



March 8, 2024

TO:

**Dr. Michelle C. Reid**  
Superintendent

**Geovanny Ponce**  
Chief of Schools

**Sherry Agnew-Scott**  
Assistant Superintendent  
Department of Human Resources

**Megan Vroman**  
Assistant Superintendent, Region 2

**Dr. Ricardy J. Anderson**  
School Board Representative, Mason District

As an integral part of the Justice High School Pyramid community, the Justice High School Parent Teacher Student Association and our fellow Pyramid feeder-school PTA/Os are providing this important feedback on the process of selecting the next Principal of Justice High School.

The Justice High School community is experiencing its *fifth Principal selection process in 12 years*. Given this track record, we must more closely consider how our system selects and supports our administrators and how well our school community is really understood. Furthermore, this revolving door of administrators has been detrimental to Justice High School's ability to build continuity of effectiveness and further magnifies the negative perceptions of our school. The selection of administrators, especially of Principals, has a deepening impact on Justice High School's ability to retain quality teachers and maintain staff morale. Additionally, the lack of consistency compounds the issue of families' engagement within and belief in the school, including the continually growing number of families who are pupil-placing their students in other local schools or sending them to private schools.

We believe that Justice High School can fully realize its potential as a twenty-first century beacon that educates and forms the minds and hearts of the future contributors to our ever-evolving civil society. We trust that you, as our educational leaders, believe the same and are as invested as we are in ensuring that the selection of our incoming Principal serves as a launching point for a season of ingenuity, advocacy, and excellence for our Justice High School



community. In order to meet these goals, we believe that FCPS leadership must *earnestly collect input*, not just explain the existing process, from parents, staff, and students using as many outreach methods as possible, including: in-person meetings with each stakeholder group where input is recorded (including - for the parent meeting - transportation offered from/to Justice and our feeder-schools and simultaneous interpretation); virtual meetings with each stakeholder group where input is recorded (including simultaneous translation for the parent meeting); multilingual online-surveys distributed via text and email; and multilingual hard-copy surveys (also with QR codes and website addresses) mailed to families registered at Justice and all feeder-schools (including a postage-paid return envelope).

The FCPS leaders responsible for selecting the candidates must do so with a particular paradigm of understanding about the unique needs of our community - a successful Principal candidate for another FCPS high school might not have the same success at Justice. Additionally, there is ample time for a Principal to be selected well-before the end of this schoolyear; therefore, we strongly request that you *not* assign an Interim-Principal because, based on recent experience in our Pyramid, this could cause confusion and delay. We have outlined below the elements we believe to be integral to the successful selection of our next Principal.

- ★ When selecting the candidates that the “stakeholder interview panel” will interview, *please ensure that each candidate:*
  - understands the Justice High School community and student population, particularly students for whom English is not a first-language, students who have advanced academic expectations, students with disabilities, students whose life-experiences are reflective of the span of our socio-economic spectrum from poor to wealthy, and students whose family-backgrounds span the education-completion spectrum from grade-school to doctorates;
  - possesses the ability to create an inclusive environment that is rooted in both empathy and high expectations, executed compassionately and diligently, and where *all* students feel valued and supported;
  - appreciates the significance of effective public relations, especially comprehensive community outreach and family engagement, including interactions which build trust and foster collaboration to build strong partnerships with parents, community organizations, and local businesses to help support the school's mission and enhance opportunities for students;
  - handles crises effectively, whether academic, social, or safety related;
  - can proactively, transparently, and consistently communicate with all stakeholders;



- illustrates strong interest and experience in seeking meaningful input from staff, parents, and students, especially including timely follow-through and effective problem-solving;
  - leads by setting clear goals, inspiring others, making decisive decisions, driving instructional and organizational process and change, implementing with fidelity, and executing with persistency;
  - demonstrates skilled personnel management abilities, with an emphasis on identifying, hiring, supporting, and evaluating highly effective faculty, administrators, and staff;
  - has experience with the facilitation of multidisciplinary and high-quality teaching and learning;
  - exhibits creativity in the development and implementation of practices and programs;
  - is knowledgeable about the functionality, structure, and policies of the FCPS system;
  - resiliently commits to the long-term success of the school, including staying for at least five years; and
  - ingeniously approaches the continuing vision of establishing our school as a leader in education.
- ★ The FCPS published Principal-selection process describes that the “stakeholder interview panel” will be asking *pre-determined questions* of each candidate selected, which are developed using "written input received from stakeholders." We request that the ***final draft of those questions be reviewed by as many community stakeholders as is feasible***, giving enough time for their feedback prior to the final version being issued for the interviews.
- ★ The FCPS published Principal-selection process also describes a two-part interview process during which the “stakeholder interview panel” will have an opportunity to develop three follow-up questions for each candidate, while the candidate is out of the room, which the candidate will return to the interview to answer. We request that the ***interview panel not be limited in the number of follow-up questions*** and that they be permitted to ask as many questions as they believe are necessary to appropriately glean the required information to make as fully informed a decision as possible.

The FCPS “Portrait of a Graduate” includes the attributes of communication, collaboration, ethical & global citizenship, creative & critical thinking, and goal-direction & resiliency. This



Principal selection process is a prime opportunity for us to exemplify all these traits. A *collaborative* effort is particularly critical because we have received feedback from previous community stakeholders that their experiences were not meaningful because they feel that their input was not weighed seriously as part of the selection of administrators within our Pyramid. As part of this effort, we expect that FCPS leadership will publish and share widely with the Pyramid community a straightforward and well-defined timeline for this selection process.

In addition to a successful Principal selection process, we are committed to advocating for a successful *retention* process. It is essential that FCPS leadership provide the Principal with a comprehensive level of support, such as assessing and honing leadership-style as a professional development tool, as well as provide Justice High School with the requisite resources to ensure parity of education and experience with the other high schools in the county. The unique fabric of our community cannot be overstated, which is exhibited in many beautiful ways, but also includes a wide and deep breadth of needs. We are requesting that you maximize the spirit, not the letter, of the selection process, so that our community can more readily trust and invest in the process of selecting our school-leader. We look forward to hearing from you and working together to select and retain the next Principal of Justice High School.

Respectfully,

/s/ Kim Lanoue  
President  
**Justice High School PTSA**

/s/ Dana Chodos  
President  
**Glasgow Middle School PTA**

/s/ Marian Perez  
President  
**Bailey's Elementary School PTA**

/s/ Katie McGrorey  
President  
**Glen Forest Elementary School PTO**

/s/ Penny Yiannarakis  
President  
**Beech Tree Elementary PTA**

/s/ Joselle Shea  
President  
**Parklawn Elementary School PTA**

/s/ Theresa Cano  
President  
**Belvedere Elementary School PTA**

/s/ Michael Toner  
President  
**Sleepy Hollow Elementary PTA**