

INTERVIEWING FOR YOUR FIRST PRINCIPAL POSITION

EDL 551: PRINCIPAL AS INSTRUCTIONAL LEADER





PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW



WHERE TO FIND OPENINGS

- Illinois Education Job Bank (48)
 - <https://www.illinoiseducationjobbank.org/>
- Teach Iowa (9)
 - <http://teachiowa.gov/>
- K12 JobSpot (478)
 - <https://k12jobspot.com>
- NASSP's Job Board (49)
 - <http://careers.nassp.org/jobs>
- NAESP's Job Board (328)
 - <https://careers.naesp.org/>

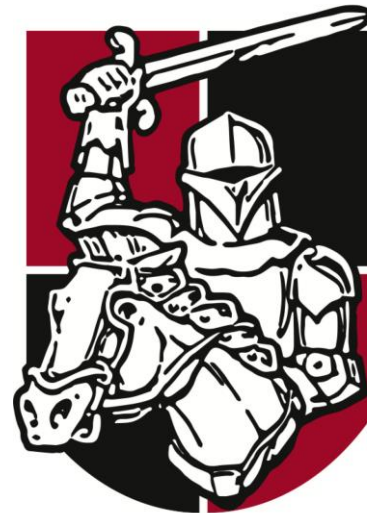
Common Job Search Options

Tend to be more key word focused, will get some (many) false positives

- Indeed (71)
 - <https://www.indeed.com>
- Monster (898)
 - <https://www.monster.com/jobs/q-school-principal-jobs-l-illinois.aspx>
- Illinois Principal Association
 - <https://ilprincipals.org/resources/job-search-resources/>

The number in parentheses is the number of returns when searched for key word "principal"

- Know what job you are applying for
 - *Keep a copy of the posting*
- Research
 - School/district website
 - City/village website
 - Illinois Interactive Report Card (<http://iirc.niu.edu>)
 - Iowa Education Data (<http://reports.educateiowa.gov/>)
- Don't interview simply for practice
 - *Don't apply for a job you don't want*
 - *Get a mentor to set up a practice interview for you*
- Determine what materials you want to provide to the interview team
 - Sample parent letters, newsletters, etc.
 - Copies of your resume



INTERVIEW PREPARATION RESOURCES

General Interview Advice for Principal Candidates

- Paul Young's Young @ Heart
http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/columnists/young/young001.shtml
- William Parker's Principal Matters
<https://www.williamdparker.com/2015/03/25/30-questions-from-principal-interviews-plus-more/>
- Gary Houchens, Western Kentucky University (3 Part Series)
<http://schoolleader.typepad.com/school-leader/2013/06/preparing-for-your-principal-interview-part-i.html>
- Thoughts to Consider for the Principal Job Interview from Principal Kafele <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gvq4aSHMSAw>
- Sample YouTube Interview
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sDT4YtmDju0>
- Thoughts to Consider for the Aspiring Assistant Principal from Principal Kafele https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_L_fGwapxpw
- Sacramento County Office of Education's Leadership Institute explain how to prepare for your first interview
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mj7-mxJWGY4>

Interview Question Banks

- Assistant principal interview questions
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AKBzu0zMO8>
- Resumes for Teachers: Principal interview questions
<https://resumes-for-teachers.com/blog/interview-questions/principal-job-interview-questions-and-the-answers/>
- Education World Tips from Principals & "Tough Questions" for Principals
http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin/admin514b.shtml

GETTING THE CALL

- Confirm the position being considered
- Ask who you will be meeting with, names and titles, if possible
- Confirm the location and time
 - You may have a screening interview somewhere besides the school
- Ask if you should bring anything
 - Portfolio, letters, sample communications to parents, etc.
- Get a name and phone number to contact if you have an emergency
- Thank the caller

PRE-INTERVIEW

- Arrive early, but don't announce yourself more than 15 minutes early
- *Bring a book to read while waiting...*
- Dress appropriately – conservative & dark colors are more likely to be successful
- Know the names (s) of who you are coming to meet with
- Everyone you meet is part of the interview process – *remember that*
- Try to determine if the interviewer prefers e-mail or the telephone

CONDUCT DURING THE INTERVIEW

- Make eye contact
- Shake hands firmly
- Don't sit or enter a room until directed
- Be cheerful and energetic
- Be yourself



