Canadian Association of Principals
association canadienne des directeurs d'école

The Alberta Teachers' Association

THE FUTURE OF THE PRINCIPALSHIP IN CANADA

A NATIONAL RESEARCH STUDY

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This study is dedicated to the organizations and facilitators that made it possible,
as well as to the school leaders from across Canada who both contributed to and inspired it.

In this important pan-Canadian study, the authors set out what is happening to the principalship from sea to sea. Principals are, in many ways, at the centre of a rapidly changing society and the impact it is having on its children. As technology gathers apace, diverse families try to cope, and economic life becomes volatile and uncertain, our schools and their principals have to prepare the next generations in an age of increasing anxiety. The core question that this report raises is whether [principals] will become overloaded by managing change agendas that are handed to them from higher up, or whether they will be expected and empowered to lead our schools, our teachers and our children to create a world where technology does not distract us, diversity does not divide us and mental health is a good that collaborative communities can create together.

Andy Hargreaves,
Thomas More Brennan Chair in Education,
Lynch School of Education Boston College

This comprehensive study of the principalship in Canada brings disturbing news. The principal's role—which we know to be crucial for school-wide development—is being diverted by a host of managerial requirements and wrong-headed policies, forcing principals to become micro managers. Not only is the role as experienced impossible to carry out, it is ruining the health of its incumbents. The report is a call to action—get rid of or blunt the distractors, and position the principal to lead the learning culture of the school and to be a system player connected to other schools and the district.

Michael Fullan, OC,
Author of *The Principal: Three Keys to Maximizing Impact*

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Foreword

I am old enough to have learned that those predicting the future for American education are frequently wrong. As I grew up the Russians were going to beat us in everything; as I matured the Japanese were going to do the same; later I learned we were not competitive in industry. But then Apple and Microsoft came along. The futility of prediction beyond, say, the next three years became clear. But, on the other hand, strategic action calls for examination of current and future trends.

There is value in trying to understand the contemporary life of principals and to extrapolate the implications for the professional and personal life of the holders of that position, now and in the future. In order to understand the work of school leaders—as it is now and as it will be in the future—the voices of those undertaking that role must be heard by stakeholders and policymakers. With this in mind, the ensuing report focuses on principals' perspectives from across Canada and offers remarkable insight into what needs to be done to improve this job at the personal level and to redesign the job to support efficacy.

The social contexts in which Canadian principals, as well as their colleagues globally, operate are always different and always fluctuating. Particularly in education, general findings stop being general because contexts vary significantly. For instance, schools in a First Nations community, suburban Calgary or inner city Toronto have different needs and demand different types of work from principals. Safety may be a primary concern and a powerful stressor for one principal; for another principal, stress on the job is rooted in the behavior of local parents; for other principals, scores on externally-mandated tests are what stress the principal and demand more time. Further, all educational work must take context into consideration because certain educational ideas, practices or leaders may not be right for a particular setting. Instability of context—and the need to adapt to an unstable context—is perhaps the only thing that can be generalized.

All leaders of industry and government need to monitor and understand shifts in context as they try to control their organizations' and their nations' future. Stasis is rare in educational systems and, thus, the question of "what needs to be done now" requires frequent re-examination. As highlighted in this report, this is part of the complexity inherent in school leadership: the principal has a critical role to play as the "change spotter" and leader of accommodations to change in a world that is volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous. This is work that is both very hard and very important, and upon which communities and nations depend.

The effects of shifting contexts and trends require understanding by those who choose to become principals and, even more so, by those who judge their performance.

This study on the Canadian principalship highlights the burden that too many directives from above place on school leaders. This corresponds to data from the USA, where, for example, school leaders in the state of Massachusetts, in the years 2009-2013, received 5,382 multiple-page documents—*around three documents a day*—from the state and the federal government. These documents required action by local school districts and frequently demanded the time and attention of school principals. That reality makes Kafka's worst descriptions of bureaucracy seem benign!

As long as the bureaucracies in which principals work inundate them with memos and mandates, neither American nor Canadian school leaders will be able to meet the needs of their students, parents and communities. Principals in both countries have to contend with almost endless needs to which attention must be paid; among the most galling of these are the 'top-down' mandates, which often

imply that principals and teachers are either incompetent or derelict in their duties, or that they are super men and women who can do whatever is asked of them, regardless of their other responsibilities.

From the perspective of an outsider and researcher who has worked across the globe, the Canadian provincial and national systems seem to be shifting toward an organizational culture where there is diminished trust and much greater external accountability. The way around this issue was put well in this report: “At the risk of sounding simplistic, more trust and less accountability is required to make schools more engaging for our students and staff.” In fact, Finland has a system much like this, and it works.

What this report makes clear is that the principalship is a paradox. While it is a nearly impossible job, it is done remarkably well by most practitioners—even though they are usually understaffed and under-resourced—given the demands that are made on them.

If wisely acted upon, the findings in this document can be used to support and sustain a better principalship across Canada. If that is done, the profession will likely attract and keep the kind of leaders who can effectively shape the schools and communities serving this increasingly diverse and complex nation. But we need to remember that the challenges faced by our principals cannot all be addressed without also attending to the social context and the issues that exist within it.

David C. Berliner
Regents’ Professor Emeritus, Arizona State University

Acknowledgements

A national study regarding the experiences and aspirations of school principals in a country as vast and diverse as Canada was a task we took on with some hesitation. The scope and scale of this research effort were ambitious to say the least. Despite these significant challenges, the need to better understand the work of school leaders in the context of the global forces shaping public education in Canada remained our imperative. This need was affirmed by the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) report, which reinforces many of the ensuing study's key findings. Released just as our study goes to press and conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development in 2013, the TALIS study, in its review of the work of both teachers and school leaders, underscores the increasingly demanding and paradoxical role of the school principal globally. While the principalship is rewarding with high levels of job satisfaction, growing complexities and expectations make this a challenging and nettlesome career.

In approaching this study, one key question emerged: if we were to capture a coherent sense of the experiences and aspirations of school leaders across Canada, how would we address the challenges of distance, time and resources? The answer materialized through the collaboration of the Canadian Association of Principals (CAP) and the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) over the course of this two-year project. In its truest sense, this project owes its completion to a global network that includes the affiliates of CAP and a research team led by the ATA, along with international experts.

The national partnership was guided through its initial phase in 2012 by CAP's Joycelyn Fournier-Gawryluk, and later sustained by Bill Tucker and the current president, Jameel Aziz. The work of the national executive and the affiliate organizations of CAP in sponsoring the 40 focus groups across the country was vital to the success of the project.

The research team was led by Dr. J-C Couture of the ATA, who designed the study and coordinated the various stages of the project. Dr. Anna Yashkina, from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, assisted in the initial design phase of the project and completed a comprehensive literature review. Dr. Phil McRae of the ATA and Jean Stiles, principal of Jasper Place High School in Edmonton, Alberta, provided the focus group piloting and the validation of the research design. Laura Servage, a doctoral candidate at the University of Alberta, assisted in the initial research design, led the data analysis of the 500 respondent booklets and completed the jurisdictional reports and the national analysis. Dr. Dennis Shirley of Boston College contributed his analysis of the national and international implications of the findings in the Epilogue. Lindsay Yakimyshyn, an ATA research staff member, and Dan Nelles of the ATA Local for Calgary Public Teachers managed the editing and publication of the final report.

Any effort to acknowledge the individual and collective contributions will be incomplete, since none of this work would have possible without the short- and long-term involvement of many people who worked behind the scenes. Yet, one last acknowledgement is perhaps the most important of all. *The Future of the Principalship in Canada* is both an analysis of the current realities of Canadian school leaders as well as an aspirational document that represents their hopes for the future. The involvement of the 500 participants who contributed to this study in the focus groups across this country remains the most significant contribution of all to this work.

Jameel Aziz
President, Canadian Association of Principals

Gordon Thomas
Executive Secretary, Alberta Teachers' Association

Preface

> *"I miss the future."*
>
> *(Jaron Lanier)*

As a philosopher, computer scientist, and one of the premier design engineers today, Jaron Lanier worries that the youthful optimism of the sixties has given way to the cold realism of economic stagnation and social malaise. Rather than giving sway to hopeless helplessness, in a bold declaration against fatalism, he argues that "the future should be our theatre. It should be fun and wild, and force us to see everything in our present world anew" (Lanier, 2013, p. 349). It is this hopeful, though some would say naïve, impulse that led to the launching of an ambitious national study on the future of the principalship in Canada.

Initiated in 2012, the project began as a partnership between the Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA) and the Canadian Association of Principals (CAP). The study aims to reveal and examine the current conditions of practice that both limit and enable the aspirational leadership roles of principals, situating these conditions in the context of the forces that will influence public education in Canada over the next two decades.

Researchers based this study on the design framework of *The Future of Teaching in Alberta* (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2011), which the ATA conducted in collaboration with researchers from the University of Calgary. For *The Future of Teaching in Alberta*, the ATA also worked with Andy Hargreaves and Dennis Shirley, co-authors of *The Fourth Way,* who provided a comprehensive global perspective to help analyze the trends shaping teaching and learning in Alberta schools. The project report concluded that the current forces that will influence education in the next two decades (e.g., the increasing complexity of the classroom, growing economic disparity, the rise of 'big data' and accountability, and the ubiquity of technology) will profoundly affect the work of teachers and students within the classroom.

Following the release of *The Future of Teaching in Alberta* in the spring of 2011, the ATA partnered with CAP to design the first phase of an analogous research project aimed at identifying the trends and influences that will shape the work of the principal as school leader. Further, this study, *The Future of the Principalship in Canada*, intended to ascertain the short- and long-term supports that administrators hoped to receive in their shifting roles.

To gain insight into the influences acting upon principalship, researchers conducted focus groups across the country. A comprehensive literature review was undertaken to inform the themes the focus groups would explore. The design of the questions and protocols was piloted in early spring of 2012. The final roll-out of focus groups ran through April 2013, leading to 500 study participants from across Canada.

While the focus groups were facilitated and sponsored by individual member organizations of CAP, a research team provided in-service support to ensure consistency across the country. The focus groups, ranging from 15 to 125 participants and lasting roughly 90 minutes, were supported by facilitators who outlined three objectives for the sessions:

1. To gather data on participants' perspectives about the future of their work as principals
2. To provide participants with the experience of sharing their views on the current and long-term societal trends that are changing the role and work of school principals
3. To gather input on the sources of support that would enhance the work of school principals in the short and long term

Each focus group worked through a consistent process. The participants completed a workbook, drawing on two resources—*Changing Landscapes in Co-creating a Learning Canada* (a brochure that explores seven trends impacting education in Canada) and an accompanying student video—to spur reflection on their experiences beyond the boundaries of their schools and systems, as well as provincial and national boundaries.[1]

A Strategic Declaration against Fatalism

One of the early findings of this study is that school administrators greatly appreciate opportunities to see beyond the immediate forces affecting their work. Across Canada, participants valued the chance to explore the impact of societal trends on public education among colleagues. As one focus group participant observed, "I attend a lot of meetings and surprisingly few of them see a conversation about learning, never mind the future, breaking out."

The role of the school principal in Canada is increasingly multifaceted and complex. Beyond the foundational administrative and managerial roles they are expected to master, principals are also expected to be innovators and agents of change—all of this in a culture that increasingly challenges traditional conceptions of leadership.

The principal's work often involves navigating myriad seemingly irreconcilable government policies and community expectations while trying live up to an idealized vision of instructional leadership. Moreover, the work of a school principal demands meeting heightened expectations while mediating multiple and often seemingly conflicting roles. Responding to these convolutions, this study aims to support the work of the principal, now and in the future.

While this study reaffirms the increasing complexity, stress, demands and paradoxes associated with principalship, our focus groups maintained hope for students' futures and a commitment to advocate on their behalf. Hopefully, in some small way, *The Future of the Principalship in Canada* will be a catalyst, helping to build the capacity of principals to achieve their aspirations as school leaders.

J-C Couture
Associate Coordinator Research, Alberta Teachers' Association

[1] The brochure can be found in Appendix B. The seven trends that informed this document are adapted from *The Future of Teaching in Alberta* (ATA 2011a). The student video is available upon request.

Executive Summary

Study Overview

This study captures the perspectives of 500 Canadian school principals on current and anticipated conditions affecting leadership in Canadian schools. Workshops were held in two territories and nine provinces. In these workshops, principals used structured workbooks to identify and comment on significant social, political, economic and educational trends influencing their work. The workbooks had three components:

1. Opportunities to identify three key trends principals were seeing in their schools and to consider the underlying social, economic or political conditions driving these trends
2. An invitation to participants to discuss what they needed in the short term (1-3 years) and in the long term (3-5 years) to improve their practices
3. A demographic section to capture data about participants and their schools

With the exception of the demographic section, all responses in the workbook were open. Participants used phrases and/or full sentences in their responses.

Data Analysis and Findings

Data from the study workbooks were transcribed and coded inductively into six categories: diversity of students, the changing family, teaching and learning conditions, technology, economy, and social and cultural influences. These categories were then coded into subcategories. In addition, researchers coded the descriptions of the needed short- and long-term supports that principals described. Initial coding and tallying of the data were followed by in-depth content analysis of the data using NVIVO.

Coding Categories: Major Findings

1) Diversity of Students

"Diversity" in the context of this study describes almost endless variations in student needs, including medical conditions, learning disabilities, language learning needs, mental health issues, cultural differences and—in too many cases—basic needs. In relation to diversity, participants specifically and frequently mentioned mental health and social adjustment of students, the needs of English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and families, and inequities in First Nations education. Yet, a larger understanding emerged: there is no such thing as a "typical" student in the classroom when so many sources of diversity must be taken into consideration.

Across the country, administrators reported that it is often impossible to meet the range of student needs with present resources. For instance, principals often stated that they and their staff lack the specialized training required to teach English as an additional language and to bring cultural understanding to their practices. While school leaders aspire to see diversity as an asset, they struggle to reconcile the growing complexity of student populations with the declining resources.

2) The Changing Family

The family unit's form is not stable. Students come from diverse family circumstances, including single-parent homes and blended families. With particular regard to this category, administrators described economic strains on families and levels of "busy-ness" as factors eroding valuable family time. Though instability in the composition of Canadian families can increase the resilience of children and youth, administrators suggest that schools are increasingly asked to meet the social, emotional and basic needs of students who are not having these needs met at home.

Principals' comments reveal that relationships between schools and parents are difficult to negotiate, with parents bifurcated between those who are very involved and place many demands upon the

school and those who are not involved at all. Each extreme poses challenges for administrators and their staff. School leaders idealize a "happy medium" of cooperative and mutually-respectful parental involvement.

3) Teaching and Learning Conditions

Researchers grouped together school administrators' accounts of the immediate conditions affecting their—and their staff's—daily practices. Most significantly, participants reported that schools are overloaded with responsibilities and attributed this overload to increasingly stringent accountability measures coupled with a lack of long-term vision for public education. Administrative and reporting requirements diminish the school leader's capacity to support teachers and build a school community. The principals in this study were, on occasion, demoralized by their inability to spend time on relationships and learning, which they perceived to be the most meaningful and effective use of their time.

School principals frequently characterized their working conditions as stressful. In particular, principals and teaching staff are overwhelmed by the range and number of needs presented by students and their families. Some participants expressed concern that society's problems are being "downloaded" onto schools. As socio-economic disparity increases and other public sector supports—from youth criminal justice to child and family services—experience cutbacks, school staff become "first responders," whether or not they feel equipped to respond.

Though some participants were critical of their teaching staff, most believed their teachers were doing the best they could under the circumstances. To improve teacher efficacy, principals suggested targeted pre-service learning (particularly in technology and teaching to diversity), increased number of specialists in schools, and stronger collaboration and integration with social service providers in the community. However, overall, these responses were qualified. The principals in this study realized that teachers were being asked to learn and do things well beyond the scope of academic instruction.

4) Technology

Schools' uptake and management of technology were central concerns in this study. In particular, participants noted workload increase, cyberbullying and digital divides as issues related to technology.

Communications technology has affected the workload of teachers and administrators (ATA, 2011). According to participants, increased communication with parents and the community is valuable, but comes at the expense of work-life balance for school staff. School leaders sometimes felt that parents expected instant, "24/7" communication, making it more difficult for staff to step away from work and care for themselves and their families (Duxbury & Higgins, 2013; Naylor & White, 2009).

Participants also expressed concerns about fallout from pernicious and frequent use of social media among students, and, in some cases, parents. Cyberbullying and community gossip are damaging school climates and many administrators are struggling to respond effectively.

Administrators also observed a persistent digital divide, which schools cannot overcome with existing technology resources and infrastructures. In the long run, administrators are seeking a stable technology infrastructure, as well as continuing professional education to support teachers' competence with core technologies, digital citizenship, and digital literacy. Overall, educators see much potential in technology to enhance teaching, learning, and parent communication, but much work remains to be done.

5) Economy
Some principals considered broader trends in provincial and federal economics, discussing the reliance on primary resource extraction, the rapidly changing nature of the labour market, and the potential impacts of these conditions on their students in terms of future work and economic opportunities. However, when commenting on economic conditions affecting their schools, most participants remarked on the economy's impacts on families and, in turn, on teaching and learning conditions in schools.

The stressors and social ills—connected to economic pressures—that some families face are felt by schools. Pertinent issues related to poverty include parental disengagement, transience, weak community ties, mental illness and substance abuse. These conditions might result in students being preoccupied, anxious or unable to focus on learning. While families from all socio-economic backgrounds can experience problems, they are more pronounced in communities with high concentrations of poverty.

Poverty does not tell the whole story, however. Principals very frequently described the impacts of income disparity in their school communities, with stark contrasts between "have" and "have-not" students in terms of academic achievement, access to technology, extracurricular learning opportunities and school engagement. Many emphasized the importance of public education to bridge these gaps, seeking stronger public commitment to schools and overall social equity. "We can't do it all on our own," commented one school leader.

6) Social and Cultural Influences
Principals in this study were most likely to express positive feelings about Canada's growing social and cultural diversity. Although diversity poses significant challenges for schools, it also offers enormous learning opportunities. Respondents described their efforts to create school communities founded on the tolerance, respect and communication skills required of "global citizens." According to principals, diversity enriches schools, communities and Canadian society.

However, many principals' comments about school communities referred directly or indirectly to perceptions of shifting social values. In particular, the influences of technology and mass media on families and on the social fabric of communities garnered much attention. While respondents viewed "increased global awareness" as a positive for students, they perceived the technology that facilitates this awareness as deleterious. Technology erodes in-person interaction with family and friends, creating troubling consequences for students' social development and mental health. Moreover, administrators saw links between pervasive technology and a damaging ethos of individualism, with students becoming anxious, alienated and often lonely.

Supports Needed
As part of the study, participants were asked to articulate the kinds of supports they needed to improve their schools today and well into the future. They were asked to distinguish between short- and long-term supports; however, their responses in either case were similar.

Self-Care and Wellness
Study participants often indicated feeling overwhelmed in their positions. Although managerial competencies are clearly important components of administrators' ongoing professional development, the findings suggest that urgent managerial functions are inhibiting the leadership development and community building that would make their work more rewarding. Because of the increasing complexities and challenges of principalship, participants worried that recruitment and retention of strong school leaders would be difficult. The findings suggest professional development

related to self-care and wellness strategies—from effective time management to delegation and other "boundary setting" skills—is necessary for supporting school leaders in their roles.

Overcoming Professional Isolation
Many principals feel professionally isolated because of pressing, often time-consuming demands, as well as the complexity and specific school-community contexts of their work. Principals need more opportunities to collaborate with peers and strategies to cultivate leadership in their teaching staff.

Supports in the Community
A strong and consistent theme in this study is that schools are experiencing "role overload." Principals indicated that they and their staff frequently face issues that they have neither the training nor the resources to respond to effectively. Mental health supports, child and youth services and preventative health services were frequently cited areas of concern. Overall, participants identified supports from specialists and community agents as most urgently needed.

Governance and Social Values that Support Public Education
Excessive external demands and accountability measures were a key source of stress and frustration for study participants. Principals do not need support here so much as fewer restrictions and expectations placed on them, particularly by ministry officials and consultants who appear well-intentioned but have little awareness of the manifold expectations placed on school leaders. High accountability climates and increasingly intricate government initiatives are demoralizing. Administrators and teachers want to be trusted to use their professional knowledge and judgement to act in the best interests of their students and school communities (ATA, 2009).

Technology Supports
Study participants suggested they need support and funding in the form of infrastructure, evergreening and staff professional development to more effectively integrate technology into classroom teaching. The potential for enhancing student engagement, preparing students for future work and learning and bridging the "digital divide"—unequal access to technology and technology-based learning that perpetuates socio-economic disparity—motivates school leaders to improve the functionality of technology in their schools.

Administrators also seek support for fostering the critical and socially-responsible use of technology. Discipline problems and dispute resolutions related to inappropriate use of social media consume enormous amounts of principals' time and energy. With this in mind, study participants stressed the need for support and guidelines to develop and enforce discipline policies. In the long run, noted respondents, schools need the capacity to cultivate digital citizenship—the responsible and respectful use of communications technologies.

Summary and Analysis: Five Ways Forward

To create the coding categories above was productive for the purposes of organizing and presenting the study data. Yet, many of the findings overlapped. Therefore, moving into analysis, researchers reconfigured the data into key holistic themes that better capture the ways in which the coding categories coalesce. These themes were developed into "Five Ways Forward" to emphasize the positive and creative efforts of school leaders to overcome the challenges they face and move toward their preferred outcomes for schools as safe, creative and welcoming learning communities that help all children and youth to reach their full potential. It is hoped that these positive directions will provide a basic template for practitioners and policymakers who might wish to use the study findings to improve school leadership in their home communities.

Way Forward 1: Teach and Learn for Diversity

"Diversity" encompasses an enormous array of cultural backgrounds, needs, interests and opportunity structures for Canadian students. Schools work to recognize and meet the needs of all kinds of diversity, and three key "ways forward" emerged from the comments of school leaders:

- Support new Canadian families, particularly in English language learning
- Strategically engage and teach First Nations, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) students and develop better partnerships with families
- Strategically address growing mental health issues in children and young adults

Way Forward 2: Collaborate and Build Professional Capacities in School Staff

Although some principals in this study discussed the importance of collaboration in their schools, many more appeared to carry the leadership burden alone. Participants noted the following strategies related to collaboration:

- Implement mentorship programs
- Foster leadership development to encourage school principals to draw on the strengths and talents of their teaching staff, moving toward distributive leadership models

Way Forward 3: Build Family and Community Relationships

School principals and teachers need new ways to connect with parents and communities. There are both short-term and long-term "ways forward" to foster family and community relationships:

- In the short term, support professional development that will help school leaders with negotiations, dispute resolutions, and boundary-setting
- In the long run, work to build community-level partnerships
- Advocate for integrated service models that house an array of family services in the school to benefit students and families directly, as well as to strengthen relationships in the community

Way Forward 4: Use Technology for Creative Learning and Good Citizenship

School principals and teachers see both opportunities and social costs in the growth of information and communications technologies. In society and mass media, technology is largely taken up in an uncritical manner. This inspires the following "ways forward":

- Recognize and assume a significant leadership role in teaching children and young people to use technology responsibly and thoughtfully
- Continue professional development for school leaders and staff regarding technology in the classroom
- Balance technical skills with sensitivity to the pedagogical and social consequences of technology for students' learning, social development and well-being

Way Forward 5: Promote Continuous Leadership Learning

Participants mentioned the need for more reflection and more collaboration with colleagues and clearly desired opportunities to work with their teachers to improve practices. Despite this, a specific vision for leadership development was not evident in these findings. Nonetheless, researchers drew the following "ways forward" from the participants' responses:

- Continue articulating leadership frameworks and competencies for school principals
- Advocate for conditions that will not crowd out leadership learning with managerial competencies

Strategies and Future Research Directions

This report concludes with an examination of the implications and the possibilities for future research and policy work by CAP, the ATA, and other organizations concerned with strengthening and sustaining excellent leadership in Canada's public education schools. What emerges is the need for school leaders and external stakeholders to engage in strategic action when undertaking efforts to introduce change.

The Changing Role of the Principal: Review of Recent Research Literature

> *"We are living in chaotic conditions. Thus leaders must be able to operate under complex, uncertain circumstances"*
>
> *(Fullan, 2001)*

Michael Fullan's 2001 monograph, *Leading in a Culture of Change*, examines how leadership is shaped by and must respond to the ever-changing social context. Fluctuating economies, shifting demographics and technological advancements are altering the definition of a leader, a skilled worker and a contributing citizen. To effectively navigate change and maintain its strength, a nation must adapt its education system to the demands of 21st-century society. Canada, like many other nations, has engaged in numerous educational reforms focused on improving student learning and academic performance. But how is reform to be not only achieved, but sustained?

Experts in educational change (e.g., Fullan, 2009; Hargreaves, 2009) agree that strong school leadership is needed for change to be successful. School leadership significantly influences student learning (Leithwood et al., 2006).[2] With their role in facilitating successful change and influencing student learning, principals—the main source of leadership in schools (Day et al., 2010)—have garnered the attention of policymakers across Canada. Today's principals are viewed as champions of change and innovation and as leaders of teaching and learning, rather than solely administrators and managers. Further, recently developed leadership frameworks and performance standards in some provinces (e.g., Leadership Standards for Principals and Vice-Principals in British Columbia, Principal Quality Practice model in Alberta, and Ontario Leadership Framework) evince the recent emphasis on transformational, instructional and distributed forms of leadership.

