



REPORT TO

STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND WELL BEING, CATHOLIC EDUCATION AND HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

WORKING CONDITIONS OF PRINCIPALS AND VICE PRINCIPALS

*“He armed each of them not so much with confidence in shields and spears as with the **inspiration** of brave words, and he cheered them all by relating a dream, a sort of vision, which was worthy of belief.”*

2 Maccabees 15:11

| Created, Draft | First Tabling | Review |
|----------------|---------------|---|
| May 22, 2018 | May 31, 2018 | Click here to enter a date. |

Adrian Della Mora – Superintendent of Education, Human Resources & Employee Relations

INFORMATION REPORT

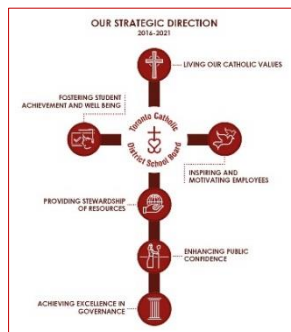
Vision:

At Toronto Catholic, we transform the world through witness, faith, innovation and action.

Mission:

The Toronto Catholic District School Board is an inclusive learning community uniting home, parish and school and rooted in the love of Christ.

We educate students to grow in grace and knowledge to lead lives of faith, hope and charity.



Rory McGuckin
Director of Education

D. Koenig
Associate Director
of Academic Affairs

T.B.D.
Associate Director
of Planning and Facilities

L. Noronha
Executive Superintendent
of Business Services and
Chief Financial Officer

A. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report responds to a Board motion, requesting a staff report on the working conditions of Principals and Vice Principals within TCDSB schools. This report provides a summary of the issues related to the working conditions of Principals and Vice Principals in the TCDSB. It is informed by a survey recently completed by our TCDSB Principal and Vice Principal Associations as well as timely research completed in Ontario. It provides insights into how administrators spend their day, the barriers that prevent them from managing their workload and suggestions that could be implemented to allow administrators to better manage their work. Given the critical role that administrators play in leading our schools, this information must deliberately inform the requisite strategic support and training to further support our academic leaders.

The cumulative staff time required to prepare this report was 20 hours

B. PURPOSE

1. At the Student Achievement and Well Being Meeting on Thursday, April 5, 2018, Trustees approved the following motion:

That staff bring a report back to the May 31, 2018 Student Achievement & Well Being Catholic Education & Human Resources Meeting, which describes the current working conditions for Principals and Vice Principals within TCDSB schools.

2. The purpose of this report is to provide insight into the context of the work of Principals and Vice-Principals in both the Elementary and Secondary panels particularly as it impacts the contribution to student achievement, school improvement and succession planning in the TCDSB. Specifically, this report aims to capture the sources of Principal and Vice-Principal workload and the influences that impact the nature of their work. Finally, this report aims to identify how workload demands may be mitigated to further enable a continued focus on student learning and achievement and address challenges associated with succession planning.

C. BACKGROUND

- As demonstrated in the table below, there is a noted decline in the number of applications submitted in response to postings for administrative academic positions. In addition, in light of work-related and personal reasons, it is important to note that we have seen one principal return to the role of vice principal and three vice principals return to the role of teacher since September 2015. This data is concerning as it suggests some leaders may not be satisfied with these leadership roles.

SUMMARY OF SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR APPLICATIONS RECEIVED (2015-2018)

| SUMMARY OF APPLICATIONS FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR (2015-2018) | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|
| Posting's Deadline | ES VP | SS VP | ES Principal | SS Principal |
| 9-Jan-15 | 36 | 18 | | |
| 2-Oct-15 | | | 22 | n/a |
| 1-Apr-16 | 55 | 33 | | |
| 28-Oct-16 | | | 26 | 21 |
| 30-Mar-17 | 20 | 23 | | |
| 28-Sep-17 | | | 15 | n/a |
| 9-Mar-18 | 17 | | | |
| 15-May-18 | | 11 | | |
| 25-May - 18 | | | 6 | |
| | 64% decrease 2016 to 2017 | 30% decrease 2016 to 2017 | 42% decrease 2016 to 2017 | |

- There is a significant amount of research at the local level as well as at the Provincial level that has been completed by the Ministry of Education in conjunction with the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario (CPCO) and the Ontario Principal Council (OPC) outlining issues associated with the work intensification of our Principals and Vice Principals. This research is summarized in greater detail in Appendix A and it has informed the summaries that are highlighted in the Evidence/Research/Analysis component of this report.

