

Hiring Process FAQ

1. What are the teacher pools? Why do you have them?

SPS posts multiple subject areas pools in order for candidates to have a way to submit their information and indicate their interest in working with Seattle Public Schools before individual positions are posted by schools. The pools allow us to review your information, determine eligibility (and reach out to you if there is an issue with your application before you apply to schools). We review applications and often reach out to candidates to assist them through the hiring process. For some subject areas, we offer early interview opportunities and offer “early” or “contingency” contracts to candidates. Having an early or contingency contract allows candidates to interview alongside internal applicants sooner in the hiring season.

2. Why can't I apply directly to schools right now?

Like most school districts, individual school budgets or allocations (the number of positions each school will get based on student enrollment) is not determined until the spring. Therefore, schools do not have an accurate accounting of all of their hiring needs until mid- to late-March or early April.

3. When will individual postings for schools be up?

Once budgets are finalized at schools around mid- to late-March, the district begins its hiring process, which goes in phases. The Collective Bargaining Agreement with the Seattle Education Association stipulates that current teachers be given access to positions for a period of time before SPS hires externally. We do not yet have the dates for when internal and external hiring will be this year, but typically, internal hiring starts in mid- to late March. Some subjects, such as Special Education move immediately into external hiring due to need, but other, lower need subjects or subjects for which the district has teachers it needs to assign for the next year, remain internal longer.

4. What do I need to include in my application(s)?

You will be required to include a resume and cover letter. You will also be asked a series of questions in the application. We urge you to draft the answers to your questions in a Word document, then copy and paste them into the application so that you don't lose any work. If you have a copy of your WA State Certificate, we encourage you to upload it to your application so that we have it for reference if/when you get hired.

5. Can I update my resume and cover letter?

Once you submit an application, the system does not (currently) allow you to upload updated documents. When individual postings at schools are posted, you will be asked to upload a school-specific cover letter and resume for each job you apply to.

6. What is a contingency or early contract?

A contingency or early contract is a contingent offer of employment from the school district. SPS issues two types of contingency contracts. Both allow the holder to be considered as an internal candidate and interview in the early phases of hiring. Hiring decisions are made at the school level by school-based hiring teams. Candidates with contracts must still interview and be selected for a position.

- a) **Binding** – If offered this type of contract, the applicant shows high-potential and is being offered an actual job, though the location of the job is not yet known. If the teacher is not selected through the school-based hiring process, HR will place the teacher in an open position in late July, early August.
- b) **Non-Binding** – If offered this type of contract, the applicant is showing high-potential and is being offered an opportunity to interview for jobs alongside internal candidates during the early phases of hiring. If the teacher is not selected through the school-based hiring process, the contract ends on July 31 at which time the candidate may accept another offer at a different district, if desired. The candidate may still apply to and be considered for jobs, but there is no guarantee of placement.

7. How do I get an interview for an early contract?

There are multiple opportunities to interview for an early contract, however, it should be noted that SPS does not give out contracts for all subject areas. This year, we anticipate offering contracts in:

- Special Education
- Elementary Education
- ELL
- Math
- PE/Health
- Spanish
- Music
- Art
- World Languages

Applications submitted to our pools are reviewed, and candidates may be contacted to conduct a pre-screening interview to be considered for a contingency contract. SPS also conducts interviews at hiring events and career fairs.

8. I've applied to many positions, why haven't I been interviewed?

Interview and hiring decisions are made at the building level. Some positions receive hundreds of applications, so not all applicants get an interview, even if they meet minimum qualifications. However, SPS hires 400-500 new teachers each year, from March until September, so there are many opportunities to apply and be considered. If you don't get an interview early in the

process, don't be discouraged. We do much of our hiring in June, July and August. Keep applying!

9. What type of references should I include in my application?

References should be professional references who can speak to your instructional abilities. This can be a teacher or principal from your student teaching or a professor from your college or university. For experienced teachers, we would like to see references from former supervisors (principal, AP) or from a coach, observer or mentor teacher. Personal references, family, friends, colleagues/peers are not acceptable references.

10. When will references be checked?

References are checked once you submit your pool applications and are screened. This allows principals to see references as part of your application.

11. I don't have a WA state license yet; can I still apply?

Yes, you can apply if you are fairly certain that you will have your WA stat certificate by Sept. 1, 2020. We will check for licensure upon hire and communicate with you on your progress toward getting licensure completed. If you do not complete it, you will not be able to begin work and your offer may be rescinded.

12. I'm from out of state, can I teach in Washington?

Yes, out-of-state teachers usually qualify for a one-year residency certificate and have one year to complete requirements to get a continuing license. For more information, visit the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction at <http://www.k12.wa.us/Certification/Teacher/TeacherOut-of-State.aspx#content>.

13. How much do teachers in SPS get paid?

Starting pay for teachers in Seattle Public Schools is just over \$56,000. Pay is determined by degree and credits earned and year's of experience. The 2019-20 teacher salary schedule can be found at: <https://www.seattleschools.org/cms/one.aspx?portalId=627&pageId=15568>

All teachers are placed on the first lane and step of the teacher salary schedule until transcripts and verifications of employment are submitted to the SPS's Classification and Compensation Department. They will notify you once they receive your documentation and place you at a higher lane/step on the salary schedule.

14. How will I know if I am selected for a job?

After schools complete their interview process, the school forwards the top candidate to Human Resources to make an offer. You will receive a call and an offer letter.

15. What happens after I accept a job?

Once you accept, you will receive a link to activate your account in the District's online onboarding portal. When you sign on, you will have a task list of required paperwork (you will complete online), required trainings and other tasks you should complete including fingerprints and completing your I-9 (employment eligibility document).

16. When is orientation for teachers?

All employees complete basic new hire orientation in training modules online. However, SPS holds a special New Teacher Induction Program, in late August (a week or so before school begins). Dates will be communicated later in the summer when finalized. New to teaching teachers attend three days of induction, and experienced teachers attend one or two days of the program. More info to come on that.

17. What is the first day of work?

Teachers begin work four days prior to students arriving at school for "contract days." This is when teachers set up their classrooms, attend PD and staff/team meetings, get class rosters and other activities to prepare for the start of school. SPS historically begins the school year (with kids) on the Wednesday following Labor Day.

NOTE: Kindergarten teachers attend a week of "Jump Start" in late August to meet and help students get acclimated to school. Teachers are paid their per diem rates for attendance at Jump Start.

2020-21 Three Phase Hiring Timeline

February 25	Interview, Resume Writing Workshops
March 23-29	13 Seattle Excellence Schools Postings (*pending SEA agreement)
March 30-April 5	Phase 1A Postings for internal certificated staff
April 6-10	Phase 1A Interviews; recommendations due by 5:00 p.m.
April 13-24	Phase 1B Postings for certificated and classified internal transfers, contingency contract candidates and substitutes requested by the hiring team. Phase III External Postings for Title Schools and Special Education.
April 27-May 1	Phase 1B Interviews; recommendations due by 5:00 p.m.
May 4-10	Phase II Postings for Displaced and Contingency Contract holders only
May 11-15	Phase II Interviews
May 18 -24	Phase II Postings for Displaced and Contingency Contract holder only
May 25-29	Phase II Interviews
June 1-14	Final Phase II Postings for remaining displaced to review and submit preferences (Cert & Classified)