Supporting principals in their multifaceted role requires investigation and understanding of how their work has been changing and what assistance they need to successfully navigate those changes. With this in mind, the literature review supports the project's overall goal of identifying trends and influences that shape the work of the Canadian principal, as well as ascertaining supports they will need in the near and far future. Two main questions guided this review:

1. What external changes influence the work of principals?
2. How do those changes influence the work of principals?

The results of the literature review informed the design of data collection and analysis.

Methodology

To answer the two guiding questions, researchers examined recent literature on social and educational changes and principals' work. Only empirical studies conducted in Canada since 2000 were considered. In the search, researchers used both scholarly literature databases (such as ProQuest and ERIC) and government and professional literature databases available on the public websites of international educational associations' websites and Canadian ministries of education, principal councils and associations, teacher federations and other educational associations. Further relevant information with less public accessibility was requested from principal and teacher associations.

This thorough and extensive search revealed gaps in the existing literature on the Canadian principalship—researchers found very few relevant studies. Of those extant, only a small portion was

[2] According to Leithwood et al. (2006), among all school-related factors, school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning.

published in academic journals; most sources were found on the websites of government, educational or professional organizations. Moreover, there were few empirical studies, with the majority of the sources being conceptual and opinion literature. Notably, though there were few studies conducted in Canada, a number of studies had been conducted in the USA and the United Kingdom.

Applying the criteria mentioned above, researchers were able to identify 22 relevant evidence-based studies.[3] These studies varied in terms of their foci, sampling and research method. For instance, while some researchers tried to identify a range of social and educational factors influencing the work of principals, others chose to focus on only one or two of these factors. Still others were more interested in the changes in principals' work rather than what caused these changes. In terms of the geographical location, there were three international studies (in which Canada was included), one pan-Canadian study, nine studies conducted in Ontario, three in British Columbia, two in Alberta, two in Quebec, one in Prince Edward Island and one in Yukon. The sample sizes ranged from 4 to 2144 participants. Some studies included principals only, while others included vice-principals as well. In addition, research methods ranged from qualitative case studies and interview studies, to survey and census studies, to mixed-method research studies. Despite all these differences in methodology—or maybe even thanks to all these differences—the 22 studies provided researchers with rich data that supported understanding of recent changes in the principalship.

Out of the studies reviewed, of particular note is *School principals in Canada: context, profile and work. Pan Canadian surveys of principals and teachers in elementary and secondary schools (2005-2006)* (Cattonar et al., 2007). For the study, Cattonar et al. surveyed 2144 primary school and secondary school principals throughout Canada. Among others things, the survey asked principals about the level of the impact of the listed social and education-system changes on schools, as well as how those changes affected their function. Notably, *School principals in Canada: context, profile and work* is the only study in the literature review that examined the level of significance of a wide number of external factors. This is not only the largest and most relevant study, but it also had the biggest effect on our literature analysis.

In analyzing the 22 studies, including that of Cattonar et al., researchers identified changes in the work of principals, as well as the external factors that influence those changes. These changes and influential factors were grouped into themes or categories. Each category was then ranked according to its prominence in the literature, using the rankings employed in *School principals in Canada: context, profile and work* in conjunction with the results of frequency tables that were created for each category.

A number of limitations observed in the literature as well as in the current study's methodology should be noted. First, most of the studies did not aim to identify all—or even a range—of changes in principals' work or influencing factors, choosing to focus only on a few of those changes and/or factors; therefore, our ranking of the changes and factors might lack accuracy and should be interpreted with caution. Second, some provinces are under-represented in the literature and thus in our literature analysis. Third, most of the reviewed studies worked with small and/or non-representative samples of principals, which would call into question the generalizability of their findings. Finally, primarily self-report methods of data collection, such as surveys and interviews, were used in most of the reviewed studies. The self-report bias could confound the research findings of these studies. While these limitations suggest that one should use caution in interpreting the results of this literature review, they

[3] For a full list of studies and their brief descriptions, please see Appendix A.

do not preclude researchers from gaining a deeper understanding of the issue and drawing conclusions to guide further investigation.

Categorization: What External Changes Influence the Work of Principals?

Recent research literature identifies a number of changes influencing the work of principals in Canada. These changes can be grouped into the following eight categories:

1. School regulation changes
2. Pedagogical changes
3. Budgetary cuts
4. Changes in parents' perception regarding their role in education
5. Social changes
6. Demographic changes
7. Marketization of education
8. Technological advancement

As mentioned above, the categories are ranked according to their level of prominence in the research literature, with the most prominent category being at the top of the list.

1. School Regulation Changes

According to the literature, changes in school regulation and governance constitute one of the most, if not the most, influential factor. This factor is mentioned in the most number of studies—seventeen studies to be exact.[4] For example, over 70 per cent of principals who participated in a Canada-wide study (Cattonar et al., 2007) felt that the changes in school regulation had made a significant impact on their school. Further, the results of a mixed-method study of principals in Quebec (Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002) suggested that principals were more concerned with changes in the organizational structures and governance than changes in curriculum because the former directly affected their management style and their relationship with the professional environment.

> *"[A]n unrelenting focus on holding schools accountable for student outcomes through ongoing monitoring of achievement linked to explicit performance targets . . . and the mandate to educate all students to the higher standard required for success in a global economy" put additional pressure on schools and principals.*
>
> *(Phillips et al., 2003, p.14)*

The overwhelming majority of Canadian principals considered the impact of new accountability policies (79 per cent) and the standardized evaluation of students (72 per cent) to be either very important or important (Cattonar et al., 2007). The "unrelenting focus on holding schools accountable for student outcomes through ongoing monitoring of achievement linked to explicit performance targets . . . and the mandate to educate all students to the higher standard required for success in a global economy" put additional pressure on schools and principals (Phillips et al., 2003, p. 14). This pressure to achieve provincial targets coupled with the pressure from the publication of school results compelled many Ontario secondary administrators to adopt "teaching to the test" techniques, according to an Ontario study on school administrators (Volante et al., 2008). The study participants recognized that these practices were not necessarily the most prudent use of curriculum time and, therefore, were a negative outcome of standardized testing in their schools. Yet, principals remained committed to their implementation.

The new distribution of powers between the central and local authorities is another school regulation change that the majority of Canadian principals—75 per cent to be exact—consider a significant

[4] For the full list of studies and categories mentioned in them, see Appendix A.

influential factor (Cattonar et al., 2007). Specifically, Cattonar et al. identified two major trends in the type of educational governance in Canada:

- Movement toward reinforcement of the central authority in the educational system, such as increased quality control, the development of standardized assessment, increasing centralization of curricula and financing and the creation of performance standards, etc.
- Movement toward strengthening the "horizontal axis of governance" or decentralizing power towards educational institutions, such as mobilizing local educational personnel, developing "performance plans" produced locally at each school, developing a culture of competition among educational institutions, etc.

These changes limit principals' authority to act unilaterally. The volume of new initiatives pouring from the top and, in many cases, lack of direction and support that come with them, contribute to administrator stress and apathy, as evidenced in a number of studies (ATA, 2009; Castle & Mitchell, 2001; CPCO, 2004; Love, 2000; Moos et al., 2008; Smith, 2009; Volante et al., 2008).

2. Pedagogical Changes

Changes of a pedagogical nature, mentioned in ten studies, also influence principals' work. In fact, such changes have the biggest effect on schools, according to about 90 per cent of principals in Canada (Cattonar et al., 2007). Specifically, 92 per cent of principals considered the impact of the introduction of new educational approaches as either important or very important. As well, 89 per cent of principals felt that the introduction of information and communications technologies (ICTs) for teaching-learning affected their schools and their work significantly, as it made school administrators assume roles of a pedagogical nature (e.g., agent of change for school practices, supervisor of teachers' work) and the role of a contact for parents (Cattonar et al., 2007).

In addition, a number of studies (e.g., ATA, 2009; MacNeill, 2009; The Learning Partnership, 2008) reported principals' dissatisfaction in regards to the amount of curriculum changes and other initiatives coming from the top. For example, according to the Ontario Principals Council survey of 947 principals and vice-principals, over 85 per cent of Ontario respondents were dissatisfied with the number of curriculum changes mandated by the province and the adequacy of time to plan for them (Williams, 2001). The author conjectures that the respondents' dissatisfaction is not with the objectives of the government in implementing the changes, but rather with the processes to manage change: "too many changes in too short a time frame that were inadequately resourced" (Williams, 2001, p. 14). Principals felt that this "initiative overload" limited their autonomy and added to their workload and stress (Smith, 2009; Volante, et al., 2008).

3. Budgetary Cuts

Budgetary cuts, mentioned in nine studies, also constitute a very influential factor. Eighty-seven per cent of principals in Canada felt that reduction in physical and financial resources had a significant impact on schools (Cattonar et al., 2007). Williams' study of 947 principals and vice-principals in Ontario reported similar results: about 85 per cent of school administrators expressed dissatisfaction with financial resources available to meet the school's educational needs (Williams, 2001). The ATA's (2009) mixed-method study of 101 principals and vice-principals revealed Alberta administrators' concerns over managing expectations and juggling competing priorities was rooted in the shortage of provincial funding. As a result of the reduction in financial resources, principals have to spend their valued time on fundraising activities. This was of a great concern to several respondents in the ATA study (2009). Principals also felt inadequately prepared to handle school budgeting and fundraising (ATA, 2009).

The reduction in human resources also has an important impact on schools, according to 86 per cent of principals in Canada (Cattonar et al., 2007). Similar concerns were voiced in the studies in Ontario

and Quebec. While 79 per cent of Ontario principals were dissatisfied with the amount of in-school staff support (Williams, 2001), about 50 per cent of English principals in Quebec were dissatisfied with available staffing resources (AAESQ, 2008). Principals felt that there was a lack of human resources at both the school level (vice-principals, secretaries, custodians) and the district level (consultants, supervisory officers) (CPCO, 2004), resulting in increased pressure on the time and workload of the principal (CPCO, 2009).

4. Changes in Parents' Perceptions Regarding Their Role in Education

Recent social, demographic, and educational changes have shifted parents' perceptions regarding their role in education. This shift, mentioned in seven studies, is another influential factor in the work of principals.

> *Overall, change is evident in parents' increased tendency to make specific demands that would benefit their children, in heightened parent expectations of schools, and—in some provinces such as Ontario—in enlarged advisory areas for School Councils.*
> *(ATA, 2009; CPCO, 2004)*

Overall, change is evident in parents' increased tendency to make specific demands that would benefit their children, in heightened parent expectations of schools and—in some provinces such as Ontario—in enlarged advisory areas for School Councils (ATA, 2009; CPCO, 2004). While for some principals "working with parents" is a source of satisfaction (ATA, 2009), for others the amount of parent demands is a source of dissatisfaction (Williams, 2001).[5] Notably, difficulty in satisfying parents and the community was reported as a barrier in assuming a principalship (The Learning Partnership, 2008).

5. Social Changes

Changes in society and economy occupy a less prominent position in recent research literature on principalship in Canada. They were explicitly mentioned in only five studies. Nonetheless, 60 per cent of Canadian principals viewed socio-economic changes as playing an important role in shaping schools (Cattonar et al., 2007). For instance, The Learning Partnership's 2008 study of over one thousand principals, vice-principals and supervisory officers in Ontario indicated that high levels of poverty, a lack of family supports and increased violence in schools deter potential candidates from becoming principals. In another vein, growth in cultural and linguistic diversity is also shaping schools in important ways, according to 43 per cent of principals in Canada (Cattonar et al., 2007). Increasingly diverse school populations bring new challenges to principals, such as the need to foster relationships with a rising number of cultural, religious and ethnic organizations (ATA, 2009) and to accommodate varied and sometimes conflicting interests of stakeholders (Phillips et al., 2003).

6. Demographic Changes

Demographic changes were mentioned in only two studies. School staff changes (as a result of retirement, redeployment or renewal) and fluctuations in the number of students are considered to have important impacts on schools by 69 per cent and 68 per cent of Canadian principals, respectively (Cattonar et al., 2007). In British Columbia, principals identified declining enrolments—an issue beyond their immediate control—as an obstacle to improved student achievement (Love, 2000 as cited in Phillips et al., 2003).

7. Marketization of Education

Trends towards globalization and marketization in Canada and many other developed countries manifest themselves in education (Schmidt, 2010). Three studies mentioned the impact of the

[5] Sixty-eight per cent of Ontario school administrators report the amount of parent demands as a source of dissatisfaction (Williams, 2001).

marketization of education on schools and on the work of principals. Even though only 40 per cent of Canadian principals considered an increase in competition among schools to have significant influence on schools, the presence of "quasi-markets in education" was felt deeply by the principals in Alberta, Quebec, British Columbia and Ontario (Cattonar et al., 2007).

8. Technological Advancements

Though advancements in technology offer a lot of new opportunities, they do not come without challenges. Three studies described increase in technology use in administration as a factor redefining the principal role. Modern communication technology creates information overload for principals (Fink, 2010) and places another demand on principals' time (CPCO, 2004; MacNeill, 2000).

Categorization: How is the Work of Principals Changing?

The reviewed research literature identifies a number of changes in the work of principals in Canada. These changes can be grouped into the following 10 categories:

1. Increased workload
2. Increased complexity of the job
3. Increased focus on instructional leadership
4. Increased focus on transformational leadership
5. Development of new skills
6. Increased focus on external relationships
7. Changes in leadership approach
8. Changes in autonomy
9. Increased levels of stress
10. Decreased family/personal time

The categories are ranked according to their level of prominence in the research literature, with the most prominent category being at the top of the list.

1. Increased Workload

Increased workload is the biggest change in the work of principals. It is mentioned in the most number of studies—13 to be exact. According to Cattonar and her colleagues' report, 96 per cent of principals in Canada experienced increasing workload (2007). A study conducted in Prince Edward Island informs that, on average, principals work 54.6 hours per week (MacNeill, 2009). A study of English principals in Quebec reports similar findings: surveys suggest that, on average, administrators worked 55 to 59 hours per week; one third of administrators worked 60 hours or more per week (AAESQ, 2008).

> *Increased workload is the biggest change in the work of principals.*

The increased workload can be attributed to a wide range of influences, including societal changes, more diverse and challenging student populations, accountability and reporting requirements, challenges related to advancements in technology, numerous initiatives coming from the top, the lack of personnel and resources, and the necessity to share authority. These factors are—in one form or another—external changes identified earlier. In addition, there is an increasing expectation that principals will be constantly accessible, whether via email or phone or in person, to perform various functions such as "year round recruitment and hiring of staff, summer training programs and mid-summer hours to reorganize class schedules and student timetables, supervision of school renovations and school building projects" (CPCO, 2004, p. 44).

Principals do not welcome the increase in workload. In Ontario, for example, 78 per cent of principals expressed their dissatisfaction with the "amount of time the job requires" (Williams, 2001) and 54 per

cent of Catholic principals identified workload as a deterrent to becoming a school administrator (CPCO, 2009).

2. Increased Complexity of the Job

The increasing complexity of the principal's job is *explicitly* mentioned in only six studies; however, it assumes the second position in the prominence list for two reasons: (1) it is *implicit* in almost every reviewed study, and (2) it sets the stage for the discussion of a number of other changes in the principal's role.

With all of the societal and educational changes bombarding schools, the principal is expected to perform a wide array of functions—from managing budget to inspiring teachers to building relationships with parents—to negotiate change. The results of the pan-Canadian survey of over 2000 principals reveal the multi-faceted nature of the principal's job: "the majority of [principals] state that they are either completely responsible for, or play a major role in, most of the different responsibilities mentioned [in the survey]. . . Consequently, from the principals' perspective, their work consists of a multitude of responsibilities" (Cattonar et al., 2007, p. 279). According to the study, more than 85 per cent of Canadian principals stated that the dozens of roles assigned to them figure either importantly or very importantly in their work. The top three roles of a school principal are the following:

1. General manager and administrator: budgetary appropriation, emergency management, general administration of the school, etc.
2. Educational administrator: development of regulations and the school's mission, assignment of teaching tasks, teacher supervision and evaluation, etc.
3. Manager of external relations: parent-teacher mediation, liaising with the authorities, promoting the school in the community (Cattonar et al., 2007)

The roles of pedagogical leader and educator of the students are less frequently considered important in the work of principals; nevertheless the vast majority of administrators (over 85 per cent) still consider these roles important or very important (Cattonar et al., 2007).

Castle and Mitchell's (2001) qualitative study of 12 Ontario principals exposes how the principal's working environment results in the multivalence of the principal role:

> Given the fragmented nature of their day, these principals needed to multi-task. Because they took on such a range of roles and tasks in limited time frames . . . in most cases the principals were unable to devote equal amounts of attention to all the tasks, and this condition disturbed them. . . . Complexity was evident in the numerous dimensions and layers associated with individual tasks, particularly in the face of sensitive, political, delicate, or volatile situations . . . increasing complexity of the environment was evident in the number of communiqués, directives, and requests for action arriving from the school board as well as from the Ministry of Education and other agencies. (p. 3)

At the same time, the study conducted by Cattonar et al. reveals that it is the principals themselves who (given the choice) want to assume numerous roles and perform a multitude of tasks. The survey of English principals in Quebec, however, reports that 86 per cent of principals felt they had too many job responsibilities. Further, 70 per cent of principals indicated that the variety of their job tasks were too broad (AAESQ, 2008). Therefore, while school administrators appear not to mind taking on a number of responsibilities, the number might be too high for some of them at the present time.

3. Increased Focus on Instructional Leadership

The job of principals is characterized by an increasing focus on instructional leadership, as 12 studies note. Most often, principals welcome the policies and expectations that bring their attention back to teaching and learning, the core of the business of schooling. The role of pedagogical leader already

shapes principals' work, according to 85.8 per cent of principals in Canada (Cattonar et al, 2007). Significantly, according to the same pan-Canadian study, if they had a choice, even more principals (over 95 per cent) would be engaged in the work of a pedagogical nature (Cattonar et al, 2007).

Other studies also report that school administrators value instruction-related leadership activities, including supporting and supervising effective teaching and learning practices (French, n.d.), developing school improvement plans (CPCO, 2004), building professional learning communities and recognizing and supporting curriculum innovations (Flessa et al, 2010). In addition, "helping to improve classroom instruction" was one of the most frequently cited sources of satisfaction in a mixed-method study of over 100 school administrators in Alberta (ATA, 2009). School administrators in Ontario also valued "providing instructional leadership to staff" when they considered taking on their leadership role (The Learning Partnership, 2008). The international survey of 1850 school leaders in eight countries (including Canada) conveys similar findings: high-performing principals focus more on instructional leadership and developing teachers. They see their biggest challenges as improving teaching and curriculum, and they believe that their ability to coach others and support their development is the most important skill of a good school leader (Barber et al, 2011, p. 7).

Instructional leadership is the focus of numerous government and board initiatives and policies and is valued by school administrators; yet, principals' engagement in it is lower than desired.

> *"Faced with a time crunch, [principals] find themselves giving more attention to the managerial aspects of their job than to the educational ones, a situation that they regret but consider inevitable."*
>
> *(ATA, 2009, p. 4)*

The results of the pan-Canadian survey reveal a gap between the principal's "assumed" and "ideal" role of a pedagogical leader (Cattonar et al., 2007). This tension within principalship emerges in other studies as well. Principals give priority to managerial tasks "because they perceive the contextual and political conditions to be forcing them to focus on management" (Castle and Mitchell, 2001, p. 5). Lack of time left for instructional leadership due to other responsibilities is identified as a key challenge in principals' work (ATA, 2009) and as a barrier to becoming a school administrator (The Learning Partnership, 2008). Most respondents in the ATA (2009) study reported that, "faced with a time crunch, [principals] find themselves giving more attention to the managerial aspects of their job than to the educational ones, a situation that they regret but consider inevitable" (p. 4).

4. Increased Focus on Transformational Leadership

An increased focus on transformational leadership, or practices associated with this type of leadership, was mentioned in 10 studies. With schools under pressure to address the changes happening in a broader environment and to implement the educational reforms and initiatives arriving from the top, principals are being viewed as advocates of change in the school. In fact, the role of a "change agent for the school's policies and practices" currently plays an important role in the work of about 94 per cent of principals; further, even more principals (97 per cent) would like to assume the role of a change agent in their schools (Cattonar et al., 2007).

The prospect of being a change agent attracts many school administrators to the job initially (ATA, 2009; The Learning Partnership, 2008). In the ATA (2009) study, principals stressed that they enjoyed the opportunity to make decisions at the school level and introduce changes that empowered teachers to teach and students to learn more effectively. At the same time, principals in the Ontario studies expressed their dissatisfaction with the changes mandated by the province (Williams, 2001; The Learning Partnership, 2008).

According to the literature, principals are engaged in the following practices that are associated with transformational leadership:

- Setting directions: setting and communicating clear goals and high expectations for student achievement, and aligning multiple, often conflicting initiatives with school goals (Barber et al., 2011; Blakesley, 2012; Castle & Mitchell, 2001; Cattonar et al., 2007; Moos et al., 2010)
- Motivating and developing staff: providing individualized support and intellectual stimulation, acting as role models, motivating and enabling teachers to implement change, dealing with resistance to change, and supporting staff development (ATA, 2009; Barber et al., 2011; Cattonar et al., 2007; Moos et al., 2010; Volante et al., 2008)
- Managing external pressure: deciding what to endorse, what to block, and what to subvert for the school in order to provide stability and security for staff (Blakesley, 2012; Fink, 2010; Moos et al., 2008; Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002; Stewart 2010)

5. Development of New Skills

Principals' lack of preparation and the need to develop new skills to address numerous impending changes were mentioned in seven studies. To respond to changes, 92 per cent of Canadian principals reported having to develop new skills and 67 per cent of Canadian principals had to take further training (Cattonar et al., 2007).

According to the reviewed literature, principals felt that they were ill-prepared and needed further development and/or training in the following areas:

- Budgeting, staffing and planning (ATA, 2009; Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002)
- Team building and conflict resolution (ATA, 2009; Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002)
- Data reporting and use (French, n.d.; Moos et al., 2008; Newton et al., 2010; Volante et al., 2008)
- Establishing relationships with the board, community and parents (ATA, 2009; Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002)
- Dealing with technology-related challenges, such as cyberbullying, amount of electronic communication, etc. (CPCO, 2004; Smith, 2009)

It would be advisable for governments, professional organizations and boards to offer professional development and training in the areas mentioned above.

6. Increased Focus on External Relationships

Eight studies revealed an increased focus on external relationships in the job of principals. In fact, 80 per cent of Canadian principals said that they became more aware of relationships in the school environment due to the impact of various changes on schools (Cattonar et al., 2007). Indeed, more than 91 per cent of principals in Canada stated that the role of a manager of external relations (mediating with parents, acting as a liaison with the authorities, promoting the school in the community) figured importantly in their job (Cattonar et al., 2007).

As the student population becomes more diverse, in terms of both cultural and socio-economic background, principals engage in fostering relationships with an increasing number of cultural, religious and ethnic organizations (ATA, 2009), as well as local community organizations (Flessa et al., 2010). Balancing the needs and interests of multiple stakeholder groups in the education community, such as the board, special interest groups, the union, the government, parents and the public, becomes increasingly difficult for principals due to multiple and often conflicting agendas of those groups (Blakesley, 2012; Castle & Mitchell, 2001; Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002).

With the shift in parents' perceptions regarding their role in education and educational policies giving more advisory power to School Councils, school administrators find themselves spending more time interacting with parents. While principals enjoy working with parents (ATA, 2009), they find it challenging to engage unsupportive parents (Flessa et al., 2010) and to deal with parents who have either unrealistic or no expectations with respect to their child's education (ATA, 2009; CPCO, 2009).

7. Change in Leadership Approach

According to seven studies, in order to adapt to external changes principals had to make changes in their leadership style. In fact, 80 per cent of Canadian principals felt they had been obliged to modify their management approach as a result of changes to the educational system (Cattonar et al., 2007). Generally, principals have been adopting a more distributive approach to leadership.

The demands of multifaceted responsibilities and roles, revealed by the literature, imply a need for principals to delegate some tasks. In Castle and Mitchell's (2001) study, principals chose to delegate instructional leadership to teachers because they perceived them to be more current with new curriculum documents and directions. However, the same principals preferred to handle managerial tasks themselves because they believed that they were better equipped to handle managerial matters, needed to stay in control of school operations and wanted to protect teachers from further encroachments on classroom time.

In addition, changes in school regulation directly affected principals' management and leadership style and their relationship with the professional environment, resulting in participative decision-making (Savoie-Zajc et al., 2002) and a team approach to school administration (MacNeill, 2000). The team approach was observed in 100 successful principalship cases in eight countries (including Canada): principals acted as members of various work teams and gave teachers and parents significant decision-making roles (Moos et al., 2010). Principals leading schools in high poverty communities often choose the distributed leadership approach (Flessa et al., 2010).

8. Changes in Autonomy

Eight studies reported changes in the principal's autonomy. In some cases, decentralization of power towards educational institutions has provided principals with more decision-making power. Alberta principals identified "having an opportunity to make school-based decisions" as a key source of satisfaction (ATA, 2009). At the same time, however, many principals felt they had little input into decision-making at the district level (ATA, 2009).

