Report of Findings from the First Biennial

MINNESOTA PRINCIPALS SURVEY
2022

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Minnesota Principals Survey (MnPS), generously funded by The Minneapolis Foundation and The Joyce Foundation, sought to elevate the voices of principals, assistant principals, and charter school leaders across the state. Developed by researchers at the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) in collaboration with a diverse group of educators and partners, the comprehensive 70-question survey was completed by 779 leaders between November 11 and December 6, 2021. The 34% response rate yielded a fairly representative sample of the school leaders it sought to reach in Minnesota in terms of principals' race, gender, and geographic location. Respondents were fairly new to their roles, with 46% having been in their current role for 2–4 years. Primary factors for pursuing their current position included opportunity for impact, location, and school mission or vision. Interestingly, 63% of respondents expect that they will remain in their current role six years or less with factors such as opportunity for impact, staff culture, and leadership structure strongly influencing their decisions to continue in their current role. Retirement was most frequently reported as respondents' next career step with 32% selecting this option. Only 5% plan to move into a role outside of public education, although 20% were undecided.

PRINCIPAL PREPARATION

Over 98% of survey respondents indicated that they had completed an administrative licensure program. Respondents were subsequently asked about how prepared they felt in 30 leadership domains, and what was potentially missing from their administrative licensure coursework and internship experiences. Overall, respondents felt most prepared in applying the *code of ethics for school administrators, understanding the role of education in a democratic society*, and *understanding educational policy regulations related to special education and student discipline*. Leaders felt least prepared to *leverage students' cultural backgrounds as assets for teaching and learning, support instruction that is culturally responsive*, and *recruit and retain staff*. What was missing from their administrative licensure coursework and internship aligned to their overall feelings about preparation. Respondents reported that their coursework lacked content on *culturally responsive teaching, family and student engagement best practices, special education due process*, and *staff recruitment and retention best practices*. Relatedly, they noted that their internship experiences lacked opportunities to *facilitate conversations about equity* and *address staff culture challenges*.

34% response rate (779/2,323)
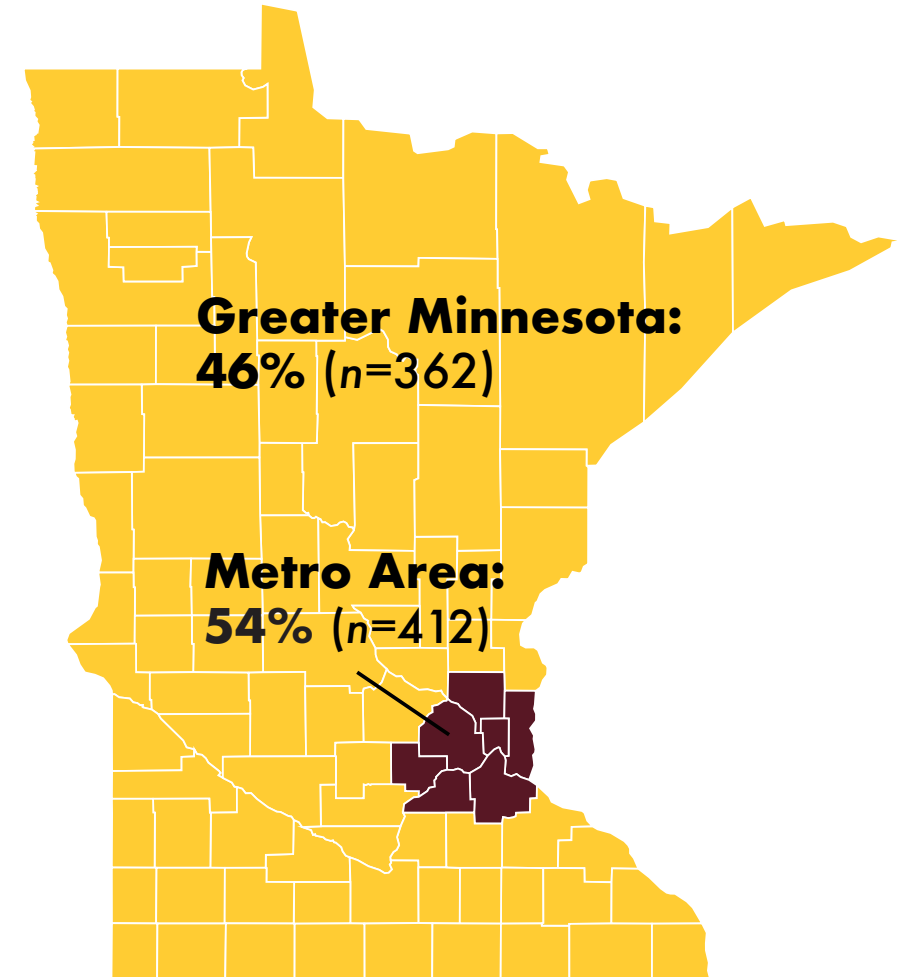
Greater Minnesota: 46% (n=362)

Metro Area: 54% (n=412)

WORKING CONDITIONS

Respondents were asked about their workload and sustainability, compensation and benefits, time allocation, influence, and job satisfaction. Leaders reported that on average they are working 58.6 hours a week with most respondents indicating they are required to work between 210–230 days a year. Over 50% of respondents reported that this workload is not sustainable. When asked about compensation and healthcare and retirement benefits, 60% *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that their compensation—averaging $119,904 statewide—was appropriate for the work that they do. Greater MN leaders reported making about $20,000 less per year on average than Metro respondents ($109,142 vs. $129,993, respectively). About three-fourths of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that their healthcare and retirement benefits are adequate. In terms of time allocation, while 79% *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that their primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader, when asked how they spend their time with regards to various leadership tasks, 62% reported they spend *much less* or *somewhat less* time on instructional tasks than they would like. Conversely, 61% of respondents indicated they spend *somewhat more* or *much more* time on internal administrative tasks than they would like. When asked about where they felt they had influence, respondents reported the highest level of influence in *decisions about hiring new teachers, evaluating teachers*, and *addressing staff performance concerns*. Respondents reported the lowest level of influence in *establishing curriculum, setting performance standards for students*, and *deciding how the school budget will be spent*. Encouragingly, school leaders reported high general job satisfaction with 83% of respondents *somewhat agreeing* or *agreeing* that they were generally satisfied with being a leader in their school. Contributing most to this satisfaction were relationships with students and staff, and seeing students grow—socially, emotionally, and academically. Finally, 93% of leaders reported that they felt their work is valued by the staff at their school.

Time Spent on Various Leadership Tasks, Overall (*n*=635)

Internal administrative tasks: 1% | 4% | 35% | 34% | 26%

Instructional tasks: 21% | 41% | 28% | 8% | 2%

Student interactions: 4% | 27% | 40% | 15% | 15%

Family and community interactions: 10% | 41% | 38% | 9% | 3%

My own professional growth: 27% | 28% | 23% | 1% | 1%

About the right amount of time

Much less / Somewhat less time than I would ideally spend   Somewhat more / Much more time than I would ideally spend
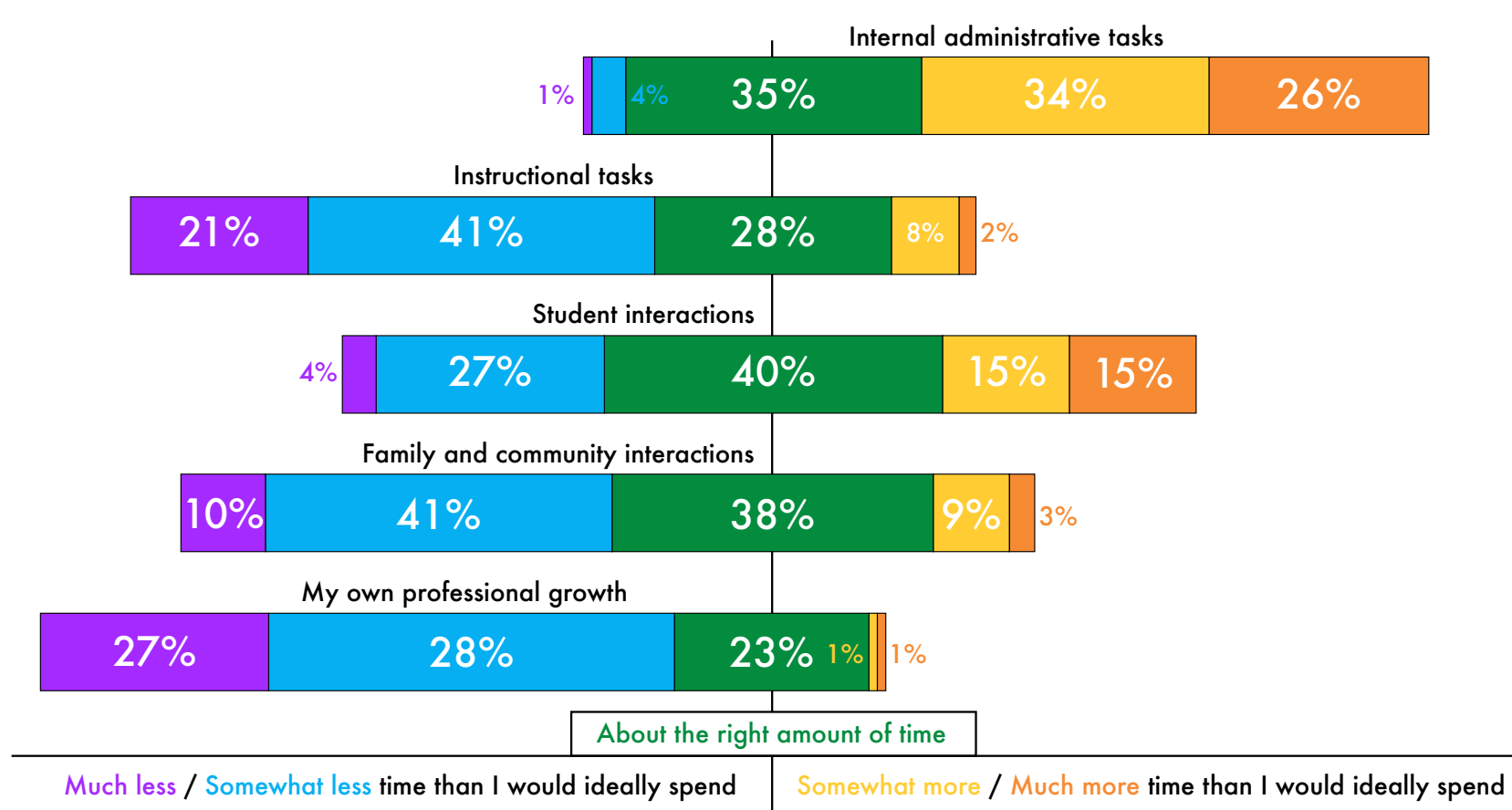
Examples of tasks within each category

Internal administrative tasks: personnel issues, scheduling, reports, budgeting, operational meetings
Instructional tasks: curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations
Student interactions: academic guidance, discipline, seeking student voice, relationship building
Family and community interactions: attending events, seeking parent or community input
My own professional growth: self-reflection, attending PD, reviewing research, reading, networking

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES AND NEEDS

Participants were asked to indicate what types of professional development they had engaged in during the 2020-2021 school year and then to indicate the usefulness of that professional development. Top responses for type were *presentations at scheduled school or district meetings* (70%), *networking with other educational leaders* (66%), and *other workshops and training* (57%). With regards to the usefulness of the professional development, respondents were asked to rank the usefulness of each type of professional development they engaged in from *1-not very useful* to *4-very useful*. The most useful professional development cited was *Minnesota Principals Academy* (3.82), *networking with other educational leaders* (3.70), *doctoral coursework* (3.57), *formal mentoring* (3.56), and *other cohort based experiences* (3.54). Somewhat surprising, the professional development that they engaged in the most often, *presentations at scheduled school or district meetings*, received the lowest usefulness rating (2.99). In an effort to understand what professional development was needed, respondents were asked to select 3 areas of need from a list of 19. Top responses included: *reducing staff burnout, advancing racial equity*, and *Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS)*. There was one striking difference in the data along lines of geography. Metro area leaders were 17 percentage points more likely than Greater Minnesota to select *advancing racial equity* (39% vs 22%) as an area of professional development from which they could benefit. When asked what barriers stood in the way of engaging in professional development, three of the possible nine categories rose to the top and were endorsed nearly three times as frequently as the remaining six categories: *feeling obligated to be in the building* (68%), *limited time* (63%), and *COVID-19 pandemic related constraints* (59%). Funding for professional development was reported at an average of $1,884. Performance evaluations, as described in MN Statute 123B.147 since 2011 requires that principals be evaluated annually. The intention of these evaluations is focused on professional growth. When asked if their performance evaluation helped respondents grow in their leadership practices, 65% *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* they did.

"What types of Professional Development did you participate in during the 2020-21 school year?

	N	%
Presentations at scheduled school or district meetings	510	70%
Networking with other educational leaders	479	66%
Other workshops or trainings	411	57%
State or local conferences	218	30%
MESPA provided opportunities	207	28%
Other cohort-based learning experience	188	26%
MASSP provided opportunities	186	26%
Formal coaching	81	11%
Formal mentoring	63	9%
National conferences	54	7%
Minnesota Principals Academy	52	7%
Doctoral coursework	37	5%

"How would you rate the usefulness of each type of professional development you participated in during the 2020-21 school year?"

	N	Mean
Minnesota Principals Academy	51	3.82
Networking with other educational leaders	476	3.70
Doctoral coursework	37	3.57
Formal mentoring	63	3.56
Other cohort-based learning experience	184	3.54
Formal coaching	80	3.54
National conferences	54	3.54
MESPA provided opportunities	206	3.35
MASSP provided opportunities	184	3.33
State or local conferences	214	3.31
Other workshops or trainings	405	3.20
Presentations at scheduled school or district meetings	505	2.99

(Participants were asked to rank the usefulness of each type of professional development they engaged in from 1-not very useful to 4-very useful.)

AREAS OF LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY AND SELF-EFFICACY

The intent of this survey was to ascertain how leaders felt about their job, including their preparedness and confidence to do their job--not to assess how well leaders were doing their jobs. In an overarching question about the ability to be successful as a leader in their school, 90% of respondents somewhat agreed or agreed that they could be successful. What followed were 49 domain-specific self-efficacy questions across four school leadership responsibility areas: *(a) instructional leadership, (b) school improvement, (c) management and decision-making,* and *(d) culture and climate*. In each section, we asked participants to respond to the following question: I*n light of your capabilities and available resources, how much confidence do you have that you can effectively carry out each activity listed below?* Overall, respondents reported the most confidence in the domain of *management and decision-making* and the least confidence in the domain of *instructional leadership*.

Examples of tasks for which leaders rated their highest levels of confidence included *hiring new teachers, establishing discipline practices*, and *evaluating teachers*. The areas in which respondents felt the least confident were tasks such as *facilitating difficult conversations with staff about gender identity, supporting culturally responsive pedagogy*, and *addressing staff mental health challenges*. Respondents who reported *little to no confidence* or *insufficient confidence* for a task then received a follow-up question asking them to select the types of support that would most help them effectively carry out the leadership task. Across the leadership tasks reportedly posing the greatest challenges, there was remarkable consistency in their selections for desired supports: *increasing knowledge and skills*, and *tools or frameworks*. These findings suggest a need and desire for further professional learning.

Average Level of Confidence by Area of Leadership

Response options: 1) little to none; 2) insufficient; 3) sufficient; 4) more than sufficient

3.03 School Improvement

3.12 Management & Decision-making

2.90 Culture & Climate

2.86 Instructional Leadership

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES

Grounded in the seminal literature review, "Culturally Responsive School Leadership: A Synthesis of the Literature" (Khalifa et al., 2016), participants were asked to respond to how frequently they engaged in Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL) behaviors. Khalifa et al. (2016) put forth a CRSL Framework that distinguished four areas of being a culturally responsive school leader: (a) critical self-reflection, (b) developing culturally responsive teachers, (c) promoting culturally responsive/inclusive school environments, and (d) engaging students, families, and communities. Six questions tied to these areas revealed that respondents were most frequently engaging in *critical self-reflection about their own identity, frame of reference*, and *biases*. Leaders reported least frequently *including families of marginalized students in school-level decisions*. Across all questions in this section, there were significant differences observed between Greater Minnesota and Metro area respondents, with Metro area respondents engaging in these tasks more frequently.

"How often do you engage in critical self-reflection about your own identity, frame of reference, and biases?"
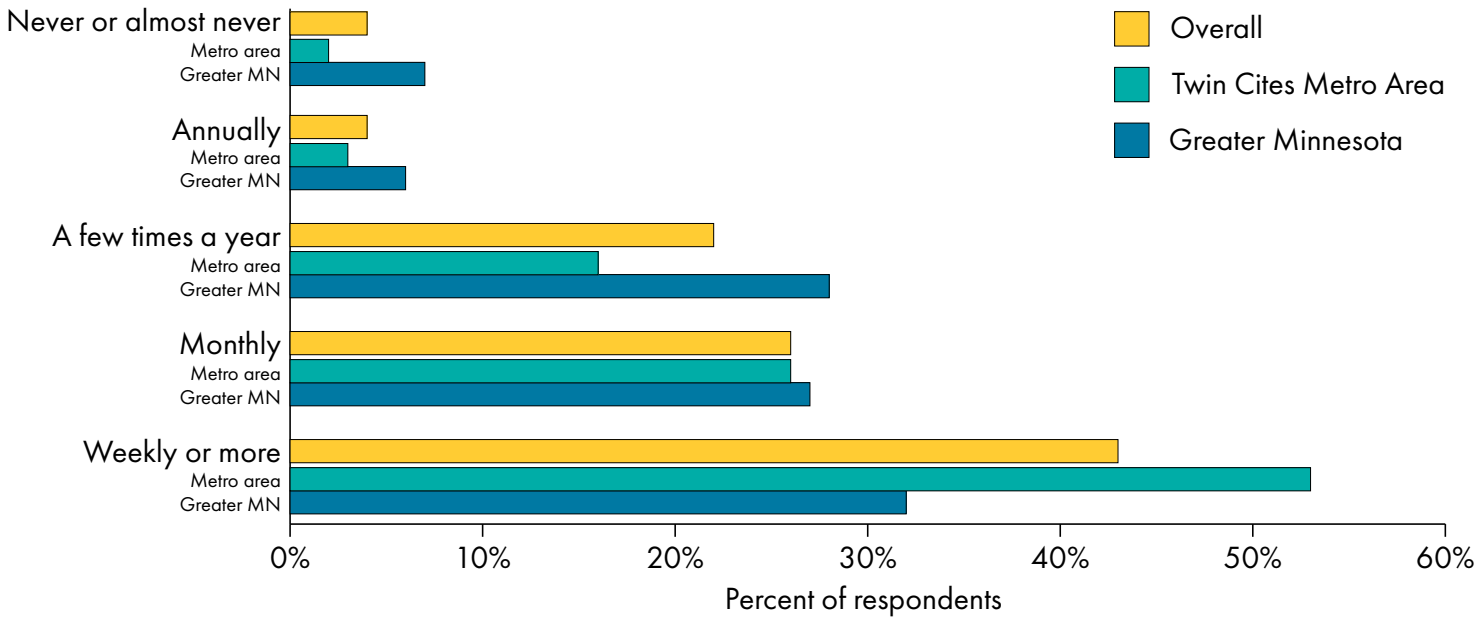
"How often do you include the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions?"
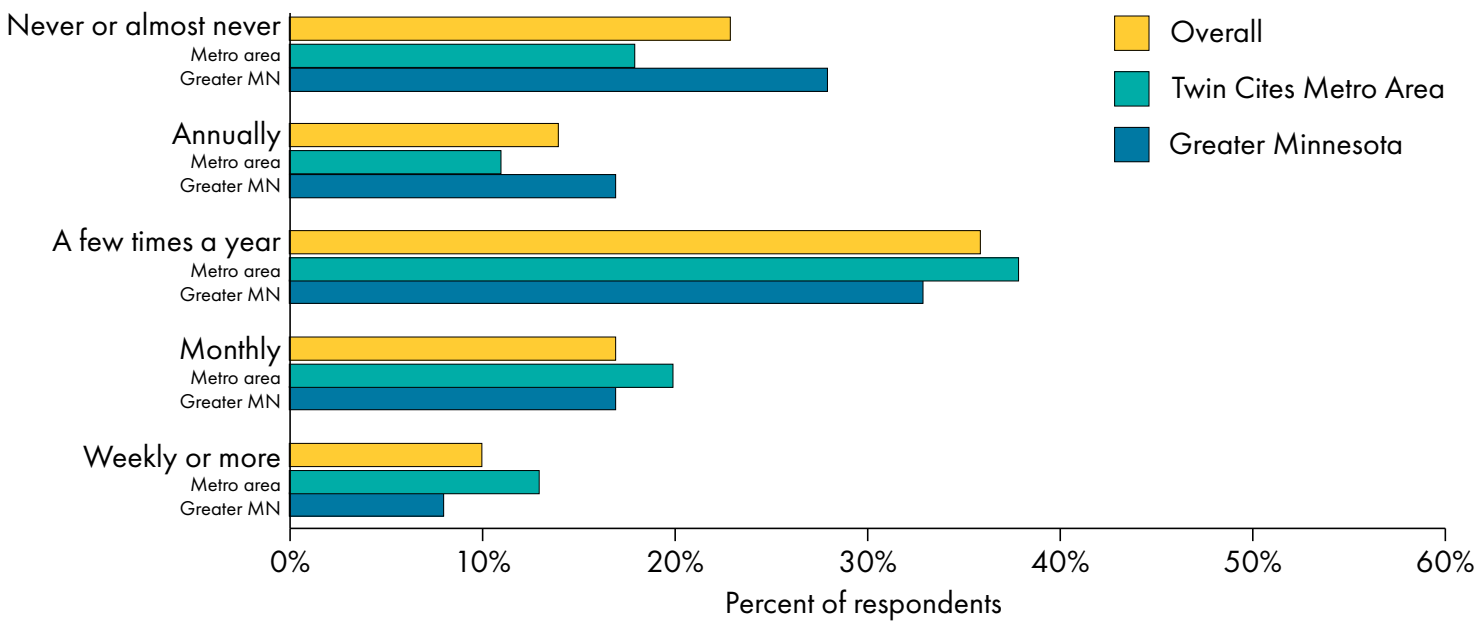
STATE AND DISTRICT POLICY AND SUPPORTS

Respondents were asked about their perceptions of current accountability systems and their knowledge of, along with their desire to be engaged in, state and local policy-making. Responses are reported separately for traditional district schools and charter schools as accountability systems are different across these two contexts. Over 70% of charter school leaders and traditional school principals *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* the measures used to evaluate school performance were reasonable. Only 42% of respondents, both charter and district principals, felt the state's accountability measures to evaluate their school's performance are reasonable. In the area of support, respondents reported feeling that their work is valued by their staff, that their supervisors' expectations for improvement are reasonable, and that they feel they are given autonomy to create their school improvement plan. Although 78% also reported that some school leaders could benefit from additional support in creating school improvement plans. That type of support often comes from district leaders or charter authorizers. More charter leaders reported feeling support from their authorizers (72%) as opposed to 53% of principals indicating they feel supported by their district leaders. With regards to policy, respondents told us they would like to have greater influence in both state and district policy, and that barriers to doing so include *lack of knowledge of the policy making process* and *time to be engaged*.

IMPACT OF COVID-19 AND LESSONS LEARNED

In the development of the MnPS, the working group determined it was important to have a section of the survey that would address a relevant topic that was timely in nature and would change in each iteration of the survey. This is intended to provide space for data to be collected about timely issues while not increasing the length of the survey. The development of the MnPS began more than a year into the COVID–19 pandemic, providing the Working Group an opportunity to focus on challenges, needed support, and lessons learned from this unprecedented time. Congruent with other survey findings in the state of Minnesota (e.g., the statewide Safe Learning Survey), mental health was a top concern among respondents. *Staff mental health* and *student mental health* were reported as the most significant ongoing pandemic-related challenge, and also overwhelmingly the areas in which leaders needed resources. The members of the Working Group and Advisory Council were interested in capturing principals' thoughts on what transformations to schooling may come as a result of the pandemic. Respondents reported that lasting transformation to teaching and learning was possible in their schools and over half indicated that the disruption brought by COVID-19 has already somewhat transformed their school in positive ways. Areas of positive anticipated change from pre- to post-pandemic include the *use of technology, alternate learning modalities, communication with families, providing non-academic services*, and *relationship building with students*.

NEXT STEPS

The MnPS results provide the state with a wealth of information. In the coming months, we will be conducting focus groups to better understand the data from the perspective of principals across the state. Additionally, over the next year, we will be releasing policy and practice briefs on topics that survey points to as potentially worthy of further guidance and support. Finally, we intend to administer the next iteration of this survey in the fall of 2023.

"I want to have greater influence over state policy."

| 7% | 23% | 46% | 24% |

"I want to have greater influence over district policy."

| 5% | 17% | 52% | 25% |

"I know of several ways I can influence state policy."

| 19% | 39% | 33% | 10% |

"I know of several ways I can influence district policy."

| 5% | 15% | 44% | 36% |
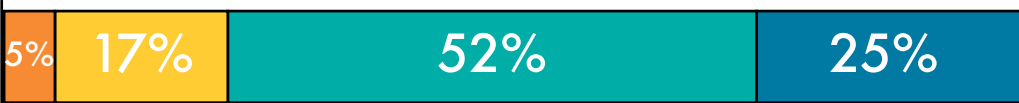
"The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways."

| 17% | 29% | 48% | 7% |

| Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Agree |

INTRODUCTION

In late 2020, The Minneapolis Foundation and The Joyce Foundation reached out to the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota to discuss the possibility of developing a statewide survey of school principals with the express intent to elevate principal voice in Minnesota. Researchers at CAREI embraced the project and suggested that the initial development of the survey include not only a traditional literature review and scan of existing instruments, but also the engagement of a wide group of educational constituents to participate in the project. Through an iterative design process from May 2021 through October 2021, what began as a notion of gaining principal insights in order to share their voice became a robust, 70-question survey sent to 2,323 principals, assistant principals, and charter leaders on November 11, 2021.

WHY PRINCIPALS?

We know from research that principals have a significant impact on school culture and student performance (Grissom et al., 2021; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marks & Printy, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005). In fact, they are responsible for over 25% of the school-based effects on student learning, second only to teachers who account for 33% of those effects (Waters et al., 2003). And yet, they are also often responsible for the recruitment, hiring, and development of the teachers they lead. The role of the principal can be defined in a myriad of ways: instructional leader, community leader, culturally responsive leader, manager, decision-maker, collective or distributive leader, or student-focused leader. In fact, according to MN Administrative Rule 3512.0510, to earn a K-12 Principal License in Minnesota, candidates must demonstrate competence in 86 areas. Arguably, principals are expected to do a lot. In an effort to inform those who support and hold principals accountable, we offer this report as a source of actionable insights surrounding many aspects of the principalship and across multiple contexts.

WHAT IS CONTAINED IN THIS REPORT?

This report provides detailed information on the survey's development; respondent demographics including career information, preparation, and licensure experiences; working conditions and job satisfaction; professional development experiences, barriers, and desires; self-efficacy in specific areas of leadership along with desired supports; how much time is spent on various tasks; how frequently specific Culturally Responsive School Leadership behaviors are enacted; perceptions of accountability and supports; actual and desired engagement in policy influence; and thoughts on the ongoing challenges posed by COVID-19 and potential lasting impacts of the pandemic on schools and school systems. Each section describes the data gathered from all survey respondents, then breaks down responses by geographic location (Greater Minnesota and Metro) and school level (elementary and secondary). This data set can eventually be analyzed by numerous other factors such as building size, school demographics, years of service, and pathway to the role, just to name a few. Subsequent policy and practice briefs specific to these and other analytical factors will follow in the coming year. We welcome questions or suggested analyses for future briefs.

A note about the word 'principal': The survey is titled "The Minnesota Principals Survey," for ease of communication. In fact, **respondents include principals, assistant or associate principals, principals on special assignment, and charter school leaders**.

METHODS

This section of the report details the development, testing, administration, and analysis of the first biennial Minnesota Principals Survey (henceforth, MnPS).

SURVEY DEVELOPMENT

Survey development began with the identification of broad topic areas to include on the survey instrument. CAREI staff conducted an initial review of school leadership research and existing survey instruments to identify topic areas relating to principals' perspectives, experiences, and impact (e.g., working conditions, professional development, and successes and challenges). Simultaneously, a 16-member Working Group composed of school and district leaders, school board members, principal support providers, parents, educators, and other educational constituents was recruited and convened to identify those topics that would be most relevant to Minnesota school leaders and most promising in terms of the insights they might offer potential users of survey data. Both topics identified through the review of research and topics brought forward by Working Group members were considered for inclusion.

An initial list of topics generated by the Working Group was then presented to a separate, 20-member Advisory Council—with representation from the Minnesota Elementary School Principals Association (MESPA), the Minnesota Association of Secondary School Principals (MASSP), the Minnesota School Boards Association (MSBA), the Minnesota Rural Educators Association (MREA), the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Minnesota Parent Teacher Association (MNPTA), and other Minnesota-based K-12 education organizations—for further discussion and refinement.

Topic areas collaboratively chosen for inclusion on the biennial survey ultimately included:
- Career information
- Preparation and licensure
- Working conditions
- Professional development
- Leadership self-efficacy and needed supports
- Culturally Responsive School Leadership
- State- and district-level policy and supports

Additionally, educational constituents agreed to include a section of the survey that would change with every administration in response to the ever-shifting educational landscape. For the first iteration of the biennial survey, the COVID-19 pandemic was chosen as this "insert" topic.

Through a similarly collaborative and iterative process, individual survey items were proposed and written by Working Group members, then revised and compiled into a preliminary survey draft by CAREI researchers in accordance with survey item-writing best practices (Dillman et al., 2014), and reviewed and refined by Advisory Council members. In some cases, survey items were repurposed or adapted from existing survey instruments and frameworks,[1] while others were developed specifically for MnPS.

SURVEY TESTING

Three primary mechanisms were used to test and further refine the draft MnPS instrument: "think-aloud" interviews, expert review, and survey piloting.