THE PROCESS

- Review applications (Maybe 40+ for a position)
- Screening interview – larger districts only
- First round interview
 - Small districts – Superintendent; Large district – central office staff
 - From 3 to 8 candidates
- Reference checks often done after the first round of interviews
- Second round interview often meeting with multiple groups
 - to 3 candidates
- Offer will usually be made within a week or two of the final interview

A SAMPLE PROCESS IN A SMALLER DISTRICT

Review of applications (anticipate that this will be March 3): Steve Smith, Heather Green; Tammy O'Toole & Initial Screening Interviews (if necessary): Steve Smith

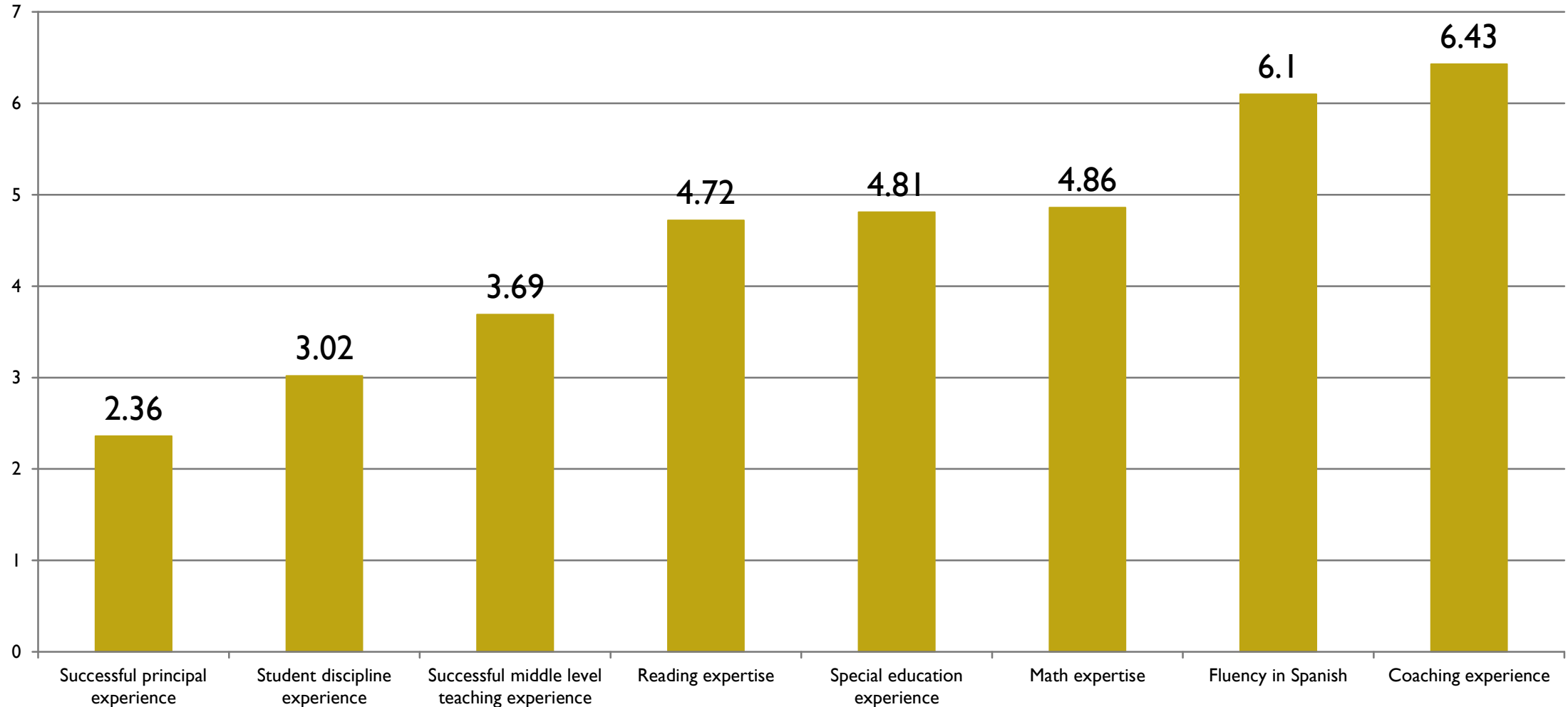
First Round of Interviews (6-8 candidates) (anticipating that these will be held March 8 & 10 time to be determined)

Staff - Mike Beerston, Molly Jones, Adel Rogers & Kristi Level;
Parent- Deb Trunk; Board - Don Jared; and Administrators Dr. Olds & Kristi Kringle

Final Round of Interviews (2-3 candidates) (March 15 & 16):
Administrative Team

Rural District – Middle School – 40% of students were native Spanish speakers

Which of the following are important for the selection committee to consider in determining whom to interview? Select "1" as the most important consideration and "8" as the least important. You may only select one item for each ranking.



