

Executive Director

3:40-E Exhibit - Checklist for the Superintendent Employment Contract Negotiation Process

The School Board hires and employs the Executive Director. The Executive Director shall be in charge of the administration of the schools under the direction of the Board, through its policies. See 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4 and 105 ILCS 5/10-16.7. As an effective employer, the Board must develop and maintain a productive relationship with the Executive Director. See IASB's *Foundational Principles of Effective Governance*, **Principle 3. The board employs a executive director, at:**

www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/.

The foundation for a productive employment relationship begins when the Board identifies the most qualified executive director candidate (*successful executive director candidate*) after an established interview process. The Board then extends an offer of employment to the successful candidate. The employment search process and resulting relationship should consist of mutual respect and a clear understanding of respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations. This relationship should begin with the Board's policy, a thoughtfully crafted employment contract and job description, and procedures for communications and ongoing assessment. See *Principles* at the link above.

Below, the *Checklist for the Executive Director Employment Contract Negotiation Process (Checklist)* provides a column entitled **Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board**. It lists common executive director employment contract terms and points of consideration for boards to prepare for during the contract formation process. Another column entitled **Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources** provides extra information about these common executive director employment contract terms.

The *Checklist* is intended to serve as a resource to educate and guide the Board through the employment contract negotiation process with its successful executive director candidate. Board members who are educated about the content within the *Checklist* are crucial to successful negotiation processes. An educated contract formation and negotiation process, along with a well-written contract and job description for the Executive Director, all set the foundation for mutual respect and a clear understanding of the Board and Executive Director's respective roles, responsibilities, and expectations. **Important:** This *Checklist* is a resource for contract formation; it is not a list of must have items for an executive director's employment contract or a basis for a board to re-open contracts currently in effect.

Prior to providing the successful executive director candidate an offer for employment and contract for review, consideration, and negotiation, consult the Board Attorney about the *Checklist* and the scope of the terms the Board wishes to offer the successful executive director candidate. The Board and the successful executive director candidate should expect and encourage the other to seek the advice of their respective attorneys during the employment contract formation process.

Many attorneys agree and best practices suggest that boards and successful executive director candidates work with their own separate attorneys in an amicable and cooperative manner to complete the employment contract negotiation process.

Board Attorney. Prior to providing any successful executive director candidate with an offer for employment and a contract for review, consideration, and negotiation, best practices suggest consulting the Board Attorney about the *Checklist*. Note: Boards should view a successful executive director candidate retaining his or her own attorney as a best practice (as opposed to a warning sign).

Each party is beginning the employment relationship in a cooperative manner to set an appropriate foundation to the future working relationship.

Power and Duties of the Executive Director

Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Duties	<p>Does the Board enumerate the duties of the Executive Director in the employment contract?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the statutory duties of the Executive Director listed? 2. Has the Board incorporated policy references to the other duties related to the Executive Director's employment? <p>See 105 ILCS 5/10-21.4 and 105 ILCS 5/10-16.7.</p>
Full-time, Attention and Energy Clause	<p>How will the Board address outside activities of the Executive Director?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How will the Board define <i>outside activities</i>? 2. Will the Board restrict the Executive Director from engaging in outside activities during the term of the employment contract? 3. Will the Board require approval/notification before the Executive Director engages in outside activities?

Employment and Compensation

Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Duration of Contract	<p>An executive director's employment contract may not exceed five years. If its duration is two to five years, the contract must reference goals and suspension of tenure.</p> <p>No performance-based contract shall be extended or rolled over prior to its scheduled expiration unless all the performance and improvement goals contained in the contract have been met. See 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8.</p> <p>If the duration is one year or less, then the contract need not reference goals or suspension of tenure.</p>
	<p>Special Considerations for the Board may include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the estimated Board contribution to the Teachers' Retirement System (TRS) for any raises above six percent (40 ILCS 5/15-155(g)) prior to retirement?