Think-Alouds

Upon initial drafting and programming of the survey within Qualtrics, a web-based survey administration platform, three practicing school leaders representing both the Twin Cities metro area and greater Minnesota, as well as the district and charter sectors, were recruited to participate in an hour-long "think-aloud" session with a CAREI evaluator. The purpose of the think-aloud process, also known as a "cognitive interview," is to understand how a survey participant interacts with and thinks about the survey as they complete it (Willis, 2004). Such a procedure provides valuable insight to survey developers on questions that are difficult to answer or interpret, or questions that may cause annoyance or discomfort on the part of the survey-taker (e.g., questions that require significant time or cognitive burden to answer). Findings from think-aloud sessions informed revisions to the pilot survey that addressed these concerns.

Expert Review

One benefit to developing and conducting the MnPS at CAREI is the access that project personnel have to experts in survey design, both within CAREI and in the broader University of Minnesota research community. Following the think-aloud process described above, the MnPS underwent review by several Ph.D.-level CAREI evaluators as well as Dr. Michael Rodriguez, Dean of the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Minnesota and a renowned expert in educational measurement and survey design, specifically. Insights from expert review informed further revisions to the survey instrument.

1. Sources included: National Center for Education Statistics (2015); Minnesota Statute 3512.0510, Subpart 1; Leithwood (2017); Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis (2016); Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (2008); Tennessee Department of Education (2020); Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (2021); Qualtrics (2021).

Pilot

The final phase of survey testing included a pilot survey administered in September 2021 to a stratified random sample of Minnesota school leaders taken from three sources: the MESPA member list of practicing elementary principals and assistant or associate principals, the MASSP member list of practicing secondary-level principals and assistant or associated principals, and the list of Minnesota charter school directors publicly available on the MDE website. Random samples were drawn from each list to ensure the inclusion of school leaders from all regions of the state as well as representation of charter leaders proportional to the charter student population in Minnesota. In all, 68 practicing school leaders were invited to participate in the pilot, of which 16 (24%) responded. All respondents were given the opportunity to request a package of University of Minnesota face masks for their schools as an incentive for completing the pilot survey. While pilot participants adequately represented the various regions of the state, none of the charter leaders invited to take the pilot survey chose to do so, a potential limitation of the testing process. Further testing was completed by CAREI personnel to simulate the experience of taking the survey from a charter school perspective in order to address this limitation.

Analysis of pilot data served largely to confirm that the online survey was working as intended and that response options were exhaustive and appropriate. Several minor revisions were made to the survey in response to pilot feedback, including the elimination of several nonessential items, the elimination of infrequently-selected response options, and the development of several closed-ended items from open-ended responses.

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

The final MnPS instrument was administered between November 11, 2021 and December 6, 2021 to all eligible Minnesota school leaders, defined as anyone "working as a principal, assistant or associate principal, director, co-director, or in some other school-level leadership role in a Minnesota publicly-funded elementary, middle, and/or secondary school" (see item Q1_01 of the survey instrument, located in Appendix A).

The surveyed population included 2,323 school leaders, primarily identified using a publicly-available list of school administrators downloaded from the MDE website and supplemented with MESPA

and MASSP member lists. Eligible school leaders not on the merged list could request to be included by completing a short Google form shared widely on a Frequently Asked Questions document and via social media.

Members of MESPA and MASSP received an email from their respective organization's Executive Director several days prior to the survey launch informing them of the survey and encouraging them to complete it. Then, on November 11, school leaders received an email from the project lead, Dr. Katie Pekel, Principal in Residence at the University of Minnesota, inviting them to take the survey within Qualtrics via an individual link. Follow-up emails were sent to nonrespondents on November 23 and again on December 2, and the survey was closed to further responses on December 6.

Using Qualtrics-provided data on the duration of survey engagement per participant, we estimate that the final survey took most individuals between 20 and 40 minutes to complete.

DATA ANALYSIS

A total of 784 participants opened the survey, of whom 779 indicated they were currently working as a principal, assistant or associate principal, or school-level leader in a Minnesota public school and were therefore included in the dataset, representing a response rate of 34%. Of the 779 eligible respondents, 631 (81%) completed the entire survey.

Using state school ID numbers, publicly available school-level demographic information was matched onto survey response data such that responses could be disaggregated by variables such as geographic location (Greater Minnesota vs. Metro), level (elementary vs. secondary), and school type (district vs. charter). For a small number of respondents (n=17, or 2% of all respondents), school-level data was not available, either because the individual was not affiliated with a specific school (e.g., a Principal on Special Assignment) or because the school ID number associated with the individual's response could not be found in state enrollment files. School ID numbers and any other potentially identifying information about survey respondents and their schools (e.g., school names and IDs, total student enrollment) were subsequently removed from the dataset to protect participant privacy.

Data analysis for findings presented in this report proceeded in phases, beginning with an analysis of the overall dataset, then turning

to analyses by geographic location and school level (i.e., elementary and secondary). Data analysis consisted primarily of calculating response frequencies, identifying the rank order of response options, calculating descriptive statistics for quantitative data[2] (e.g., mean, standard deviation), and conducting statistical tests to identify significant differences between subgroups. Free-response data (i.e., other responses and answers to open-ended questions) were analyzed inductively for major themes using a constant comparative method (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

In the results sections that follow, we primarily report summary-level findings across all survey participants ("overall"). We also report notable differences in responses between participants from Greater Minnesota and the Metro area, and also between participants working in elementary schools and secondary schools (i.e., junior high/middle and high schools). Unless otherwise indicated, a notable difference is defined in the following ways:

- For interval or ratio quantitative data (e.g., number of years in the current role): a p-value less than or equal to .05 when comparing subgroup means using an independent samples t-test;
- For multiple-choice items with nominal response options (e.g., job selection factors or professional development needs): either a 10 percentage point or greater difference in the frequency of a given response option, or a ratio between response option frequencies of 2 or more (i.e., one group selected a particular response at least twice as often as another group);
- For single items with ordered response options (e.g., level of agreement): a p-value less than or equal to .05 when comparing subgroup response frequencies using a Chi-square test of independence;
- For multiple, related items with ordered response options (e.g., level of preparedness in multiple leadership domains): a difference in subgroup means exceeding 5% of the possible range of values, where the mean is calculated by assigning a value to each response option (e.g., *little to no preparation* = 1 and *more than sufficient preparation* = 4); and

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2. For some quantitative items (e.g., salary, work hours) and on a case-by-case basis, individual responses were excluded from analysis as outliers when determined to be highly unlikely (e.g., salary values less than $15,000) or reflective of unusual circumstances (e.g., work hours less than 20 hours per week).

- For multiple, related items with ordered response options that comprise a subscale (e.g., level of confidence across multiple instructional leadership tasks): a p-value less than or equal to .05 when comparing subgroup means using an independent samples t-test, where means are computed by first translating ordered response options into numeric values (e.g., *little to no confidence* becomes 1, *insufficient confidence* becomes 2, etc.), calculating a scale score for each participant, and then averaging those scale scores across participants within a subgroup.

Additional results disaggregated by geographic location and level are provided in Appendix A. Future analyses will further disaggregate survey data by school- and respondent-level variables including school type, student demographic characteristics, and respondent race/ethnicity, to name a few examples. We expect to publish additional briefs describing findings from such analyses in the coming months.

RESPONDENTS

Principals, assistant or associate principals, and charter school directors from all regions of Minnesota completed the MnPS. This section describes the demographic characteristics of the individuals who participated in the survey and the schools they led. Overall, we found that survey responses were largely representative of the composition of the state's population of school leaders, with several minor to moderate exceptions.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, roughly half of survey respondents (53%) were affiliated with schools in the 7-county Twin Cities metropolitan area (henceforth, "Metro") and about half (46%) were affiliated with schools in non-Metro counties (henceforth, "Greater MN"). Figure 1, right, displays the breakdown of responses by Minnesota Service Cooperative region. The distribution of responses across regions differs minimally from the overall distribution of Minnesota public schools, with one exception being a moderate overrepresentation of Metro ECSU respondents (53% of responses as compared to 44% of Minnesota schools). Information on Minnesota public schools obtained from Minnesota Department of Education 2021 Student Enrollment file and limited to schools with the following classification codes: 10, 20, 31, 32, 33, 40, 41.

LEVEL

About half of respondents work in elementary schools (*n*=381, 49%) and half (*n*=373, 48%) work in secondary schools (classified as Senior High Schools, Middle Schools, Secondary Schools, Area Learning Centers, and Junior High Schools) which roughly mirrors the breakdown of public schools in Minnesota.

SCHOOL TYPE

The majority of respondents (*n*=718, 92%) work in district schools whereas approximately 7% (*n*=58) work in charter schools. In comparison, approximately 87% of Minnesota public schools are district schools and 13% are charter schools, suggesting there is a slight overrepresentation of district leaders among survey respondents.

EDUCATION

Participants were asked to indicate the highest degree they have earned. The most common response selected was an *Administrative License* (*n*=312, 49%), followed by an *Educational Specialist* degree (*n*=208, 33%), *Doctoral degree* (*n*=60, 9%), *Master's degree* (*n*=49, 8%), and *Bachelor's degree* (*n*=3, 0.5%).

Figure 1. Responses by Minnesota Service Cooperative Region

Northeast Service Cooperative *n*=40 (5%)

Northwest Service Cooperative *n*=33 (4%)

Sourcewell *n*=20 (3%)

Lakes Country Service Cooperative *n*=27 (3%)

Resource Training & Solutions *n*=60 (8%)

SWWC Service Cooperative *n*=49 (6%)

Metro ECSU n*=412 (53%)

Other *n*=5 (1%)

South Central Service Cooperative *n*=22 (3%)

Southeast Service Cooperative *n*=111 (14%)
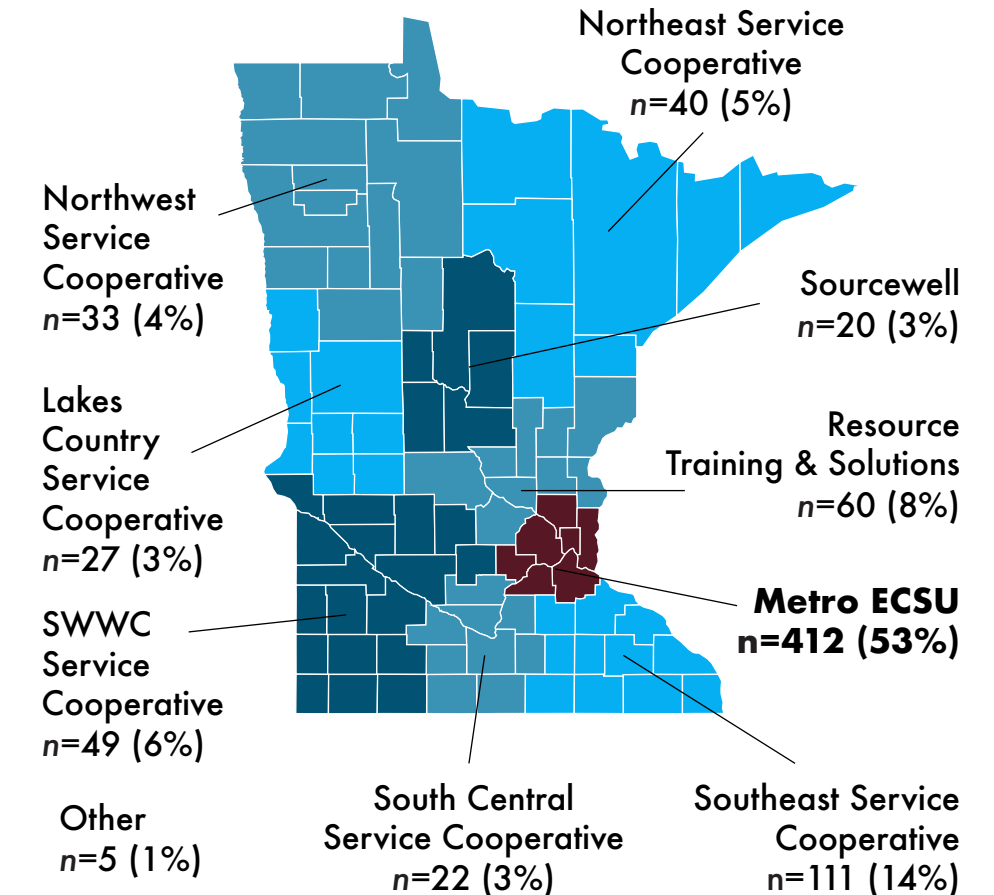
CURRENT ROLE

Survey participants were asked to indicate their current role. Most respondents indicated they are currently a *principal*, *director*, or *co-director* (*n*=547, 70% of responses), about one-quarter indicated they are an *assistant* or *associate principal* (*n*=204, 26%), and a small minority selected *other* (*n*=26, 3%). Common *other* responses included superintendent, a combined principal/superintendent role, and executive director.

GENDER IDENTITY

Approximately half of respondents identified as female (n=310, 49%), half identified as male (n=313, 50%), and a small number preferred not to answer (n=7, 1%). This breakdown mirrors that of the overall population of Minnesota school leaders, 47% of whom are female and 53% of whom are male. Information on Minnesota school leaders' demographic characteristics was obtained through a public data request from the Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB).

RACE/ETHNICITY

Table 1 displays the racial/ethnic identities of survey respondents.

Table 1. Responses by Participant Race/Ethnicity

Racial/ethnic identity	N	%
White	549	87%
Black or African American	26	4%
Two or More Races	17	3%
Asian	10	2%
Hispanic/Latino	8	1%
American Indian or Alaska Native	2	0.3%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	2	0.3%
I prefer not to answer.	12	2%
Other	2	0.3%
Total	**628**	**100%**

Of the 628 respondents indicating their race/ethnicity, a large majority (n=549, 87%) identify as *White*. The next most common response categories included *Black or African American* (*n*=26, 4%), *two or more races* (*n*=17, 3%), *I prefer not to answer* (*n*=12, 2%), and *Asian* (*n*=10, 2%). Again, this demographic breakdown is comparable to the statewide population of school leaders, 89% of whom are White, 4% of whom are Black or African American, 2% are two or more races, and 2% are Asian. Furthermore, statewide, 2% of school leaders identify as Hispanic or Latino, 1% identify as American Indian or Alaska Native, and <1% identify as Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander.

COMMUNITY MEMBERSHIP

Participants were also asked to indicate if they lived in the same community in which they work. Overall, about half of respondents (48%) replied *Yes* and half (52%) replied *No*. However, a comparison between Greater MN and Metro responses revealed that Greater MN respondents were far more likely to select *Yes* than Metro respondents (65% vs. 32%, respectively, p<0.001; see Figure 2). The difference between Elementary and Secondary responses was nonsignificant.

Figure 2. "Yes, I Live in the Same Community in Which I Work"

Legend:
- Overall
- Twin Cites Metro Area
- Greater Minnesota

48%
32%
65%

Percent of respondents answering "yes"
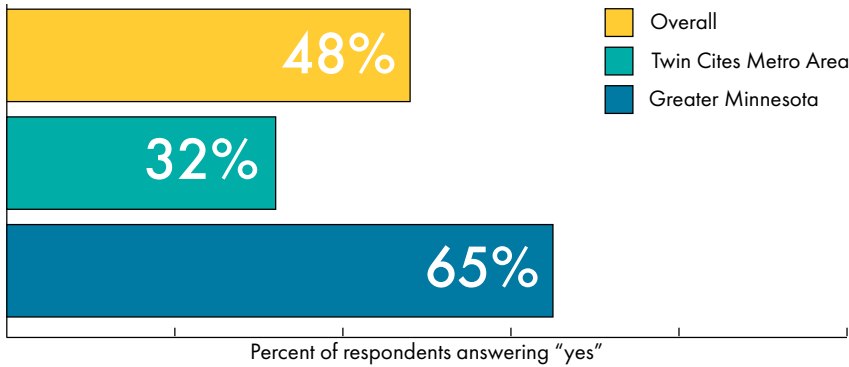
CAREER INFORMATION

Two sections of the survey asked respondents to provide information about their career pathways and experiences. This section summarizes response data from both sections, and includes information about such topics as role tenure, prior roles, job selection factors, and future plans.

YEARS IN CURRENT ROLE

Respondents were asked, *For how many years have you been working in your current role?* Table 2, below, displays averages for each of five groups of respondents: Overall, Greater MN, Metro, Elementary, and Secondary.

Table 2. Average Years in Current Role by Geography and Level

	N	Years
Overall	768	6.7
Greater MN	356	6.7
Metro	407	6.8
Elementary	376	7.4
Secondary	366	6.2

Overall, respondents reported an average of 6.7 years in their current role. However, the distribution of responses was highly positively skewed, with the largest proportion of responses (194 of 768, or 25%) falling in the 0- to 2-year range (see Figure 3). That is, while some school leaders have served in their roles for well over a decade, most are relatively new to their roles.

While the difference in experience in the current role between Greater MN and Metro respondents was nonsignificant, that between Elementary and Secondary respondents was found to be significant ($p<.01$), with Elementary school leaders having been in their roles longer on average than Secondary school leaders (7.4 versus 6.2 years, respectively).

PATH TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP

We then asked participants to indicate their prior two roles and the number of years they had spent in each role. Tables 3 and 4, next page, display the breakdown of responses for participants currently working as principals (defined here as those indicating their current role was *Principal, Director,* or *Co-director* alongside the average number of years they had spent in prior roles.

The most common role held immediately prior to the principalship was *assistant* or *associate principal* (35%), followed by *principal* (of a different school; 29%), and *teacher* (13%). *Other* responses (*n*=29; 5%) included a variety of school- and district-level roles, university-based positions, and positions outside of public education.

Figure 3. Years in Current Role
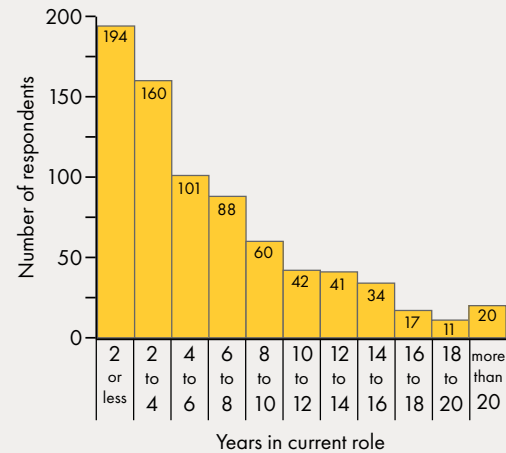
Figure 4. Years of Teaching Experience
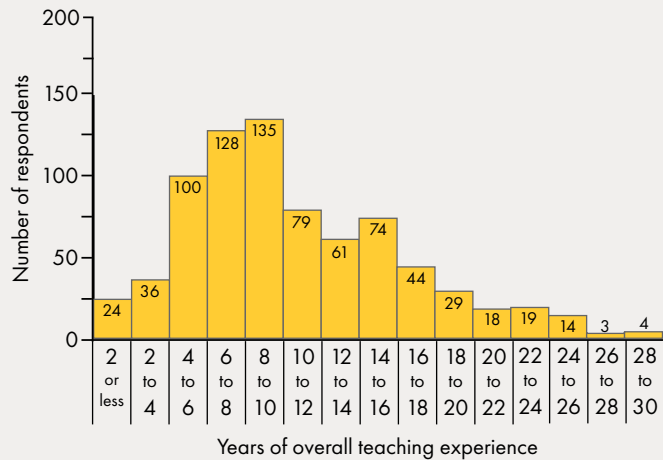
Figure 5. Years Expecting to Remain in Current Role
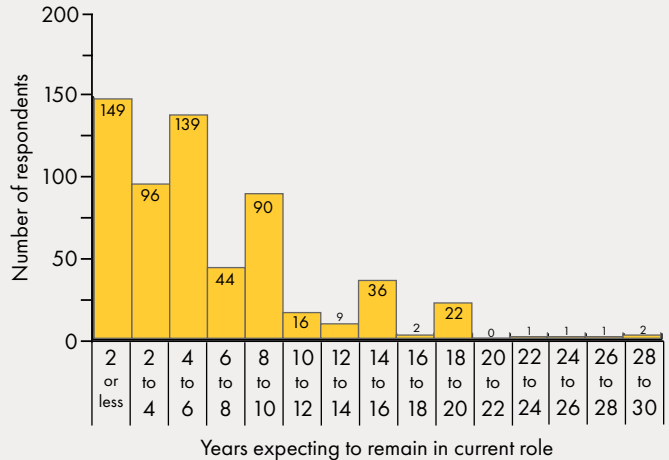
The most common roles held two roles prior to their current role were *teacher* (40%), followed by *assistant or associate principal* (13%) and *principal* (of a different school; 12%). *Other* responses (n=51; 10%) primarily included various school- and district-level positions (e.g., Program Coordinator, Activities Director).

Table 3. Role before current

	N	%	Years
Assistant or Associate Principal	189	35%	4.3
Principal	155	29%	5.6
Teacher	72	13%	12.6
Dean	42	8%	3.5
Other	29	5%	3.4
Instructional Coach	26	5%	3.4
Director	24	4%	6.0
Co-Director	5	1%	4.0
Counselor	1	0.2%	8.0
Total	**543**	**100%**	**5.7**

Table 4. Role before prior

	N	%	Years
Teacher	197	40%	10.4
Assistant or Associate Principal	66	13%	4.7
Principal	58	12%	5.1
Dean	54	11%	2.8
Other	51	10%	3.8
Instructional Coach	33	7%	3.1
Director	17	3%	3.3
Counselor	11	2%	8.1
Co-Director	3	1%	6.7
Social Worker	3	1%	7.3
School Psychologist	1	0.2%	3.0
Total	**494**	**100%**	**6.6**

Prior Teaching Experience

Survey respondents were asked to indicate the number of years of teaching experience they had prior to becoming a school leader. Table 5 displays the average years of teaching experience for each of five groups of respondents: Overall, Greater MN, Metro, Elementary, and Secondary.

Table 5. Average Teaching Experience by Geography and Level

	N	Years
Overall	768	11.1
Greater MN	358	12.2
Metro	405	10.3
Elementary	376	11.9
Secondary	367	10.4

Overall, respondents reported having between 0 and 30 years of prior teaching experience, averaging 11.1 years. The distribution of responses is shown in Figure 4 (previous page), with the largest proportion of responses (135 of 768, or 18%) falling in the 8- to 10-year range.

Subgroup analyses revealed notable differences across both geography and level. Greater MN respondents reported having more teaching experience than did Metro respondents, on average (12.2 years versus 10.3 years, respectively, $p<.001$), and Elementary respondents reported having more teaching experience than did Secondary respondents (11.9 years versus 10.4 years, respectively, $p<.001$).

Job Selection Factors

We asked school leaders, *When deciding whether to pursue your current position, what were the most important factors you considered?* Participants could select up to 3 factors among a list of 14 options. Table 6 (right) shows the percentage of respondents who selected each option, ordered from most frequently-selected to least frequently-selected. The top job selection factor, by far, was *opportunity for impact*, with two-thirds (67%) of respondents selecting this response option. Other top factors included *location* (33%), *school mission or vision* (24%), *compensation* (20%), *leadership structure* (20%), and *staff culture* (20%). Among participants who selected *other* (*n*=70; 9%), many identified wanting to work in their hometown or home district as one of the most important factors in pursuing their current position. Other common

responses included being influenced by a mentor to apply for the role or being asked by a superior to fill a vacant role.

Table 6. Job Selection Factors, Overall

Factor	N	%
Opportunity for impact	517	67%
Location	250	33%
School mission or vision	181	24%
Compensation	152	20%
Leadership structure	152	20%
Staff culture	151	20%
Student demographic characteristics	146	19%
Future career opportunities	146	19%
School size	113	15%
Characteristics of the surrounding community	111	14%
Quality of staff	86	11%
Other (please specify)	70	9%
Your district or charter authorizer leadership	61	8%
Benefits	30	4%
Total respondents	**768**	**100%**

While opportunity for impact was the most frequently-chosen job selection factor across all subgroups, there were several noteworthy differences between Greater MN and Metro responses to this question. Greater MN respondents were more likely than Metro respondents to select location (42% vs. 24%, respectively), school size (24% vs. 7%), and benefits (6% vs. 2%). Greater MN respondents were less likely than Metro respondents to select school mission or vision (14% vs. 32%, respectively) and student demographic characteristics (11% vs. 26%).

There were no notable differences in the selections of Elementary and Secondary school leaders. Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A1.

FUTURE PLANS

The previous section described school leaders' pathway to their current jobs and the factors that influenced their role selection decisions. This section explores the factors that influence leaders' decisions to stay in their jobs, the length of time they expect to remain in their roles, and what they hope to do next.

Job Continuation Factors

Akin to the question about leaders' reasons for choosing their jobs, we also asked, *when deciding whether to continue in your current position, what are the most important factors you consider?* Participants could select up to 3 of 15 listed factors. Table 7 shows the percentage of respondents who selected each option, ordered from most frequently-selected to least frequently-selected.

Table 7. Job Continuation Factors, Overall

Factor	N	%
Opportunity for impact	340	54%
Staff culture	273	43%
Leadership structure	145	23%
Compensation	137	22%
Decision-making autonomy	109	17%
Future career opportunities	107	17%
School mission or vision	100	16%
Quality of staff	98	15%
Location	96	15%
District or charter network leadership	82	13%
Characteristics of the surrounding community	73	12%
Other	56	9%
Benefits	49	8%
Student demographic characteristics	45	7%
School size	33	5%
Total respondents	**633**	**100%**

Consistent with school leaders' most important reasons for choosing their jobs, *opportunity for impact* was the most common reason cited for remaining in their roles, with 54% of all respondents selecting this option.

Other top job continuation factors included *staff culture* (43%), l*eadership structure* (23%), *compensation* (22%), and *decision-making autonomy* (17%). Themes among other responses (*n*=56; 9%) included mental health considerations, workload, and proximity to retirement.

Comparing Greater MN and Metro respondents yielded several noteworthy findings. Greater MN respondents were more likely than Metro respondents to select *characteristics of the surrounding community* (16% vs. 7%, respectively), and less likely than Metro respondents to select *school mission or vision* (10% vs. 20%) and *student demographic characteristics* (4% vs. 10%).

Comparing Elementary and Secondary respondents, Elementary respondents were more likely than Secondary respondents to select *school size* (7% vs. 3%, respectively). Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A2.

Anticipated Tenure in Current Role

Respondents were also asked to indicate the number of years they planned to stay in their current roles. Table 8 displays the average anticipated tenure in the current role for each of five groups of respondents: Overall, Greater MN, Metro, Elementary, and Secondary.

Table 8. Average Anticipated Tenure in Current Role by Geography and Level

	N	Years
Overall	608	6.5
Greater MN	287	6.7
Metro	317	6.3
Elementary	310	6.6
Secondary	277	6.3

Overall, respondents expected to stay in their jobs for an average of 6.5 years, including the current school year. As was the case above for years in the current role, the distribution of responses was highly positively skewed, with the largest proportion of responses (149 of 608, or 25%) falling in the 0- to 2-year range (see Figure 5, page 15). That is, while some respondents expect to remain in their roles for another decade or more, a substantial proportion of respondents anticipate leaving their roles in the next few years. There were no significant differences in the responses of Greater MN and Metro participants, nor between Elementary and Secondary participants.

Next Steps

The final question in this section of the survey asked participants, *what do you hope to do upon leaving your current role, whenever that may be?* Participants were given a list of 8 options and could select only 1. Table 9 displays the breakdown of responses, ordered from most to least frequently-selected.

Table 9. Next Steps in Career, Overall

Option	N	%
Retire	201	32%
Undecided	128	20%
Take a position in a different school	107	17%
Take a position in educational administration at the district or charter authorizer level	72	11%
Other (please specify):	37	6%
Work in a sector outside of public education	34	5%
Work in public education in some other capacity not described above	27	4%
Take a different position in the same school	23	4%
Total respondents	**629**	**100%**

The most common response overall and across all subgroups was *retire*, with nearly two-thirds of respondents (32%) selecting this option. Other top selections included *undecided* (20%), *take a position in a different school* (17%), and *take a position in educational administration at the district or charter authorizer level* (11%). Participants that selected *other* (*n*=37, or 6% of responses) primarily identified moving into a school or district leadership role or moving into a higher education teaching role as a likely next step.

There were no notable differences in response breakdowns between Greater MN and Metro respondents or between Elementary and Secondary respondents, with one exception being that Metro respondents were 2.4 times more likely than Greater MN respondents to select *other* (8% vs. 3%, respectively). Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A3.

PREPARATION AND LICENSURE

In the state of Minnesota, "principals" serving in traditional district schools must be licensed according to Minnesota Administrative Rule 3512.0220. Charter school leaders are not required by Minnesota Rule to be licensed as a K-12 principal. To earn a K-12 principal license, candidates must demonstrate competency in ten core leadership areas and 86 specific competencies per Minnesota Administrative Rule 3512.0510 via one of the 14 approved administrative licensure programs, and complete an internship of 340 hours.

One section of the survey included a series of questions about participants' administrative licensure and leadership preparation experiences. Overall, 98% of respondents indicated they had completed an administrative licensure program. In the paragraphs that follow, we describe participants' perceptions of their level of preparation across various school leadership domains as well as their thoughts on the content and experiences they felt were missing from their administrative licensure preparation programs. Respondents did indicate which preparation program they attended. The program-specific information will be shared with each of the 14 individual administrative licensure programs upon request, though not reported publicly.

LEVEL OF PREPARATION IN LEADERSHIP DOMAINS

Those individuals who answered that they had completed an administrative licensure program (*n*=753) were asked to indicate the level of preparation their licensure programs provided in 30 leadership domains (derived from the "Core leadership competencies for Minnesota administrative licenses" as detailed in Minnesota Statute 3512.0510, Subpart 1). Participants could select one of the following response options for each domain: *1-little to no preparation, 2-insufficient preparation, 3-sufficient preparation*, or *4-more than sufficient preparation*. Table 10 displays the mean level of preparation (possible range 1-4) for all 30 leadership domains, ordered highest to lowest.

Overall, respondents reported the highest level of preparation in the following domains: *Applying the code of ethics for school administrators* (mean = 3.26), *Understanding the role of education in a democratic society* (3.12), *Understanding educational policy and regulations (e.g., special education, student discipline)* (3.11), *Sharing leadership with teachers and staff* (3.03), and *Analyzing problems to identify causes and solutions* (3.01).