D. EVIDENCE/RESEARCH/ANALYSIS

1. A survey completed by the **Toronto Catholic Elementary and Secondary Principals and Vice-Principals Associations in the Fall of 2017**, found the following examples to be factors that increased the work intensification of Principals and Vice-Principals in TCDSB schools.
 - Dealing with staff-related concerns associated with hiring staff, shortage of staff (lack of Occasional Teacher coverage) and issues related to workplace health and safety
 - Implementing School Board/Ministry mandated projects involving curriculum, equity and student success priorities (Renewed Math Strategy implementation and other Ministry reporting)
 - Addressing student concerns related to behaviour investigations, student absenteeism and addressing the needs of special education students
 - Dealing with safety issues involving transportation (anaphylaxis protocols, changes in excursion related safety precautions, concussion protocols, other prevalent medical conditions and the requirement for mandatory staff in-servicing)
 - Managing issues related to enhancing community engagement
 - Operational issues (chairing IPRC meetings and having to organize professional development/instructional leadership since the removal of 14 program coordinators who previously supported this work)
 - Academic leadership challenges (greater accountability imposed on school boards due to reporting requirements – Auditor General, Ministry of Education, Regional Internal Audit Team)
2. Research conducted by Dr. Katina Pollock with Dr. Fei Wang and Cameron Hauseman in October 2014 and June 2017 provides significant insights into the working conditions for Ontario-based Principals and Vice Principals respectively.

The following graphics highlight daily challenges identified in this research, which prevent Ontario Principals and Vice Principals from managing their workload.

Enforcement of policies including Reg. 274 (hiring practices), Growing Success, and Safe Schools Act are cited as having the most influence on what administrators do on a daily basis.

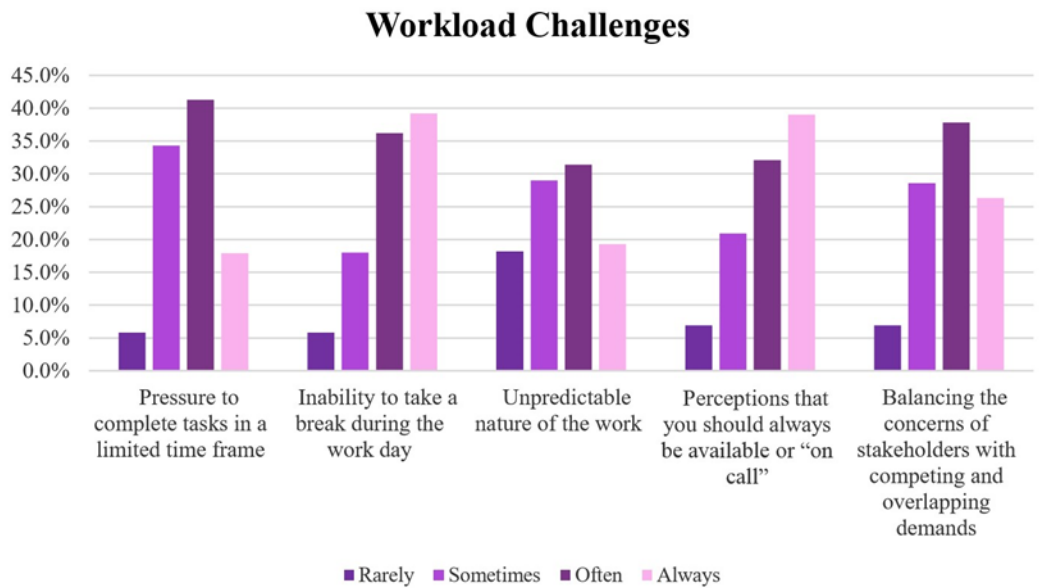
On average, the task on which principals spend the greatest amount of time is dealing with student discipline concerns, which takes up 7.6 hours per week.