Salary	<p>2. What is the <i>cost shift</i> implication for the District if the Board offers or later agrees to a salary that is equal to or greater than the governor’s statutory salary? School districts are responsible for paying the actuarial cost of the pension benefits earned on the portion of a TRS member’s salary that exceeds the governor’s statutory salary. The governor’s annual salary is published by TRS at: www.trsil.org/employers/payments/contribution-rates_earnings-limitations.</p> <p>3. Do any administrative cost cap triggers exist (105 ILCS 5/17-1.5)?</p> <p>Items the Board may see the successful executive director candidate request of it:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A fixed salary for each year of the contract. 2. A guaranteed minimum salary. 3. Compensation increases.
Severance Agreements	<p>Any contract that contains a condition of severance pay must include the following provisions required by the Government Severance Pay Act (GSPA), 5 ILCS 415/10:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A restriction to an amount not exceeding 20 weeks of compensation; and 2. A prohibition for any severance if the Executive Director is fired for <i>misconduct</i> by the Board. See the <i>Severance Pay</i> row under the Changes to the Executive Director’s Employment Contract subhead below for a definition of what misconduct means in the context of this law.
Teachers Retirement System (TRS) & Teacher Health Insurance (THIS)	<p>How does the Board want to address:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pension contributions (TRS-THIS)? 2. Inclusion of salary and other compensation in the payment of TRS and THIS? Or, will TRS and THIS be in addition to salary and other compensation? 3. Unforeseen pension reform issues?

Conditions of Employment

Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Administrative License	Does the Board want to require the successful executive director candidate to guarantee that as the future Executive Director of the District, he or she has and will maintain the appropriate licensure throughout the employment contract?
	105 ILCS 5/10-21.9. See also PRESS sample policy

Criminal Background Check Law	5:30, <i>Hiring Process and Criteria</i> , and the subhead entitled Fingerprint-based Criminal History Records Information Check in administrative procedure 5:30-AP2, <i>Investigations</i> .
Sexual Misconduct Related Employment History Review Law	105 ILCS 5/22-94, added by P.A. 102-702, eff. 7-1-23. See also PRESS sample policy 5:30, <i>Hiring Process and Criteria</i> and PRESS sample administrative procedure 5:30-AP3, <i>Sexual Misconduct Related Employment History Review (EHR)</i> .
Other Background Check Laws	<p>Does the Board want to require additional background inquiries beyond the fingerprint-based criminal history records information check required by 105 ILCS 5/10-21.9 and sexual misconduct related employment history review required by 105 ILCS 5/22-94, added by P.A. 102-702, eff. 7-1-23 and discussed above? If yes, consult the Board Attorney and consider the following laws:</p> <p>15 U.S.C. § 1681 et seq., Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act (FCRA), is a federal law that regulates the gathering and use of information about consumers by third party <i>consumer reporting agencies</i>, including credit information, criminal background, driving record, personal characteristics/reputation, etc. The law requires consumer reporting agencies to comply with certain procedural notice requirements when gathering information from a consumer.</p> <p>820 ILCS 75/, Ill. Job Opportunities for Qualified Applicants Act, prohibits employers from inquiring about an applicant's criminal history until the application has been determined qualified and notified that he/she has been selected for an interview (<i>a/k/a ban the box law</i>).</p> <p>820 ILCS 55/, Ill. Right to Privacy in the Workplace Act (RPWA), prohibits employers from:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Requesting, coercing, or requiring any employee or prospective employee to provide a user name and password for any personal online account; 2. Requesting, coercing, or requiring an employee or applicant to invite the employer to have access to that individual's personal online account; and 3. Taking an adverse employment action against an individual (including refusal to hire) based on that individual's use of a lawful product off District property during nonworking hours, i.e.,

tobacco, cannabis, or alcohol. (Note: RPWA allows employers to regulate employees' use of those lawful products that impair an employee's ability to perform the employee's assigned duties. See policy 5:50, *Drug- and Alcohol-Free Workplace; E-Cigarette, Tobacco, and Cannabis Prohibition*, and its f/ns).

