

## REMOTE RECRUITING & HIRING TOOLKIT:

# Staff Involvement in Virtual Recruiting

Content Level: **ENHANCE**

Research has shown that current employee referrals significantly improve the chances of a successful hire; referred candidates are more likely to accept an offer than those candidates who do not experience any personal contact. Involving your staff in recruitment is a proven strategy that also helps distribute this work across a team, **making overall recruitment efforts more efficient and effective**. Furthermore, tapping into your employees' personal and professional networks can yield a broader and more high-quality candidate pool. Your staff know your school community best and are likely to recommend candidates with strong potential and help sell these candidates on your school. See below for suggestions and best practices to involve staff in virtual recruitment.

### Identify “talent ambassadors”.

Find staff who are interested in serving as “talent ambassadors”. The ambassador role can be as simple as being available to answer candidates' questions about working in the LEA or can involve more structured and frequent participation in virtual recruitment efforts. Be sure to outline what participation will look like and a time estimate; it's helpful to be flexible with the time involved, so that staff can contribute as much as they're able to. Ambassadors should:

- ✓ be in good standing in their roles,
- ✓ speak to the positives of their LEA/school communities, and
- ✓ represent the diversity of your team (e.g. by role, race/ethnicity, age, gender, etc.).

Leaders may invite specific staff members to join or invite them to apply via a simple application (for instance, respond to a few questions like “Why are you interested in this role?” and “What would you share with a potential candidate?”). Lean on this group to participate in the activities below and solicit other recruitment ideas from them as well. Finally, be sure to thank talent ambassadors regularly and recognize their impact.

### Prepare talent ambassadors to speak to candidates.

Share recruitment materials and sample talking points with talent ambassadors to ensure their candidate communication is aligned and consistent, and that it **reinforces your priority recruitment messages**. Additionally, walk through any potentially challenging

questions candidates may ask (for instance questions around workload, performance evaluation, or compensation) so that ambassadors are prepared to respond to these as well. You may also ask for feedback on your LEA’s recruitment materials from this group; based on their experiences, what would they highlight to prospective candidates?

## **Involve talent ambassadors in online recruitment events.**

Have talent ambassadors join events like **online information sessions** and job fairs to provide their perspectives on why they enjoy working at your school and to answer candidate questions. Ambassadors can illustrate or reinforce the LEA’s primary recruitment messages; for instance, if professional growth is a strong selling point, have staff members share specific examples of what their own development looks like. Encourage staff to use pictures, video, sample student work, or other media to bring these messages to life. If staff can’t join events live, they can record their contribution in advance. Ensure that ambassadors are clear on their roles, have prepared talking points, and have an opportunity to rehearse before the event.



For more on online information sessions, see the guide: **Virtual Information Sessions.**

## **Involve ambassadors in cultivating high priority candidates.**

For your strongest candidates, and/or those applying for hard-to-staff roles, ask ambassadors to reach out to the candidates individually via email or a phone call. Be strategic about this communication. For instance, an ambassador who teaches high school special education can reach out to an applicant for the same type of position. You can match ambassadors with high priority candidates who share common backgrounds, such as the same alma mater. Use a tracker or sign up form to monitor these communications and to avoid overloading candidates. Provide ambassadors with sample communications templates they can customize.

## **Offer virtual informal chats with ambassadors.**

Give candidates informal opportunities to get to know current staff via virtual “coffee chats”. These may be individualized or in a group—for instance, one-on-one talks with a current candidate and a specific ambassador who can speak to that candidate’s interest, or a group session. For these events, ensure both ambassadors and participants are prepared. Provide talent ambassadors with a basic PowerPoint presentation or other materials they can use to introduce themselves and their school; share sample talking points; and ensure ambassadors know how to use the video conference platform. For candidates, advise them of the informal structure and encourage them to bring questions to the meeting.

## Launch a referral campaign—involving all educators, not just ambassadors.

Systematize a way for current staff to refer potential candidates and encourage them to do so.

**Identify a staff member** to be the referral campaign manager who will lead communication with current staff, track referrals, and send follow-up emails to referred candidates. This could be someone in HR, a talent ambassador, an administrative assistant, etc.

