# Sample Interview Questions for School Leadership Team and School Improvement Team (annotated by Darrell)

(Also used for Interviews of School-Based Administrators from Schools not Receiving Site Visits)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Listen and probe for:</th>
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| **Vision and Purpose**
1. In your own words, what is the vision the school district is seeking to achieve? How does the district vision relate to the vision of your school?  
   - Preparing 21st Century Graduates (see vision statement).
   - School and district vision are aligned and interrelated. (specific responses are based on your school vision statement).  
   - What is your role in accomplishing the district vision?  
   - Implement the Strategic Plan and the School Improvement Plan strategies  
   - Understanding and communicating it to all stakeholders  
   - Assuring school practices are in line with district instructional expectations.  
   - Does the vision serve as the focus for assessing student performance and system and school effectiveness?  
   - Quarterly reviews of our School Improvement Plans assure that alignment is occurring between our assessment practices and the district vision.  
   - An assessment plan is in place for all schools in the district.  
   - Parent/Student/Teachers surveys annually assess the school's progress with respect to student performance and the implementation of the school vision/strategic plan.  
   - District performance expectations (PASS, MAP, Dominie, World Language) are all tied to the district’s mission and vision.  
   - Is there evidence that the vision guides allocations of time, human, material, and fiscal resources?  
   - Regular meetings with HR and Finance maintain the alignment of resources with the school and district vision. School Improvement Plans are reviewed quarterly with a rubric tied to the district vision (strategic direction) and feedback given to all administrators.  
   - The principal’s evaluation system (PADEPP) is built completely around the School Improvement Plan process and District Strategic Plan as expressed in annual instructional expectations.  
   - How are stakeholders involved in the development and communication of the vision?  
   - School vision/mission statements are crafted and reviewed through the School Improvement Council made up of parents, teachers, and business/community members.  
   - Parent Advisory Groups operate at the district level who are intimately involved in the process.  
   - The Schools of the Future Planning Team and the Schools of the
Future Task Force crafted and reviewed the district mission and vision.
- The Teacher Advisory Group and the Student Advisory Group also reviewed the district’s mission and vision.
- Administrators assisted in the development and continue to have professional learning around the instructional expectations through monthly District Leadership and Team Learning meetings, leveled principal’s meetings, “On Common Ground” and “Whatever It Takes Meetings”.
- The Senior Leadership Team and the Lexington One Board of Trustees were involved in the development of the mission and vision and have multiple opportunities for review and revision.
- Centers of Study Advisory Groups have high levels of input into the development of their specific programs as they relate to the vision and mission of Lexington School District One.

### Current Profile

2. **How well is the district and your school doing in achieving its vision?**

   **Lexington One continues to exceed expectations at local, state, and national levels with respect to student performance.**

   Student and parent interviews and comments indicate strong support for the instructional direction of the district (21st Century Graduates).

   Specific school responses required.

   - What does the data say about **student performance and district effectiveness**?
     - Students are performing at higher rates. Standardized testing results indicate that students are reaching higher levels of performance.
     - Parent/Teacher/Student surveys indicate a high degree of satisfaction with the district and its schools in the areas of home-school relations, physical environment, and learning environment.
   - What **trends** are you seeing?
     - Personal Responses. Ideas include:
     - Increasing population, increasing diversity. Improving performance on all measures.
   - What are the district’s **strengths and weaknesses**?
     - **Strengths:**
       - Strong instructional commitment on the part of the Superintendent. 21st Century thinking of administration (Supt, Board, Admin).
       - Allocated resources for 21st century learning (Centers of Study, Laptop Initiative, etc.)
       - Strong sense of community and great community support.
       - Facilities that are modern and designed for 21st century learning (Centers of Study, Learning Commons)
       - District-wide indicatives that focus on gradual release of responsibility, personalized learning, etc..
     - **Weaknesses (rather, Challenges)**
       - Rapid growth.
       - Diminishing resources from the state, etc.

### Governance and Leadership

3. **As school leaders, how do you provide direction and support to achieve the district and school vision?**

   **Personal responses. Ideas include:**

   Professional learning opportunities provided to faculty

   - **What role** does the Leadership Team and School Improvement Team play in the school?
     - Meet weekly, maintain minutes, includes discussions of district initiatives and progress.
     - Reviews data regularly and makes recommendations to changes for the School Improvement Plan.
     - Monitors strategies and reflects over results.
and staff, review of the district’s strategic plan, Alignment of School Improvement Plan and school-based initiatives with the district strategic plan.

