

Principal interview protocol

[Interviewer: introduce yourself, who you are, your role]

As you know, the purpose of this interview is to learn more about the college-going culture that [school name] aims to provide for its students. This information will be used to help the school better understand what's going on, what's going well, and what needs improvement.

Remember, there are no right or wrong answers. You're the expert on how you feel and what you think.

This interview is confidential and anonymous. This means that no other teachers or any of the staff will see your survey. Only a team of outside researchers will look at the individual responses and will summarize the responses. No one will be able to find out what you answered, so please be completely honest.

I would like to tape record this discussion. Tape recording allows me to concentrate on talking with you and not on taking notes, although I will sometimes write things down. I will hold on to the audio files; not only will everything I report be anonymous, I will be especially careful to ensure that never will enough information be known for someone to deduce who said what. Is it OK with you if I tape this conversation?

Any questions?

Easing in

Tell us about how you would describe a college-going culture in a middle school.

Probe: What are the characteristics? Supports? Resources?

Probe: Do different students need a different college-going culture?

Probe: Is such a model sustainable?

Tell us about how [school name] supports/is developing a college-going culture?

Probe: Has this school been successful? What's been most helpful/difficult?

Probe: Is this model sustainable?

Tell us about your role in this.

Probe: Have you been successful? What's been most helpful/difficult?

College talk

(How) do you talk about college with students? Where? How often? With whom?

Probe: (How) does this conversation differ for different students?

(How) do you talk about college with teachers? Where? How often? With whom?

Probe: (How) does this conversation differ for different teachers?

(How) do you talk to students' families about college? How often? With whom?

Probe: Is this conversation different for different families?

What does getting a student ready for college mean to you?

Probe: How do you determine if a student is “college material”?

Clear expectations

What are your expectations for students?

What are your expectations for families?

What are your expectations for teachers?

What are your expectations for other staff members?

Do you feel expectations are similar for school staff? Students’ families? Students?

Information and resources

(How) do you provide students the information they need to be ready for college?

(How) do you provide information to their families?

If a student asked you a question about college, how would you answer it?

Do you talk with the counselor about college advising? If so, how often? About what?

Family involvement

How have students’ families been involved in the college-going process, if at all?

Articulation

Does [school name]’s courses prepare students for college? If so, how?

Do you coordinate [school name]’s courses with activities at other grade levels and schools?
How so?