Table 10. Mean Level of Preparation in Administrative Leadership Domains, Overall

Domain	Mean (1-4)
Applying the code of ethics for school administrators	3.26
Understanding the role of education in a democratic society	3.12
Understanding educational policy and regulations (e.g., special education, student discipline)	3.11
Sharing leadership with teachers and staff	3.03
Analyzing problems to identify causes and solutions	3.01
Communicating effectively to different audiences	2.97
Understanding laws and regulations governing human resource management	2.91
Establishing a mission and vision for your school	2.91
Analyzing data to inform decision-making	2.90
Supporting instruction that is consistent with principles of child learning and development	2.89
Understanding school districts as political systems	2.87
Holding students to high academic expectations	2.86
Applying research to inform curricular decisions	2.85
Developing teachers as professionals	2.84
Developing policies and procedures to promote a safe learning environment	2.81
Resolving conflicts	2.80
Aligning educational constituents in support of school priorities	2.80
Implementing state academic standards	2.79
Evaluating staff performance	2.76
Facilitating productive meetings	2.76
Using assessment data to monitor student progress	2.75
Advocating publicly for the needs of students	2.74
Managing budgets	2.74
Formulating a site improvement plan	2.67
Managing facilities	2.66
Ensuring equitable student access to learning opportunities	2.63
Addressing emergency and crisis situations	2.59
Recruiting and retaining staff	2.56
Supporting instruction that is culturally responsive	2.46
Leveraging students' cultural backgrounds as assets for teaching and learning	2.45

In contrast, respondents reported the lowest level of preparation in the areas of *Leveraging students' cultural backgrounds as assets for teaching and learning* (2.45), *Supporting instruction that is culturally responsive* (2.46), *Recruiting and retaining staff* (2.56), *Addressing emergency and crisis situations* (2.59), and *Ensuring equitable student access to learning opportunities* (2.63). Notably, three of these five areas of least preparation pertain to the practice of Culturally Responsive School Leadership, a theme that resurfaced in a later section of the survey regarding school leaders' self-efficacy across various leadership activities.

To analyze differences in responses between Greater MN and Metro participants, and between Elementary and Secondary participants, subgroup means were calculated and compared according to the procedure detailed in the Methods section of this report. Greater MN participants reported higher levels of preparation than Metro participants in the areas of *Ensuring equitable student access to learning opportunities* (2.72 vs. 2.55, respectively) and *Facilitating productive meetings* (2.84 vs. 2.68, respectively). No notable differences were found between Elementary and Secondary respondents. All subgroup means are provided in Appendix Table A4.

CONTENT AND EXPERIENCE MISSING FROM ADMINISTRATIVE LICENSURE PROGRAMS

Individuals who completed an administrative licensure program were also asked two follow-up questions about their experiences in their preparation programs.

Content Missing from Administrative Licensure Coursework

The survey asked program completers, *what content, if any, was missing from your administrative licensure coursework that you wish had been addressed?* Respondents could select up to 3 options from a list of 8 (including an *other* option with text entry). Table 11, right, displays the response frequencies for each option, ordered from most to least frequently selected. Overall, 657 participants answered the question. Top responses included *culturally responsive teaching* (58% of respondents), *family and community engagement best practices* (36%), and *special education due process* (32%). Themes among *other* responses (*n*=34, or 5% of respondents) included student behavior, staff mental health, and equity.

Table 11. Coursework Missing from Administrative Licensure Programs

Content type	N	%
Culturally responsive teaching	380	58%
Family and community engagement best practices	239	36%
Special Education due process	207	32%
Staff recruitment and retention best practices	206	31%
Teacher development and evaluation best practices	174	26%
Data-driven decision-making	132	20%
School finance	124	19%
Other (please specify):	34	5%
Total respondents	**657**	**100%**

Comparing response frequencies between Greater MN and Metro respondents and between Elementary and Secondary respondents yielded only one notable difference: Greater MN respondents were 13 percentage points less likely than Metro respondents to select *culturally responsive teaching* (51% vs. 64%, respectively) as missing from administrative licensure coursework. Despite this difference, *culturally responsive teaching* was still the most frequently-selected response among principals in both regions. Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A5.

Experiences Missing from Administrative Licensure Internship

Similarly, program completers were asked, *what experiences, if any, were missing from your administrative licensure internship that you wish had been included?* Again, respondents could select up to 3 options (including an other option with text entry) from a list of 14. Table 12, right, displays response frequencies in order from most to least selected. Overall, 691 participants answered the question. Top responses included *facilitating conversations about equity* (46% of respondents), *addressing staff culture challenges* (35%), and *developing and evaluating non-teaching staff* (22%). Themes among *other* responses (*n*=44, or 6% of respondents) included experience leading amongst political or ideological division, pandemic or crisis management, and addressing staff and student mental health needs.

Table 12. Experiences Missing from Administrative Licensure Internships

Experience	N	%
Facilitating conversations about equity	320	46%
Addressing staff culture challenges	243	35%
Developing and evaluating non-teaching staff	152	22%
Engaging families and community members	146	21%
Scheduling experience	146	21%
Addressing student discipline challenges	145	21%
Developing and evaluating teachers	137	20%
Budgeting experience	130	19%
Facilitating professional development	111	16%
Analyzing data to inform decisions	87	13%
Supervising staff	49	7%
Hiring new staff	47	7%
Other (please specify)	44	6%
Making administrative decisions	31	4%
Total respondents	**691**	**100%**

Secondary respondents were 13 percentage points more likely to select *scheduling experience* than were Elementary respondents (27% vs. 14%, respectively), likely due to the scheduling demands that are unique to secondary school administration. No other notable differences were identified when comparing responses between geographic or school level subgroups. Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A6.

WORKING CONDITIONS

Multiple survey questions were designed to ask about the nature, intensity, and subjective quality of school leaders' work lives. This section summarizes findings pertaining to respondents' workloads, compensation and benefits, influence across various decision-making domains, and job satisfaction.

WORKLOAD

Several aspects of principals' workloads were examined, including work hours per week, work days per year, actual and ideal time use across leadership functions, and perceptions of the sustainability of their jobs.

Work Hours per Week

All participants were asked to report how many hours they spend on all school-relevant activities during a typical full week. Figure 6 displays the overall distribution of responses, with the largest number of responses falling between the 55-60 hour range.

Figure 6. Work Hours per Week, Overall
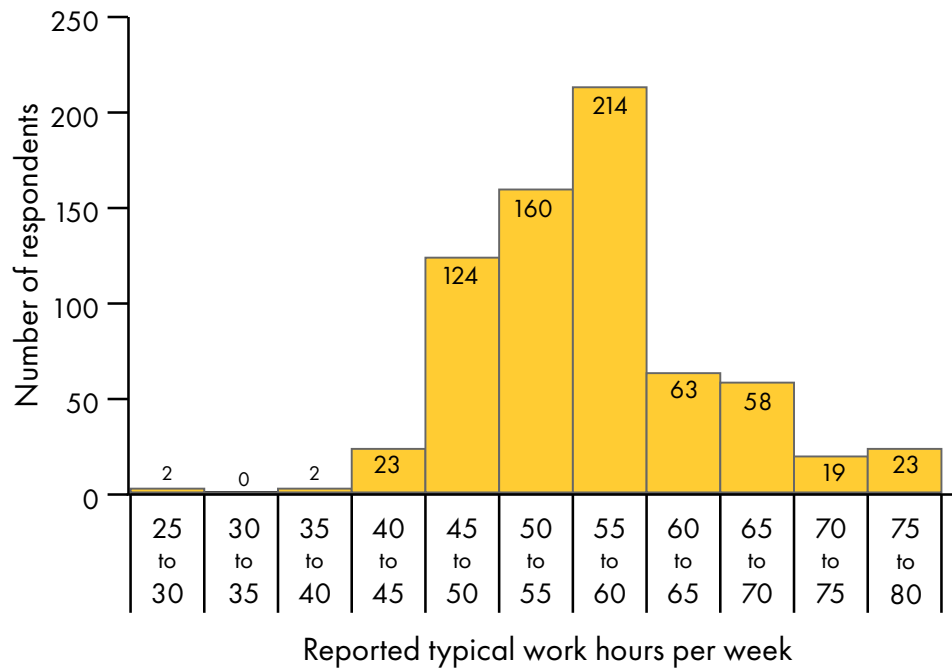
Note. Excludes values < 20 (n=19).

Table 13 displays the average work hours per week for each of five groups of respondents: Overall, Greater MN, Metro, Elementary, and Secondary. Overall, respondents worked an average of 58.6 hours per week, nearly 20 hours more per week than is considered full-time work in the United States.

Table 13. Average Work Hours per Week by Geography and Level

	N	Mean
Overall	688	58.6
Greater MN	315	58.9
Metro	368	58.3
Elementary	341	58.6
Secondary	323	58.7

Note. Excludes values < 20 (n=19).

Differences in average weekly work hours between Greater MN and Metro participants and between Elementary and Secondary participants were nonsignificant.

Work Days per Year

Participants were also asked to indicate the number of days per year they are required to work under their current contract. Figure 7 displays the overall distribution of responses, with the largest number of responses falling between the 220-230 day range.

Figure 7. Work Days per Year, Overall
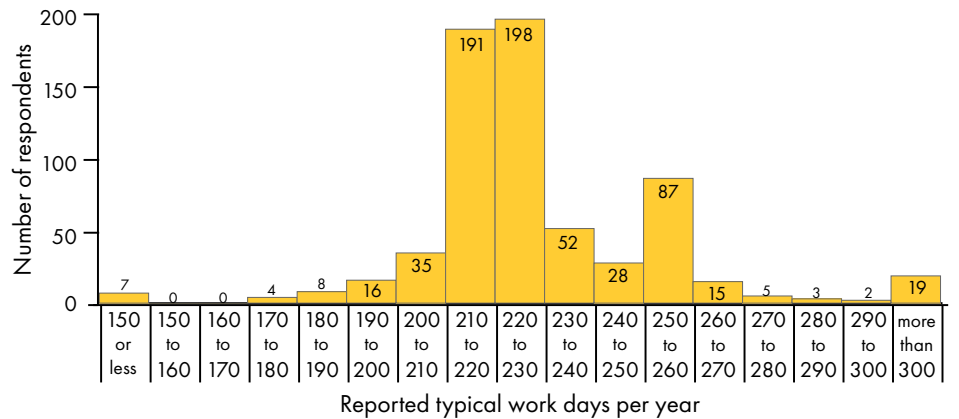
Note. Excludes values < 100 (n=12).

Table 14 displays the average number of contract work days overall and across geographic and level variables. Overall, respondents reported that their contracts required them to work an average of 231.3 days of the year.

Table 14. Average Work Days per Year by Geography and Level

	N	Mean
Overall	670	231.3
Greater MN	318	225.9
Metro	347	235.8
Elementary	336	230.1
Secondary	311	232.3

Note. Excludes values < 100 (n=12).

In comparing subgroup responses, we found a significant difference across geography, but not across school level. Specifically, Greater MN respondents reported being required to work approximately 10 days less per year than Metro respondents (225.9 vs. 235.8 days, respectively; $p<.001$).

Workload Sustainability

We asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, *my workload is sustainable*, specifically in reference to their work experience over the past three months (roughly since the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year). Figure 8 shows the breakdown of responses across all participants (n=635). Overall, fewer than half (46%) of respondents somewhat agreed or agreed that their workloads are sustainable.

Figure 8. (*n*=635)

"My workload is sustainable."

25%	29%	26%	19%
Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
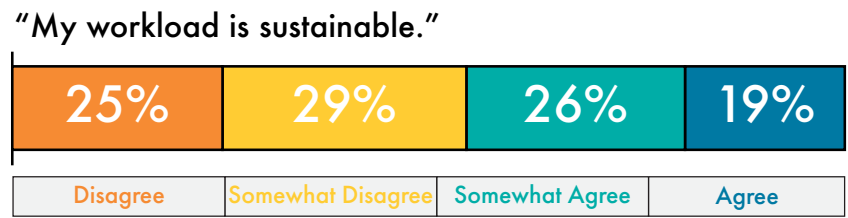
Subgroup analyses revealed no statistically significant differences between the responses of Greater MN and Metro participants nor between Elementary and Secondary participants. Response frequencies for subgroups are provided in Appendix Table A10.

Use of Time across Leadership Functions

One topic of particular interest to the educational constituents involved in the creation of the survey was the use of school leader time across various types of leadership tasks. A resulting survey item asked respondents to characterize the time they typically spend on five types of tasks by selecting one of five response options: *Much less time than I would ideally spend, Somewhat less time than I would ideally spend, About the right amount of time, Somewhat more time than I would ideally spend,* and *Much more time than I would ideally spend.*

The five types of tasks were described as follows:
- **Internal administrative tasks**, including human resource/ personnel issues, scheduling, regulations, reports, school budget, and attending operational meetings;
- **Instructional tasks**, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, mentoring teachers, and educator professional development;
- **Student interactions**, including academic guidance, discipline, seeking student input and engagement, and developing student relationships;
- **Family and community interactions**, including formal and informal interactions, attending events, engagement with specific groups, and seeking parent or community member input; and
- **My own professional growth**, including critical self-reflection, attending professional development, reviewing research, reading, and networking with other administrative colleagues.

Figure 9 displays the breakdown of responses across all participants. Overall, respondents reported spending more time than they would ideally spend on **internal administrative tasks** (61% reported spending *Somewhat more* or *Much more time than ideal* in this area; *n*=711).

In contrast, respondents reported spending less time than they would ideally spend on **instructional tasks** (62% selected *Somewhat less* or *Much less time than ideal*; *n*=710), **family and community interactions** (51% selected *Somewhat less* or *Much less time than ideal*; *n*=711), and **my own professional growth** (74% selected *Somewhat less* or *Much less time than ideal*; *n*=710).

Responses were more balanced for the category of **student interactions**, with 30% of respondents reporting spending *more time than ideal* in this area, 30% reporting spending *less time than ideal* in this area, and 40% spending *about the right amount of time* (*n*=709).

Figure 9. Time Spent on Various Leadership Tasks, Overall (*n*=635)
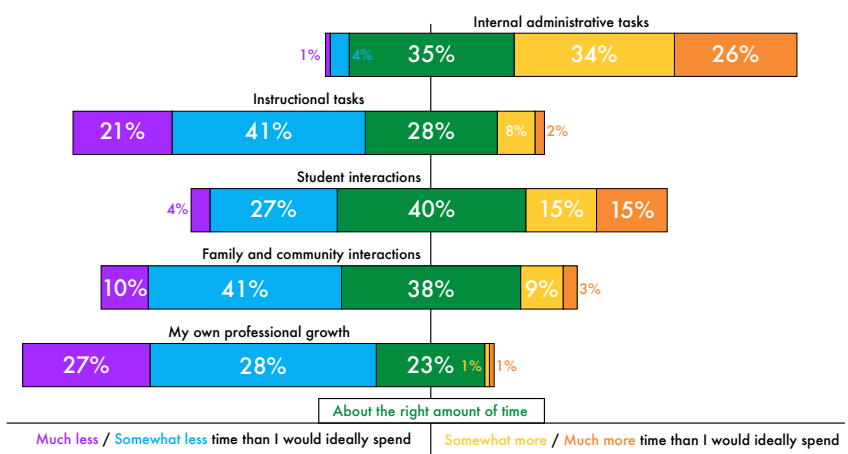
Response breakdowns were compared across geographic and school level variables, with largely consistent findings across subgroups. No notable differences were found between Greater MN and Metro respondents (here, a "notable" difference is defined as a difference in subgroup response frequencies of 10 percentage points or more for one or more response options). Secondary respondents were 15 percentage points more likely to report spending somewhat more or much more time than ideal in the area of **student interactions** than were Elementary respondents (38% vs. 23%, respectively). Subgroup response breakdowns are provided in Appendix Table A7.

Principal as Instructional Leader: Belief Versus Capacity

Given previous research demonstrating the tremendous impact principals have on student learning (Grissom et al., 2021; Wahlstrom et al., 2010; Leithwood & Riehl, 2003; Marks & Printy, 2003; Marzano et al., 2005; Waters et al., 2003), principals' role as an instructional leader is one of paramount importance. We asked participants to respond to two survey items designed to understand (a) the extent to which they believe their primary role is to be an instructional leader, and (b) the extent to which they feel their supervisor ensures they have the time to be an instructional leader.

Figure 10 shows the breakdown of responses to these two items across all participants.

Overall, 79% of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* with the statement, *my primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional*

leader (*n*=634). However, only 61% of respondents somewhat agreed or agreed with the statement, *my supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader* (*n*=633), suggesting a gap exists between school leaders' belief in the importance of their instructional leadership role and the time they have available to act on that belief.

Figure 10. Responses to Instructional Leadership Items

"My primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader"

5%	16%	35%	44%

"My supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader"

11%	28%	39%	21%

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
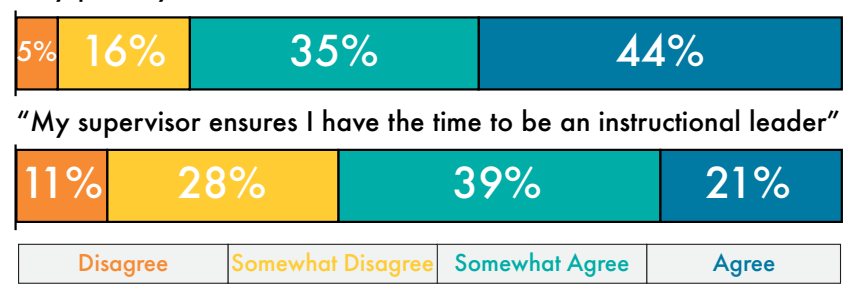
Subgroup analyses revealed that Greater MN respondents were somewhat less likely to *somewhat agree* or *agree* with the statement, *my primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader* than Metro respondents (75% vs. 82%, respectively, *p*=.03). Elementary respondents were somewhat more likely to *somewhat agree* or *agree* with the same statement than Secondary respondents (83% vs. 75%, respectively, *p*=.02).

There were no significant differences between geographic and level subgroups' responses to the statement, *my supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader*. Subgroup response breakdowns are provided in Appendix Table A8.

COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

This section describes results regarding school leaders' compensation, out-of-pocket expenses, and benefits.

Salary and Expenditures

We asked all participants to provide their current annual base salary before taxes and deductions. Figure 11 displays the overall distribution of responses, with the largest number of responses falling between the $110,000–$120,000 range.

Figure 11. Histogram of Annual Base Salary, Overall

Reported annual salary, in units of $1,000
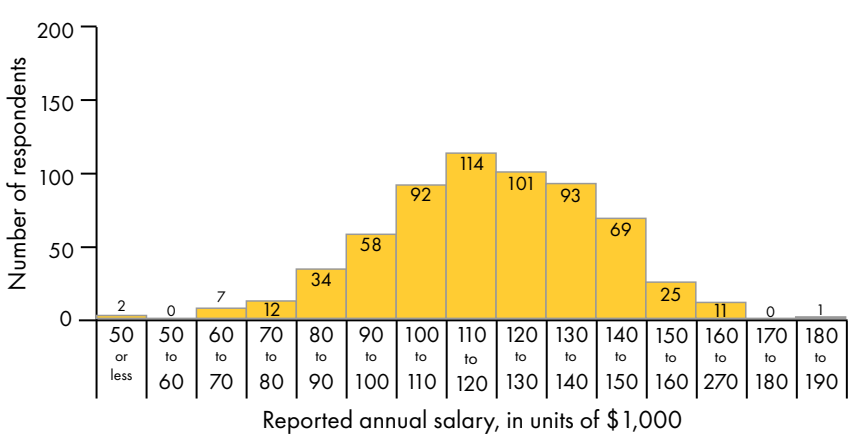
Note. Excludes values <$30,000 (n=3).

Table 15 displays the average reported salary overall and across geographic and level variables. Overall, respondents reported making an average of $119,904.

Table 15. Average Annual Base Salary by Geography and Level

	N	Mean
Overall	619	$119,904
Greater MN	293	$109,142
Metro	322	$129,993
Elementary	316	$119,318
Secondary	282	$120,853

Note. Excludes values < $30,000 (n=3).

Differences in average salary were significant between geographic subgroups but not between school level subgroups. Greater MN respondents reported making about $20,000 less per year, on average, than Metro respondents ($109,142 vs. $129,993, respectively, *p*=.03). Average Elementary and Secondary salaries were comparable ($119,318 vs. $120,853, respectively).

Additionally, we asked participants to report how much of their own money they typically spend each year on food, supplies, or other items for their school's staff, students, and families. Overall, 97% of respondents indicated they typically spent some amount of their own

money, while 3% reported spending $0 (*n*=689). The overall distribution of responses, excluding $0 responses, is shown as a histogram in Figure 12. Responses varied widely, with the largest number of responses falling into the $400–$600 range.

Figure 12. Histogram of Out-of-Pocket School Expenditures, Overall

Reported annual expenditures, in units of $100
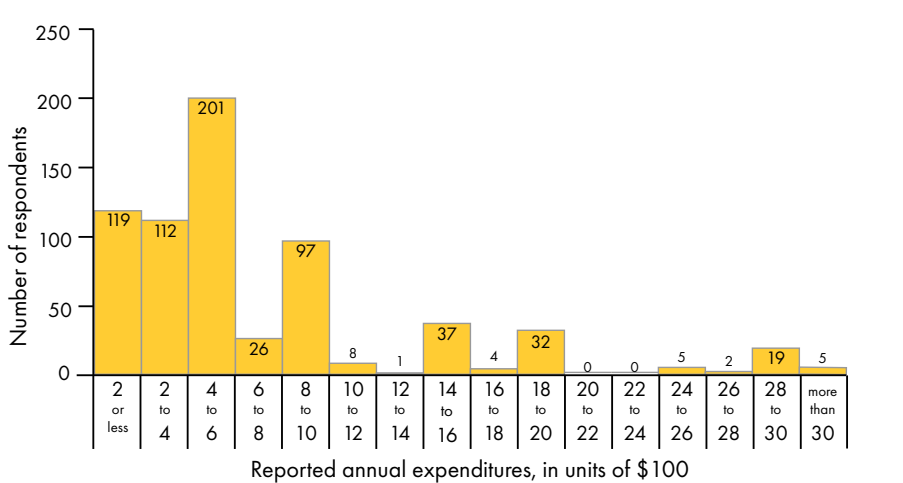
Note. Excludes responses of $0 (n=21).

Table 16 displays the average reported out-of-pocket expenditures overall and across geographic and level variables. Overall, respondents reported spending an average of $757 of their own money on food, supplies, or other items for their school communities.

Table 16. Average Out-of-Pocket School Expenditures by Geography and Level

	N	Mean
Overall	668	$757
Greater MN	311	$712
Metro	352	$790
Elementary	340	$808
Secondary	304	$701

Note. Excludes responses of $0 (n=21).

The difference in out-of-pocket expenditures between Greater MN and Metro respondents was found to be nonsignificant. However, Elementary respondents reported spending about $100 more per year, on average,

than Secondary respondents ($808 vs. $701, *p*=0.002. Note: Due to the skewed distribution of this variable, we used a logarithmic transformation method (Howell, 2012) to normalize the data prior to conducting significance testing. The p value reported here corresponds to the converted means, $572 and $459 for Elementary and Secondary school responses, respectively).

Satisfaction with Compensation and Benefits

Three survey items asked respondents to gauge the appropriateness of their compensation and the adequacy of their healthcare and retirement benefits. Figure 13 displays the breakdown of responses to these items across all participants.

Overall, approximately two-thirds of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* with the statement, *my compensation is appropriate for the work I do* (64%, n=635). About three-fourths of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* with *my healthcare benefits are adequate* (76%, <u>n</u>=635) and *my retirement benefits are adequate* (77%, n=634).

Across all three of these survey items, differences in response breakdowns between Greater MN and Metro participants and between Elementary and Secondary participants were nonsignificant. Subgroup response breakdowns are provided in Appendix Table A9.

Figure 13. Responses to Compensation and Benefits Items

"My compensation is appropriate for the work I do"

11%	28%	39%	21%

"My healthcare benefits are adequate"

9%	16%	35%	44%

"My retirement benefits are adequate"

6%	16%	35%	44%

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
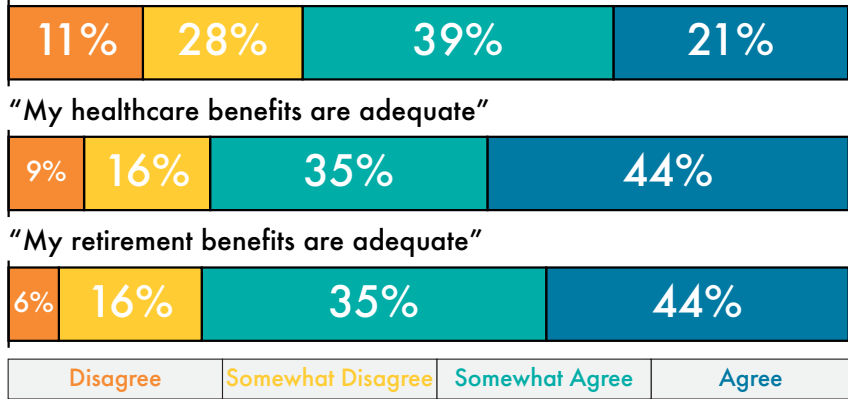
DECISION-MAKING INFLUENCE

We asked participants to respond to a series of items designed to gauge the extent to which they felt they had decision-making influence across a range of school leadership domains (this survey item was adapted from the 2015-16 National Teacher and Principal Survey Principal Questionnaire, National Center for Education Statistics, 2015). Participants could select one of the following four response options for each domain: *1-no influence, 2-minor influence, 3-moderate influence,* or *4-major influence*. Table 17 displays the mean level of influence (possible range 1-4) for all 8 decision-making domains, ordered highest to lowest.

Overall, respondents reported the highest level of influence in the following decision-making domains: *hiring new teachers* (mean=3.77), *evaluating teachers* (3.64), and *addressing staff performance concerns* (3.59). Respondents reported the lowest level of influence in the domains of *establishing curriculum* (2.59), *setting performance standards for students* (2.84), and *deciding how the school budget will be spent* (2.93).

Table 17. Mean Level of Influence on School-Level Decisions, Overall

Domain	Mean Rating (1-4)	N
Hiring new teachers	3.77	693
Evaluating teachers	3.64	691
Addressing staff performance concerns	3.59	693
Establishing discipline practices	3.54	694
Determining the content of in-service professional development programs for teachers	3.22	694
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	2.93	694
Setting performance standards for students	2.84	693
Establishing curriculum	2.59	693

Subgroup means were calculated to analyze differences in responses between Greater MN and Metro participants, and between Elementary and Secondary participants. Greater MN participants reported higher levels of influence than Metro participants in the area of *setting performance standards for students* (2.97 vs. 2.73, respectively). Elementary participants reported higher levels of influence than Secondary participants in the area of *deciding how the school budget will be spent* (3.05 vs. 2.81, respectively). No other notable differences

between subgroups were identified. All subgroup means are provided in Appendix Table A12.

JOB SATISFACTION

Two survey items asked respondents about their general satisfaction with their jobs and the elements that most contributed to their satisfaction at work. First, we asked participants to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, *I am generally satisfied with being a leader at this school*, prompting them to think specifically about their experience over the past three months (roughly since the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year).

Figure 14 shows the breakdown of responses across all participants (n=635). Overall, 83% of participants *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that they were generally satisfied, with nearly half of respondents (48%) selecting the top category, *agree*.

Figure 14. Responses to General Job Satisfaction Item
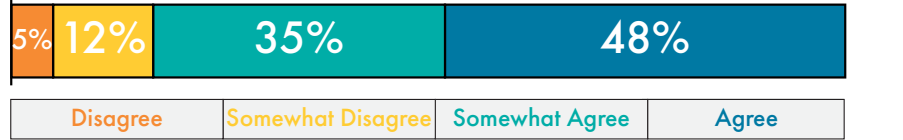
5%	12%	35%	48%

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree

There were no significant differences between the response distributions of Greater MN and Metro participants, nor between those of Elementary and Secondary participants. Subgroup response breakdowns are provided in Appendix Table A11.

Next, we asked participants to indicate which elements of their jobs most contributed to their satisfaction at work. Participants could select up to 3 elements from a list of 9 (including an *other* option with text entry). Table 18, next page, displays the response frequencies for each option, ordered from most to least selected.

Overall, 634 participants answered the question. Top responses included *relationships with students* (68%), *relationships with staff* (60%), *seeing students grow socially and emotionally* (48%), and *seeing students grow academically* (37%). Common *other* responses (*n*=10, or 2% of respondents) included relationships (generally) and comments such as all of the above.

Table 18. Elements Most Contributing to Satisfaction at Work, Overall

Job element	N	%
Relationships with students	433	68%
Relationships with staff	378	60%
Seeing students grow socially and emotionally	305	48%
Seeing students grow academically	235	37%
Collegial relationships with other leaders	167	26%
Seeing staff grow professionally	166	26%
Relationships with families	154	24%
Compensation	35	6%
Other	10	2%
Total respondents	**634**	**100%**

There were two noteworthy differences identified when comparing geographic and school level subgroup response frequencies. Greater MN respondents were 16 percentage points more likely than Metro respondents to select *relationships with students* (77% vs. 61%, respectively) as an element that most contributed to their satisfaction at work. Elementary respondents were 11 percentage points more likely than Secondary respondents to select *relationships with families* (30% vs. 18%) as contributing to their work satisfaction. All subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A13.

STAFF APPRECIATION

We asked all participants to evaluate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, *my work is valued by the staff at my school*. Figure 15 displays the breakdown of responses to this item across participants. Overall, the majority (93%, *n*=644) *somewhat agreed* or *agreed*. The high agreement rate suggests that school leaders generally feel recognized for their contributions to their schools.

No significant differences were identified in response breakdowns between Greater MN and Metro respondents, nor between Elementary and Secondary respondents. Subgroup response breakdowns are provided in Appendix Table A15.

Figure 15.

"My work is valued by the staff at my school"

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
	6%	47%	46%

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

While all licensed K-12 principals are required to engage in 125 clock hours of professional learning to renew their license every 5 years, the types of professional development and impact of that professional development vary. Due to COVID-19, access to what one may traditionally think of as professional development also shifted for many.

One section of the survey was designed to capture school leaders' experiences with and perceptions of their own professional development. We asked school leaders to indicate the kinds of professional development opportunities they had participated in during the previous year, the usefulness of those opportunities, the barriers they faced to participating in professional development, and the areas of school leadership in which they would benefit from professional development. In addition, we asked respondents to provide information about the access they have to employer-provided funding for professional development as well as the expenses they have personally incurred to advance their own professional development.

PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section, we report on survey respondents' participation in specific kinds of professional development activities, their perceptions of the usefulness of those activities, and the barriers they face to participating.

Types of Professional Development

We asked all participants to indicate the kinds of professional development they had participated in during the 2020-21 school year from a list of 12 options. Participants could select as many options from a list of 12 as applied to them. Table 19 displays the response frequencies for each option, ordered from most to least selected. Overall, 727 participants answered the question. Top responses included *presentations at scheduled school or district meetings* (70% of respondents), *networking with other educational leaders* (66%), and *other workshops or trainings* (57%).

Comparing response frequencies between Greater MN and Metro respondents yielded multiple notable differences. Most strikingly, there was a 24 percentage point difference in participation in *MASSP provided opportunities*, with Greater MN respondents selecting this option nearly 3 times as often as Metro respondents (39% vs. 14%, respectively). Greater MN respondents were also more likely than Metro respondents to select *networking with other educational leaders* (72% vs. 60%), *other workshops or trainings* (63% vs. 51%), and *state or local conferences* (38% vs. 23%). In contrast, Metro respondents were twice as likely as Greater MN respondents to select *national conferences* (10% vs. 5%, respectively) and *doctoral coursework* (6% vs. 3%, respectively).

Table 19. "What types of Professional Development did you participate in during the 2020-21 school year?

	N	%
Presentations at scheduled school or district meetings	510	70%
Networking with other educational leaders	479	66%
Other workshops or trainings	411	57%
State or local conferences	218	30%
MESPA provided opportunities	207	28%
Other cohort-based learning experience	188	26%
MASSP provided opportunities	186	26%
Formal coaching	81	11%
Formal mentoring	63	9%
National conferences	54	7%
Minnesota Principals Academy	52	7%
Doctoral coursework	37	5%
Total respondents	**727**	**100%**

Table 20. "How would you rate the usefulness of each type of professional development you participated in during the 2020-21 school year?"

	N	Mean
Minnesota Principals Academy	51	3.82
Networking with other educational leaders	476	3.70
Doctoral coursework	37	3.57
Formal mentoring	63	3.56
Other cohort-based learning experience	184	3.54
Formal coaching	80	3.54
National conferences	54	3.54
MESPA provided opportunities	206	3.35
MASSP provided opportunities	184	3.33
State or local conferences	214	3.31
Other workshops or trainings	405	3.20
Presentations at scheduled school or district meetings	505	2.99

As expected, Elementary respondents were 46 percentage points more likely to select *MESPA provided opportunities* than were Secondary respondents, and Secondary respondents were 43 percentage points more likely to select *MASSP provided opportunities*. Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A16.

Usefulness of Professional Development

We then asked survey respondents to rate the usefulness of each type of professional development they had participated in. Respondents could select one of four options: *1-not very useful, 2-slightly useful, 3-moderately useful,* or *4-very useful.* Table 20 (previous page) displays the mean usefulness (possible range 1-4) for all 12 professional development types, ordered highest to lowest.

Overall, respondents reported that the following types of professional development were most useful: *Minnesota Principals Academy* (mean = 3.82), *networking with other educational leaders* (3.70), *doctoral coursework* (3.57), and *formal mentoring* (3.56). It is noteworthy that, other than *networking with other educational leaders*, the types of professional development that were rated as most useful were among the types of professional development participated in the least.

In contrast, the professional development types that were least useful included: *presentations at scheduled school or district meetings* (2.99), *other workshops or trainings* (3.20), *state or local conferences* (3.31), and opportunities provided by the two statewide principals' professional associations (3.33 and 3.35 for MASSP and MESPA, respectively). Again, there is some irony that the professional development type with the lowest ranking—*presentations at scheduled school or district meetings*—is also the type participated in most.

Geographic and level subgroup means were also calculated and compared as described in the Methods section. Greater MN participants, overall, tended to rate their professional development experiences as more useful than Metro participants, with notably higher means for *networking with other educational leaders, doctoral coursework, other cohort-based learning experiences, MESPA and MASSP provided opportunities, state or local conferences,* and *presentations at scheduled school or district meetings*.

Elementary respondents rated the following professional development types as being considerably more useful than did Secondary

respondents: *national conferences, MESPA and MASSP provided opportunities,* and *state or local conference*s. In contrast, Secondary respondents rated *formal mentoring* as considerably more useful than did Elementary respondents. All subgroup means are provided in Appendix Table A17.

Two additional survey items sought to understand school leaders' perceptions of their opportunities for professional growth. First, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, *my performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice*. Second, respondents rated their agreement with the statement, I *am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role*.

Figure 16 shows the breakdown of responses for these two items across all participants.

Figure 16. Responses to Professional Growth Items

"My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice"

| 15% | 19% | 39% | 26% |

"I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role"

| 4% | 16% | 40% | 40% |

| Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Agree |
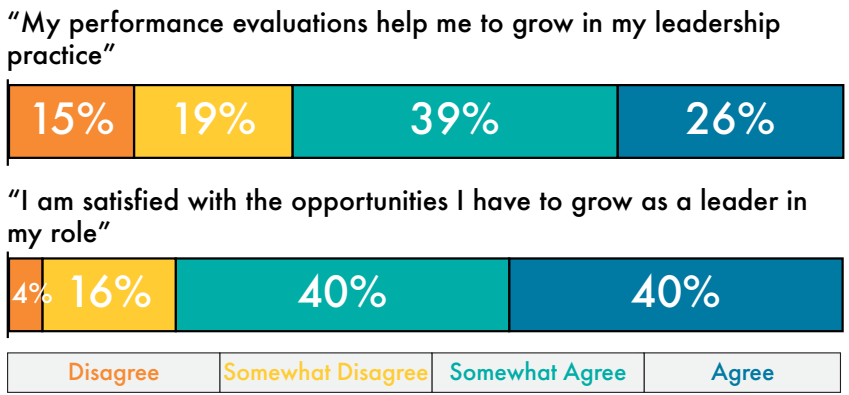
Overall, 65% *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that their performance evaluations help them grow in their leadership practice, although over a third of participants (35%) *disagreed* or *somewhat disagreed*. Participants responded more favorably regarding the opportunities they have to grow in their roles, generally, with 80% *somewhat agreeing* or *agreeing* that they are satisfied in this arena.

For the first item (*My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice*), there were no significant differences between the response distributions of Greater MN and Metro participants, nor between those of Elementary and Secondary participants. However, for

the second item (*I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role*), Greater MN respondents reported significantly higher agreement than Metro respondents (85% vs. 76% *somewhat agreed* or *agreed,* respectively). Agreement on this item did not vary significantly between Elementary and Secondary respondents.

Barriers to Professional Development

We also asked survey respondents to select the three greatest barriers they confronted to participating in professional development opportunities from a list of 9 options, including an *other* option with text entry. Alternatively, they could select *I do not face any barriers*. Table 21 displays the response frequencies for each option, ordered from most to least selected.

Table 21. Barriers to Professional Development Participation

Experience	N	%
Feeling obligated to be in the school building	502	68%
Limited time	466	63%
COVID-19 pandemic-related constraints	437	59%
Budget constraints	126	17%
Geographic distance from opportunities	91	12%
Lack of relevant options	54	7%
Lack of quality options	49	7%
Lack of support from supervisor	29	4%
Other (please specify):	24	3%
I do not face any barriers.	20	3%
Total respondents	**735**	**100%**

Overall, 735 participants answered the question. Top barriers included *feeling obligated to be in the school buildin*g (68% of respondents), *limited time* (63%), and *COVID-19 pandemic-related constraints* (59%). Three percent (3%) of respondents indicated that they faced no barriers. Among other responses (*n*=24; 3%), participants overwhelmingly identified *staff or substitute shortages* as keeping them from participating in professional development. Additionally, in some cases, leaders felt it was frowned upon for them to leave school under pandemic conditions, specifically.

In comparing response frequencies between Greater MN and Metro respondents, most did not manifest noticeable differences.

However, Greater MN respondents were 7.5 times more likely than Metro respondents (23% vs. 3%) to select *geographic distance from opportunities* as one of the greatest barriers to professional development opportunities. In contrast, Metro respondents were twice as likely as Greater MN respondents to select *lack of quality options* (9% vs. 4%, respectively). In comparing Elementary and Secondary responses, no noticeable differences were found between response frequencies for any of the 9 selection options. Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A18.

INVESTING IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In this section, we describe the monetary investments in professional development activities reported by respondents, including employer-provided funds and out-of-pocket, personally-incurred expenses.

Employer Investments

We asked survey respondents to estimate the amount of employer-provided money they have access to for their own professional development in the current contract year (2021). Overall, 648 respondents answered this question. Among them, 91% of respondents (589) entered an amount larger than $0, indicating that they have access to some employer-provided funding for professional development. The remaining 9% of respondents (59) entered $0, suggesting they have no such access. Among those who have access to employer-provided funds, the average amount was $1,884 for the current contract year. It is worth noting that the distribution of the amount of available employer-provided funds is positively skewed; whereas the majority of respondents have access to approximately $500-$2,000 for professional development, less than 10% of respondents have access to budgets greater than $3,000 (see Figure 17).

No significant differences were found in the average amount of employer-provided funds between Greater MN and Metro respondents nor between Elementary and Secondary school leaders (Due to the skewed distribution of this variable, we used a logarithmic transformation method (Howell, 2012) to normalize the data prior to conducting significance testing).

Personal Investments

In addition to employer-provided funds, the survey also asked

Figure 17. Employer-Provided Funds for Professional Development
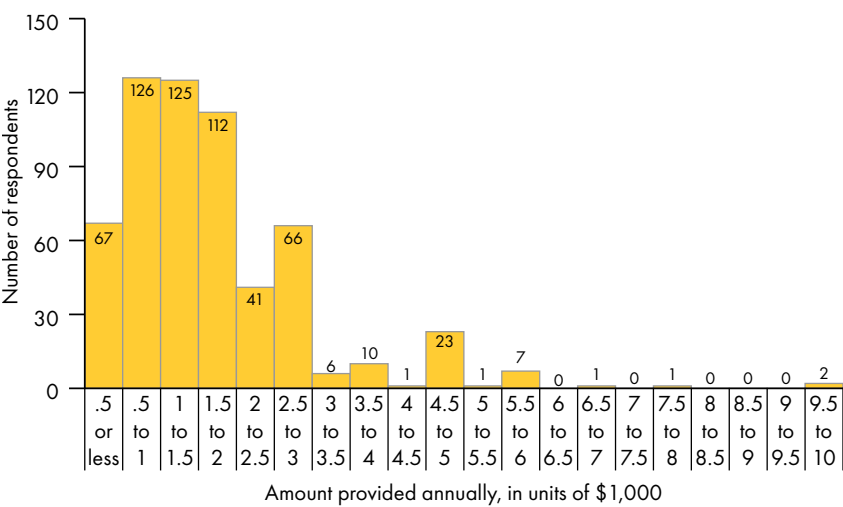
Note. Excludes responses of $0 (n=59).

respondents whether they paid out-of-pocket for professional development that was not reimbursed during the 2020-2021 school year. Among all 731 respondents, 90 (12%) selected Yes, and 641 (88%) selected No, indicating a relatively small proportion of respondents reported paying out-of-pocket for professional development in the past school year. No significant differences were identified between Greater MN and Metro responses, nor between Elementary and Secondary responses.

We asked those who reported out-of-pocket expenses for professional development to approximate how much they spent in the 2020-2021 school year. A total of 87 responses were collected, with respondents spending an average of $861. The majority of out-of-pocket expenses were $500 or less, but a few participants reported spending $2,000 or more. We speculate that these extremely high expenditures might reflect tuition fees for academic credits or programs, although the survey did not ask specific follow-up questions about how the money was spent.

Among school leaders who spent their own money in professional development, Metro school leaders spent more, on average, than Greater MN leaders ($1,203 vs. $559, respectively). In addition, Secondary school respondents spent more, on average, than Elementary

Table 22. In which areas would you benefit from additional professional development?

	N	%
Reducing staff burnout	242	34%
Advancing racial equity	224	31%
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	176	25%
Providing instructional feedback	151	21%
Managing political divisions in my school community	128	18%
Fostering a positive school culture and climate	124	17%
Developing the leadership capacity of teachers	124	17%
Social and emotional learning	117	16%
Facilitating difficult conversations	116	16%
Special education law	106	15%
Science of reading	98	14%
Implementing non-exclusionary discipline practices	96	13%
Supporting LGBTQ+ students	82	11%
Family and community engagement	70	10%
State-level rulemaking (e.g., adopting academic standards, deciding licensure requirements)	65	9%
Engaging student voice	57	8%
Conceptual understanding of mathematics	43	6%
Teacher retention	37	5%
State-level legislative process	25	3%
Total respondents	**717**	**100%**

school respondents ($943 vs. $748 – Due to the skewed distribution of this variable, we used a logarithmic transformation method (Howell, 2012) to normalize the data prior to conducting significance testing. The converted mean from logarithmic transformation was $595 and $353 for Metro and Greater MN responses (p=0.02), and $546 and $325 for Secondary and Elementary responses (p=0.03), respectively).However, it is worth noting that the number of respondents in each group is relatively small (approximately 40 in each subgroup), and the means are likely inflated due to the effect of extreme outliers. As such, we advise caution in extending these findings to a broader population.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

Lastly, we investigated the areas of professional development in which school leaders expressed the most need. Each participant could select up to 3 areas from a list of 19 in answering the question, in which areas would you benefit from additional professional development? Table 22 (previous page) displays the response frequencies for each option, ordered from most to least selected. A total of 717 respondents answered this question. Top responses included Reducing staff burnout (34%), Advancing racial equity (31%), and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS; 25%).

One striking difference was identified between Greater MN and Metro responses to this item. Metro area school leaders were 17 percentage points more likely than Greater MN school leaders to select Advancing racial equity (39% vs. 22%) as an area of professional development from which they could benefit most. No other notable differences in responses were found.

Comparing the response frequencies of Elementary and Secondary school respondents yielded two notable findings. First, Elementary school leaders were three times as likely as Secondary school respondents to select Science of reading (20% vs. 7%, respectively) as a top area for professional development. In contrast, Secondary school respondents reported twice as often as Elementary school respondents (24% vs. 12%) that they would benefit from professional development in Managing political divisions in my school community.

LEADERSHIP SELF-EFFICACY & NEEDED SUPPORTS

During the survey development process, educational constituents expressed a desire to capture and understand school leaders' *self-efficacy*, which refers to the extent to which an individual feels capable of carrying out a given course of action (Bandura, 1982). This was of interest given the importance of self-efficacy in motivating leaders to adopt effective practices (see, e.g., Tschannen-Moran & Gareis, 2004; Khalifa, 2018). Educational constituents wondered: Do school leaders feel they can be successful in their roles? In what areas of school leadership do Minnesota principals feel they have the ability and capacity to be successful? In what areas do they lack such confidence? Several sections of the survey were designed to answer these and related questions.

GENERAL SELF-EFFICACY

One survey item assessed school leaders' overall self-efficacy in their roles. We asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement *I can be successful as a leader at this school*, in light of their work experience over the previous three months. Figure 18 shows the breakdown of responses for this item across all participants.

Figure 18. Responses to General Self-Efficacy Item
"I can be successful as a leader at this school"

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
3	8%	32%	58%
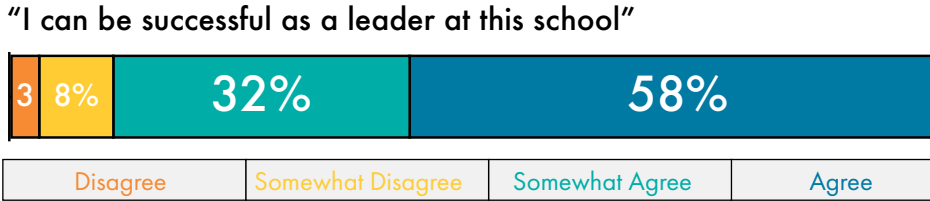
Overall, 90% agreed or somewhat agreed that they can be successful—a somewhat surprising finding in light of the significant COVID-19 related challenges faced by schools and documented in other statewide surveys conducted in 2021 (for example, the Minnesota Safe Learning Survey). There were no significant differences between the response distributions of Greater MN and Metro participants, nor between those of Elementary and Secondary participants. Subgroup response frequencies are provided in Appendix Table A21.

SELF-EFFICACY ACROSS FOUR LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITY AREAS

Four sections of the survey were designed to measure leaders' domain-specific self-efficacy across four school leadership responsibility areas: **instructional leadership**, **school improvement**, **management and decision-making**, and

culture and climate. In each section, we asked participants to respond to the following question: "In light of your capabilities and available resources, how much confidence do you have that you can effectively carry out each activity listed below?" Response options included *1-little to no confidence*, *2-insufficient confidence, 3-sufficient confidence*, and *4-more than sufficient confidence*.

To compare respondents' self-efficacy across the four responsibility areas, we calculated a scale score for each participant by averaging the numeric response values (i.e., 1, 2, 3, or 4) across the specific activities that made up that area (between 6 and 16 individual activities per responsibility area). Table 23 displays the mean self-efficacy ratings for each of the four areas.

Table 23. Mean Self-Efficacy Across Four Leadership Responsibility Areas

Area of Leadership	Mean (1-4)
Management & Decision-Making	3.12
School Improvement	3.03
Culture & Climate	2.90
Instructional Leadership	2.86

Overall, school leaders rated their self-efficacy highest in the area of **management and decision-making** (mean=3.12), followed by **school improvement** (3.03), **culture and climate** (2.90), and **instructional leadership** (2.86). It is noteworthy that school leaders reported the lowest confidence in the **instructional leadership** domain—which nearly 80% of respondents also viewed as their "primary role," as noted in a previous section of this report.

Comparing mean self-efficacy ratings between geographic and level subgroups, we identified two significant differences. First, respondents from Greater Minnesota reported significantly lower self-efficacy than respondents from the Metro Area in the area of **culture and climate** (2.86 vs. 2.94, respectively, p<.01). Second, Elementary respondents reported significantly higher self-efficacy than Secondary respondents in the area of **school improvement** (3.07 vs. 2.98, respectively, p<.01). All other comparisons were nonsignificant. All subgroup means are provided in Appendix Table A22.

Leadership Activities with the Highest and Lowest Self-Efficacy

Across the four sections of the survey corresponding to the four leadership responsibility areas described above, respondents rated their self-efficacy for a total of 49 specific leadership activities. Tables 24 and 25 (next page) display the activities with the highest and lowest self-efficacy ratings, respectively.

Table 24. Five Highest-Efficacy Leadership Activities

Task	Mean	Area of Leadership
Hiring new teachers	3.39	Management & Decision-Making
Establishing discipline practices	3.30	Management & Decision-Making
Evaluating teachers	3.29	Instructional Leadership
Explaining administrative decisions to staff	3.29	Management & Decision-Making
Engaging staff in school-level decision-making	3.27	Management & Decision-Making

Table 25. Five Lowest-Efficacy Leadership Activities

Task	Mean	Area of Leadership
Creating culturally responsive assessments	2.31	Instructional Leadership
Designing culturally responsive curriculum	2.49	Instructional Leadership
Addressing staff mental health challenges	2.52	Culture & Climate
Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy	2.58	Instructional Leadership
Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity	2.59	Culture & Climate

Overall, respondents reported the highest level of self-efficacy in the following five leadership activities: *hiring new teachers* (mean = 3.39), *establishing discipline practices* (3.30), *evaluating teachers* (3.29), *explaining administrative decisions to staff* (3.29), and *engaging staff in school-level decision-making* (3.27). Notably, four of these five highest-rated activities fall into the **management and decision-making** area.

Respondents reported the lowest level of self-efficacy in the areas of *creating culturally responsive assessments* (2.31), *designing culturally responsive curriculum* (2.49), *addressing staff mental health challenges* (2.52), *supporting culturally responsive pedagogy* (2.58), and *facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity* (2.59). Three out of these

five lowest-rated activities fall into the **instructional leadership** category, and pertain to Culturally Responsive School Leadership (CRSL), specifically—further evidence that Minnesota school leaders need targeted support in this area.

Appendix Table A23 lists all 49 leadership activities ordered from highest to lowest self-efficacy, along with geographic and level subgroup means.

Geographic Differences in Self-Efficacy

Among the 49 leadership activities included in survey items assessing self-efficacy, 5 met established criteria for a "notable difference" (as described in the Methods section) when comparing means across geographic subgroups. In all 5 cases, Metro area respondents reported higher self-efficacy than Greater MN respondents:

- *Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy*: Greater MN (2.49) < Metro (2.66)
- *Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity*: Greater MN (2.51) < Metro (2.67)
- *Facilitating discussions with staff about sexual orientation*: Greater MN (2.55) < Metro (2.72)
- *Communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members*: Greater MN (2.53) < Metro (2.81)
- *Facilitating discussions with staff about race*: Greater MN (mean = 2.67) < Metro (2.91)

Four (4) of these 5 areas fall into the **school culture and climate** leadership responsibility area and pertain specifically to discussing aspects of identity and diversity with staff and families, suggesting that Greater MN school leaders feel less-equipped than Metro school leaders to engage in such conversations. Appendix Table A26 lists all school culture and climate activities ordered from highest to lowest in terms of the number of participants selecting each as a greatest challenge.

School Level Differences in Self-Efficacy

In comparing Elementary and Secondary responses to self-efficacy items, we found notable differences between subgroups for 7 of the 49 self-efficacy items. For 5 of these 7 items, Elementary respondents reported higher average self-efficacy than Secondary respondents:

- *Establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)*: Elementary (mean = 2.81) > Secondary (2.65)
- *Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize instructional supports*: Elementary (2.98) > Secondary (2.78)
- *Balancing our school's emphasis on academics and social and emotional learning (SEL)*: Elementary (2.98) > Secondary (2.81)
- *Ensuring all students' sense of belonging at school*: Elementary (3.17) > Secondary (2.99)
- *Deciding how the school budget will be spent*: Elementary (3.17) > Secondary (3.00)

For the other 2 items, Secondary respondents reported higher average self-efficacy than Elementary respondents:

- *Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity*: Elementary (2.50) < Secondary (2.69)
- *Facilitating discussions with staff about sexual orientation*: Elementary (2.55) < Secondary (2.73)

We hypothesize these last two leadership activities regarding discussions of gender identity and sexual orientation may be more relevant, and therefore more practiced, at the Secondary level than at the Elementary level due to differences in students' identity development at each level.

GREATEST CHALLENGES AND NEEDED SUPPORTS: LEADERSHIP ACTIVITIES WITH LOW SELF-EFFICACY RATINGS

Any respondent who selected *little to no confidence* or *insufficient confidence* for any of the 49 leadership activities was subsequently prompted to select up to 3 activities (per responsibility area) that *pose the greatest challenge to you in your current role*. In the case where a respondent had selected *little to no confidence* or *insufficient confidence* to only one or two of the activities, they could select from only that many options in choosing their greatest challenge(s). This prompt served to identify which leadership activities—of those rated lowest in terms of self-efficacy—school leaders actually struggle with most. Then, for each activity selected as posing the greatest challenge, respondents were asked to select up to 3 supports from a list of 8-10 that would "most help you to effectively carry out" that leadership activity.

Overall: Greatest Challenges and Needed Supports

Of all 49 leadership activities included on the survey, *addressing staff mental health challenges* was the most frequently-selected activity

identified as posing the greatest challenge to school leaders, with 219 low self-efficacy respondents selecting this item. In fact, *addressing staff mental health challenges* was the #1 greatest challenge identified across all subgroups: Greater MN, Metro, Elementary, and Secondary.

The next most frequently-selected activities were: *creating culturally responsive assessments* (*n*=198), *designing culturally responsive curriculum* (*n*=192), *addressing student mental health challenges* (*n*=177), and *engaging families in school-level decision-making* (*n*=161).

[Appendix Table A28](#) lists all 49 leadership activities ordered from highest to lowest in terms of the number of participants selecting each as a greatest challenge, along with subgroup breakdowns.

Across the leadership activities identified as posing the greatest challenges to school leaders, there was remarkable consistency among responses to the *what would help* question: respondents' top two selections for all but one of the five most challenging activities were *increasing my knowledge or skills* and *tools or frameworks*, suggesting a desire for further professional learning (the top needed support selected by those identifying addressing student mental health challenges as one of their greatest challenges was more personnel). The four sections that follow describe in greater detail what leadership activities respondents viewed as posing *the greatest challenge* in each of the four leadership responsibility areas, and furthermore, what supports would most help them to carry out those challenging activities.

Instructional Leadership: Greatest Challenges and Needed Supports

In the area of **instructional leadership**, the top three challenges selected were: *creating culturally responsive assessments* (37% of 536 respondents selected), *designing culturally responsive curriculum* (36%), and *establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)* (29%). Table 26 displays the response frequencies for each of these 12 activities, ordered from highest to lowest.

Among those who selected *creating culturally responsive assessment*s as a top challenge, the most common answers to the *what would most help* probe included: *(1) increasing my knowledge or skills, (2) tools or frameworks,* and *(3) greater staff buy-in.*

Table 26. Instructional Leadership Activities Posing the Greatest Challenge

Activity	N	%
Creating culturally responsive assessments	198	37%
Designing culturally responsive curriculum	192	36%
Establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	154	29%
Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy	126	24%
Supporting instruction in all content areas taught at my school	98	18%
Balancing our school's emphasis on academics and social and emotional learning (SEL)	95	18%
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize instructional supports	67	13%
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize behavioral supports	54	10%
Coaching teachers	34	6%
Designing professional development for teachers	31	6%
Evaluating teachers	23	4%
Facilitating professional development for teachers	13	2%
Total answering question	**536**	**100%**

Likewise, among those who selected *designing culturally responsive curriculum* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports were: *(1) increasing my knowledge or skills, (2) tools or frameworks,* and *(3) greater staff buy-in.*

Lastly, among those who selected *establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports were: *(1) tools or frameworks, (2) more personnel,* and *(3) increasing my knowledge or skills.*

The top three needed supports for each of the 12 instructional leadership activities are provided in [Appendix Table A24](#).

School Improvement: Greatest Challenges and Needed Supports

In the area of **school improvement**, the top three challenges selected were: *implementing changes with fidelity* (41% of 241 respondents selected), *applying research-based approaches to school improvement*

Table 27. School improvement Activities Posing the Greatest Challenge

Activity	N	%
Implementing changes with fidelity	98	41%
Applying research-based approaches to school improvement planning	80	33%
Motivating a majority of my staff to implement changes	78	32%
Monitoring changes to our practice over time	61	25%
Analyzing data to identify areas needing improvement	28	12%
Collaborating with staff to implement a school improvement plan	27	11%
Total answering question	**241**	**100%**

planning (33%), and *motivating a majority of my staff to implement changes* (32%). Table 27 displays the response frequencies for each of these 6 activities, ordered from highest to lowest.

Among those who selected *implementing changes with fidelity* as a top challenge, the most common answers to the "what would most help" probe included: *(1) greater staff buy-in, (2) tools or frameworks,* and *(3) more personnel.*

Among those who selected *applying research-based approaches to school improvement planning* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports included: *(1) increasing my knowledge or skills, (2) tools or frameworks,* and *(3) greater staff buy-in.*

Lastly, among those who selected *motivating a majority of my staff to implement changes* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports included: *(1) greater staff buy-in, (2) tools or frameworks,* and *(3) increasing my knowledge or skills.*

The top three needed supports for each of the 6 school improvement activities are provided in [Appendix Table A25](#).

Management and Decision-Making: Greatest Challenges and Needed Supports

In the area of **management and decision-making**, the top three challenges selected were: *engaging families in school-level decision-making* (42% of 379 respondents selected), *evaluating programs and initiatives* (20%), and *engaging students in school-level decision-making*

(20%). Table 28 displays the response frequencies for these 15 activities, ordered from most-frequently to least-frequently selected.

Table 28. Management and Decision-Making Activities Posing the Greatest Challenge

Activity	N	%
Engaging families in school-level decision-making	161	42%
Evaluating programs and initiatives	77	20%
Engaging students in school-level decision-making	75	20%
Managing multiple initiatives simultaneously	60	16%
Leveraging research findings to inform decision-making	57	15%
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	50	13%
Hiring new teachers	28	7%
Addressing staff performance concerns	28	7%
Explaining administrative decisions to families or community members	27	7%
Establishing a vision for my school	16	4%
Engaging staff in school-level decision-making	15	4%
Establishing discipline practices	13	3%
Setting meaningful student learning goals	12	3%
Facilitating decision-making in teams	10	3%
Explaining administrative decisions to staff	6	2%
Total answering question	**379**	**100%**

Among those who selected *engaging families in school-level decision-making* as a top challenge, the most common answers to the "what would most help" probe included: *(1) tools or frameworks, (2) increasing my knowledge or skills,* and *(3) reduced pushback from families or community members*.

Among those who selected *evaluating programs and initiatives* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports included: *(1) tools or frameworks, (2) increasing my knowledge or skills,* and *(3) more personnel*.

Lastly, among those who selected *engaging students in school-level decision-making* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports included: *(1) tools or frameworks, (2) increasing my knowledge or skills,* and *(3) greater staff buy-in*.

The top three needed supports for each of the 15 management and decision-making activities are provided in Appendix Table A26.

School Culture and Climate: Greatest Challenges and Needed Supports

In the area of **school culture and climate**, the top three challenges selected were: *addressing staff mental health challenges* (46% of 477 respondents selected), *addressing student mental health challenges* (37%), and *communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members* (24%). Table 29 displays the response frequencies for these 16 activities.

Table 29. School Culture and Climate Activities Posing the Greatest Challenge

Activity	N	%
Addressing staff mental health challenges	219	46%
Addressing student mental health challenges	177	37%
Communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members	116	24%
Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity	100	21%
Facilitating discussions with staff about race	83	17%
Facilitating discussions with staff about sexual orientation	83	17%
Boosting staff morale	66	14%
Motivating teachers to take responsibility for school improvement	60	13%
Motivating teachers to help each other improve instruction	45	9%
Ensuring all students' sense of belonging at school	26	5%
Facilitating conflict resolution	18	4%
Analyzing perception data from families about school climate	14	3%
Ensuring all staff members' sense of belonging at school	14	3%
Analyzing perception data from students about school climate	7	1%
Analyzing perception data from staff about school climate	6	1%
Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	6	1%
Total answering question	**477**	**100%**

Among those who selected *addressing staff mental health challenges* as a top challenge, the most common answers to the "what would most help" probe included: *(1) tools or frameworks, (2) increasing my knowledge or skills,* and *(3) more personnel*.

