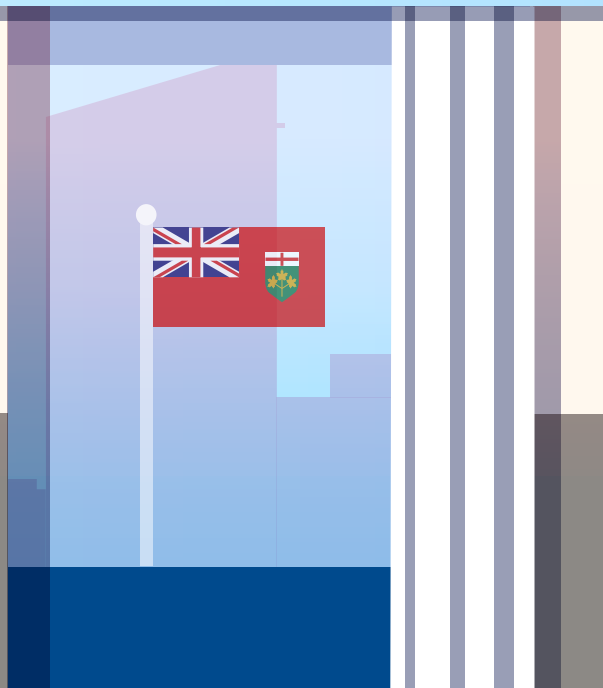
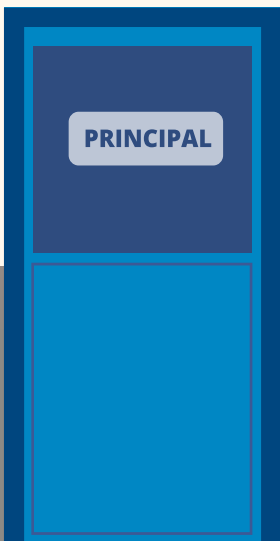


Principals' Work and Well-Being in Ontario

Dr. Katina Pollock
Dr. Fei Wang

Booklet #2 Well-Being of School Principals



PART OF A SERIES OF 4 BOOKLETS

Overview

This booklet summarizes the findings of a research survey and describes principals' well-being along six dimensions:

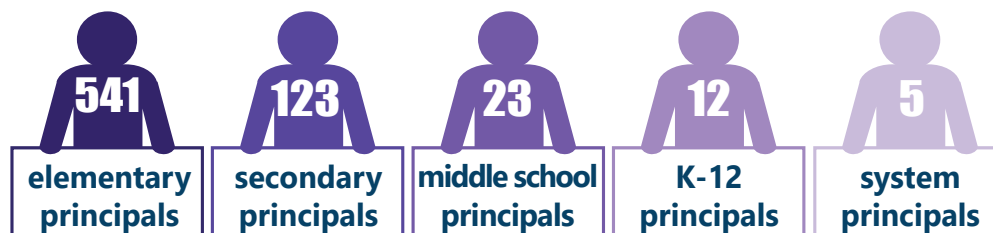
- physical
- cognitive
- psychological
- emotional
- social
- spiritual

and provides evidence-informed recommendations to better support principals' overall health and well-being.

