



New England School Development Council

28 Lord Road, Marlborough, MA 01752 ➤ Tel: 508-481-9444 ➤ www.nesdec.org

EXECUTIVE OPPORTUNITY

**AN INVITATION TO APPLY FOR THE POSITION OF
PRINCIPAL, PORTSMOUTH HIGH SCHOOL
PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL DEPARTMENT, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Dear Fellow Educator:

The Portsmouth School Department is actively seeking a highly qualified, community-minded, and student-centered leader to serve as the next **Principal of Portsmouth High School**.

About the City of Portsmouth

Portsmouth, New Hampshire is a historic and vibrant seacoast community of about 25,000 residents. Located along the Piscataqua River, it blends a deep colonial heritage with a thriving arts and cultural scene. The city is home to Strawberry Banke, a walkable downtown, and a strong economic base that includes the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, technology companies, local businesses, and a wide range of restaurants, galleries, and performance spaces. Residents enjoy proximity to beaches, hiking trails, and year-round recreation. Portsmouth is approximately 20 minutes from the University of New Hampshire and within an hour of Boston, the Lakes Region, and the White Mountains. It is widely regarded as one of the most desirable places to live in New England.

About the Portsmouth School Department

The Portsmouth School Department serves 2,394 students across three elementary schools, one middle school, one high school, one alternative high school program, and a districtwide PreK program. The district is in the second year of a five-year Strategic Plan centered on the community's Portrait of a Graduate. The six pillars of the Portrait emphasize Passion for Knowledge, Global Awareness and Community Contribution, Collaboration and Communication, Transferable Skills, Personal Well-Being, and Empathy and Kindness. Portsmouth schools are consistently ranked among the strongest in New Hampshire. Two district schools have been recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools within the past five years. The district's FY26 operating budget is \$65,915,610.

About Portsmouth High School

Portsmouth High School is a comprehensive public high school with an enrollment of approximately 990 students from Portsmouth, Rye, Greenland, New Castle, and Newington. The school employs about 150 staff members, and 90 percent of the faculty hold advanced degrees. PHS is fully accredited by the New England Association of Schools and Colleges. Portsmouth High School is recognized for its strong academics, inclusive school culture, and extensive extracurricular and co-curricular programs. The school's athletics program is a point of pride for the wider community and remains one of the most visible expressions of "Clipper Pride." Over the past five years, PHS teams have earned 12 state championships across multiple sports, a reflection of both student dedication and strong community support. The school regularly exceeds state and national academic benchmarks. Recent graduating classes include National Merit Finalists, National Merit Semi-Finalists, National Merit Special Scholarship recipients, and students recognized by the U.S. Presidential Scholars program. PHS graduates continue on to selective colleges and universities throughout the country and abroad.

Signature Program Highlights

Dual Enrollment Pathways

PHS offers an extensive set of dual enrollment courses through partnerships with Great Bay Community College, Lakes Region Community College, Manchester Community College, and Southern New Hampshire University. These courses give students the opportunity to earn meaningful early college credit in several disciplines.

Global Connect Program

The Global Connect Program encourages students to build global awareness, examine international issues, and develop the intercultural skills needed to thrive in a diverse and interconnected world.

International Exchanges

Portsmouth High School maintains long-standing international relationships with communities in Japan, Italy, Puerto Rico, and Tanzania. These exchanges offer students immersive cultural experiences and strengthen the school's commitment to global citizenship.

Career and Technical Education Center

PHS serves as a regional Career and Technical Education hub with multi-year pathways in Automotive Technology, Business, Computer Science, Culinary Arts, Health Science Technology, Careers in Education, and Welding. These programs provide hands-on, industry-aligned learning and prepare students for high-demand career fields.

Performing Arts Excellence

The Performing Arts program is a defining feature of the school. Students participate in drama productions, band and choral ensembles, jazz studies, and music technology courses. Performers regularly take part in state and regional festivals, and the school's artistic programming plays a significant role in shaping the overall culture of the building.

About the Position of Principal

The Portsmouth School Department seeks an approachable and community-minded leader to serve as the next Principal of Portsmouth High School. This individual will be a transparent and consistent communicator who listens carefully to students, staff, and families, makes thoughtful and fair decisions, and explains them with clarity. The ideal candidate will lead with integrity and empathy, valuing diverse voices, fostering a sense of belonging, and striving to create an environment where every student feels supported, challenged, and known within a safe and inclusive school environment. Portsmouth seeks a principal who will strengthen a culture of "Clipper Pride" by building strong partnerships across the school, district, and community. This leader will be a strategic thinker who inspires confidence through collaboration, visibility, and follow-through, while also celebrating the achievements of both students and staff. Above all, the next principal will bring a genuine appreciation of student growth, a commitment to relationships, and the vision to sustain and enhance Portsmouth High School's tradition of academic excellence, inclusion, and civic pride.

Qualifications

Applicants must hold New Hampshire principal certification or be eligible for certification through the New Hampshire Department of Education. A minimum of three years of administrative experience is preferred. A master's degree is required; an advanced degree is preferred.

Compensation

The district offers a regionally competitive salary (negotiable, in the range of \$158,000 - \$169,000 annually) and benefits package, commensurate with qualifications and experience.

Timeline

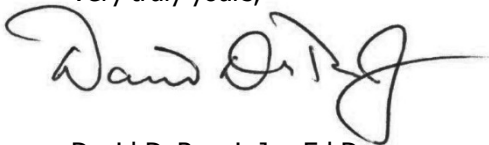
The application deadline is **January 1, 2026**. Review of materials will begin immediately after the deadline. The expected start date for the successful candidate is **July 1, 2026**.

For more information, please contact: NESDEC Search Office, Portsmouth High School Principal Search, NESDEC, 28 Lord Road, Marlborough, MA 01752; Phone: 508-481-9444; Email: search@nesdec.org

To access the application, please visit www.nesdec.org
<https://www.applitrack.com/nesdec/onlineapp/>

I look forward to your application or your nomination of a qualified applicant. All inquiries and nominations are considered confidential and should be made to the NESDEC office. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Very truly yours,



David DeRuosi, Jr., Ed.D.
Executive Director

Member:

