

ASCEND

((●)) LIVE



Justin Baeder, PhD
The Principal Center



Q: Engaging Parents

Our Essential Question



How can I answer
interview questions like this?

*“How would you engage parents and
community members as active
participants in the school?”*

What Am I Being Asked?



“How would you engage parents and community members as active participants in the school?”

- Hypothetical “would”
- Not asking for a specific example/experience
- Not a very specific scenario

The Question(s) Behind The Question



- Do you value parent engagement?
- Do you recognize the diversity of our parent community?
- Do you have good ideas for meaningful parent involvement in our specific context?

Many Types of Engagement



- Supporting academics, e.g. helping students stay on track with their work, checking grades, communicating with teachers, paying attention to school announcements, etc.
- Volunteering at events, in classrooms, for PTA/PTSO, etc.
- Attending family events, e.g. open house, curriculum night, parent-teacher conferences, assemblies, performances, etc.
- Participating in decision-making & leadership, e.g. site-based governance, hiring, strategic planning, etc.

Know Your Audience



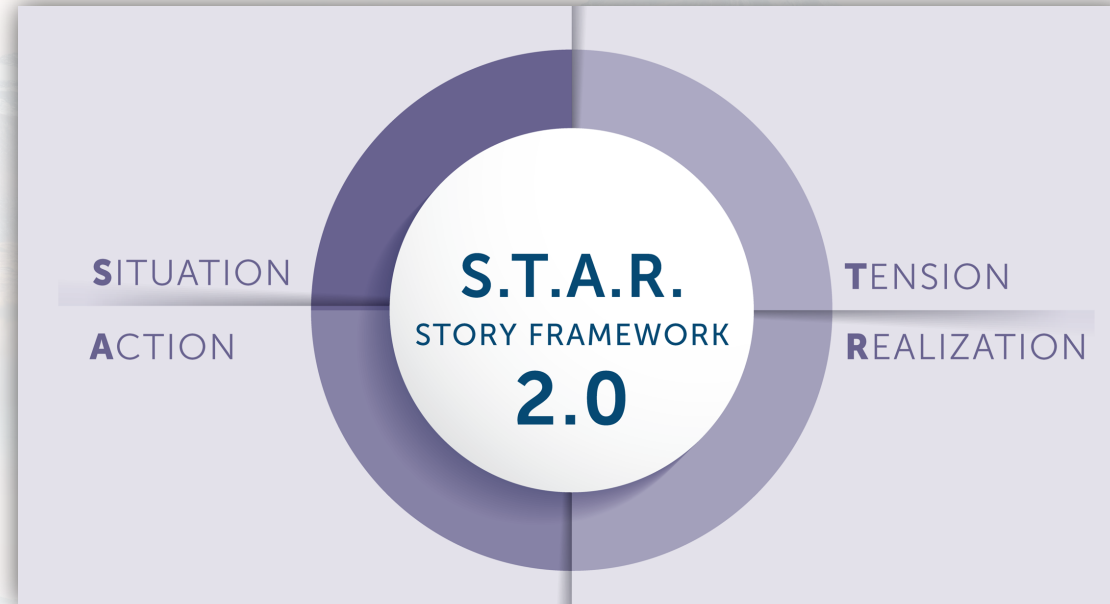
- Are many languages spoken among families?
- What are some common needs, e.g. interpretation, transportation, and childcare for events?
- What kinds of engagement would be relevant?

Specifics Give You An Edge



In any question that *doesn't* ask for specific examples, providing them will make you stand out from other candidates

Specifics: Parent Engagement



Describe specific examples even if you were not involved with them



Present-Tense Technique

Conditional	Future	Past	Present
<p>Too weak—hesitant language that comes across as a lament or wishful thinking will cause the listener to doubt you:</p>	<p>Too strong—overconfident language will prompt the listener to mentally take you down a notch by doubting your predictions:</p>	<p>Unprepared—language that references your responsibilities in your previous role, or what you’ve seen other people do in this role, conveys that you aren’t yet thinking at the necessary level:</p>	<p>Just right—position yourself as already thinking like a leader at this level by citing beliefs, commitments, obligations, and other indicators that you know what you’re getting into:</p>
<p><i>“If someone would just give me a chance, I think I’d do a good job.”</i></p>	<p><i>“I will be your next principal, and I will raise test scores.”</i></p>	<p><i>“Well, I’ve never been a principal before, but one thing I did in my classroom was...”</i></p>	<p><i>“I believe that, as principal, I’m ultimately responsible for student learning.”</i></p>