On average, Ontario principals spend 11 hours reading and writing e-mail every week and 88.3% of principals are involved in school-based programs designed to support student mental health, while 87% administer programs aimed at improving the social skills of their students.

On average, vice-principals indicated being involved in curriculum and instructional leadership for 2.7 hours per week. ***Instructional leadership was the 10th most frequent task in which participants engaged.***

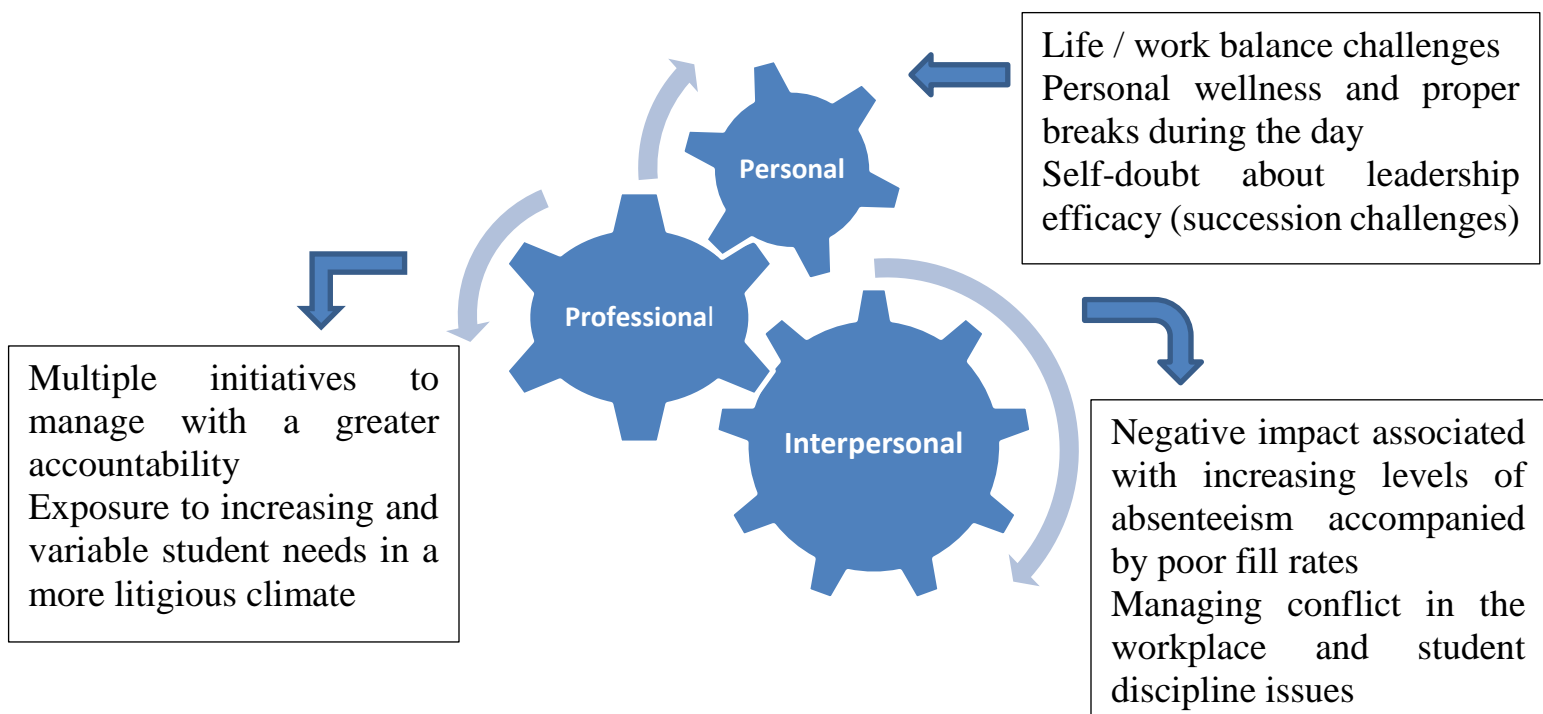
A total of 46.4% of participating vice-principals highlighted how mental health concerns among students often lead to emotionally draining days.