School administrators often felt that their role was constrained by the number of initiatives and standards imposed on the school (Blakesley, 2012; Fink, 2010; Smith, 2009). For example, principals in Yukon felt constrained by government policy, unable to exercise their educational judgment to hire those who they believed were the best teachers for their school or to pursue the educational vision that they believed was the best for their school and the local community (Blakesley, 2012). Instead, "they are constrained and confined to being small, frustrated cogs in a larger educational machine" (Blakesley, 2012, p. 12).

According to the literature, all principals complied with new policies and regulations to some degree, but they were selective in their compliance (Fink, 2010; Moos, et al., 2008). In her study of Ontario principals, Stewart (2009) concludes that principals' response to educational reforms in Ontario varied considerably: some administrators embraced and legitimated reform directives; others did not agree with aspects of reform, but viewed them as inevitable and hence incontestable; and still others critiqued aspects of reform and found ways to engage in strategic and tactical forms of resistance.

Such limited ability to exercise autonomy is discouraging to potential school leaders (The Learning Partnership, 2008). Principals' perceived inability to incite change was identified as a deterrent to seeking principalship by 61 per cent of strong potential candidates who had opted not to pursue that career path (Williams, 2001). Overall, principals described their job as more structured and less entrepreneurial (Fink, 2010), recognizing an imbalance between the authority given and the level of accountability expected (French, n.d.).

9. Increased Stress Levels

As noted in six studies, greater workload, lack of preparation, and emergent pressures and conflicts led to increased levels of stress. Stress, linked with depression and burnout (CPCO, 2004), is becoming a significant issue in principalship. The high level of stress associated with the principal's job was reported as a barrier to becoming a school administrator in two Ontario studies (CPCO, 2009; The Learning Partnership, 2008). Notably, statistics from the Catholic Principals' Council of Ontario Long Term Disability (LTD) program note a recent shift in the type of illness most commonly affecting its members on sick leave: "Psychiatric disorders (stress, anxiety) now account for 50 per cent of the cases on LTD" (CPCO, 2009, p. 8).

10. Decreased Family/Personal Time

The more time principals spend at work, the less time is left for family and personal matters. Indeed, in the ATA (2009) study many administrators reported feeling pulled between their work and their families. Also, more than half of English principals in Quebec felt that they were not able to perform their personal obligations due to intensive job demands (AAESQ, 2008). Lifestyle and family commitments were considered deterrents to seeking principalship by 42 per cent of potential candidates in Ontario who decided not to pursue it as a career path (Williams, 2001). Similarly, 27 per cent of Catholic principals in Ontario identified the desire to spend more time with family rather than at work as a barrier to becoming a principal (CPCO, 2009).

The Effects of Change in the Work of Principals

Aside from the workload and its impact on family life, the majority of principals in Canada (71 per cent) are generally satisfied with most aspects of their job (Cattonar et al., 2007). While various social and educational changes significantly influenced the work of principals, they did not disrupt the career plans of at least 81 per cent of principals in Canada (Cattonar et al., 2007).

Conclusions

Having reviewed recent research literature on the changing work of principals in Canada and the forces that shape it, researchers can draw three conclusions.

First, school leaders perceive more immediate changes (i.e., educational reforms in school governance, curriculum, assessment and parental role) to have a greater influence on schools and principals than global changes (i.e., socio-economic, cultural and demographic changes). This finding can be explained by Levin and Riffel's (1998) explanation of how people perceive change. The authors suggest that people in schools, as well many other organizations, are mainly inward-directed and tend to see larger social forces only as they impinge on daily work.

> *Changes in school regulation have altered the way principals lead their schools by giving them more power, but limiting their autonomy at the same time.*

Second, the literature suggests that, as a result of recent educational reforms and social changes in Canada, the job of principals is perceived to have become more demanding, complex and stressful. With school councils gaining power and parent and public expectations growing, principals must have a heightened awareness of the school environment and their role within it. New accountability policies

have added pressure to the principal's work. Reduction in human and financial resources has increased the time principals have to spend on administrative tasks. Social and demographic changes lead to more work and stress for principals. Increases in the number of initiatives of a pedagogical nature has affected principals' engagement in transformational and instructional leadership practices. Overall, changes in school regulation have altered the way principals lead their schools by giving them greater responsibility, but limiting their autonomy at the same time.

Finally, the literature suggests that the principal's role has become more ambiguous and conflicted.[6] Accounting for diverse and sometimes conflicting agendas of various stakeholders who establish school priorities poses a challenge and, because principals take on multiple roles, defining the primary job function becomes problematic. For example, the tension between managerial and leadership functions arises when school administrators indicate their preference to be more engaged in instructional leadership and act as "an agent of change," while the current conditions of principalship demand that most time is spent on administrative tasks. Another tension in principals' work emerges in the definition of authority boundaries: principals are expected to share their power with teachers and parents, but they remain ultimately responsible for everything happening at their schools. Principals' authority is further complicated by directives coming from the top.

Implications for Practice

In addition to identifying the changes in principal's work and the forces that affect those changes, some of the reviewed studies (ATA, 2009; Castle & Mitchell, 2001; CPCO, 2004, 2009; French, n.d.) also identify supports needed to assist principals in their jobs. Frequently cited supports include:

- access to training/professional development/mentorship in challenging areas, such as managing competing agendas, building relationships with multiple stakeholder groups and the media, balancing personal and professional lives, managing scarce resources, dealing with legal issues, and dealing with conflict and difficult people;
- more opportunities for networking, collaboration, and professional dialogue;
- more support in terms of human (consultants, school administration staff) and financial resources;
- clearer direction from the central office; and
- fewer initiatives and more coherent and long-term initiatives.

Implications for Research

This literature review bears significant implications for research. As mentioned in the methodology section, some of the provinces (e.g., Nova Scotia, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland and Labrador) are under-represented in the recent research on the topic. Thus, a Canada-wide study can make an important contribution by addressing this gap in the literature.

One of the overall findings of this study is that school administrators who perceive more immediate forces as having greater influence might do so because they do not see the direct connection between their work and wider changes. Therefore, bringing respondents' attention to more global forces rather than mere reforms in education, which are often only a response to those larger forces, will provide a clearer picture of how global trends shape the work of principals.

The literature review reveals that the job of the principal has become more demanding, ambiguous and stressful. This finding implies that principals tend to focus on negatives, which is common to most studies on change. It is productive, however, to consider what *positive* effects, if any, change has on the work of principals in Canada. Acquiring principals' perspectives on the kinds of support they need

[6] Castle and Mitchell (2001) identify multiple dilemmas and ambiguities (i.e., role ambiguity, decision ambiguity, authority ambiguity, complexity dilemma, direction dilemma and accountability dilemma).

to better deal with the social and educational changes affecting schools today can inform policy and decision-making at the district and provincial levels. By glimpsing into the future of principalship, researchers, policymakers and communities can find ways to support and strengthen it.

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Study Overview

Study Design

The primary data for this study were recorded using individual workbooks in a focus group format. The following focus question guided these sessions:

What are the current conditions of practice that enhance and/or limit your work as a school principal and what are broader societal trends that will shape your work in the future?

The workshops began with the facilitator reviewing the goals of the sessions, which were the following:

- To gather data on participants' perspectives about the future of their work as principals
- To provide participants with the experience of sharing their views on the current and long-term societal trends that are changing the role and work of school principals
- To gather input on the sources of support that would enhance the work of school principals in the short and long term

Round One: After participants had introduced themselves and provided informed consent, they were invited to discuss the three social changes or influences that had the most powerful impact on their work as a principal. After group discussion, respondents recorded their own thoughts individually in their workbooks.

Round Two: Participants viewed a short video introducing the broad social changes that *Changing Landscapes in Co-creating a Learning Canada* (Appendix B) highlights. The *Changing Landscapes* document identifies seven trends and broad societal forces that are currently affecting public education in Canada and are expected to continue to do so for at least the next 20 years. These social change drivers are:

1. primary resource dependence,
2. environmental crises,
3. the impact of globalization,
4. broadening learning opportunities,
5. rethinking citizenship and civil society,
6. fluid personal identity, and
7. blurring boundaries and emerging technologies.

After considering these drivers individually and in groups, participants returned to their workbooks to add any elaborations or insights connecting the social changes they were experiencing in their schools with the change drivers described in the *Changing Landscapes* document.

Round Three: This segment of the workshop invited participants to consider supports they would require in the near and distant future to work effectively in their schools.

The workbooks also included demographic information about the administrators, the locales of their schools and the composition of their student bodies.

Development of Coding Categories

The workbooks completed by respondents were recorded and coded by four researchers, with frequent meetings early on to ensure inter-coder reliability. Approximately 10 per cent of the overall study sample was subjected to initial, inductive coding in order to develop broad coding categories for analysis. Inductive coding yielded six broad categories of data. These categories, which are descriptive,

were then used to code the entire sample. The contents of these categories were sorted into subcategories and tallied, yielding the study data, which take the form of the charts that appear in the national and provincial level reports. The coding categories identified, as discussed earlier in this report, are the following:

1. Diversity of Students
2. The Changing Family
3. Teaching and Learning Conditions
4. Technology
5. Economy
6. Social and Cultural Influences

In retrospect, some additional codes should have been included in these findings, especially comments related to curriculum changes and reform, and comments related to technology infrastructure and evergreening. Other issues noted by participants included pre-service teacher education, digital divides and significant concerns about student mental health. While these topics are not captured in the chart that accompanies the findings below, they are given their due in the analysis segment.

Text Box 1: What Topics Did Participants Add to Our Findings?

Participants' comments yielded additional interests and areas of concern not captured in the classification scheme initially developed to code the workbooks. Significant points contributed by participants included the following:

- Considering how curriculum needs to change for 21st-century learning
- Simplifying curriculum, with more latitude for responding to local needs
- Bridging digital divides
- Improving technology infrastructures and evergreening
- Improving teacher preparation, particularly around understanding and responding to diversity in the classroom
- Addressing concern with the marketization of education and parental choice
- Addressing concern with pervasive concerns about mental health
- Incorporating better pre-service preparation for teaching to diversity

Researchers also coded the short- and long-term supports (Round Three in the workshops). Although both short- and long-term needs are reported, participants tended to treat these questions as the same, usually drawing few distinctions between short- and long-term supports.

Synthesis and Analysis of the Data

Further analysis of the data was challenging. Although the researchers identified six discrete categories for the purposes of organizing the data, significant overlaps became apparent. Therefore, any analysis generated must capture how the categories intersected. Treating them discretely would not capture the complexity of the data, nor the meanings ascribed to the data by administrators. Analysis at this stage thus involved reviewing the categories in context—that is, looking at how study respondents framed and connected their experiences. The researchers then synthesized the findings into "Five Ways Forward," described earlier in the report, which drew on study participants' hopes, desires and predictions for their school communities.

Demographic Data

Demographic data accompanying the workbooks were aggregated to provide a descriptive overview of the study participants. National data as well as provincial data were produced. Provincial data appear in the appendices of this report.

Differences between Provinces

Although the data for this study were disaggregated into individual provinces, these subsets cannot be considered representative of the issues faced by provinces as a whole, nor should the data be used comparatively. However, throughout this report are comments and quotes on themes that appeared to be more significant in some provinces than others.

The ways in which the individual provinces are similar are also noteworthy, as they suggest that all Canadian provinces are following similar policy trajectories. These trajectories, broadly speaking, include an emphasis on technology integration and individualized learning, a greater variety of learner pathways, and increased school accountability (e.g., standardized testing, reporting and parental involvement). Administrators across the country report similar problems and concerns accompanying these policy directions, and make analogous observations about the social, political and economic contexts of education.

Study Sample

The data presented here come from 500 participants in 9 provinces and 2 territories. Participation was not representative by provincial population, as focus groups were held according to interest and availability of participants. Most of the focus groups were stand-alone events. Data were also drawn from over 100 respondents who completed the workbooks in a session held at the 2012 CAP national conference in Montreal.

The Schools

School student populations ranged from less than 150 students to 1,200+ students, with only 10 per cent of the sample representing very large schools with 900+ students (see Figure 1). Consequently, the issues faced by large urban high schools may be under-represented. Rural schools, however, were reasonably well represented, composing one-third of the sample (see Figure 2).

Figure 1: Size of Schools by Student Population

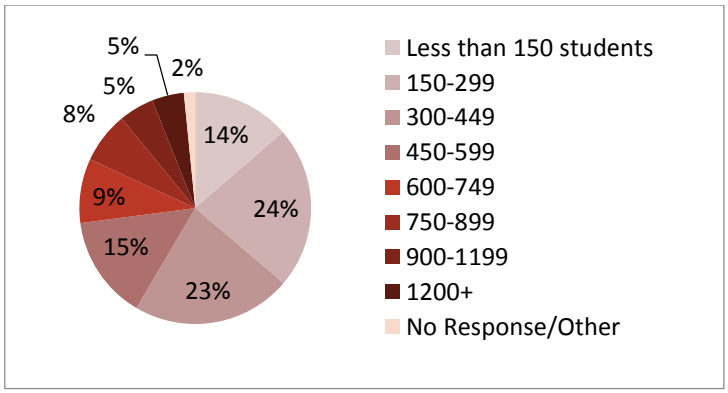
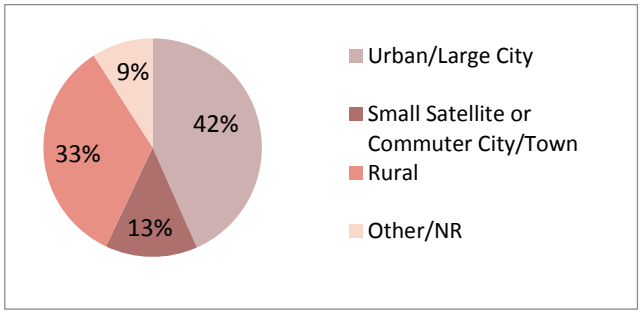
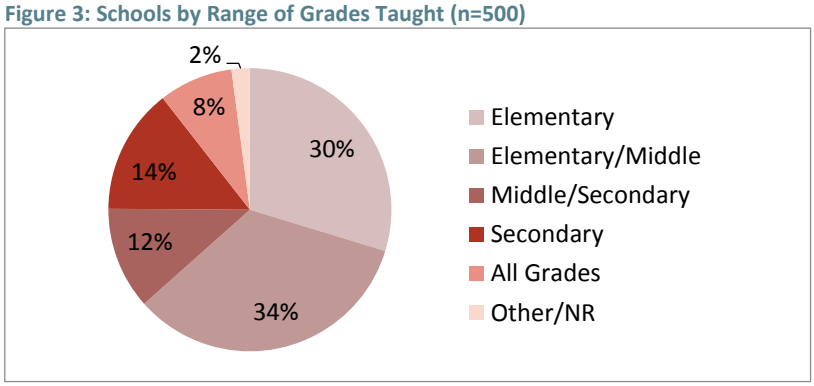


Figure 2: Schools in Sample by Population Density (n=500)



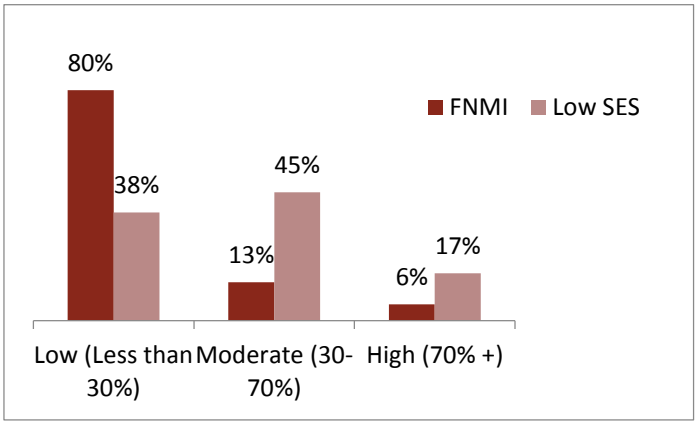
The median or typical school in this study is an urban elementary school of up to 600 students. Elementary-focused schools (K-8) are over-represented, making up almost two-thirds of the sample. This may have affected findings through an increased focus on relationships with parents and an under-emphasis on vocational aims and transition plans for post-secondary education, which researchers would expect to see more of in a sample with better representation of secondary schools.

Figure 3: Schools by Range of Grades Taught (n=500)



Most schools had relatively few First Nations students, with occasional exceptions. Northern schools (8 per cent of the national sample) were much more likely to report very high concentrations of First Nations, Métis or Inuit (FNMI) students and to discuss the needs of FNMI students and families. Overall, only 10 per cent of participants in this study specifically referred to FNMI students in their workbooks, despite the significant growth in Canada's First Nations populations and the documented effects of poverty and racism on educational attainment (cf. Assembly of First Nations, 2012). It may be that Northern schools with larger First Nations populations are under-represented in this study. Yet, it may also be the case that crises in Aboriginal education are embedded in participants' more general observations that diversity and poverty are making it challenging to support all students equally.

Figure 4: Number of FNMI Students and Low SES Students in Student Body, Estimated by Respondents



In addition to estimating the number of FNMI students in their schools, administrators were asked to estimate the percentage of their school population they would classify as having low socio-economic status (SES). As can be seen in Figure 4, poverty levels are significant, with over half of respondents estimating student poverty rates in excess of 30 per cent. This figure is higher than the Conference

Board of Canada's estimate of approximately 15 per cent of children in Canada living in poverty.[7] If respondents in this study overestimate poverty in their schools, it may be because, as the comments that follow in this report suggest, the effects of poverty are felt so keenly in school communities.

This study largely excludes Canada's Francophone population, primarily because the study was conducted in English only. However, many principals reported immersion programming in their schools, reflecting the growth in popularity of second language immersion programs across the country.

The Administrators

Participants in this study generally held advanced degrees. Overall, 70 per cent held a Master's degree or higher and an additional 18 per cent were pursuing a Master's degree. Gender distribution was balanced, with 50 per cent female and 50 per cent male.

[7] UNICEF Canada similarly places this rate at 14 per cent. Low income cut-off rates used to calculate these statistics, however, are well below those proposed by living wage advocates for a reasonable standard of living.

National Findings

The following reports on the contents of the six coding categories identified by the study researchers.

1) Diversity of Students

The "diversity" theme captured participants' perspectives on the great range of students' needs. Participants linked growing diversity in schools to: (1) the increasing inclusion of students with special needs in classrooms, and (2) the increasing number of languages, cultures and religions represented in schools, given Canada's shifting immigration demographics.[8]

Capacity to Support EAL Students

Some respondents reported that their schools were struggling to meet the needs of English as an Additional Language (EAL) students and their families. According to one principal, "Immigration has created huge challenges for program delivery and staffing. EAL students add a great deal to the cultural mosaic, but funding and programs make it difficult to meet their needs." Administrators stated that teachers needed professional development opportunities to learn how to teach EAL, and to gain understanding and awareness of the many cultures they are encountering in their classrooms.

Administrators emphasized the importance of creating an "inclusive culture." However, some also described tensions stemming from cultural misunderstandings. Intolerance was sometimes a problem: "Conflict at school is occurring because different countries are clashing," shared one principal. Another observed "a discrepancy in beliefs and values between the 'mainstream' community and the 'immigrant' community that creates tension in the school." Language barriers also make it difficult for administrators and teachers to connect with EAL parents. A principal indicated that her school "relies on outside agencies and liaisons to provide translations so we can better communicate with these families." Administrators appealed for programming supports and professional development to work effectively in culturally-diverse schools.

> *"Globalization brings rich diversity and a challenge to meet the unique learning needs of students learning English within the program of studies and to address the cultural differences which impact students' learning, health and basic needs."*

Impacts of Diversity on Programming

Economic and social changes creating diversity also generate student needs and, in some cases, parental demands for increasingly diverse and specialized programming in schools. Given "such a variety of needs to be met—health issues, mental health issues, learning disabilities, poverty, EAL, etc.—teachers find it difficult to maintain classroom programming," stated one principal. She predicted, "As expectations and diversity increase, the need to be all things to all students may become overwhelming without proper resources and supports in place."

As teachers struggle to respond to diverse needs in their classrooms, school leaders are challenged to balance programming needs at the school level with relatively scarce resources. "We need to change how we view learning, application, instruction, timetabling and technology for all students and all needs," commented one principal. Programming concerns are most acute in rural/remote schools with dwindling resources and enrolments. One rural administrator noted, "Small school budgets require [administrators] to take on a teaching assignment to make the budget work." Some larger

[8] Language and cultural differences encompass Canada's First Nations children, youth and families.

schools with very diverse population groups also found it difficult to split resources among different student groups whose needs were not always compatible.

Mental Health

Participants frequently cited mental health issues as a concern in their schools. One school leader effectively articulates a typical observation: "there are increasing social, emotional and mental health needs for students and a decrease in the amount of services to support them. A disconnect exists between government and community health services and schools in a time when a connection is imperative." Schools roundly lack the capacity to deal effectively with the kinds of issues students are bringing to school. The frequency with which study respondents referred to this problem is significant because mental health issues require professional intervention beyond what most teachers can provide. Principals are seeking much more community support in this area, often suggesting that other public services—youth and family services in particular—were being "downloaded" onto schools.

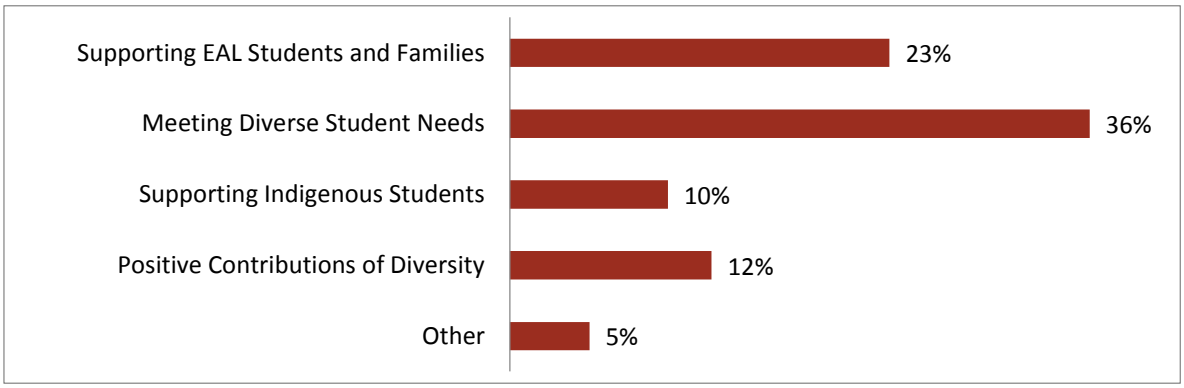
> *"The social and emotional needs of students are high. The stress of home dynamics comes into the school. A team approach must be in place; wraparound services are a must!"*

Capacity to Respond to Diversity

Administrators in this study consistently reported that teachers in their schools were "stretched very thin" in their efforts to respond to diverse student needs. "The demographics in the classroom—gifted, learning challenged, EAL, FNMI, mental health issues—are overwhelming," stated one principal. "Teachers can't do it all, and they lack experience and lack efficacy at times." Respondents frequently stated that their teachers needed more support and professional development in this area. In fact, responding to diverse student needs and incorporating technology were overwhelming professional development priorities in this study.

Some administrators also noted the particular challenges faced by novice teachers and called upon universities to better prepare incoming educators for the realities of the classroom. "Teachers with little special needs background are feeling overwhelmed," said one principal. "New teachers have to have different training from universities to accommodate new changes with students' knowledge and technology," stated another. Although appeals to pre-service education were not frequent, they did consistently suggest that new teachers need to be better prepared to use technology and to teach in inclusive and culturally diverse classrooms.

Figure 5: Respondents' Concerns Related to Diversity, National Sample (n=500)



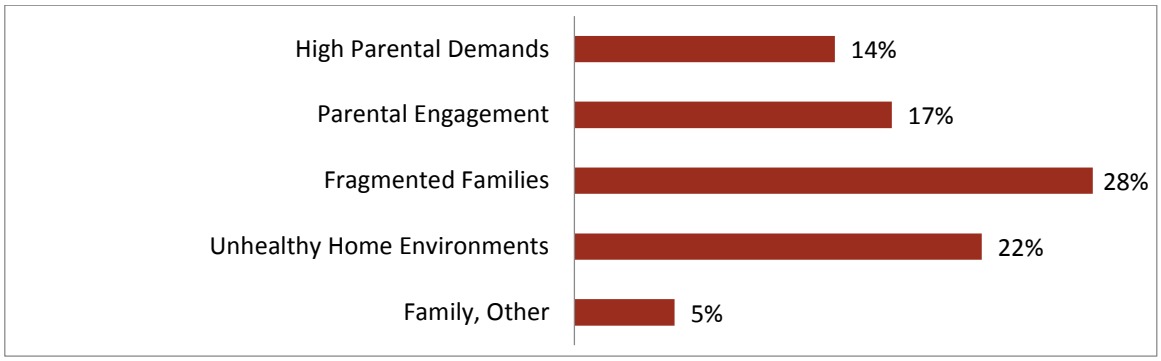
Many administrators expressed frustration with an ethos of individualism that hinders school communities. They feel torn in multiple directions by competing demands. Some described the challenges of providing enough diversity in their programming to satisfy all families in their school

communities. Principals also stated that responding to many individual requests from parents can take up a great deal of time, making it difficult to meet the rest of their responsibilities.