Among those who selected *addressing student mental health challenges* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports included: *(1) more personnel, (2) tools or frameworks,* and *(3) increasing my knowledge or skills*.

Finally, among those who selected *communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members* as a top challenge, the most commonly needed supports were: *(1) increasing my knowledge or skills, (2) reduced pushback from families or community members,* and *(3) tools or frameworks*.

The top three needed supports for each of the 16 school culture and climate activities are provided in Appendix A27.

CULTURALLY-RESPONSIVE SCHOOL LEADERSHIP

Culturally responsive school leadership (CRSL) has been most clearly defined in the seminal literature review "Culturally Responisve School Leadership: A Synthesis of the Literature" by Muhammad A. Khalifa, Mark Anthony Gooden, and James Earl Davis (2016). These authors provide a conceptual framework of four distinct areas of being a culturally responsive school leader: critical self-reflection, developing culturally responsive teachers, promoting culturally responsive/inclusive school environments, and engaging students, families, and communities.

FREQUENCY OF ENGAGEMENT IN CRSL PRACTICES

To understand leaders' use of CRSL practices, respondents were asked to cite how often they engaged in 6 CRSL practices that align to the conceptual framework of Khalifa, Gooden, and Davis. Response options included: *never or almost never, annually, a few times per year, monthly,* and *weekly or more*. Figures 19-25 in the sections that follow display the breakdowns of responses to each of these items across all participants ("Overall"), as well as for Greater MN and Metro subgroups. These subgroup comparisons are included to highlight the significant differences that were observed between Greater MN and Metro area respondents, as described in more detail in the subsections that follow. Response frequencies for all geographic and level subgroups are provided in [.

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Culturally Responsive School Leadership Framework
Muhammad Khalifa, Mark Anthony Gooden, James Earl Davis

Critically Self-Reflects on Leadership Behaviors

- Is committed to continuous learning of cultural knowledge and contexts (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006)
- Displays a critical consciousness on practice in and out of school; displays self-reflection (Gooden & Dantley, 2012; Johnson, 2006)
- Uses school data and indicants to measure CRSL (Skrla et al., 2004)
- Uses parent/community voices to measure cultural responsiveness in schools (Ishimaru, 2013; Smyth, 2006)
- Challenges Whiteness and hegemonic epistemologies in school (Theoharis & Haddix, 2011)
- Uses equity audits to measure student inclusiveness, policy, and practice (Skrla et al., 2004)
- Leads with courage (Khalifa, 2011; Nee-Benham et al., 1988)
- Is a transformative leader for social justice and inclusion (Alston, 2005; Gooden, 2005; Gooden & O'Doherty, 2015; Shields, 2010)

Develops Culturally Responsive Teachers

- Develops teacher capacities for cultural responsive pedagogy (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz et al., 2003)
- Conducts collaborative walkthroughs (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012)
- Creates culturally responsive professional development opportunities for teachers (Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2000; Voltz et al., 2003)
- Uses school data to see cultural gaps in achievement, discipline, enrichment, and remedial services (Skrla et al., 2004)
- Creates a CRSL team that is charged with constantly finding new ways for teachers to be culturally responsive (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006)
- Engages/reforms the school curriculum to become more culturally responsive (Sleeter, 2012; Villegas & Lucas, 2002)
- Models culturally responsive teaching (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012)
- Uses culturally responsive assessment tools for students (Hopson, 2001; Kea et al., 2003)

Promotes Culturally Responsive/Inclusive School Environment

- Accepts indigenized, local identities (Khalifa, 2010)
- Builds relationships that reduce anxiety among students (Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012)
- Models CRSL for staff in building interactions (Khalifa, 2011; Tillman, 2005)
- Promotes a vision for inclusive instructional and behavioral practices (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Webb-Johnson, 2006; Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2007)
- If need be, challenges exclusionary policies, teachers, and behaviors (Khalifa, 2011; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012)
- Acknowledges, values, and uses students' Indigenous cultural and social capital (Khalifa, 2010; 2012)
- Uses student voice (Antrop-González, 2011; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012)
- Uses school data to discover and track disparities in academic and disciplinary trends (Skiba et al., 2002; Skrla et al., 2004; Theoharis, 2007)

Engages Students, Parents, and Indigenous Contexts

- Develops meaningful, positive relationships with community (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006; Johnson, 2006; Walker, 2001)
- Is a servant leader, as public intellectual and in other roles (Alston, 2005; Gooden, 2005; Johnson, 2006)
- Finds overlapping spaces for school and community (Cooper, 2009; Ishimaru, 2013; Khalifa, 2012)
- Serves as advocate and social activist for community-based causes in both the school and neighborhood community (Capper et al., 2002; Gooden, 2005; Johnson, 2006; Khalifa, 2012)
- Uses the community as an informative space from which to develop positive understandings of students and families (Gardiner & Enomoto, 2006)
- Resists deficit images of students and families (Davis, 2002; Flessa, 2009)
- Nurtures/cares for others; shares information (Gooden, 2005; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012)
- Connects directly with students (Gooden, 2005; Khalifa, 2012; Lomotey, 1993)

Critical Self-Reflection About My Own Identity, Frame of Reference, and Biases

Overall, roughly two-thirds of all respondents indicated that they engaged in *critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases* at least on a monthly basis (69%; see Figure 19). However, we observed significantly different responses when comparing geographic subgroups, with 59% of Greater MN participants engaging in *critical self-reflection* monthly or more often compared to 79% of Metro participants. Differences between Elementary and Secondary responses were nonsignificant.

Development of Culturally Responsive Teachers

About half of all respondents reported engaging in *development of culturally responsive teachers* at least monthly (50%; see Figure 20). Again, we observed significant differences in the responses of Greater MN and Metro participants. Greater MN respondents were far less likely to report developing culturally-responsive teachers on a monthly or more frequent basis than Metro respondents (66% vs. 34%, respectively). No significant differences were observed between Elementary and Secondary respondents.

Analysis of Student Data to Identify Disparities in Academic and Disciplinary Outcomes

Similarly, roughly half of all respondents reported engaging in *analysis of student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes* on a monthly or more frequent basis (49%; see Figure 21). Comparing Greater MN and Metro responses again yielded significant differences, with Greater MN respondents engaging in this CRSL practice far less often than Metro respondents (35% vs. 63% engaging on a monthly or more frequent basis, respectively). Responses of Elementary and Secondary school leaders did not differ significantly.

Figure 19. "How often do you engage in critical self-reflection about your own identity, frame of reference, and biases?"

Figure 20. "How often do you engage in the development of culturally responsive teachers?"

Figure 21. "How often do you analyze student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes?"
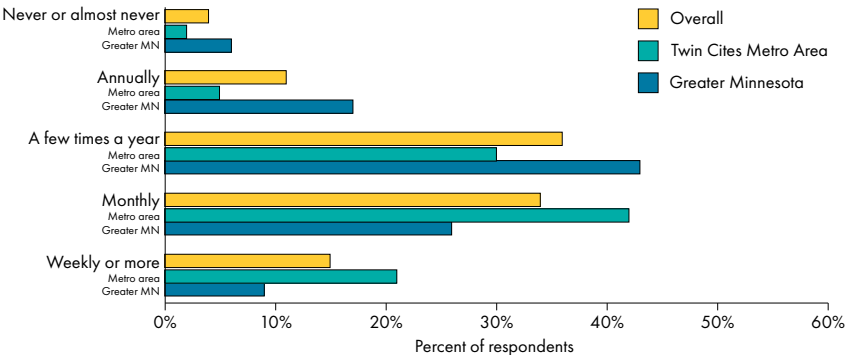
Modeling of Culturally Responsive Practices for Staff

Nearly two-thirds of respondents, overall, reported *modeling of culturally responsive practices for staff* on a monthly basis or more frequently (60%; see Figure 22). Greater MN participants reported doing so less frequently than Metro participants (49% vs. 70% on a monthly or more frequent basis, respectively). Differences in responses between Elementary and Secondary respondents were nonsignificant.

Figure 22. "How often do you model culturally responsive practices for staff?"
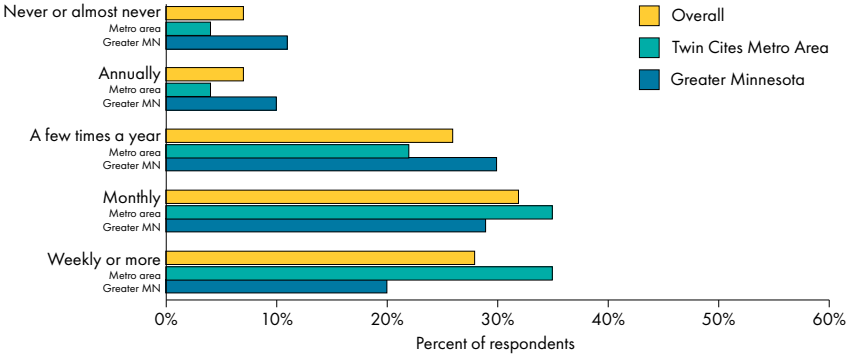
Inclusion of the Families of Marginalized Students in School-Level Decisions

The CRSL practice with the lowest overall frequency of reported engagement was *inclusion of the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions*, with only about 1 in 4 school leaders reporting engaging in this practice on a monthly or more frequent basis (27%; see Figure 23). Notably, 23% of respondents reported including marginalized students' families in decisions *never or almost never*. This finding parallels school leaders' lack of self-efficacy in engaging families in decision-making, which was the leadership activity rated most challenging among all management and decision-making activities as detailed in the last section of this report. The response distributions of Greater MN and Metro respondents were again found to be significantly different, with Greater MN school leaders being less likely than their Metro counterparts to include families of marginalized students in decision-making on a monthly or more frequent basis (22% vs. 32%, respectively). Engagement in this CRSL practice did not differ significantly between Elementary and Secondary respondents.

Figure 23. "How often do you include the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions?"
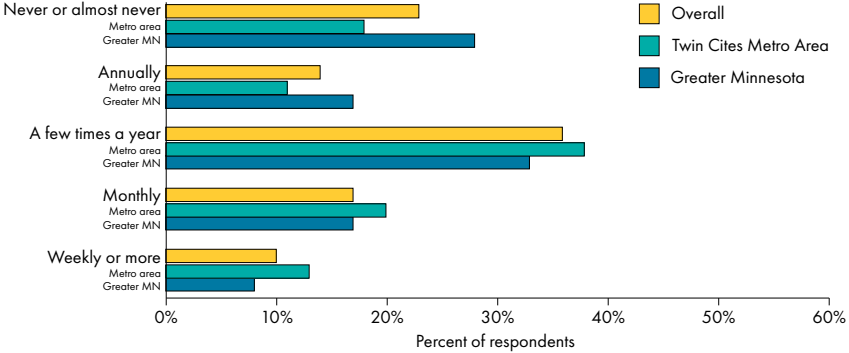
Advocacy for Marginalized Populations Outside of My School

Overall, 39% of respondents reported *engaging in advocacy for marginalized populations outside of my school on a monthly or more frequent basis* (see Figure 24). As in each of the other CRSL practices highlighted above, we observed significant differences in the response frequencies of Greater MN and Metro respondents, with Greater MN school leaders engaging in such advocacy less often than Metro school leaders (32% vs. 45% monthly or more often, respectively). Again, we did not observe significantly different response breakdowns when comparing Elementary and Secondary participants.

Figure 24. "How often do you advocate for marginalized populations outside of your school?"
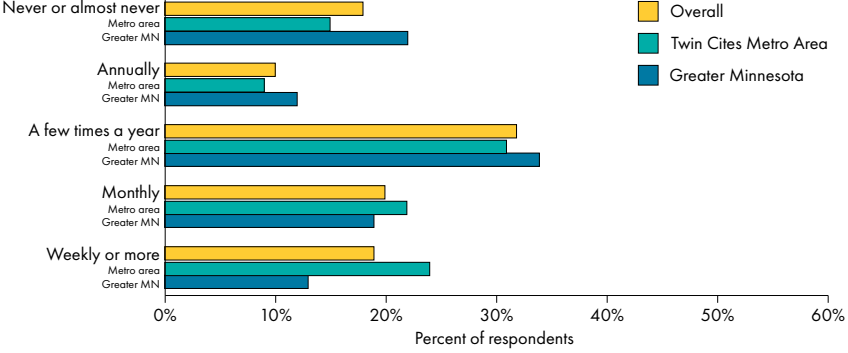
FREQUENCY OF ATTENDANCE AT COMMUNITY EVENTS

To capture the extent to which Minnesota school leaders connect and engage with students and families beyond the walls of the school building, we asked respondents, *approximately how often do you attend community events NOT sponsored by your school or district that students from your school and/or their families also attend (e.g., community forums, public gatherings)?* Again, respondents could choose from five response options: *never or almost never, annually, a few times per year, monthly,* and *weekly or more*.

The breakdown of responses to this item is shown in Figure 25, below. Overall, nearly half of respondents reported attending community events with students and their families a few times per year (49%), with about a quarter indicating they did so *monthly or more* (23%). One in five school leaders reported attending such events *never or almost never* (20%). Again, we observed a significant difference in the response distribution of Greater MN and Metro respondents, but in the opposite direction of the differences highlighted in the previous section: Greater MN respondents reported attending community events more frequently than Metro respondents, with 32% of the Greater MN subgroup doing so on a *monthly or more* frequent basis compared to only 14% of the Metro subgroup. Response distributions of Elementary and Secondary subgroups did not differ significantly.

Figure 25. "How often do you attend community events that students from your school and/or their families also attend?"
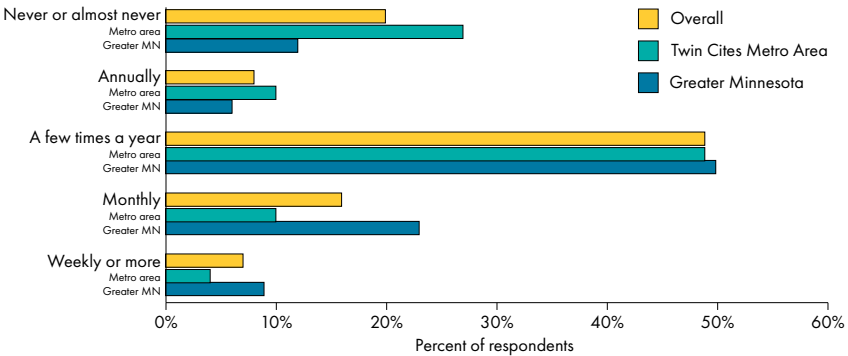
STATE AND DISTRICT POLICY AND SUPPORTS

We asked a series of closed-ended questions designed to understand principals' perceptions of current state and local accountability systems as well as their knowledge of—and desire to be engaged in—state and local policy. These questions focused on their perceptions of the reasonableness of current state and local accountability systems, support they feel from local leaders, and their knowledge of opportunities to influence policy at both the state and local levels. Broadly, principals view local accountability systems as more reasonable than the state's. They also report that they are more engaged in local policy-making than state level policy-making, though they would like to be more involved in both. Top barriers cited are lack of time and knowledge of policy-making processes.

ACCOUNTABILITY AND SUPPORT

This section describes responses to survey items pertaining to state and local accountability and supports. School leaders working in district schools were given district-specific items, whereas leaders working in charter schools were given charter-specific items.

Reasonableness of Accountability Measures

Three survey items asked respondents to gauge the reasonableness of the state and local accountability measures used to evaluate their schools' performance. Figure 26 displays the breakdown of responses to these items across all participants. Overall, fewer than half of respondents somewhat agreed or agreed with the statement, *state accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable* (41%, *n*=635). In contrast, about three-fourths of respondents somewhat agreed or agreed with *district accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable* (75%, *n*=587, district respondents only) and *charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable* (72%, *n*=46, charter respondents only). These findings suggest that school leaders tend to view local accountability measures as more reasonable than those of the state.

While there were no significant differences between geographic or school level subgroups' responses for the state-level accountability item, we did observe that Greater MN respondents were significantly more likely to *somewhat agree* or *agree* that district accountability measures are reasonable than their Metro area counterparts (82% vs. 68%, respectively, *p*<0.001). While response counts for the corresponding charter authorizer item were too small to appropriately compare Greater MN and Metro responses (only 8 individuals working in Greater MN charter schools answered this item), the difference between Elementary and Secondary subgroups was nonsignificant.

Figure 26. Responses to Accountability Items

"State accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."

| 22% | 37% | 36% | 6% |

"District accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."

| 6% | 19% | 55% | 21% |

"Charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."

| 7% | 22% | 30% | 41% |

| Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Agree |
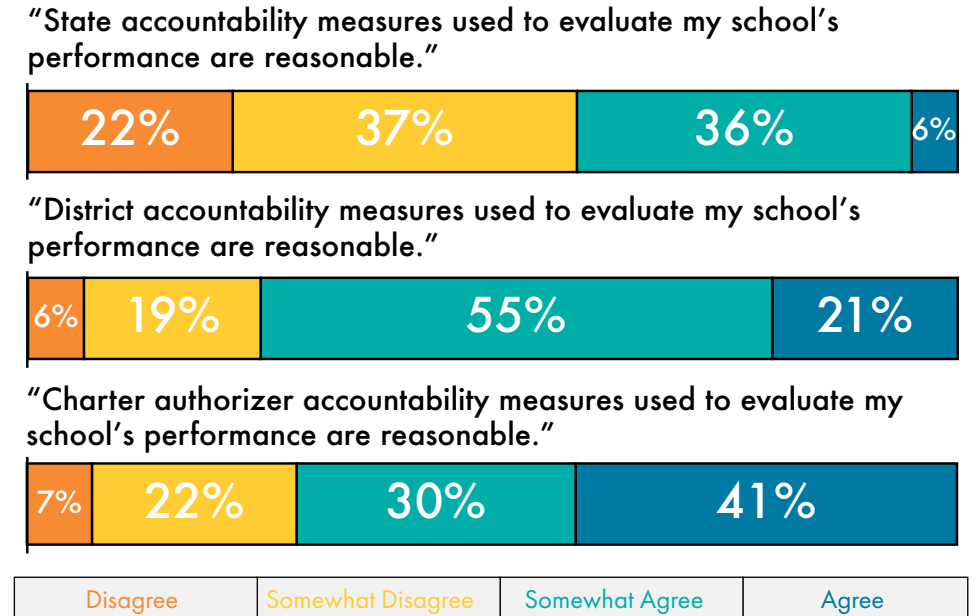
A breakdown of responses to these by geography and level is available in Appendix Table A31.

Perceptions of Local Support

Several survey questions were designed to elicit school leaders' perceptions of the support they receive from district or charter leadership. These questions

Figure 27. Responses to Local Support Items

"I feel supported by district leaders."

| 6% | 10% | 31% | 53% |

"I feel supported by our charter authorizer."

| 4 | 2 | 22% | 72% |

| Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Agree |
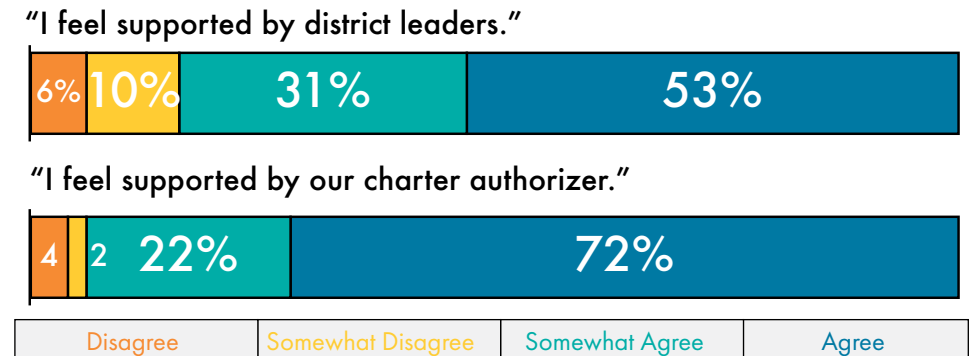
fell into two categories: general support, and support with school improvement work, specifically.

General Support. Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with one of two statements: *I feel supported by district leaders* or *I feel supported by our charter authorizer*, intended for district and charter respondents, respectively. Figure 27 (previous page) displays the breakdown of responses to the two items across all participants. Overall, a large majority (84%) of district respondents somewhat agreed or agreed that they feel supported by district leaders (*n*=590). Similarly, 93% of charter respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that they feel supported by their charter authorizer (*n*=46). These findings suggest that Minnesota school leaders largely feel supported by their supervisors across both district and charter sectors.

There were no significant geographic or level differences observed among responses to the district support item. Response counts for the corresponding charter authorizer support item were too small to appropriately compare across geographic or level subgroups.

A breakdown of responses to these items by geography and level is available in Appendix Table A32.

Support with School Improvement. Three survey items asked principals, directors, and co-directors to rate the extent of their agreement with three statements about the support they receive in the area of school improvement. Figure 28 displays the breakdown of responses to these items across all respondents. Overall, the majority of respondents (92%, *n*=486) *agreed* or *somewhat agreed* with the statement, *My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable*. Similarly, respondents mostly *agreed* or *somewhat agreed* (91%, *n*=485) that *My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context*. These findings suggest that most school leaders perceive their supervisors' expectations and degree of latitude granted for school improvement to be appropriate. A third item pertained to school leaders' preparation for school improvement: *District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan*. About three-fourths of participants (78%, *n*=486) *agreed* or *somewhat agreed* with this statement, suggesting that some school leaders could use additional support in this area.

Across all three of these survey items, no significant differences in response breakdowns were identified between Greater MN and Metro respondents, nor between Elementary and Secondary respondents.

POLICY INFLUENCE

Eight survey items were included to gauge school leaders' knowledge of opportunities to influence state and district policy, desire for policy influence, engagement in state and district policy influence, and barriers to engaging in policy influence. Response data for each topic is summarized in turn in the sections that follow.

Knowledge of Opportunities to Influence Policy

We asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with two statements: *I know of several ways I can influence state policy*, and *I know of several ways I can influence district policy* (only respondents working in district schools were shown the latter item). Figure 29 displays the breakdown of responses to these items across all participants. Overall, less than half of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that they knew of several ways they could influence state policy (42%, *n*=636). In contrast, nearly twice the proportion of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that they knew of several ways they could influence district policy (81%, *n*=589), suggesting that Minnesota school leaders are more familiar with opportunities to influence local as opposed to state-level policy.

While responses across geographic and level subgroups did not vary significantly for the item about state-level policy influence, Greater MN respondents were significantly more likely to *somewhat agree* or *agree* that they *know of several ways [they] can influence district policy* than Metro respondents (87% vs. 75%, respectively). Responses to the same item did not differ significantly between Elementary and Secondary subgroups.

A breakdown of responses to these items by geography and level is available in Appendix Table A33.

Desire for Policy Influence

We then asked school leaders to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with two statements about their desire for greater policy influence: *I want to have greater influence over state policy,* and

Figure 28.

"My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable."

| 6% | 28% | 64% |

"My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context."

| 7% | 29% | 62% |

"District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan."

| 18% | 39% | 39% |

Figure 29.

"I know of several ways I can influence state policy."

| 19% | 39% | 33% | 10% |

"I know of several ways I can influence district policy."

| 5% | 15% | 44% | 36% |

Figure 30.

"I want to have greater influence over state policy."

| 7% | 23% | 46% | 24% |

"I want to have greater influence over district policy."

| 5% | 17% | 52% | 25% |

| Disagree | Somewhat Disagree | Somewhat Agree | Agree |

I want to have greater influence over district policy (only respondents working in district schools were shown the latter item). Response breakdowns for these two items are shown in Figure 30 (previous page). A majority of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* with both items, with a somewhat higher percentage of respondents desiring greater influence over district policy (78%) than state policy (70%).

There were no significant differences between the response frequencies of Greater MN and Metro participants nor between those of Elementary and Secondary participants for either of these two items.

A breakdown of responses to these items by geography and level is available in Appendix Table A34.

Engagement in Policy Influence

Given that a major purpose of the MnPS is to "elevate principal voice" in state and local decisions impacting Minnesota schools, we were interested in collecting baseline data about the ways in which Minnesota school leaders have previously engaged in policy influence. The two items described in this section were designed to do just that.

State Policy Engagement. First, we asked respondents, *In which ways, if any, have you sought to influence state policy?* Respondents could select all response options that applied to them from a list of 11 options (including an *other* option with text entry). Alternatively, respondents could select, *I have not sought to influence state policy.* Table 30 displays response frequencies in order from most to least selected. Overall, 601 participants answered the question, with over one-third indicating they had not sought to influence state policy (34%, *n*=203). Among those who had sought to influence state policy in one or more ways, top responses included s*ent written communication to legislators* (49% of respondents), *met with (a) legislator(s)* (33%), and *submitted comments to MDE in response to a proposed rule change (e.g., revision of state standards)* (16%). *Other* responses (*n*=22, or 4% of respondents) included participation in policy work with the Minnesota Association of Charter Schools (MACS), serving on another committee or work group, or involvement in political campaigning or fundraising.

Comparing response frequencies between geographic and school level subgroups yielded several notable findings. First, Greater MN respondents were 15 percentage points **less** likely than Metro

Table 30. Experiences Engaging in State Policy Influence

Influence type	N	%
Sent written communication to legislators	296	49%
I have not sought to influence state policy	203	34%
Met with (a) legislator(s)	197	33%
Submitted comments to MDE in response to a proposed rule change (e.g., revision of state standards)	99	16%
Met with Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) staff about a policy issue	90	15%
Participated in the development of a policy platform for a professional organization	67	11%
Submitted comments to PELSB in response to a proposed rule change (e.g., tiered licensure)	57	9%
Testified at the State Capitol	44	7%
Attended a session at the State Capitol to support or oppose a particular bill	41	7%
Other (please specify)	22	4%
Met with Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) staff about a policy issue	20	3%
Joined a MDE rulemaking committee	14	2%
Total respondents	**601**	**100%**

respondents to indicate that they had not sought to influence state policy (26% vs. 41%, respectively). Furthermore, Greater MN respondents were 14 percentage points **more** likely to have *sent written communication to legislators* (57% vs. 42%), 18 percentage points more likely to have *met with (a) legislator(s)* (42% vs. 24%), and 14 percentage points more likely to have s*ubmitted comments to MDE in response to a proposed rule change* (24% vs. 10%) than were Metro respondents. Additionally, Greater MN respondents were twice as likely as Metro respondents to have *met with PELSB staff about a policy issue* (5% vs. 2%). Overall, these findings suggest that school leaders in Greater MN have generally been more engaged in state-level policy influence than Metro area school leaders.

Several noteworthy differences between level subgroups emerged as well, with Secondary school leaders demonstrating relatively greater engagement in state-level policy influence than their Elementary

Table 31. Experiences Engaging in District Policy Influence

Influence type	N	%
Contributed as a member of a district-level committee	488	83%
Met with the Superintendent	454	78%
Spoke at a School Board meeting	325	56%
Met with School Board members	320	55%
Sent written communication to School Board members	106	18%
I have not sought to influence district policy.	27	5%
Other (please specify):	13	2%
Total respondents	**585**	**100%**

> *School leaders in Greater Minnesota have generally been more engaged in state-level policy influence than those in the Metro Area.*
>
> *Secondary school leaders demonstrate relatively greater engagement in state-level policy influence than their Elementary counterparts.*

counterparts. Elementary respondents were 10 percentage points **less** likely to have *met with MDE staff about a policy issue* than Secondary respondents (10% vs. 20%, respectively). Furthermore, Secondary respondents were roughly four times as likely as Elementary respondents to have *met with PELSB staff about a policy issue* (5% vs. 1%) and four times as likely to have *joined a MDE rulemaking committee* (4% vs. 1%).

Subgroup response frequencies for state policy engagement items are provided in Appendix Table A36.

District Policy Engagement. Second, we asked respondents, *In which ways, if any, have you sought to influence district policy?* Again, respondents could select all response options that applied to them, in this case from a list of 6 options (including an *other* option with text entry). Alternatively, respondents could select, *I have not*

sought to influence district policy. Table 31 (previous page) displays response frequencies in order from most to least selected. Overall, 585 participants answered the question. In contrast to the corresponding state-level item, only 5% of respondents (*n*=27) indicated that they had not sought to influence district policy. Among those who had sought to influence district policy in one or more ways, top responses included *contributed as a member of a district-level committee* (83% of respondents) and *met with the Superintendent* (78%). Over half of respondents had also *spoken at a School Board meeting* (56%) and *met with School Board members* (55%). Among other responses (*n*=13, or 2% of respondents), some felt it was not their place to influence district policy, while others indicated they did so by attending meetings or providing feedback on draft policies.

As in the arena of state-level policy influence, Greater MN respondents reported higher levels of engagement in district-level policy influence than Metro respondents. Greater MN respondents were 12 percentage points more likely to have *met with the Superintendent* (84% vs. 72%, respectively), 28 percentage points more likely to have *spoken at a School Board meeting* (70% vs. 42%), 24 percentage points more likely to have *met with School Board members* (67% vs. 43%), and 16 percentage points more likely to have *sent written communication to School Board members* (26% vs. 10%) than were Metro respondents. Furthermore, Metro respondents were approximately twice as likely as Greater MN respondents to report not having sought to influence district policy (6% vs. 3%, respectively).

In comparing Elementary and Secondary responses to district policy engagement items, we identified one notable difference: Elementary respondents were 10 percentage points less likely than Secondary respondents to have *spoken at a School Board meeting* (51% vs. 61%, respectively).

Subgroup response frequencies for district policy engagement items are provided in Appendix Table A37.

Barriers to Policy Influence

As a follow-up to the two questions above about engagement in policy influence activities, we asked, *What barriers do you face, if any, in influencing state or district policy?* Respondents could select any options that applied to them from a list of 5 options (including an *other* option

with text entry). Alternatively, respondents could select either one of the following exclusive options: *I have not faced any barriers*, or *Not applicable; I do not view influencing state or district policy as part of my role*.

Table 32 displays response frequencies in order from **most** to **least** selected. Overall, 625 participants answered the question. About 1 in 5 of respondents indicated they had not faced any barriers to influencing state or district policy (21%, *n*=134), and a small minority of respondents did not view influencing policy as part of their roles (3%, *n*=20). Among those who had faced one or more barriers, top responses included *lack of time* (61% of respondents) and *lack of understanding of policy-making processes* (27%). Themes among other responses (*n*=44, or 7% of respondents) included pessimism regarding participants' ability to influence policy, fear of retribution by superiors for expressing an alternate opinion, and being new to their roles.

