Principals' Work and Well-Being in British Columbia

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Booklet #1 Work Intensification of Principals



PART OF A SERIES OF 4 BOOKLETS

OVERVIEW

This booklet summarizes the findings of a research survey. The following results include principals' work intensification, how it manifests, the contributing factors, and the related challenges and possibilities.

THE RESPONDENTS

1239 invited

38.3% response rate



elementary principals



secondary principals



elem/sec principals



middle school principals

GENDER

female

male

prefer

not to

non-

binary

answer

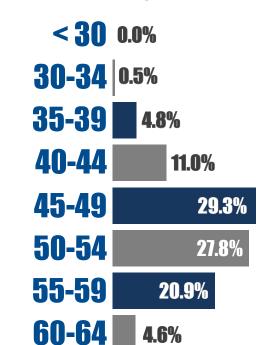
57.6%

41.2%

1.2%

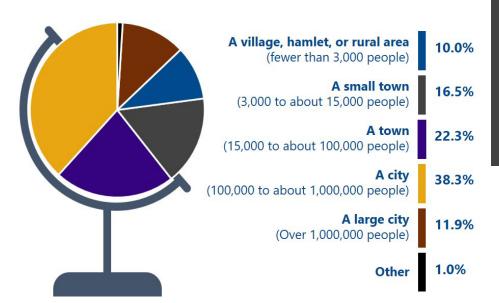
0%

AGE



>65 1.2%

SCHOOL LOCATION



56 school boards

HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ACHIEVED Master's **Professional** Bachelor's **Doctorate** Degree Degree Degree Other 1.4% 1.7% 1.4% 2.2% 93.3%

47.3% **LESS THAN 5 YEARS**

YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A PRINCIPAL



AVERAGE =



7.1 YEARS

6.9%

1.7%











HOW PRINCIPALS SPEND THEIR TIME

AVERAGE HOURS SPENT PER WEEK ON WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES

student discipline/attendance 7 4 walking hallways, playground, etc. **6.6** special education 52 office committees 4.6 working with parents 4.7 staff well-being 3.5

> classroom walk-throughs 2_6 building maintenance 17

occupational health & safety

student transportation

6_9 internal school management

student well-being

administrative directives

student-related activities

school personnel

curriculum & instructional leadership

budget (central & funding raised by school)

principal's own professional development

community

Many principals would like to spend **LESS** time on activities related to managerial and administrative matters such as:

Internal School Management (49.0%) Student Discipline/Attendance (46.2%) Administrative Directives (40.8%) School Board Committees (36.0%) Building Maintenance (34.4%)

Principals also felt that the following activities should have **MORE** time dedicated to them:

Curriculum & Instructional Leadership (79.8%) Principal's Own Professional Development (79.6%) Classroom Walk-Throughs (79.5%) Student Well-Being (50.0%) Student-Related Activities (49.2%)

Staff Well-Being (44.9%)

56.9 avg. # of hrs worked per week 97.2

% of principals working more than 40 hrs per week

HOURS SPENT ON COMMUNICATION TASKS & IF LESS, MORE, OR THE SAME AMOUNT SHOULD BE SPENT

9.6

6.0

4.7

3.1

e-mail

informal (impromptu) meetings formal (pre-scheduled) meetings

phone (cell or landline)

LESS

SAME

SAME

SAME

2.0

1.5

1.4

1.4

text messaging

SAME

other modes of communication

SAME

of social media

SAME

school newsletter

SAME

WORK-RELATED
CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES

LACK OF REPLACEMENT STAFF

LACK OF TEACHERS W/ SPEC ED EXPERTISE

LACK OF SPEC ED SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

DIFFICULTY TERMINATING UNDER-PERFORMING TEACHERS

LACK OF TIME TO EVALUATE TEACHERS

DIFFICULTY RECRUITING & HIRING THE RIGHT TEACHERS

LACK OF QUALIFIED SUBSTITUTE TEACHERS

TEACHER/STAFF APATHY & RESISTANCE TO CHANGE

LACK OF TIME FOR TEACHER PLANNING & PD

PRINCIPALS' 'FAIL TO FILLS'

Ranking of factors OFTEN or ALWAYS affecting principals' work with regard to teachers:

LACK OF TEACHER KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

TEACHER TURNOVER

LACK OF TRUST BETWEEN
TEACHERS & PARENTS/GUARDIANS

WORK-RELATED CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES

Principals AGREED or STRONGLY AGREED with the following statements:

Highest in agreement

My job makes a difference in the school community

My work puts me in emotionally draining situations

I know how to get my job done

My school is a good place to work

My work requires me to always be available or "on call"

My work requires extensive memory recall

I encounter increased demands from competing priorities from different stakeholders

I am unable to take a break during the work day

I find my work unpredictable

I feel pressured to work long hours

I can make my own decisions about how I do my work

I find it impossible to take a day off or a sick day

Increased parental engagement has influenced how I got about doing my work

I get behind on my work

The pace of my work is too fast

Increased threats of litigation and complaints have influenced the way I do my work

I have the appropriate resources to do my job

I find it impossible to attend professional development events

I often have time to complete all my work tasks

Lowest in agreement

The extent to which principals agreed with the following statements:



strongly disagree or disagree



agree or strongly agree



99.0%



I have compassion for people at my work



94.8%



The demands of everyday work life have an impact on me



51.5%



I often feel overwhelmed by my work responsibilities



46.1%



My work negatively impacts my relationship with my family & friends



40.4%



The role of principalship is what I expected



42.1%



I do not find current professional activities helpful for my work



70.5%



I have given up trying to make big improvements or changes in my professional life



78.2%



I do not enjoy being in a new situation that requires me to change old familiar ways of doing things



78.8%



I do not fit very well with the communities my school serves

POLICY & EXTERNAL INFLUENCE

Principals reflected on which of the following provincial policies impacted their work A LOT:

New Education Curriculum	67.3%	
	53.3%	BC Education (Learning Enhancement) Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 33): Class Size & Composition
Policies related to Truth and Reconciliation	39.3%	
	38.9%	Education Improvement Act (Bill 22)
Special Education Policy Manual	37.9%	
	36.4%	Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA)
Teaching Students with Mental Health Disorders: Resources for Teachers	36.1%	
	33.4%	Memorandum of Agreement
The BC Safe Schools Initiative	30.8%	
	28.5%	Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework
SOGI (Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity) Education Initiative	28.0%	
	25.6%	Expect Respect and a Safe Education (ERASE) BC
First Nations Education Act	24.4%	
UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples	19.9% 14.2%	BC Early Learning Framework
Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)	13.9% 10.1%	BC Education Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 11)
- Simples in Land and in Community	10.0%	BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)

POLITICAL CLIMATE

The top 10 areas where principals' work has been VERY or EXTREMELY impacted by the political climate surrounding public education in the past 2 years:

Growing mental health issues among students, teachers, and parents (87.6%)

A system of anxiety in education (81.9%)

Supreme court ruling on class size and composition (81.2%)

BC curriculum change (75.3%)

Finite resources available to meet demanding constituents (65.6%)

Other (63.2%)

Advances in Information Communication Technology (61.6%)

Increasingly diverse student populations (60.0%)

Consumer mentality among parents (53.9%)

Impact of the changing government (e.g., reduced resources, recent policy and program changes) (51.9%)

RECOMMENDATIONS

Ministry **Education**

- reduce the number of policies and initiatives principals are responsible for to address the time-consuming nature of regulations, follow-up reports, and documentation
- make standardized templates, samples, and routine tasks into an operational manual to alleviate principals' paperwork and administrative tasks

For **District** School **Boards**

- recognize context matters and allow principals more localized discretion and decision-making
- streamline work processes by consolidating standardized templates, forms, samples, and routine tasks into an interactive portal/database to alleviate principals' paperwork and administrative tasks

For **Professional Associations**

- advocate and lobby for members to have more staffing arrangements (e.g., co-principalship, VPs, administrative assistants, dedicated school management positions, and district resource people), and increased health and well-being benefits (e.g., counselling, physiotherapy, etc.), resource allocations, and administrative time
- enhance its process for disseminating and sharing information with its members

Fnr **Principals**

- create opportunities for collaboration
- engage in peer support and learning on effective practices
- create or revisit your existing well-being plan to determine if it includes all components of your well-being

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For the full research report, visit: https://bit.ly/BCprincipals2020

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