2) The Changing Family

Changing family dynamics and diverse family forms were topics in the *Changing Landscapes* discussion primer (Appendix B), and were also categories frequently evoked by study participants. Responses in this category were complex, frequently overlapping with observations about parents' employment status, the state of the economy and the influences of technology and mass media, as well as social values that were generally perceived to be changing, but not for the better.

Figure 6: Respondents' Concerns Related to "The Changing Family" (n=500)



Are Schools Substituting for Families?

Study respondents suggested that schools are increasingly expected to meet all of the needs of children and youth. Parents have "unrealistic expectations that schools should solve all family issues and in fact do many of the things parents formerly did like teaching manners and respect." Commented another educator, "Increasingly, school is becoming a social agency that must parent students, and parent parents."

> *"There has been dramatic change in parental expectations of schools in relation to "raising" children . . . far more frequent and regular contact and parents who believe schools are responsible for everything from fitness to moral education."*

Potential explanations for schools taking on "more family responsibilities" were offered. Those more sympathetic to families pointed to both parents working due to economic conditions, as well as a dearth of community supports for families in need. A school leader observed, for example, that "parents spend more time working and [the] majority do not get paid well. They lack resources, including time." Another similarly noted that the "incredibly busy lives people have due to their economic situation means more time working and less time parenting." In the same vein, administrators frequently commented that schools are overwhelmed by the social, emotional, and basic needs of students. The topic of meeting increasingly complex student needs is further considered in the following section about school teaching and learning conditions.

Parental Engagement

Perceptions of schools' relationships with parents were strongly bifurcated mainly because, as one principal put it, parental engagement "ranges from abdication to disruptive influences." On the one hand, administrators described parents who were inclined to advocate for their children and had high expectations of their children and the school. Some parents' expectations "are not always realistic."

At the other end of the spectrum are parents who are disengaged. Disengaged parents pose different kinds of problems for school administrators and teachers, including "lack of attendance, incomplete

assignments and discipline problems." Special concerns with respect to increasing parental engagement are First Nations families and new Canadian families. Principals in this study sometimes described the challenges of connecting with parents across "cultural differences" and language barriers. One study respondent noted, "Engaging with these families is a challenge."

> *"The 'rights of the one' have eroded the rights of the 'many' when the discussion turns to education of students with special needs . . . both the gifted and the challenged."*

The divides between "high demand" and "disengaged" parents fell largely along socio-economic lines and neither extreme was perceived as desirable by study respondents. Poor communication and mismatched expectations between schools and parents appear to be having deleterious effects on the work of educating Canada's children and youth.

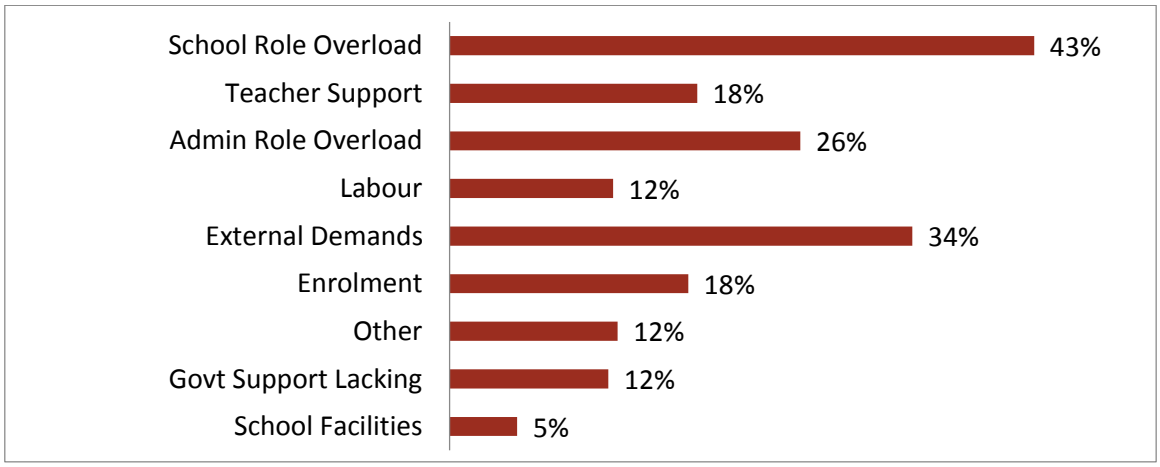
Complex Family Forms

Some principals described the impacts of different family formations on their work. Communicating with parents could also be challenging in complex family situations, in which children may be moving between two homes. "It's no longer one family conversation," said a respondent, "There are multiple calls, meetings with 'all parents.'" In some cases, complex family dynamics were seen to be creating social and emotional difficulties for students. As one administrator stated, this "requires school staff to be very aware of how to help students with personal and social issues. Educators will have to develop counselling skills." These observations align with administrators' overall perceptions that families are under a great deal of strain and need more support to manage challenges and changes.

3) Teaching and Learning Conditions

In their accounts of immediate daily conditions in their schools, many principals stated that they and their staff were overwhelmed by the number and variety of demands they faced. Some of these demands, as noted in previous sections, are the direct result of diverse student needs and the time required to interact with and respond to parents. "School role overload" (see Figure 7) describes frequent accounts of school staff's efforts to provide supports to students extending well beyond those related to academic learning. "Labour" describes political conditions and labour strife that administrators perceived as barriers to their efforts to lead in their schools.

Figure 7: Respondents' Concerns Related to Teaching and Learning Conditions (n=500)



For the most part, school facilities were seen as satisfactory, with the exception of schools experiencing overcrowding and schools lacking adequate technology infrastructure to provide access to all students and to integrate technology into daily teaching practices. Enrolment issues reflect the types of population changes described in the "Economy" category of this report, as immigration

patterns, rural out-migration and "boom or bust" economies cause schools to be overcrowded or at risk of closure. Each extreme poses problems for schools.

The balance of this section focuses on our distillation of the data into two key explanations for school overload. First, school principals consistently noted that they and their teaching staff lack the time and expertise to respond to the complex social problems with which they are faced in their schools, resulting in role overload within the school and within individual teaching and administrative positions. Forty-three per cent of principals referred to school overload in their responses. Second, study respondents reported that they and their staff are unable to keep up with the array of programs, mandates, testing regimes and reports their Ministries of Education and school authorities require. Thirty-four per cent of study respondents stated that accountability measures and other external demands were making it difficult to work effectively on behalf of their staff and students.

> *"Schools are expected to be all things to all people."*

The Need for Specialized Services and Community Partners

Tying into their comments on diversity, principals stated that their students are presenting with many needs that schools cannot meet without the support of specialized services and community partners. Some of the needs most often identified include:

- settlement supports for new Canadian families and English language learning;
- treatment and support for students and families with alcohol and substance abuse issues;
- mental health treatment and support for children and youth suffering from depression, anxiety or other ailments;
- services for children and youth-at-risk; and
- specialized services and training for students with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, autistic spectrum disorders, medically fragile children, and students with other significant behavioural, adjustment, and mental health concerns.

In addition to these needs, some schools are also attempting to meet students' basic needs for food and clothing through breakfast programs and other community outreach efforts. One principal stated, "I spend a good part of my time looking and begging for resources for snack programs and family rooms. There needs to be a belief that basic needs must be met before learning can happen." Many schools, because of their location, size, and funding, are unable to enrich the lives of students in poverty with programs that might bridge the digital divide or offer recreational programming.

Several principals stressed that time and resources spent meeting the physical, social and emotional needs of children and youth come directly at the expense of these resources going to student learning. Administrators indicate spending "inordinate amounts of time" seeking out and coordinating outside services, resulting in "less time to deal with the items that are educationally important." One respondent noted, "We need supports in the school so teachers can focus on teaching."

External Demands and Accountability

Also contributing to role overload are external demands, particularly time-consuming accountability reporting. Administrators were critical of "top-down" initiatives and standardized testing regimes. In keeping with the findings from our literature review (see especially Cattonar et al., 2007; Volante et al. 2008), principals in this study stated that accountability mandates from the provincial governments and school districts translated to "reams of paperwork" and "countless hours filling out reports." Administrators believe that these accountability measures "force us to report results in a manner that takes away from kids."

"Increasing government demands to quantify student achievement forces a school-wide focus on numbers, not learning. The goals are misplaced. We should be raising a generation that is creative and brave."

In addition, principals reported that they and their staff are "spread too thin" because of the number and breadth of expectations that districts, governments and parents place upon them. "We are unable to maintain or sustain school goals . . . because of competing and/or conflicting agendas," stated one administrator. With too many expectations to respond to with limited resources, "management in compliance requirements ends up taking priority; these are the items that place you at risk of fines or prosecution."

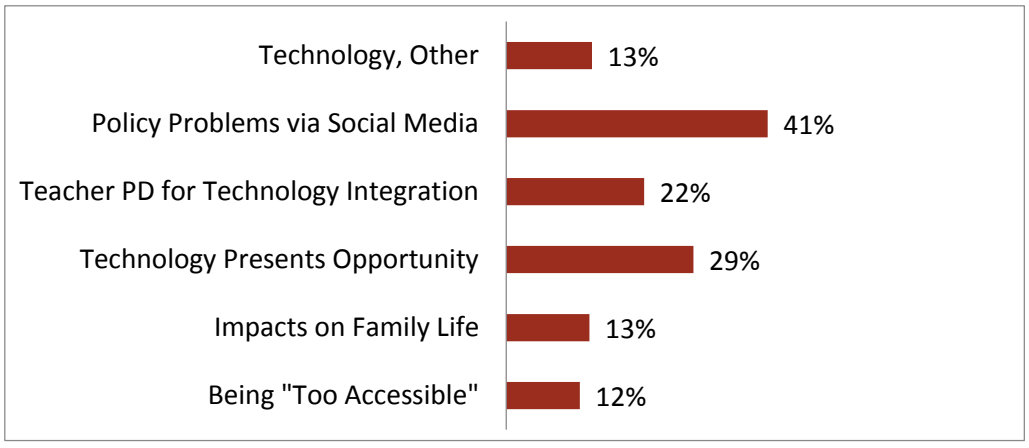
Respondents called upon provincial governments and districts to relax and streamline imposed programming and accountability requirements so that they and their staff could be more responsive to the needs they were seeing in their schools. Stringent reporting requirements, multiple initiatives and little time to interact as a staff are preventing teachers and their leaders from being "flexible" and "creative" in their efforts. Principals emphasized the need for more autonomy to respond to the great diversity of student needs.

"Paperwork keeps us from doing the right work."

4) Technology

Responses on this theme showed, unsurprisingly, that technology has profound implications for teaching, learning and the operation of schools. Administrators highlighted the challenges that they faced in helping their teachers learn quickly enough to keep up with changes, and expressed concerns about developing and maintaining needed technology infrastructures. Technology also affects the interactions between schools and parents, making communication "easier than ever." Yet, as many respondents noted, the instantaneous nature of communication challenged work-life balance, with some parents expecting teachers and administrators to be available "24/7."

Figure 8: Respondents' Concerns Related to Technology (n=500)



Social issues related to technology were also very prominent in respondents' comments. As Figure 8 illustrates, policy issues were a pressing concern for many principals, with 41 per cent of respondents noting concerns in this area. Respondents often connected their concerns regarding misuse, overuse and abuse of technology—from excessive screen time to cyberbullying—to a lack of family and social norms around balanced and responsible usage. Despite reservations in these areas, however, they saw much potential in technology for enhancing student engagement and meeting diverse learning needs.

Technology for Teaching and Learning

Study participants had many comments, observations and uncertainties around the use of technology in classrooms. Some referred to "21st-century learning" to describe contemporary efforts to modify curriculum and instruction practices to better incorporate technology and teach to the changing nature of the workforce. While there were relatively few direct references to curricular reform in this study, conversations about curriculum that did occur were very much in the context of the appropriate role of technology, suggesting that reforms and changes in curriculum and technology have been, and will remain, intertwined.

Administrators frequently described a disjuncture between students' technology-related needs and interests, and teachers' ability to "keep pace." With respect to skills and knowledge, teachers need considerable professional development to "catch up, never mind get ahead of the curve." In some instances, principals said that they themselves lacked technology skills and knowledge, making it harder for them to act as instructional leaders in this area. They also noted that technical competence by itself is not enough; educators have a broader agenda to teach "digital literacy," "digital citizenship," and critical thinking skills. Technology integration is more than just "knowing how to do things," a principal noted.

> *"There are opportunities and challenges in innovations with technology. There are great opportunities to unleash teacher and student creativity, but challenges due to inequity, and also to corporate aspirations to take over education. I am constantly working to keep pace with change and also to help my teachers embrace new practices. [I hope] it will deepen community but fear it may isolate both educators and students."*

Overcoming the Digital Divide

Some respondents expressed concerns that access to technology remains unequal, questioning the capacity of schools to respond to the "digital divide." In one remote community, a school has "many families that do not have a computer let alone the access to the Internet." Geography is not the only factor, however. Urban principals, especially those serving lower socio-economic students and families, described similar problems. Findings show that many schools are struggling to develop and evergreen the infrastructures they need to ensure that students have equitable access to technologies for learning. "Everyone must have the technology but schools don't have the money," said one principal, "Everything has become a need, not an option." Another respondent wondered, "Can schools keep up [with] required need of growth in this area? How will schools boards afford to do this? Students want more technology."

Social Media and Cyberbullying

Policy issues related to students' use of social media constituted one of the most pressing concerns in this study. Administrators described complex disciplinary issues for which they simply lacked the policy tools and authority to manage effectively. Some principals also felt that lack of supervision and guidance at home with respect to technology use was contributing to this problem. Cyberbullying and other technology-facilitated "bad behaviours" have multiple negative consequences for schools. Beyond the impacts on school climate and distractions for learning, administrators described the enormous amount of time spent managing discipline-related problems emerging from technology-facilitated bullying and gossip. Commented one respondent, "Facebook in particular draws away opportunities for me to be an instructional leader in my school because we have to deal with peer-to-peer issues that have, as result of this media, been 'made' to include up to 100 other people." Another school leader stated that she "spends many hours a week dealing with cyberbullying, and the misuse of technology." Similar comments are frequent enough to conclude that the fallout from social media use in the school community places a significant burden on administrators' time.

> *"I am spending a lot of time trying to educate parents, staff and students as to what constitutes bullying and what is normal social conflict. We will need to include education on bullying on an ongoing basis."*

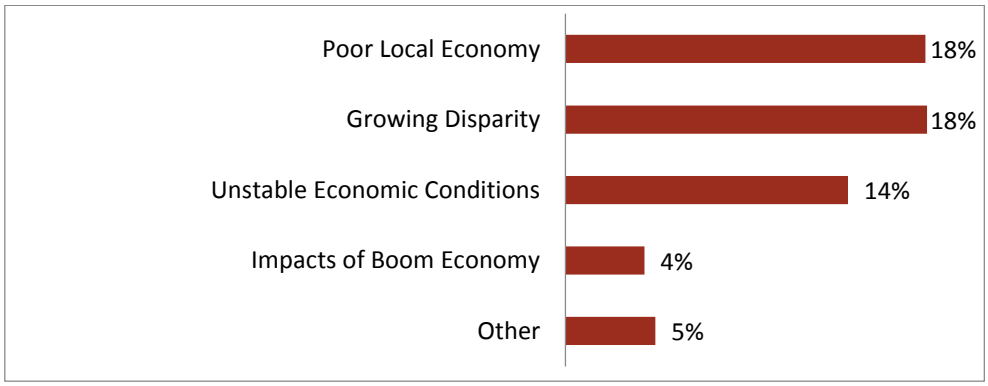
Overall, administrators in this study were ambivalent about technology. It is best characterized as opening up the boundaries of the school. For better or for worse, communications from schools have a further reach, but the reverse is also true: communications of all sorts—from the mean distractions of cyberbullying to the remarkable global learning opportunities—flow readily into school and classroom environments. Administrators and teachers are trying to gain the knowledge and skills they need to manage a tsunami of implications, from technology-facilitated learning and student engagement opportunities, to preventative and healing measures to curb the perceived damaging effects of technology on social and family relationships.

5) Economy

Participants did not directly comment on the impact of economic conditions on schools as frequently as some other themes, but the lower values in the charts are likely deceptive. Economic conditions are also being expressed indirectly through participants' responses in other themes. Impacts of the "economy," then, are hard to isolate. Overall, participants' comments revealed a complex nexus around:

- the ebb and flow of labour market conditions, which vary by province and region;
- the significant effects of "booms" and "busts" in the resource sector on towns and regions dependent on primary industries for work;
- the impacts of parents' work on their ability to spend time with their children;
- the complex effects of poverty and transience on students and their families;
- the effects of growing income disparity on school populations and school districts; and
- the concerns about preparing youth for future work under uncertain economic and labour market conditions.

Figure 9: Respondents' Concerns Related to Economic Conditions (n = 500)



Poverty and Disparity

Participants in this study frequently described—sometimes in detail—how poverty affected the ability of schools to meet students' learning needs. The message here was consistent: poverty creates stress for families, impeding parents' ability to meet the basic physical, social, and emotional needs of their children. When families cannot manage these needs, problems emerge in schools.

Principals and their staff saw the effects of income disparity daily, particularly in students lacking school supplies and resources for extracurricular activities. "There is a widening gap between those [who] 'have' and those who 'have not,'" said one school leader, "If a student cannot afford to buy

a bus pass how [does he or she] get to school?" Another administrator noted the social stigmas and stressors associated with "life style and perceptions of affluence of self and others." Moreover, as already noted, families in poverty are less likely to have current technologies in the home, placing pressures on schools to bridge the digital divide.

> *"The current economic downfall has had a tremendous effect on communities and families. This increases the stress level for families, and also results in challenges to provide needed resources to support children."*

Principals leading schools with large numbers of lower socio-economic students and families described efforts to compensate for poverty in their communities. As noted in "Teaching and Learning Conditions" above, due to funding and resource shortfalls, school leaders must go out into the community to address student needs. One administrator stated, "Increasing poverty is causing us to build partnerships with community and social agencies and businesses to meet the basic needs of our students: breakfast programs, counselling, policing, lunch programs, social skills groups, home visits and mental health and substance abuse programs. These connections must be further cemented." While comments about the benefits of community partnerships were frequent, principals also noted that the work of liaising in the community distracted them from supporting their teachers and students within their schools.

Booms and Busts

The *Changing Landscapes* document used to spur conversation in the workshops with study participants refers to "primary resource dependency"—a condition that resonated particularly with those administrators working in communities that rely heavily on primary industry for their vitality. Alberta and Saskatchewan—provinces that have experienced strong economic growth as a result of resource extraction—were most likely to cite problems associated with school overcrowding, an influx of immigrant families and, in some cases, highly visible socio-economic disparities.

Both "boom" and "bust" economic conditions were accompanied by population transience and its destabilizing effects. Transience tended to be associated with poverty and insecure employment; however, a noted form of transience particular to higher-income families was the "virtual single parent," with the other parent travelling long distances to work in the oil industry. Some administrators also suggested that more international travel and more temporary workers contribute to destabilized communities. Overall, transience impedes relationships between schools and students and their families. One principal, for example, noted that "people moving and relocating means a loss of sense of community." Another described "looser connections to the school."

> *"It's very hard to get students interested in graduating in our area because of good wages in the oil field. It is difficult to talk to kids about the value of an education when good money and jobs are right close to home. In time this may level out as the resources are depleted, but that may come too late and then what do you do with 40-50 year olds with no education?"*

Students' Futures

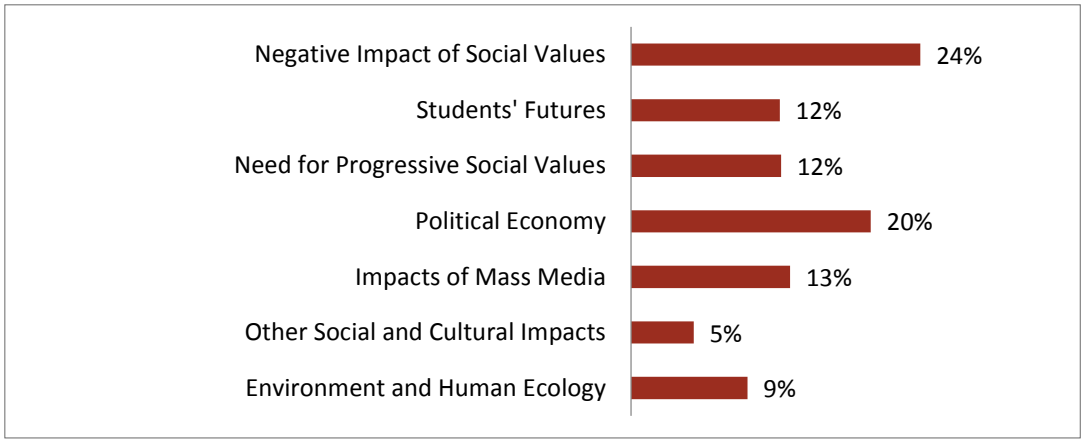
A small number of administrators commented on how economic conditions might affect their students in the future. Again, the under-representation of secondary schools in this study may have had some bearing on the number of respondents referring to students' post-secondary and employment options. Principals did not express concerns in this study about transitions to higher education. Rather, their emphasis was on the employment prospects and graduation rates of students who are not university-bound. "We need more partnerships with [post-secondary institutions] and industry," said one

participant, “We need to build bridges so our students can move into training programs and skilled positions.” Rural school leaders were especially concerned that “There are no opportunities for students to apprentice in small rural areas.” In relation to this, one rural principal described his efforts to “build small projects, community based, that work for small numbers of students and identify how students can stay and be productive in their local communities.”

6) Social and Cultural Influences

In this category, researchers included participants’ more general comments about social values, culture, and mass media. As in the “Economy” category, there are considerable overlaps with other segments of the data. “Political economy” and “students’ futures” include perceptions of future labour market insecurity and a weakened social safety net. Some respondents stressed the need for schools, government and industry to address degradation of human environments. Other comments convey concerns regarding violence and negative social values portrayed in mass media, children growing up too quickly and the effects of the free market ethos on social values.

Figure 10: Respondents' Concerns Related to Social and Cultural Influences (n = 500)



Although it is difficult to narrow down perceptions of such broad topics as “culture” and “society,” the following contexts work to capture the study participants’ perceptions about beliefs and values that are affecting public education.

Individualism and Loss of Community

Some principals believed that social values were eroding, with community and collective interests taking a back seat to individual needs, wants and entitlements. A theme woven throughout the findings was a sense that schools are lacking the community contexts they need in order for students to thrive. According to administrators, public education needs more partners who share an interest in the well-being of all children and are willing to cooperate for the greater good. “We need a long-term series of very public conversations on what we value as a society,” concluded one respondent.

> *“School is not a building, but a commons/community connected to others in complex web.”*

While some principals described successes in their efforts to connect with parents and community partners, they also tended to emphasize that the work they were doing was unsustainable because they did not have the necessary support. They pointed to a “lack of community resources,” “disconnects . . . between government/community health services and schools,” “disengagement” and “competing agendas.” Respondents consistently emphasized that strong, sustainable school communities require broad support.

Loss of Trust in Schools

Many principals in this study commented on a loss of trust related to the teaching profession and the work of schools. Participants found it demoralizing, and often very time consuming, to be constantly justifying and defending their own work and that of their staff. “Everyone feels they have the right to tell us how to do our jobs,” commented one respondent. “Parents are allowed to challenge teachers' expertise or dictate student learning needs and supports,” added another. Some principals also emphasized that the teaching profession needs greater public respect to attract the “best and brightest” to Canada’s schools.

> *“We need to have respectful conversations with and between parents. I would like to see policies in support of teachers so they are not afraid of parents and will continue to be willing to invite them into their classrooms.”*

Lack of trust in schools is also both a cause and consequence of the level of scrutiny that principals reported in regards to excessive accountability measures. While these external demands are time consuming, they also send the message to educators that they are not trustworthy. “We need government leaders who respect and value education and see educators as professionals if we are going to keep new teachers in the profession,” said one respondent. Another principal recognized the value of transparency, but suggested that it should not undermine professional judgment.

The Role of Markets in Education

Few comments on the role of businesses and corporations in schools appeared. Still, notable tensions emerge from the comments that were made. On the one hand, principals are seeking to protect schools as sites of academic freedom in which civic values, environmental issues and human rights, for example, may be fully explored without corporate influence. On the other hand, many schools rely on and value partnerships with large and small companies in their communities. Schools in need of resources may find it difficult to get by without the businesses that sponsor extracurricular programs, support breakfast programs, or provide work experience opportunities for students. There is the real possibility that loss of business sponsorships and partnerships would most adversely affect students with high needs. However, many of the supports that schools are accessing help companies to promote or market their brands. Are these good partnerships? The comments from administrators also reveal the need for broader conversations about whether and to what extent private industry ought to supplement public funding for schools: do partnerships—especially those with private interests—make it easier for governments to underfund education?

> *“We are challenged with how long to keep programs that aren't viable but are demanded by parents. It has become a game of ‘fighting’ for the same students[.]”*

Some administrators also commented on the effects of a “consumerist mentality” on schools. “Choice” was perceived positively in the sense of responding flexibly to diverse student needs, but some concerns were also apparent. Administrators perceived the “competitive nature of education and future career prospects” to be driving parents to push for their children’s interests and to seek specialized programming that might give their children an “edge.” One educator suggested that “if we continue to follow parent choice we may not be offering the type of program that we know is in the interests of all students.” Some administrators also commented on the difficulty of managing too many programs within their schools, which spread their staff too thin. Demands for specialized programming are especially challenging for rural schools with dwindling enrolments. School leaders also commented that they dislike having “to ‘sell’ our schools to prospective students and parents.”