The Respondents

2419
invited

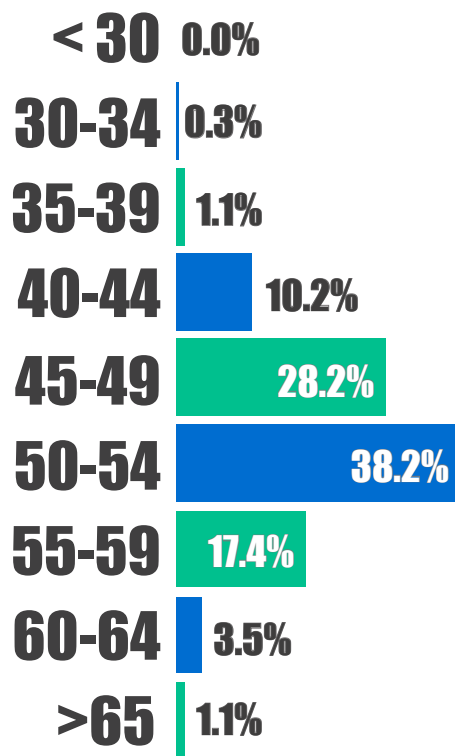
35.6%
response rate



Gender



Age

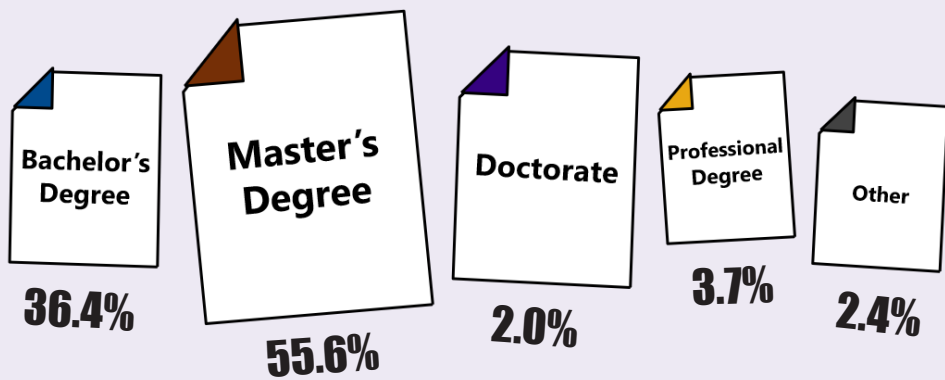


School Location

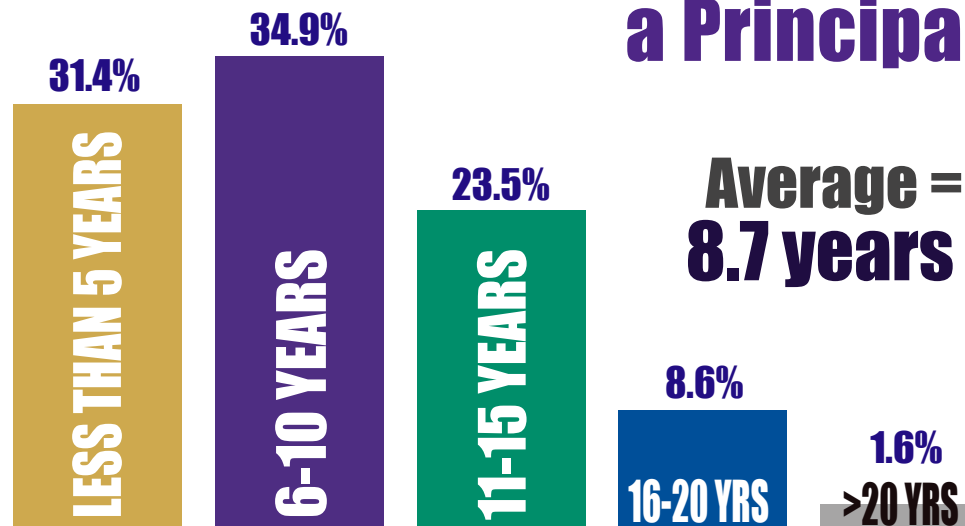


33 school boards

Highest Level of Education Achieved



Years of Experience as a Principal



Overall Well-Being

Feelings of Overall Well-Being at Work

5.2%
very poor



25.1%
poor



25.3%
neutral