**Create an online form**, such as a Google form, where staff can share referrals. This form should ask for referred candidates' names, contact information, and any relevant notes (e.g. subject area, specific role, etc.).

**Craft template communications** to send to referred candidates. This should include:

- *Sample emails and phone scripts that all staff can use with their referrals. These should align to your recruitment materials and reinforce the same messages.*
- *Sample social media posts that all staff can post to their network that share opportunities at your school and how to learn more.*
- *Sample emails and phone scripts the referral campaign manager can use when following up with referred candidates.*

For examples of applicant cultivation messages, see

**Sample Candidate Referral Messages** 

**If your budget allows, incentivize referrals.** This may be an individual incentive, e.g. offering a bonus to staff whose referrals accept their offer (recommend paying half at their start dates and the other half three months into their roles) or a group award like a staff breakfast at the start of the next school year to the school whose staff makes the most successful referrals.

**Share the referral campaign with staff.** Take time on a virtual staff meeting to introduce the referral program, covering why it's important, how staff can make referrals, who is eligible, and the communication templates staff may use. Be sure to share what staff can expect after they make referrals—what will happen next in the recruitment and hiring process. Be sure to continue to remind staff to make referrals and share updates to maintain momentum.

**Run the campaign and track effectiveness.** Ensure the campaign manager follows up with all referrals regularly and that staff are also sending individualized emails/ phone calls to their referred candidates. Track referral applications and let staff know when you're making job offers to their referred candidates, so your staff can encourage the candidates to accept.

# Sample Candidate Referral Messages

## Email for staff to directly refer candidates

Hi <Name>,

I hope you're doing well! I'm writing to share that my <school/network/district> is hiring strong <insert role/specific teacher content area>, and I thought of you, given your strengths in <name a few experiences and/or qualities that make the referral a strong candidate>. My time at <school/network/district> has been a great professional experience, and I've really enjoyed <insert appealing specific characteristics/experiences at school/network/district>. I encourage you to apply! You can do so <here; insert link> and make sure to share that I referred you. If you have any questions, or want to learn more, let me know, and I'd be happy to chat!

Warmly,

<Name>

## Phone script for staff to directly refer candidates

Hi <Name>, is now a good time to talk for a few minutes?

*If no: Plan another time to talk and/or follow up with a version of the above email*

*If yes:*

Great! I wanted to talk to you because my <school/network/district> is hiring strong <insert role/specific teacher content area>, and I think you'd be an excellent fit! I know you have lots of expertise in <insert role specific expertise/experience>, and as you probably know I've really enjoyed my time at <school/network/district>. What do you think?

*<Gauge interest, provide additional information, offer to answer their questions, highlighting what you've enjoyed about <school/network/district>, and why this person would be a good fit>*

Thanks so much for talking. I hope you apply, and you can do that <share directions for applying> and make sure to share that I referred you. If you have any other questions, let me know. I'd be happy to talk more!

**Social media post to share with personal/professional networks**

*Calling all teachers looking for a great opportunity! My <school/  
network/district> is currently hiring. I love teaching here because  
<insert appealing specific characteristics/experiences at school/  
network/district>. Want to know more? Feel free to get in touch!  
Interested in applying? You can do so <here; insert link>*



Toolkit Introduction  
LEA Employment Web Pages  
Online Job Search Platforms  
Educator Job Descriptions for Online Posts  
Social Media for Educator Recruitment  
Retention Conversations with Educators  
**Staff Involvement in Virtual Recruiting**  
Virtual Information Sessions  
Virtual Hiring Activities that Assess Desired  
Teacher Competencies  
Best Practices for Remote Interviews  
Remote Processes for Hiring Eligibility Forms  
Virtual Options for Demonstration Lessons and  
Other Performance Tasks  
Consistent Virtual Communication with Applicants  
Online Job Application Tracking

**DEVELOPED IN PARTNERSHIP WITH**  
Pennsylvania's System for LEA/School Improvement  
Lancaster-Lebanon IU13  
The Urban Schools Human Capital Academy  
TNTP