

**MEDIA RELEASE
WESTERN UNIVERSITY
November 7, 2014**

Western study finds majority of Ontario school principals feel they don't have the necessary supports to succeed in their role

A recent study of the work of principals in Ontario's school system has found that while 90 per cent of principals find their positions rewarding and fulfilling, only one third of them feel they have the supports and training to do the job to the best of their ability.

The study, led by Dr. Katina Pollock, an associate professor at Western's Faculty of Education, examined the daily lives of principals in relation to all elements of their work duties, and involved feedback from more than 1,400 principals. The results, said Pollock, reflect the ways in which the daily work of school principals has evolved to include a number of additional tasks and responsibilities.

"We've found principals are now responsible for taking a greater role in areas such as engagement with increasingly diverse cultural communities, parental engagement, mental health support for teachers and students, and student health and wellbeing," said Pollock. "Some of the best instructional specialists in schools are being put into the role of Principal, but they need support in these other areas in order to have the greatest likelihood for experiencing success."

Principals identified four main areas of support and skill development in which they feel additional professional learning opportunities would be beneficial: relationship building, instructional leadership, communications skills and mental health and wellness.

Pollock hopes the study's findings will help provide a clearer understanding of the realities of the role of Ontario's principals, and lead to constructive discussions in the province about additional supports that may be implemented to help principals succeed.

"Increased supports for principals will help them to better fulfill their roles as leaders and ultimately lead to an improved education system in Ontario, benefiting the province now and in the future," said Pollock.

The study, ***The Changing Nature of Principals' Work***, was funded by the Ontario Principals' Council and is available in full at http://www.edu.uwo.ca/faculty_profiles/cpels/pollock_katina/OPC-Principals-Work-Report.pdf

MEDIA CONTACT:

ABOUT WESTERN

Western delivers an academic experience second to none. Since 1878, The Western Experience has combined academic excellence with life-long opportunities for intellectual, social and cultural growth in order to better serve our communities. Our research excellence expands knowledge and drives discovery with real-world application. Western attracts individuals with a broad worldview, seeking to study, influence and lead in the international community.

Follow Western Media Relations online:

Website: <http://communications.uwo.ca/media/>

RSS: <http://feeds.feedburner.com/MediaWesternU>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/mediawesternu>