



**Principal/Assistant Principal Interview Guide (Cohort II Schools)
Fall 2009**

Hello, this is _____ from _____ in _____, _____. We've contracted with Memphis City Schools to conduct an independent evaluation of the Memphis Striving Readers Program. As part of this four-year evaluation, we are seeking to describe your school's reading practices. You have been asked to participate in this interview because of your knowledge about your school as its principal or assistant principal.

This interview should take **approximately 50 minutes**. Please answer the questions as best as you can. As indicated in the informed consent form that you signed, I would like to audiotape this interview so that I may document your responses the most accurately. Only evaluators will listen to the audiotape and have access to a transcription of our conversation. Your responses will be kept confidential and you will never be identified by name when we report the results of these interviews. Your identity will never be revealed to program staff or any individual associated with your school or school district. While researchers may report quotes collected during interviews with school principals, every effort possible step will be taken to ensure your confidentiality. RBS and Edvantia staff members will store this information in a secure location.¹ You are free to stop participating or withdraw at any time. Let me know if you would like to skip a question because you do not know how to respond to it.

Do I have permission to audiotape this interview? May I start the interview now?

1. How long have you been in your current position as principal/assistant principal?
2. Do you have any prior experience with literacy instruction? Please describe.
3. What is your understanding of the Memphis Content Literacy Academy (MCLA) and its purpose?
4. Please describe any specific links (or disconnects) between MCLA and current school improvement plans.
5. To what extent, if at all, have you been involved in MCLA since school started this year?
Did you and/or designated administrative staff attend the kickoff? [Probe: Who attended?]
Did you and/or designated administrative staff attend the first principal fellowship meeting? [Probe: Who attended?]

¹ Data collected for research purposes are stored in compliance with ISO 17799 requirements for access, security, and redundancy. Data are stored in an encrypted format in centralized, electronically and physically secure servers at RBS and Edvantia for a period not to exceed five years. All electronic data of a personal nature are safeguarded and available only to those project leaders, staff, and technologists having a need to know within the specific criteria as set forth in the approved project plan. The Edvantia Institutional Review Board has the authority to inspect consent records and data files only to assure compliance with approved procedures.

Who at this school handled the rostering of students randomly assigned to receive *READ 180*?

How much time, if any, do you think you will devote to attending the principal fellowship?

6. What would you like teachers to be able to do as a result of their participation in MCLA?
7. Do you think that MCLA requires teachers to do different things in addition to what is already expected of them? [Probe: If YES, please describe whether the additional demands support or conflict with achievement of other/more important priorities.]
8. How important do you think it is for you to communicate to teachers the expectation that they work with their coach to implement MCLA strategies? [Probe: In what settings, if any, and how often, if at all, would you say this occurs? Please describe.]
9. What are your expectations of the principal fellowship? [Probe: What, specifically, are you expecting to learn? What supports, if any, are you expecting the fellowship to provide?]
10. We have just completed the first six-week academic cycle. How often, if at all, have you (or your designee) mentioned the importance of literacy in the content areas in **daily school announcements**? [Probe: Would you say once a week, every other week, every now and then? What was the nature of those comments? Can you give me an example?]
11. How often, if at all, has MCLA been discussed at **faculty meetings**? [Probe: How frequent are faculty meetings at your school? Is MCLA discussed at each meeting? What in particular is discussed?]
12. In what ways, if at all, do you or your staff seek out [or reallocate] additional **resources** related to literacy instruction?
13. Have you had the chance to **see any MCLA strategies** “in action?” yet? [Probe: What do you notice when you see MCLA in action?]
14. To what extent, if at all, does the school **schedule** enable grade-level teachers in a department to work together on integrating literacy? [Probe: How frequently do these meetings occur? How long are these meetings?]
15. Since the start of the school year, how often if at all, have you or designated staff conducted **walkthroughs** content area classes? What was the purpose of those walkthroughs? What do you look for when you observe part of a lesson?
16. How realistic is it to expect you to conduct **walkthroughs** and observations of MCLA teachers’ **literacy strategy implementation**? [Probe: How often?]
17. To what extent do you (or designated staff) provide feedback to teachers about observed use of literacy strategies? [Probe: How soon after the observation is feedback provided? What,

specifically, do you provide feedback about? Do you comment on teachers' use of strategies, students' use of strategies, both, or neither?]

18. Who is your designated MCLA literacy coach? What are your expectations for her? In what ways, if any, have you interacted with her? Do you see her as a resource for providing school-wide support? [Probe: Would you consider her appropriate as a member of any school-wide teams you assemble? Do you expect her to provide in-service professional development for school staff? Do you seek her input on decisions related to literacy? Ask for supporting details/examples.] *{NOTE: Interviewer should let respondent name teams rather than mention leadership team specifically.}*

19. **School Improvement Goals:** What are your school's main student achievement improvement goals? [Probe: Is MCLA mentioned in the school's improvement plan?]

20. How were these goals identified? [Probes: Internally, by the principal/school staff? Under NCLB as a result of performance on adequate yearly progress (AYP) indicators?]

21. How much teacher turnover was there this year?

Thank you so much for your time today.