We identified two notable subgroup differences. First, Metro respondents were about twice as likely as Greater MN respondents to indicate that they do not view influencing state or district policy as part of their roles (4% vs. 2%, respectively). Second, Elementary respondents were 13 percentage points more likely to select l*ack of understanding of policy-making processes* as a barrier to influencing state or district policy (33% vs. 20%, respectively).

Subgroup response frequencies for barriers to policy influence items are provided in Appendix Table A38.

Understanding of Funding Allocation. Educational constituents engaged in the survey development process expressed an interest in knowing whether school leaders generally understood how their building budgets were determined. As such, we asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement, *I understand how funding for my school is allocated*. Figure 30, below, shows the breakdown of responses to this item among all participants. Overall, 85% of 635 total respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed*, suggesting that funding allocation processes were well-understood by most school leaders.

There were no significant differences identified between the responses of Greater MN and Metro school leaders, nor between those of Elementary and Secondary school leaders.

Table 32. Barriers to State and District Policy Influence

Barrier	N	%
Lack of time	382	61%
Lack of understanding of policymaking processes	167	27%
I have not faced any barriers.	134	21%
Lack of understanding of educational policy	61	10%
Other (please specify):	44	7%
District or charter network leaders discouraging policy influence	39	6%
Not applicable; I do not view influencing state or district policy as part of my role.	20	3%
Total	**625**	**100%**

Figure 31.
"I understand how funding for my school is allocated."

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
	12%	43%	43%
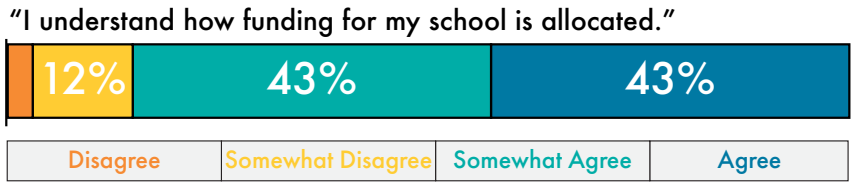
Subgroup response frequencies for funnding allocation understanding items are provided in Appendix Table A35.

COVID-19 AND SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION

In the development of this survey, the Working Group decided to include a topical section that would likely change in each iteration of the survey. Including a new section each time the survey is given would not only motivate prior respondents to retake the survey, thus affording the collection of longitudinal data, but it would also allow for the inclusion of timely topical questions without adding to the overall length of the survey. Additionally, such an "insert" section gives voice to educational constituents via the Working Group and Advisory Committee to determine what aspect of the principalship should be more closely understood in that iteration of the survey. In this inaugural survey, the likely topic was of course COVID-19 and the impact it has had on principals and the K-12 system as a whole.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

In March of 2020, Governor Tim Walz signed Executive Order 20-19, authorizing what came to be known as "Distance Learning." Schools scrambled to switch to fully online learning in the matter of a week. Schools across the state remained physically closed for the remainder of the 2019-2020 school year. By July 30, 2020, Governor Walz signed Executive Order 20-82, directing schools to use a localized, data driven approach to operate schools across the state. The plan intended to prioritize safe learning for all Minnesota students and provide flexibility for school districts and charter schools to adapt their learning model based on the prevalence of COVID-19 cases in their area. During the 2020-2021 school year we saw great variation in how schools operated. Some continued distance learning, some adopted a hybrid format, and some operated fully in-person. State-level requirements found in the Safe Learning Plan ended when the state's peacetime emergency ended on July 1, 2021. As such, during the 2021-2022 school year, COVID-19 response plans were developed at the local level, resulting in even greater variation among districts across the state in terms of instructional delivery models and approaches to COVID-19 mitigation strategies. Further understanding of how educators, families, and students experienced this time period can be found in the results of the statewide Safe Learning Surveys conducted by the Wisconsin-Minnesota Comprehensive Center housed at the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement at the University of Minnesota.

Development of the inaugural Minnesota Principals Survey began in earnest in the spring and summer of 2021, more than a year into the COVID-19 pandemic. Being cautious not to replicate the data collected through the aforementioned Safe Learning Surveys, Working Group members developed a series of survey items designed specifically to understand school leaders' key takeaways from their professional experiences during the pandemic, their most significant ongoing pandemic-related challenges, the supports they need most at this stage in the pandemic, and their beliefs about the degree and nature of lasting transformation within their schools brought about by COVID-19. We summarize school leaders' responses to these items in the sections that follow.

PANDEMIC LESSONS LEARNED

To better understand leaders' experiences with the pandemic, we asked them: *What is one lesson or takeaway that has stuck with you as a school leader during the pandemic?* Respondents were required to answer this question with 200 or fewer characters. Overall, 591 respondents answered this question and responses largely aligned with 13 topics. Responses that did not align with the 13 topics were grouped by an other category. Below findings for the 13 categories are presented in order of most to least frequently mentioned, followed by a description of the other responses.

Values and virtues. Leaders frequently reported that there were values and virtues they learned were essential to navigating and surviving their leadership roles during the pandemic. These included compassion, flexibility, gratitude, honesty, humility, kindness, patience, persistence, resilience, resourcefulness, and self-regulation. As one respondent stated, "Flexibility is a daily requirement to survive as a school administrator. We are dealing with obstacles on a daily basis that are related to COVID-19 and state and federal mandates. It is exhausting." Additionally, leaders reported it was important to be willing to adjust quickly as needed, be creative, remain calm, listen, and seek to understand before responding. The pandemic demonstrated to leaders that quick change in school systems is possible, is a good thing, and requires leaders to "go slow to go fast" and "pause, reflect, plan, adjust as [they] go." Celebrating small successes was also highlighted by respondents as important. Lastly, respondents emphasized needing to meet students and families where they are at, do what is right by them, and make sure they know, as one respondent said, "we genuinely care about them" because as another leader shared, "Peoples' humanity and sense of belonging [are] central to everything."

School systems, structures, and supports. In addition, leaders shared various lessons focused on school systems, structures, and supports. Some of these lessons echoed the values and virtues indicating that change to school systems was possible, did happen, and there are many more changes that need to happen in order to help students, families, and staff thrive. As one leader said, "We have to greatly review how we are 'doing' school." Changes included modifying curriculum to be more relevant; making instruction more individualized, learner

centered, and project based; worrying less about state assessments; providing social and emotional support; disrupting "district silos" to make navigating crisis situations easier; and providing fair compensation and setting realistic expectations for staff. For many leaders, the focus now needs to be placed on creating a "new normal" that embraces change and makes it sustainable over the long term. In addition, leaders shared their gratitude for some existing school structures, such as having Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports (MTSS), and expressed needing more funding and partnerships to address the additional roles schools took on during the pandemic. These additional roles included being a community hub carrying out contact tracing, addressing food insecurity, providing childcare, and making technology accessible. Lastly, respondents varied in their perspectives on state agencies (e.g., MDE and the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH)). Some respondents wanted more autonomy to make decisions, especially in rural areas, whereas other respondents wanted more opportunities to meet with MDE and MDH to receive guidance.

Relationships. Leaders also commented on lessons learned regarding relationships during the pandemic. Many focused on the need for compassion, flexibility, and openness in relationships with students, families, and staff. One respondent expressed this idea particularly well saying, it "is about humanity and understanding the social emotional needs of all adults, students, and families. It is about safety first and ensuring the why behind the plans in place. Relationships!" Such positive relationships were also expressed as central to successfully navigating crisis situations. As one respondent said, "The relationships that are developed ahead of potentially harmful events can carry you through anything that comes to the school[,] including a pandemic." Collaboration gave leaders confidence in their roles and helped them successfully navigate decisions during the pandemic. A few educators wrote about anger among parents, students, and/or staff that was unexpected and made their jobs especially difficult. For example, one respondent wrote, the "perception in the community is that we control more than we actually do. I didn't know so many people were angry and that this was so personal. The personal attacks took me off guard."

Mental health. Lessons learned among leaders also concerned mental health. For many leaders, mental health crises and the need for additional mental health supports were more readily apparent during the pandemic. This was true for both staff and student mental health, and was an area leaders identified as needing to be prioritized and better supported through funding and community partnerships. Leaders themselves also shared feeling stressed, overwhelmed, and concerned about their own mental health and longevity in the profession. The pressure to stay strong for everyone else was also present, as one leader wrote: "Maintaining my own mental health is imperative as a leader because everyone else is relying on you (me) for that support. If I am not strong, they won't be either (students, staff and families)."

Leadership. The leadership category of responses covered a range of topics from leadership approaches and challenges to decision-making processes. Leaders commented on the numerous and varied roles they had, including as one respondent put it "being a therapist, epidemiologist, crisis manager more than ever before." This number of roles leaders had was often described as unreasonable, meaning they had to constantly "be prepared for anything and be proactive in [their] decision-making" to keep up. Leaders were also acutely aware of how their decisions affected others during this time of crisis. For example, a leader wrote: "When in crisis, you will see the best and the worst come out in people. My choices influence which one I get most of the time." Leaders also felt they grew as a result of this experience, were creative in problem solving, and were learning about how to manage work-life balance. Finally, respondents expressed the need for more culturally responsive decision making.

Learning format. Leaders who focused on learning format in their lessons learned responses frequently commented on the ineffectiveness of online learning and their preference for in-person learning. However, there were some leaders who acknowledged that students had the chance to explore learning formats that worked for them. In addition, leaders in some cases expressed preferring online formats, particularly for district meetings because it reduced travel time. Leaders also found online meetings helpful for communicating with parents.

Successes. Many responses also chose to share successes as part of their lessons learned. For example, students, families, and staff were incredibly resilient according to leaders as they each figured out how to navigate various teaching and learning modalities. In addition, leaders expressed that students' learning is perhaps greater than has been frequently reported and students have made great strides in their behavior this year. For example, one leader shared, "Be more optimistic - students who started the year with BIG behaviors and barriers have grown immensely - the growth took longer compared to other years, but they have grown so much already!" In addition to students, leaders expressed that they have grown professionally and, as in the words of one participant, they are "looking for ways to innovate and improve no matter the circumstances surrounding the situation."

Workload expectations and sustainability. In terms of workload, leaders expressed being overwhelmed with the expectations for their work and the work of their staff. As one leader wrote, "There has been so much more to navigate - the increase of supporting students and staff, behavior management, new protocols and procedures, day to day school issues, and budget cuts impacts." The heavy workload has led educators to be concerned about sustainability and longevity in their positions. One leader said, "What I'm being asked to do is unsustainable. The stress and workload is having a huge impact [on] my well-being." Other leaders expressed that they could not handle another pandemic, an end needs to be in sight for the current pandemic, and they may not be able to persist.

Equity. Leaders commented broadly about concerns regarding equity. Many expressed that the pandemic has highlighted and exacerbated disparities among students, and, further, that efforts to promote equity have been largely ineffective. As one respondent said, "The pandemic exposed a lot of weaknesses. We know where we have fallen short of supporting our marginalized students. There is much work to be done, but it is glaringly obvious now." In addition, one leader expressed their own challenges with racism during the pandemic stating, "As a Black male leader navigating a Racially Isolated experience and a pandemic has challenged me. No one realizes how hard this is/was. It is exhausting. A take away is to do better with self-care." Just as this leader was concerned about his own mental health, leaders expressed concern about the mental health of students from marginalized backgrounds as well as those students have undoubtedly fared worse during the pandemic.

Communication. Many leaders expressed that communication was of the utmost importance as they navigated the pandemic. This included ensuring that there was clarity in their communication so that students, families, staff, and communities understood and trusted their decisions. Consistently communicating, expressing the "why" behind decisions, and using multiple methods to communicate were also key. One respondent went so far as to say that "Communication is the balance between success and failure as a school and leader."

Technology. Lessons were also learned about technology during the pandemic. Several leaders shared that the pandemic taught them about the role that technology can play in schools. At times, technology can increase efficiency and facilitate communication. However, one respondent also shared that the student mental health crisis has been "made worse by the increased reliance on technology during the pandemic, as well as the fact that students are allowed unlimited access to social media."

Lives of students and families. Various leaders commented on the lessons they learned about the lives of students and families through the pandemic. Specifically, as one leader wrote, the pandemic experience "Increased understanding of barriers our students and families encounter." Leaders realized the extent to which family members struggle with mental health and the lack of resources at school to help with these problems. Similarly, leaders learned about trauma and its effect on students. Overall, the lessons about the hardships that many students and families faced taught educators that they need to, as one respondent put it, "Take time to listen to them before making assumptions or trying to solve a problem."

Politics. Several leaders shared insights about political pressure and societal division they were handling as well. Leaders expressed that people are angry and it has been very difficult to navigate COVID-19 mitigation protocols, especially, during the pandemic due to politics. As one leader expressed, "it's a lose-lose." Leaders feel education is particularly vulnerable right now as a result of the "increasing uncertainty and [the] political[ly] charge[d] nature of the pandemic" as one leader wrote.

Other. Additional lessons learned by leaders included the lack of substitute teachers making it difficult to maintain day to day operations, teachers needing more planning time, and challenges due to misunderstandings between district-level and school-level leadership.

ONGOING PANDEMIC-RELATED CHALLENGES

We asked school leaders to indicate the most significant ongoing challenges their schools were facing related to, or exacerbated by, COVID-19. Respondents could select up to 3 challenges from a list of 13 options, including an other option with text entry. Table 33 displays these response options in order from most to least selected.

Table 33. Most Significant Ongoing Pandemic-Related Challenges

Challenge	N	%
Staff mental health	433	68%
Student mental health	419	66%
Active pushback from families or community members related to COVID-19 mitigation (e.g., masking, quarantining)	179	28%
Loss of instruction	172	27%
Other (please specify):	108	17%
Low student engagement	101	16%
Support staff turnover	93	15%
Low student attendance	82	13%
Insufficient resources	69	11%
Teacher turnover	51	8%
Low enrollment	26	4%
Student mobility	16	3%
Insufficient tech support	13	2%
Total	**634**	**100%**

Overall, 634 participants answered the question. Top responses included *staff mental health* (68% of respondents) and *student mental health* (66%). The next most frequent selections included *active pushback from families or community members related to COVID-19 mitigation* (28%) and *loss of instruction* (27%). Nearly 1 in 5 respondents selected *other* (*n*=108, or 17% of respondents). Participants that selected *other* overwhelmingly identified staffing issues—including finding substitutes and hiring for permanent roles—as the most significant challenge for their school. Additional themes among other responses included intensified social and emotional learning needs of students (e.g., "reteaching how to be a student") and absences due to staff and student quarantines.

Subgroup analyses revealed several notable geographic and level differences in response selections. Along geographic lines, Greater MN respondents were 10 percentage points more likely to select *active pushback from families or community members related to COVID-19 mitigation* than were Metro respondents (34% vs. 24%, respectively). Metro respondents were 3 times more likely than Greater MN

respondents to select *low enrollment* as an ongoing challenge (6% vs. 2%, respectively).

Comparing responses across school level, Secondary respondents were 4.5 times more likely than Elementary respondents to select *low student engagement* (26% vs. 6%, respectively), and 17 percentage points more likely to select *student mental health* (75% vs. 58%). Elementary respondents, in turn, were 16 percentage points more likely to select *loss of instruction* as a challenge than Secondary respondents (34% vs. 19%, respectively).

All subgroup response frequencies for pandemic-related challenges are provided in .

NEEDED PANDEMIC-RELATED SUPPORTS

We also sought to understand what supports school leaders would find most helpful at this stage of the pandemic. Respondents could select up to 3 supports from a list of 9 options, including an *other* option with text entry. Alternatively, respondents could indicate that they do not need support at this time. Table 34 shows the breakdown of responses, ordered from most to least selected. A total of 631 participants answered the question, 98% of whom reported needing some form of support. The most frequent responses—again, by far—were *mental health* resources for staff and students.

Table 34. Most Helpful Supports at this Stage in the Pandemic

Support	N	%
Mental health resources for staff	460	73%
Mental health resources for students	445	71%
Academic support resources for students	301	48%
Guidance on leading amidst community division	198	31%
Mental health resources for myself	57	9%
Guidance on implementing hybrid or distance learning modalities	48	8%
Access to high-speed internet	46	7%
Other (please specify):	36	6%
Access to technology hardware	21	3%
No supports are needed at this time.	10	2%
Total	**631**	**100%**

resources for staff (73% of respondents) and *mental health resources for students* (71%), paralleling participants' ongoing challenges as reported in the previous section. Other top supports included *academic support resources for students* (48%) and *guidance on leading amidst community division* (31%). Additionally, nearly 1 in 10 respondents selected *mental health resources for myself* (9%) as one of the three most helpful supports at this time. Among other responses (*n*=36, 6%), the most common theme, again, pertained to the overwhelming need for more staff, including support staff, licensed staff, and substitutes. Additional themes included the need for "more time" and improved alignment of state directives (e.g., required testing and reporting) with the trealities facing schools.

Comparing selections of Greater MN and Metro participants, two differences were noteworthy: Greater MN respondents were twice as likely as Metro respondents to select *access to high-speed internet* (10% vs. 5%, respectively), and Metro respondents were twice as likely as Greater MN respondents to indicate that *no supports are needed at this time* (2% vs. 1%, respectively).

One difference between Elementary and Secondary responses was notable: Secondary respondents were 12 percentage points more likely than Elementary respondents to select *mental health resources for students* (77% vs. 65%, respectively), which was the most frequently-selected response option among the Secondary subgroup.

All subgroup response frequencies for needed pandemic-related supports are provided in Appendix Table A40.

BELIEFS ABOUT SCHOOL TRANSFORMATION

Anecdotally, school and system leaders involved in the creation of this survey had observed fundamental changes to the process of schooling resulting from the pandemic, but it was unclear to what extent such changes were widespread or perceived to be lasting—or even possible. As such, Working Group and Advisory Council members developed three survey items that would gauge leaders' beliefs about school transformation "in light of [their] experience as a school leader during the pandemic."

First, we asked respondents to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with two statements: "The disruption brought about by

COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways," and "Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible." Response breakdowns for these two items are shown in Figure 31. Overall, about half (54%) of respondents *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that COVID-19 had fundamentally changed their schools for the better, but a far larger percentage (88%) *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* that lasting transformation was possible, regardless of whether they had experienced such transformation during this COVID-19 era.

There were no significant differences between the response frequencies of Greater MN and Metro participants nor between those of Elementary and Secondary participants for either of these two items.

Next, we asked participants to predict how their schools will have changed "from pre-pandemic to post-pandemic." Respondents could select as many options as applied to them from a list of 9 possible changes, including an *other* option with text entry. Alternatively, respondents could indicate that they do not anticipate any changes. Table 35 displays the breakdown of responses ordered from **most** to **least** selected. Overall, 633 participants answered the question. The top response was *use of technology*, which was selected by the vast majority of respondents (78%). Other frequent responses included *learning modalities (i.e., distance learning or hybrid)* (48%), *communication with families* (45%), *providing non-academic services* (e.g., mental health services) (45%), and r*elationship-building with students* (44%). Only 2% of respondents anticipated no changes from pre- to post-pandemic. *Other* responses (*n*=21, 3%) included a mix of both positive (e.g., better staff collaboration) and negative (e.g., decreased family/community support) anticipated changes.

There were no notable differences between subgroup responses for either geographic or school level breakdowns, with the exception that twice as many Metro respondents selected other as Greater MN respondents (5% vs. 2%, respectively).

All subgroup response frequencies for school transformation items are provided in Appendix Tables A41 and A42.

Figure 31. Responses to Questions about School Transformation

"Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible."

10%	56%	33%

"The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways."

17%	29%	48%	7%

Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree
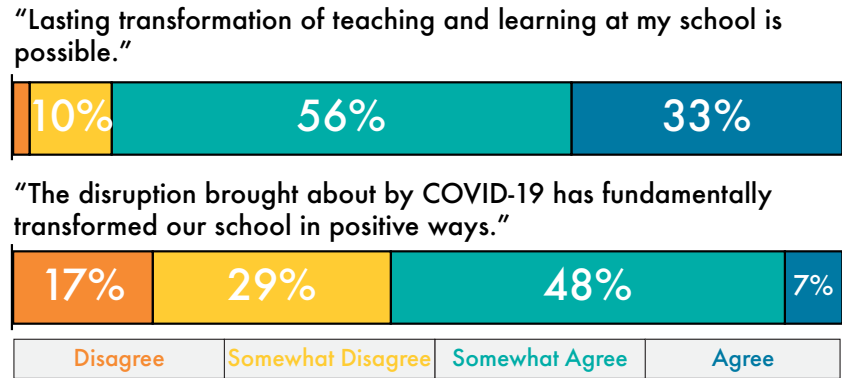
Table 35. Anticipated Changes, Pre- to Post-Pandemic

Anticipated Change	N	%
Use of technology	491	78%
Learning modalities (i.e., distance learning or hybrid)	305	48%
Communication with families	288	45%
Providing non-academic services (e.g., mental health services)	287	45%
Relationship-building with students	279	44%
Professional development	133	21%
School schedule	127	20%
Selection of curricular materials	83	13%
Other (please specify):	21	3%
I do not anticipate any changes.	13	2%
Total	**633**	**100%**

ADDITIONAL INSIGHTS FROM EXPERIENCES AS A SCHOOL LEADER

As the final question on the survey, to collect any additional thoughts, we asked leaders: *Is there anything else about your experience as a school leader that may be helpful for various education constituents to know—including local and state-level decision-makers?* Respondents were required to answer this question within 500 or fewer characters. In total, there were 198 leaders who responded to this question. Their responses primarily aligned with 16 different topics, which are summarized below. Responses that did not align with at least one of the 16 topics were grouped into a category labeled other and are also described below.

Unmanageable workload. School leaders frequently expressed concerns of the overwhelming workload and demands on them and school staff, exaggerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Many respondents shared they were expected to perform multiple tasks including COVID-19 tracking and reporting, behavioral support, conflict resolution, communications, taking care of staff mental health, etc., whereas little support is provided. For example, one respondent commented "I am often finding myself 'full'. Tasks, responsibilities keep being added to our plates and things don't get taken off. Sometimes it feels like we are protecting other education positions with balancing workload yet piling it on administration with little to no additional help". Sustainability and staff retention were common concerns that showed up in the responses, as one of the responses said, "Our work environment due to the pandemic is unsustainable. If we don't get some relief soon we will lose more colleagues." Some school leaders proposed that the school system needed additional staff to assist with the unmanageable workload, that "Principals can't be everything to all people....every principal needs a dedicated personal admin assistant so we can stay on top of communications while trying to be excellent at our jobs."

Insufficient and inequitable funding. In terms of funding, leaders commented on the insufficient or inequitable funding provided to schools, including insufficient compensation for staff. Respondents specifically wanted additional funding for mental health supports, culturally responsive resources, academic interventionists, classroom teachers, as well as retired administrators taking on part-time supervisory roles. Several leaders expressed frustration with the inequitable funding formula that, as one respondent put it, "causes disparity in opportunities and services for students based on the local ability to fund levy requests." This respondent continued by discussing the challenges of lacking a high tax base, "Without a high tax base, it is too costly for some communities to afford the same amount of support another community easily passes. Our students are victims of the formula and this inequity. This inequity is not addressed in our state funding formula." In addition, leaders requested fewer unfunded mandates and a regular review process to identify the money needed to carry out a mandate,

including staff time. Respondents were also concerned about the lack of funding for smaller schools and frustration with the disregard of local knowledge. As one respondent stated, "The gatekeepers present in a way that assumes they have more knowledge than me about what is best for the children that look like me and the children & families we serve. Money & time are tight and the lack of support of smaller schools is horrible." Additional concerns were raised about schools losing funding when students take valuable PSEO courses and the need to improve teacher salaries to avoid a "mass exodus from public education."

State accountability and mandate overload. Many leaders provided additional insights on the ways in which state accountability systems and mandates are not serving the work of schools and need to be better aligned or eliminated altogether. Leaders specifically wanted statewide testing through the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments to be either replaced with assessments that provide results in a shorter timeframe or eliminated. In addition, leaders wanted requirements for licensure to be reduced, including the Minnesota Teacher Licensure Examinations. Furthermore, various leaders expressed the need to reduce the administrative burden of managing various policy mandates. As one leader said, "State and federal mandates must begin to work together to reduce the amount of paperwork and mandates handed down to school district administrators. [...] We must understand that administrators' time needs to be spent on caring for our students, staff and families." This need to lessen the administrative burden included reducing "the amount of data required to be sent to the state" and the amount of paperwork required for special education.

Mental health supports needed. Leaders particularly expressed the need to secure more funding to meet the mental health needs of students and staff, including addressing trauma and building social and emotional skills. Among the responses, leaders felt strongly that mental health support needs to be regularly available in every school building and programming needs to be available for every student. In addition, leaders expressed needing support for themselves and their own families as well. Two respondents expressed similar sentiments saying, "This has been the hardest year in my 19 years in education. I feel like quitting every day. I dread going to work. I feel inadequate as a leader. My mental health is suffering because there is no break. I feel alone and abandoned by district leaders." and "my stress level and the stress level of my principal colleagues is off the charts and not sustainable. Something needs to change dramatically. This is the most disillusioned I have felt as a principal in over 25 years of experience." In terms of their family, another leader wrote, "I do not want to be someone who quits when it gets tough but at some point it is a question of mental health and prioritizing one[']s own children vs. those of others. It breaks my heart." Political

division, according to leaders, was also influencing the mental health of school personnel. For example, a leader shared: The constant attacks by a small group of community members is making the lives of our staff miserable. People are constantly on edge and feeling frustrated by those attacks. This has led to staff breakdown and people starting to take out aggressions on each other."

District support. In addition to needing support from the state, school leaders expressed needing support from their district. As one respondent said, "Principals are in the middle. We get pressure from staff and families to meet their needs. We get pressure from [district office] staff to implement with little opportunity for input. It can be overwhelming to have such pressure from both directions with limited support." This dynamic presents challenges that make school leaders' jobs difficult. Other leaders, however, expressed having different experiences. One leader in particular shared, "I have had the opportunity to work with powerful mentors as I have grown as a leader. I feel supported by district level leaders who guide me and provide individualized support as needed. That has made a huge impact in my professional growth and is why I feel that I can continue in this position. It's a stressful job, and a support structure for principals is essential."

Staff burnout and shortages. School leaders are incredibly worried about burnout, the retention of staff, and the availability of substitute teachers. As one respondent put it, "Schools are at a difficult stage right now. Everyone is exhausted. The substitute shortage is putting a TON of pressure on people working in schools." They continued by expressing the need for assistance from the state: "There needs to be some help from the state to address the substitute worker shortage in education. We will [have] good people to burn-out if the[y] have to keep picking up the slack for a staff member who is out or if they have to keep worrying about not wanting to take a day off because of the pressure it puts on others." Leaders fear they won't be able to continue operating their schools without addressing staff burnout. One leader's response particularly illustrated this challenge from the perspective of a school principal. This leader shared, "My work as a principal is challenging especially over the past few years. We are extremely short-handed every day. I am a sub, the nurse, the receptionist, recess/lunch coverage, para, and principal. There are many days that I think I cannot sustain this level of expectations all at once. I am in a wonderful school with an amazing staff and it is still challenging each day. I love my job but dread checking our staffing situation each morning between 6:00-6:30."

Political divisiveness and lack of community support. Another prevalent topic on the minds of school leaders who responded to the survey was the pervasive political divisiveness and the lack of community support. As one leader said, "The political division in our country is impacting our schools and our staff more than people recognize. With so much media conversation about schools, curriculum, unions, etc. it really wears on my teachers. [...] I want my staff to be happy, and healthy and we know that efficacy plays a major role in creating this environment. Right now teacher efficacy is really low due to politics." As a result of this divisiveness, some leaders report that they no longer have time to carry out one of their most important duties--that is to be an instructional leader. For example, one leader wrote, "I think the biggest issue is that I no longer have time to be an instructional leader. [...] I now spend so much time responding to irrational adults that are verbally and emotionally abusive that I can hardly get into classrooms, I spend less time improving the lives of students, teachers are resistant to any PD. Teachers are just trying to survive too and instructional coaching feels impossible right now." Some leaders are going so far as to even rethink their careers.

Professional Development. On a positive note, several school leaders shared valuable professional development experiences when responding to the question about additional insights. These experiences included the Courageous Leadership cohort, the Minnesota Principals Academy, MDE professional communities on special education, and peer mentorship. However, leaders were concerned about the limited amount of time they had to put towards their professional development and the lack of required courses or trainings about racial equity.

Student behavior/Parent support. Among the additional insights, school leaders expressed pressing concern about student behavior. Various leaders highlighted extreme challenges with student behavior, saying student behavior has been "the worst we have seen," "the biggest struggle," and "unprecedented." Leaders also reported difficulties with parents, including parents challenging school leaders' decisions. Both these issues, as leaders expressed, are in need of support and some leaders emphasized the opportunity educators have to "reimagine how [they] engage and partner with families."

Lack of time to be an instructional leader. While school leaders expressed the importance of their role as instructional leaders across this open-ended question and closed-ended questions presented earlier, this role, as they shared, was increasingly being limited by competing demands on leaders' time. Many leaders that shared insights about their role as instructional leaders expressed that it was one of the roles they enjoyed the most about their job. As one leader shared, "There is not time to be an instructional leader, coach, etc. We are the only one who can manage the building, provide behavior support (which is taking 90% of my time this year) or managing adult behavior (conflict resolution)."

Racial trauma and harm. Various school leaders shared additional insights about the pervasive issues of racism in education and the need for support. While leaders of color shared that among their many contributions to education were their efforts to eliminate biases among White staff and students and serve as role models for students of color, leaders of color faced numerous challenges on a regular basis that their White peers did not. For example, leaders of color shared that they regularly faced violence. As one leader wrote, "I have received hate mail, have had my home and vehicles vandalized, and have been discounted due to my gender and race." As a result of challenges, such as these, leaders of color expressed needing support in various forms. Such support included access to professional development specifically designed for them as well as representation among and opportunities to provide input on the decisions of local and state leaders. One leader expressed having sought to secure such support, saying "PD for BIPOC leaders is crucial and the state doesn't offer this. I've proposed this to MDE and have yet to receive a response. When you have White people making decisions for BIPOC, the work is never complete. We need more BIPOC making educational decisions for BIPOC & LGBQT+IA groups NOW to better respond to the injustice in our commissioner office, district office, schools, and communities. I am one that is willing to stand front and center to uphold this task." Another leader echoed this sentiment saying, "We've got to deal with how to humanize and better support BIPOC administrators as a State. Few enter into the profession and struggle leading some to leave the profession." The need for support for leaders of color was further emphasized by a respondent who explained, "Principals of color need support because we tend to work in poor communities, our staff are overworked, students and their families lack political power. We work under a lot of pressure to perform and limited real support from state and district for our communities and our scholars. Districts do not seem to do enough to encourage and promote us unless they need a token person of color. Central offices are mainly White people even in districts with large communities of color."

