

2025-2026 School Statement of Needs – Section 1

Name of School: Northern Secondary School

Family of Schools 10 (Learning Center 1)

Superintendent: Jennifer Chan

Trustee: N/A - Currently under Supervision

School Council Chairs: Gavin McCulloch and Aimee Sulliman

The parent section of the School Statement of Needs document is to be developed annually in the fall by the parent representative in consultation with the school community and the trustee (when available). The superintendent will complete his/her section when it becomes known that there may be a principal vacancy. The School Statement of Needs document shall reflect needs that are specific to the school and community. Please see the attached SSON Parent User Guide which is also found at www.torontopiac.com.

To be completed by Parent Rep(s)	
School & Community Needs	Comments
Overview An agile leader with experience in special education to ensure student success with a proven track record of focusing on student achievement, and creating a caring, collaborative community environment that empowers all stakeholders (students, staff, and parents) to improve student achievement, enrichment, belonging and well-being. We hope that all Principal candidates will have the characteristics listed below.	Northern Highlights A large and diverse school with an ideal student target population range of: 1800-2000 annually and 140+ staff. We have a thriving and inclusive community with a breadth and diverse offering of academic and co-curricular activities. Our school has students from a diverse range of socio-economic, cultural, and religious backgrounds. <u>2025-26 Highlights of Student Demographics:</u> ● 2025-26 total enrolled student population: 1966 ● Deaf and Hard of Hearing population: 35 ● Gifted population: 295 ● Learning Disabilities population: 46 ● Special Education (Resource) population: 412 Approximately 40% of Northern's student population has a learning exceptionality with accompanying supports and Individual Education Plans.

1. Leadership and Vision Actively committed to improving achievement of all types for all students throughout the school, with a focus on helping each student to realize their educational and individual potential. Agile, resilient, and innovative, willing to consider and apply 'out of the box' solutions that help break through gridlock and bureaucracy, to meet the individual and collective needs of students. Willing to find flexible, creative solutions that make student needs and learning the priority.	The principal should share parents' and students' expectations that high school be a place where positive habits of well-being, respect, integrity, and achievement are developed. Each graduating student should be equipped with the ability to become a healthy, independent learner, capable of coping, making good decisions, and supporting themselves financially. We expect Northern to be a safe and vibrant environment where: ● all students feel included, challenged and supported to explore their ideas, pursue their unique and diverse interests, and reach their full potential; ● staff feel inspired and empowered; and ● parents and guardians feel welcome.
2. Educational Expertise and Experience: Dedicated to maintaining and enhancing Northern's diverse, broad, and robust academic offerings, course selection, co-curricular activities, and opportunities. Understands, champions, and fully supports academic excellence and programs for special education, special needs, and at-risk students. Empowered and supported by TDSB to ensure Northern is designated as a Limited School and provided the latitude to expand or override boundary restrictions to prioritize the learning opportunities for students by enabling student admissions to Northern within 14 business days of the first day of the school year. For example: empowered to extend offers to wait-listed student applicants for the Gifted Program. Deeply committed to a culture of safety and caring. Demonstrates curiosity and an understanding of	The principal should respect, support, and continue to innovate and enhance Northern's diverse and broad academic and co-curricular programs and offerings. ● 2025-26 total enrolled student population: 1966 ● Deaf and Hard of Hearing population: 35 ● Gifted population: 295 ● Learning Disabilities population: 46 ● Special Education (Resource) population: 412 Approximately 40% of Northern's student population has a learning exceptionality with accompanying supports and Individual Education Plans. Our students benefit from: ● Academic Resource and Core programs ● Deaf and Hard of Hearing program ● Gifted program ● Academic, Enriched and AP level course; and ● A Robotics Lab that is open to all students This includes the ability to lead AI integration into curriculum and school operations, support staff in developing AI literacy, and ensure students are equipped with the skills to critically and ethically engage

artificial intelligence (AI) and its implications for education.	with AI technologies. The Principal should foster a culture of innovation, data-informed decision-making, and responsible use of AI tools to enhance learning outcomes, operational efficiency, and future readiness.
3. School Culture and Climate Actively fosters a culture of learning, co-curricular activities, and community building beyond the classroom. Northern’s parent and student community expect the Principal to: ● Act as a role model in maintaining and fostering a positive and thriving school spirit ● Encourage a cohesive and vibrant sense of belonging and community ● Promote life-long learning An empathetic and supportive role model and leader of well-being, neurodiversity, and mental health and wellness.	Our school has a rich and robust offering of clubs, teams, events and activities organized by students, staff and parents that foster a sense of school spirit, giving and community. The breadth, variety, and depth of opportunities are integral to Northern’s culture and to the full development and well-being of all students. The Principal has a key role in setting expectations and ensuring staff participation and support for these activities. Opportunities for a diverse range of co-curriculars, clubs, sports, and activities include involvement in music, drama, art, athletics, AI, Robotics, Gay Straight Alliance require commitment from the Principal. With a diverse population, and increasing levels of stress and anxiety, well-being and mental health issues need dedicated resources in real-time.