4. How does the district support your leadership efforts?
   - Regular meetings with role alike groups
   - Personal conferences with district administration

   School Professional Development Plan and Principal Personal Development Plan are required to be submitted in July each year and are reviewed for alignment to the school and district strategic plans.

   Professional Learning opportunities every month for various administrator groups (Team Learning, DLT, On Common Ground, Whatever It Takes, Assistant Principal’s Meetings)

   Professional learning and training opportunities for aspiring leaders

   Graduate level cohort group with USC for administrative degree program.

   Succession Planning

   Regular meetings of administration with Supt (Supt Roundtable) for personal time.

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<th>Teaching and Learning</th>
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<td>5. How does the district support the teaching and learning process at your school?</td>
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### Administrative Support (AP’s)

- **Literacy and Math Coaches**
- **STEM Coach**

Various committees for input and training for staff (Literacy, Math, Science, STEM)

Regular meetings for administrators focused on our own learning (On Common Ground, Whatever It Takes).

Student performance review with superintendent/CAO.

Content coordinators provide assistance in assessment and best practice.

Financial support for materials and for innovation.

### Classroom Visits

- Classroom visits are conducted regularly (formal and informal).
- How does the district ensure curriculum is **research-based**?
- Extensive process for curriculum and materials selection assures research-base.
- How does the curriculum provide **opportunities for all students** to acquire requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes?
- Provisions are made for differentiated learning for all students (EAGLES, RTI program, Special Education, FOCUS, etc.).
- Does the curriculum reflect a commitment to equity and demonstrate an appreciation of diversity?
- Examples abound in programs and materials. Fine arts programs highlight diversity. Variety of world languages (Immersion, FLES, KITE-LL, Core).
- How does the district support teachers in using **proven instructional practices** that actively engage students in their learning, provide opportunities for students to apply their knowledge and skills to real world situations, and give students feedback on their performance?
- Training, Summer Institutes, classroom observations and feedback systems, district review of curriculum materials and materials for RTI programs, global connections/digital citizenship programs, leadership development.
- What systems are in place to ensure continuity as students articulate through the system?
- Cross grade level meetings, elementary to middle/ middle to high school orientations and visits, communication instruments between the levels to assure continuity and rigor, common permanent record expectations and forms, meetings between administrators on a regular basis, common assessment development, common curriculum that includes pacing guides and assessment guides.
- Does the district climate support student learning?
- Strong focus on relationships. (See mission and vision.).
- How does the district coordinate and ensure ready access to instructional technology, information and media services, and materials?
- Technology Department, IT’s, TIS’s, Funding, Training opportunities, provision of current technology (SmartBoards, sound systems), STEM support (equipment), Communication tools for administration (iPhones, iPads).
- Learning Commons development and support.
- School Messenger systems and other communication systems.
- How does the district protect instructional time?
- Clear guidelines and policies about class visits, announcements, program interruptions, etc.

### Documenting and Using Results

6. What data does the school regularly collect?

**Student performance data including** Dominie, Dibels, MAP, PASS, H SAP, Plan, Explore, CogAt, ITBS, Writing. (other state requirements).

- What **types of data** does the school collect? (School Responses vary).
- How is data shared and used at the classroom level?
- Is there a process for systematic review of student performance data?
- Are multiple assessments used to gauge student performance?
- How does the school demonstrate growth in student performance?
Perceptual Data including surveys from parents, students, and teachers.
Demographic data (ethnicity, income, etc, attendance, tardies, etc.).
Trend data over time.

7. How does the school use data to inform and support student learning?
   Data walls, data team (School Leadership Team) reviews, faculty expectations for review (VCG).

8. What support does the district provide to the school in documenting and using results?
   Provision of data in useful formats
   Assistance with understanding using data
   School Improvement support
   Performance expectations

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<th>Resources and Support Systems</th>
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<td>9. How does the district ensure that your school has sufficient human, material, and fiscal resources in place to implement the curriculum and meet the needs of all students?</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Budget allocations</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Regular meetings with finance</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Budget appeals process</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Human Resource meetings</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Target Ratios defined for staffing</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• What processes are in place to ensure that staff are well-qualified, appropriately assigned, and provided ongoing professional development?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Active and involved Human Resources department</td>
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<td>• Semester meetings with HR</td>
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<td>• Support for certification through the district office</td>
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<td>• Processes defined for interviews, reference checks, recommendations, etc.</td>
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<td>• Transfer procedures available</td>
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<td>• Professional Learning opportunities prolific in the content areas and include summer institutes</td>
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<td>• New teacher support (MENTOR)</td>
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<td>• Continuing teacher support (GBE)</td>
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<td>• Support for teachers with performance issues (Competency Based, etc.).</td>
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<td>• New Teacher Orientations</td>
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<td>• Summer workshops in content areas for new teachers</td>
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<td>• School Professional Development Plans written and approved</td>
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<tr>
<td>• How does the district/school ensure it has sufficient financial resources to support the school’s educational programs and plans for improvement?</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Budget processes and procedures.</td>
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<td>• Audits</td>
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<td>• Regular training</td>
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<td>• Grant opportunities</td>
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<td>• Funding formulas</td>
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| • How does the district help you maintain and ensure a safe, orderly, and
**Stakeholder Communication and Relationships**

10. How does the district and your school ensure effective communication, engagement, and shared leadership of stakeholders?

