

LEADERSHIP PROFILE FOR
PRINCIPAL—FRANCIS C. HAMMOND MIDDLE SCHOOL

APRIL 10, 2023

1. Purpose

This LEADERSHIP PROFILE defines the specific attributes for the next principal of Francis C. Hammond Middle School. The profile reflects input from several stakeholder groups to include staff, students, parents, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) members and community residents. Applicants and selection panels will use this profile to assess the candidate qualities of the position.

2. Introduction and Background

The Alexandria City Public Schools initiated a search for the position of principal of Francis C. Hammond Middle School in March 2023, to replace the principal who moved to a position at central office.

ACPS gathered information for the leadership profile from a community online survey with staff, students, parents, and community members. The online survey was open to the public. The survey requested participant comments about strengths of the school, challenges facing the school and qualities/attributes desired in a new leader. The online survey was open from March 17-30, 2023. The survey enlisted comments from approximately eighty-two parents, students, community, and staff members.

As there was no requirement for participants to provide personal identifying information, there may have been some duplication of survey responses. There were, as will be evidenced later, several consistent themes in the survey responses. Certain comments from parents, students, staff and community were very much in line with one another.

Note, the data provided are not a scientific sampling, nor should they necessarily be construed as representing the majority opinion of the respective groups providing feedback.

As search consultant, I have reviewed the comments made and provided a summary of consistent themes in a concise manner to support the application, interview, and selection process for the new principal. This report, by its nature, cannot include all comments made. However, the detail of all feedback is available and will be maintained for an appropriate period.

The strengths, challenges and traits noted will be used to inform panelists about candidates to be interviewed. The successful candidate will be one who, through the interview and selection process, best fits the leadership profile. Ultimately, the selected principal will be a school leader who can provide excellent educational, social, and personal outcomes for students, staff, parents,

and the community.

3. Consistent Themes from the Online Survey

Strengths of Francis C. Hammond Middle School

- Diversity of school community
- Quality of educational program
- Student body
- Competence, dedication, and caring of staff
- Availability and quality of activities/programs
- General school organization
- Connections to the community

Challenges for Francis C. Hammond Middle School

- Staffing shortages
- Differing needs of student body—instructional and social/emotional
- Consistency in student behavioral expectations
- Academic performance, particularly of identified subgroups
- Building maintenance/upkeep
- Communications and parent engagement
- Funding for instruction and necessary resources

Desired Personal Qualities/Attributes of Principal

- Good listener and communicator
- Approachable/accessible
- Role model
- Stands up for what is best for the school community
- Fair, caring, nice, honest, fun, and kind
- Culturally competent
- Respectful and purposeful

Desired Professional Qualities/Attributes of Principal

- Visionary
- Degreed, knowledgeable, and experienced in both teaching and administration
- Firm but fair—willing to hold individuals accountable
- Able to build relationships and school culture
- Holds high and clear expectations
- Strong professional who values others and helps them develop
- Leader who gets things done
- Motivator
- Leads by example

4. Sample Comments from the Online Survey.

Many of the comments centered around the principal, staff and students at Francis Hammond. The following comments provide a brief commentary in this area:

“I want them to have a good time taking care of us.”—Student

“Teachers are stretched too thin.”—Parent

“We have small adults...who are in need of structure and support.”—Staff Member

The following statements provide an overview of feedback from the online survey relative to attributes desired in the new principal:

- We need a trusting, empathetic leader who cares about staff health and retention and who finds ways to improve the social/environmental experience for students.
- Someone who will not give in and will stand up for what is best for the staff, students and school.
- Firm but fair.
- Kind, caring, nice, fun, and funny.
- We need a good listener and communicator.
- Someone who is strong-willed.
- A school culture builder.
- Someone who will expand our supports for children.

5. Instructions to Applicants.

A candidate should use this profile to make a self-assessment and determine how she/he best fits the qualities sought by the school community. These characteristics should be reflected in the content of the application. Should the applicant be selected for an interview, that candidate must demonstrate these qualities in the screening process. Generally, a strong principal should demonstrate leadership and management skills, inspire trust, and build support in the school and across the community. We seek a principal who can do adapt these qualities for the Francis C. Hammond Middle School community.

6. Closing.

As your search consultant, I extend my thanks to all who provided feedback via the online survey. Your time, effort and care are most appreciated. We look forward to the selection of the best candidate as your next principal.

Sincerely,

John Porter

School Principal Search Consultant

Department of Human Resources, ACPS