820 ILCS 70/, III. Employee Credit Privacy Act, prohibits employers from inquiring into an individual's credit history or taking action against an employee based such history unless a satisfactory credit history is a *bona fide occupational requirement*, which is further defined in the statute. The job descriptions of executive directors generally meet this standard because they: (1) describe a managerial position that involves direction of school districts; (2) include signatory power over more than \$100; and (3) involve having access to confidential and financial information. Note: Any one of these grounds alone is sufficient.

Medical Examination

105 ILCS 5/24-5 requires new employees to submit evidence of physical fitness to perform assigned duties and freedom from communicable diseases.

The Americans with Disabilities Act allows medical inquiries of current employees only when they are job-related and consistent with business necessity or part of a voluntary employee wellness program. 42 U.S.C. §12112(d)(4). Districts may deny jobs to individuals with disabilities who pose a direct threat to the health or safety of others in the workplace, provided that a reasonable accommodation would not either eliminate the risk or reduce it to an acceptable level. 42 U.S.C. §12113; 29 C.F.R. §1630.2(r).

See also PRESS sample policy 5:30, *Hiring Process and Criteria*, specifically f/ns 25 and 26.

Tenure

Suspension of Tenure

With multi-year contracts and multi-year extensions, executive directors waive their rights to tenure in a school district, but no previously acquired tenure may be lost.

Continued Tenure

Executive Directors serving multiple one year contracts may still accrue service toward and acquire tenure.

See 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8 and the *Duration of Contract* row in the Employment and Compensation checkbox, above.

Evaluations and Goals

Executive Director Evaluation	<p>Once the Board has developed its goals and indicators (as discussed immediately above), 105 ILCS 5/10-20, 5/10-23, and 5/10-23.8 require the Board to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. “Direct, through policy, its executive director in his or her charge of the administration of the school district;” and2. Evaluate the executive director in his or her “administration of school board policies and his or her stewardship of the assets of the district.” <p>How will the Board evaluate the successful executive director candidate upon its outlined goals and indicators?</p> <p>Does the Board state when it will evaluate the successful executive director candidate upon the goals and indicators that it set? Note: Some districts do not consider the executive director evaluation to be a <i>one-time event</i> and put an on-going process into place. Contrast other districts, which depending upon their preferences, generally find the best time of year to evaluate is in the winter or early springtime.</p> <p>Is the Board or the successful executive director candidate responsible to trigger the components of the Executive Director’s evaluation process?</p> <p>What evaluation instrument will be used? How will the evaluation be documented?</p> <p>Will an evaluation instrument be outlined by the Board in its employment contract with the successful executive director candidate?</p> <p>Is the evaluation instrument the Board will use tied to its goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement and other information as the Board may determine?</p> <p>For more information about best practices when planning for and evaluating the Executive Director, see:</p> <p><i>The Executive Director Evaluation Process</i> at: www.iasb.com/iasb/media/documents/superintendent-evaluation-process.pdf;</p> <p>IASB’s <i>Foundational Principles of Effective Governance</i>, Principle 3. The board employs a superintendent, at: www.iasb.com/conference-training-and-events/training/training-resources/foundational-principles-of-effective-governance/; stating “the board employs and evaluates one person — the Executive</p>
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Director — and holds that person accountable for district performance and compliance with written board policy.”

Expenses and Benefits

Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Expenses and Allowances	<p>How will the Board address expenses and allowances in its employment contract negotiations with the successful executive director candidate?</p> <p><u>Business</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What standard will the Board use, e.g., reasonable, itemized, etc.? 2. Will the Board designate the Board President or another individual to review and/or approve the Executive Director’s expenses? <p><u>Transportation</u></p> <p>Will the Board reimburse travel? If yes, what types of travel will the board reimburse? Some transportation topics that successful executive director candidates request discussion about include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Vehicle insurance reimbursement(s) 2. Vehicle repair reimbursement(s) 3. A travel allowance only at either a set amount or the District’s per mile rate 4. A vehicle 5. Out-of-district travel
Insurance	<p>Will the Board address insurance in its employment contract negotiations with the successful executive director candidate?</p> <p>Some items successful executive director candidates request include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Insurance contributions as part of a Cafeteria Plan, or in the alternative, the Board paying the premiums. 2. Specific insurance coverages from the Board, such as health, dental, vision, life, disability, etc.
	<p>Will the Board address vacation days in its employment contract negotiations with the successful executive director candidate? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many days?