Supports Needed

The third round of data collected in the focus groups reflected the supports school leaders need. Many of the supports proposed are in direct response to the kinds of problems already highlighted in this report. Table 1 provides a tally of most cited support areas. In addition to supports in the form of funding, community engagement and government, administrators also require a strong, professional teaching staff and personal supports that will help them as school leaders to create positive and effective learning environments.

Table 1: Short- and Long-Term Supports Needed (n=500)

	Short Term	Long Term
Political Vision and Commitment	29%	35%
Teacher PD	39%	27%
Leadership & Capacity Building	36%	26%
More Specialists In Schools	33%	24%
Increased Funding (More Staff)	25%	21%
Community Partnerships & Wrap-Around Services	28%	19%
Improved Conditions for Families	13%	12%
Help Schools Focus on Core Work	21%	16%
Other	11%	11%
No Response	4%	9%

As noted earlier, participants were asked in the workshops to distinguish between short-term supports (within three to five years) and long-term supports (five years or more into the future), but many respondents did not make significant distinctions between the two time frames. Researchers, however, noted two patterns in the data:

- Short-term supports speak to the pressing nature of concerns noted above and include teacher professional development, specialists in schools, and wrap-around services.
- Long-term supports were somewhat more likely to emphasize systemic reforms, political "vision" and support and stable, predictable funding.

These observations suggest that administrators distinguish between "band-aid" solutions—infusions of funding and professional development for example—and the kinds of structural and systemic reforms that will move schools into the future. Respondents' visions for the future of schools are considered in more detail in "Five Ways Forward," the analysis section of this report.

Self-Care and Wellness

Study respondents reported feeling overwhelmed in their roles—a significant concern. "The time required to understand and absorb policy is beyond 24 hours a day," reported one principal. "I can't keep up," confessed another principal, "I need to become more capable of triaging what is truly important or I will be overwhelmed."

> *"Help us to create boundaries around our work to maintain work-life balance. Keep challenging us to work innovatively and creatively in these exciting and dynamic times. Provide time and access to continue our professional development as leaders with experts."*

Because they are finding their work so difficult, administrators in this study were not optimistic about the future role of the school principal. They see the position as fraught with increasing stress and complexity because they must respond to the needs of multiple stakeholders, even when such needs

are conflicting (Honig & Hatch, 2004). Principals reported that they had many responsibilities, but little autonomy in terms of how to address them.

As school leadership is one of the key determinants of a positive and successful learning environment, the wellness of school leaders is paramount (Boyland, 2011). Yet, the principals in this study rarely spoke of strategies that might promote work-life balance or improve well-being. It is possible that many principals have little in the way of stress-management strategies. However, it may also be the case that they are aware of strategies, but lack time to implement them.

Text Box 2: Reducing Administrator Stress

Participants made the following suggestions to address stress:

- Include education about stress and stress management as part of leadership development
- Offer tools and reflection/collaboration opportunities that help school principals to identify priorities, delegate non-essential work and encourage broad-based participation in both leadership and administrative functions in the school
- Use inventories and self-reflection strategies to help school principals monitor and assess their stress levels and support needs
- Increase collaboration and networking opportunities between administrators
- Develop leadership capacities in teachers and other members of the school community

Overcoming Professional Isolation

School leaders were generally very supportive of their teachers, and, in keeping with the literature on school leadership, stated that supporting students and teachers is the most valuable and meaningful part of a principal's job (ATA, 2009; Cattonar et. al., 2006). However, comments indicated that administrators vary in the extent to which they see teachers as potential sources of support in the educational mission. Some principals felt isolated in their roles. One respondent, for example, said that "many parents and teachers are looking to us for 'the answers' and often expect us to 'fix' the issue."

Administrators may feel the burden of responsibility more keenly when, as the comments above suggest, they believe they are responsible for gaining and transferring professional knowledge rather than facilitating its development. One respondent framed the administrator's role as one of possessing and then passing along the skills and learning that teachers need.

Some study participants envisioned stronger collaboration with teachers as part of present and future leadership efforts. One respondent stated, "Professional development is giving me the desire to more fully understand and draw in my teacher counterparts to create a rich and research-based program. . . I want to excite and engage them . . . so we can collectively approach our students' learning needs." "In the future," said another, "managing change will require team effort and . . . shared leadership."

Opportunities to collaborate with other administrators can also alleviate administrators' professional isolation. "I'd like increased support from colleagues so that I don't have to figure everything out myself," said a respondent. In relation to this, several principals indicated that they are looking to their districts for professional development resources. School districts play an important role in bringing principals together to share knowledge and best practices. Some respondents also felt that they needed more formal leadership development opportunities. One principal asked, "Apart from university programs, what is available for [administrators]?"

Supports in the Community

Proposed supports at the level of community took two general forms. First, principals spoke of community supports in the form of improved liaising with community-based service agencies.

Administrators, who are trying to do too many things, "need things taken off their plates." In particular, schools do not feel equipped to provide social supports like child and youth services and psychological counselling, and preventative health care measures and education.

> *"How do we connect to provide solid living and learning experiences to raise whole, 'well' citizens? How do we bring people together with a common cause to create a community?"*

The second form of community support principals seek is a broad-based coalition of parental support. In this study, respondents often described families as isolated, either disengaged entirely from the school or singularly focused on the educational goals and outcomes of their own children. One administrator called for "a culture of co-responsibility or collaboration [between] home and school so that parental interactions, while more frequent, are positively focused."

Governance and Social Values that Support Public Education

"External demands" in this study describe government and district initiatives that require schools to reach certain standards or benchmarks, generate certain outputs, or allocate their resources in certain ways. Concerns about the negative effects of excessive accountability and standardization were prominent our study, confirming the findings of many of the Canadian studies in our literature review (see especially ATA, 2009; Cattonar et al., 2007; Williams, 2001).

Respondents reported that accountability initiatives were excessive in number and scope, placed competing demands on resources, and kept schools trapped in short-term and reactive stances. They seek a reduced number of initiatives with longer timeframes. "Changing focus every year is too much," said one administrator, "we need to work and play with ideas for three to five years before they become part of practice."

School leaders are also seeking stability from higher levels of governance in relation to policies and funding. "If I knew with some certainty what my budget would be, I could program with much more confidence," said one principal, "I can do it all, but I need to know that I have the funds required in a sustained manner." Changing mandates and funding schemes are frustrating to school leaders because they appear to be founded on the political interests of the day rather than the best interests of children and youth. Further, principals want relief from the constraints of "top-down" mandates that limit their ability to act locally: "We need the authority to act and the ability to make significant structural change instead of bureaucratic restrictions," stated a respondent.

Overall, the findings from this study strongly suggest that a culture of mistrust has come to dominate schools (cf. Fitzgerald, 2008). For all the political rhetoric of "partnering" and "stakeholders," cooperative relationships cannot take hold and flourish in an accountability-driven climate.

> *Principals told us that they need to build trusting relationships in their school communities, but such efforts are unlikely to succeed fully without support and trust from above.*

The overarching message from school principals in this study is, as one principal stated, "At the risk of sounding simplistic, more trust and less accountability is required to make schools more engaging for our students and staff." Schools need this leadership from higher levels of governance. Principals told us that they need to build trusting relationships in their school communities, but such efforts are unlikely to succeed fully without support and trust from above.

Technology Supports

Administrators are looking to higher levels of government to provide more leadership and support for technology. This is not surprising, as technology needs and issues described in this study require scales of intervention and levels of expertise beyond what individual schools and school leaders can achieve. Needs cited here included funding and planning for infrastructure. However, some respondents also suggested that support was less helpful when it had too many strings attached. One administrator stated, "Needs should drive the technology department, not the other way around." Another called for supports that were "less 'top-down' regarding instructional technologies." Principals want assurance that technology supports will improve education quality and hopefully reduce workloads by introducing greater efficiencies.

In addition, administrators need more support in developing and enforcing policies around social media use, like "protocols for communication between home and school and more support from [the justice system] involving social media bullying."

Text Box 3: School Leaders' Support Needs

Personal Supports	• More collaboration with peers • Leadership development and succession planning
In the School	• More daily time with teachers and students • More staff and specialists • Improved/more technology infrastructure
In the Community	• More parental support, better relationships with parents • Increased access to community support services • Outreach strategies and support with liaising activities in the community
In Governance and Society	• Public and government valuing and supporting the work of schools • Fewer/streamlined accountability demands • Trust in educators as professionals • Better coordination between provincial ministries in service provision • Stable, long-range planning and funding

Summary

Overall, respondents tended to focus on present and immediate conditions affecting their schools. The future in *The Future of the Principalship* study was difficult to envision. For the most part, participants seemed too weighted down by the challenges they face to extend their creative capacities in a visioning exercise.

While the overall tone of the study is pessimistic, two sources of promise were evident. Administrators saw a great deal of potential in instructional technology to engage students and meet a broad range of student needs and interests. Administrators were also generally positive about the growing diversity in their student bodies and believed that their schools were places where cultural diversity is a source of learning and celebration.

There is also a silver lining in the persistent will of administrators and teachers to meet their students and families "where they are at."

A Declaration of Hope: Five Ways Forward

"Leadership is standing up for what you believe in."
(Margaret Wheatley, 2013)

1) Teach and Learn for Diversity

The study data point to three key areas of diversity that require targeted investments in professional learning for school staff, in addition to that learning spanning the traditional focus on special needs as medical and learning disabilities:

- **First Nations, Métis and Inuit Students and Families:** Although the statistics have been clear for decades, there is now more awareness that Canada's public education system, modelled on Western worldviews and values, has not met the needs of Canada's Aboriginal people.
- **Student Mental Health and Social Development**: The extent to which principals discussed the mental health problems in their schools was striking. These issues include diagnosable mental illnesses, but also a wide range of behavioural problems resulting from difficult living situations. Many of the problems that administrators described disrupt learning, and require skills and strategies beyond mere "classroom management."
- **English Language Learning for Immigrant and Refugee Students and Families**: Principals in schools with large EAL populations stressed that the learning needs of new Canadian children inevitably intertwine with the language learning and cultural adjustments of the newcomer family as a whole. Schools lack the capacity to respond to these interconnected needs.

"First Nations are our fastest growing population in Canada. There remains a chiasmic gap in our understanding of First Nations learning and worldviews."

Recognizing that diverse student needs are inevitable, some school leaders considered the potential of technology to individualize and personalize student learning. This seems unlikely to be fully effective, however, without a flexible curriculum and a consistent and high-quality technology infrastructure in schools to bridge the digital divide. Also, technology in and of itself will not accommodate diversity coming out of distinctive cultures and worldviews.

While professional development for school leaders and staff to address diversity is important, this should be complemented by appropriate specialists who are available to meet with students and parents, and to consult with teachers as needed. As discussed further below, integrated service models, which a number of respondents proposed, would better connect schools with other support services and hopefully encourage a stronger sense of community in schools.

Text Box 4: Embracing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

VISIONS for SCHOOLS: Embracing Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

- "We need to find ways to build an inclusive culture, where children's strengths are celebrated and they all [are seen] as active participants in the school community."
- "We may need translators to be part of school staff. We may need to hire teachers from other countries to assist in building a strong school culture."
- "Many cultures and languages and traditions meet at a school. How do we move forward within this exciting dynamic in a unified way? I promote respect and dignity."
- "All students need to see themselves and their cultures represented in their learning."
- "Educators will have to understand how to differentiate instruction for diverse learners. We may have to start helping families earlier, such as pre-kindergarten."

2) Collaborate and Build Professional Capacities in School Staff

Emerging from the aggregation of comments about educators' skills and preparedness is an impossibly long list of professional development "priorities," many of which cannot be addressed without systemic reforms and supports. Teacher learning to promote digital citizenship, for example, is unlikely to have a significant impact if it is not accompanied by the appropriate formal support of school districts and the support of parents and the school community.

Yet, despite recognition on the part of administrators that many of the problems they are facing in their schools are systemic, they often pose solutions in the language of changes in individual teachers, and in themselves. This finding reveals a potential disjuncture between administrators' professional self-concepts as isolated leaders and problem-solvers and the forms of distributed leadership and integrated service models, which school improvement literature promotes (Clandfield & Martell, 2010; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Harris, 2009; Leithwood, Mascall & Strauss, 2009).

Administrators' professional isolation is evinced by respondents' direct comments to this effect, but also by the rare references to teachers, paraprofessionals, parents or outside agencies as sources of support. In particular, respondents tended to frame teachers as passive recipients of skills and learning. Not only does such a perspective fail to tap the talents and capacities of other educators in the school, it also places an enormous responsibility on the shoulders of the administrator alone. Alternative models that promote greater sharing of leadership are difficult to implement, given the present structure of schooling and allocation of resources. Participants' comments point to this challenge, calling for more time and space during the school day for various forms of professional collaboration. Also, it cannot be assumed that administrators possess the skills required to delegate meaningful aspects of school leadership, build consensus or otherwise think more systemically about their work (Sackney & Walker, 2006). It is thus important to incorporate specific skills into principals' leadership development that enable them to foster leadership capacity in their staff.

Text Box 5: Collaboration and Professional Supports

VISIONS for SCHOOLS: Collaboration and Professional Supports

- "I would like to see embedded [professional development] and collaborative time and flexible scheduling—continuous learning, and time for reflection."
- "Time and space to build a school culture. Partnerships that offer needed supports."
- "When people come together connections to deepen learning occur. We can set an example for students by collaborating face-to-face and through technology."
- "Young teachers require either mentors or someone to work alongside them as they learn the 'art of teaching.' With supports they will become educators who are creative, and will move the learning of all students forward."

3) Build Family and Community Relationships

In addition to seeking more help from qualified specialists in their schools, some respondents also proposed "community hub" or "wraparound service" school models to help build relationships with parents and the larger local community. These models house multiple supports and services under one roof, allowing professionals to collaborate in the interests of students and their families (Clandfield & Martell, 2010). Further, hub models "share a common focus, share resources," and reduce the boundaries that tend to keep schools isolated from other local supports and activities. Such facilities still require a great deal of hands-on management, however. A study respondent thus noted the "need [for] a business manager or equivalent so that [administrators] can focus on instructional leadership." Hub models might also, in the longer term, improve relations between parents and educators by increasing opportunities for positive engagement and cooperation (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009).

Principals' comments about parental involvement suggest that schools and parents need new ways of connecting and working together. "Parents want to be involved," said one principal, "but they still only understand the traditional views of schools from their own experiences." Respondents described the need for "real" and "meaningful" engagement that moves "beyond just Parent Advisory Councils, fundraising, and token FSA."

Study participants had other ideas about how schools could be reconfigured in the future to allow for greater "creativity" and "flexibility" in meeting student needs. Some questioned whether students ought still to be grouped by grades, especially given that more and more classes in small schools are combining grades to manage staff cuts. Suggestions for alternative arrangements included ability groupings, more distance and technology-mediated alternatives and year-round schooling.

Text Box 6: Building Strong School Communities

VISIONS for SCHOOLS: Building Strong School Communities

- "Value education has become a central theme. Continuous improvement in the future is anticipated regarding citizenship, values education and democratic thinking."
- "Specialists in the areas of health, mental health, spiritual health, technology, career development and partnership development would be an asset to any school."
- "Connection through conversation to reflect on meeting student needs. Targeted staff/student/parent conversations to come together: engage all in supporting student learning."
- "Guarantee quality before/after school programming at reasonable cost (subsidies, etc.) easy access to health, nutrition [and] physical activities."

While many administrators expressed enthusiasm for stronger community partnerships, it is also essential that principals and their advocates retain a critical stance, particularly when it comes to working with industry. As noted earlier, there are both pros and cons to stronger relationships between schools and businesses. Much depends on the scale of these initiatives, the relative power of stakeholders and the long-term consequences for schools; there must be balance between learning for vocation and learning for critical and engaged citizenship. A principal cautioned, "We need to ensure that public education serves the public good."

> *"Environmental issues are opportunities to bring real life problems into the school and the classroom and encourage citizenship, altruism and critical thinking . . . and provide opportunities for our school and our students to have an influence on society as a whole."*

4) Use Technology for Creative Learning and Good Citizenship

The comments about technology in this study show that, on balance, educators value the potential of technology in education. While they appreciate the opportunities it affords, they also recognize the need to consider the social consequences of unfettered use. Canada's school leaders and their staff can contribute to larger discourses about the role of information and communications technology in society by raising awareness of what it means to be a "digital citizen," and by continuing to advocate for a healthy balance between face-to-face and digitally-mediated relationships. A preventative and educative approach is required. Further research might highlight how digital citizenship—not just technology—can be infused into classroom practices and into safe and caring school cultures.

Although school principals and staff can take an important leadership role in technology for learning, they require the support of districts and their provincial governments in developing and enforcing guidelines and disciplinary measures around the use of social media. Study respondents were clear

that they are struggling to manage this issue on their own. Creating opportunities to share best practices and knowledge in this significant and evolving area is important.

Text Box 7: Technology for Creative Learning and Good Citizenship

VISIONS for SCHOOLS: Technology for Creative Learning and Good Citizenship

- "The infusion of technology into our schools has greatly increased the diversity of teaching strategies and learning opportunities for our staff and students."
- "Implementation of new technologies has helped staff and students to embrace change in and outside the classroom and engage in digital citizenship. This change has been a motivating factor in my growth as an educator and leader."
- "Assistive technologies are helping students be successful and integrated into the classroom. Inclusion seems to be the starting place for kids instead of congregating and secluding them into pull out programs. In time more students will be integrated into the regular classroom."
- "We are directly influenced by what is happening elsewhere. Teachers are able to use topics and materials that are immediately relevant to students *today*."

5) Promote Continuous Leadership Learning

Surprisingly, study respondents offered few specifics about the kinds of support and learning they need for their own professional development. Many of the needs that they did indicate were content-focused, such as help with technology, mediation training for work with parents and timetabling strategies. Yet, principals clearly expressed that they value time in an instructional leadership role and want to spend more time occupying that role. This seeming disjuncture makes sense given that respondents also consistently described being overwhelmed in their roles, with one principal describing it as "triage." Principals' most *urgent* learning needs, then, are likely not the same as those they might classify as their most *important* learning needs.

Text Box 8: Continuous Learning for Leadership

VISIONS for SCHOOLS: Continuous Learning for Leadership

- "We need more opportunities as [administrators] to discuss issues, trends and practices."
- "Leadership development programs should be available for anyone interested in developing leadership skills."
- "As the go-between between the school division and my school, it is essential that the division provides the support needed to help me as principal to pass on information, knowledge and skills to my staff, who ultimately use this to increase student learning."
- "I need more training in how to develop leadership skills in others."

With several Canadian provinces reviewing leadership competencies and considering how the principalship can be improved, principals and their advocacy organizations will need to work together to ensure that their voices are heard and that any mandates for professional learning are grounded in a clear understanding of the realities of administrators' daily practices in schools.

Provincial and Regional Analysis

Overview

The national sample indicates that administrators in provinces and territories across Canada are experiencing similar concerns. To summarize, these broad-brush areas of concern include the following:

- A need for policy guidance and strategies to manage social media and its potentially damaging effects on school communities
- Increasingly diverse student needs, with growing focus on immigrant students and students with mental health and behavioural issues—the level of concern reported about students' mental health issues is nothing short of alarming
- Insufficient resources to meet student needs (specialists, educational assistants)
- Increased managerialism in the principal's role at the expense of community building and instructional leadership
- Lagging infrastructures and professional development in the area of technology
- Strained relationships with parents and a bifurcation of parents between those who are "over-engaged" and those parents who are difficult to engage
- High external demands placed on schools by districts and governments (multiple initiatives, all with accountability and reporting requirements)
- Growing income disparity, with schools feeling the effects of poverty (effects include digital divides with respect to technology access, difficulty stabilizing and supporting transient students, and weakened communities)

The pessimistic tone of responses, noted earlier, is not specific to one province or region. Overall, respondents' comments were rife with accounts of students and families facing poverty, stress, mental illness, loneliness and uncertainty. Across the regions of Canada, administrators and their staff see enormous need in their communities; nonetheless, they express no desire to ignore needs that lie beyond the scope of academic learning. Instead, they persist in their desire to help. Asked for—and in many cases begged for—are the partnerships, staff complement and funding required to support the social, intellectual and emotional development of all students. Administrators serving schools with large EAL populations and lower SES students, in particular, often accept the role of the community hub and wish to extend supports and resources to families.

The focus group settings in which the participant workbooks were completed appear to contribute, in some cases, to a given group of respondents attending to issues that may have come up in the context of that specific workshop. Areas of concern discussed were also likely to be affected by whether participants hailed from urban or rural schools, and whether they were operating in primary or secondary grade schools.

Below, researchers attend to regional particularities in relation to the trends and categories already highlighted. Researchers reviewed the findings from each individual province; however, the samples in most provinces are too small to be considered representative. Further, additional research would be required in order to fully situate responses within their unique provincial policy, economic and social contexts.

Atlantic Provinces

Representing 17.4 per cent of the national sample, a total of 87 administrators from the Atlantic Provinces participated in the study: 28 from PEI, 22 from Newfoundland, 18 from Nova Scotia and 19 from New Brunswick. Overall, Atlantic province respondents commented more often than most regions on economic uncertainty and out-migration due to declining resource sectors. One

administrator described “economic devastation” due to slumping lumber and mining industries. Declining enrolments in rural schools are a national concern, but the effects are especially acute in regions where whole rural communities depend on resource extraction to remain economically viable.

These economic conditions have destabilizing effects, with poverty and transience breaking up communities. Perhaps for this reason, 42 per cent of Atlantic province respondents reported effects of “fragmented families.” Some households are virtual single-parent families, with one parent away for extended periods working out of province. Some respondents believe that weakening family and community ties are contributing to behavioural and mental health issues among students. Poverty further contributes to stress on families and students. An elementary school principal, for example, commented that “Young students—even in Grades 2 to 3—talk about suicide, girlfriends, and boyfriends. They don't have opportunities to live as children. It takes more time to help them engage in conflict resolution. A lot of basic needs are not met and there is a lack of resources to meet them.”

Administrators in the Atlantic Provinces shared in national concerns around the inability of schools to meet increasingly diverse student needs. Students’ special needs are increasing in overall number and in complexity, and many of them extend well beyond academics into realms that school teachers and administrators are “not adequately trained or compensated” to address. As one respondent noted, “the majority of teacher and administrator time is spent on minority of students, and this is a trend that will probably continue.” Broadly, administrators speak about excessive demands placed on school resources and staff. They described “expectations of society that schools are a ‘fix all’ for all issues in society.” A respondent observed that “it is the school's responsibility to not only educate but feed, clothe, and teach morals and values. Many responsibilities of the home have been pushed to the schools.”

As a result, schools in this region are seeking more support from government and community agencies, and more staff in schools to support both teachers and administrators. To consistently meet students’ needs, “stable direction and consistency from governments [is necessary]—more than a four year mandate. We need a clear definition of the role of the school in society.”

Administrators feel overloaded in their roles, with higher numbers reporting being overwhelmed in the Atlantic Provinces. This may reflect a larger proportion of that sample hailing from rural schools. Forty-two per cent of Atlantic province administrators felt they were over-extended in their roles, and many described their roles as increasingly managerial in focus. “The job I want to do—being an instructional leader—gets overshadowed by the demands placed on us as ‘building managers,’” stated one. He or she predicts, “More people will burn out or not even choose to come into the job.” A number of administrators sought more support in their schools, either in the form of administrative support or a vice-principalship. Some also felt responsibilities more properly vested with school districts were being downloaded to school sites and the principal’s jurisdiction. Like administrators in other provinces, Atlantic province administrators described increasing reporting and accountability requirements, which eroded their role as an instructional leader.

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Atlantic province administrators also shared a significant national concern around the impacts of social media on the school community. Cyberbullying and other inappropriate communications can create a negative school climate, and many administrators reported spending more and more time managing disciplinary issues: “Time and energy used to try to control social media's influence could be

used elsewhere." Some respondents in the region pointed to the need for greater parental involvement and cooperation in educating children about cyber-citizenship and appropriate use of social media.

Quebec

Fifty-two Quebec administrators participated in the national study and accounted for 10 per cent of the overall national sample. Two issues should be taken into consideration in evaluating the Quebec data. First, study respondents were all from English language schools and thus inherently reflect a minority position in the province. Related to this, responses on "diversity" take on additional dimensions compared to other provinces.

In this study, diversity includes students with special needs and students from different cultural backgrounds. While many administrators addressed EAL students and Aboriginal students in regards to this area of concern, in the Quebec context, diversity also includes the dynamics of bilingualism. Many of this province's respondents were administrators in bilingual or immersion schools, and/or were operating in communities in which English language of instruction falls in the minority. A handful of comments from these participants described marginalized positions in largely francophone communities.

Diversity has positive possibilities and many administrators across Canada envisioned truly inclusive schools. While Quebec administrators shared this vision, they also shared in the struggles to support an "increasing number of special needs students integrated in regular classes" combined with "decreasing social services." Respondents described pressures to meet an increasingly complex array of student and family needs, with one respondent noting this was "especially challenging in remote rural areas." To respond to this array of student needs, administrators have to work to coordinate multiple services. "We are increasingly asked to partner with health and community organizations," noted one participant, "There are more meetings, and my attention is divided." This administrator saw increased community engagement as a positive, but was frustrated that this forced him into the role of "school manager instead of a pedagogical leader." To address imperatives extending well beyond students' academic learning, Quebec administrators would like "more partnerships with local organizations, and less bureaucracy to access and use these supports."

