



Morningside Elementary School Leadership Profile

In order to determine the leadership traits that would best describe the ideal Principal candidate for Morningside Elementary School, staff and community meetings were held virtually and in person to gather input. The following profile summarizes the leadership characteristics and qualities valued by the school community as shared during the meetings and via the online survey:

Types/Years of Experience

- **Familiarity with the School Community:** Several respondents value a principal who is already familiar with the Morningside community and its dynamics, as this allows for continuity and a better understanding of the school's culture.
- **Empathy and Relationship-Building:** There is a strong focus on the need for a principal who is empathetic, builds positive relationships with staff, students, and parents, and has strong communication skills. (Community #3 rated quality in this domain)
- **Experience in Leadership Roles:** Many respondents highlight the need for the principal to have previous leadership experience, such as being an assistant principal, instructional coach, or vice principal, with at least 5+ years in an administrative capacity. (STAFF #3 rated quality in this domain) (Community #2)
- **Teaching Experience:** Many mention the importance of the principal having experience as a classroom teacher, particularly in elementary education, to better understand the challenges teachers face.
- **Instructional Leadership:** Many comments emphasize the need for a principal who is knowledgeable about curriculum, instruction, and student learning, with an ability to lead and support teachers' professional development. (STAFF #1 rated quality in this domain) (Community #2)
- **Problem-Solving and Conflict Resolution:** Respondents often mention the importance of a principal who can manage conflicts, handle school logistics, and resolve issues creatively.
- **Years of Experience in Education:** Many responses emphasize the importance of having significant experience in education, often citing at least 10+ years in various educational roles. (STAFF #2 rated quality in this domain) (Community #1)
- **Experience with School Operations and Budgeting:** Several responses point out the need for a principal with experience in managing school operations, including budgeting, scheduling, and handling logistics.
- **Experience in Urban or Diverse School Settings:** There is a clear preference for candidates who have worked in urban schools or diverse communities, indicating the importance of cultural competence and understanding of diverse student needs.



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- **Support for Diversity and Inclusion:** A number of responses highlight the importance of a principal who is committed to creating an inclusive and equitable school environment, with experience working with diverse student populations and implementing restorative practices.

Instructional Leadership

- **Support for Teachers:** A consistent theme is the need for a principal who listens to and supports teachers, providing them with resources, advocating for their needs, and fostering a collaborative work environment. ([STAFF #3 rated quality in this domain](#))
- **Instructional Leadership and Curriculum Knowledge:** The principal should have a deep understanding of curriculum, teaching strategies, and assessment methods. This includes a focus on evidence-based teaching practices and the ability to guide teachers effectively. ([Community #1](#))
- **Clear Communication and Transparency:** There is a strong emphasis on transparent leadership, clear communication with staff, parents, and students, and explaining the "whys" and "hows" behind decisions. ([Community #3 rated quality in this domain](#))
- **Data-Driven Decision Making:** The principal should be able to analyze data from multiple sources (academic, anecdotal, etc.) to make informed decisions and address learning gaps. ([STAFF #2 rated quality in this domain](#)) ([Community #2](#))
- **Empathy and Emotional Intelligence:** The principal should be empathetic, understanding the emotional and developmental needs of students and staff, while also building strong relationships across the school community. ([STAFF #1 rated quality in this domain](#))
- **Commitment to Equity and Inclusion:** The principal should prioritize equity, ensuring that all students, regardless of background or ability, have access to high-quality education and are supported through differentiated instruction.
- **Commitment to Student Well-being and Safety:** Ensuring students feel safe, valued, and supported emotionally is critical. This also includes fostering a positive school culture where students can thrive both academically and socially.
- **Adaptability and Openness to Innovation:** There is a focus on being open-minded, innovative, and forward-thinking, with a willingness to try new teaching methods, technology, and educational research.
- **Experience and Expertise:** Experience as a teacher, familiarity with educational standards and systems (particularly Georgia's), and the ability to lead both academically and operationally are frequently mentioned.
- **Community Engagement and Relationship Building:** Building strong relationships within the school community (teachers, parents, students) and the wider community is crucial. The principal should be accessible, engaged, and proactive in involving stakeholders in the school's success.