Lower has more value on this chart

A SAMPLE PROCESS IN A LARGE DISTRICT

Round One Interview Candidate 2

An hour with the Director of Curriculum, HR Director, Spec. Ed. Director, and Asst. Principal

Round Two Interview Candidate 2

10:00-10:45 Admin Team Oliver, Houi, Delmar, Kral, Jones, Lyons

10:45-11:15 Tour of School MSG Murray and MCJROTC

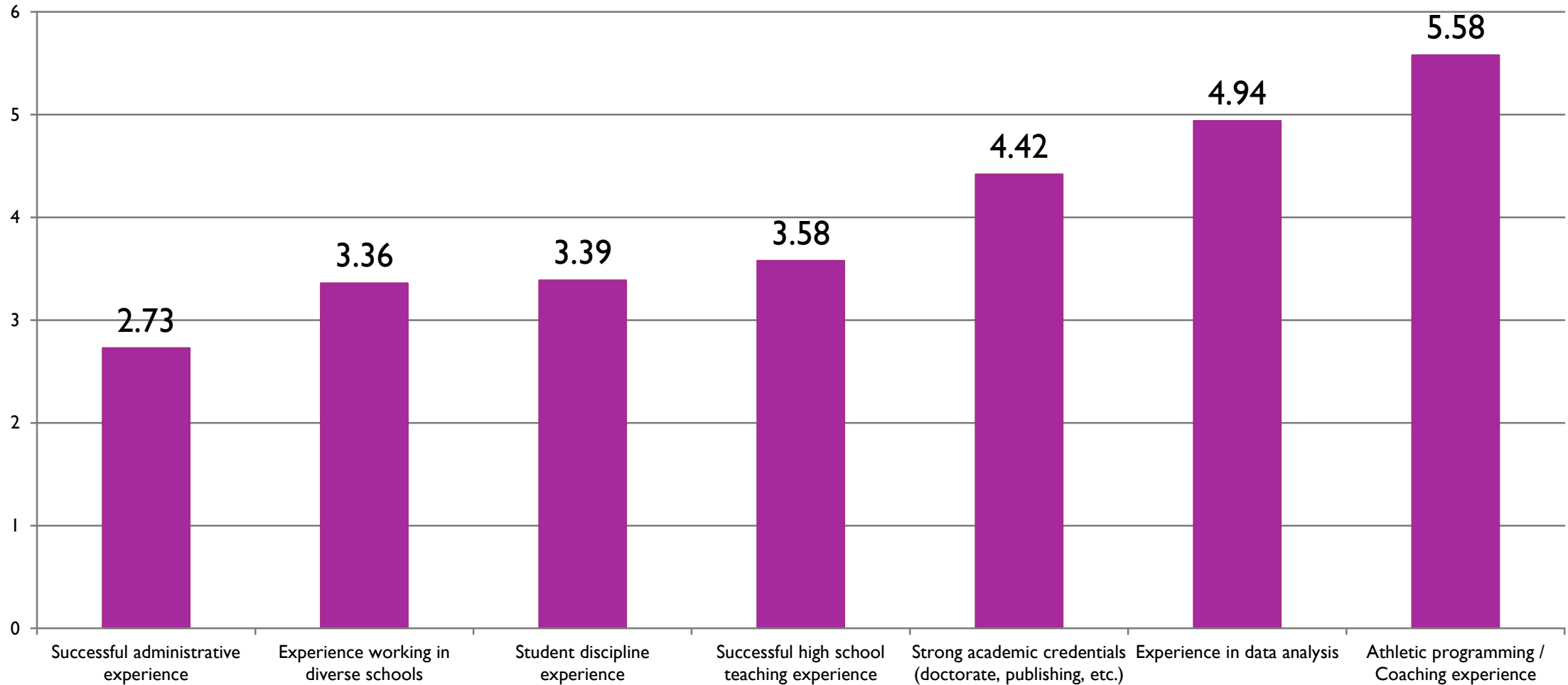
11:15-12:00 Parent/Teacher/Coach Team

Group 1- Parents-Dave Evans, Sherri Schmidt, and Tara Growler; Coach-Adam Morris; Teachers-Ken Wells, Sandy Davis, John Minore, and HR Director- Rhonda Word