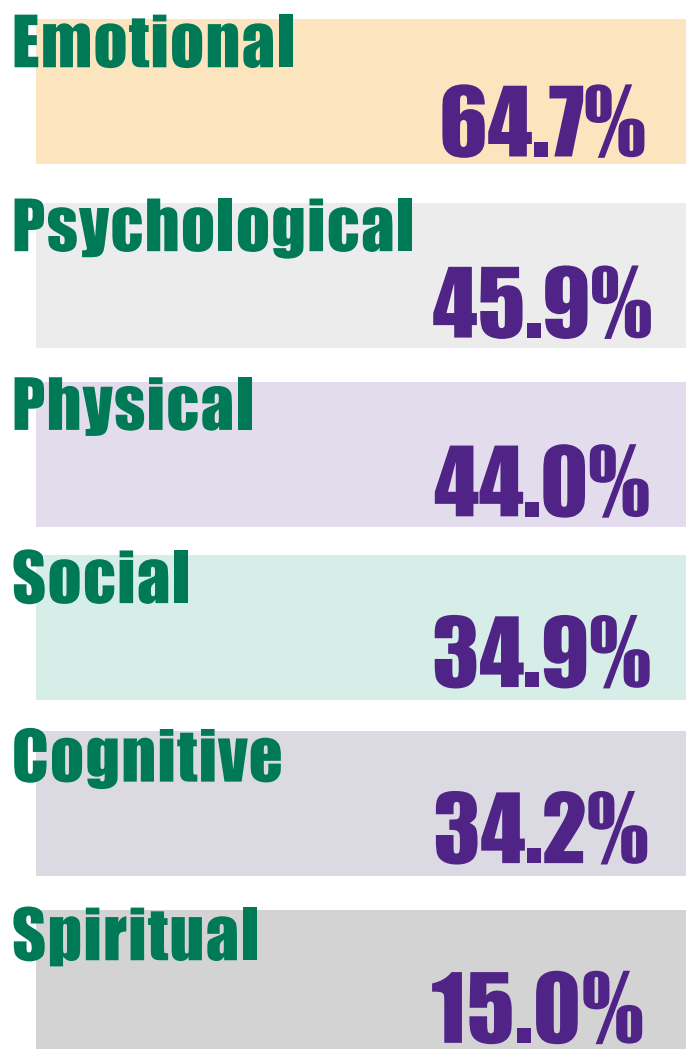
39.6%
good



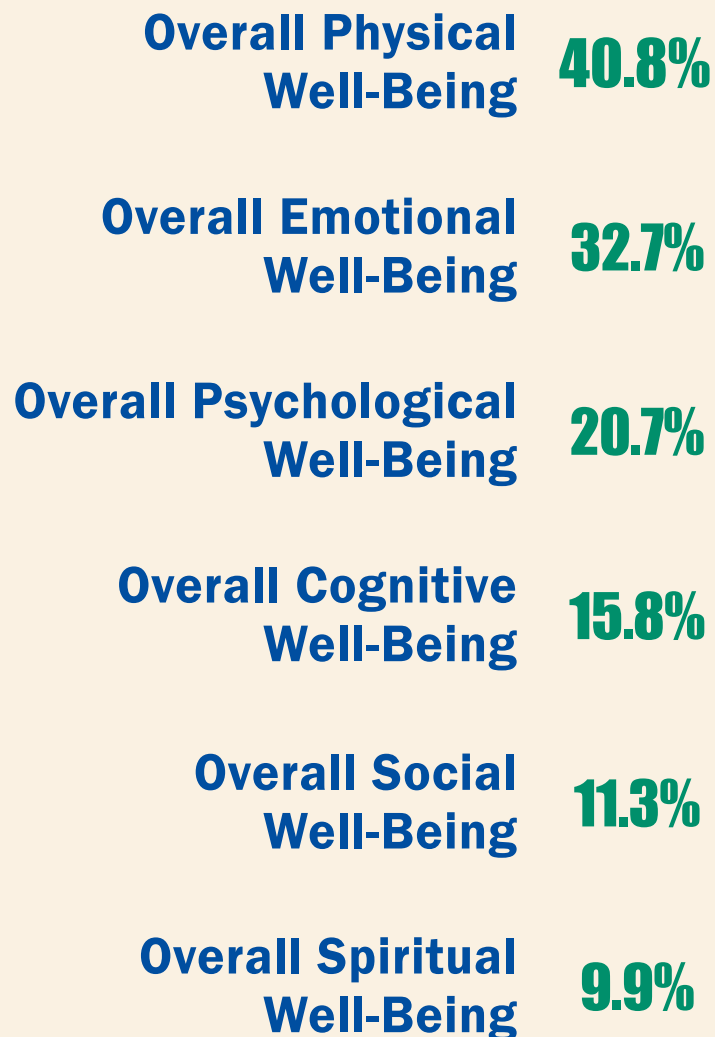
4.8%
excellent



If principals felt drained by their work, this is the extent to which the following aspects of their well-being were **CONSIDERABLY** or **EXTREMELY** affected:



When combining the **POOR** and **VERY POOR** feelings of principals toward each aspect of well-being, they felt the **worst PHYSICALLY** and the **best SPIRITUALLY**.