Discipline Management

- **Whole-Child Approach:** Discipline should consider the whole child, addressing academic, behavioral, and mental health needs, with a focus on supporting students' social and emotional development. (STAFF #1 rated quality in this domain) (Community #2)
- **Fairness and Consistency:** The importance of applying discipline policies equitably, ensuring consistent enforcement of rules and expectations for all students.
- **Clear Communication:** Clear communication with students, staff, and parents about behavior expectations, consequences, and the rationale behind disciplinary decisions.
- **Proactive and Preventative Measures:** Focusing on positive behavior reinforcement and prevention strategies, such as PBIS, to minimize behavior issues before they escalate. (STAFF #3 rated quality in this domain)
- **Collaboration and Stakeholder Involvement:** Working closely with teachers, counselors, parents, and other stakeholders to develop effective behavior management strategies and ensure that the discipline system is well understood and supported. (Community #3 rated quality in this domain)
- **Safety and Security:** Prioritizing student safety, addressing bullying and violence promptly, and creating a safe, welcoming school environment.
- **Empathy and Support:** The principal should show compassion and empathy, understanding students' backgrounds and addressing root causes of behavior issues, while balancing firmness and care.
- **Restorative Practices:** Emphasis on restorative justice approaches that focus on repairing harm and teaching students from their mistakes rather than merely punishing them. (STAFF #2 rated quality in this domain) (Community #1)
- **Flexibility and Individualized Responses:** Understanding that each child is unique and requires tailored disciplinary responses, including evaluating the broader context of individual behavior.
- **Equity and Inclusivity:** Ensuring that disciplinary actions are fair and equitable, with a particular focus on addressing any disparities, such as disproportionate disciplinary measures affecting marginalized groups.

Leadership Style

- **Approachability & Visibility:** Leaders should be visible and approachable to both students and staff. Being physically present in the school, engaging with students and staff, and maintaining an open-door policy help foster a culture of trust and accessibility.



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- **Empathy & Emotional Intelligence:** Many respondents highlighted the importance of a leader who is compassionate, understanding, and able to connect emotionally with students, staff, and parents. This empathy fosters a supportive and nurturing school environment.
- **Strong Communication:** Clear, transparent, and open communication is consistently mentioned as crucial for a successful leader. This includes regular, proactive communication with all stakeholders (students, parents, and staff) and ensuring everyone feels heard and valued. (STAFF #2 rated quality in this domain) (Community #1)
- **Visionary Leadership:** A clear and inspiring vision is essential. A principal should not only set the direction for the school but also communicate and rally support for that vision. The vision should be student-focused and inspire both staff and students to work towards shared goals.
- **Servant Leadership:** The concept of servant leadership comes up repeatedly, where the principal serves the needs of the teachers, students, and staff rather than focusing on personal authority. A servant leader is there to remove obstacles and support others in achieving their best work.
- **Decisiveness & Accountability:** While empathy is key, a strong leader should also be decisive when necessary and maintain clear boundaries and expectations. A leader should be able to make difficult decisions, hold people accountable, and maintain fairness across all interactions.
- **Positive School Culture:** Building and maintaining a positive and engaging school culture is central to many responses. A leader should create a school environment where everyone feels safe, supported, and motivated to succeed. This includes fostering respect, celebrating achievements, and supporting professional growth. (STAFF #3 rated quality in this domain) (Community #3)
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- **Student-Centered Leadership:** There is a strong emphasis on leadership that prioritizes the well-being and academic success of students. A leader should be committed to ensuring that decisions and actions are always in the best interest of the students, and that their needs are at the forefront of the school's mission. (STAFF #1 rated quality in this domain) (Community #2)
- **Collaboration & Inclusivity:** The need for collaborative leadership is clear, where a principal values input from all stakeholders (teachers, staff, parents, and students) in decision-making. A strong leader should foster an environment of teamwork and inclusivity.
- **Adaptability & Flexibility:** A great leader must be adaptable to the unique needs of the school community, as well as open to change and growth. Being able to adjust leadership styles to different situations and needs, whether it's a classroom or a district initiative, is seen as crucial for the principal's success.



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Community Engagement

- **Student-Centered Engagement:** Ensuring that community engagement efforts directly benefit students' learning, well-being, and overall school experience, with a focus on creating opportunities for student growth.
- **Visible & Approachable Leadership:** A principal should be actively involved in the community and school events, attending activities outside of school hours, and being accessible to parents and stakeholders. (STAFF #1 rated quality in this domain) (Community #2)
- **Effective Communication:** Open, transparent, and consistent communication with the community, parents, and staff. This includes clear articulation of the school's vision and plans, as well as engaging all stakeholders. (STAFF #3 rated quality in this domain) (Community #3)
- **Cultural Responsiveness:** Understanding and respecting the diverse backgrounds of the school's community to ensure all families feel welcomed and valued.
- **Strong Relationship with PTA & Foundation:** Continued partnership with the PTA and school foundation, as they are vital in fostering parent and community involvement and fundraising.
- **Stewardship and Resource Management:** The principal must be a good steward of resources, including working with local businesses and other community organizations to enhance the school experience.
- **Innovative Outreach and Partnerships:** Exploring creative ways to engage the community, including reaching out to businesses, social groups, and other organizations that can support student enrichment and school programs.
- **Collaboration & Inclusivity:** A principal should be able to engage a diverse range of families and community members, including those who are typically less involved, and foster a collaborative environment.
- **Building Trust:** Establishing credibility with the community by being reliable, authentic, and holding people accountable. Trust is critical in forming lasting relationships. (STAFF #2 rated quality in this domain) (Community #1)
- **Community Engagement:** Building and maintaining strong relationships with parents, businesses, and other community organizations.