Love and gratitude for being a school leader. Among additional insights, leaders expressed gratitude for the opportunity to serve in the roles that they do. Several shared that they love working as school leaders, even saying it is the "best job [they] have ever had." Leaders find their day to day work to be rewarding and especially appreciate the ways they can "make an impact for students and staff." One leader expressed this particularly clearly saying, "I am so thankful for the opportunity to be around children and teachers. I consider it a privilege to be able to share what I know with them, to learn from them, and to be able to provide the resources and opportunities for our school community to grow." Leaders acknowledge that the pandemic has challenged them, certainly, however they feel they will end the year stronger having "handled the challenges as a team" as one participant wrote.

Survey feedback. Some respondents provided feedback on the MnPS in their response to the additional insights question. Specifically, they expressed that there were often more than three response options they felt were critical in some questions and some questions could be worded more clearly. Also, the role and support from district leadership could be touched upon in future surveys. School leaders also shared gratitude for the survey team and the opportunity to share their input.

District/school level decision making. In terms of decision making at the district and school levels, leaders expressed the pervasiveness of a male-dominant and misogynistic culture, the importance of local decision making, and opportunities for school leader voice in district decisions.

Need for differentiation between greater MN and metro area schools. A few school leaders also expressed the need to distinguish between greater MN and metro area schools. As one respondent wrote, "Rural school needs are unique and a blanket approach does not work for the entire state of MN." This sentiment was echoed by other leaders who wanted state leaders to differentiate their decision making for the metro and greater MN schools. Part of the reason for this seemed to be because, as one respondent stated, "rural school districts often do not feel heard by the state leadership. This was especially true during the pandemic." One example of the uniqueness of greater MN shared by a respondent included that the closeness of communities in rural areas means that "stress on rural leadership extends beyond the school to community leadership [...] This is the greatest stress I face - I want to provide leadership within the community but the division of political thought makes it harder to bring about positive, influential change."

Advice to others. There were a few leaders who provided advice for other leaders when answering the additional insights question. For example, one leader wrote, "Young or new administrators coming into the field of educational leadership should always keep in mind why they are in this field of work. Stick to you[r] morals, lead with integrity, and be yourself. If you can do those things, you will shine and help create leaders for our future." Similarly, other leaders expressed the importance of having a clear vision of why they are a leader, finding a mentor, "lov[ing] children and be[ing] a good human to all," "aligning efforts and resources to best meet student needs," and "lead[ing] with a servant heart, willing to view their school community as an extension of their family and prioritize what's best for students with every decision."

Other. Other responses leaders shared under additional insights included, concerns about the harms of social media, the loss of the Rule of 90, and a heavy focus on diversity and identities. In addition, leaders expressed wanting guidance from experts who have worked in schools rather than researchers who have only read about education, wanting lower class sizes, and hoping staff will recover from their experiences during the pandemic.

CONCLUSION

The MnPS provides a robust baseline for understanding how principals, assistant principals, and charter school leaders are experiencing their work, how confident they are in doing it, and in what areas they may benefit from additional support. Perhaps one of the most positive findings is that 90% of respondents felt they can be successful as a leader in their school, citing relationships with students and staff as elements that most contribute to their job satisfaction. Leaders also report feeling well prepared and efficacious in management and decision making. Additionally, even in light of the COVID-19 pandemic, nearly 9 in 10 believe lasting transformation in teaching and learning is possible, specifically in the use of technology and how we interface and build relationships with students and their families.

The job is not without its challenges. Addressing staff mental health was the number one greatest challenge identified by respondents regardless of where or at which level they served. Principals are asking for support not only in the area of mental health, they are looking for opportunities for increasing their own knowledge and tools and frameworks to assist them in domains such as instructional leadership, culture and climate, and Culturally Responsive School Leadership. Three out of the five lowest-rated leadership activities in terms of the principal's level of confidence fall into the instructional leadership category and pertain to Culturally Responsive School Leadership specifically—further evidence that Minnesota school leaders need additional support in this area.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

In the words of one respondent, "Simplify and support." Schools and districts should consider prioritizing what work principals can and must do in the coming year and then support that work. Support could come from district leaders by ensuring principals have clear direction and the time to accomplish what is expected. Support also likely can come in the form of effective professional learning and mentoring that addresses cited areas of need like instructional leadership, culture and climate, and culturally responsive and affirming practices. As one principal described, "The job is definitely rewarding. The job is also physically, mentally and emotionally challenging." We have an opportunity - a responsibility - to believe them, to believe the data reported here, contextualize it from where we sit, and to respond. Given that over 70% of respondents report concern about student and staff mental health, nearly one out of ten principals report they would benefit from mental health resources for themselves, and less than half of the respondents report that the current amount of work is sustainable, it would seem that the totality of the job and expectations of a single leader likely need to be examined in schools and districts across the state.

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY

Both the quantitative and qualitative data overwhelmingly indicate that principals need help in addressing both student and staff mental health. Principals have shared that 'the school' has become the place that many in society see as needing to support student mental health. They also indicate that it is nearly impossible to meet the demands they are seeing. Thus, mental health is an issue in need of policy discussion. At the state level, policymakers will need to determine what they expect schools to provide in terms of mental health support and services. These discussions should also include the expectations of community support and county services. All of these discussions will likely point to a need for increased funding, regardless of who provides services.

Another theme that emerged from the survey data is that while principals feel they can be successful and believe their primary role is to be an instructional leader, there are areas within instructional leadership--specifically culturally responsive and affirming practices--that need more support. This theme emerged in the questions on preparation and resurfaced among desired professional learning topics, confidence in leadership practices, and Culturally Responsive School Leadership. While current policies set forth requirements for re-licensure that seemingly address these topics, respondents are telling us that expectations alone are not enough. Formal principal mentoring may be a policy provision that could ensure principals get the ongoing development needed to be efficacious and skilled in these areas.

NEXT STEPS

The first iteration of the MnPS has provided the state with a wealth of information on a broad range of topics. In the coming months, the MnPS team will conduct focus groups to explore select topics in more depth. These focus groups will provide a more nuanced understanding of the survey findings from the perspective of principals across the state. Additionally, over the next year, the MnPS team will release various policy and practice briefs on topics that leaders have identified as needing further guidance and support. Finally, the MnPS team intends to administer the next iteration of this survey in the fall of 2023.

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APPENDIX

Table A1. Job Selection Factors

Factor	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Opportunity for impact	517	67%	225	63%	287	71%	252	67%	247	67%
Location	250	33%	149	42%	99	24%	124	33%	120	33%
School mission or vision	181	24%	49	14%	130	32%	74	20%	96	26%
Compensation	152	20%	77	22%	73	18%	70	19%	78	21%
Leadership structure	152	20%	58	16%	94	23%	64	17%	83	23%
Staff culture	151	20%	69	19%	82	20%	68	18%	77	21%
Student demographic characteristics	146	19%	38	11%	105	26%	69	18%	70	19%
Future career opportunities	146	19%	65	18%	80	20%	65	17%	75	20%
School size	113	15%	84	24%	29	7%	52	14%	61	17%
Characteristics of the surrounding community	111	14%	59	17%	52	13%	69	18%	40	11%
Quality of staff	86	11%	52	15%	34	8%	40	11%	45	12%
Other (please specify):	70	9%	32	9%	38	9%	39	10%	30	8%
Your district or charter authorizer leadership	61	8%	25	7%	36	9%	38	10%	22	6%
Benefits	30	4%	20	6%	10	2%	15	4%	14	4%
Total respondents	**768**	**100%**	**357**	**100%**	**406**	**100%**	**376**	**100%**	**368**	**100%**

Table A2. Job Continuation Factors

Factor	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Opportunity for impact	340	54%	152	51%	185	56%	174	54%	152	52%
Staff culture	273	43%	127	43%	144	43%	149	46%	117	40%
Leadership structure	145	23%	69	23%	75	23%	62	19%	73	25%
Compensation	137	22%	67	23%	69	21%	65	20%	69	24%
Decision-making autonomy	109	17%	44	15%	64	19%	63	20%	40	14%
Future career opportunities	107	17%	47	16%	60	18%	53	16%	51	18%
School mission or vision	100	16%	31	10%	67	20%	41	13%	53	18%
Quality of staff	98	15%	57	19%	41	12%	51	16%	45	16%
Location	96	15%	56	19%	40	12%	51	16%	42	14%
District or charter network leadership	82	13%	38	13%	43	13%	41	13%	38	13%
Characteristics of the surrounding community	73	12%	49	16%	24	7%	37	11%	36	12%
Other	56	9%	29	10%	27	8%	29	9%	26	9%
Benefits	49	8%	27	9%	22	7%	24	7%	24	8%
Student demographic characteristics	45	7%	13	4%	32	10%	18	6%	25	9%
School size	33	5%	17	6%	16	5%	22	7%	10	3%
Total respondents	**633**	**100%**	**297**	**100%**	**332**	**100%**	**322**	**100%**	**290**	**100%**

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Table A3. Next Steps in Career

Option	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Retire	201	32%	109	37%	92	28%	110	34%	87	30%
Undecided	128	20%	51	17%	77	23%	62	19%	63	22%
Take a position in a different school	107	17%	51	17%	55	17%	50	16%	54	19%
Take a position in educational administration at the district or charter authorizer level	72	11%	31	10%	41	13%	38	12%	30	10%
Other (please specify):	37	6%	10	3%	27	8%	21	7%	15	5%
Work in a sector outside of public education	34	5%	20	7%	13	4%	20	6%	12	4%
Work in public education in some other capacity not described above	27	4%	12	4%	14	4%	10	3%	15	5%
Take a different position in the same school	23	4%	13	4%	9	3%	8	3%	13	4%
Total respondents	**629**	**100%**	**297**	**100%**	**328**	**100%**	**319**	**100%**	**289**	**100%**

Table A4. Mean Level of Preparation in Administrative Leadership Domains (Range: 1-4)

Domain	Overall	Greater MN	Metro	Elem.	Sec.
Applying the code of ethics for school administrators	3.26	3.31	3.22	3.28	3.24
Understanding the role of education in a democratic society	3.12	3.13	3.11	3.13	3.11
Understanding educational policy and regulations (e.g., special education, student discipline)	3.11	3.13	3.10	3.08	3.15
Sharing leadership with teachers and staff	3.03	3.07	3.01	2.99	3.09
Analyzing problems to identify causes and solutions	3.01	3.01	3.02	3.01	3.03
Communicating effectively to different audiences	2.97	3.03	2.91	2.96	2.98
Understanding laws and regulations governing human resource management	2.91	2.97	2.86	2.90	2.91
Establishing a mission and vision for your school	2.91	2.92	2.90	2.89	2.92
Analyzing data to inform decision-making	2.90	2.91	2.90	2.91	2.91
Supporting instruction that is consistent with principles of child learning and development	2.89	2.91	2.87	2.88	2.90
Understanding school districts as political systems	2.87	2.91	2.85	2.90	2.86
Holding students to high academic expectations	2.86	2.89	2.83	2.88	2.85
Applying research to inform curricular decisions	2.85	2.86	2.84	2.81	2.90
Developing teachers as professionals	2.84	2.85	2.83	2.82	2.88
Developing policies and procedures to promote a safe learning environment	2.81	2.83	2.79	2.82	2.81
Resolving conflicts	2.80	2.86	2.75	2.74	2.87
Aligning stakeholders in support of school priorities	2.80	2.83	2.77	2.78	2.82
Implementing state academic standards	2.79	2.84	2.75	2.81	2.78
Evaluating staff performance	2.76	2.81	2.73	2.74	2.80
Facilitating productive meetings	2.76	2.84	2.68	2.72	2.78
Using assessment data to monitor student progress	2.75	2.78	2.72	2.77	2.73
Advocating publicly for the needs of students	2.74	2.80	2.69	2.74	2.75
Managing budgets	2.74	2.79	2.70	2.75	2.72
Formulating a site improvement plan	2.67	2.70	2.66	2.64	2.71
Managing facilities	2.66	2.69	2.65	2.68	2.66
Ensuring equitable student access to learning opportunities	2.63	2.72	2.55	2.60	2.66
Addressing emergency and crisis situations	2.59	2.62	2.57	2.60	2.60
Recruiting and retaining staff	2.56	2.64	2.49	2.59	2.54
Supporting instruction that is culturally responsive	2.46	2.50	2.43	2.43	2.50
Leveraging students' cultural backgrounds as assets for teaching and learning	2.45	2.50	2.41	2.42	2.48

Table A5. Experiences Missing from Administrative Licensure Internships

Option	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Facilitating conversations about equity	320	46%	132	41%	187	51%	168	49%	142	43%
Addressing staff culture challenges	243	35%	104	33%	138	38%	125	37%	112	34%
Developing and evaluating non-teaching staff	152	22%	69	22%	82	22%	75	22%	74	22%
Engaging families and community members	146	21%	71	22%	74	20%	68	20%	73	22%
Scheduling experience	146	21%	72	23%	71	19%	49	14%	90	27%
Addressing student discipline challenges	145	21%	74	23%	69	19%	73	21%	68	21%
Developing and evaluating teachers	137	20%	61	19%	76	21%	71	21%	61	18%
Budgeting experience	130	19%	56	18%	72	20%	59	17%	65	20%
Facilitating professional development	111	16%	50	16%	61	17%	50	15%	59	18%
Analyzing data to inform decisions	87	13%	43	13%	43	12%	47	14%	36	11%
Supervising staff	49	7%	24	8%	25	7%	25	7%	23	7%
Hiring new staff	47	7%	25	8%	22	6%	21	6%	24	7%
Other (please specify)	44	6%	20	6%	24	7%	22	6%	21	6%
Making administrative decisions	31	4%	17	5%	14	4%	15	4%	13	4%
Total respondents	**691**	**100%**	**319**	**100%**	**368**	**100%**	**340**	**100%**	**330**	**100%**

Table A6. Coursework Missing from Administrative Licensure Internships

Content type	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Culturally responsive teaching	380	58%	156	51%	223	64%	188	58%	182	59%
Family and community engagement best practices	239	36%	106	35%	131	38%	113	35%	119	38%
Special education due process	207	32%	109	36%	98	28%	98	30%	101	32%
Staff recruitment and retention best practices	206	31%	90	30%	112	32%	97	30%	97	31%
Teacher development and evaluation best practices	174	26%	81	27%	92	26%	84	26%	81	26%
Data-driven decision-making	132	20%	67	22%	64	18%	65	20%	62	20%
School finance	124	19%	60	20%	62	18%	55	17%	66	21%
Other (please specify):	34	5%	14	5%	20	6%	21	6%	12	4%
Total respondents	**657**	**100%**	**304**	**100%**	**349**	**100%**	**324**	**100%**	**311**	**100%**

Table A7. Time Spent on Various Leadership Tasks

		Much less time than I would ideally spend		Somewhat less time than I would ideally spend		About the right amount of time		Somewhat more time than I would ideally spend		Much more time than I would ideally spend		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Internal administrative tasks, including human resource/personnel issues, scheduling, regulations, reports, school budget, attending operational meetings	6	1%	25	4%	249	35%	243	34%	188	26%	711	100%
	Instructional tasks, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, mentoring teachers, educator professional development	148	21%	292	41%	201	28%	54	8%	15	2%	710	100%
	Student interactions, including academic guidance, discipline, seeking student input and engagement, developing student relationships	25	4%	188	27%	283	40%	109	15%	104	15%	709	100%
	Family and community interactions, including formal and informal interactions, attending events, engagement with specific groups, seeking parent or community member input	72	10%	292	41%	267	38%	62	9%	18	3%	711	100%
	My own professional growth, including critical self-reflection, attending professional development, reviewing research, reading, networking with other administrative colleagues	190	27%	338	48%	166	23%	8	1%	8	1%	710	100%
Greater MN	Internal administrative tasks, including human resource/personnel issues, scheduling, regulations, reports, school budget, attending operational meetings	3	1%	13	4%	115	35%	126	39%	68	21%	325	100%
	Instructional tasks, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, mentoring teachers, educator professional development	63	19%	131	40%	93	29%	30	9%	8	2%	325	100%
	Student interactions, including academic guidance, discipline, seeking student input and engagement, developing student relationships	11	3%	78	24%	132	41%	51	16%	53	16%	325	100%
	Family and community interactions, including formal and informal interactions, attending events, engagement with specific groups, seeking parent or community member input	36	11%	129	40%	121	37%	27	8%	12	4%	325	100%
	My own professional growth, including critical self-reflection, attending professional development, reviewing research, reading, networking with other administrative colleagues	79	24%	155	48%	82	25%	3	1%	6	2%	325	100%
Metro	Internal administrative tasks, including human resource/personnel issues, scheduling, regulations, reports, school budget, attending operational meetings	3	1%	12	3%	133	35%	116	30%	117	31%	381	100%
	Instructional tasks, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, mentoring teachers, educator professional development	84	22%	159	42%	108	28%	22	6%	7	2%	380	100%
	Student interactions, including academic guidance, discipline, seeking student input and engagement, developing student relationships	13	3%	109	29%	150	40%	56	15%	51	13%	379	100%
	Family and community interactions, including formal and informal interactions, attending events, engagement with specific groups, seeking parent or community member input	36	9%	161	42%	145	38%	33	9%	6	2%	381	100%
	My own professional growth, including critical self-reflection, attending professional development, reviewing research, reading, networking with other administrative colleagues	109	29%	182	48%	82	22%	5	1%	2	1%	380	100%
Elementary	Internal administrative tasks, including human resource/personnel issues, scheduling, regulations, reports, school budget, attending operational meetings	1	0%	10	3%	119	34%	115	33%	106	30%	351	100%
	Instructional tasks, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, mentoring teachers, educator professional development	77	22%	143	41%	95	27%	27	8%	8	2%	350	100%
	Student interactions, including academic guidance, discipline, seeking student input and engagement, developing student relationships	12	3%	98	28%	160	46%	44	13%	36	10%	350	100%
	Family and community interactions, including formal and informal interactions, attending events, engagement with specific groups, seeking parent or community member input	29	8%	160	46%	129	37%	27	8%	6	2%	351	100%
	My own professional growth, including critical self-reflection, attending professional development, reviewing research, reading, networking with other administrative colleagues	81	23%	167	48%	94	27%	5	1%	4	1%	351	100%
Secondary	Internal administrative tasks, including human resource/personnel issues, scheduling, regulations, reports, school budget, attending operational meetings	5	1%	13	4%	123	37%	121	36%	74	22%	336	100%
	Instructional tasks, including curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, mentoring teachers, educator professional development	69	21%	137	41%	100	30%	24	7%	6	2%	336	100%
	Student interactions, including academic guidance, discipline, seeking student input and engagement, developing student relationships	11	3%	80	24%	116	35%	61	18%	67	20%	335	100%
	Family and community interactions, including formal and informal interactions, attending events, engagement with specific groups, seeking parent or community member input	40	12%	123	37%	128	38%	33	10%	12	4%	336	100%
	My own professional growth, including critical self-reflection, attending professional development, reviewing research, reading, networking with other administrative colleagues	104	31%	158	47%	66	20%	3	1%	4	1%	335	100%

Table A8. Breakdown of Responses to Instructional Leadership Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "My primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader"	32	5%	102	16%	219	35%	281	44%	634	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader"	72	11%	177	28%	248	39%	136	21%	633	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "My primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader"	19	6%	55	18%	114	38%	111	37%	299	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader"	27	9%	86	29%	121	40%	65	22%	299	100%
Metro	Responses to "My primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader"	13	4%	45	14%	104	31%	169	51%	331	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader"	43	13%	89	27%	127	38%	71	22%	330	100%
Elementary	Responses to "My primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader"	12	4%	43	13%	113	35%	153	48%	321	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader"	33	10%	89	28%	136	43%	62	19%	320	100%
Secondary	Responses to "My primary role as an administrator is to be an instructional leader"	19	7%	54	18%	100	34%	119	41%	292	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor ensures I have the time to be an instructional leader"	36	12%	80	27%	110	38%	66	23%	292	100%

Table A9. Breakdown of Responses to Compensation and Benefits Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "My compensation is appropriate for the work I do"	104	16%	123	19%	235	37%	173	27%	635	100%
	Responses to "My healthcare benefits are adequate"	57	9%	94	15%	208	33%	276	43%	635	100%
	Responses to "My retirement benefits are adequate"	39	6%	109	17%	260	41%	226	36%	634	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "My compensation is appropriate for the work I do"	49	16%	60	20%	116	39%	74	25%	299	100%
	Responses to "My healthcare benefits are adequate"	28	9%	48	16%	97	32%	126	42%	299	100%
	Responses to "My retirement benefits are adequate"	18	6%	52	17%	127	43%	101	34%	298	100%
Metro	Responses to "My compensation is appropriate for the work I do"	54	16%	62	19%	119	36%	97	29%	332	100%
	Responses to "My healthcare benefits are adequate"	28	8%	45	14%	110	33%	149	45%	332	100%
	Responses to "My retirement benefits are adequate"	20	6%	57	17%	131	39%	124	37%	332	100%
Elementary	Responses to "My compensation is appropriate for the work I do"	53	16%	70	22%	115	36%	84	26%	322	100%
	Responses to "My healthcare benefits are adequate"	29	9%	43	13%	110	34%	140	43%	322	100%
	Responses to "My retirement benefits are adequate"	19	6%	55	17%	140	44%	107	33%	321	100%
Secondary	Responses to "My compensation is appropriate for the work I do"	49	17%	47	16%	114	39%	82	28%	292	100%
	Responses to "My healthcare benefits are adequate"	26	9%	46	16%	89	30%	131	45%	292	100%
	Responses to "My retirement benefits are adequate"	19	7%	49	17%	113	39%	111	38%	292	100%

Table A10. Breakdown of Responses to "My Workload is Sustainable"

	Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	158	25%	187	29%	168	26%	122	19%	635	100%
Greater MN	71	24%	90	30%	80	27%	58	19%	299	100%
Metro	86	26%	95	29%	87	26%	64	19%	332	100%
Elementary	79	25%	100	31%	84	26%	59	18%	322	100%
Secondary	75	26%	82	28%	79	27%	56	19%	292	100%

Table A11. Breakdown of Responses to "I am generally satisfied with being a leader at this school"

	Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	34	5%	74	12%	221	35%	306	48%	635	100%
Greater MN	16	5%	40	13%	104	35%	139	46%	299	100%
Metro	18	5%	34	10%	115	35%	165	50%	332	100%
Elementary	15	5%	33	10%	113	35%	161	50%	322	100%
Secondary	19	7%	40	14%	100	34%	133	46%	292	100%

Table A12. Mean Level of Influence on School-Level Decisions (Range: 1-4)

Domain	Overall	Greater MN	Metro	Elem.	Sec.
Hiring new teachers	3.77	3.80	3.75	3.80	3.78
Evaluating teachers	3.64	3.68	3.60	3.65	3.65
Addressing staff performance concerns	3.59	3.60	3.58	3.63	3.55
Establishing discipline practices	3.54	3.58	3.50	3.53	3.57
Determining the content of in-service professional development programs for teachers	3.22	3.25	3.20	3.24	3.19
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	2.93	2.87	2.99	3.05	2.81
Setting performance standards for students	2.84	2.97	2.73	2.80	2.87
Establishing curriculum	2.59	2.77	2.43	2.65	2.51

Table A13. Job Satisfaction Elements

Job element	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Relationships with students	433	68%	228	77%	201	61%	219	68%	200	69%
Relationships with staff	378	60%	182	61%	192	58%	195	61%	169	58%
Seeing students grow socially and emotionally	305	48%	129	43%	174	52%	143	44%	155	53%
Seeing students grow academically	235	37%	110	37%	124	37%	126	39%	102	35%
Collegial relationships with other leaders	167	26%	74	25%	93	28%	81	25%	80	27%
Seeing staff grow professionally	166	26%	68	23%	98	30%	89	28%	70	24%
Relationships with families	154	24%	73	24%	80	24%	95	30%	53	18%
Compensation	35	6%	21	7%	14	4%	14	4%	21	7%
Other	10	2%	1	0%	9	3%	2	1%	6	2%
Total respondents	634	100%	298	100%	332	100%	322	100%	291	100%

Table A15. Breakdown of Responses to "My work is valued by the staff at my school"

	Disagree #	Disagree %	Somewhat Disagree #	Somewhat Disagree %	Somewhat Agree #	Somewhat Agree %	Agree #	Agree %	Total #	Total %
Overall	7	1%	38	6%	294	46%	305	47%	644	100%
Greater MN	2	1%	21	7%	144	47%	138	45%	305	100%
Metro	5	1%	17	5%	147	44%	166	50%	335	100%
Elementary	3	1%	19	6%	126	39%	177	54%	325	100%
Secondary	3	1%	19	6%	157	53%	119	40%	298	100%

Table A14. Breakdown of Responses to School Improvement Support Items

		Disagree #	Disagree %	Somewhat Disagree #	Somewhat Disagree %	Somewhat Agree #	Somewhat Agree %	Agree #	Agree %	Total #	Total %
Overall	Responses to "My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable."	8	2%	31	6%	134	28%	313	64%	486	100%
	Responses to "District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan."	21	4%	88	18%	189	39%	188	39%	486	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context."	10	2%	32	7%	142	29%	301	62%	485	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable."	5	2%	14	6%	65	27%	155	65%	239	100%
	Responses to "District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan."	9	4%	48	20%	89	37%	93	39%	239	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context."	4	2%	15	6%	78	33%	142	59%	239	100%
Metro	Responses to "My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable."	3	1%	17	7%	68	28%	157	64%	245	100%
	Responses to "District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan."	12	5%	38	16%	100	41%	95	39%	245	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context."	6	2%	17	7%	63	26%	158	65%	244	100%
Elementary	Responses to "My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable."	3	1%	15	5%	76	27%	191	67%	285	100%
	Responses to "District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan."	13	5%	49	17%	115	40%	108	38%	285	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context."	7	2%	20	7%	82	29%	176	62%	285	100%
Secondary	Responses to "My supervisor's expectations for school improvement are reasonable."	5	3%	15	8%	54	28%	116	61%	190	100%
	Responses to "District or charter leadership has adequately prepared me to implement a school improvement plan."	8	4%	34	18%	71	37%	77	41%	190	100%
	Responses to "My supervisor gives me and my staff autonomy to create a school improvement plan that reflects our local context."	3	2%	12	6%	55	29%	119	63%	189	100%

Table A16. Professional Development Participation, 2020-21 School Year

Professional Development Type	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Presentations at scheduled school or district meetings	510	70%	220	66%	287	74%	262	73%	230	66%
Networking with other educational leaders	479	66%	242	72%	233	60%	239	67%	224	65%
Other workshops or trainings	411	57%	210	63%	199	51%	206	58%	190	55%
State or local conferences	218	30%	128	38%	90	23%	94	26%	119	34%
MESPA provided opportunities	207	28%	105	31%	100	26%	182	51%	18	5%
Other cohort-based learning experience	188	26%	89	27%	98	25%	93	26%	89	26%
MASSP provided opportunities	186	26%	130	39%	56	14%	15	4%	164	47%
Formal coaching	81	11%	31	9%	49	13%	42	12%	36	10%
Formal mentoring	63	9%	27	8%	36	9%	27	8%	36	10%
National conferences	54	7%	16	5%	38	10%	29	8%	23	7%
Minnesota Principals Academy	52	7%	18	5%	34	9%	33	9%	19	5%
Doctoral coursework	37	5%	9	3%	25	6%	13	4%	21	6%
Total respondents	**727**	**100%**	**334**	**100%**	**388**	**100%**	**357**	**100%**	**346**	**100%**

Table A17. Mean Usefulness of Professional Development Types (Range: 1-4)

Domain	Overall	Greater MN	Metro	Elementary	Secondary
Minnesota Principals Academy	3.82	3.78	3.85	3.84	3.79
Networking with other educational leaders	3.70	3.78	3.61	3.71	3.68
Doctoral coursework	3.57	3.78	3.56	3.54	3.67
Formal mentoring	3.56	3.52	3.58	3.44	3.64
Other cohort-based learning experience	3.54	3.65	3.45	3.58	3.49
Formal coaching	3.54	3.53	3.55	3.51	3.58
National conferences	3.54	3.56	3.53	3.69	3.39
MESPA provided opportunities	3.35	3.52	3.17	3.37	3.11
MASSP provided opportunities	3.33	3.41	3.14	3.57	3.30
State or local conferences	3.31	3.39	3.19	3.43	3.22
Other workshops or trainings	3.20	3.25	3.15	3.23	3.18
Presentations at scheduled school or district meetings	2.99	3.08	2.92	2.97	3.00

Table A18. Barriers to Professional Development Participation

Experience	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Feeling obligated to be in the school building	502	68%	232	68%	266	68%	256	71%	231	66%
Limited time	466	63%	224	66%	239	61%	216	60%	238	68%
COVID-19 pandemic-related constraints	437	59%	193	57%	242	62%	226	63%	197	56%
Budget constraints	126	17%	46	14%	78	20%	61	17%	57	16%
Geographic distance from opportunities	91	12%	78	23%	12	3%	44	12%	44	13%
Lack of relevant options	54	7%	17	5%	36	9%	23	6%	27	8%
Lack of quality options	49	7%	15	4%	34	9%	26	7%	21	6%
Lack of support from supervisor	29	4%	11	3%	17	4%	15	4%	13	4%
Other (please specify):	24	3%	8	2%	16	4%	15	4%	9	3%
I do not face any barriers.	20	3%	9	3%	11	3%	10	3%	9	3%
Total respondents	**735**	**100%**	**339**	**100%**	**391**	**100%**	**360**	**100%**	**351**	**100%**

Table A19. In which areas would you benefit from additional professional development?