	The school needs to partner and rely upon other agencies in the community to support student well-being and lifelong success.
4. Communication Skills ● Accountable ● Approachable ● Embodies servant leadership ● Leads with integrity, transparency, and honesty ● Creates an environment of psychological safety ● Fosters a learning culture ● Roles models an “open-door policy” (not unlimited access to meet) by actively	Parents and guardians are accustomed to and appreciate receiving regular information (i.e. Principal’s weekly emails and communications from teachers, etc.). Parents also appreciate receiving context related to decisions affecting Northern’s student learning environment routinely during school council meetings. Parents are helpful and necessary partners in

soliciting feedback and encouraging input and engagement by students, staff, and parents without fear of retaliation Understands and communicates the implications of proposed changes by the TDSB – allowing for meaningful engagement to improve the learning environment for students.	improving outcomes for our students and benefit from clear, consistent, and concise communication from the principal.
5. Management and Operational Skills Expected attributes for the Principal at Northern: ● Accountable and Acts with Fiduciary prudence ● Acts as an Ambassador with unwavering dedication to the best interests of Northern students, programs, and staff performance, in a challenging fiscal environment ● Resourceful and effective in finding solutions to address ongoing infrastructure needs in a rapidly aging building ● Agile in managing boundary changes and an unwavering advocate for the best interests of students ● Discretion and authority granted by TDSB to adapt policies to meet the distinct needs of school's student population and extended community within the range of the school's target school population (1800-2000). For example: enable Gifted Program expansion for waited-listed students within 14 days of the first calendar day of school capped at upper limit of school target population; and expansion of boundaries/designation as a Limited School to ensure optimal student demographics and academic offerings. ● Highly skilled at multi-tasking, prioritizing, and managing multiple, often conflicting priorities calmly with tact and diplomacy.	Northern is a large and complex school with a breadth of academic programs and co-curricular activities that require operational excellence to maintain. These programs are also at the core of what differentiates Northern's culture and community offering to our valued student experience. The size and complexity of the school require a Principal who is a talented, capable, and effective administrator, with strong interpersonal skills, intellect, and emotional intelligence.

6. Commitment to Pluralism, Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Belonging Northern’s Principal should have experience with and exhibit understanding and actively support a diverse range of student needs by implementing data and research-driven decision-making. The Principal needs the skills to manage the high volume and complexity of the IEP administrative review, processing, and implementation. The candidate must be empathetic to the challenges and diverse needs inherent in this process.	In 2024, 771 students had IEPs that uniquely required a significant workload associated with creating and implementing them. There is a need for individualized dedication, detail orientation, responsiveness, and decisive operational leadership in ensuring their effective implementation. Students and staff in the Deaf and Hard of Hearing program (approximately 50 students annually) have unique challenges in accessing both the curriculum and co-curricular activities. Attunement to their needs and removal of barriers to ensure their active participation in the school community is required. Finding effective solutions that accommodate their needs requires a willingness to understand and work collaboratively with all parties.
---	--

7. Collaboration and Staff Development It is imperative for the Principal to encourage a culture of staff and student excellence, learning, continuous improvement, exchange, and sharing of knowledge, best practices, and resources, to meet each student’s individual and often diverse needs and aspirations.	The complex nature of Northern requires a Principal who can provide support and direction as needed while empowering students, staff, and parents to responsibly innovate and lead initiatives. A range of different leadership styles, agility, and versatility is necessary.

Excerpt from PR705 Selection, Promotion and Placement Process for School Principals and Vice-Principals – Appendix K

SCHOOL STATEMENT OF NEEDS – SECTION 2

To be completed by the Superintendent of Education	
Academic needs, based on school data and the Boards’ Strategic Directions	Comments

Verification that School Statement of Needs is developed according to agreed process	
Parent Representative (Please Print) Parent Representative (Signature)	Date
Superintendent (Please Print) Superintendent (Signature)	Date