Physical Well-Being

Feelings of Overall Physical Well-Being at Work

6.9%
very poor 

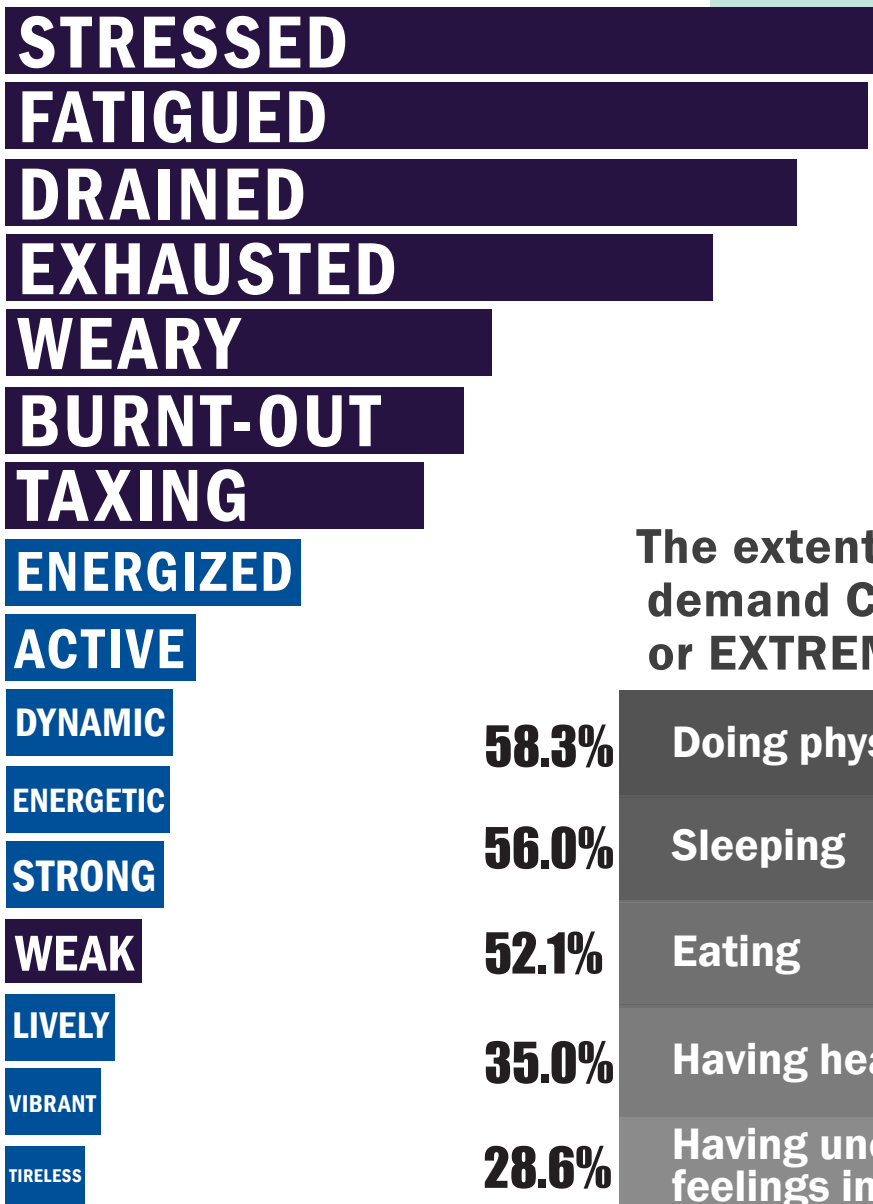
33.9%
poor 

33.2%
neutral 

23.8%
good 

2.2%
excellent 


How principals' work made them feel physically in the week prior:





When feeling drained from work, the extent to which these aspects of principals' physical well-being were **CONSIDERABLY** or **EXTREMELY** affected:


The extent to which work demand **CONSIDERABLY** or **EXTREMELY** affected:





ENERGY  72.9%


FITNESS  62.0%

SLEEP  58.6%

