

New Principal Connection

Insights from new principals, for new principals

The principal's role can be incredibly complex and quite demanding. Among the myriad of responsibilities, it is important to give and receive feedback in order to provide an optimal learning environment and to meet student's needs.

Our Spring survey asked new principals to explore thoughts and reflections regarding how we provide and gather feedback.

Let's start with the 'Who'

There are many different roles that exist in your school, and they all receive feedback during different times of the year:

- **64%** of new principals surveyed said that the majority or all of staff is required to have a formal evaluation each year.
- **78%** of principals are evaluated, and **55%** receive feedback on an **annual** basis.
- Faculty and staff are strategically solicited for their feedback, insights, and opinions **monthly (46%)**.
- Structured feedback conversations are scheduled with parents every **quarter (30%)**.

There was an interesting divide in responses to getting feedback from students. While **38%** of new principals surveyed said they schedule time for student feedback **annually**, **31%** said they **never** schedule time with students to get feedback. The reason why? They receive unsolicited feedback from their students year-round!



It's Procedure

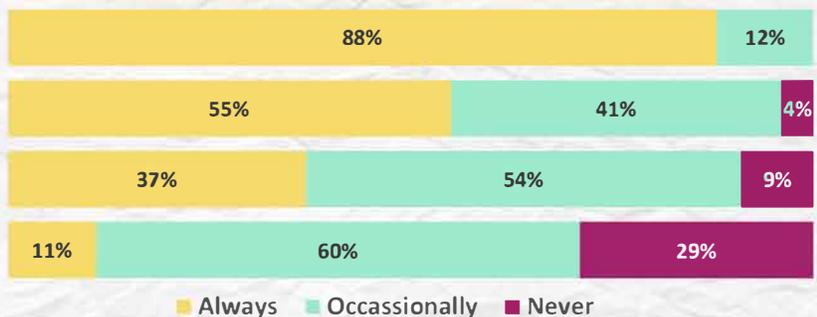
Feedback procedure in your school:

Allows time for others to have a voice in the conversation

Typically includes a time of reflection for the person

Typically includes a time of reflection for the principal

Typically sets a follow-up date to revisit the feedback conversation



From the Desk of the Principal:

| How is principal feedback used? | Always | Occasionally |
|--|--------|--------------|
| ✓ To manage the work environment | 37% | 63% |
| ✓ To promote the success of students | 85% | 15% |
| ✓ To create an instructional program that strives to improve teaching and learning | 77% | 23% |
| ✓ To establish a positive climate and culture | 81% | 19% |
| ✓ To maintain a safe, supportive, and caring learning environment | 85% | 15% |
| ✓ To encourage professional learning and development | 71% | 29% |
| ✓ To motivate students and staff | 67% | 33% |
| ✓ To collaborate with families and community members | 12% | 81% |
| ✓ To engage stakeholders in decision-making | 19% | 71% |
| ✓ To resolve conflicts productively | 27% | 71% |

Is feedback provided:

following informal classroom visits?



in a structured environment and setting?



52% of new principals said that they like to start their feedback conversations with a question.

FEEDBACK

What would you consider your greatest challenge in providing feedback?

An overwhelming majority of respondents identified **time** as being the greatest challenge in providing feedback – not just finding time to meet and/or reflect, but also in making sure that the time has a quality standard.



While **79%** of respondents feel like feedback is sometimes difficult to give, **73%** feel skilled as a key provider of feedback.



Another popular challenge identified was **overcoming the perception and reception of feedback as negative and/or confrontational** – directing the conversations towards growing and becoming more effective through constructive criticism.

Here are a few more great responses about challenges!

| | |
|---|---|
| Balancing correction with motivation | Teachers are not entirely receptive to constructive criticism. Most recently, open and honest conversations are misinterpreted and referred to the local union as concerns. |
| I feel as though many staff members do not see feedback as an attempt to help them become more effective. There seems to be a divide between staff and administrators, as well as an attitude of "us" and "them", so attempting to overcome that has to happen simultaneously with giving feedback is a challenge. | When providing feedback, it is difficult to avoid words like, "I loved when..." |
| Balancing being direct with inspiring change | Moving target with respect to the instrument being used. |
| Finding a form that fits what I am looking for. | I struggle when the topic is unpleasant and could get confrontational. |
| Making staff feel like they have ownership of their learning both professionally in the classroom and within the conversations with administration. I think we are making strides with the conversations becoming mutual and not one sided. | Finding the time and opportunity to provide meaningful feedback can be difficult. It's easy to get caught up in the day to day events and time can get away from me. |
| Trying to toe the line between constructive criticism and keeping the teacher positive. We struggle with staff morale in this state and in this school (I was hired to rebuild culture); therefore, teachers are extremely sensitive. I worry about those great teachers that need just a little changing to improve instruction. | Feeling that I am limited in my own tools as a newer administrator. Trying to educate myself on best practices to be able to share ideas with the staff. |
| Finding time. I spend a lot of time in classrooms, but finding time to schedule all of the follow-up meetings that coincide with teacher planning time is difficult. I want to value their time and respect their planning, but also convey that feedback is a part of "what we do." | Helping others see what I see. |
| | When I have criticism to give. |
| | Keeping a welcoming atmosphere |
| | Having a structured format to share the feedback and constructively digest the feedback. |
| | Knowledge of how to word/express things. |
| | Greatest challenge is making feedback meaningful for instructors. |

About the Panel

NAESP's National Panel of New Principals is the first and only national program dedicated to gathering and sharing the experiences of new and early career principals in rural, urban, and suburban schools across the country.

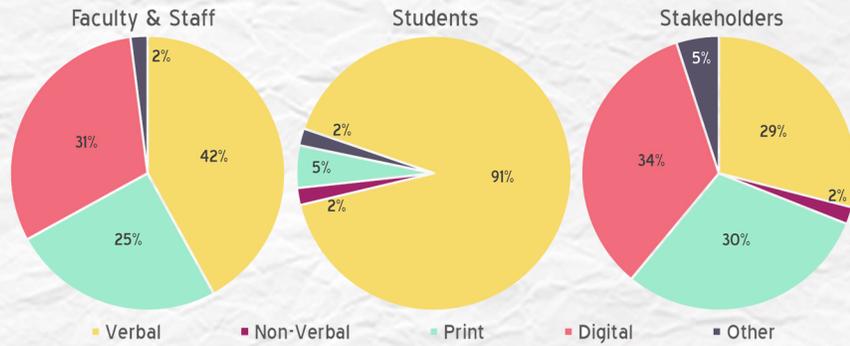
Learn more at newprincipal.org

About NAESP

The mission of the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) is to lead in the advocacy and support for elementary and middle level principals and other education leaders in their commitment for all children.

Learn more at naesp.org

What platform do you most often use to provide feedback to...



New principals said they use **verbal** communication most often when providing feedback to faculty & staff (**42%**) and students (**91%**). Communications switch over to a **digital** platform, however, when providing feedback to stakeholders (**34%**).

98%! reported they strive to diversify methods of providing feedback – **76%** by weaving appreciation into their feedback conversations. As a result, the feedback is more likely to be received as constructive (**72%**) rather than critical.



NPNP is always welcoming feedback and new panelists - sign up today at newprincipal.org!