Principals see many possibilities for technology to engage students and improve student learning, but do not feel they have the resources and expertise at present to implement it effectively.

Technology is having profound impacts on the work of schools and Quebec administrators agreed that "technology creates opportunities but also challenges." Principals see many possibilities for technology to engage students and improve student learning, but do not feel they have the resources and expertise at present to implement it effectively. "Students are growing up in a technology-driven society," a principal observed, "and our school system has not necessarily kept up." Another described "trying to keep abreast, and discern between what's needed and what's obsolete or unnecessary." As in the national sample, some administrators here also noted the effects of digital divide: "Many children and families do not have access due to low SES."

Improved communication also caused concern in Quebec. Although the ability to communicate with parents is enhanced by technology, administrators are feeling the effects of "24/7" access. "My work day has been expanded into evenings and weekends," said a respondent. "Parents and others send information, inquiries and complaints at any time. Some parents expect feedback immediately."

Notably, Quebec's concern regarding the negative effects of social media on their school communities was higher than the national average: 42 per cent of Quebec respondents reported this as a concern, compared to 35 per cent of respondents nationally. "Schools are often left dealing with the aftermath of children's negative exchanges on social networking" and, one administrator predicted, "Unless we play an active role in teaching appropriateness in communication, things will get worse."

Twenty-two per cent of Quebec administrators expressed concerns that students have unhealthy home environments, suggesting that schools are increasingly expected to "parent" children. This can, stated one respondent, create "ethically challenging situations." Another observed that "supporting families and students is difficult in light of their mistrust of schools." Fifteen per cent commented on parents placing demands on schools that at times are unreasonable. "Parents are more active in their child's education as advocates but not necessary as school partners," stated one respondent. Another noted the need to work cooperatively with parents to ensure student success.

Quebec administrators feel pressured to keep up with increasing demands on their schools. "Expectations of the school come from everywhere," stated one administrator, "home, community, school board, agencies, and the ministry." Twenty-three per cent of Quebec respondents felt overly burdened by external demands and bureaucracy, although these administrators were more likely than those in other provinces to focus on political contexts at the board rather than provincial level. Further, on balance, Quebec respondents were also more likely to interpret expectations through a legalistic lens: an increasingly litigious public means that "in dealing with parents you need to be well versed on policies and the law, and you need more legal advice."

Requesting supports in the form of building maintenance, training and infrastructure for technology, and "training and guidance for team collaboration and leadership," Quebec respondents expressed a strong desire for more leadership at the board level. At the same time, they indicated the need for more flexibility and autonomy at the local level. One principal suggested, "We need a long-term vision to prepare graduates and teachers for the role of the principalship. School systems are going to have to radically change to keep pace with societal changes. They will have to re-invent themselves to remain relevant and competitive."

Ontario

Ontario respondents numbered 110, with 40 per cent of respondents reporting from rural schools and half of respondents expressing concerns about declining or unpredictable enrolments. Rural areas across Canada deal with economic instability and Ontario is no exception. As one administrator described, "lack of employment in rural areas is affecting the size and the composition of our schools. Families struggle. Students are transient." This instability challenges principals' ability to meet student needs and provide consistent leadership.

The effects of poverty are also apparent in urban schools, which are more likely to be serving new Canadian students and their families. These students "need support but engaging with these families is difficult." Schools serving large immigrant or refugee communities are challenged to bridge language and cultural barriers in order to gain parent and community support. Overall, 22 per cent of Ontario administrators commented that more parental engagement was desired, and 15 per cent expressed the desire to improve the prospects of immigrant students and their families.

> *"As resources become more limited we cannot meet the needs of identified students without compromising the needs of other students."*

As with national results, Ontario administrators reported that schools are taking on more responsibilities for children and youth beyond academics. Fifty-five per cent of Ontario respondents

felt their schools were attempting to meet needs without sufficient resources. While there is a consistent desire to assure the overall well-being of children regardless of the needs they present, administrators indicate that they are having difficulty doing so. One of the main challenges involves "increased student stress levels and mental health problems" that are "beyond the expertise" of school staff. Additionally, individualized learning plans are required for "a wide variety of needs, including learning disabilities, autism, behaviour issues, and physical disabilities," stated one principal. "As resources become more limited we cannot meet the needs of identified students without compromising the needs of other students."

Ontario principals ascribed much of this overload to "disintegration of both family and the family unit." Connecting with some families can be difficult, which administrators attribute to cultural or language gaps as well as "economic pressures that require parents to work extensively, leaving little or no time to parent their children." Others place high demands on schools to ensure the success of their children, showing little regard for the school community as a whole. Administrators perceive a persistent and growing gap between 'have' and 'have not' families, reflected in the two dysfunctional extremes of parental engagement.

Ontario administrators saw much promise in instructional technology. Technology will "totally revolutionize the way a school will operate," envisioned one respondent, "eLearning, virtual schooling, year round schooling: Does a school have to be a building?" Administrators also reported challenges in the "inordinate amount of time required for training and updating tech knowledge," as well as dealing with fallout related to inappropriate use of social media. According to one administrator, social media issues originating outside of the school are "seeping into the day-to-day, and I'm having to address issues I have little if any influence over." Policy and discipline issues related to technology use were cited by half of the Ontario principals. Respondents also noted the significant costs associated with technology. Many schools feel they are not keeping pace and some are feeling the effects of a digital divide among the students and families they serve. Further, while technology offers more opportunities for engaging students and increases the ability of staff to communicate with parents, this increased communication can also increase stress and workloads.

To address overloaded mandates, Ontario principals seek consistent leadership and funding from the provincial government, as well as reduced, streamlined accountability expectations. Forty-five per cent of Ontario respondents felt that external accountability expectations were hindering their capacity to support their students and teaching staff. Many expressed the need for greater autonomy at local levels to set priorities that reflect the most pressing needs of the school community. "Principals know their students and communities," stated one respondent, "We need local autonomy based on a Board strategic plan. Allow us to choose what is important." For another principal, autonomy amounts to "intelligent accountability" cultivated through infrastructures and funding that would support more collaborative school cultures in which "staff is self-directed and self-regulated for improving student achievement."

Ontario administrators envision stronger collaboration with other agencies, ministries and stakeholders: "We need support from all community agencies working together—more hands on, with fewer people worrying about territorial issues." Administrators generally expressed a willingness to serve as a community hub that meets a variety of student and family needs, but were adamant that significant structural reforms and funding are required for them to fulfill this role. The hub model requires the presence of health care professionals, special needs experts, mental health programming, arts and recreation and family-focused support. The present model of schooling, respondents emphasize, supports none of these innovations consistently or effectively.

Manitoba

The Manitoba sample included 32 respondents, 61 per cent of whom hailed from urban schools. Like the other Prairie Provinces in the sample, Manitoba administrators appear to be particularly challenged by two social groups: First Nations students and immigrant or refugee students. These students are more likely to be experiencing poverty and health and mental health issues that affect their ability to learn. A Manitoba respondent observed the "mainstreaming" of Aboriginal rights and education issues and wondered "if we are doing the best we can for our Aboriginal populations. I think we need to figure out ways to provide opportunities for our students to share their world views and thoughts." Immigrant children and their families are also in need. In addition to the fact that these families are generally poor, language and culture barriers make it difficult for teachers to support students in the classroom and to connect with parents.

All of these conditions make for highly diverse student populations with complex needs. "Our greatest fear," described one administrator, "is being overwhelmed by the emergent needs and being swamped by the number of individualized plans required." Teachers and administrators do their best, but are generally "ill-equipped" and "untrained" to address family, mental health and addiction issues that confront some educators on a daily basis. Overall, Manitoba administrators shared the perspectives of other Canadian school leaders who indicated being asked to do more with fewer resources. One respondent, for example, wondered how to sustain breakfast, lunch and school supply programs presently bankrolled by solicited grant funding.

Social and economic concerns also filter into technology issues. Manitoba administrators as a group were particularly concerned with the effects of the digital divide, and saw training for themselves and their staff as crucial for levelling the playing field for students. Schools also face having to "solve social media situations outside of the school day" because negative or harassing exchanges online affect the school's ability to offer a safe and peaceful learning environment. Schools "need to focus on students' proper use [of] and responsibility with social media." Some administrators perceived that this educative function needed to extend into communities where "parents lack education about proper social media use and etiquette."

Administrators reported that work unrelated to instructional leadership has increased. Central are the collection, management and reporting of data in response to increasing accountability demands and liability concerns. Said one respondent, "I spend huge amounts of time filling out violent incident forms and investigating. I'm concerned that my job will become completely administrative, with no time left to be a teacher or work on the education side." Manitoba administrators also described ongoing challenges in "navigating a bureaucratic system to access supports," and "dealing with outside agencies to help students and families." As in other provinces, Manitoba principals envision a "systemic approach to problem-solving requiring agency collaboration."

> *"We need to move away from the philosophy that education is black and white. One size does not fit all. We need training for teachers in areas of diversity, differentiation, and critical thinking if they are to meet more students' needs. We need to reduce paperwork or add business managers, mental health staff, and other specialists. This will allow me to work with staff, students and families. . . . We need to be able to work with people, not paper."*

In the short term, administrators want funding to address service gaps in their schools with an infusion of funding for staff and specialists. In the longer run, however, they want vision, commitment and sustainability from the provincial government, and from their school districts. Central to this vision, according to participants, is the establishment of realistic priorities—"doing less and doing it better,"

in the words of one principal. Another stated, “Long term planning will enable us to focus our energies rather than juggling too many issues.” Planning, according to respondents, includes a robust system of inter-agency cooperation, in which “intergovernmental agencies work together instead of offloading responsibilities onto the education system. The government must back up new demands on system with the financial support we need.”

Saskatchewan

There were 42 participants in the Saskatchewan sample, which represented 9 per cent of the national sample. Rural schools were under-represented in the data. Only 26 per cent of respondents were from rural schools. Comments were sufficient, however, to paint a picture of rural communities in Saskatchewan that may be booming at one extreme, or declining at the other.

Both Saskatchewan and Alberta, discussed below, are experiencing the impacts of an expanding economy based on natural resource extraction. Effects of this economy include growing economic disparity, urbanization, increasing mobility and transience, and, very notably, a significant influx of immigrants and refugees. “The economy has made us a very attractive market,” stated one administrator, “so we have grown abundantly due to new Canadian families.” Fifty-three per cent of Saskatchewan administrators commented on the effects of immigration compared to an overall national average of 23 per cent citing this concern.

> *“We need more supports for children who do not meet academic levels. Too much is left to the classroom teacher and school! We need language supports for immigrant students and families, and more money must be spent to give direct support to students and teachers. Our school community includes poor and needy families. I need resources to help support this type of family in order to eliminate barriers to student learning.”*

Diversity presents significant and immediate challenges. Many new Canadians speak little or no English. Some schools are overcrowded, and many Saskatchewan respondents stated that they do not have the resources needed to meet the needs of immigrant families. Teachers lack training for EAL and communication with families is hindered by language and cultural barriers. Further, as one respondent noted refugee families “are often traumatized. They have PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder]. They do not have school readiness; they need counselling, etc. before schooling.” Many immigrant families are also impoverished. Even with the challenge of responding to these concerns, diversity is, in the words of one respondent, an “incredible asset to our education system and society.”

With student needs extending far beyond those addressed through academic supports alone, the increasingly complex work of functioning as a “case manager”—coordinating services with outside specialists and agencies—becomes a source of time-consuming paperwork. Saskatchewan’s students and families are no exception to the troubling widespread mental health issues among Canadian students that school leaders perceive. Administrators reported that they and their staff need to be part of a network of professionals: “We cannot continue to support children in isolation,” stated one respondent. “Mental health, justice, healthcare—all need to work in unison to help mould and shape our children into healthy adults.”

External demands impair Saskatchewan participants’ work to forge “direct ties with teachers and students,” according to 58 per cent of respondents in the province. Administrators described growing pressure from the government to increase graduation rates and academic achievement, particularly for Saskatchewan’s Aboriginal students. Accountability and transparency take the form of more paperwork which, respondents report, is very time consuming. One administrator commented, “No more does society accept that a principal is doing the best job possible in the best interests of the community. They must provide untold documentation to demonstrate proof. I spend many hours

preparing documents, reading documents and communicating results rather than working with the teachers and students to improve those results."

> *Administrators are very much in need of direction and support to respond to this complex new social phenomenon.*

Saskatchewan administrators are also concerned with the effects of technology on students and teachers. Many commented on the positive learning opportunities afforded by technology, but also expressed concern that teachers were unable to keep pace with changes. More professional development is needed for technology integration. Some respondents believe that technology has contributed to weakening family ties. Frequently described by administrators were policy concerns around social media, which, according to comments, has harmful effects on school communities and increases time spent responding to disciplinary issues and distractions fuelled by poor conduct online on the part of students and, sometimes, parents. It appears that policy responses are lagging in this area. Administrators are very much in need of direction and support to respond to this complex new social phenomenon.

Overall, Saskatchewan school leaders expressed the need for "a committed and realistic economic plan that puts education and, more importantly, students first. Work hard at decreasing class sizes and truly explore the idea of inquiry learning with facilities and budgets that actually lend themselves to this learning." Some administrators invited leadership to look to Finland as a model for reform efforts. Saskatchewan administrators also seek supports for EAL students, including language specialists, protocols for support and long-term strategies to engage parents and create inclusive school communities. Like administrators nationally, Saskatchewan respondents see potential in a community hub model where an array of services are integrated. Overall, these administrators, like their counterparts in other provinces, want a "clear and consistent vision from their governments" and a "long-term commitment" that would stabilize funding and prioritize the work of schools.

Alberta

One hundred eighty administrators from Alberta participated in the study, although only a sub-sample of this group (n=55) was included in the national figures in order to better balance representation relative to other provinces. Overall, however, the sub-sample differed little from the larger sample and from other provincial samples in the concerns expressed.

> *"The amount of time needed to deal with the diverse situations effectively and lack of office support or a vice-principal make it challenging to share information with staff ensuring their safety and [that] of other students. I spend a great deal of time away from the school at meetings, PD and other commitments to stay informed. Reports and paper work need to be completed to support the school and student learning. Makes it difficult to be an effective leader; I fear I will burn out."*

One exception, however, is that Alberta respondents were more likely to comment specifically on the impacts of a market-model for education. Administrators described a "culture of consumerism. Students and parents do comparison shopping before making decisions." One respondent commented, "Much of what we do each day is done to market ourselves. We need to keep parents happy so we have good accountability pillar results. I have become, in many ways, more of a marketing manager than an educator." The choice model, argued one respondent, legitimizes the claims of parents with "personal agendas" and unrealistic expectations that "consume a large percentage of interaction time." Parent choice also extends to homeschooling, an issue not raised in other provinces. Alberta administrators' comments surrounding the market model reflect the nation-wide feelings of frustration and mutual antagonism between parents and school staff. While this is not a universal concern, it is

still a significant one. Fifteen per cent of Alberta administrators commented specifically on high parental expectations as a source of stress, matching the 15 per cent national average.

Alberta administrators were also more likely than those in other provinces to express perceptions that teachers lack the preparation they need to manage the complexities they face in the classroom. One respondent observed that it is "overwhelming for teachers to do it all and they lack experience and . . . job efficacy at times." This observation may in part reflect the large influx of new teachers in the province over the last five years and booming economic conditions that led to population growth. In some cases, administrators attributed teachers' lack of preparedness to ineffective pre-service education and "disconnects between schools, districts and post-secondary institutes in aligning the supports and training needed to build teacher capacity." Administrators are finding it difficult to support these new teachers. One noted a "limited opportunity or time to increase teaching or instructional leadership." On the other hand, another administrator supporting isolated teachers in Hutterite Colony schools made the interesting comment that "many teachers believe I am their sole support. It would be great if they could see a line extending beyond me to the Alberta Teachers' Association and Alberta Education."

Mental health issues among students and families constitute a very significant theme in the study nationally, and it is not an overstatement to say that school staff is crying out for training and expert supports to deal with this growing problem.

Like administrators nationally, Alberta school leaders are struggling to find the funding and resources needed to support teachers directly in their classrooms. Three overlapping sources of diverse student needs are especially apparent: immigrant and Aboriginal students who are not achieving academically, students falling under the traditional rubric of "special needs" due to learning and physical disabilities and, most troubling, the exploding number of children with undiagnosed and uncoded difficulties described by administrators and teachers as "anxiety," "depression," "mental health issues" and "behavioural issues." Mental health issues among students and families constitute a very significant theme in the study nationally, and it is not an overstatement to say that school staff is crying out for training and expert supports to deal with this growing problem.

Integrating immigrant students and their families—an issue for schools across Canada—is a prominent concern for Alberta school leaders. Growing economic disparity also enters consideration, as schools "celebrate the learning opportunities and diversity [high levels of immigration] creates" even as they struggle to provide needed supports and programming for immigrant students. The booming economies in Alberta and Saskatchewan are reflected in the amount of comments about the needs of immigrant students: 58 per cent in Alberta and 53 per cent in Saskatchewan (compared to an overall national average of 23 per cent) cited concerns about their ability to support EAL students and families. Further, Alberta and Saskatchewan school leaders described challenges created by population influxes in small communities driven by immigration. While many rural communities, in keeping with the national picture, are facing declining numbers, some smaller areas in these provinces have seen exponential growth in populations. These communities lack the infrastructures and economies of scale needed to support new Canadian students and their families.

Alberta administrators cited the "revolutionary" impacts of technology on education. Echoing a broadly held perspective, one Alberta principal stated that technology "presents both a challenge and an opportunity. Challenges include teacher professional learning, meaningful implementation, and the costs of devices and maintenance. Opportunities include increased engagement in learning that reflects the current realities of our students and the world they live in." As instructional leaders, administrators feel pressured to stay ahead of the technology learning curve in order to support

teachers' learning. "I have been working at becoming tech savvy so I am in the know," commented one principal, "It has become a huge part of my job."

Although administrators in all provinces commented on excessive accountability expectations, Alberta and Ontario respondents gave this area the most attention. Fifty-eight per cent of the Alberta sample stated that accountability demands were overwhelming schools. These demands take the form of "an endless treadmill of improvements. The path to perfection has no finish line, so technically it's more like a death march." Another principal stated that standardized exams "have created a huge amount of teacher stress, which in turn makes my job as an administrator more difficult. I find myself trying to balance putting more pressure on the teachers while at the same time trying to take care of their needs."

Alberta administrators are seeking relief from accountability demands, reduced and clarified expectations, and the resources they need in their schools to meet an increasingly complex array of student needs. "The greatest societal change is that the school has become the venue to be all things to students. We are the parent, doctors, nurses, social workers, the educators. The responsibility is becoming too much." Another echoed, "I have to be the doctor, counsellor, advisor, and psychologist. I have to be whatever my families need, and we are increasingly asked to provide it for our students and their families without systemic change."

British Columbia

The British Columbia (BC) sample included 77 respondents, making up 15 per cent of the national sample. Thirty-three per cent of responses came from rural school administrators and 14 per cent were from principals in satellite/commuter areas. 36 per cent described their schools as "urban." Comments suggest that many BC communities are experiencing upheavals from fundamental changes in labour markets.

> *"We embrace the idea of fluidity, and assisting individuals to explore themselves and their world in new ways, and develop a sense of who they are in relation to their world. There are opportunities to do so through our international program: In a school of 350 students, we have about 30 international students per year. Multiculturalism expands students' awareness, understanding, acceptance and tolerance."*

Administrators in BC, Ontario and the Atlantic Provinces most frequently noted the effects of declining primary or resource-extraction industries. One BC administrator described her community as "changing from a resource dependent to tourist dependent economy," resulting in "more seasonal jobs or lower paying jobs combined with high cost of living." Administrators stated that job loss and growing poverty in their areas were resulting in higher student absenteeism, more mental health issues in students and families, and more behavioural issues in the classroom. These changes also led administrators to wonder, "What jobs [should we] be preparing students for? We need to think beyond our community and creatively and entrepreneurially think about possibilities."

Growing economic disparity, a nation-wide issue, was mentioned by 23 per cent of BC administrators. One respondent observed, "The widening affluence gap is a social and cultural phenomenon with huge implications for and within education." Resulting from this gap is a bifurcation in parental engagement: BC respondents describe over-involved and demanding parents at higher SES levels, particularly when the school is offering a specialty program like French immersion. On the other hand, principals reported on the challenges of engaging lower SES parents. Immigrant and First Nations families are important sub-groups, as communication is also thwarted by language and cultural barriers.

Administrators perceived significant increases in numbers of special needs students and the complexity of their issues. “Social, emotional and cognitive issues are pushing our already limited resources beyond what we can offer,” stated one principal, “We feel truly unable to meet their needs. I feel overwhelmed and deflated as I think about what I and my team can accomplish.” Rural schools lacking resources are doubly challenged to respond to significant needs in their communities. Rural administrators reduced budgets and staffing, yet felt more pressure to personalize learning and integrate technology.

> *“Technology is transforming education, but we are not really equipped or ready for the wave.”*

The impacts of technology on schools constituted a very significant theme in this study and BC administrators saw a great deal of potential in technology to enhance learning, despite uncertainty regarding needed resources and expertise. “Technology is transforming education,” noted one respondent, “but we are not really equipped or ready for the wave.” In addition, 35 per cent of BC administrators cited concerns about the effects of social media and the need for workable policies in this area, as “social media, sexting and cyberbullying [are having] major impacts on school culture and student behaviour.” Discipline issues must, however, give way to more effective integration of technology in the long run. Pondered one principal, “how do we use it best as a learning tool? It is not going to go away.”

Notably, responses suggest that BC administrators are pre-occupied with the toxic labour relations in that province. Although this study, like any with voluntary participation, runs the risk of bias on the basis of the most dissatisfied airing their views, there is absolute consistency in comments related to labour relations. For instance, one administrator noted, “There is no doubt that the pressures and demands of BCTF [British Columbia Teachers’ Federation] affect my ability to lead my school, work collaboratively, and move forward in any meaningful way. I'm cast more as a manager and less as a leader.” Other respondents expressed similar feelings of being marginalized in the instructional leadership role and challenged to effect positive change in hostile local political environments. Some BC administrators also perceived a generation gap among their teachers, with younger teachers being less committed to the profession. Concluded one respondent, “Teaching and learning conditions will be enhanced if the labour situation is more peaceful.”

Further, just as principals across Canada are struggling to juggle many and multiple external demands, 25 per cent of BC administrators specifically noted the negative effects of responsibilities “downloaded from ministry and district levels.” Centralized standards “get in the way” when they excessively limit the ability of administrators to respond to local conditions and needs. “We are being told to be creative and forward thinking, yet are working with archaic mindsets in both labour relations and physical structures,” said one respondent. More flexibility at the local level is desired to “support learning and teaching in the 21st century. We need to expand the walls of the classroom, access community resources, and redefine the use of time and space. Give teachers the permission to combine curriculum and find some white space to provide time to learn in different ways.” Administrators feel that voluminous and complex bureaucracy takes time away from their efforts to develop positive relationships with teachers, students, and the wider school community. One principal specifically called for more time for “vision and leadership activities.”

To respond to the issues that make their work so challenging, BC principals want leadership based on a long-term vision for education and stable funding. “I know we have to think past funding,” stated one respondent, “but having proper funding is very important.” Respondents need stable and reliable financing and policies to plan for the future, and this is especially the case for the many communities that are experiencing rapid demographic changes.

Northern Territories

There were a total of 42 participants from Nunavut, Yukon and the Northwest Territories, making up 8 per cent of the national sample.

Northern administrators were more focused on Aboriginal education than other provinces, with the exception of Saskatchewan. Seventeen per cent of the Northern sample commented on FNMI education compared to the national average of 9 per cent. For immigrant students and some FNMI students, English is a second language and schools are challenged to incorporate language instruction alongside mainstream curriculum. Many comments expressed concern that Aboriginal languages and cultures are under threat and need to be nurtured in schools. This led one respondent to comment on the "chasm" of understanding that exists between Western and Aboriginal peoples: "We need knowledgeable First Nations people hired—not based on Western academia but their own [Indigenous] knowledge and their ability to teach those who don't know."

Northern administrators described parental disengagement and chaotic family situations as detrimental to their efforts. Students and families have "mental health issues and anxiety issues." In some communities, drug and alcohol abuse and poverty create additional challenges. Thirty-three per cent of administrators are concerned that parents are not involved enough in their children's education. On the other hand, some parents are over-involved and place what are perceived to be unreasonable demands on staff. Once again, this bifurcation of parental involvement was observed nationally and reflects widespread socio-economic polarization.

Calling for a "major overhaul of interagency involvement with families and youth," many Northern administrators would like to see integrated "wraparound services" that would include "social services, speech therapy, language learning, occupational therapists, and counsellors." In many instances Northern schools are providing for students' basic needs and would like more support here as well: "We need to develop and increase meal and activity programs for hungry and at-risk students. We need partnerships with departments, teacher associations, community organizations and parents."

Reflecting the national trend of administrators feeling over-extended, 40 per cent of Northern administrators reported challenges keeping up with the demands placed on their schools by "an ever-increasing number of programs, teaching strategies, options, and services," attributed in part to the "off-loading" of services and duties by other departments with no extra funding. This "diverts dwindling resources from our core mandate," stated one respondent, "and also places staff in the position of dealing with very serious issues beyond the limits of their training." Several respondents noted that they and their staff are burning out, and predict that it will be difficult to recruit and retain staff in the future if some of the noted problems are not addressed.

Northern administrators also recounted the effects of technology on their schools. "Technology makes things more efficient," stated one principal, "but it also causes extra work and stress." Sources of stress include large volumes of information and, in some cases, expectations that administrators and teachers will be available "24/7" to respond to inquiries. Principals also stated that their workloads were increasing due to the time needed to research, implement and lead technology changes. In addition, internet access is a problem in some rural and remote schools. A Nunavut administrator noted that "Nunavut is behind in the modern school and classroom. Most third-world countries have better Internet!" Some schools are also experiencing a digital divide in their student populations, as some families lack access at home: "The more affluent part of our society has more access to technologies and alternative ways of learning than other parts of society," stated a principal.

Significant policy concerns around social media use were noted by 35 per cent of administrators nationally, and 23 per cent of Northern respondents. Though their level of concern is lower than the national average, principals in this region described negative effects on their school communities related to cyberbullying and other inappropriate uses of social media. As one respondent stated, "lots of my time is spent on managing bullying . . . [W]ork with families and individuals [to promote legal understanding] will become more frequent, and we need funding to focus on this issue."

> *"Coupled with increased staffing, more local autonomy would allow for a greater variety of class structures and lower pupil/teacher ratios, enhancing our ability to offer more inclusive, collaborative options."*

Northern administrators are seeking "more site-based management and less micro-management by school districts" to respond to local needs and conditions. Coupled with "increased staffing," stated one administrator, more local autonomy would "allow for a greater variety of class structures and lower pupil/teacher ratios, enhancing our ability to offer more inclusive, collaborative options." Administrators want to nurture collaborative learning in their staff and, as one respondent indicated, among administrators: "Living in a small centre, we don't always realize the potential of partnerships that would benefit one party or the other. Sharing with the principals of the other schools would be advantageous to all."

> *"We have a factory-model institution with bells, subject [and] grade divisions, even though we live in an inclusive, collaborative society. Our challenge is to change the model as much as possible. We are seeking ways to offer instruction in inclusive, aesthetically engaging 'out of the box' methods: creating more learning teams, multi-aged groupings for classes, and individualized programming to enhance learning."*

Administrators also need strategies to develop and retain their teaching staff. "I am currently having difficulty keeping young staff in the profession. They consistently tell me the job is too demanding, too energy draining, and too time consuming," commented one administrator. Respondents also noted that staff needs training to "keep up with new and assistive technologies." Some principals called for more teachers who could instruct in Inuktitut and other First Nations languages. Administrators also stated that they need more teachers and support staff in order to respond effectively to overwhelming needs in their schools. One respondent articulated this issue: "we need time and resources to research and plan for future changes and demands. Perhaps we need a completely new system of education that is not classroom based in the traditional sense."

International Comparison and Analysis: Teaching and Learning International Survey

As *The Future of Principalship in Canada* entered its final stage, the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS) 2013 results were released. There are points of intersection and of divergence between the two studies that render comparison productive. Furthermore, consideration of the TALIS findings in relation to the current study allows us to broaden the purview and analyze the results of the Canadian study in an international context.

What is TALIS?

TALIS is a report series produced by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). It surveys teachers and school administrators in many countries, compiling data to inform education policymakers and policy analysts. Data highlight teachers' perceptions of their working conditions, learning opportunities, professional growth, job satisfaction, efficacy, opportunities for collaboration and opportunities to participate in decision-making in their schools.

The first TALIS survey of schools was conducted in 2008 in 24 countries, and published in 2009. The 2014 publication of a second cycle of the survey includes 34 countries and focuses on a number of policy priorities, which were identified in consultation with participating countries. Priorities were:

- school leadership, including the role of distributed leadership;
- teacher training and professional development;
- teacher evaluation and feedback on practices;
- teachers' pedagogical beliefs and practices; and
- teachers' self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and perceptions of their school climates.

Canada is among a handful of TALIS participating countries represented by sub-samples ("sub-national entities"). The only survey data from Canada come from Alberta.[9] This obviously limits the applicability of findings to the broader Canadian context, because, as the current study shows, policy and economic contexts in Canadian provinces vary. Nonetheless, a general comparison of TALIS and our findings shows congruency in the types of issues and trends observed by school leaders across Canada. The focus of this evaluation and comparison, then, is on broad patterns and themes rather than close scrutiny of quantitative data which, given very different methodologies guiding the two reports, offers no opportunities for direct comparison in any event.

Text Box 9: TALIS Interpretation of Alberta's Schools

The TALIS survey produced a series of "Country Notes," focusing on specific participating countries and sub-national entities.[10] TALIS highlights the following points for Alberta, most of which are drawn from findings about teachers rather than administrators:

- Although the role of school administrators is not mentioned directly in the Country Notes, TALIS reports that feedback received by Alberta teachers "could be improved." Alberta teachers reported positive impacts on practice from feedback at lower rates than the TALIS average (51-60 per cent versus 63-70 per cent).
- The TALIS report finds high teacher and principal job satisfaction (over 90 per cent on most measures), but also the perception that the teaching profession is not valued by society: 47 per cent of Alberta teachers expressed this sentiment.

[9] The Alberta TALIS sample included 1,773 lower secondary teachers and 175 principals in 182 schools.
[10] See http://www.oecd.org/canada/TALIS-2013-country-note-Alberta-Canada.pdf for the Alberta Country Notes.

- Alberta teachers have among the highest professional development rates (98 per cent compared to the TALIS average of 88 per cent), but also have relatively weak levels of formal training in the subject areas in which they teach.

TALIS Principals

The TALIS sample of Alberta principals was n=175.[11] TALIS's Alberta principals were very similar to TALIS averages in many respects including age (about 50 years), gender (slightly more than half were male), and education levels. One point of divergence was in the greater likelihood of teaching duties for Alberta administrators (50 per cent versus 35 per cent TALIS average). Also, Alberta respondents sampled indicated a smaller average school size. While the TALIS average school had 546 students and 45 teachers, the average Alberta school in the TALIS sample had 335 students and 18 teachers.

Text Box 10: The Principalship: TALIS highlights

Key points on principalship emerging from the TALIS study were the following:

- Principals face demands from multiple stakeholders. These demands are often perceived to be "incompatible" and include increasing diversity, inclusion of special needs, and increased pressure to prepare students for a competitive economy.
- Although there is widely-held belief that strong school leadership contributes to student achievement, evidence linking these two factors directly is difficult to establish because there are many factors affecting school climate and efficacy. The principal's impact is thus "indirect," although certainly important. The principal impacts teachers' work and working conditions.
- The report states that administrators "are being accorded much more decision-making authority than they have enjoyed in the past" (p. 57). Decision-making authority, notes the TALIS study, is accompanied by an "increased demand for results" (p. 57).
- Principals in schools with a more distributed leadership model are more satisfied with their jobs.
- Comparisons between TALIS averages and Alberta principals show similar distributions of administrator experience levels by population size (size of the community in which the school is located) (Source: http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933044556).

Comparing Findings

Overall, TALIS findings show that many of the concerns facing Canadian administrators are being experienced globally (the Epilogue of this report also addresses this theme). The TALIS report notes as concerns "increasing social diversity, the inclusion of students with special needs, an emphasis on retaining students until graduation, and ensuring that students have the knowledge necessary to be able to participate in an increasingly competitive economy" (p. 56). In keeping with TALIS findings, Canadian principals surveyed in the current study—as the national and provincial analyses indicated—believed that they and their staff need the most support and professional development in addressing diverse student needs to ensure student success.

Despite this intersection in findings, the TALIS review of school leadership does not consider the political and economic contexts of schools that are so central to the current national study, such as the clear impacts of family poverty and transience on school communities or the ongoing work of transforming schools for meaningful learning in a wired age. It is understandable that contexts cannot be taken into consideration in such a sweeping international study; yet, without contexts, it is difficult

[11] As outlined in the Provincial and Regional Analysis section of this report, the current study included 180 Alberta school leaders with a sub-sample of 55 drawn to balance distribution in the overall Canadian sample.

to evaluate either the feasibility or the ideological underpinnings of policy recommendations. Key differences emerge in the kinds of assumptions that inform the TALIS and our national reports.

Table 2: TALIS Interpretation of Alberta's Schools

TALIS Policy Recommendations	Future of Principalship Policy Recommendations
• Increased school autonomy and increased school accountability (p. 51) • Formal preparation and leadership development programs for administrators • Increased use of distributed leadership models and strategies • Increased training in and applications of instructional leadership (p. 81) • Formal induction programs for new teachers (p. 113) • Increased and formalized teacher appraisal, using "comprehensive data" (p. 143); provide training to school leaders to conduct appraisals (p. 121) • Strong "teacher cooperation and a positive school climate" (p. 174)	• Focus on teaching and learning for diversity, especially for Aboriginal students, EAL students, and students with mental health concerns • More collaboration and capacity building among school staff • Stronger family and community relationships, working toward integrated service delivery models • Responsible and creative use of technology for learning and good citizenship ("digital citizenship") • Increased collaboration for administrators, and robust, continuous leadership learning

Whereas TALIS recommendations are focused on the inner workings of the school, our own findings suggest that capacities for school improvement depend also on the broader social, economic and political conditions within which schools operate.

Analyzing TALIS Items

Principals' Job Satisfaction

TALIS reported high job satisfaction among teachers and administrators.[12] Alberta principals in the TALIS sample reported satisfaction near study averages, with about 90 per cent of respondents "agreeing" or "strongly agreeing" to items like "The advantages of the profession clearly outweigh the disadvantages," and "All in all I am satisfied with my job." TALIS found correlations between principals' job satisfaction and the greater presence of collaboration and mutual respect in the school—a finding that appears congruent with our identification of administrator isolation as problematic. Further, heavy workloads correlated with less satisfaction.

TALIS questions pertaining to administrators' job satisfaction do not reflect the level of pessimism we discerned in our study. However, it is again difficult to draw direct comparisons given that the studies' methodologies were so different.

Teachers' and Administrators' Perceptions of Collaborative School Cultures[13]

In all countries and in the TALIS average, teachers' and administrators' perspectives on collaboration were most likely to align on "agreeing" that their schools were collaborative. Greater disparity between the perspectives of teachers and administrators is noted on the "strongly agree" descriptor.

[12] See Figure 3.11 in the TALIS report at http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933044480.

[13] In our review of TALIS findings, we chose a handful of countries to compare against the TALIS average, and Alberta's averages. These choices of comparison countries are based on their currency in comparative research conducted in Canada. Within the extensive data provided by the TALIS survey, we focused here on questions asked of administrators directly, and on those questions that best aligned with the current study in terms of their subject matter.

For example, on average, 33 per cent of administrators (47 per cent of Alberta administrators) "strongly agree" that staff have "opportunities to actively participate in school decisions," whereas teachers rank the same item as "strongly agree" an average of 12 per cent of the time (18 per cent in Alberta sample). However, on the "agree" level of the scale, perspectives are more closely matched. Sixty-five per cent of administrators agree on average (only 49 per cent in Alberta), and 63 per cent on average for teachers (63 per cent in Alberta).

A similar pattern is observed in other countries (Finland, England, Singapore and the USA, in particular), suggesting that generally (and unsurprisingly) administrators perceived a more collaborative environment than teachers did. However, as the majority of alignment falls under the "agree" descriptor, it seems reasonable to conclude that any gaps between administrators and teachers when it comes to collaborative environments are not insurmountable. On the other hand, there is a consistent pattern of about 20 per cent of teachers feeling disaffected, in comparison to only 3 per cent of administrators. This suggests that administrators either have a "blind spot" when it comes to staff disengagement, or that they choose to focus on the positive aspects of school collaboration in their responses.

Instructional Leadership or Distributed Leadership?

Overall, the TALIS study appears to value and promote greater distributed leadership, stating that "the work of the school and especially the work of the principal are increasingly recognized as responsibilities that are or should be shared" (p. 62). A similar policy direction is also advocated in this report. However, at the same time, the TALIS commentary stresses the instructional leadership dimensions of the principalship, raising an important question: is it "leadership" that is, in fact, to be distributed in the school, rather than the offloading of increasingly onerous managerial work onto teachers? There is also a philosophical tension in the TALIS call for school administrators to simultaneously embrace instructional leadership and distributed leadership—leadership models that locate power and expertise very differently within the school.

In contrast, the Canadian study's findings foreground instructional leadership as the most rewarding aspect of school administrators' work, even though participants struggled to find the time to focus on it. *The Future of Principalship in Canada's* analysis also questions the extent to which the school leader can or should be expected to offer a full complement of instructional leadership, given the increasing diversity of student learning needs and accompanying complexity of program requirements.

The fundamental tension between accountability and leadership functions is mentioned but goes largely unaddressed in the TALIS report. TALIS proposes that both functions are possible, whereas the Canadian study concluded that accountability and reporting requirements infringe directly upon the time and resources that administrators would like to be putting into instructional leadership.

Perceived Barriers to Principal Effectiveness

The TALIS report compares the barriers to effectiveness, as perceived by principals, in England, USA, Singapore, Finland and Alberta. Table 2, drawn from TALIS data, shows the percentage of respondents who state that given barriers diminished principal effectiveness "a lot" or "to some extent."[14]

[14] Likert items in the original question: "A lot," "To some extent," "Very little," or "Not at all." Original data is available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/888933044062.

Table 3: Barriers to Principal Effectiveness (from TALIS report)

Barriers	TALIS Average		Alberta		Finland		Singapore		England		USA	
Per cent Ranking Barrier as "A lot" or "To some extent"	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*	*%*	*Rank*	*%*
Inadequate school budget and resources	**1**	80%	**2**	78%	**2**	77%	**2**	66%	**2**	78%	**3**	62%
Government regulation and policy	**3**	69%	**3**	63%	5	35%	5	28%	**1**	80%	**2**	66%
Teachers' absences	7	38%	5	33%	**3**	40%	4	29%	5	49%	5	37%
Lack of parent or guardian involvement and support	5	49%	4	53%	4	38%	**3**	46%	4	53%	4	60%
Teachers' career-based wage system	4	50%	9	17%	6	35%	7	15%	6	32%	7	33%
Lack of opportunities and support for principal's professional development	9	30%	8	24%	9	22%	8	8%	9	9%	9	21%
Lack of opportunities and support for teachers' professional development	6	43%	6	27%	8	24%	9	7%	8	14%	8	24%
High workload and level of responsibilities in the principal's job	**2**	72%	**1**	88%	**1**	82%	**1**	76%	**3**	68%	**1**	77%
Lack of shared leadership with other school staff members	8	32%	7	25%	7	26%	6	23%	7	18%	6	35%

The data show that, for the countries in question, budget constraints, government policies, high workloads, and complex responsibilities are consistently ranked as the most significant barriers. These findings align well with our study, which similarly shows resource constraints, workloads and government accountability requirements as the greatest challenges to principal effectiveness.

Notably, while TALIS concludes in its policy recommendations that greater leadership learning is a priority—for principals in these countries at least—access to professional development opportunities rank among the lowest of the barriers. One might conclude that the OECD's long-standing focus on professional learning as a lever for educational development tends to ignore more systemic barriers to the capacity of school leaders to do their work.

What Can We Conclude from the TALIS Comparison?

While the TALIS report is highly descriptive and analytical, it still reflects a certain underlying vision of schooling and its ends. So much is contingent upon what the ideal role of the school principal is deemed to be—at times represented by the authors of the TALIS 2013 results in highly attenuated and decontextualized frames. While the TALIS survey exhaustively reports differences between countries in terms of describing how administrators spend their time, this does not matter much if it is not benchmarked against how administrators *aspire* to spend their time.

Although the roles of parents, community, policy and other factors outside of the school are acknowledged in the TALIS study, the focus on the actions and behaviours of teachers and administrators, necessarily decontextualized by the large scale and international scope of this study, overshadows the importance of contexts and runs the risk of being interpreted in a manner that perpetuates schools' responsibility to address society's major problems.

As a policy body, the OECD aggregates and legitimizes global policy trends of ongoing (and increasing) accountability, merit-based systems of teacher performance, greater standardization of assessments, evaluation via fine-grained metrics—i.e., data-driven decision making—and, overall, a largely technocratic view of teaching and learning.

The Future of the Principalship in Canada, in contrast, recognizes and emphasizes that the broader contexts of the work of schools cannot be ignored. The responses in the national study stressed that a wide array of social problems and pathologies—poverty, accommodating immigrant families, mental health matters and economic instability were key factors—are being foisted on schools without the resources required to address them effectively. The national study also revealed that Canadian school leaders and their staff do not desire to work in isolation of their communities; further, principals do not believe they can work effectively without community support.

On balance, the administrators of *The Future of the Principalship in Canada* offered a vision of public education as a community endeavour grounded in trusting relationships—a vision that is in many ways at odds with OECD foci on efficiency, standardization, and accountability.

Strategic Foresight and the Future of School Leadership

> *"We are always educating for a world that is or is becoming out of joint, for this is the basic human situation, in which the world is created by mortal hands to serve mortals for a limited time as home."*
>
> *(Arendt 1969, p. 192–93)*

As the study affirms, the multiplicity of forces impacting schools and the work of principals should prevent us from simplistic cause-effect thinking and from rushing to solutions and strategies. In analyzing the data collected, Galtung's (1982) *Model for Configuring the Future* (Table 4) provides a helpful scaffold to ensure that we consider the future of the principalship in Canada in terms of four futures: possible, probable, preferred and prospective. Scott (2005, p. 116) has pointed out that strategic foresight that attempts to predict the future and/or determine the precise impacts of trends and drivers of change runs the risk of "closing down the opening to unknown futures."

This continuum of futures reminds us that the future does not live as an "other" to human agency: we are its co-creators.

Table 4: Model for Configuring the Future (Galtung, 1982)

	Probable Futures	Possible Futures	Preferred Futures	Prospective Futures
Description of Activities	• Trend analysis • Global analysis	• Imaginative • Creative ideas	• Values position • Critical	• Willingness to act • Empowerment
Related Types of futures thinking	• Predictive • Quantitative • Trend is destiny (one future)	• Cultural • Interpretive • Utopian (many futures)	• Critical • Postmodernist • Ideological (a future that is "other")	• Integral • Transformational • Empowering • Futuring: a future that is co-created
Supporting Paradigms	• Positivist • Empirical • Analytical	• Constructivist • Interpretive • Hermeneutic	• Critical • Emancipatory	• Paradigm shift • Transformational
Research Methods	• Quantitative • Forecasting • Trend scenarios	• Qualitative • Dialogues • Creative visions	• Text analysis • Critique of media • Cultural artifacts • Visioning	• Integral visioning • Action planning • Research in action/action in research
Goals	• Generalization • Extrapolation	• Opening alternate possibilities	• Critical awareness • Deconstruction	• Empowerment • Transformation

Complementing Galtung's model, the four-corner matrix below allows us to conceptualize the future of the principalship in Canada as a multiplicity of futures bound up in the complexities of the temporal (short and long term) and the spatial or geographic. As the graphic organizer below indicates, the range of influences on school leaders can be positioned along a continuum of short to long term,

moving from the left to right on the horizontal axis. When considering the influences and societal trends impacting schools and the education sector, the vertical axis delineates the boundary between internal and external.

As we look to the top left quadrant, externally driven, short-term changes include what one respondent described as “the year-to-year budgeting processes of our provincial government that function like a drive-by act of vandalism leading to staff cuts and reductions in services to students.” While some short-term changes are both feasible and desired, such as those listed in the graphic above, also included in this area are potential sudden funding cuts to education, program closures instigated by school districts, labour action by employee groups and indecisive leadership in the area of policy development.

Internally driven short-term changes described by school leaders occupy the bottom left corner. These include many reactive and tactical activities, such as efforts to mitigate poverty and support for social work interventions. Many of these strategies are also desirable and effective in the immediate sense, but do not foster the kind of forward-thinking, progressive and systemic change that is necessary in order to achieve true change. The bottom right corner addresses internally driven long-term changes, such as planning leadership succession, fostering parent partnerships and finding ways to sustain the capacity of the school to offer programs. These long-term changes demonstrate schools’ adaptability to their environmental conditions—often in positive and proactive ways—but still do not address underlying social issues, and do not result in broad change in the educational landscape.

In the top right corner lies the truly strategic work of school leaders. This is a zone outside the school system boundary where action is focused on actually reshaping or shifting the influences and trends that drive the changes that impact schools, rather than on adapting to the environment. This reshaping of influences and trends involves advocating for resources and drawing public awareness to the importance of supports for early learning. Focusing action and strategic attention here creates

environmental change that will drive real innovation and broad societal changes in schools, making a lasting and intense impact on students' learning conditions.

The following synthesizes the seven trends or societal changes and Galtung's four futures to productively consolidate the perspectives study respondents brought to the focus groups.

Trends	Possible Futures	Probable Futures	Preferred Futures
1. Continued dependence on primary resources	• Canadians remain tied to primary resources as the driving force for their economy and as the source of funding for public services. • Boom–bust cycles continue, making long-term, meaningful changes in education difficult. • School systems continue to be over-managed and under-imagined. • Growing economic disparity limits opportunities for children and youth.	• As high-performing countries move toward a knowledge-based economy, access to education in some progressive jurisdictions becomes more equitable and the education is of a high quality. • Canadians struggle to reconcile two competing views: one driven by fear of "the other" (i.e. international rankings) that sees education as a matter of survival of the fittest, and one driven by equity that sees upholding public education as a way to create a vibrant future for Canadians. • Schools face increasing pressure to privatize services, such as student assessment.	• Schools maintain sustained partnerships with communities, enterprises and tertiary education. • So called high-performing countries move toward a focus on equity and building networks to co-create a great school for all (locally and globally). • Students become their best selves by relating to others in schools that focus on living rather than on preparing for life.
2. A growing environmental crisis	• Globalization continues and economic goals remain focused on maintaining continual material progress and achieving profits. • Environmental and social justice education continues to be seen as an add-on to already content-heavy courses. • The curriculum remains fragmented into externally mandated learner outcomes shaped by international competition for results ('learnification').	• Advocates for sustainable communities slow the pace of urban sprawl. • Governments realize that economic competitiveness and global sustainability are not mutually exclusive. • Curriculum as encounter with the world focuses on critical thinking, self-reflection and group decision-making. • Schools focus on teaching students about the world as it is and how it could be (futures thinking).	• Schools focus on problem-based learning to teach students how human beings are connected to the earth. • Studies in deep ecology and chaos, systems, and complexity theories broaden the concept of learning. • Social capital is measured in terms of overall well-being rather than in terms of material growth, as measured by the Gross Domestic Product.
3. Globalization	• Power increasingly resides in the hands of transnational corporations (which advance an industrial model of schooling) rather than in the hands of governments (which can use schools to promote democratic values and build community). • The gap between the rich and the poor continues to grow. • Schools are pressured to address the needs of employers and, as a result, focus on preparing students for the workforce. • Standardized testing increases in an effort to force schools to demonstrate that they are meeting performance targets imposed by external agencies.	• Schools take a more holistic approach to learning by focusing on the arts and crafts rather than on just the narrow set of skills needed to compete in a globalized economy. • Stakeholders (including teachers, parents and students) struggle to collaborate in the work of learning and building vibrant democratic communities. • Cultures of compliance and bureaucratic accountability (i.e. the Third Way) increasingly clash with cultures fostering creativity, innovation and social responsibility (i.e. the Fourth Way).	• Schools across Canada substitute a critique of globalization and explore internationalization through networks of schools committed to a great school for all. • Schools honour previously neglected ways of knowing, including the wisdom of indigenous cultures, aesthetics, spirituality and altruism. • The social imagination of Canadians is driven by a shared vision that diversity is an asset honoured through the internationalization of education.

Trends	Possible Futures	Probable Futures	Preferred Futures
4.Broadening learning opportunities	• Teachers struggle to provide students with comprehensive "wrap-around" services while government ministries continue to work in bureaucratic silos. • Schools are knowledge factories of 'learnification' overseen by data analytics and digital learning-management systems marketed by technology vendors. • Technology is viewed as the best way of creating communities.	• Corporations and technology vendors advance the view that learning should be personalized to meet the needs of the student as customer. • School-based assessment strategies that assess different kinds of learning increasingly come into conflict with the government's efforts to impose standardized competency-based indicators of achievement. • Canadians become increasingly dissatisfied with the view that students, as judged by their performance on standardized tests, are either winners or losers.	• Committed to equity, governments ensure that every Canadian student has access to a great school. • Schools focus on teaching students how to live in harmony with the ecosystem. • Schools are vibrant centres of learning focused on how to live in harmony with an increasingly complex ecosystem. • The curriculum is viewed as an encounter between students and teachers and between the school and the community. • Performing beyond expectations, schools focus on public assurance measures and professional responsibility.
5. Rethinking citizenship and civil society	• Schools continue to perpetuate the notion that the individual is sovereign and that students are entitled to learn anywhere, at any pace and at any time. • Governments, using digital learning management systems, enhance accountability frameworks that focus on data-mining and analytics. • Driven by cuts to public education, public education is increasingly privatized. • Teachers are deprofessionalized, while non-certificated personnel are hired to take charge of students. • Young bloggers use social media to express their views while educators scramble to meet them on "their own turf."	• The importance of public education in fostering citizenship is overshadowed by an insistence that education should be customized to address the needs of the learner. • Teachers want to establish lateral networks whereby they can share innovative practices with one another. • Governments increasingly attempt to tie teachers' financial compensation to the performance of their students. • Professional development for teachers is increasingly geared to boosting student performance on large-scale assessments. • Technology vendors and others with a vested interest in undermining public education continue to charge that education is in crisis and that ineffective teachers are to blame.	• Communities understand that the so-called crisis in education is a product of neoliberal ideology and reject the proposed solutions (i.e. downsizing, increased surveillance, privatization). • The concept of learning is broadened to include the personal, social, spatial and spiritual. • Learning is seen as critical to the survival of the human race.