DIET  55.7%

WEIGHT  48.2%

PHYSICAL HEALTH  38.6%

STRESS-RELATED ILLNESS  30.1%

Emotional Well-Being

Feelings of Overall Emotional Well-Being at Work

7.1%
very poor



25.6%
poor



30.5%
neutral



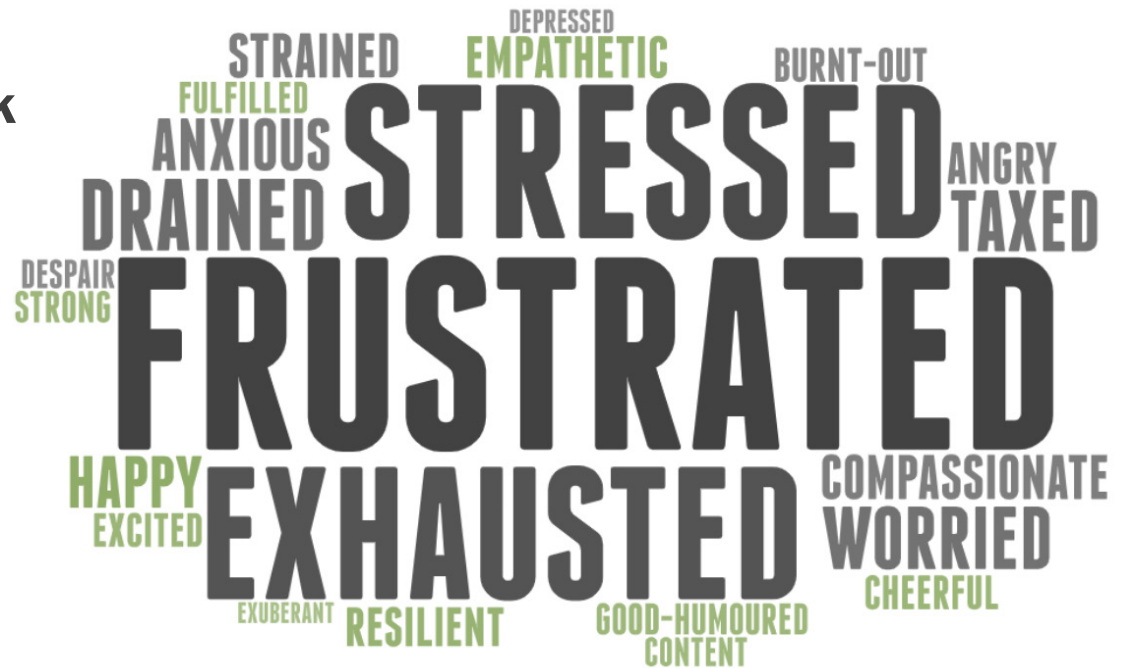
33.6%
good



3.1%
excellent



In the week prior, how principals' work made them feel emotionally:



If principals were feeling emotionally drained by their work, the extent to which each of the following described how they OFTEN or ALWAYS felt:

69.3%

I feel passionate about my work.