<p>Vacation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Will vacation days accumulate? And, if so, how? 3. Will the Board designate itself, the Board President, or a Board officer to approve or receive notification from the Executive Director prior to taking a vacation? If yes, describe the process. 4. Will the Board address reimbursement for unused days? 5. Will vacation days need to be used for days off during winter or spring breaks?
<p>Sick Leave/Days</p>	<p>Will the Board address sick days in its employment contract negotiations with the successful executive director candidate? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will sick leave be limited to annual sick leave days in the District's teachers' contract or will a different amount be provided? 2. How will sick day accumulation be addressed? 3. Will the Board designate itself, the Board President, or a Board officer to approve or receive notification from the Executive Director prior to taking or upon returning from a sick day? If yes, describe the process.
<p>Professional Activities and Organizations Memberships in Community Organizations</p>	<p>Will the Board address memberships in professional activities/organizations and/or community organizations its employment contract negotiations with the successful executive director candidate? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many organizations will the Board allow the Executive Director to join? 2. Which organizations will be allowed? 3. What is the Board's limit for the cost of dues to professional organizations?
<p>Retirement</p>	<p>Will the Board address any type of payment(s) upon the Executive Director's retirement? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has the Board thoroughly examined and addressed: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any consequences or other penalties to it? b. The impact of any prior salary increases? c. Potential pension reform issues? 2. Often, a successful executive director candidate's attorney has interest in the following issues: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Available post-retirement options available, e.g., payments for sick/vacation

	<p>days, post-retirement insurance, longevity annuity payment, etc.</p> <p>b. Whether a potential retirement payment will be properly creditable for TRS purposes. Note: Ultimately, only TRS has the authority to determine creditability.</p>
Annuities and Other Deferred Compensation	<p>Will the Board address any type of annuities and other deferred compensation issues? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will it offer such compensation in addition to the Executive Director's agreed-upon salary? 2. Will it contribute creditable earnings for TRS purposes?

Changes to the Executive Director's Employment Contract

Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Non-Renewal at End of Contract	<p>How will the Board and successful executive director candidate agree to address orderly end to the employment contract when the Board chooses not to renew it?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will there be a non-renewal notification date? Do both parties' attorneys find it reasonable? 2. Will the Board require the Executive Director to remind it of the non-renewal date? 3. Will there be any agreement to a clause for an automatic one-year renewal if the Board fails to provide end-of-contract non-renewal notification? 4. Will the Board agree to language in the employment contract that would provide the Executive Director with a hearing upon non-renewal?
Renewal at End of Contract	<p>Will the Board agree to a procedure for renewing the employment contract at its end? If yes, then:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What date would be the earliest that the Board could renew its employment contract with the Executive Director? 2. What criteria will the Board base its renewal upon? For example, some boards base renewal upon executive directors achieving their stated goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement and other information they required.
	<p>Will the Board agree to allow for an extension of its employment contract during its term? If yes, then:</p>

