



We know principals and assistant principals are working longer and harder than ever before — and under more stress too. As principals have dealt with COVID, contact tracing, and masking, other things have had to give. Anecdotally, we've heard from countless principals that it's time to throw in the towel — they love the job, they just can't do it anymore or deal with what it's doing to them. We are very concerned about a summer of even more principal churn, which is bad for kids (see the Power of the Principal video at the bottom of the page).

To collect some more data about job satisfaction and ideas for changing the role of the principal, we surveyed our members in February 2022. We also repeated some questions from our [2018 pay gap and working conditions survey](#). We had over 600 responses. We've highlighted some common sentiments on this page, and you'll see a link to the full results below.

Principals and assistant principals have always had a tough job, and they welcome that. School leadership isn't without its bumps and bruises, but it's incredibly rewarding, and people choose it to make a difference. Our job is to make school leadership more manageable, more enjoyable, more rewarding, and more possible to give our students the strong, caring, and consistent leadership they deserve.

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## Key Takeaways

- The number of principals working 7 days per week has more than doubled since 2018-19 (7% to 15.6%).
- 43% of principals/APs work more than 61 hours per week.
- 70+% of principals/APs work more than 56 hours per week.

- Over 71% of principals/APs report their job having a negative or somewhat negative effect on their personal relationships.
  - 72% of principals/APs work 6-7 days per week.
  - 92% of principals/APs work on the weekend.
  - Nearly 13% of principals/APs plan to leave education entirely or retire at the end of this year.
  - Only 60% plan to stay in their current position at the end of this year.
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## Some Quotes

- Parents are hostile. The amount that I am cursed at and yelled at, told I don't care about kids or don't understand or that ill is wished upon my own children is overwhelming. I also think the legislature has passed laws that do not support the school community. Specifically their change in suspension and exclusion laws without funding and staffing to support extremely needy and mentally ill students in poverty without parent support who act out. There is nowhere for me to move them when they create a dangerous situation and teacher quit because of them. I also work far too many hours. I regularly work a 12 hour day 6 days a week. That is insane and I am still not able to get all my work done, especially with the shortage of staff.
  - As an elementary principal, I'm on survival mode every single day.
  - The pressure is tremendous and we are rarely given grace by the community.
  - We are currently dealing with the aftermath of the damage caused by shutdowns and remote learning, and everywhere I look is an opportunity for something to go wrong in my school and me to lose my job.
  - I am not dissatisfied, I am exhausted.
  - The constant lack of staffing and having to "fill in " as a para and teacher. The long, long hours which are uncompensated. I easily work 11-12 hour days MOST days - the exception is working an 8 hour day. Also, we do NOT have enough mental health support for students. The children are really struggling to get along and I need more staff to work with them.
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## Factors Contributing to Job Satisfaction

- Good staff relationships
  - The students
  - Strong support from the principal (for APs) or superintendent
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## Factors Contributing to Job Dissatisfaction

- Increased student needs with lack of resources to support.
  - Staffing shortages, very volatile students and parents, unhappy teachers.
  - The job of school leadership has become overwhelming.
  - Lack of subs, taking the heat for all things COVID, and the overall lack of control our whole community feels.
  - Political climate.
  - Getting stuck with COVID protocols.
  - The overwhelming pressure and weight of the responsibilities of the job.
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## Suggestions to Redefine and Reimagine the Scope of Work

- "We need more building leadership so we can effectively work, plan, and be instructional leaders."
- "Time to be the coach and instructional leader I want to be and that my staff need and deserve. With no AP, I do discipline too many hours a day."
- "We need to stop coming up with the constant, new, shiny initiative or edict. Let buildings catch up and get back to something that works for them after two years of pandemic chaos."
- "We have to start rethinking the role of the building principal."
- "All buildings should have an assistant principal."