

Pacific Montessori Society

ACADEMIC HEAD APPRAISAL POLICY

Effective Date: September 21, 2009

POLICY STATEMENT

A properly conducted appraisal of the Academic Head¹ benefits the individual in that role, enhances the relationship between the Academic Head and the Board of the Pacific Montessori Society (“the Board”), ensures accountability, fosters opportunities for strengthening the quality of the educational experience provided within the Selkirk Montessori community, and models the importance of systematic assessment throughout the school.

POLICY RATIONALE

A vibrant and effective Montessori school is dependent upon the quality of the leadership provided by its Academic Head. Appropriate appraisal processes provide meaningful feedback and contribute to the improvement of school leaders and, thereby, the effectiveness of the school. The Academic Head is accountable for her/his performance and a comprehensive appraisal process is one of the vehicles used to validate performance.

POLICY

I. Purpose

The appraisal of the Academic Head has the following purposes:

- To promote the professional growth and development of educators.
- To recognize and encourage the use of effective administrative behaviours.
- To assist the Academic Head in assessing her/his own performance
- To ensure the duties and responsibilities of the position are being carried out as outlined in the job description.
- To provide a basis for decisions affecting salary and employment.

II. Appraisal Values

The appraisal process will:

- respect the dignity, confidentiality and anonymity of all participants,
- be inclusive by involving a cross-section of the school community,
- provide constructive feedback,
- affirm the partnership between the Board and the Academic Head by utilizing a collaborative approach, whenever appropriate and/or possible, and
- be fair, equitable, non-discriminatory, consistent and predictable.

¹ The term “Academic Head” in this document is equivalent to the term “principal” in the *Independent School Act*, which refers to “the teacher responsible for administering and supervising an independent school.”

III. Process and Timelines

As the legal entity responsible for the Pacific Montessori Society, the Board has the duty and authority to conduct a performance appraisal of the Academic Head. This will occur on a periodic basis, as deemed necessary, but no less than every three years, for an Academic Head who has successfully completed her/his probationary period upon hiring, and one year after the date of hire, for a new Academic Head.

A committee of the Board (“the Appraisal Committee”) will be delegated with responsibility for identifying and hiring an independent evaluator and ensuring the appraisal process is reasonable, fair and based on a valid and reliable appraisal instrument.

A 360° survey will form part of the appraisal instrument. Although the list of survey recipients will be determined in consultation with the Academic Head, the following groups/individuals should be represented: the Administrator, students, teachers, parents, and support staff. A minimum of ten surveys must be distributed.

The Academic Head will participate actively in the appraisal process by completing a self-evaluation, using an instrument designated by the independent evaluator.

A meeting between the Academic Head and the Appraisal Committee will occur at least 15 working days before the appraisal is to begin to review the appraisal process and timelines.

Upon completion of the appraisal, a written report will be prepared by the Appraisal Committee and submitted to the Board for approval within 10 working days. The report will be reviewed by the Board during an *in camera* session at its next regularly scheduled meeting after receipt of the report. Once approved, the report will be forwarded to the Academic Head. A meeting to review the appraisal results will take place between the Board and the Academic Head within 20 working days following receipt of the report by the Academic Head.

During this appraisal review meeting, professional development goals and activities may be identified to assist an Academic Head whose appraisal results indicate areas requiring remediation, as determined by the Board. A timeline for demonstrating acceptable levels of improvement will be established and appended to the report.

The report and appendices, if any, will be signed by both the Academic Head and the Chair of the Board. The Academic Head’s signature indicates receipt of the report but does not necessarily signify agreement with its contents. A section for the Academic Head’s comments will form part of the report. The Chair’s signature signifies the Board’s majority agreement with its contents; minority opinions by individual members of the Board may be attached as appendices.

Copies of the report and appendices, if any, will be given to the Academic Head, and will be included in the Board’s confidential files. The original(s) will be placed in the Academic Head's personnel file, to be stored offsite.

IV. Appraisal Criteria

The criteria for an initial appraisal of the Academic Head will be based on the responsibilities defined in the Academic Head's job description, and per the numbered criteria listed below.

The criteria for subsequent appraisals will be those defined by the Academic Head's job description plus any growth goals identified by the Board in the previous written appraisal report(s). Such growth goals may be areas requiring remediation or actions which must be taken to address trends, issues or external realities.

