the DCPS principal role. To qualify to be a Principal, applicants must have or obtain an [Administrative Services Credential \(ASC\)](#) through the [Office of the State Superintendent of Education](#) (OSSE) prior to getting an official offer of employment. In order to be considered for a principal position with DCPS, candidates must meet the qualifications listed below:

1. Completed bachelor's degree; and
2. Completed master's degree or higher, OR a completed state-approved educator preparation program in school leadership and supervision; and
3. At least two years of full-time, instructional leadership experience.

PLEASE NOTE: Meeting the minimum educational and experience requirements for the position, or being placed in the hiring pool, does not guarantee that an applicant will be invited to interview for a position.

What skills does the ideal candidate possess?

Ideal school leader candidates possess the competencies outlined in the [DCPS Leadership Framework](#))

When is the principal application generally open for candidates to apply?

While the exact day of the application launch and close-out is slightly different each year, the principal application generally opens in the late fall and closes in the spring.

What are the steps in the DCPS principal application process? What type of tasks should I be prepared to complete?

The DCPS principal application process consists of the following steps:



1. **Initial Application**

During the online application candidates will be asked to provide the following:

- Resume
- Overview of candidates educational background and work experience

We suggest that candidates are prepared to complete the application in one sitting because they will not be able to make any edits or changes to the application after it has been submitted. The entirety of the application should take no more than 30 to 45 minutes. After submitting the application, candidates that meet all pre-qualifications will be sent an email to complete the Instructional Video Activity.

2. **Instructional Video Activity**

Once candidates have completed the initial application, they will receive an email with the Instructional Video Activity. Candidates will watch a video of classroom instruction and answer a series of questions regarding the video. Candidates cannot continue to the next stage of the selection process if they have not submitted the Instructional Video Activity. The Instructional Video Activity should take no more than 45-60 minutes to complete, including watching the linked video.

The School Leader Recruitment, Selection and Development Team will review the Instructional Video Activity within 5 business days and candidates will be notified via e-mail of their application status. If a candidate does not receive a status update within 7 business days, please email lead.dc@k12.dc.gov.

3. Video Interview

Qualified candidates will move on to the Spark Hire video interview stage. In this one-way asynchronous video interview segment, candidates will share their leadership journey and their vision for student success. Candidates will be asked to articulate their vision for student success, outlining the strategies and initiatives they believe will improve the educational experience of students. This video format offers a dynamic and accessible way to convey candidate insights and passion effectively.

Candidates are also asked to submit 3 professional references at this stage.

4. In-Person Interview

Candidates who pass the Performance Task stage will be invited to an in-person interview day with various DCPS executive leaders. The in-person interview will be approximately four hours long. At this point in the process, the School Leader Recruitment & Selection team will also check candidates' professional references.

5. Chancellor Interview

Based on recommendations from the in-person interviews, a selection of candidates will be invited to interview with the Chancellor.

6. Candidate Pool

After the Chancellor interview, approved applicants are placed in the applicant pool and become eligible to participate in Community Panel interviews at schools with Principal vacancies.

7. **Community Panel**

As Principal vacancies are announced, candidates in the approved pool are invited to participate in Community Panels. The purpose of the panel is for the school community to offer feedback to the Chancellor about each candidate's strengths and areas of support within the specific context of that school community. Community Panels include school community members, parents, faculty, staff, and students of schools with vacancies. Based on the results of the community panel, the Chancellor will make all final Principal hiring determinations. Official employment offers will be given by the Office of Talent & Culture. Candidates cannot receive an official offer until the security clearance process has been completed and candidates have an official [Administrator Services Credential](#) from the [Office of the State Superintendent of Education \(OSSE\)](#). Once hired, all new school leaders will need to participate in an onboarding process. For more information, please see [DCPS Onboarding Website](#).

What, if any, additional resources or artifacts should I upload to my online application other than my resume?

The only item that you need to upload to your initial application is your resume. Additional information and artifacts may be requested by the School Leader Recruitment & Selection Team as candidates progress through the process.

Who should I be in contact with if I have any questions about the application process?

The DCPS School Leader Recruitment & Selection (SLRS) team is your primary point of contact for questions about the DCPS school leader application process. The SLRS team can be reached at lead.dc@dc.gov.