

New Principal Connection

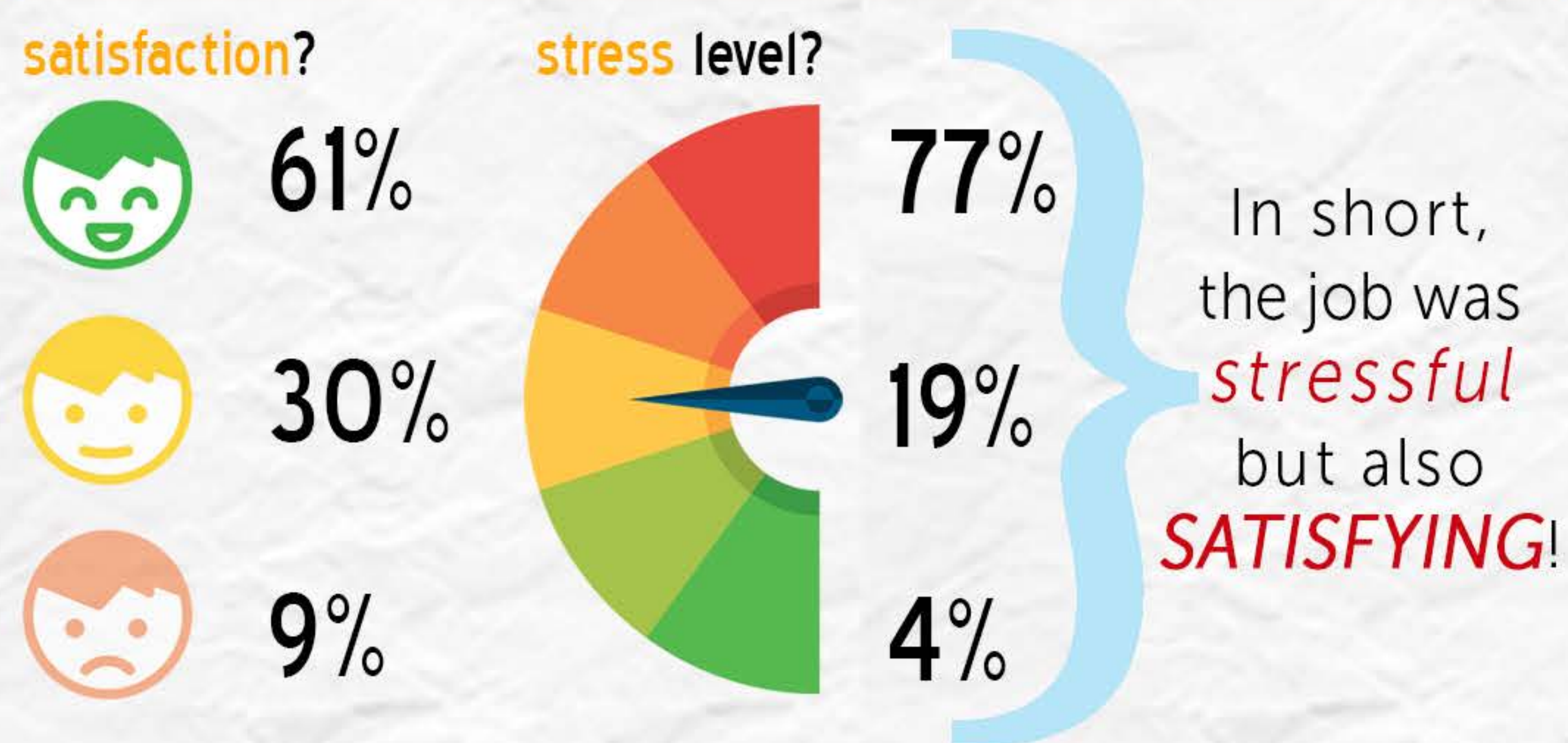
Insights from new principals, for new principals

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 2017-18 school year, as well as future plans.