1. Educational Leadership
 - provides leadership in all matters relating to education in the school;
 - ensures that students in the school have the opportunity to meet the standards of education mandated by the Ministry of Education.
2. Human Resources Management
 - has overall authority and responsibility for all academic personnel-related issues, except the development of mandates for collective bargaining and those personnel matters precluded by Board policy, legislation or collective agreements;
 - monitors and improves the performance of all teaching staff.
3. Administrative Procedures
 - has overall authority and responsibility for development, implementation and evaluation of administrative procedures as required to ensure effective administration of the school.
4. Academic Head/Board Relations
 - establishes and maintains positive working relations with the Board;
 - respects and honours the Board's roles and responsibilities and facilitates the implementation of its role as outlined in policy.
5. Planning and Reporting
 - provides leadership for the development of an annual plan;
 - ensures appropriate involvement of the Board (approval of process and timelines, strategic directions, key results and an annual review of school success in achieving the key results);
 - reports annually on results achieved.
6. Organizational Management
 - demonstrates effective organizational skills that result in compliance with all legal, Ministerial and Board mandates and timelines;
 - reports to the Ministry with respect to matters identified in and required by the *Independent School Act* and Regulations.
7. Communications
 - ensures that open, transparent and positive internal communications are in place.

8. Leadership Practices
 - practices leadership in a manner that is viewed positively and has the support of those with whom s/he works most directly in carrying out the directives of the Board and the Ministry of Education.
9. Student Welfare
 - ensures that each student is provided with a safe and caring environment that fosters and maintains respectful and responsible behaviour.

V. Appeals

If the Academic Head does not agree with any portion of the report or professional development activities as outlined, the Academic Head has the right to attach an appendix containing her/his views. This appendix must be submitted to the Board within 30 calendar days of the appraisal review meeting.

The Academic Head has 30 calendar days following the receipt of the appraisal report to request a review of the appraisal findings.

VI. Remediation and Probation

The process for an Academic Head whose appraisal report indicates areas requiring remediation is as follows:

- A Professional Development Contract, which includes an action plan, must be signed within 60 days.
- The Professional Development Contract must identify the indicators and/or areas requiring remediation.
- The action plan to correct these areas will be developed by the Appraisal Committee and approved by the Board and will include specific resources to be provided to the Academic Head, a schedule for periodic review of progress, and the types of evidence required to demonstrate satisfactory progress.
- The length of a remediation period cannot exceed 6 calendar months, excluding July and August.
- The Appraisal Committee must meet with the Academic Head at least monthly to assess progress and to provide assistance and support.
- An Academic Head on remediation is required to compile documentation of progress and improvement in the specific goal areas.

At the conclusion of the remediation period, a meeting will be held between the Board and the Academic Head to review the Academic Head's documentation, determine the degree of progress made and decide on the action to be taken:

- Remediation Completed—If the Academic Head has demonstrated satisfactory progress, including successful completion of all goals, s/he is confirmed in the position of Academic Head.

- Remediation Extended—If the Academic Head has shown progress and has met some of the goals, the Professional Development Contract is revised and the remediation process is repeated.
- Probation—If the Academic Head has not shown at least moderate improvement and has not met the majority of her/his goals, the Academic Head is placed on probation.

When an Academic Head is placed on probation, the following process is implemented:

- The remediation process is repeated and a new Professional Development Contract is negotiated and implemented.
- Near the end of the probationary period, a second appraisal will be completed.
- The status of an Academic Head on probation means that the continued employment of the Academic Head is in question and that termination may result if performance appraisal results do not indicate improvement to the satisfaction of the Board.
- At the conclusion of the appraisal, a Professional Development meeting is held where the Board reviews the Academic Head's documentation, the results of the appraisal and determines the degree of progress made.
- The Board will then determine the action to be taken. Possible actions include:
 - Probation Completed: If the Academic Head has demonstrated satisfactory progress, including successful completion of all goals, s/he is confirmed in the position of Academic Head.
 - Termination: The termination of the Academic Head will be reported to the council of the College of Teachers, per the requirements of the *Independent School Act*.

VII. Appraisal Process Evaluation

The Board may review and evaluate the appraisal process upon completion of each appraisal and make changes to its process or instruments, as it deems necessary.

REFERENCES

Academic Head Position Description
Independent School Act
Society Act