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## Principal interview questions

This **Principal** interview profile brings together a snapshot of what to look for in candidates with a balanced sample of suitable interview questions.

### Principal Interview Questions

Hiring a Principal typically involves a small army of people. The hiring committee decides the essential requirements based on existing needs and with state and district goals in mind. The same committee oversees the hiring process. Candidates for the position of Principal at a school interview with the committee first, then return for one-on-one interviews or an interview with the core administrative team.

Use these interview questions to start purposeful, open-ended conversations with your candidates at the initial committee interview. The questions will help you evaluate your candidates' practical experience as educators and their overall ability to lead teaching and learning at your school.

There is no role at a school with more pressure and more visibility than the Principal. These interviews are critical for evaluating soft skills as rigorously as the hard skills. Yes, you'll be looking at their prior effectiveness in improving student outcomes. But can they hire, train, and develop teachers? How do they communicate with parents? Can they shape the school's culture in a positive way, creating a safe, challenging, and disciplined space for learning? What are some indicators of success for principals at this school? Evaluate your candidates against your metrics for success.

### Operational and Situational questions

- How much do you know about this school's improvement plan? What do you think you can contribute to that plan?
- Describe your vision of an effective (elementary/middle/high) school in as much detail as possible.
- How would you describe your leadership style?
- How would you rate yourself as a disciplinarian?
- Recall a time a situation needed to be handled with great sensitivity and tact. What was the issue? What was the outcome?
- How do you empower teachers to be leaders?
- List some traits of highly effective teachers. How does this inform the way you hire them?
- Recall a time you made an unpopular decision. What was the reaction? How did you handle it?
- Some teachers are complaining about a lack of administrative support. How would you

address it?

- How do teacher evaluations correspond to student achievement?
- How do you help teachers improve their instruction methods?
- What classroom management strategies have been most effective for you?
- How would you advise new teachers during their first year on the job?
- Describe a time you had to give negative feedback to a veteran teacher. How did it go?
- How would you bridge the gap between advantaged and disadvantaged students?
- How do you know when a parent organization is effective?
- When dealing with difficult students, at what point do you involve parents? How would you communicate with them?
- Describe a time you discovered a student actively endangering other students. How did you handle it?
- What would you do if a group of students launched a complaint against a teacher?
- What would you do if extracurricular activities were in danger of being phased out due to budget cuts?
- What new services or activities did you establish at your previous school?
- How would you increase the school's involvement with the community?
- What are the strengths of this school? What are our weaknesses?