LUNCH- 12:00-1:00 Sarah Jones will take candidate to lunch

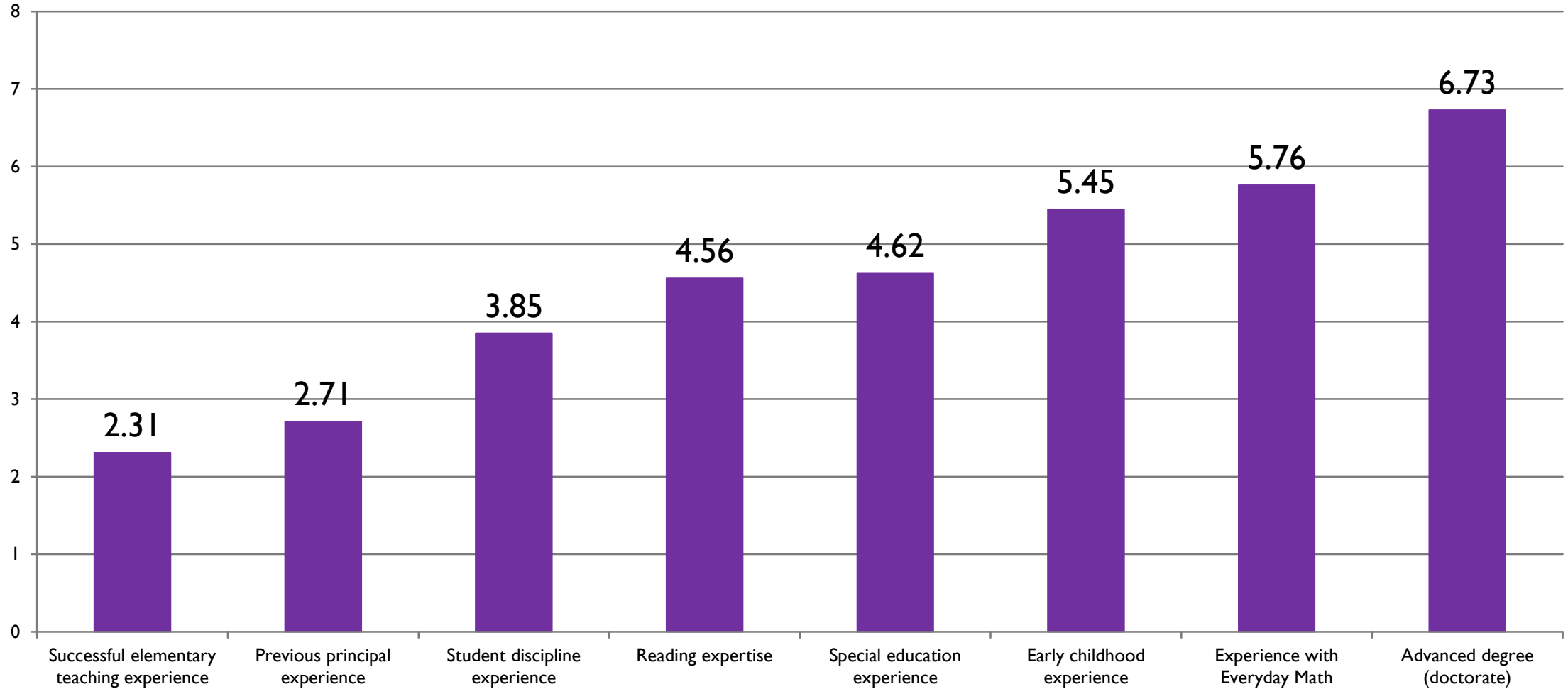
1:00-2:00 Central Office Team

Which of the following are important for the selection committee to consider in determining whom to interview? Select "1" as the most important consideration and "7" as the least important. You may only select one item for each ranking.



