Overview

This booklet summarizes the findings of a research survey and demonstrates:

• principals’ self-care,
• the availability and effectiveness of organizational support, and
• the necessary skills for principals in intensified work conditions.

The Respondents

2419 invited
35.6% response rate

541 elementary principals
123 secondary principals
23 middle school principals
12 K-12 principals
5 system principals
**Gender**
- Female: 64.2%
- Male: 35.0%
- Prefer not to answer: 0.7%
- Non-binary: 0.1%

**Age**
- <30: 0.0%
- 30-34: 0.3%
- 35-39: 1.1%
- 40-44: 10.2%
- 45-49: 28.2%
- 50-54: 38.2%
- 55-59: 17.4%
- 60-64: 3.5%
- >65: 1.1%

**Highest Level of Education Achieved**
- Bachelor's Degree: 36.4%
- Master's Degree: 55.6%
- Doctorate: 2.0%
- Professional Degree: 3.7%
- Other: 2.4%

**School Location**
- A village, hamlet, or rural area (fewer than 3,000 people): 13.5%
- A small town (3,000 to about 15,000 people): 11.0%
- A town (15,000 to about 100,000 people): 17.7%
- A city (100,000 to about 1,000,000 people): 39.2%
- A large city (Over 1,000,000 people): 17.1%
- Other: 1.5%

**Years of Experience as a Principal**
- Less than 5 years: 31.4%
- 6-10 years: 34.9%
- 11-15 years: 23.5%
- 16-20 years: 8.6%
- >20 years: 1.6%

Average = 8.7 years
Self-Care

Overall, how well principals thought they were managing their well-being:

- 4.0% very poor
- 24.7% poor
- 28.7% neutral
- 38.9% good
- 3.8% excellent

Overall, how well principals felt they can cope with work-related stress:

- 2.7% very poor
- 14.1% poor
- 27.7% neutral
- 48.7% good
- 6.9% excellent

The extent to which principals AGREED or STRONGLY AGREED with these statements:

- I manage my emotions well: 89.5%
- Self-efficacy helps me manage my work: 75.9%
- I feel resilient at work: 69.6%
- I am able to turn adversity into achievement: 65.1%
- I engage in mindful practices to manage My work: 44.5%

The TOP 10 ways principals coped with a draining day at work:

- Seeking solitude
- Reading
- Talking with colleagues
- Watching TV/Movies
- Spending time with my family/friends/pets
- Talking with my family/friends
- Physical activities/exercising
- Sleeping
- Using alcohol
- Eating
The following supports were deemed effective for many principals but are not available for everyone:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Support</th>
<th>Effectiveness Rate</th>
<th>Specific Support Was Unavailable</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health and well-being benefits</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
<td>5.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information sharing for members of professional associations (e.g. OPC)</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Streamlined work processes</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Additional time for administrative work</td>
<td>28.5%</td>
<td>43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaching for school principals</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>22.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Redefine the principal’s role</td>
<td>22.9%</td>
<td>37.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modification to teacher hiring practice</td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>29.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Intervention Program (EIP)</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
<td>30.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work with policy makers to clarify policies &amp; their intent</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
<td>29.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support phone line</td>
<td>11.1%</td>
<td>45.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development and use of health-assessment tools to support school principals</td>
<td>10.9%</td>
<td>32.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Skills principals thought were necessary to effectively manage their work:

- Conflict Resolution
- Emotional Intelligence
- Communication Skills
- Problem Solving
- Skills to De-escalate Situations
- Time Management
- Social Intelligence
- Instructional Knowledge
- Stress Reduction
- Legal/Procedural Knowledge
- Use of Technology & Social Media
- Skills & Knowledge to Engage Indigenous Practices
- Other
Recommendations

For Ministry of Education

• re-evaluate existing safe schools acts and school wellness initiatives to consider how principals well-being can be included

For District School Boards

• consider what other additional district supports can be specifically targeted to school principals such as expanding the school well-being mandate to include principals
• develop and use support phone lines, online platforms, early intervention programs, counselling services, and health assessment tools to support school principals

For Professional Associations

• deliver continued professional learning opportunities focused on coping strategies such as those from the American Psychology Association
• partner with outside agencies whose expertise are around managing workplace stress such as the OPC Starling Minds program

For Principals

• build personal support network and reduce personal isolation through participating in formal and informal coaching, mentoring, and/or networking, and attending professional learning programs to build resilience and self-care strategies
For the full research report, visit:

To cite this booklet: