

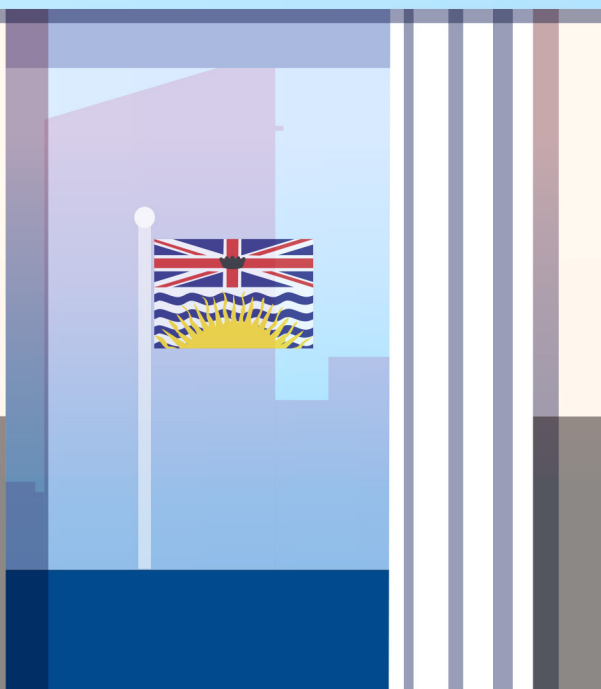
# Principals' Work and Well-Being in British Columbia

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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

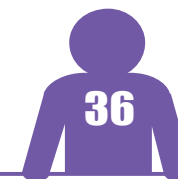
**38.3%**  
response rate



elementary  
principals



secondary  
principals



elem/sec  
principals

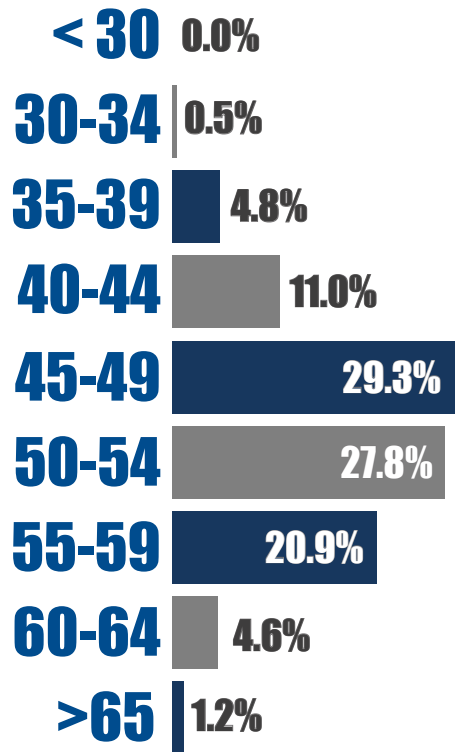


middle school  
principals

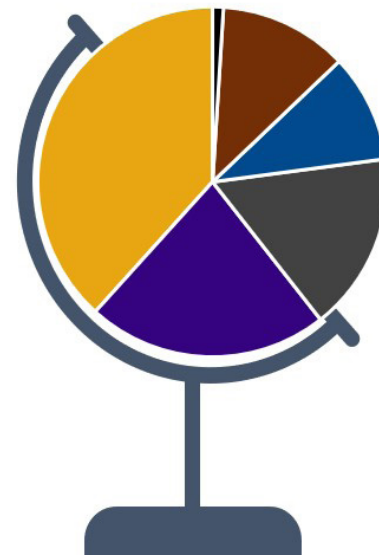
# GENDER



# AGE

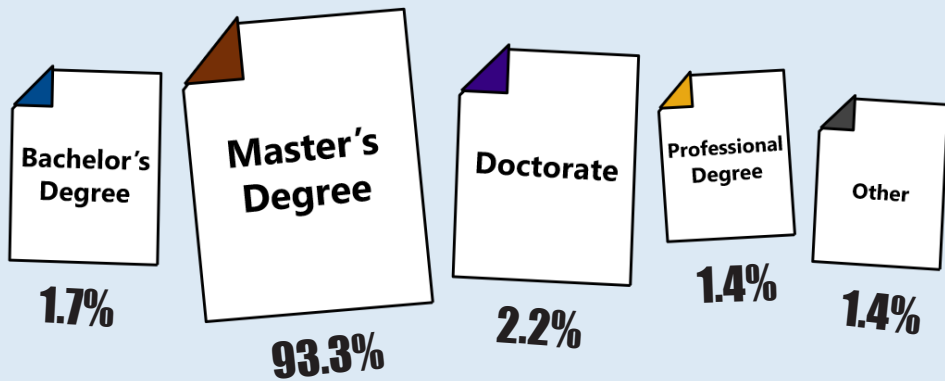


# SCHOOL LOCATION



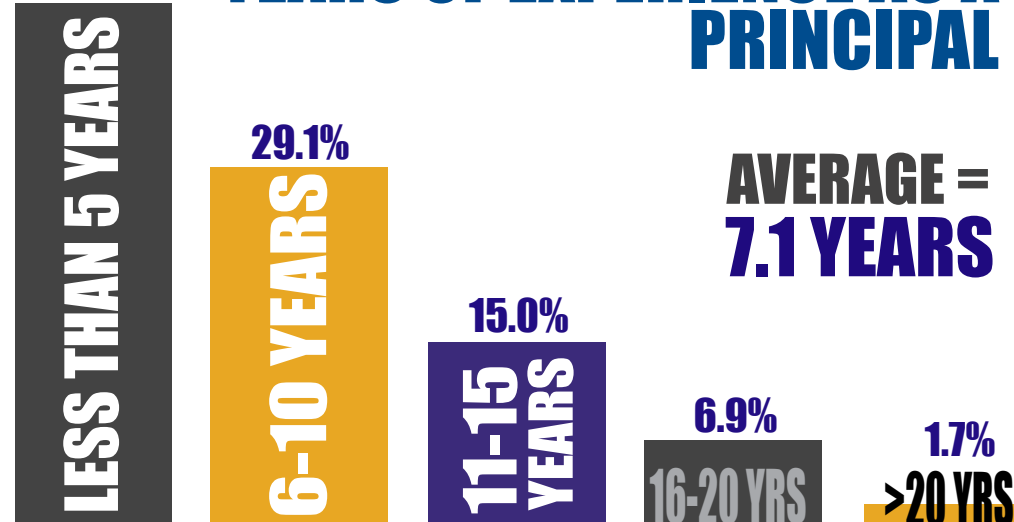
**56** school boards

# HIGHEST LEVEL OF EDUCATION ACHIEVED



47.3%

# YEARS OF EXPERIENCE AS A PRINCIPAL



**AVERAGE = 7.1 YEARS**

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

## AVERAGE HOURS SPENT PER WEEK ON WORK-RELATED ACTIVITIES



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%)

# 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

LESS

6.0

informal (impromptu) meetings

SAME

4.7

formal (pre-scheduled) meetings

SAME

3.1

phone (cell or landline)

SAME

2.0

text messaging

SAME

1.5

other modes of communication

SAME

1.4

social media

SAME

1.4

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'

