Primary features of the APS principal and assistant principal hiring process include:

- Increasing efficiency and applicant quality measures
- Identifying a pool of “preferred” principal and assistant principal candidates
- Integrating a school committee component to the district process, including classroom observations when possible
- Posting general principal and assistant principal pool positions as well as specific school vacancies as they are known

The process consists of two phases:

**PHASE 1 – APPLICATIONS AND DETERMINING THE POOL**

Beginning in January 2014, postings for general principal and assistant principal (e.g. Principal, Elementary) pools will be advertised on the APS web site as well as on relevant state and professional web sites. Candidates who are interested in principal and assistant principal positions in APS may first apply to be accepted into the pool of preferred candidates. Candidates will be expected to complete an online application that is specifically for licensed administrative and professional/technical positions.

Postings for the principal and assistant principal pools will include the dates that application files will be read and reviewed. These initial screenings will be conducted by teams consisting of administrators from the divisions of instruction and human resources, as well as APS schools. Candidates who are selected will be scheduled for interviews by teams consisting of administrators from instruction, human resources and APS schools. Successful interviewees will be placed into a preferred pool of principal or assistant principal candidates and will be eligible for consideration to fill appropriate principal or assistant principal vacancies for the upcoming school year.

All pool candidates will be considered for each appropriate vacancy, but each candidate is encouraged to express an interest in a specific vacancy by sending a letter of interest to the Office of Licensed Employment in Human Resources for the specific school vacancy.

Current APS employees who are interested in promoting to a principal or assistant principal position or are interested in a lateral position may apply to be in the preferred candidate pool:

- Current APS employees who are interested in promoting to a principal or assistant principal position will need to complete a licensed administrative and professional/technical application, which includes a current resume and three current letters of recommendation.

- Current APS principals or assistant principals interested in a lateral move, need to complete an online application. In addition to the application, current principals or assistant principals interested in a lateral position must also submit a current resume, three current letters of recommendation, and a letter of interest specific to that job.
In February 2014, Human Resources will facilitate an invitation only principal and assistant principal interview day in order to establish the initial preferred candidate pool. Only candidates with complete applications will be considered for an invitation. Interviews will be conducted to determine which candidates will be placed in the principal and/or assistant principal candidate pools for the current hiring season. Human Resources will inform applicants if they have been accepted into the pool. After this initial pool selection, monthly pool screening and interview dates will be scheduled by teams consisting of administrators from instruction and human resources to consider new applicants to the pool. Once an applicant is not accepted into the pool, they are ineligible for re-consideration until the next hiring season.

PHASE 2 – SCHOOL PROCESS AND SUPERINTENDENT’S SELECTION

Note: The following applies to principal vacancies. The process for assistant principals is similar, but facilitated by the principal. The principal determines the selected candidate.

1. As specific school vacancies are made known, a director or coordinator from Human Resources will facilitate phase two of the principal hiring process for schools. This will include conducting an all staff meeting (attendance voluntary) to describe the hiring process and the opportunities for staff to participate.

2. Human Resources will help staff generate a list of professional characteristics that they desire in a principal. These characteristics will then be used to select candidates from the preferred candidate pool, as well as other applicants for interviews, to develop the interview questions, and to evaluate each candidate’s interview.

3. Human Resources will solicit volunteers from school staff to serve on the interview committee.

4. Human Resources will facilitate the selection of representatives for the interview committee. The committee size is limited and participants are expected to represent the ideas of their stakeholder group. The committee is comprised of:
   - 2 staff members – Human Resources will facilitate the school’s instructional leadership team’s selection of interview committee participants from a list of staff volunteers. The staff members may or may not be members of the leadership team and may be either licensed or classified employees. To eliminate possible bias, if an incumbent assistant principal applies for principal, other assistant principals in the building will be excluded from serving on the interview team.
   - 1 parent from the school accountability or PTO/PTA/PTSAC committee
   - 1 principal from the same level (e.g. if the vacancy is for a middle school principal, a current middle school principal will be on the committee
   - 1 administrator from the Division of Equity and Engagement or ELA department
   - 1 Director of Student Achievement
   - 1 Director or Coordinator of Human Resources
   - Chief Academic Officer (optional)

5. Human Resources will work with the staff representatives on the interview team to write interview questions. There is a core list of district approved and required questions that will be asked of every applicant. Other questions address the school’s unique needs.

6. Directors/Coordinator from Human Resources and the Division of Instruction will review the pool of preferred candidates, as well as other applicants and recommend several for possible interviews.
7. Human Resources will facilitate a meeting with the staff representatives and the school’s director of student achievement to review the recommended applications and to finalize who will be interviewed.

8. Human Resources will schedule and facilitate the first round of interviews. Interviews will consist of a one hour written component and a one hour verbal component. In no priority order, the interview committee will recommend no more than two to three finalists to the superintendent for a final interview.

9. Following the committee interview but prior to the final interview, finalists may be asked to participate in classroom walkthroughs at the APS school for which they are interviewing.

10. The finalists will be interviewed by the superintendent, the deputy superintendent, the chief academic officer, the chief personnel officer, and the director of student achievement. Based on the finalist interview, a review of the interview committee’s input, and the candidate’s fit for the school, the superintendent will select the new principal. If neither finalist is deemed satisfactory by the superintendent, he will either ask the committee for another finalist or repost the position.

11. The superintendent forwards his recommendation to Human Resources who will conduct a thorough background check. If references and other aspects of the background check are satisfactory, the chief personnel officer will formally offer the job.

12. Once the job is accepted, Human Resources staff will make regret calls to those who interviewed. Once regrets are complete, announcements will be made to the Board of Education and at the school.

Principal and Assistant Principal Hiring Timeline

The preferred candidate pool process will be advertised in the HR News and on the APS, Colorado Association of School Executives, and other professional web sites as appropriate. APS principals will be asked to share information about the pool process with APS employees aspiring to principal and assistant principal positions.

February 5, 2014 – Application Deadline
Deadline for candidates to complete a licensed administrative/professional technical application and submit a current resume, a letter of interest, and three letters of recommendation.

February 7, 2014 – Application Review
Administrators from the divisions of instruction and human resources and other district administrators will review candidates’ applications and determine which candidates will be invited to the preferred candidate pool interview day.

February 14, 2014 – Preferred Candidate Pool Interviews
Administrators from the divisions of instruction and human resources along with current principals will interview applicants. After interviews, candidates will be selected as preferred candidates for the principal or the assistant principal vacancies. Successful candidates will be notified by Human Resources and authorized for school specific vacancies.

March 1, 2014 – Hiring Begins
School committee hiring processes will begin for known vacancies.

Human Resources will advertise general principal and assistant principal openings as well as specific school openings as they occur. Jobs will be advertised on the HR, CASE and other professional web sites as appropriate.

Completed applications will be screened once a month by Human Resources and Instruction administrators. Potential candidates will be contacted monthly for an interview with administrators from the divisions of instruction and human resources. After an interview, Human Resources will either authorize the candidate for the pool or notify the candidate that s/he was not selected for the pool and will not be considered for any principal/assistant principal vacancies for the 2014-15 school year.