How did the job measure up?

Most new principals seem to have had a good idea of what the principalship entailed — **47%** said the job was **what they expected**. Even better, **39%** said the job was **better** than expected, with only **14%** stating it didn't quite meet expectations.

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

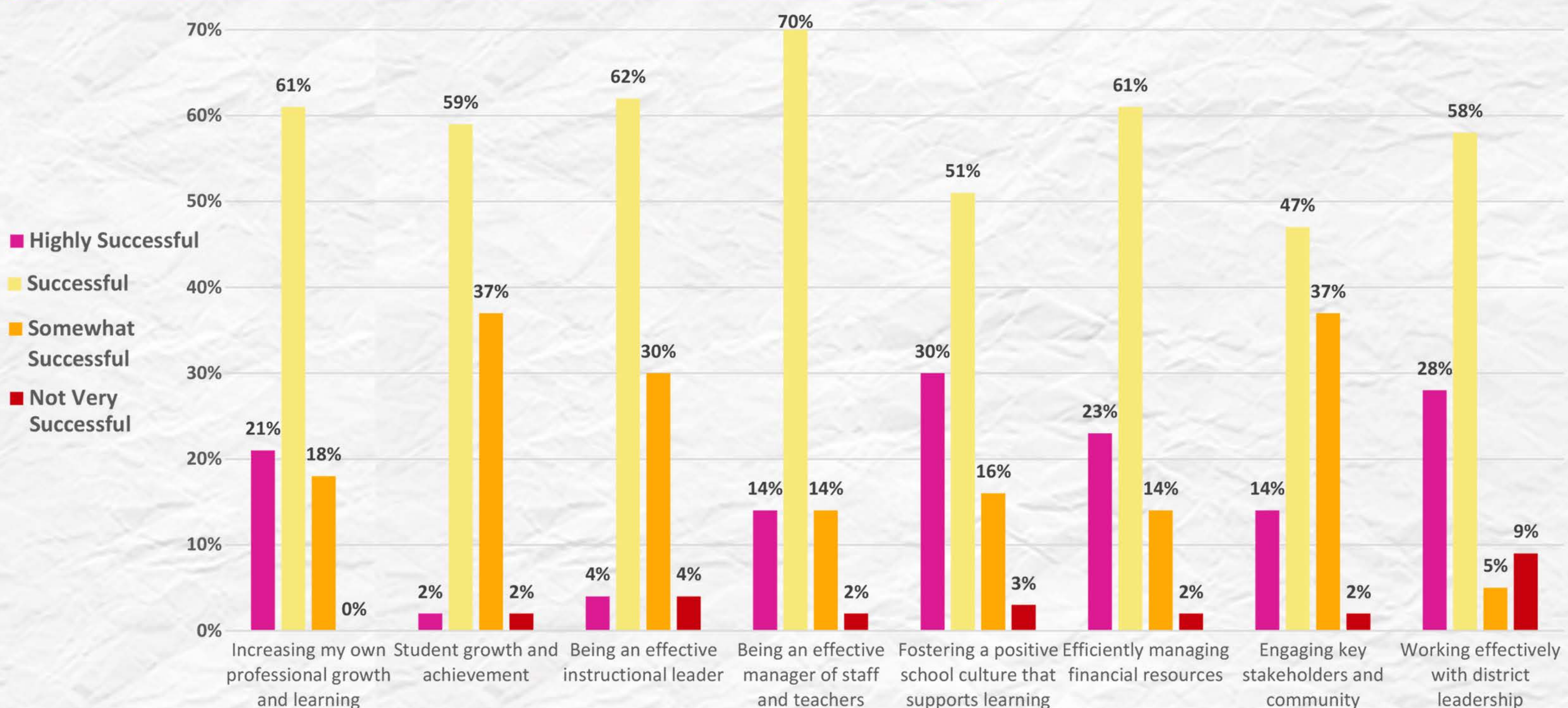


The top 3 challenges faced by new principals:

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| Managing time | 44% |
| Implementing change | 39% |
| Understanding the politics | 28% |
| Providing relevant staff development | 25% |
| Receiving valuable feedback on leadership skills | 25% |
| Creating a clear vision for our school | 23% |
| Working productively with parents | 23% |
| Evaluating staff | 18% |
| Implementing team development | 18% |
| Using data to inform decision-making | 18% |
| Assessing classroom instructional practices | 18% |
| Using technology | 4% |

The greatest challenges facing new principals were **time management** and trying to **implement change** within their school (**44%** and **39%**). It's apparent that most had a good understanding of **using technology** — only **4%** reported this as a challenge.

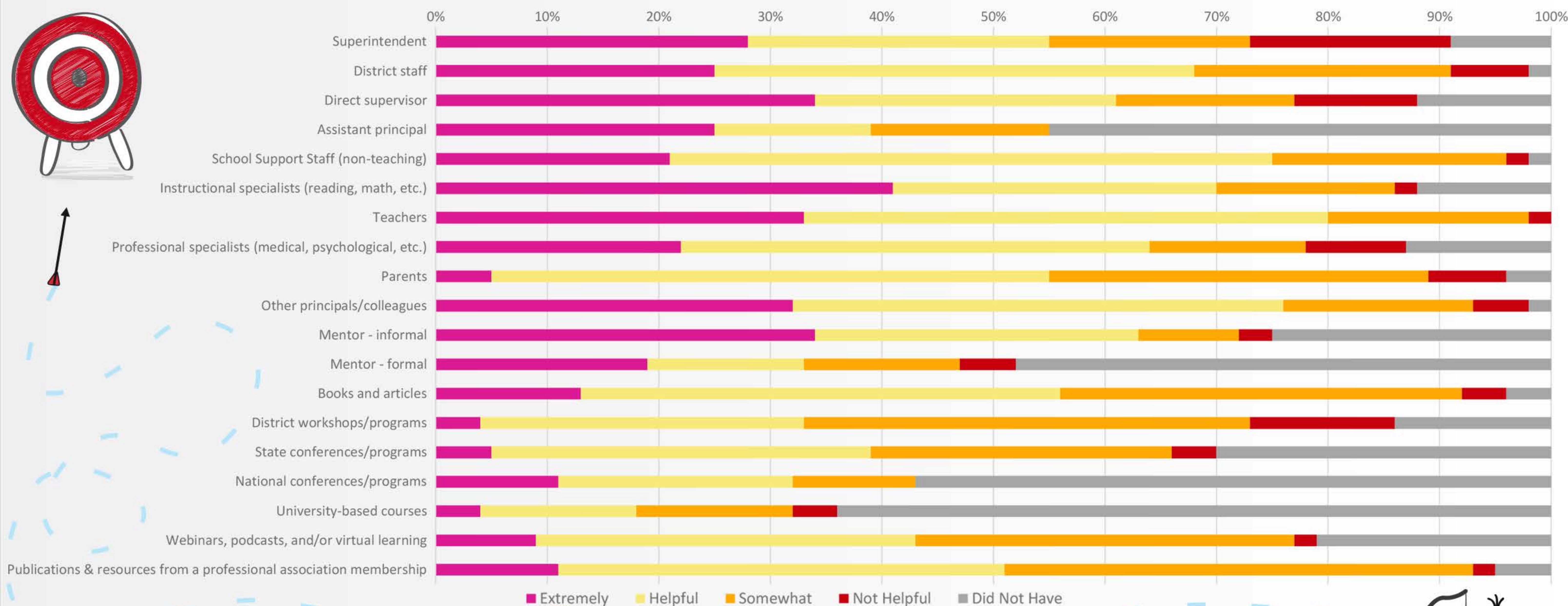
With challenge comes reward — new principals found success this year!



We learn and grow by adapting and overcoming challenges. New principals shared the most effective ideas or strategies implemented that helped to address a significant challenge.

- I think I was able to be successful in difficult situations due to my training and keeping focused on the students. I was able to engage in direct difficult conversations with a very involved parent community who had been given a significant amount of power by my predecessor, and thus required limits be set by the principal in order to allow teachers to focus on their work. By being diplomatic, but direct, I was able to
- Cohesive staff, created a vision and mission statement.
- Working with teachers to look at data and trends and come up with plans for intervention. We looked at the actual standard and talked about what worked and what needed to be changed.
- Student behavior. Implemented seven habits and PBIS.
- Instructional leadership team working with me to implement PLCs and grade span teams.
- Playworks - helped reduce conflict and injury on the playground.
- I reduced the number of classes departmentalizing to allow students to remain with one teacher for core
- Using Situation/Behavior/Impact to guide feedback conversations with students. Students' mental health -
- Schoolwide Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies.
- I helped my team streamline the RtI/MTSS process so that the steps (what to do when) were more clear to
- Observations of instructional practices with feedback.
- Beginning the journey of PBIS.
- We were able to cut behavior referrals in half because of implementing site-wide procedures, being specific and efficient with supervision and human resource placement. We talk constantly about building
- Having ongoing monthly meetings with parent and community groups.
- Distributive leadership - working to develop leadership team and shared accountability for the school plan.
- Drop Everything and Read (D.E.A.R.), a time where most everybody in the building stops what they are doing and reads. I believe this contributed to an increase in Reading on summative testing.
- Development of Instructional Leadership Team.
- Growing leadership team's leadership skills.
- Increased collaboration with administrative colleagues.
- Collaboration during all meetings to promote a sense of community and shared decision-making.
- Teacher led professional development.
- Achievement meetings with staff-changing the dialogue and the soundtrack of the campus.
- Always be open to hearing from parents. If they request a meeting, make time.
- Identifying weaknesses in instruction and planning quality PL to meet those needs. Holding everyone accountable via feedback was exhausting, but I believe it's the piece that ties everything together and helps
- Provide teachers with release time for Professional Learning Communities work.
- Stay calm, stay positive. It's about the kids.
- Organization helps in all areas and being prepared as you can be for a situation.
- Data-driven programming.
- We discussed our strengths...specifically in adaptation. We service one of the top three fastest growing neighborhoods in the country and with that comes much continual change.
- We perfected our PLCs this year, which was very helpful in using data to drive instruction and
- Support teacher leadership. Listen and cultivate their ideas.
- Monthly data chats around math unit assessment data. Attempted something similar with ELA with negative results.
- Inquiry Team Professional Learning.
- The challenge was to get teachers to look past achievement and focus on student growth. The strategy was to focus teachers on risk-taking. We began the year by creating a vision for our school. I then made an effort to say yes to and support all of their new ideas. It has improved our building culture. People appear
- Visibility *Making morning and afternoon check ins with teachers. *Cafeteria and recess walk through
- *Before school walk with lead custodian *Communication about observations outside of evaluation
- PLC protocols.

New principals rely on help from various people and resources to achieve goals.



It's no surprise that most new principals surveyed reported they received the most help from *school support staff, instructional specialists, and teachers*—the people a principal sees and works with every day. It is surprising, however, that **45%** and **47%** of new principals said they had no *assistant principal* or *formal mentor*.



Looking Ahead...

42% of new principals said they expect to be in the principal role for another **3-5 years**; **19%** said **6-10 years** and, greater still, **25%** said they plan on being a principal for **10+ years**! **82%** also indicated they plan to remain at the same school.

New principals have big plans for the next school year.