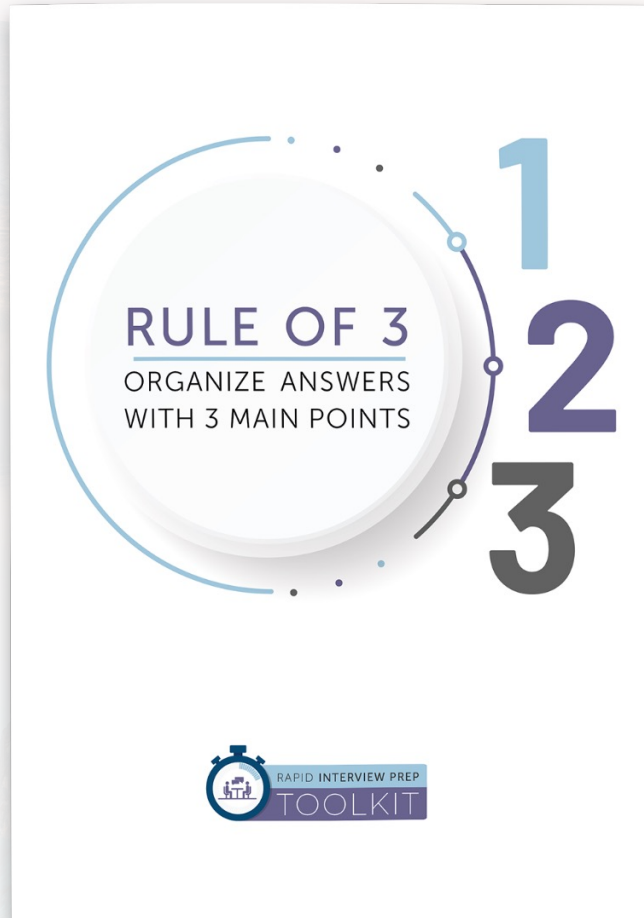


Present-Tense Technique

Describe your approach based on your experience, beliefs, and commitments:

<i>I believe that, as principal, it's my job to...</i>	<i>I have a responsibility to be a principal who...</i>
<i>As superintendent, it's my responsibility to...</i>	<i>I believe it's crucial for every new assistant principal to...</i>
<i>I believe in being the kind of vice principal who...</i>	<i>My primary commitment as principal is to ensure that...</i>
<i>I'm deeply committed to being the kind of dean of students who builds relationships...</i>	<i>I'm committed to meeting with every staff member my first week on the job as assistant principal...</i>
<i>I'm committed to...in the principalship.</i>	<i>In this role, one of my top priorities is ensuring that...</i>
<i>I take my obligation, as principal, to ensure that each teacher receives a fair evaluation, very seriously...</i>	<i>As assistant superintendent, I need to be available for principals when they're dealing with...</i>

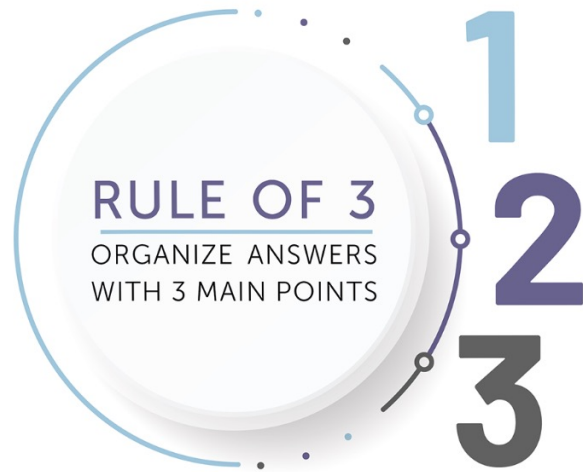
The Rule of 3—Recommendations: Parent Engagement



Possible structures:

- 3 principles
- 3 priorities
- 3 key actions

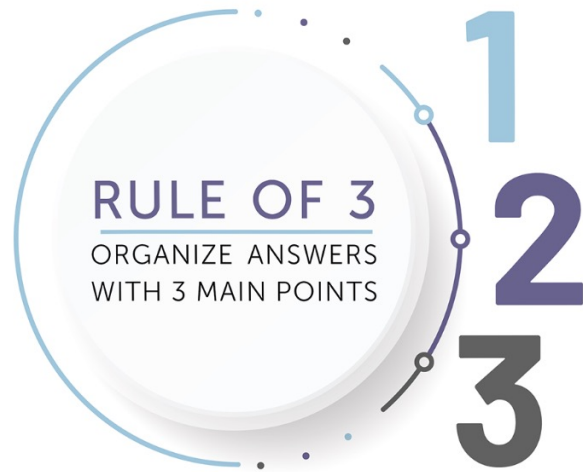
The Rule of 3—Recommendations: Key Actions for Parent Engagement



3 Key Actions:

- Communicate proactively
- Make it accessible
- Listen & act on input

The Rule of 3—Recommendations: 3 Principles for Parent Engagement



3 Principles:

- Parents are the experts on their children
- Our work is a partnership
- Engagement is our job

Interview Soon?



PrincipalCenter.com/toolkit
dashboard.PrincipalCenter.com/prep