67.7%

I worry about work-related issues.

47.0%

I feel happy about my work.

44.8%

I feel satisfied about my work.

30.2%

I feel excited when thinking about going to work.

16.9%

I feel a sense of despair about my work.

The **TOP 10** ways principals' work made them feel cognitively in the prior week:

Disorganized (41.0%)

Forgetful (41.0%)

Focused (39.3%)

Unfocused (39.0%)

Attentive (35.5%)

Mindful (33.0%)

Delayed memory retrieval (31.0%)

Absent-minded (31.0%)

Active/quick-witted (25.5%)

Indecisive (23.6%)

Cognitive Well-Being

The extent to which principals felt each of the following work-related statements **OFTEN** or **ALWAYS** applied to them.

Feelings of Overall Cognitive Well-Being at Work

2.1%
very poor 

13.7%
poor 

30.2%
neutral 

47.8%
good 

6.2%
excellent 

MOST

I am able to make difficult work-related decisions

I am able to make decisions under high pressure

I am able to initiate tasks

I am able to think clearly about work-related issues

I am able to follow complex procedures at work

I am able to prioritize competing demands

I am able to connect abstract thought to concrete issues

I am able to engage in higher order thinking

I am able to make decisions in a fast-paced manner

I am able to self-monitor

I am able to multi-task

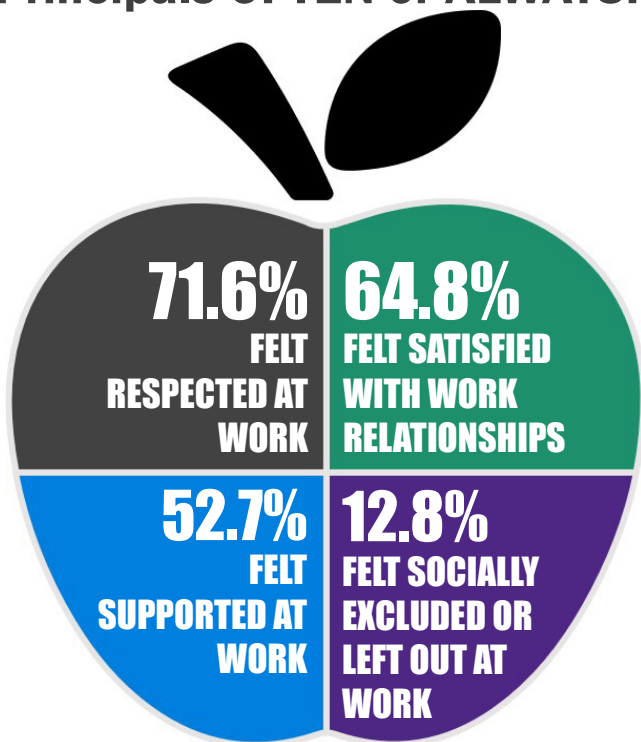
I am able to hold attention in a hectic environment

I find my memory recall is challenged

LEAST

Social Well-Being

Principals OFTEN or ALWAYS:



Ranking of groups principals felt they OFTEN or ALWAYS have positive relationships with:

- Students (96.4%)
- Vice-principals (92.1%)
- School support staff (88.4%)
- Administrative assistants (87.5%)
- Teachers (87.2%)
- Community leaders (83.0%)
- Parents/guardians (81.7%)
- Board office staff (71.8%)
- Superintendents (70.8%)
- Trustees (61.8%)
- Union reps (54.3%)

Note: Data was collected during labour dispute.