Professional Development Area	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Reducing staff burnout	242	34%	122	37%	116	30%	113	32%	120	35%
Advancing racial equity	224	31%	74	22%	149	39%	119	34%	98	29%
Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	176	25%	92	28%	84	22%	86	25%	87	25%
Providing instructional feedback	151	21%	66	20%	84	22%	76	22%	72	21%
Managing political divisions in my school community	128	18%	52	16%	75	20%	41	12%	83	24%
Fostering a positive school culture and climate	124	17%	62	19%	62	16%	50	14%	70	20%
Developing the leadership capacity of teachers	124	17%	65	20%	59	15%	58	17%	65	19%
Social and emotional learning	117	16%	62	19%	53	14%	57	16%	58	17%
Facilitating difficult conversations	116	16%	44	13%	71	19%	70	20%	41	12%
Special education law	106	15%	46	14%	60	16%	49	14%	55	16%
Science of reading	98	14%	48	15%	50	13%	71	20%	23	7%
Implementing non-exclusionary discipline practices	96	13%	45	14%	51	13%	57	16%	36	10%
Supporting LGBTQ+ students	82	11%	39	12%	43	11%	34	10%	46	13%
Family and community engagement	70	10%	37	11%	32	8%	34	10%	33	10%
State-level rulemaking (e.g., adopting academic standards, deciding licensure requirements)	65	9%	36	11%	29	8%	31	9%	32	9%
Engaging student voice	57	8%	22	7%	33	9%	25	7%	26	8%
Conceptual understanding of mathematics	43	6%	23	7%	20	5%	22	6%	17	5%
Teacher retention	37	5%	17	5%	18	5%	13	4%	19	6%
State-level legislative process	25	3%	9	3%	16	4%	8	2%	15	4%
Total respondents	**717**	**100%**	**330**	**100%**	**382**	**100%**	**350**	**100%**	**343**	**100%**

Table A20. Breakdown of Responses to Professional Growth Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice"	97	15%	123	19%	250	39%	164	26%	634	100%
	Responses to "I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role"	27	4%	99	16%	252	40%	257	40%	635	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice"	53	18%	58	19%	107	36%	80	27%	298	100%
	Responses to "I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role"	11	4%	34	11%	133	44%	121	40%	299	100%
Metro	Responses to "My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice"	43	13%	63	19%	142	43%	84	25%	332	100%
	Responses to "I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role"	16	5%	64	19%	117	35%	135	41%	332	100%
Elementary	Responses to "My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice"	42	13%	71	22%	131	41%	78	24%	322	100%
	Responses to "I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role"	15	5%	46	14%	129	40%	132	41%	322	100%
Secondary	Responses to "My performance evaluations help me to grow in my leadership practice"	50	17%	46	16%	111	38%	84	29%	291	100%
	Responses to "I am satisfied with the opportunities I have to grow as a leader in my role"	12	4%	48	16%	116	40%	116	40%	292	100%

Table A21. Breakdown of Responses to "I can be successful as a leader at this school"

	Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	16	3%	48	8%	205	32%	365	58%	634	100%
Greater MN	9	3%	17	6%	100	34%	172	58%	298	100%
Metro	7	2%	29	9%	104	31%	192	58%	332	100%
Elementary	9	3%	18	6%	103	32%	192	60%	322	100%
Secondary	7	2%	26	9%	98	34%	160	55%	291	100%

Table A22. Mean Self-Efficacy Across Four Leadership Responsibility Areas (Range: 1-4)

Area of Leadership	Overall	Greater MN	Metro	Elementary	Secondary
Instructional Leadership	2.86	2.84	2.89	2.89	2.84
School Improvement	3.03	3.00	3.05	3.07	2.98
Management & Decision-Making	3.12	3.10	3.14	3.15	3.10
Culture & Climate	2.90	2.86	2.94	2.91	2.90

Table A23. Mean Self-Efficacy Across Four Leadership Responsibility Areas (Range: 1-4)

Area of Leadership	Overall	Greater MN	Metro	Elementary	Secondary
Analyzing perception data from staff about school climate	3.19	3.19	3.19	3.21	3.17
Analyzing perception data from students about school climate	3.14	3.13	3.14	3.15	3.13
Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	3.10	3.05	3.15	3.08	3.13
Ensuring all students' sense of belonging at school	3.08	3.04	3.12	3.17	2.99
Analyzing perception data from families about school climate	3.06	3.06	3.06	3.11	3.02
Facilitating conflict resolution	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.06
Ensuring all staff members' sense of belonging at school	3.04	3.03	3.05	3.10	2.98
Motivating teachers to help each other improve instruction	2.97	2.93	3.01	2.98	2.95
Boosting staff morale	2.97	2.92	3.01	3.02	2.90
Motivating teachers to take responsibility for school improvement	2.96	2.92	3.00	3.03	2.91
Facilitating discussions with staff about race	2.79	2.67	2.91	2.78	2.80
Communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members	2.67	2.53	2.81	2.62	2.74
Addressing student mental health challenges	2.66	2.69	2.63	2.65	2.68
Facilitating discussions with staff about sexual orientation	2.64	2.55	2.72	2.55	2.73
Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity	2.59	2.51	2.67	2.50	2.69
Addressing staff mental health challenges	2.52	2.50	2.54	2.48	2.56
Evaluating teachers	3.29	3.29	3.30	3.31	3.29
Coaching teachers	3.20	3.21	3.19	3.20	3.20
Facilitating professional development for teachers	3.16	3.13	3.19	3.19	3.13
Designing professional development for teachers	3.08	3.05	3.10	3.12	3.04
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize behavioral supports	2.92	2.87	2.96	2.99	2.85
Balancing our school's emphasis on academics and social and emotional learning (SEL)	2.90	2.89	2.91	2.98	2.81
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize instructional supports	2.88	2.83	2.92	2.98	2.78
Supporting instruction in all content areas taught at my school	2.82	2.86	2.80	2.85	2.79
Establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	2.73	2.73	2.73	2.81	2.65
Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy	2.58	2.49	2.66	2.55	2.61
Designing culturally responsive curriculum	2.49	2.42	2.55	2.44	2.53
Creating culturally responsive assessments	2.31	2.28	2.33	2.25	2.37
Hiring new teachers	3.39	3.41	3.38	3.46	3.35
Establishing discipline practices	3.30	3.32	3.28	3.32	3.30
Explaining administrative decisions to staff	3.29	3.28	3.29	3.32	3.25
Engaging staff in school-level decision-making	3.27	3.24	3.29	3.33	3.21
Establishing a vision for my school	3.25	3.23	3.27	3.28	3.23
Setting meaningful student learning goals	3.19	3.16	3.23	3.23	3.16
Facilitating decision-making in teams	3.19	3.18	3.20	3.23	3.16
Addressing staff performance concerns	3.15	3.19	3.13	3.14	3.19
Explaining administrative decisions to families or community members	3.15	3.11	3.18	3.17	3.12
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	3.09	3.06	3.12	3.17	3.00
Managing multiple initiatives simultaneously	3.06	3.02	3.10	3.08	3.06
Leveraging research findings to inform decision-making	2.98	2.97	2.99	3.03	2.93
Evaluating programs and initiatives	2.92	2.93	2.91	2.94	2.91
Engaging students in school-level decision-making	2.88	2.83	2.93	2.84	2.93
Engaging families in school-level decision-making	2.68	2.60	2.75	2.72	2.66
Collaborating with staff to implement a school improvement plan	3.15	3.12	3.18	3.20	3.09
Analyzing data to identify areas needing improvement	3.13	3.09	3.16	3.18	3.06
Motivating a majority of my staff to implement changes	3.03	3.01	3.05	3.10	2.95
Applying research-based approaches to school improvement planning	2.97	2.94	3.00	3.01	2.93
Monitoring changes to our practice over time	2.96	2.95	2.96	2.98	2.93
Implementing changes with fidelity	2.92	2.91	2.93	2.95	2.89

Table A24. Greatest challenges and needed support in instructional leadership

Instructional Leadership Activities	N	Support 1	Support 2	Support 3
Creating culturally responsive assessments	198	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Designing culturally responsive curriculum	192	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	154	Tools or frameworks	More personnel	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy	126	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Supporting instruction in all content areas taught at my school	98	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel	Tools or frameworks
Balancing our school's emphasis on academics and social and emotional learning (SEL)	95	More personnel	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize instructional supports	67	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Greater staff buy-in
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize behavioral supports	54	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Coaching teachers	34	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Greater staff buy-in
Designing professional development for teachers	31	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Evaluating teachers	23	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Fewer or different state requirements
Facilitating professional development for teachers	13	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Total answering question	536			

Table A25. Greatest challenges and needed support in school improvement

School Improvement Activities	N	Support 1	Support 2	Support 3
Implementing changes with fidelity	98	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks	More personnel
Applying research-based approaches to school improvement planning	80	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Motivating a majority of my staff to implement changes	78	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Monitoring changes to our practice over time	61	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Analyzing data to identify areas needing improvement	28	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Collaborating with staff to implement a school improvement plan	27	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks	More personnel
Total answering question	241			

Table A26. Greatest challenges and needed support in management and decision-making

Management and Decision-making Activities	N	Support 1	Support 2	Support 3
Engaging families in school-level decision-making	161	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Reduced pushback from families or community members
Evaluating programs and initiatives	77	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Engaging students in school-level decision-making	75	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Greater staff buy-in
Managing multiple initiatives simultaneously	60	More personnel	Fewer or different state requirements	Tools or frameworks
Leveraging research findings to inform decision-making	57	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	50	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Supervisor support	Tools or frameworks
Hiring new teachers	28	More personnel	Higher staff retention	Fewer or different state requirements
Addressing staff performance concerns	28	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Supervisor support
Explaining administrative decisions to families or community members	27	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Reduced pushback from families or community members
Establishing a vision for my school	16	Supervisor support	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Engaging staff in school-level decision-making	15	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Establishing discipline practices	13	Greater staff buy-in	More personnel	Tools or frameworks
Setting meaningful student learning goals	12	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in	Fewer or different state requirements
Facilitating decision-making in teams	10	Greater staff buy-in	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks
Explaining administrative decisions to staff	6	Greater staff buy-in	Supervisor support	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Total answering question	**379**			

Table A27. Greatest challenges and needed support in school culture and climate

School Culture and Climate Activities	N	Support 1	Support 2	Support 3
Addressing staff mental health challenges	219	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Addressing student mental health challenges	177	More personnel	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members	116	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Reduced pushback from families or community members	Tools or frameworks
Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity	100	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Reduced pushback from families or community members
Facilitating discussions with staff about race	83	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Reduced pushback from families or community members
Facilitating discussions with staff about sexual orientation	83	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Reduced pushback from families or community members
Boosting staff morale	66	Greater staff buy-in	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Motivating teachers to take responsibility for school improvement	60	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Motivating teachers to help each other improve instruction	45	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Ensuring all students' sense of belonging at school	26	More personnel	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Facilitating conflict resolution	18	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in
Analyzing perception data from families about school climate	14	Tools or frameworks	More personnel	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Ensuring all staff members' sense of belonging at school	14	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in	Increasing my knowledge or skills
Analyzing perception data from students about school climate	7	Tools or frameworks	Increasing my knowledge or skills	More personnel
Analyzing perception data from staff about school climate	6	Tools or frameworks	Greater staff buy-in	Fewer or different state requirements
Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	6	Increasing my knowledge or skills	Greater staff buy-in	Tools or frameworks
Total answering question	477			

Table A28. Greatest Challenges (counts)

Activity	Overall	Greater MN	Metro	Elementary	Secondary
Addressing staff mental health challenges	219	105	113	121	89
Creating culturally responsive assessments	198	84	113	105	86
Designing culturally responsive curriculum	192	100	90	105	81
Addressing student mental health challenges	177	73	103	96	74
Engaging families in school-level decision-making	161	94	66	77	75
Establishing a robust Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)	154	67	86	62	87
Supporting culturally responsive pedagogy	126	69	57	74	48
Communicating about race, gender, and culture with families and community members	116	65	50	65	50
Facilitating discussions with staff about gender identity	100	48	52	66	32
Implementing changes with fidelity	98	41	56	46	50
Supporting instruction in all content areas taught at my school	98	39	58	51	45
Balancing our school's emphasis on academics and social and emotional learning (SEL)	95	43	51	42	50
Facilitating discussions with staff about race	83	40	43	47	34
Facilitating discussions with staff about sexual orientation	83	54	28	48	33
Applying research-based approaches to school improvement planning	80	41	38	40	39
Motivating a majority of my staff to implement changes	78	37	41	32	43
Evaluating programs and initiatives	77	29	47	44	31
Engaging students in school-level decision-making	75	43	31	41	29
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize instructional supports	67	39	28	23	42
Boosting staff morale	66	33	33	32	32
Monitoring changes to our practice over time	61	23	37	33	26
Managing multiple initiatives simultaneously	60	32	28	32	26
Motivating teachers to take responsibility for school improvement	60	32	28	23	33
Leveraging research findings to inform decision-making	57	27	30	29	26
Gathering and analyzing student-level data to personalize behavioral supports	54	34	20	25	28
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	50	23	27	24	26
Motivating teachers to help each other improve instruction	45	23	21	23	21
Coaching teachers	34	18	16	19	15
Designing professional development for teachers	31	11	20	13	15
Hiring new teachers	28	15	12	10	14
Analyzing data to identify areas needing improvement	28	12	15	11	16
Addressing staff performance concerns	28	10	17	18	7
Collaborating with staff to implement a school improvement plan	27	15	12	11	16
Explaining administrative decisions to families or community members	27	14	12	12	13
Ensuring all students' sense of belonging at school	26	10	16	8	17
Evaluating teachers	23	11	11	12	9
Facilitating conflict resolution	18	7	11	11	6
Establishing a vision for my school	16	5	11	5	9
Engaging staff in school-level decision-making	15	10	5	6	8
Analyzing perception data from families about school climate	14	7	7	6	7
Ensuring all staff members' sense of belonging at school	14	4	9	7	5
Establishing discipline practices	13	4	8	6	5
Facilitating professional development for teachers	13	5	8	5	7
Setting meaningful student learning goals	12	6	5	2	8
Facilitating decision-making in teams	10	5	5	4	6
Analyzing perception data from students about school climate	7	5	2	5	2
Explaining administrative decisions to staff	6	5	1	2	4
Analyzing perception data from staff about school climate	6	3	3	4	2
Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	6	5	1	3	3

Table A29. How often do you engage in the following culturally responsive leadership practices?

		Never or almost never		Annually		A few times per year		Monthly		Weekly or more		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	28	4%	28	4%	139	22%	167	26%	272	43%	634	100%
	Development of culturally responsive teachers	40	6%	76	12%	199	31%	228	36%	92	14%	635	100%
	Analysis of student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes	24	4%	70	11%	228	36%	218	34%	95	15%	635	100%
	Modeling of culturally responsive practices for staff	45	7%	43	7%	167	26%	203	32%	176	28%	634	100%
	Inclusion of the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions	147	23%	88	14%	228	36%	107	17%	65	10%	635	100%
Greater MN	Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	21	7%	19	6%	83	28%	81	27%	96	32%	300	100%
	Development of culturally responsive teachers	30	10%	66	22%	104	35%	84	28%	17	6%	301	100%
	Analysis of student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes	17	6%	51	17%	128	43%	78	26%	26	9%	300	100%
	Modeling of culturally responsive practices for staff	33	11%	29	10%	91	30%	86	29%	61	20%	300	100%
	Inclusion of the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions	85	28%	51	17%	99	33%	42	14%	23	8%	300	100%
Metro	Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	7	2%	9	3%	54	16%	85	26%	175	53%	330	100%
	Development of culturally responsive teachers	10	3%	10	3%	92	28%	143	43%	75	23%	330	100%
	Analysis of student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes	7	2%	18	5%	98	30%	139	42%	69	21%	331	100%
	Modeling of culturally responsive practices for staff	12	4%	14	4%	73	22%	116	35%	115	35%	330	100%
	Inclusion of the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions	61	18%	36	11%	127	38%	65	20%	42	13%	331	100%
Elementary	Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	19	6%	18	6%	75	23%	78	24%	132	41%	322	100%
	Development of culturally responsive teachers	27	8%	43	13%	97	30%	112	35%	44	14%	323	100%
	Analysis of student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes	13	4%	31	10%	119	37%	118	37%	41	13%	322	100%
	Modeling of culturally responsive practices for staff	30	9%	25	8%	84	26%	101	31%	83	26%	323	100%
	Inclusion of the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions	84	26%	50	16%	115	36%	45	14%	28	9%	322	100%
Secondary	Critical self-reflection about my own identity, frame of reference, and biases	9	3%	10	3%	57	20%	85	29%	130	45%	291	100%
	Development of culturally responsive teachers	12	4%	31	11%	95	33%	107	37%	46	16%	291	100%
	Analysis of student data to identify disparities in academic and disciplinary outcomes	9	3%	35	12%	102	35%	96	33%	50	17%	292	100%
	Modeling of culturally responsive practices for staff	15	5%	18	6%	74	26%	99	34%	84	29%	290	100%
	Inclusion of the families of marginalized students in school-level decisions	60	21%	35	12%	105	36%	59	20%	33	11%	292	100%

Table A30. Breakdown of Responses to "How often do you attend community events that students from your school and/or their families also attend?"

	Never or almost never		Annually		A few times per year		Monthly		Weekly or more		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	127	20%	51	8%	313	49%	102	16%	42	7%	635	100%
Greater MN	35	12%	18	6%	150	50%	69	23%	28	9%	300	100%
Metro	90	27%	33	10%	162	49%	32	10%	14	4%	331	100%
Elementary	62	19%	27	8%	158	49%	57	18%	19	6%	323	100%
Secondary	60	21%	23	8%	143	49%	42	14%	23	8%	291	100%

Table A31. Breakdown of Responses to Accountability Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "State accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	137	22%	236	37%	226	36%	36	6%	635	100%
	Responses to "District accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	35	6%	111	19%	320	55%	121	21%	587	100%
	Responses to "Charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	3	7%	10	22%	14	30%	19	41%	46	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "State accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	61	20%	110	37%	117	39%	12	4%	300	100%
	Responses to "District accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	12	4%	39	13%	173	59%	67	23%	291	100%
	Responses to "Charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	2	25%	2	25%	4	50%	0	0%	8	100%
Metro	Responses to "State accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	76	23%	123	37%	108	33%	24	7%	331	100%
	Responses to "District accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	23	8%	71	24%	146	50%	54	18%	294	100%
	Responses to "Charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	1	3%	7	19%	9	25%	19	53%	36	100%
Elementary	Responses to "State accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	74	23%	120	37%	110	34%	19	6%	323	100%
	Responses to "District accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	17	6%	65	22%	156	52%	62	21%	300	100%
	Responses to "Charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	2	9%	5	23%	5	23%	10	45%	22	100%
Secondary	Responses to "State accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	59	20%	106	36%	109	37%	17	6%	291	100%
	Responses to "District accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	17	6%	42	16%	152	56%	59	22%	270	100%
	Responses to "Charter authorizer accountability measures used to evaluate my school's performance are reasonable."	1	5%	4	20%	7	35%	8	40%	20	100%

Table A32. Breakdown of Responses to Local Support Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "I feel supported by district leaders."	34	6%	60	10%	182	31%	314	53%	590	100%
	Responses to "I feel supported by our charter authorizer."	2	4%	1	2%	10	22%	33	72%	46	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "I feel supported by district leaders."	18	6%	24	8%	89	30%	161	55%	292	100%
	Responses to "I feel supported by our charter authorizer."	2	25%	0	0%	2	25%	4	50%	8	100%
Metro	Responses to "I feel supported by district leaders."	16	5%	35	12%	92	31%	153	52%	296	100%
	Responses to "I feel supported by our charter authorizer."	0	0%	1	3%	6	17%	29	81%	36	100%
Elementary	Responses to "I feel supported by district leaders."	16	5%	37	12%	89	30%	159	53%	301	100%
	Responses to "I feel supported by our charter authorizer."	1	5%	1	5%	5	23%	15	68%	22	100%
Secondary	Responses to "I feel supported by district leaders."	18	7%	20	7%	85	31%	149	55%	272	100%
	Responses to "I feel supported by our charter authorizer."	1	5%	0	0%	3	15%	16	80%	20	100%

Table A33. Breakdown of Responses to Knowledge of Policy Opportunity Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence state policy."	122	19%	246	39%	207	33%	61	10%	636	100%
	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence district policy."	27	5%	87	15%	261	44%	214	36%	589	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence state policy."	50	17%	114	38%	102	34%	34	11%	300	100%
	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence district policy."	11	4%	28	10%	136	47%	117	40%	292	100%
Metro	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence state policy."	70	21%	130	39%	105	32%	27	8%	332	100%
	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence district policy."	16	5%	58	20%	124	42%	97	33%	295	100%
Elementary	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence state policy."	69	21%	125	39%	106	33%	23	7%	323	100%
	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence district policy."	19	6%	47	16%	142	47%	93	31%	301	100%
Secondary	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence state policy."	46	16%	113	39%	97	33%	36	12%	292	100%
	Responses to "I know of several ways I can influence district policy."	8	3%	36	13%	110	41%	117	43%	271	100%

Table A34. Breakdown of Responses to Desire for Policy Influence Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over state policy."	46	7%	143	23%	292	46%	153	24%	634	100%
	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over district policy."	30	5%	102	17%	309	52%	148	25%	589	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over state policy."	22	7%	63	21%	137	46%	77	26%	299	100%
	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over district policy."	16	5%	52	18%	157	54%	67	23%	292	100%
Metro	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over state policy."	24	7%	77	23%	155	47%	75	23%	331	100%
	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over district policy."	14	5%	49	17%	151	51%	81	27%	295	100%
Elementary	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over state policy."	25	8%	71	22%	154	48%	73	23%	323	100%
	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over district policy."	14	5%	50	17%	166	55%	71	24%	301	100%
Secondary	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over state policy."	19	7%	63	22%	132	46%	76	26%	290	100%
	Responses to "I want to have greater influence over district policy."	16	6%	50	18%	132	49%	73	27%	271	100%

Table A35. Breakdown of Responses to "I Understand How Funding for My School is Allocated"

	Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	17	3%	76	12%	270	43%	272	43%	635	100%
Greater MN	7	2%	38	13%	133	44%	122	41%	300	100%
Metro	10	3%	37	11%	134	40%	150	45%	331	100%
Elementary	11	3%	35	11%	136	42%	141	44%	323	100%
Secondary	6	2%	38	13%	126	43%	121	42%	291	100%

Table A36. Experiences Engaging in State Policy Influence

Influence type	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Sent written communication to legislators	296	49%	162	57%	132	42%	142	46%	142	52%
I have not sought to influence state policy.	203	34%	74	26%	127	41%	119	38%	81	30%
Met with (a) legislator(s)	197	33%	121	42%	76	24%	91	29%	99	36%
Submitted comments to MDE in response to a proposed rule change (e.g., revision of state standards)	99	16%	69	24%	30	10%	49	16%	46	17%
Met with Minnesota Department of Education (MDE) staff about a policy issue	90	15%	49	17%	41	13%	31	10%	54	20%
Participated in the development of a policy platform for a professional organization	67	11%	33	12%	34	11%	35	11%	31	11%
Submitted comments to PELSB in response to a proposed rule change (e.g., tiered licensure)	57	9%	36	13%	21	7%	21	7%	33	12%
Testified at the State Capitol	44	7%	25	9%	19	6%	22	7%	19	7%
Attended a session at the State Capitol to support or oppose a particular bill	41	7%	19	7%	22	7%	20	6%	17	6%
Other (please specify):	22	4%	8	3%	14	5%	11	4%	11	4%
Met with Professional Educator Licensing and Standards Board (PELSB) staff about a policy issue	20	3%	13	5%	7	2%	4	1%	14	5%
Joined a MDE rulemaking committee	14	2%	8	3%	6	2%	3	1%	10	4%
Total respondents	**601**	**100%**	**286**	**100%**	**311**	**100%**	**310**	**100%**	**272**	**100%**

Table A37. Experiences Engaging in District Policy Influence

Influence type	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Contributed as a member of a district-level committee	488	83%	246	85%	242	83%	251	84%	226	84%
Met with the Superintendent	454	78%	244	84%	210	72%	226	75%	218	81%
Spoke at a School Board meeting	325	56%	202	70%	123	42%	152	51%	164	61%
Met with School Board members	320	55%	194	67%	125	43%	153	51%	157	58%
Sent written communication to School Board members	106	18%	76	26%	30	10%	54	18%	49	18%
I have not sought to influence district policy.	27	5%	8	3%	18	6%	16	5%	10	4%
Other (please specify):	13	2%	2	1%	11	4%	8	3%	4	1%
Total respondents	**585**	**100%**	**290**	**100%**	**293**	**100%**	**300**	**100%**	**269**	**100%**

Table A38. Barriers to State and District Policy Influence

Barrier type	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Lack of time	382	61%	182	62%	198	61%	186	58%	185	64%
Lack of understanding of policymaking processes	167	27%	67	23%	100	31%	105	33%	56	20%
I have not faced any barriers.	134	21%	69	23%	65	20%	70	22%	61	21%
Lack of understanding of educational policy	61	10%	25	9%	36	11%	40	13%	19	7%
Other (please specify):	44	7%	26	9%	18	6%	26	8%	18	6%
District or charter network leaders discouraging policy influence	39	6%	18	6%	21	6%	24	8%	13	5%
Not applicable; I do not view influencing state or district policy as part of my role.	20	3%	5	2%	13	4%	7	2%	10	3%
Total respondents	**625**	**100%**	**294**	**100%**	**327**	**100%**	**319**	**100%**	**287**	**100%**

Table A39. Most Significant Ongoing Pandemic-Related Challenges

Challenge	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Staff mental health	433	68%	203	68%	228	69%	226	70%	191	66%
Student mental health	419	66%	196	66%	221	67%	186	58%	219	75%
Active pushback from families or community members related to COVID-19 mitigation (e.g., masking, quarantining)	179	28%	100	34%	79	24%	94	29%	81	28%
Loss of instruction	172	27%	88	30%	82	25%	111	34%	55	19%
Other (please specify):	108	17%	42	14%	66	20%	67	21%	39	13%
Low student engagement	101	16%	53	18%	47	14%	19	6%	77	26%
Support staff turnover	93	15%	39	13%	53	16%	56	17%	32	11%
Low student attendance	82	13%	49	16%	32	10%	28	9%	50	17%
Insufficient resources	69	11%	27	9%	41	12%	41	13%	27	9%
Teacher turnover	51	8%	23	8%	27	8%	24	7%	25	9%
Low enrollment	26	4%	6	2%	20	6%	17	5%	8	3%
Student mobility	16	3%	6	2%	10	3%	7	2%	9	3%
Insufficient tech support	13	2%	5	2%	7	2%	7	2%	5	2%
Total respondents	**634**	**100%**	**298**	**100%**	**332**	**100%**	**322**	**100%**	**291**	**100%**

Table A40. Most Helpful Supports at this Stage in the Pandemic

Support	Overall #	Overall %	Greater MN #	Greater MN %	Metro #	Metro %	Elementary #	Elementary %	Secondary #	Secondary %
Mental health resources for staff	460	73%	215	72%	242	73%	237	74%	206	71%
Mental health resources for students	445	71%	212	71%	231	70%	208	65%	222	77%
Academic support resources for students	301	48%	138	46%	160	48%	160	50%	132	46%
Guidance on leading amidst community division	198	31%	94	32%	102	31%	98	31%	95	33%
Mental health resources for myself	57	9%	30	10%	26	8%	25	8%	27	9%
Guidance on implementing hybrid or distance learning modalities	48	8%	24	8%	23	7%	24	7%	20	7%
Access to high-speed internet	46	7%	31	10%	15	5%	24	7%	20	7%
Other (please specify):	36	6%	12	4%	24	7%	22	7%	12	4%
Access to technology hardware	21	3%	9	3%	12	4%	10	3%	9	3%
No supports are needed at this time.	10	2%	3	1%	7	2%	5	2%	5	2%
Total respondents	**631**	**100%**	**297**	**100%**	**330**	**100%**	**321**	**100%**	**289**	**100%**

Table A41. Breakdown of Responses to School Transformation Items

		Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Somewhat Agree		Agree		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Overall	Responses to "The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways"	109	17%	181	29%	301	48%	42	7%	633	100%
	Responses to "Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible."	11	2%	63	10%	351	56%	207	33%	632	100%
Greater MN	Responses to "The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways"	58	20%	81	27%	141	47%	17	6%	297	100%
	Responses to "Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible."	4	1%	33	11%	168	57%	92	31%	297	100%
Metro	Responses to "The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways"	50	15%	98	30%	159	48%	25	8%	332	100%
	Responses to "Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible."	7	2%	30	9%	181	55%	113	34%	331	100%
Elementary	Responses to "The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways"	51	16%	87	27%	163	51%	21	7%	322	100%
	Responses to "Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible."	6	2%	28	9%	177	55%	110	34%	321	100%
Secondary	Responses to "The disruption brought about by COVID-19 has fundamentally transformed our school in positive ways"	53	18%	87	30%	130	45%	20	7%	290	100%
	Responses to "Lasting transformation of teaching and learning at my school is possible."	4	1%	34	12%	165	57%	87	30%	290	100%

Table A42. Anticipated Changes, Pre- to Post-Pandemic

Anticipated Change	Overall		Greater MN		Metro		Elementary		Secondary	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Use of technology	491	78%	230	77%	257	78%	245	76%	229	79%
Learning modalities (i.e., distance learning or hybrid)	305	48%	143	48%	160	48%	156	48%	137	47%
Communication with families	288	45%	146	49%	142	43%	160	50%	118	41%
Providing non-academic services (e.g., mental health services)	287	45%	143	48%	142	43%	140	43%	137	47%
Relationship-building with students	279	44%	134	45%	144	44%	142	44%	127	44%
Professional development	133	21%	58	19%	74	22%	80	25%	47	16%
School schedule	127	20%	61	20%	64	19%	54	17%	66	23%
Selection of curricular materials	83	13%	40	13%	42	13%	33	10%	44	15%
Other (please specify):	21	3%	6	2%	15	5%	13	4%	6	2%
I do not anticipate any changes.	13	2%	7	2%	6	2%	8	2%	5	2%
Total respondents	**633**	**100%**	**298**	**100%**	**331**	**100%**	**322**	**100%**	**290**	**100%**

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