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

284 elementary principals
77 secondary principals
36 elem/sec principals
12 middle school principals
**Gender**
- Female: 57.6%
- Male: 41.2%
- Prefer not to answer: 1.2%
- Non-binary: 0%

**Age**
- <30: 0.0%
- 30-34: 0.5%
- 35-39: 4.8%
- 40-44: 11.0%
- 45-49: 29.3%
- 50-54: 27.8%
- 55-59: 20.9%
- 60-64: 4.6%
- >65: 1.2%

**School Location**
- A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people): 10.0%
- A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people): 16.5%
- A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people): 22.3%
- A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people): 38.3%
- A large city (Over 1,000,000 people): 11.9%
- Other: 1.0%

**Highest Level of Education Achieved**
- Bachelor’s Degree: 1.7%
- Master’s Degree: 93.3%
- Doctorate: 2.2%
- Professional Degree: 1.4%
- Other: 1.4%

**Years of Experience As A Principal**
- Less than 5 years: 47.3%
- 6-10 years: 29.1%
- 11-15 years: 15.0%
- 16-20 years: 6.9%
- >20 years: 1.7%

**Average = 7.1 Years**

**School Boards**
- 56 school boards
How Principals Spend Their Time

## Average Hours Spent Per Week on Work-Related Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student discipline/attendance</td>
<td>7.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking hallways, playground, etc.</td>
<td>6.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District school board office committees</td>
<td>4.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Working with parents</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff well-being</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom walk-throughs</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building maintenance</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational health &amp; safety</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student transportation</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internal school management</td>
<td>6.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student well-being</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative directives</td>
<td>4.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student-related activities</td>
<td>4.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School personnel</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum &amp; instructional leadership</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget (central &amp; funding raised by school)</td>
<td>2.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal’s own professional development</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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%)

Overall, how well principals felt they manage their work:

- 0% very poor
- 7.8% poor
- 26.7% average
- 60.5% good
- 4.9% outstanding
**How Principals Spend Their Time**

- **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 e-mail**
- **6.0 informal (impromptu) meetings**
- **4.7 formal (pre-scheduled) meetings**
- **3.1 phone (cell or landline)**

- **MORE**
- **SOME**
- **SOME**

**Ranking of Factors Often or Always Affecting Principals’ Work with Regard to Teachers:**

- Lack of replacement staff
- Lack of teachers with 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’
- 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
- I do not fit very well with the communities my school serves

Lowest 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
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The extent to which principals agreed with the following statements:

- I have compassion for people at my work
- The demands of everyday work life have an impact on me
- I often feel overwhelmed by my work responsibilities
- My work negatively impacts my relationship with my family & friends
- The role of principalship is what I expected
- I do not find current professional activities helpful for my work
- I have given up trying to make big improvements or changes in my professional life
- I do not enjoy being in a new situation that requires me to change old familiar ways of doing things
- I do not fit very well with the communities my school serves
Principals reflected on which of the following provincial policies impacted their work A LOT:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Policy</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Education Curriculum</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Education (Learning Enhancement) Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 33): Class Size &amp; Composition</td>
<td>53.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Education Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 11)</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Education (Learning Enhancement) Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 33): Class Size &amp; Composition</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policies related to Truth and Reconciliation</td>
<td>39.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education Improvement Act (Bill 22)</td>
<td>38.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA)</td>
<td>37.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Memorandum of Agreement</td>
<td>33.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching Students with Mental Health Disorders: Resources for Teachers</td>
<td>30.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Education Enhancement Agreement (AEEA)</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expect Respect and a Safe Education (ERASE) BC</td>
<td>28.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The BC Safe Schools Initiative</td>
<td>25.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diversity in BC Schools: A Framework</td>
<td>24.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Early Learning Framework</td>
<td>19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Education Statutes Amendment Act (Bill 11)</td>
<td>13.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BC Tripartite Education Agreement (BCTEA)</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**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**

**For Ministry of 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

**For 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:

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