TOP Priority: Increasing knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment **48%**

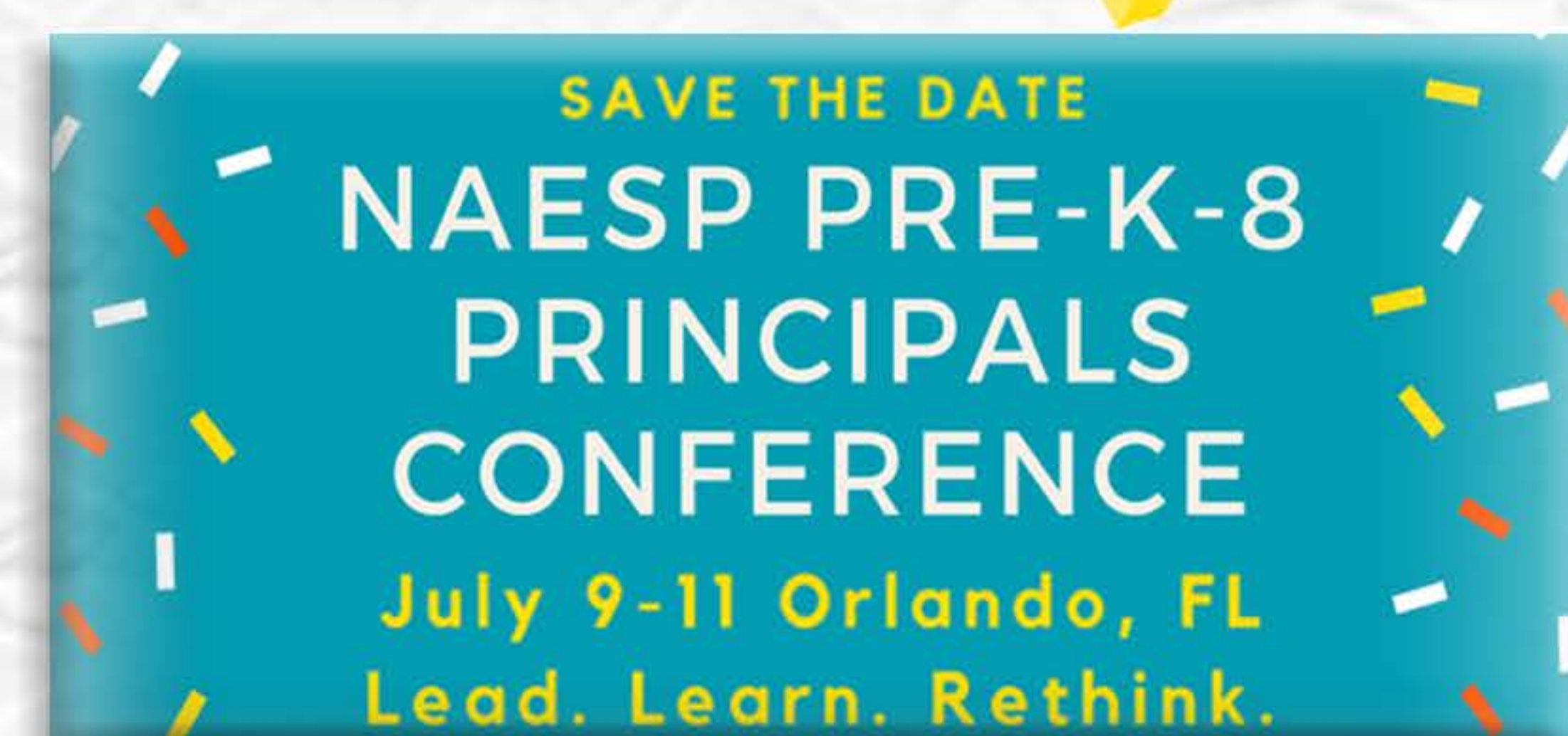
HIGH Priority: Increasing staff and student cultural competency **51%**

Secondary Priority: Increasing anti-bullying efforts **40%**

Lesser/Not Priority: Implementing new assessment systems **53%**

What type of professional development is planned for the summer?

Most new principals, **88%**, said they were going to participate in some kind of *in-person* professional development, be it a seminar, course, or something through their district. Another **63%** said they plan to *attend a conference* on either their state or national level.



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