



School Board Update

Ministry of Education Releases New “School Board Teacher Hiring Practices” PPM

Date: March 3, 2021

On February 22, 2021, the Ontario Ministry of Education (Ministry) released the much anticipated [Policy/Program Memorandum No. 165](#) (PPM 165) regarding “School Board Teacher Hiring Practices.” PPM 165 comes in response to the revocation of Ontario Regulation 274/12 “Hiring Practices” and will replace the *Interim policy for school board hiring practices*. The PPM is effective March 31, 2021. However, the expectations it sets out apply to hiring practices that began after the revocation of the regulation on October 29, 2020. The purpose of the PPM is to provide direction to school boards on the development and implementation of fair, consistent and transparent teacher hiring policies and processes.

School boards are expected to include the following components in their teacher hiring policies:

- Qualifications and Merit
- Diversity, Equity, and Human Rights
- Employment Mobility
- Fairness and Transparency
- Monitoring and Evaluation.

PPM 165 provides further detail about the expectations for each component to assist school boards in achieving a diverse and representative teacher workforce. Perhaps most notably, PPM 165 does not include any requirements for interviewing candidates based on seniority.

Within the PPM, school boards are encouraged to develop “Effective Practices” to remove barriers and gaps in teacher hiring. These include:

- acknowledging the importance of supporting renewal in the teacher workforce (i.e. hiring newly qualified teachers)
- encouraging diversity in the teaching workforce to reflect the diversity of Ontario
- voluntary collection of teacher workforce demographic data to provide a foundation for well-

informed discussions and decision-making

- conducting an Employment Systems Review to determine whether employment systems create barriers for potential candidates or otherwise unfairly impact their chances to succeed
- identifying and making recommendations to address the gaps and barriers, including workplace culture and attitudinal barriers, to a diverse and inclusive work environment.

PPM 165 offers school boards an opportunity to reassess and redevelop their teacher hiring practices. However, when implementing any changes, it is important for school boards to keep in mind that the Ministry expects all hiring decisions to be made in accordance with the PPM, applicable laws (including the *Human Rights Code*) and school board collective agreements.

For Catholic school boards, we note that there are detailed hiring practice provisions in the Central OECTA Terms. PPM 165 expressly requires boards to comply with collective agreements while at the same time creating a new framework that may be different from those hiring practice provisions. Accordingly, the implementation of PPM 165 may pose unique challenges for Catholic school boards.

For assistance with policy development or implementing any other changes related to teacher hiring practices as a result of PPM 165, we encourage you to [contact your regular Hicks Morley lawyer](#).