Lower has more value on this chart

Which of the following are important for the selection committee to consider in determining whom to interview? Select "1" as the most important consideration and "8" as the least important. You may only select one item for each ranking.



I am most impressed with the person who answers my questions directly and concisely rather than dancing around the actual question and rambling.

Chip Mehaffey

Superintendent, Loogootee School Corporation, Indiana

HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTIONS

- Answer the question asked directly and without embellishment
- Don't ramble, but don't become monosyllabic either
- If in a group interview, try not to focus only on the questioner
- Use proper formal grammar and syntax
- If you don't know, don't be afraid to say that
- Be positive

Don't whine or complain.

Whatever you do, don't obsess or lament about high-stakes testing, deadbeat parents, unfunded mandates, or No Child Left Behind accountability. Principals are hired to solve problems and make issues go away.

Paul Young's Young @ Heart

Landing Your First Principalship

http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/columnists/young/young001.shtml

EXPECT QUESTIONS TIED TO THE PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

ILLINOIS PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

Standard	Indicator	Standard	Indicator
<p>I. Living a Mission and Vision Focused on Results</p> <p>The principal works with the staff and community to build a shared mission, and vision of high expectations that ensures all students are on the path to college and career readiness, and holds staff accountable for results</p>	<p>a. Coordinates efforts to create and implement a vision for the school and defines desired results and goals that align with the overall school vision and lead to student improvement for all learners</p> <p>b. Ensures that the school's identity, vision, and mission drive school decisions</p> <p>c. Conducts difficult but crucial conversations with individuals, teams, and staff based on student performance data in a timely manner for the purpose of enhancing student learning and results</p>	<p>IV. Building and Maintaining Collaborative Relationships</p> <p>The principal creates a collaborative school community where the school staff, families, and community interact regularly and share ownership for the success of the school</p>	<p>a. Creates, develops and sustains relationships that result in active student engagement in the learning process</p> <p>b. Utilizes meaningful feedback of students, staff, families, and community in the evaluation of instructional programs and policies</p> <p>c. Proactively engages families and communities in supporting their child's learning and the school's learning goals</p> <p>d. Demonstrates an understanding of the change process and uses leadership and facilitation skills to manage it effectively</p>
<p>II. Leading and Managing Systems Change</p> <p>The principal creates and implements systems to ensure a safe, orderly, and productive environment for student and adult learning toward the achievement of school and district improvement priorities</p>	<p>a. Develops, implements, and monitors the outcomes of the school improvement plan and school wide student achievement data results to improve student achievement</p> <p>b. Creates a safe, clean and orderly learning environment</p> <p>c. Collaborates with staff to allocate personnel, time, material, and adult learning resources appropriately to achieve the school improvement plan targets</p> <p>d. Employs current technologies</p>	<p>V. Leading with Integrity and Professionalism</p> <p>The principal works with the school staff and community to create a positive context for learning by ensuring equity, fulfilling professional responsibilities with honesty and integrity, and serving as a model for the professional behavior of others</p>	<p>a. Treats all people fairly, equitably, and with dignity and respect</p> <p>b. Demonstrates personal and professional standards and conduct that enhance the image of the school and the educational profession. Protects the rights and confidentiality of students and staff</p> <p>c. Creates and supports a climate that values, accepts and understands diversity in culture and point of view</p>
<p>III. Improving Teaching and Learning</p> <p>The principal works with the school staff and community to develop a research-based framework for effective teaching and learning that is refined continuously to improve instruction for all students</p>	<p>a. Works with staff to develop a consistent framework for effective teaching and learning that includes a rigorous and relevant standards-based curriculum, research-based instructional practices, and high expectations for student performance</p> <p>b. Creates a continuous improvement cycle that uses multiple forms of data and student work samples to support individual, team, and school-wide improvement goals, identify and address areas of improvement and celebrate successes</p> <p>c. Implements student interventions that differentiate instruction based on student needs</p> <p>d. Selects and retains teachers with the expertise to deliver instruction that maximizes student learning</p> <p>e. Evaluates the effectiveness of instruction and of individual teachers by conducting frequent formal and informal observations providing timely feedback on instruction as part of the district teacher appraisal system</p> <p>f. Ensures the training, development, and support for high-performing instructional teacher teams to support adult learning and development to advance student learning and performance</p> <p>g. Develops systems and structures for staff professional development and sharing of effective practices including providing and protecting time allotted for development</p> <p>h. Advances Instructional Technology within the learning environment</p>	<p>VI. Creating and Sustaining a Culture of High Expectations</p> <p>The principal works with staff and community to build a culture of high expectations and aspirations for every student by setting clear staff and student expectations for positive learning behaviors and by focusing on students' social-emotional learning</p>	<p>a. Builds a culture of high aspirations and achievement and for every student</p> <p>b. Requires staff and students to demonstrate consistent values and positive behaviors aligned to the school's vision and mission</p> <p>c. Leads a school culture and environment that successfully develops the full range of students' learning capacities—academic, creative, social-emotional, behavioral and physical</p>

Often the First Question is: *Please tell us about yourself and why you are interested in working in District 691?*

Be prepared for this to be skipped over in some districts as time is essential!

Gary Houchens

Preparing for your Principal interview, Part I

<http://schoolleader.typepad.com/school-leader/2013/06/preparing-for-your-principal-interview-part-i.html>

GENERAL TYPES OF QUESTIONS

- Your administrative experience
- Classroom management and student discipline issues
- Working with parents and the community
- Your views and experience on teacher supervision/evaluation
- Your ability to address accountability issues
- Your experience with diversity and/or the achievement gap
- Your reasons for entering the administrative ranks
- Your desire to work in *THIS* school/district
 - How will you support the school/district strategic direction(s)/vision/mission
- What other skills do you bring to the administrative team
 - Usually more of an issue in a smaller district

REAL QUESTIONS TIED TO THE ILLINOIS PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

- As the new principal in the building, please describe specific ways you would learn about students both academically and personally. (PSEL Standard V)
- In our world of high stakes accountability, it is important that we continue to improve classroom instruction and provide students with engaging, rigorous experiences. How would you work with teachers to increase the rigor and engagement within their lessons? (PSEL Standard VI and VII)
- It is the second week of school and parents want a child moved to another class because they have heard the teacher is mean and students in her class are not challenged and prepared for the next grade. There is a certain amount of truth to both of the parent's concerns. What would you do? (PSEL Standard VIII)
- Please tell us about a time that feedback from staff caused you to change your mind about something. (PSEL Standard I and II)
- You have completed multiple Reflective Practice Visits and an Informal Observation on a tenured teacher. Despite your constructive feedback and professional conversations following these visits, you have not observed any improvements in instruction. How would you work with this tenured teacher who is not performing up to your expectations? What steps would you take to support their growth? (PSEL Standard IV)
- While our school has a high percentage of at-risk students, many are high achieving. How will you meet the needs of both our academically at-risk and high-performing students? (PSEL Standard X)
- District 691 spends less per student than both the state and county average. How will you ensure that you have the proper resources to improve student achievement? (PSEL Standard IX)
- If you were elected to be the new State Superintendent in IL, what would be the first policy you would address in your new role?

SPECIFIC QUESTIONS

- Why do you want to lead at ABC School?
- What do you feel are your greatest strengths/weaknesses?
- Tell me about a lesson you taught and how you would improve it next time?
- How would you deal with a problem student?
- Where do you see yourself in five years?
- Tell me/us about your technology skills?
- What changes or future challenges do you foresee in the profession?
- How do you plan for working with students of different abilities? As the new principal, how would you go about learning about the school?
- Besides tests and quizzes, what measures do you use to determine what students really know?
- What have you read lately, personally or professionally?
- What are your expectations of your colleagues?