LACK OF TEACHER KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS

TEACHER TURNOVER

LACK OF TRUST BETWEEN TEACHERS & PARENTS/GUARDIANS

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

# WORK-RELATED CHALLENGES & POSSIBILITIES

**Principals AGREED or STRONGLY AGREED with the following statements:**

## Highest in agreement



## Lowest in agreement

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



strongly disagree or disagree

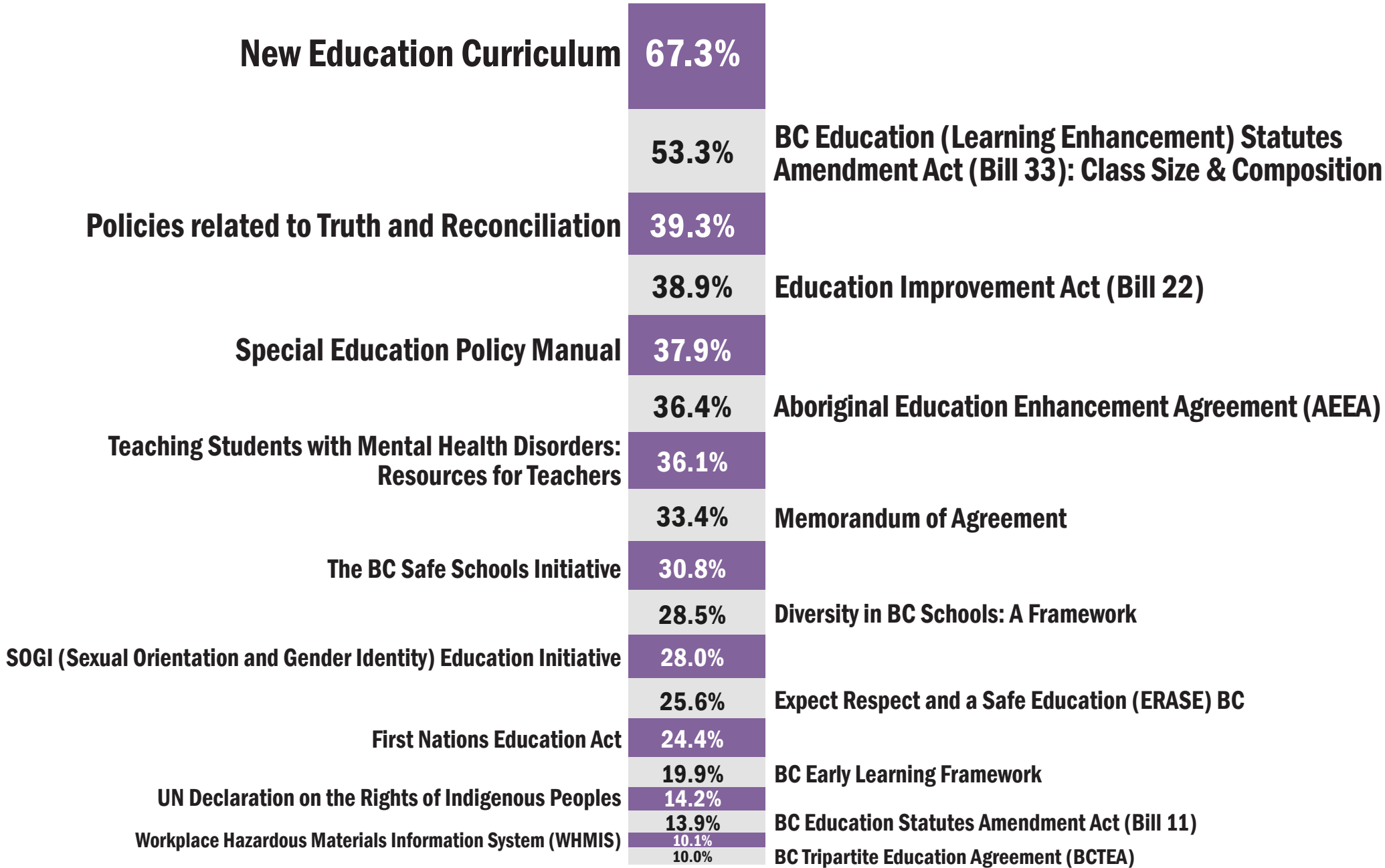


agree or strongly agree

|  |       |  |  |
|--|-------|--|--|
|  | 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**:



# 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:  
<https://bit.ly/BCprincipals2020>

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