

New Principal Connection

Insights from new principals, for new principals

What a year! New principals have worked hard and finally made it to summer break. But, before they wrap things up, we asked them to take a **retrospective look back** on the 2018-19 school year, as well as their **plans for future**.

How did the job measure up?

Most principals seem to have had a good idea of what the principalship entailed — **62%** said the job was what they expected. Even better, **16%** said the job was better than expected, with only **22%** stating it didn't quite meet expectations.

Considering the entire year, how would you rate your overall job:



The top challenges faced by new principals:

Time management	22%
Implementing change	19%
Understanding the politics	14%
Working with parents	13%
Assessing classroom instructional practices	11%
Providing staff development	8%
Evaluating staff	5%
Using data in decision-making	5%
Receiving feedback on leadership skills	3%
Implementing team development	0%
Creating a clear school vision	0%
Using technology	0%

The greatest challenges facing new principals were time management and trying to implement change within their school (**22%** and **19%**). It's apparent that most have a good understanding of using technology - **0%** reported this as a main challenge!

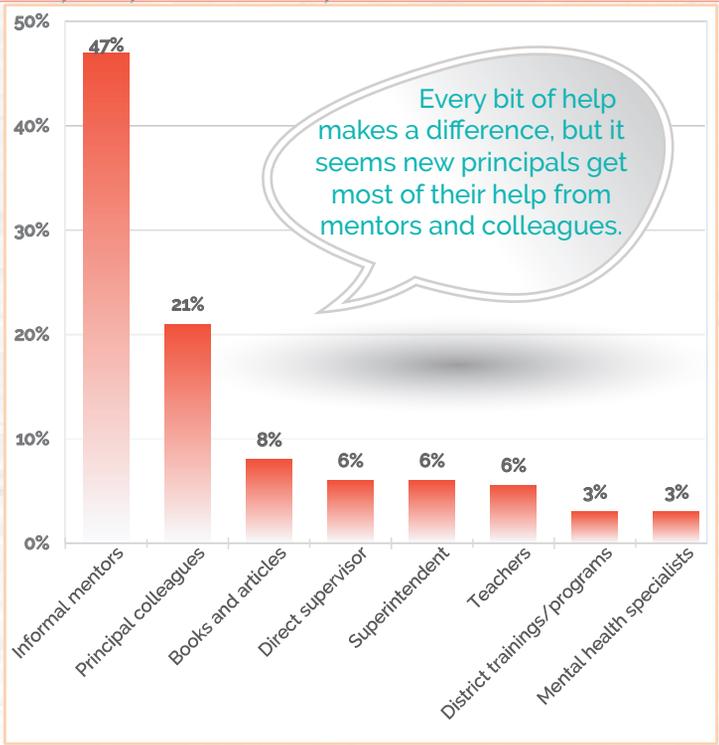
New principals came up with strategies to address their challenges!

- Reached out to colleagues to see how they managed their time.
- Plans for various meetings times.
- Sending more forms of communication.
- Being welcoming and inviting to all parents who come to school.
- Displaying a "Status" board in the lobby that updates on all activities in the school, attendance rates, positive phone calls home, suggestions for reading and math, and the ELA and Math units of study for the month.
- Job embedded staff development.
- Increased more direct communication and increased documentation.
- Justifying change with data, making personnel accountable and making sure that you are consistent.
- Relied on peers in the district and on staff.
- Goal setting with action steps.
- Formed a partnership (MOU) with the local tribe, local Native Corporation and the city in order to facilitate change.
- Coming in early and staying late, working from home, delegating assignment workload, minimizing and prioritizing.
- Working additional hours, trying to schedule events that were predictable (teacher/staff evaluations).
- Zoomed out and assessed need before acting, reducing priorities.
- Lean on instructional leaders.
- Read a lot of Leadership books to understand how to approach a school with a climate and culture that may not be the best to maximize student potential.
- Mentoring by former principal.
- Have parent office hours - appointment times the staff can schedule meetings.
- As a new school opening in August 2019, calendaring helped the most, but establishing a faculty and recruiting students was a challenge.
- Worked hard to develop collective commitments, a common set of values, a mission statement that is reflective of our purpose and a clear vision for our future work. We also worked to establish trust in order to move to a more accountable culture.
- Have direct conversations with various stakeholders and practice self-care to manage stress.
- Ask mentor to help understand the political implications.
- Have a team of in-house leaders participating in a state sponsored 3-year Inclusive Practices Academy.
- Review the NEE (Network for Educator Effectiveness) indicators each time observing a staff member.

