

***The following list of concepts and critical principal behaviors are from pages 108-113 in “Leadership for Highly Successful Middle Level Schools: A National Study of Leadership in Middle Level Schools: Volume II.”**

<u>FACTOR/ CONCEPT</u>	<u>CRITICAL PRINCIPAL BEHAVIORS</u>	
Expectations of Academic Excellence for All Students	1	Engage in purposeful discussions and staff development activities to establish a set of shared values, beliefs, and commitments about key aspects of the schooling process.
	2	Maintain ongoing dialogue about values, beliefs, and commitments to internalize those into the daily life of the school.
	3	Take a stand on what you believe is right for students and do everything possible to maintain that stance.
	4	Accept the fact that faculty members who do not share the commitment to excellence should work somewhere else.
	5	Engage in purposeful discussions about professional development activities to establish a collaborative vision of what the school will need to look like in the future to achieve and maintain a high level of excellence.
	6	Build knowledge about best practices and apply that knowledge to the development of values, beliefs, and commitments and to the development of the vision and the goals necessary to accomplish school improvement.

“The Principal’s Impact on Middle School Success.” Jerry Valentine, Middle Level Leadership Center, University of Missouri; Matthew Goodman, Springfield Public Schools, Springfield, Missouri; Kristin Matthews, Gentry Middle School, Columbia, Missouri; Nyle Klinginsmith, Jefferson Junior High School, Columbia, Missouri; Gregory Mees, Middle Level Leadership Center, University of Missouri. NASSP San Antonio February, 2008.

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Educational Core Knowledge	1	Share the responsibility for instructional leadership, realizing that the paradigm of the principal as the sole instructional leader is questionable because, in highly successful schools, teachers with instructional expertise accept the responsibility of leadership among their peers.
	2	Use small groups, whole-faculty groups, and individual sessions to study the current research about best programs and practices in middle level schools, including student learning, curricular programs, instructional practices, and assessment practices.
	3	In formal settings, such as faculty meetings, team meetings, and committee meetings, discuss best teaching practices and share ideas and strategies for working with specific students.
	4	Use interdisciplinary teams or some form of organizational structure to create small learning communities where students experience identity and personal attention as well as involvement and belonging, and where teachers accept responsibility for the success of each student in the team.
	5	Use common planning times among team members, even if there is not a separate team planning time, to discuss student needs, design programs and instruction, meet with parents, and find methods to meet students’ needs.
	6	Use a variety of instructional strategies to engage students actively in the learning process.
	7	Align curriculum, instruction, and assessment and monitor the teaching of the curriculum to ensure that the “written” curriculum is the “taught” curriculum.
	8	Use formative assessments on a regular basis to identify concepts for reteaching and enrichment, then adjust schedules and instruction to accommodate remediation and enrichment experiences on the basis of the assessments.

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Relationships	1	Maintain ongoing discussions throughout the school year about the importance of behaviors that build and that destroy relationships.
	2	Engage in study groups about the challenges inherent among the students the school serves, and design strategies to work more effectively to meet those challenges.
	3	Accept personal responsibility to serve as a role model who exhibits the type of behavior from which students and other adults can learn.
	4	Collect data about teachers’ perceptions of the school’s climate and culture, and discuss those data in small groups and as a whole faculty.
	5	Engage staff in retreats away from the school setting at least once a year so school issues and challenges can be discussed or resolved, where planning can involve all teachers, and where relationships can be developed and nurtured.
	6	Establish school structures that create small learning communities where relationships can become meaningful, including small interdisciplinary learning teams.
	7	Build and maintain strong relationships with parents and community members and involve them in the life of the school; focus on building school and community awareness, and emphasize effective personal, two-way communication.

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Communities of Learning	1	Establish the “big picture” processes for change that are known by all staff members and are used as the format for continual growth and improvement so everyone in the school understands the importance of the change and the relationship of the change to the school’s vision and goals.
	2	Use small study groups to build knowledge and translate that knowledge into practice.
	3	Be patient, because changing the culture of a school into a continual learning community usually takes multiple years.
	4	Be impatient and aggressive in the effort to move a school into a culture of continual learning; it does not happen by chance, it happens by design.
	5	Use the current knowledge about the most-effective practices for professional development, including stakeholder design and delivery, relevance, application to practice, and follow-up support.

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Leadership Making a Difference	1	Wear the mantle of leadership with conviction because, in today’s education environment, the principal, more than any other individual within the school, will make a difference in the quality of the educational experiences students receive.
	2	Be aggressive in articulating and modeling personal beliefs about the success of each student because few others will have the courage to do so and the school will not serve the needs of all students.
	3	Understand that teachers are the key individuals who collectively determine the school’s quality and that they need involvement, the opportunity for leadership, encouragement, support, and a standard of high expectations for the way they think and behave toward the students they teach.
	4	Establish formal structures, such as committees, cadres, vertical teams, advisory teams, school improvement teams, and task forces, to engage teachers and other stakeholders in the decision-making processes.
	5	Identify potential leaders among faculty members and nurture their leadership talent by providing opportunities for them to become teacher-leaders and have other formal leadership roles, eventually leading to the principalship.
	6	Read and build knowledge of best practices in middle level education, school improvement, change processes, collaborative and distributive leadership, and efficient daily management.
	7	Develop confidence among faculty members, students, and parents that the daily operations of the school will go smoothly; implement effective daily operational routines throughout the school; and maintain communication with staff members so they know and follow those routines.
	8	Implement organizational structures that enhance the academic and social success of middle level students, such as flexible schedules, interdisciplinary teaming, common planning times for team teachers, advisory classes, and extended academic opportunities for remediation and enrichment.
	9	Understand the importance of literacy and mathematics as foundational skills of all middle level students, and do whatever is necessary to provide learning opportunities that prevent students from leaving school without those skills.
	10	Collect and analyze data that will move the school toward accomplishing its vision and goals,

	including data about students; the school's environment; the instructional practices present throughout the school; the attitudes of parents, students, and teachers; and the integrity of the written and taught curriculum.
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