- **School Messenger Calls**
- **School Improvement Council**
- **Advisory Groups**
- **Web Presence**
- **PowerSchool/ LMS**
- **Newsletters (digital and paper)**
- **District produced videos, communications**
- **Lexington TV station**

- What system-wide strategies are in place to **listen to** and **communicate with** stakeholders?
  - **Advisory Groups (Parent, Student, Teacher, Support)**
  - **Centers of Study Expert Panels**
  - **Involvement in community groups by administration/ supt (Chamber of Commerce, Rotary Club, Lions Club, etc).**
  - **Surveys annually**
  - **Community Meetings hosted by Superintendent**
  - **PTA/ PTO programs**
  - **School Orientations/ Open House**
  - How are **stakeholders engaged** in supporting **student learning** and enhancing the work of the school?
  - **School Improvement Councils**
  - **Volunteer Programs**
  - **Grants**
  - **Snack Pack programs sponsored by faith groups**
  - **Corporate support for school initiatives and district initiatives (Michelin Grants, Chic Fil A LeaderCast),**
  - **Lexington One Education Foundation support**
  - How are **expectations for student learning** and goals for improvement **communicated** to all stakeholders?
  - **Open House**
  - **Newsletters**
  - **Web Presence**
  - **Regular communication between home and school**
  - **PTA/ PTO meetings**
  - **Parent Conferences**
  - **Student led conferences**
  - **School Improvement Council annual report**
  - **District produced videos**
### Continuous Improvement

**11.** What is the process that the school uses for continuous improvement? Describe the process, including how it is implemented and monitored. How does the school’s process relate to the district process and what support does the district provide to the school? (Darrell?)

District and school engage in a single improvement process. All school improvement plans are written to support district expectations and initiatives. These are reviewed by District Coordinators using a rubric to assure alignment and support. Feedback is given. SIP’s are reviewed and UPDATED quarterly with current data and revised strategies.

- Does the school implement a **collaborative and ongoing process** for improvement that **aligns the functions of the school with the school’s vision**? How is the process aligned with the district?
- Is the school **demonstrating progress**? Are improvements **sustained**?
- Are **new improvement efforts informed by results** of earlier efforts?
- How does the district guide, align, support, and monitor the **school’s improvement efforts**?
- Does the district allow for **appropriate flexibility** at the school level to tailor improvement efforts to site needs?
- School Plans aligned to district strategic plan. reviewed by rubric.
- Stakeholder involvement expected by district and state and is documented in the cover page of the report.
- Principal’s evaluation system (PADEPP) is aligned to School Improvement Plan and the resulting student performance.
- Student performance expectations are clearly aligned with district plan and school goals.
- Schools have flexibility in many of the strategies selected as well as additional performance goals based on specific school data.

### Quality Assurance

**12.** What processes does the school use to monitor and ensure that every student is receiving a quality education? How does the district monitor quality at your school?

Regular review of student performance. Provision of meaningful data. Principal evaluation component includes student performance. Regular meetings with supervisors (Dr. Talley and Directors). District staff visits to schools. Professional Development Plans submitted and reviewed. Principal’s Personal Professional Plan submitted and reviewed and aligned to School Improvement Plan and Strategic Plan.

- How do you monitor the operations of the school to ensure quality, consistency, and integrity? (school specific responses).
- What role does the district play in quality assurance? Is there a systematic process in place?
- School Improvement Plans developed with Strategic Plan direction, rubric, and review by Directors. Training provided by Darrell Barringer regularly as well as support.
- Principal evaluation (PADEPP) tied to school improvement.

- How does the district ensure that you are meeting the AdvancED standards?

- Regular review of performance during biannual meetings with CAO.
- School Improvement Plans are revised to reflect measures of performance compared to projections.
- Darrell Barringer trained on understanding the seven standards.
- All schools engaged their faculties in a meaningful process to complete the Standards Assessment Report (even though it is not required for District Accreditation currently….special permission).