

HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL SEARCH

Shaker Heights Schools



CANDIDATE PROFILE SUMMARY

The following attributes, opportunities and challenges will help to inform the candidate selection process. To create this summary, 377 stakeholders filled out surveys, and 12 stakeholder groups and 10 High School classrooms offered input.

Top Skills That The Next Principal Of SHHS Must Have In Order To Be Successful:

- Experience as a teacher and principal
- Ability to hold all students to high expectations in terms of academics and behavior
- Emotional intelligence, motivation and drive to help the entire school community heal and move forward
- Strong leadership that meets the needs of our diverse community by making the tough decisions based on thought and collaboration, stand by and implement those decisions
- Able to build relationships with students; be accessible, approachable and visible
- A strong and professional work ethic, ability to provide stability for the years to come, and excellent communication skills
- Able to build relationships with all staff on a foundation of trust; support the ongoing growth of the building leadership
- Problem-solving skills and ability to recognize all of the different types of students in our school
- Strategic thinking and ability to facilitate effective collaboration with all stakeholders and implement specific plans to move our school community forward while also understanding our long-term and short-term past experiences

Most Exciting Opportunities For The Next Principal Of SHHS:

- There are highly creative, diverse students at our High School who have a wide range of abilities, interests, and ideas.
- We have a strong, highly educated and dedicated staff.
- Our community is exceptionally diverse in terms of race, socio-economic status, sexual orientation, etc. The opportunity is here to help the school community understand and celebrate the differences and build bridges and connections for student achievement.
- We need a leader who will serve as a role model to students and staff by building relationships and leading with integrity.

- The opportunity is here to make path-breaking achievements in the International Baccalaureate (IB) program, Restorative Practices (RP), and Equity efforts in a nationally recognized school district. Work needs to be done to build the reputation of SHHS as a leader of student academic achievement.
- Shaker will look to the next High School principal to develop and implement strategic plans that work towards equity and excellence and include stakeholder input.

Top Challenges That The Next Principal Of SHHS Will Face:

- Recognizing the layers of institutional racism, unconscious bias, and gaps in achievement and class structures, preparing to address these issues, and having courageous conversations
- Strengthening relationships among staff, students, parents and community
- Acknowledging that equity is a challenge and opportunity, identifying past negative feelings, exploring how to solve and move forward with and for all stakeholders
- Examining and implementing other educational paths for non-college bound students
- Addressing discipline in classrooms and hallways; working with students to identify “patterns of behavior” and closely examining Restorative Practices (RP) implementation
- Ensuring that special education program best practices are implemented per the requirements of IEP (individualized education plan) and 504 plans (accommodations)
- Effectively leading the implementation and use of learning technology resources
- Addressing and improving the instruction and rigor of core classrooms as compared to the advanced classrooms
- Working with the High School staff and Human Resources department to intentionally and thoughtfully recruit and retain a staff that is more reflective of the student body demographic and diversity

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Valuable Pieces Of Information About SHHS For The Next Principal:

- Plan to spend time understanding the history of Shaker Heights and our “segregated diversity” and be prepared to work to increase the involvement of Black parents in school activities and programs through a vision of engagement.
- Examine the International Baccalaureate (IB) program implementation and areas for improvement.
- Recognize that the High School feels like a different school to students depending on their classes and needs, and that there are high achieving students who have different experiences than lower performing students
- Know that you have a supportive School Board, District administration and caring community who will work tirelessly with you to support the success of all students
- Recognize the near-world class resources and opportunities for students, staff and families
- Understand and appreciate the galvanized activism of the students including the Shakerite, MAC Scholars, student leadership groups and other school organizations
- Be visible – Observe and spend time in classrooms and use data to identify the disparities between achievement levels of black and white students. Work to understand the gaps, speak with disenfranchised students and parents to understand their experiences
- Assist with interpreting data and practices to create meaningful curriculum and instruction innovations
- Know that we have strong and supportive collective bargaining groups
- Seek input, feedback and trust the staff and students regarding what is best for the school
- Provide stability by remaining at the school for more than just a few years
- Consider how the school should develop a uniform set of standards and expectations for all students, implement them and hold all accountable for them
- Support the work and ongoing growth of Assistant Principals, Counselors and the Dean of Students

- Explore, celebrate and support the school’s successful arts (visual and performing) and athletic programs and recognize their influence on student growth, behavior and achievement

Additional Information:

- The new principal will become member of a team of educators who are committed to continuous improvement for years to come – this is not a short-term position or a résumé builder.
- Be willing to learn/understand and celebrate the “Shaker Way” while also thoughtfully bringing new ideas.
- Prepare to engage in extensive work to (re)build relationships and improve academic programming. Understand that this takes time: work in stages, be inclusive and listen. Use data as one resource of many available.
- Plan to be visible and involved in the school hallways and classrooms as well as at after school and community events.
- Be ready to provide consistent support and ongoing mentorship to building leaders.
- Plan to demonstrate knowledge and experience with current best practices in curriculum and instruction and use to examine the high school courses, from advanced classes to special education, to ensure that all courses are developmentally appropriate, engaging and rigorous.
- Spend time understanding the challenges and celebrations of diversity, exhibit cultural competence and incorporate your understanding into your leadership practices and decision-making.
- Know that our parents and students are very passionate about our schools and that they are ready to have difficult conversations about areas needing improvement.
- Come ready to lead as problem solver within the High School and find a balance of school-level decision making and Central Office involvement. Demonstrate leadership by being consistent, accountable and following through. Lead by example.
- Be prepared to work on addressing declining enrollment, budget issues and facilities needs.
- Plan to find a balance between your heart and your head, understand audience and purpose, and remain level headed in crises and challenging situations.

For more information about the search process, please visit shaker.org/HSprincipalsearch.aspx.