



The Hun School of Princeton

Princeton, NJ
Grades 6-PG Coed Boarding and Day School
650 students

Contributor

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Case Study Focus

Professional Advancement Model

Background

The Hun School of Princeton was founded in 1914. Hun strives to empower each student to thrive in a diverse and ever-changing world, by nurturing resilient character, providing individual mentorship, and inspiring vigorous and joyful learning. The 24-hour campus is culturally diverse and located in one of the most academically minded communities in the world.

The Hun School's unique approach to compensating faculty and staff is based on a combination of factors, including experience, professional development, performance and alignment with the school's educational mission. The school has attempted to strike a balance by incorporating elements from both traditional compensation models and merit-based pay.

Rather than relying solely on a traditional step-based system, the school incorporates merit pay, which has resulted in a banding approach with overlapping bands. This system allows teachers to progress through the bands based on factors such as experience, length of service, professional development achievements, strength of program and willingness to support the school beyond teaching responsibilities. The model aims to reward high performers with merit pay, enabling them to progress to higher points within their respective bands.

To advance from one band to the next, teachers must submit a proposal showcasing their achievements, innovative teaching methods and commitment to professional development. The dean of faculty and division heads evaluate these proposals to determine whether the teacher is ready to move up to the next band. While most aspects of the model must remain subjective, the school continues to

explore ways to add further quantitative requirements while managing the complexities of implementation.

Faculty Rank Structure

Faculty advancement is tied to a substantial increase in income as teachers progress through four ranks during their professional careers at the school. The rank for a beginning teacher is at the Teacher 1 level. Experienced teachers are assigned a rank as determined by their years of experience. Each rank is assigned a beginning salary, which may be adjusted year to year to reflect cost of living increases, plus a percentage as determined by the head of school and approved by the board of trustees.

The minimum longevity criteria for each of the four rank levels for 2022-2023 are:

- Teacher 1 – 0-3 years of experience
- Teacher 2 – 4-8 years of experience
- Senior Teacher – 9-15 years of experience
- Master Teacher – 16 years or more experience

This part of the faculty growth and development process is evaluative and involves input from the faculty member's department chair, division head, dean of faculty and the appropriate program directors, such as the grade level deans, the athletic director and/or the director of resident life. The following are expectations for teachers at different ranks:

Teacher 1: Beginning teachers are mentored during their first two years at the school. Each year they will set two goals with their department chair. Mentors meet regularly with their department chair and the dean of faculty to discuss their progress. Teachers in their third year will be eligible to apply for advancement to Teacher 2.

Teacher 2: Teachers at this level have demonstrated progress in curriculum development and pedagogy as determined by the appropriate department chair, division head and dean of faculty. Evidence of professional growth is evident from observations and written feedback from administrators and program directors that are involved in the advancement process.

Senior Teacher: Teachers at this level maintain a high level of teaching competence as demonstrated through their participation in professional development opportunities, and feedback from colleagues, administrators and students.

Master Teacher: Teachers at this level continue to hone their teaching skills and serve as models of life-long learning to less experienced faculty members. They are active in professional development both on and off campus, demonstrate curricular leadership within the department, and have earned the respect of the greater School community.

Professional Advancement Process

Teachers who are in the second semester of year 3, 8 and 15 of their teaching careers are eligible to apply for advancement. The number of years of experience credited to a teacher is determined by the head of school at the teacher's time of hire. The process is outlined below:

1. Written application submitted to dean of faculty and division head

This is a reflective self-evaluation of the faculty member's performance during the current year and provides evidence that they are ready for advancement. It should include an overall reflection about the teacher's growth over the course of their career and/or time at the school that includes but is not limited to a description of student-centered and skills-based initiatives in the classroom, contributions to school life beyond the classroom, professional development and plans for continued professional growth in the future.

2. Performance summaries from supervisors

The dean of faculty will contact the candidate's supervisor to gather information about the faculty member's performance in various areas of school life. Written feedback will be collected from the division head, department chair, and, when appropriate, the director of resident life and the director of athletics. The dean of faculty will compile this information so that it can be considered as a part of the faculty member's application for advancement.

3. Interview with the candidate for advancement

After receiving both the written application and any appropriate performance summaries, the faculty member will meet with the dean of faculty, their department chair (if applicable), and, if desired, a faculty member who will be there in a supporting role. This meeting will take the form of a conversation about the letter of self-reflection, the candidate's evolution as a teacher, areas where the candidate would like to grow, and the candidate's performance in different areas at the school.

4. Review of candidate's application by the advancement committee

An advancement committee consisting of the dean of faculty, the appropriate division head, and the faculty member's department chair (if applicable) will review the applicant's self-evaluation, discuss the supervisory feedback and reflect upon the applicant's interview. The committee will also closely examine the candidate's annual evaluations and commitment to professional growth. After this review, the advancement committee will submit their recommendation to advance or to not advance to the head of school.

5. Candidate meeting to discuss the results of the advancement process

After the head of school's decision is made, the dean of faculty, the appropriate division head, and the faculty member's department chair will meet with the applicant in order to communicate the advancement decision within the structure of the candidate's year-end evaluation. If advancement

is denied, a letter describing specific areas that need to be addressed will be given to the teacher, and that teacher may potentially enter the intervention process.

Merit Bonuses and Stipends

Faculty and staff are nominated by department and division heads for merit pay each year, based on direct evaluative criteria. Around 20% of the total staff and approximately 30% of faculty members receive merit increases annually. These increases are typically a percentage of their base salary.

Beyond this process, the school has a unique mission-driven point-based system that defines extracurricular responsibilities and may provide stipends beyond base salary. Teachers are expected to teach four classes and earn 10 extracurricular points, which must be for activities that engage students outside the classroom, including athletics, performing arts, Model UN and robotics. Teachers can earn additional cash value by taking on more extracurricular activities, determined by a rubric that allocates points for each activity based on time commitment and student engagement.

Compensation Committee

The Hun School also relied upon a thoughtful compensation committee, with diverse representation of both faculty and administrators, to develop the school's mission-driven point-based system. The committee periodically reviews and recommends amendments to the structure, including adding or removing responsibilities that qualify for mission points or extra stipends. The committee's recommendations are presented to a smaller administrative group, which ultimately makes the final decisions.