



Maine West High School Principal Profile

The principal profile synthesizes the key attributes and qualifications that the staff, students, parents, and administrators consider important based on multiple feedback loops, including focus groups and a survey. It serves as a guideline for which characteristics and areas of focus stakeholders at Maine West High School value most in a principal. Below is a summary of the focus group feedback.

Academic Achievement & Instruction

- **Academic Rigor:** Prioritize strengthening academic expectations and increasing rigor to ensure that all students are prepared for postsecondary success and/or college.
- **Core Focus:** Student needs should be centered and the principal should build positive relationships among teachers and students.
- **Access to Challenging Coursework:** Provide all learners with access to, and increased opportunities to participate in, high-level academic opportunities.

Personal Qualities and Leadership Style

- **Visible Connector:** The principal should maintain a high physical presence in classrooms, hallways and after-school activities to build trust and connection with students and staff daily.
- **Stabilizing Force:** Demonstrate high emotional intelligence by serving as a stabilizing, regulated force during crises, providing calm and offering hope to the school community.
- **Authentic and Approachable:** The ideal candidate should possess warm people skills and a genuine, non-transactional interest in students and staff that makes them easy to talk to and trust.
- **A “Want to be at West” Leader:** The principal should show a deep, long-term commitment to Maine West rather than viewing the role as a stepping stone or “just another” principal job.

Meeting the Needs of All and Embracing the Culture:

- **Advocate for Resource Parity:** While recognizing that Maine West is part of a larger district, the principal should act as an advocate for Maine West’s unique needs, particularly regarding academic offerings and student supports.
- **Equity for All:** Recognize and find solutions for students facing barriers related to resources. All students should be welcomed to school, embraced for their unique needs and supported for their strengths and challenges so they can be productive and contributing members of the Maine West community.
- **Cultural and Linguistic Assets:** Leverage the school’s diversity to improve engagement with Hispanic families and support the large multilingual population.
- **Value Tradition:** Rebuild community pride by establishing traditions and shared experiences that anchor and celebrate the school’s identity.

Support for Teachers & Staff

- **Ensure Professional Norms:** Ensure there are high professional standards throughout the building for teachers and support staff that lead to success for all students.
- **Staff Support:** Understand the commitment required for educators to support students with significant needs and provide them with the necessary support to assist in their efforts.

- **Empower and Protect Time:** Streamline administrative processes and meetings to honor teachers, respect their autonomy and allow them to focus on instruction.
- **Mentor and Build Talent:** Identify the strengths of younger staff and distribute leadership opportunities to build their sense of purpose and ensure long-term stability.
- **Clear is Kind:** The principal should serve as the connector to district leadership and explain the “why” behind decisions so everyone (students, staff and community) can clearly understand the decisions of the district and Maine West.

Student Well-Being and Engagement

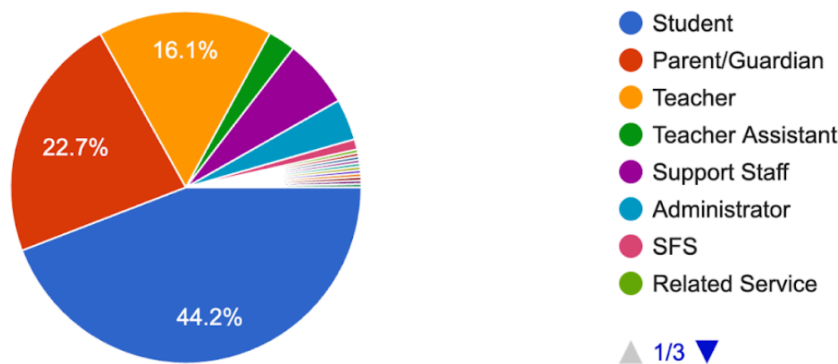
- **Amplify Student Voice:** Actively engage with and integrate student voice from diverse groups into high-level school decision-making. Ensure that there is follow-through on requests and when something can't be accomplished, the “why” behind it is shared. Maintain a system that ensures student voices are heard throughout each school year and used to drive change.
- **Belonging to Achieve:** Leverage the school's strong “family culture” and sense of belonging to help students achieve higher academic goals and build personal resilience.
- **Increase Rigor and Expectations:** Stakeholders want high academic expectations, attendance standards and accountability when behavior doesn't meet the benchmarks.



Maine West High School Principal Survey Results

A principal survey was distributed and available to all staff, students and families for more than a week and there were 317 stakeholders who finished the survey. The results below serve as a guideline for the characteristics most valued in a principal at Maine West High School.

Please indicate which of the following BEST describes your connection to Maine West.



Please select the THREE (3) items below that represent the greatest challenges at Maine West (top results).

Answer Choices	Responses	
Achievement gaps among student groups	37%	117
Student engagement in learning	34%	108
Decisions not centered on student needs	24%	75
Curriculum	17%	54
Communication with all staff	14%	44
School safety	14%	43

Please select the top THREE (3) goals for Maine West to accomplish in the next three years (top results).

Answer Choices	Responses	
Ensure that all students are ready for post high school success	38%	119
Strengthen academic experiences to support and challenge all learners	31%	97
Maintain high levels of student achievement	20%	64
Increase opportunities for students to earn college credits	18%	58
Engage students through best instructional practices	16%	51
Build strong connections between the teachers and students	16%	50
Improve staff morale	16%	50

Please select the THREE (3) attributes that you believe are most important for a person to be successful as the Principal at Maine West (top results).

Answer Choices	Responses	
Has warm people skills, is approachable and easy to talk to	28%	89
Builds a great team and brings out the best in others	25%	78
Exhibits strong commitment to put student needs first	24%	77
Is visible in the schools and community	24%	75
Is open-minded and flexible	18%	58
Is committed to ensuring equitable experiences and outcomes for all students	18%	57
Has excellent communication skills	16%	52
Has an inspiring vision for the future	16%	51
Is a collaborative consensus builder and able to work with all constituencies and viewpoints	16%	50

Respondents were asked about what other thoughts they wanted to share and this is a summary of those opinions.

Academic Rigor and Student Accountability: A significant portion of the feedback emphasized a need to return to high academic standards and firm disciplinary structures. Many respondents expressed concern over the current level of rigor and challenge for all students so they are prepared for life after high school. There were also concerns expressed related to the classroom environment, specifically around cell phone distractions and the practice of restarting lessons for late arrivals.

Visible and Present Leadership: Stakeholders across all groups highlighted the importance of a principal who is “seen” and active within the school building. Specific items included a leader who walks the halls, visits classrooms and attends extracurricular events. There is a desire for a principal who knows students by name and fosters a “family” atmosphere.

Support for Staff and Morale: Staff members specifically noted that morale has been low and they feel a lack of support from the current administration. They shared a need for leadership that trusts teachers’ expertise, respects all staff, and involves them in decision-making.

Equity and Inclusion: Many staff and parents emphasized the importance of a principal who is culturally competent, supports linguistically diverse families (specifically mentioning the Spanish-speaking community) and champions equity for “often silenced” learners. Other respondents urged the school to re-center the educational focus around teaching and learning and critical thinking.

Resource Allocation and Holistic Support: Feedback suggests a need for a more balanced approach to how school resources (time and money) are distributed, with respondents asking for more support of fine arts, athletics and for students, particularly with mental health challenges.