Insights from new principals

October Survey Results
Getting the school year launched, taking stock of your school’s strengths, picturing the year ahead, and more

Who’s on this year’s panel?

Closing in on 1,000 new principals from all 50 states!

You’re mostly Gen-Xers!
82% are in your 30s and 40s
And there are also plenty of career changers – 16% of you are over 50
2% are under 30!

We asked you how you got here – and you said:

Many roads lead to the principalship

For 6 in 10, it’s the next stop from Assistant Principal

22% came directly from teaching

The rest of you held a wide assortment of positions – including heading up a curriculum and instruction department, serving as instructional coach, math or reading specialist, dean of students, and more.

What are your schools like?

Enrollment: Very few (8%) have fewer than 200 students or more than 800 (11%). The median student population size is somewhere between 400-599.
71% of you are leading Title I schools
For 60% of you, the percent of English language learners in your school is low – accounting for less than 10% of your students; yet there is group of about 10% of you, for whom more than half your students come to school speaking a different language.

YOUR JOB SO FAR THIS YEAR

This past month, how stressed were you?
(note that 7% of you were nearly off the charts – 10 on a 10 point scale!)

70% high
26% medium
4% low

This past month, how satisfying was your job?

79% 19% 3%

About how many hours did you work per week this month?

Less than 40 0%
40-50 10%
50-60 44%
60-70 32%
70+ 15%
At this point in the year, we asked you to rate how strong your school is in a number of areas.

The good news is that almost all have solid safety measures in place, you rate your teaching staff and your students’ behavior as strong, and principals with Pre-K programs feel confident about them. The core areas where you are looking to achieve significant growth are student achievement, classroom technology, after-school programming, and getting parents involved.

Whose rules rule?

Policies and regulations set by local school districts and state education departments have about equal impact on your daily life – significantly affecting almost 75% of what you do. But you also believe that what happens in Washington, D.C. significantly influences over 50% of your work. Percentage of your job’s duties that are impacted by the regulations and requirements set by the following:

- Local school district: 74%
- County or Regional Office of Education: 33%
- State: 71%
- Federal: 53%

Thinking back to your first day of school this year, how prepared did you feel?

- 60% extremely well-prepared or prepared
- 35% fairly prepared
- 5% felt... not so prepared!
BEST RESOURCES YOU’VE RECENTLY ENCOUNTERED

Shifting the Monkey: The Art of Protecting Good from Liars, Criers and Other Slackers by Todd Whitaker

The Book Whisperer: Awakening the Inner Reader in Every Child by Donalyn Miller

Mind in the Making: The Seven Essential Skills Every Child Needs by Ellen Galinsky

Your First Year as a Principal: Everything You Need to Know that They Do Not Teach You in School by Tena Green

Daniel Pink on The Puzzle of Motivation (author of A Whole New Mind, Drive and other books)

John Hattie: Why are so many of our teachers and schools so successful? (author of Visible Learning and the Science of How We Learn and other books)

Books

TED TALKS

BLOGS

Connected Principals

Your “aha” moments so far...

Re: Parents/students

“We had some new students arrive 6 weeks after school started. They had a hard time adjusting and I realized that we did not have a process in place for welcoming new students and their families – so we are now creating a new student orientation.” Tracy Westerman, Christel House Academy, Indianapolis, IN

“When I discovered how to conquer a difficult parent. At the end of the day she just wanted someone to listen to her.” Okeelah McBride, Moon Elementary, Muskegon, MI

Re: Your teachers/staff

“If you give teachers even a little choice in something, they are so much more willing to try it rather than if you mandate it!” Nicole Svee-Magann, Altara Elementary, Sandy, UT

“How powerful praise is, and how it improves teacher morale.” Rena Sabey, Rothschild Elementary, Merrill, WI

“Realizing that any staff member can make a difference – when I heard the lead custodian walking down the hall singing “Read baby read” to our students, in support of our schoolwide reading goal!” Renee Jones, John F Kennedy Elementary, Terrell, TX

“People only remember how you make them feel.” Nancy Coppola, Cleveland Elementary, Norwood, MA

Re: Your leadership/job survival skills

“How much I can learn about my students, teachers and instruction by simply taking the time to sit in every classroom and watch and listen.” Rebecca Bowers-Call, French Creek Elementary, Buckhannon, WV

“I need to ask for help instead of worrying someone will think I am incompetent! My colleagues all needed help at first too!” Vanessa McAllister, Central Elementary, Okeechobee, FL

“How powerful a group of school administrators can be when we work together to positively affect student environment.” Lowell Rogers, Sawmills Elementary, Granite Falls, NC

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TED TALKS

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BLOGS

Connected Principals

Thanks for your participation on the panel. Remember to invite other new principals you know to join the panel by emailing npnp@naesp.org.