

# Navigating the Shifting Hiring Landscape for Heads of School

The Association of Colorado  
Independent Schools

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# The Evolving Needs of Schools



## New Challenges – New Opportunities

- Increased complexity of school leadership
- Growing demand for diverse and inclusive leaders
- Emphasis on strategic vision and innovation
- Heightened focus on community engagement and communication
- Identifying leaders who “have it all”

# The Shifting Tides

## Challenges and Opportunities in Teacher Recruitment

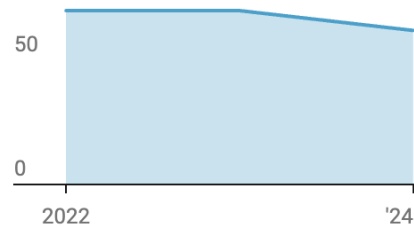
- **Fierce Competition:** The "Great Resignation" and teacher burnout have intensified competition for qualified teachers.
- **Evolving Expectations:** Teachers seek more than just a job; they want purpose, work-life balance, and opportunities for growth.
- **Diversity Imperative:** Building a diverse and inclusive faculty is essential for reflecting the student body and preparing students for a globalized world.
- **Tech-Savvy Educators:** Integrating technology effectively in the classroom requires teachers with strong digital literacy skills.



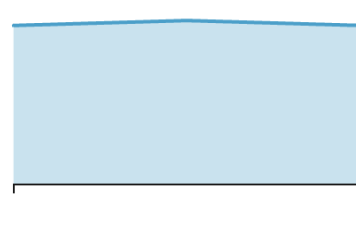
# What challenges did you experience filling vacant teaching positions for the upcoming school year?

**Too few candidates applying for open teaching positions**

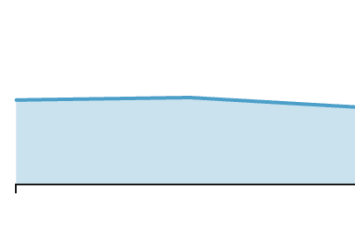
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**A lack of qualified candidates applying for open teaching positions**

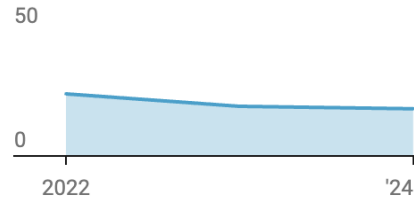


**Candidates felt the salary and benefits for teaching positions were not enough**

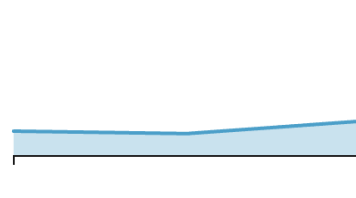


**Applicants turned down teaching positions once offered for reasons other than salary and benefits**

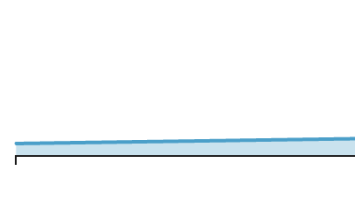
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**We did not experience any challenges filling teacher vacancies**



**Other**



# Rethinking Traditional Hiring Practices

## Moving Beyond the Status Quo

- **Reimagine Job Postings:** Go beyond listing duties and qualifications. Showcase your school's culture, values, and unique opportunities.
- **Streamline the Process:** Make the application process user-friendly and efficient. Respect candidates' time.
- **Embrace Technology:** Utilize online platforms for applications, virtual interviews, and candidate communication.



# The Recruitment Cycle

## OLD

- Intent to Return (Maybe)-  
December
- Set FY Budget- January
- Employment Contacts- February  
/ March
- Vacancies Known & Recruitment  
Begins

## NEW

- Continuous Recruitment Cycle
- Recruiting a “Bench” of  
Candidates for Openings Not Yet  
Known



# The 3 A's

## So What Can Leaders Do?



### **Acquisition**

Focus on acquiring  
educator talent



### **Acceleration**

Commit to accelerating  
educator talent



### **Assessment**

Continuously assess  
educator talent



# Acquisition



- Forecast Vacancies
- Recruit Continuously
- Hire Early
- Create Efficient Hiring Processes
- Utilize Effective Interviewing Strategies
- Create a Compelling School Environment



# Methods of Recruitment

Traditional



- Job Postings
- Career Fairs
- Networking
- Recruitment Agencies
- Word of Mouth

# Acceleration

In tandem with ongoing acquisition efforts, principals and school leaders need to be strategic about where to assign new team members, how to onboard them into their new roles, and which school staff will make the best mentors to help each new hire feel supported and reach their potential. Here are some strategies to support with onboarding and supporting new hires:

- New Teacher / Staff Orientation
- New Teacher / Staff Support
- Prioritize Mentorship



# Assessment



Along with ongoing recruitment and retention efforts, school leaders should also continuously monitor and assess the strengths, needs, and opportunities among their current teaching staff. Here are some ways to engage in this type of teacher assessment:

- Identify Successors at Key Positions
- Create Tiers of Support

# Methods of Recruitment

Innovative



- Social Media Outreach
- Virtual Career Fairs
- University Partnerships (Handshake)
- Continuous Recruitment
- Retained Partnerships with Search Firms

# Innovative Strategies for Attracting Talent

## Finding the Best of the Best

- **Proactive Recruitment:** Build relationships with teacher preparation programs, attend career fairs, and network with educators.
- **Targeted Marketing:** Use social media, online platforms, and targeted advertising to reach specific audiences of educators (e.g., those with specific subject matter expertise or experience in diverse educational settings).
- **Employee Referral Programs:** Incentivize current faculty and staff to refer qualified candidates.
- **Showcase Your School's Story:** Highlight your school's unique mission, values, and commitment to teacher support through compelling storytelling in your recruitment materials.



# Strategies for Retaining Top Teachers

## Investing in Your Most Valuable Asset

- **Competitive Compensation and Benefits:** Offer competitive salaries, comprehensive benefits packages (health insurance, retirement plans, etc.), and opportunities for advancement.
- **Robust Professional Development:** Provide ongoing professional development opportunities, including mentoring, coaching, leadership training, and support for pursuing advanced degrees.
- **Positive and Collaborative Culture:** Foster a school culture where teachers feel valued, respected, and supported. Encourage collaboration and teamwork.
- **Prioritize Work-Life Balance:** Offer flexible work arrangements, manageable workloads, and resources to support teacher well-being (e.g., wellness programs, mental health resources).
- **Recognition and Appreciation:** Regularly acknowledge and celebrate the contributions of teachers through awards, events, and public recognition.



# Cultivating a Culture of Growth



## Empowering Teachers as Leaders

- **Mentorship Programs:** Pair experienced teachers with newer faculty to provide guidance and support.
- **Leadership Opportunities:** Offer opportunities for teachers to take on leadership roles within the school (e.g., department chairs, curriculum development committees).
- **Distributed Leadership:** Empower teachers to participate in decision-making processes and contribute to the school's strategic direction.

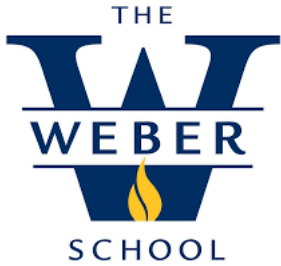
# School / Employer Branding



When hiring teachers, cultivating a compelling education employer brand attracts aligned candidates and enhances their overall experience. This can help you foster a vibrant and cohesive school community.

- **Attracting Strong Candidates**
- **Differentiation**
- **The Candidate Experience**
- **Increase Referrals**





# A Case Study



## Continuous Recruitment

- Quarterly “Taking Stock” Assessments
- Continuous Recruitment
- Goal- Develop a bench of candidates who are vetted and excited to work for you.
- Added Benefit- A bench of candidates when/if there is a mid-year need.

# Thank you!

Tim Viands  
President & Founder  
IndySchool Consultancy

**Email:** [tim@indyschoolconsultancy.com](mailto:tim@indyschoolconsultancy.com)

**Web:** [indyschoolconsultancy.com](http://indyschoolconsultancy.com)

**Phone:** (440) 361 - 9880



# A Head of School Leads by

1. Modelling behavior
2. Having a plan and communicating it
3. Accepting responsibility and giving credit
4. Placing principles over expediency
5. Remembering that transparency builds trust
6. Taking risks worth taking
7. Developing a pipeline
8. Embracing their fallibility
9. Being empathic, compassionate, and understanding
10. And / But.... Remembering a school is a workplace



A HEAD OF SCHOOL  
LEADS BY...