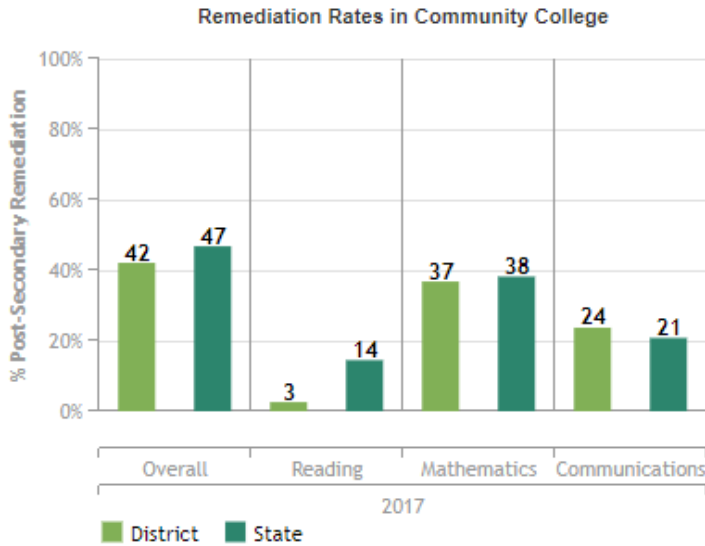
LAST QUESTION

- Do you have any questions for us?
 - Have at least five questions prepared
 - Ask one or two, don't grill the interviewer, particularly in the first round
 - Ask about the timeline for the process unless already presented
 - Tell them you are excited about the position – if you are
 - Remember to thank him/her/them

PLEASE COME UP WITH A QUESTION BASED ON THE FOLLOWING DATA: OPTION I

Post Secondary Remediation

Percentage of students at Illinois community colleges taking remedial courses.



Class of 2015

	District	State
Graduates (N)	104	128,527
Attending Illinois Community Colleges (N)	38	41,464
Attending Illinois Community Colleges (%)	36.5%	32.3%
Enrolled in Remedial Courses (N)	16	19,388
Enrolled in Remedial Courses (%)	42.1%	46.8%

PLEASE COME UP WITH A QUESTION BASED ON THE FOLLOWING DATA: OPTION 2

Achievement Gap

The persistent difference in academic performance between different ethnic and racial groups, income levels, gender, and special student groups.



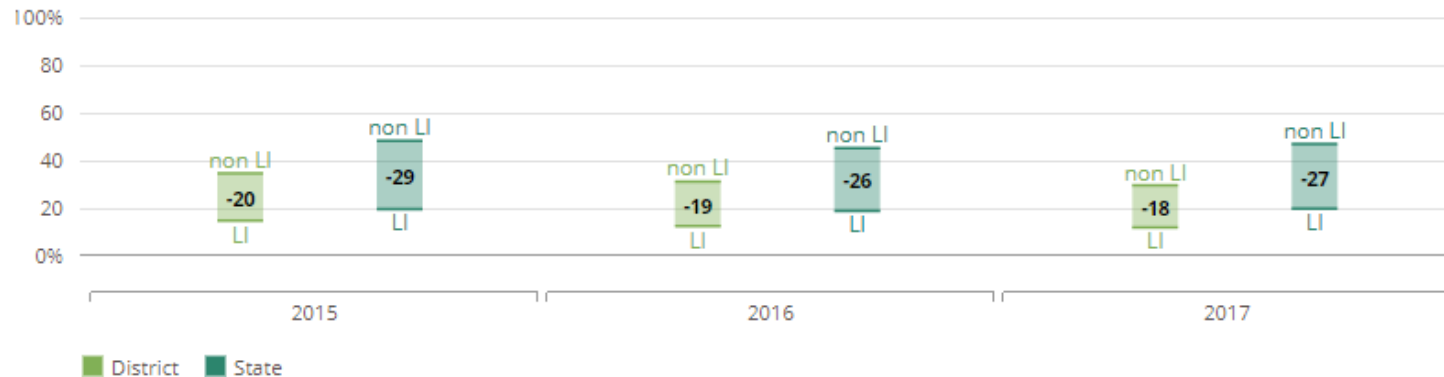
← **PARCC** SAT →

GRADES Summary ▾

SUBJECT Composite ELA Mathematics

COMPARE Low Income/Non Low Income Black/White Hispanic/White
 Black/Hispanic Male/Female IEP/Non IEP

Summary - Composite - Low Income and Non Low Income



AFTER THE INTERVIEW



- If possible, send a handwritten thank you note to each interviewer
 - Make sure names and titles are correct
 - *E-mail doesn't carry the same weight in this case*
- Follow up via e-mail or phone as earlier determined, a couple of days after you were told you would be contacted
- Don't badger....
- Remember education is a VERY small world
- If you get a call telling you, you are still a candidate...

HOW TO GET AN INTERVIEW



- Ask the principal at your school to pass your resume on to his/her colleagues
- Participate in (and present at) professional development workshops and conferences
- Try to send letters of application with a personal hook...
- Network...



QUESTIONS