Research highlights the fact that teachers requiring high levels of support always cause emotionally draining situations for 6.7% of participating vice-principals and often cause emotionally draining situations for 30.3% of participating vice-principals.



The previous figure demonstrates how VPs struggle to adapt to an expanded workload. For example, 75.4% of participating VPs indicated often (36.2%) or always (39.2%) experiencing emotionally draining situations because the nature of their work does not allow them to take breaks during the workday.

3. Qualitative feedback attained through attendance at monthly TCDSB Principal meetings and feedback received from two plenary leadership strategy events conducted in the 2017 – 2018 academic year suggests that the following three categories are most significantly impacted by a school administrator's working conditions:



E. METRICS AND ACCOUNTABILITY

1. In their October 2014 research entitled Elementary and Secondary Principals' and Vice Principals' Workload Studies, Kenneth Leithwood and Vera N. Azah Leithwood identified seven categories that represent possible actions a school board could undertake to reduce the extent of principal and vice-principal workload particularly as it impacts the perception of the role by future leaders. The seven categories listed in the table below are extracted directly from their study. These suggestions can inform the TCDSB's approach and TCDSB strategies to address these suggestions are also included in the table below.

| Ways to reduce the extent of Principal and Vice Principal Workload | |
|---|---|
| Research Categories | Implemented TCDSB initiatives |
| Review district expectations | Use Leadership Strategy plenary sessions (two per year) to articulate system goals and align priorities around the TCDSB MYSP |
| Align and balance what the system/district is expecting of its schools and school leaders | Field Superintendent and central team alignment through mid-point check exercises, SLIP visits and refined Professional Learning Forms |
| Increase efficiencies and streamline work processes | Reduce the number of offsite Principal meetings, use Skype sessions and transfer learning from specialized student success programs to all school leaders |
| Reduce principals' and vice-principals' tasks and provide other forms of relief | Use government provided resources to release administrators to use their time to build leadership capacity and professional learning networks (see page 8) |
| Add support for principals and vice-principals to do their jobs | Use of Code 83 and Code 92 Ministry of Education release days to schedule targeted staff professional development (challenges in light of poor Occasional Teacher fill rates) |

| | |
|---|--|
| Professional learning | Creation of Professional Learning Networks supported by board resources and Ministry of Education Student Achievement Officers |
| Provide individual consultation and counselling | Superintendent mentoring and Issues/Succession/Renewal series seeking to implement formal succession planning processes |

2. Provincial government interest in addressing these challenges.

In recognition of the leadership role that Principals and Vice-Principals play in the publicly funded education system, the Ontario government made a system investment for Principals and Vice-Principals of \$4,281,163 province-wide in 2017-18, which shall continue, in a further equal amount for 2018-19.

The TCDSB and Association Executives are currently finalizing mutually agreed upon local priorities and ways to use the above-noted Ministry funding to target identified urgent needs. The top five priorities that were identified by the SSPA, SSVPA, TCPVA (Principals) and TCPVA (VPs) to disburse these funds were:

- Provide itinerant administrative coverage positions
- Assign administrative days dedicated to management tasks
- Provide opportunities for administrators to shadow, collaborate or learn with colleagues from other sites or in school leadership teams.
- Provide collaboration time off-site to plan with administrative team members, with coverage provided where needed
- Hire system/Family of Schools administrative support to manage budget and/or management tasks to allow the school leader to focus on student learning and achievement.

The TCDSB continues to invest in leadership discernment activities and is exploring sponsorship opportunities to complement the existing array of mentorship and leadership programs provided to our new and experienced leaders. We are also endeavouring to refine our overall Leadership Development program to address the need to enhance capacity, develop and support leader networks, deliberately address issues of diversity and streamline administrative tasks wherever possible.

F. CONCLUDING STATEMENT

This report is for the consideration of the Board.