The No. 1 strategy that made a significant difference in a new principal's school and leadership this year:

- Building relationships!
- Seeing Through My Student's Eyes
- Building teacher leadership, focusing on the PLC process.
- Knowing what I was doing. The first year was very much a "trial by fire" kind of year. I also stepped up and out and modeled my beliefs and skills more.
- Participating in a doctorate.
- Never letting them see me sweat.
- Educating and empowering teacher leaders.
- The teachers lacked knowledge on the state teaching standard and how to raise rigor. The strategy was to not take complaints personally, but to help teachers gain independence in mastering the knowledge need to teach the standards and raising rigor.
- Relationship building!
- Creating a leadership team with a variety of teachers to work with to implement school direction.
- Feedback from mentors.
- Helping the staff develop self-awareness techniques, and peer observations to develop strengths and weaknesses.
- PLC's
- Holding staff accountable to the collective commitments while also supporting them in their professional growth and development has made a significant difference in the way our school operates.
- Communication with and support of teachers.
- My fantastic team.
- Making time and preparing for challenging conversations that would have a positive impact on student learning.
- Coaching cycles with leadership team.
- Assuming positive intent and listening to understand.
- Relationships with students.
- Ongoing job-embedded professional development and a focus on changing school culture.
- Building culture and climate.
- Having a network of colleagues within my county and state-wide to reach out to if I needed support.

New principals receive help from a lot of different sources:



How long do new principals anticipate serving in the principal role?

- 3-5 years: 19%
- 6-10 years: 56%
- 10+ years: 25%

2019-2020 What professional plans do new principals have for next year?

86% of them said they plan on staying at the same school, while the other 14% are going to move to another district.

Are you looking for professional development opportunities for this summer?



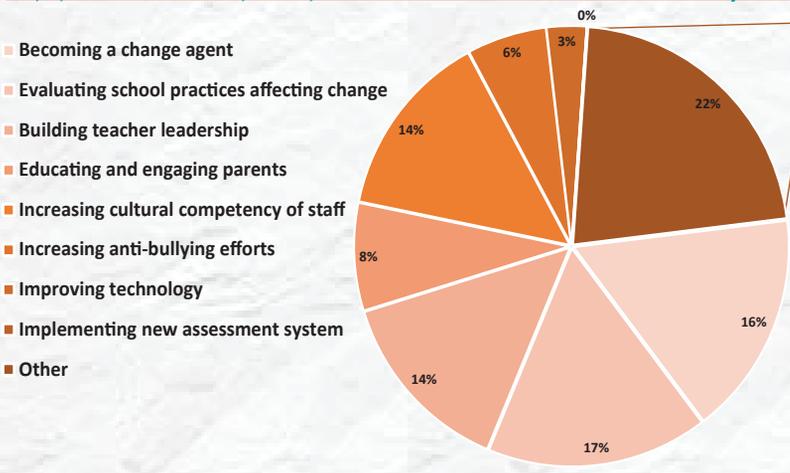
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Top priorities new principals have for the 2019-20 school year:



Other top priorities:

- Working on Social-Emotional Learning as a school - developing/ implementing specific SEL practices in the classroom.
- Not letting the dominant voices control staff meetings, leadership team meetings, and give the indication that they represent the entire school.
- Close the achievement gap.
- Include more native cultural activities in the school.
- Implementing Ci3T at our school.
- Continued work on our Professional Learning Communities.
- Getting to know new staff, their celebrations, needs, and expectations.