<p>Contract Extensions</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the Board agree to extend it during its term if the Board determines that the Executive Director successfully met all of the Board's stated goals and indicators of student performance and academic improvement and other information it required? 2. Will the Board agree to extend a one-year contract when the Executive Director is not required to meet any goals? <p>See 105 ILCS 5/10-23.8.</p>
<p>Terminations</p>	<p>If the successful executive director candidate accepts employment with the Board and becomes the Executive Director, how will the Board outline the grounds and procedures for terminating the Executive Director's employment during the contract's term?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Will the Board and the successful executive director candidate agree to terminate it upon mutual agreement? 2. Will the Board allow retirement to be an appropriate reason for terminating its employment contract with the Executive Director? And if so, will the Board require reasonable notice from its Executive Director? 3. Could either the Board or Executive Director terminate the employment contract without cause by providing notice to the other? 4. Will the Board terminate the employment contract for permanent disability of the Executive Director? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. How will the Board define permanent disability in the contract? b. Will the Board require the Executive Director to obtain a permanent disability determination through physician certification, and/or c. Will the Board consider duration of absence; e.g., 90-days after exhaustion of available leave, whichever is greater? <p>See PRESS sample policy 5:180, <i>Temporary Illness or Temporary Incapacity</i>.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. What standard will the Board use to terminate the employment contract for cause? Items to consider include: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Any conduct detrimental/prejudicial to the District;* b. Just cause; c. Sufficient to dismiss a tenured teacher; d. Material breach of contract; or

	<p>e. Not arbitrary and capricious.</p> <p>*50 ILCS 205/3c, requires a school district to post on its website and make available to news media specific information about severance agreements that it enters into because an employee or contractor was found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, as defined by the Ill. Human Rights Act or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. See Severance Pay row directly below.</p> <p>6. Will the Board agree to provisions for hearing and due process for the Executive Director?</p> <p>7. How will the Board address death of its Executive Director during the duration of the employment contract?</p>
Severance Pay	<p>Any renewal or renegotiation that adds a condition of severance pay must include the following provisions of GSPA, 5 ILCS 415/10(a)(1):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A restriction to an amount not exceeding 20 weeks of compensation; and 2. A prohibition for any severance if the Executive Director is fired for <i>misconduct</i> by the Board. This law defines misconduct to include sexual harassment and/or discrimination. But 50 ILCS 205/3c limits sexual harassment or discrimination to instances when an employee is “found to have engaged in sexual harassment or sexual discrimination, as defined by the Ill. Human Rights Act or Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.” For more discussion about these laws, see f/n 6 in policy 2:260, <i>Uniform Grievance Procedure</i>.
Liquidated Damages	<p>Will the Board agree to liquidate damages with its Executive Director if one or the other terminates the employment contract?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have both the Board and the successful executive director candidate discussed the practical consequences of a liquidated damages clause with their respective attorneys? 2. If the Board terminates the contract, has it discussed with the Board Attorney how it can avoid litigation with its former Executive Director?
Amendments	<p>How will the Board and Executive Director agree to allow for amendments to the employment contract?</p>

What technical clauses need to be in the Executive Director’s employment contract?

Executive Director Contract Term

Explanation, Special Considerations, and

Considerations for the Board	Resources
Technical clauses (common in contracts)	<p>If the employment contract contains any of the following technical provisions, have the Board Attorney and Executive Director's attorney reviewed them?</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notice 2. Applicable law 3. Headings and numbers 4. Complete understanding, i.e., do the Board members and Executive Director share the same understanding of the various provisions written in the employment contract? 5. Counterparts 6. Effect of Policy Amendments 7. Severability 8. Advice of Counsel

Miscellaneous Issues

Executive Director Contract Term Considerations for the Board	Explanation, Special Considerations, and Resources
Board Obligations Under the Employment Contract	<p>Do all members of the Board understand the District's obligations under the employment contract and what not complying with them will mean to the District?</p> <p>Specifically, are Board members aware of the Board's specific obligations regarding:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Executive Director Evaluation 2. Goal setting 3. Required notifications/actions by each party prior to termination of the employment contract
Ongoing Monitoring of Each Party's Compliance with the Contract	<p>Are the Board and Executive Director actually complying with the terms of the employment contract? Has the Board Attorney explained how the Board should monitor compliance with the employment contract?</p>
Legislative Issues	<p>How might pending pension reform legislation or other trending legislation affect the employment contract?</p>

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Proviso Area for Exceptional Children (P.A.E.C.)