How the work of principals made them feel socially in the prior week:



Feelings of Overall Social Well-Being at Work

1.8%
very poor

9.5%
poor

26.8%
neutral

51.9%
good

10.0%
excellent

Psychological Well-Being

Feelings of Overall Psychological Well-Being at Work

4.6%
very poor



16.1%
poor



33.2%
neutral



42.4%
good



3.7%
excellent



The extent to which principals felt each of the following work-related statements **OFTEN** or **ALWAYS** applied to them:

92.0% My colleagues know they can trust me

86.2% I have the sense that I have developed a lot as a principal since I began the role

76.4% In general, I feel confident and positive about myself as a principal

67.7% I know that I can trust my colleagues

67.5% I enjoy being in new situations that require me to change my old familiar ways of doing things

65.2% I judge myself by what I think is important to get the job done, not by what others think is important

62.6% In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I work

60.2% I am not afraid to voice my work opinions, even when they are in opposition to the opinions of stakeholders

58.4% I feel a sense of fulfillment

53.0% I have been able to build a work environment and a work-style for myself that is much to my liking

50.6% I enjoy making work plans for the future

42.1% I feel comfortable challenging the implicit "rules of the game"

33.6% I feel comfortable asking for forgiveness rather than permission

27.1% I feel lonely because I have few close colleagues with whom to share my concerns

10.6% I live, work one day at a time and don't really think about the future

Spiritual Well-Being

Feelings of Overall Spiritual Well-Being at Work

3.8%
very poor



6.1%
poor



55.8%
neutral



27.6%
good



6.7%
excellent



The extent to which the following spiritual and religious statements described principals and their work:

N/A-NEVER-RARELY SOMEWHAT OFTEN-ALWAYS

I often attend religious services to give me strength to deal with work-related issues

81.7% 7.5% 10.8%

Attending religious services provides me with a sense of direction and purpose at work

78.3% 9.2% 12.6%

My religious beliefs sustain me at work

70.2% 14.0% 15.8%

My spiritual practice grounds me at work

63.1% 16.4% 20.4%

I often resort to spiritual practice(s) to give me strength to deal with work-related issues

65.1% 16.0% 19.0%

My spiritual practice provides me with a sense of direction and purpose at work

61.1% 18.1% 20.8%

Recommendations

For Ministry of Education

- mandate Well-being Lead positions at the district school board level to support a comprehensive well-being program that includes principals and their schools
- expand the healthy schools initiatives to include the well-being of the school principals
- expand the Ontario's well-being Strategy for Education to include the well-being of the school principals

For District School Boards

- consider creating Well-being and Safety Teams to provide support and resources for principals
- designate fund and apply for grants from other agencies to work in partnership with health organizations and researchers to support principals' well-being

For Professional Associations

- mobilize and align existing resources and programs from the districts, health and community organizations, and provincial and municipal governments to improve school system well-being
- explore the possibility of or expand the existing third party partnerships that focuses on wellness in public schools (e.g., STARLING Mind, IWBI, etc.)
- create well-being assessment tools to keep track of the health and well-being of their members to provide better support

For Principals

- cultivate individualized strategies to promote health and wellness (e.g., a personalized system dealing with emails/paperwork)
- set aside time to engage physical activities, sports, hobbies, and other individualized well-being practices

Principal Investigators:



Western

Dr. Katina Pollock
University of Western Ontario
katina.pollock@uwo.ca
Twitter: @DrKatinaPollock



Dr. Fei Wang
University of British Columbia
fei.wang@ubc.ca
Twitter: @DrFeiWang

For the full research report, visit:
<https://bit.ly/ONprincipals2020>

To cite this booklet:

Pollock, K. & Wang, F. (2020). *Principals' work and well-being in Ontario: Booklet #2 Well-being of school principals*.
University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, Canada.



This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Canada