

Date: May 8, 2020

**TO: Principals
Executive Superintendents and Superintendents
Borough/Citywide Offices – Executive Directors
Borough/Citywide Offices – Directors for Special Education
Borough/Citywide Offices – Directors for of Finance & Human Resources**

**FROM: Arwina Vallejo, Executive Director of School Based Evaluations and Family
Engagement
Special Education Office (SEO)**

**SUBJECT: School Psychologist and School Social Worker Clustering Activities for
Spring, 2020**

Due to school closure related to COVID 19, clustering activities will be cancelled this year. Clinicians will have the opportunity to claim retention to their current cluster following the retention rules below. Please note that this process is only in effective for this current school year because of the COVID-19 pandemic. Once public school buildings are open again, the clustering process will revert back to the way it has been done previously, as per the CBA and clustering memorandum. Clusters will be posted on Friday May 15 and retention can be claimed using the online survey through end of day May 19.

- DAC teams will not be elected
- The majority of the cluster will remain the same, with the exception of a few clusters due to opening/closure of schools. When warranted, cluster changed due to a school opening or closure will be considered for additional support in the 2020-2021 school year
- Clinicians with retention rights will be allowed to retain their cluster
- Clusters involving school opening and closures will be reviewed and considered in collaboration by the DOE and UFT

Please find enclosed a calendar for the clustering process and cluster retention/open market hiring phases of this process.

RETENTION/OPEN MARKET HIRING PLAN

All School Psychologists and School Social Workers who have received a cluster assignment through the previous clustering process and those clinicians hired via the open market process

may opt to retain their clusters. School Psychologists and School Social Workers who do not have retention to a cluster assignment or wish to change their cluster assignment must apply for open clusters through the Open Market Transfer System. Posting for school based CSE Team vacancies will also occur as part of the selection process as per the enclosed calendar. The assignment of staff to schools and school based CSE Teams is intended to maintain consistency of service, to assist in the performance of timely evaluations and to allow staff to select among assignment options. The following are procedures for the school based CSE teams and respective District CSE Teams selection process:

- All School Psychologists and School Social Workers who obtained their cluster assignment as a result of the previous clustering activity and those who were hired through the open market process may opt to retain their clusters if the cluster remains appropriate to their license area (monolingual or bilingual by language) and there is valid documentation confirming the criteria outlined above.
- Staff who remained in their cluster assignment but had the number of days of service changed in their majority school continue to have the right of retention even though the number of days of service to that school may have dropped below three days (to include only one day).
- All bilingual clusters filled by monolingual personnel, and similarly all monolingual clusters filled by bilingual personnel, must be posted on the Open Market Transfer System. If additional bilingual or where appropriate monolingual personnel apply, the Office of First Deputy Chancellor (**OFDC**)/Borough Offices selection committee must make every effort to assign selected bilingual or monolingual personnel in accordance with the bilingual cluster rank order list in the district where appropriate. Monolingual personnel in bilingual clusters may be hired to the bilingual cluster in the absence of additional bilingual candidates but, if displaced, must apply for open clusters on the Open Market Transfer System like all other candidates.
- All other school clusters (open clusters) will be posted on the Open Market Transfer System. Any School Psychologist or School Social Worker may apply for an open school cluster anywhere in the system.
- An SEO administrative/supervisory designee in collaboration with the **OFDC/Borough Offices HR Liaison** or designee will notify candidates either by telephone or in writing to arrange interviews with the OFSC selection committee. Priority of interview for open clusters will be given to personnel without an assignment in the same district.
- An OFDC/BO selection committee will be comprised of the Principal of the school of majority (3 days or more per week), OFDC/BO administrative/supervisory designee and an in-discipline staff member assigned within the OFSC/BFSC for all open school clusters. Using the "Selection Committee Invite" letter or similar thereof, the Principal of the minority school will be invited to participate in the selection committee process for those candidates. If the Principal is unable to participate in the Selection Committee process, he/she will be notified by e-mail within three (3) days of the appointment and provided with the name of the "appointed" candidate.
- Principals of the school of majority will have final approval of the selected candidate for the entire cluster.

N.B. A Principal of a school with the majority days of service may submit a request for additional days of service to SEO or designee, at the school's own expense to add a fourth or fifth day to a three or four day assignment. In this case, the cluster should remain the same. The request may be considered by SEO or designee only to the extent that personnel in these titles remain available in each district to support the request.

Requests for additional days by Principals of schools of minority (one or two day assignments), again at the school's own expense, may be considered SEO only to the extent that personnel in these titles remain available in each district to support the request.

In the event that a Principal purchases additional service, it is essential that the school losing services receives adequate coverage (i.e. by an ATR, F status, etc).

CSE TEAM

- Selection of CSE Team School Psychologists and School Social Workers for vacant CSE Team positions will continue to be posted for each CSE. While the CSE Team Psychologist and Social Worker positions continue to be for a three year term, current CSE Team members completing their three year term may apply and be selected for another term the same as all other applicants. Special Education Teachers Assigned to CSE or vacancies for one of the 15 School Psychologists assigned directly to the CSEs will also be posted.
- CSE Team Psychologists and Social Workers who leave the CSE Team for any reason must apply for open cluster assignments through the Open Market Transfer System, the same as all other personnel. They may not "bump" other personnel and are subject to the same interview process. Priority of interview only will be given to personnel exiting the CSE Team for open cluster assignments in the same district.
- Special Education Teacher positions on the CSE Team will continue to be posted on a one year rotational basis. Exiting teachers may reapply and be assigned to the position by the CSE Chairperson upon the absence of other qualified applicants. Special Education Teachers exiting the CSE Team must apply for positions on the Open Market Transfer System and will be treated the same as all other teachers in the system exiting "teacher assigned" positions.

SAMPLE RETENTION OF CLUSTER ASSIGNMENT FORM (Survey only)

Date: _____

TO: _____

FROM: _____
Name/Discipline

SUBJECT: Retention of Cluster Assignment for the 2020-2021 School Year

My current assignment is(Current Cluster 2019-2020):

_____ School 1	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 2	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 3	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 4	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 5	_____ Days per Week

I have been in this assignment since _____.

I wish to remain in my cluster, as specified(On Proposed POS 2020-2021):

_____ School 1	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 2	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 3	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 4	_____ Days per Week
_____ School 5	_____ Days per Week

, in as much as it includes my current three day-a-week assignment.

Signature

Date