Trends	Possible Futures	Probable Futures	Preferred Futures
6. Fluid personal identity	• As Canada's student population becomes more diverse, schools are under growing pressure to offer English as an Additional Language programs. • Family units become increasingly complex and schools are pressured to address students' social needs.	• The educational system develops ways of addressing the needs of marginalized students, while governments continue to underfund public education. • Schools begin to teach students not only about how the world is but about how they can help to change it though internationalization efforts. • The market-driven approach to personalizing learning begins to clash with the recognition that real learning is built on human relationships.	• School communities not only address students' learning needs but advance policies ensuring that students are ready to learn. • Schools see diversity as an asset and place a priority on leadership that supports social justice. • Teachers exercise mindfulness as they participate in holistic communities of practice.
7. Blurring boundaries between nature, culture and technology	• Students of privilege attend boutique schools that prepare them for life in an increasingly competitive culture driven by a fear of "the other." • Although schools increasingly use personal, digital technologies, the curriculum continues to be fragmented into discrete subject areas and grade levels. • Students use a wide range of technologies, including social networking. • Funding for technology in schools continues to focus on hardware and software rather than on supporting collaborative professional learning. • Children from disadvantaged families continue to have less access to technology than their more advantaged peers.	• Pilot schools allow students to have flexible access to learning based on their own timetable and needs. • Learning increasingly occurs as an encounter between teachers and students. • Teachers and students have opportunities to connect with learners from all over the world through networks. • The potential of technology to transform learning is thwarted by bureaucratic thinking and an emphasis on large-scale testing programs.	• Students learn different ways of knowing and enhance their appreciation of other cultures by connecting with learners all over the globe. • Schools not only teach students how to use digital technology but also help them to develop manual skills and an appreciation of the crafts. • Learning is less about acquiring facts than about developing multiple literacies. • Schools are no longer subject to the drivers of the technocracy, standardization and bureaucratic accountability.

Strategic Foresight as a Declaration against Fatalism

Public education has always been intimately connected to the beliefs, aspirations and values of a society. Yet, society today is diverse and complex. As study respondents often told us, creativity, flexibility, local autonomy and cohesive community are required if schools are to meet the range of needs they encounter. This is why strategic action is necessary: without a cohesive plan of action by education stakeholders to address the wide range of social issues that impact classrooms, any change introduced into the system would merely reflect the fact that today's school administrators have been corralled into practicing "band-aid" leadership. Instead of asking administrators to move their fingers from plugging one set of holes in the dam to another, policymakers must act to relieve the buildup of pressure *behind* the dam so that school leaders can anticipate and effectively respond to the problems inherent in the system.

This study certainly validates the findings of our initial literature review, namely that school administrators are:

- overloaded by the volume and complexity of their responsibilities,

- often feeling unable to act in the best interests of their school staff and students (Blakesley, 2012),
- frustrated by excessive accountability demands, and
- at risk of burnout in an increasingly ramped up culture of performativity.

Study respondents across Canada pointed to these issues and—while there are some regional particularities—it appears that educational ministries nationally tend to subscribe to the view that devolved administrative responsibilities, increased accountability, and reduced public funding for social services and family supports are the appropriate drivers for educational reform. In such a climate, organizations advocating for change are compelled to take a proactive stance in their work, taking up the challenge of creating a compelling vision of what ought to be.

Some study participants alluded to alternative models of schooling and the need for different kinds of relationships in schools, but were not always able to offer a specific vision of how leadership might have to change in response to these new models. In their descriptions of needed short- and long-term supports, administrators in this study included the need for more embedded professional learning time during the school day, more opportunities to collaborate, and more time to build relationships with teachers, students and parents. Yet, questions also arose in relation to this:

- To what extent, if at all, should private and corporate interests be involved in schools? This study highlights the need for industry engagement to prepare students for work, particularly in skilled trades. Yet, some principals wondered whether corporate engagement erodes public education.
- If community partnerships are desired and should be expanded upon, who should be responsible for community relations, administration of shared services, and other forms of external outreach and collaboration?
- How might different models rebuild relations between schools and families?

> *"After twenty years as a principal I appreciate the fact that there will always be a line-up of people outside of my office door—but it is the growing number of bureaucrats, consultants and other 'experts' hovering outside the school yard telling me how to do my job that I find most frustrating."*

Overall, respondents in this study were not optimistic about the role of the school principal as it is currently enacted. They see the position as fraught with increasing stress and complexity and predict that this will result in early retirements, increased incidents of stress leaves and burnout, and difficulty recruiting committed and talented educators into administrative roles. In keeping with existing literature on the topic, principal recruitment in rural schools is anticipated to be a particular challenge (Fink, 2008; Honig & Hatch, 2004).

Despite the pessimistic tone, this study collected ample evidence of the types of schools that Canada's school leaders aspire to see. These are schools in which:

- parents and educators work in respectful and mutually supportive ways to nurture the social, emotional and cognitive growth of children and youth;
- all students feel safe and valued;
- social services are readily accessible to families in need;
- educators have time during the school day to share professional learning;
- flexible, local leadership and sufficient funding allow schools to be responsive to the needs of students and their families;
- all students are able to transition effectively to the workplace, or to further post-secondary education;

- technology is used critically and effectively in teaching and learning, and is accessible to all students; and
- citizenship is modeled and enacted in local partnerships, formal democratic processes, and globally through understanding and respect for diversity.

Although Canada's provincial governments would claim allegiance to this vision, school leaders are not, according to the respondents in this study, supported with policy or necessary funding and resources to allow schools to educate all students well. While many of the needs expressed in this study are often overwhelming and pressing, the best strategies are those that show leadership and present a strong, feasible vision for ways forward.

Administrators are reaching for new paradigms. Respondents imagined that schools might become community hubs, providing "flexible, inquiry-based learning and 'wraparound supports' that meet the needs of all students." There is an "increased need for distributed leadership and the involvement of schools' communities to provide support and contribute to developing a transition plan."

Nationally, many administrators viewed a clear, consistent and non-partisan vision for education as necessary. One respondent envisioned national focus on supports for "healthy communities. We need policies to help re-culture schools and society. Schools cannot lead society, yet that is what is expected of us. Society has to have expectations of itself if its members want children to grow into it." Another administrator further articulated the tensions surrounding external expectations:

> The swing toward results-based education with statistical accountability is in direct juxtaposition with the creativity and critical thinking skill that we are trying to nurture. Educators are asked to do both. Honestly, I am pushing forward with what matters in fostering creative and critical thinking. The more we move forward in education with what really matters, the more we will need to change what is expected from above.

If what is in fact the "management" of schools is consistently conflated with "leadership" in policy and professional development, gaps between expectations and reality are likely to persist and damage the morale and efficacy of school leaders.

But how does the reality of administrators' work—highlighted in this study—align with the visions and expectations of leadership development models? Furthermore, how can CAP contribute to a re-articulated vision of school leadership that taps the talents and motivations of educators who are drawn to leadership in its many forms and facets?

As an organization that advocates for school leadership and contributes to the professional identity of school principals, CAP, among other teacher organizations across Canada, provides service to its members by drawing on both research-based findings and practical wisdom to articulate a clear vision of the kinds of schools envisioned by the respondents in this study. With this in mind, future studies might examine the following questions:

- How can CAP contribute to the definition of leadership priorities and build stakeholder supports for this vision?
- How can CAP enhance national dialogue about school leadership?
- What does a school administrator's "ideal day" look like and how does it benefit school staff and students? How does this ideal compare to the present state of affairs?

Recognizing the growing complexity of principalship and the "wrong drivers" that are now distracting school leaders from the deeper work they ought to be doing, Fullan (2014) advocates for a balance of the role of the principal, one that repositions the principal as a Leading Learner, a System Player and an Agent of Change. In his view, a "narrow focus on instructional leadership and student achievement can

shut out other dimensions of leading learning" (p. 41). Fullan's challenge to principals is to "*lead the school's teachers in a process of learning to improve their teaching, while learning alongside them about what works and what doesn't*" (p. 56). On the ground, this work involves seven competencies: (1) Challenge the Status Quo, (2) Build Trust Through Clear Communications and Expectations, (3) Create a Commonly Owned Plan for Success, (4) Focus on Team over Self, (5) Have a Sense of Urgency for Sustainable Results, (6) Commit to Continuous Improvement for Self, and (7) Build External Networks and Partnerships. Each of these competencies is expanded and explained from the perspective of the principal.

While leadership competencies and the attributes of exemplary school leaders will likely remain the focus of much of the literature on the future of principalship, the *Beyond Expectations Project* (Hargreaves & Harris, 2011) helps us to crystalize a preferred future for the school principal.[15] This project examined the ways in which the highest performing schools, districts or local authorities and school systems achieved and sustained excellence, despite historical and systemic challenges. Drawing from an analysis of twenty education sites across three countries, including case studies from Finland, Alberta, Ontario and Singapore, Hargreaves and Harris' work provides concrete examples of what leadership looks like in the midst of the growing complexity and diversity of our organizations and communities. The frame of performing "beyond expectations" provides clarity and optimism for the future of school leadership that avoids sloganeering and Pollyanna approaches in reimagining the future work of the school principal.

> *"Schools need to become places where students and teachers can work creatively to build common understanding, rather than being a factory of human production. It is exciting to get back to this point [and] to see how the improved creativity of students [and] school programs is also re-energizing teachers [and] school communities."*

Countering the Isolation of School Leaders

The paradoxical nature of principals' work is evident throughout this study. Along with other recent analyses of administrators' time use documented in our literature review, this study points not only to deep tensions surrounding the globalizing, disembodied and "outward facing" characteristics of technology, but also to the very embodied and place-based activities and relationships that characterize administrators' preferred visions.

While this study reinforces the need for developing strategic foresight in the work of school leaders, the persistent realities of dealing with the day-day-to demands of the principalship remain an obstacle to achieving this goal. The principalship role has always embodied a tension between managerial and instructional leadership roles (Sackney & Walker, 2006). While the principalship should be increasingly informed by work in relation to internally driven long-term change, this study and other research illustrate the difficulties in committing time to this work.[16]

School leaders are more frequently called to account for their schools' performance relative to so-called international standards, yet they are simultaneously compelled to work in isolation, too often in

[15] This project resulted in the publication of Hargreaves, Harris, and Boyle's study, *Uplifting Leadership: How Organizations, Teams, and Communities Raise Performance*.

[16] In 2013 the ATA conducted a time diary study of 27 principals focused on determining patterns of time committed to 14 categories of activities over a one week period. While a small sample, the study affirmed the decreasing capacity of school leaders nationally to commit time to the enduring work of instructional leadership (4.5 hours per week) versus operations and management (12 hours per week). The study will be published in the summer, 2014.

the quiet hope that solutions will come from outside. However, considerable evidence suggests that the locus of control for advancing school improvement is increasingly the school and not the system.[17]

The growing use (and misuse) of the term "leadership" is a shaky ladder leaned on the wall of school reform. Certainly the participants' responses reflect both the irony and the possibility that characterize the hope that leadership will resolve the local and global challenges. Yet, perhaps the challenge is not in leadership, per se, but in the refusal to accept that leaders require public support through civic engagement and a commitment to community and "followership" (Kellerman, 2013). The culture of "drive by complaint," fuelled by a combination of cynicism and narcissism, is not conducive to supporting leadership in any sector.

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For Canada's principals, unfortunately, those who are not committed to the values of equity and social justice drive (what passes for) educational research and innovation in leadership. It is well established that family and community characteristics account for over half of the variation in student learning outcomes (Berliner & Glass, 2014, p. 170-177); still, increasingly policymakers focus on strategies to ramp up performance for school leaders, all but ignoring the systemic obstacles to learning.

Sahlberg (2011) has coined the term *Global Educational Reform Movement* (GERM) to describe current distorted conceptions of leadership that prevent governments from undertaking meaningful educational reforms. Driven by elite policymakers (a growing number of professional "school reform" bureaucrats and corporate leaders), GERM is a neoliberal movement that promotes an agenda with which Canadians and other North Americans are all too familiar: a narrow focus on "basics" tied to core subjects (now ambiguously repackaged as competencies in the Common Core Standards in the USA and Canada), the implementation of universal standards for teaching practice and school leadership and a fixation on emerging technologies as a way of improving schools.

Fuelled by powerful organizations such as the OECD, GERM compels schools and nations to compete for scarce resources and seek vaguely described competitive advantages rather than collaborate. To facilitate managerial accountability, GERM typically requires the maintenance of a large bureaucratic infrastructure that generates a seemingly endless stream of standards, benchmarks and performance indicators. The prevalence of GERM ideology has impeded governments from meaningfully tackling curriculum redesign, addressing family poverty, taking measures to increase the readiness of children to learn and allowing teachers to lead reform efforts. More importantly, the GERM movement distracts policymakers from considering the complex intersection of social, economic and political forces that inhibit the capacity of schools to achieve the broader goals of social justice and equity (Theoharis, 2009).

The strategy to counter GERM and its deleterious effects on school leaders includes focusing on internationalization, which means establishing international partnerships to help foster innovation and creativity at the school level by emphasizing that school reform is part of the internationalization of education. Moujaes, Hoteit and Hiltunen, in consultation with Sahlberg (2012), developed a helpful framework for transformational leadership that includes three strategies:

1. **Thinking ahead:** being bold, visionary and forward-thinking in aspiring to create a great school for all students

[17] See Couture, J-C & Murgatroyd, S. 2012. *Rethinking Leadership: Creating Great Schools for All Students*. Edmonton: Future Think Press.

2. **Delivering within:** materially supporting and committing to the goals one sets while avoiding the distractions of "doing business as usual;" continually asking, "why do we do things this way?"
3. **Leading across:** principals, teachers and students crossing school and jurisdictional boundaries to learn from each other

Rethinking leadership by *thinking ahead*, *delivering within* and *reaching across* can incite transformation for Canada's principals.

Canada's school leaders aspire to be co-creators of a great school for all students. Only time and networks of support will give them the opportunity to achieve this highest of all aspirations, which is integral to the future of public education in this country.

Epilogue: The Leadership Challenge for Canada's Principals Today

Dennis Shirley, Boston College

The Future of the Principalship in Canada provides a clarion call to action for Canada's public, policymakers and the educational profession overall. While one has to exercise caution in reading the results because of the small sample sizes from the individual provinces, there is a striking consistency by and large if one looks at the nation as a whole. As well, this study productively considers the international contexts of school leadership, analyzing the findings in relation to the results of the 2013 Teaching and Learning International Survey. But what are some of the most significant findings of the Canadian study?

There are five major points that emerge from this study. First, Canada's principals are struggling to address the needs of increasingly diverse students and in many cases lack sufficient resources to do so. While they appreciate that diversity is a blessing in general and essential in preparing Canada to engage with the opportunities and challenges of globalization, in the immediate, day-to-day lived realities of their schools, diversity often requires supplementary materials and cross-cultural skills that expand the nature of their responsibilities. When principals lack those materials and the professional development required to make the most of diversity, the nature of their workload intensifies.

Second, heightened accountability systems and their management and compliance features distract principals from their core tasks of improving teaching and learning. Principals do not call into question the quest for public assurance as much as they do the translation of broad civic responsibility into narrow, technicist accountability. When these new burdens become excessively onerous, they undermine the educational nature of school leaders' work, transforming those leaders into compliance officers of vast information systems that appear to offer few cognitive returns for their investment for schools.

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Third, technological advances, often heralded as beacons of a bold new age of 21st-century skills, drag principals into complicated vortices of conflict resolution. Canada's principals, like their colleagues around the world, find themselves trying to get to the bottom of just who posted which bullying or sexting message on Facebook first and how a simple message with perhaps benign intent spiraled into a crisis that hurt vulnerable youth. In addition, new technologies require constant maintenance and upkeep. When an expensive new operating system falters or a new on-line curriculum freezes up, nerves are frayed and principals are left scrambling for support that is often delayed and incomplete.

Fourth, there is a bimodal distribution of parent and school relationships. Professional parents demand more and more supports and individualized attention for their sons and daughters with an apparently inexhaustible sense of entitlement. Poor and working-class parents, on the other hand, do not know how to access the school system or feel threatened and defeated by it, so they learn to keep a measured distance from the school. Social justice demands that principals develop special initiatives to serve those who historically have been at the margins of schools, but patterns of privilege can easily subvert new initiatives into yet another set of services for those who already receive the lion's share of educators' attention. Principals need help navigating these messy school and community relationships.

Finally, *The Future of the Principalship in Canada* reveals that there is enormous diversity in regard to how school leadership is enacted in Canada. Some provinces have histories of complicated labour relationships between teacher unions and the schools. Others have introduced new marketplace models of reform that rob principals of scarce time to improve instruction by directing them towards branding and advertising tasks that have little to do with their call to improve education. It does not mean the same thing to be a school principal in a remote, rural school with only two colleagues as it does to be in a crowded urban environment with a staff of over 70.

All of these complicated change forces immerse Canada's principals in a social context that does not promote the kinds of life-long learning needed to best meet the challenges of the future. An insistently intrusive consumer society erodes the focused attention on teaching and learning which educators need to bring the full repertoire of their professional skills to fruition. Electronic media and powerful and pervasive advertising promote individualistic acquisition without a countervailing civil society emphasizing the responsibilities of the individual to the collective. Globalization and urbanization deplete rural areas of jobs, leaving behind vulnerable populations of the elderly, the indigenous, and the young to subsist without adequate supports and with few long-term prospects.

While there are many positive social and educational trends, they do not leap off the pages of *The Future of the Principalship in Canada* report as much as the troublesome ones. Canada's principals are soldiering on, but they need consistent and strategic assistance from policymakers and the public. Fortunately, Canada has developed excellent policies over many years that on the whole have produced a strong and resilient educational profession. I have visited schools across Canada where principals work the corridors like charismatic dynamos of school improvement, asking one student about her results on a test, checking in with a teacher on a new curriculum and touching base with a parent about a student with a learning disability. These principals demonstrate that with a cheerfully hyperactive character, an infectious can-do spirit and vast panoply of behind-the-scenes consultations with students and faculty, the principalship in Canada can be a fulfilling profession.

Therefore, it is important to acknowledge the heroic dedication of Canada's best principals. Still, Canadians should avoid the propensity of USA reformers who idealize individual educators who sacrifice everything in their pursuit of student achievement. Movies like *The Freedom Writers* that extol the dedication of an educator who loses her marriage for the sake of her students call for penetrating critique, not mindless emulation. One cannot build a profession out of moral martyrs.

So what do Canadian policymakers and the public need to do to better support their principals? First, acknowledge that, while diversity brings forth many blessings in terms of enriching the social fabric of the nation and preparing young Canadians to engage with other cultures and nations, in the short run principals and teachers need more supports. Diverse students need educators with the skill sets to help them with language issues, with the right technological adaptations to match their learning needs, and with the creativity to persevere in trying to find just the right pedagogical adjustments to help students access the general curriculum.

Second, while principals understand their responsibility to assure parents and the public that students are learning at high levels, recent emphases on accountability have entailed additional time demands on principals that subtract from their ability to focus on improving teaching and learning. Internationally, more and more jurisdictions are now stepping back from policies that entailed the belief that more tests would surely result in more learning. We are turning to a new if belated recognition that the improvement of teaching and learning is its own domain and focal area rather than one that is derivative from accountability, at least in any simple-minded or direct relationship. Shifting resources from accountability to capacity enhancement is one of the next large-scale transitions of educational change, and one that is gaining momentum around the world today.

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The third area in which policymakers can help principals relates to the infusion of new technologies into schools and the culture at large. Especially for students with learning disabilities, new technologies can help to give them previously unimagined access to the general curriculum. In other areas, principals need help deciding which technology to pursue and which to avoid. Policymakers can help principals and the public to come up with a broad set of guidelines on appropriate and inappropriate behaviors for students and can make sure that these are taught like any other part of the curriculum. These should be transmitted not only after an incident has occurred but rather form part of an ongoing and dynamic set of curricular conversations during school time.

Beyond this, educators, policymakers, and the public at large need to step back from the unquestioned mania for more and more technology. Schools and communities need to help young people discover the healthy joys that can be found in their environments. We need to expose our young people to the wonders of nature, whether through farming, whitewater rafting, mountain climbing, or cross-country skiing. We should have international competitions among nations to raise youth who exemplify physical excellence and overall social and emotional well-being. We need to stop *surfing* technology and return to *serving* our young people, modeling for them that we all are happier and healthier when we use technology *intentionally* as a tool rather than *permanently* as a crutch.

Fourth, to help Canada's principals to excel at their jobs, a new social compact among educators, parents and communities is called for. Vigorous new outreach and development efforts are needed between schools and parents and communities of poor, working class, and aboriginal students. Some of this can involve the transmission of optimal supports for student learning, and some of it should involve respectful and quiet learning of the conditions that exist in under-resourced communities. School-community development needs to begin at the preschool level and continue all the way to the end of secondary school. Our educators all need to understand the public-building aspects of their vocation, which require engaging in sympathetic dialogue, especially with those who have been most poorly served by their schools in the past.

At the other end of the spectrum, professional parents in too many cases have taken the consumerist mentality that they bring to shopping malls or on-line businesses and applied it to the schools. The mentality appears to be one of entitlement on the basis of one's financial clout and the proposition that the customer is always right. But schools are not businesses, and, in free and self-governing societies like Canada, schools need to be places where all parties practice the civic skills of compromise; no one's needs or desires should run roughshod over the needs of others. In market-oriented western societies we need to understand that the creation of a *public* through *public schools* requires learning the arts of democracy—sharing one's own opinions and learning that the exchange of ideas and aspirations of others ultimately is enriching if one is steadfast and relational in how one advances one's ideas and aspirations.

Fifth, policymakers and the public need to understand that their expectations of school leaders—and how some of their politically-motivated reforms become translated into the decrees and mandates that determine the work lives of principals—carry real consequences. For example, principals in British Columbia devote far more of their time to warding off and adjudicating labour-management disputes than is the case in other provinces. This deprives them of precious time that could be used to focus on improving instruction. Principals in Alberta argue that policymakers' infatuations with marketplace models of reform lead them to dedicate too much time to branding and then advertising their schools.

In contexts of heightened marketplace competition the battle for student enrolments is imperative—but is this the best use of principals' time? Principals working with immigrant pupils, or with First Nations, Métis and Inuit students, need additional supports to understand how to optimize the potential of non-dominant groups. Placing policy pressure on easily measurable areas, such as literacy and math, may provide some reassurance that educators are being held accountable, but may simultaneously demotivate populations that have a more holistic and cooperative approach to education. Further, policy decisions that emphasize standardization may prove to be of limited use when differentiation and inclusion need to drive school improvement forward. This is especially the case for populations for whom traditional understandings of academic learning have poor records of success in the recent past.

Canada is a dynamic and vibrant nation that, in spite of its many challenges, posts highly not just on education on international indicators but also fares well on health, environmental guidelines, and tolerance. Its school principals deserve credit and gratitude for their important roles in forging the societal values that have enabled the country to thrive. Theirs is a demanding job. Still, when they have adequate supports and energetic, highly social personalities, it can be an enormously rewarding one.

The Future of the Principalship in Canada should be studied carefully for the warnings it contains about a vital professional role that is under increasing societal pressure. To ask principals to be at the front line of educating for diversity, managing accountability systems, mediating technological conflicts, and improving community relations—all while focusing their energies on the improvement of teacher quality and student learning—is to raise expectations to a level that few individuals on their own are likely to be able to meet. With the courage to confront the problems forthrightly and the right calibration of public and professional will to rethink expectations and to redeploy resources, Canada's principals can persevere and even thrive in their indispensable social roles. Best of all, the nation will be able not just to maintain and accelerate its quantitative results measuring student achievement, but will be able to do so with integrity, knowing that in the end not just every *student*, not just every *teacher*, but also every *principal* matters.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Summary of Recent Empirical Literature on Factors that Influence the Work of Principals and Changes in Principals' Work

Study	Sample	Methods	Factors*	Principal* Work
ATA (2009)	Alberta: 101 principals and vice-principals	Surveys, focus groups, interviews	1, 3, 4	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10
AAESQ (2008)	Quebec: all school and board administrators	Census survey	2, 3	1, 2, 10
Barber et al. (2011)	8 systems: Alberta, Ontario, England, New York, New Zealand, Netherlands, Singapore, Victoria.	Literature review 70 interviews and surveys of 1,850 leaders		3
Blakesley, (2012)	Yukon: 4 principals	In-depth interviews	1	3, 4, 6, 8, 9
17. Castle & Mitchell (2001)	Ontario: 12 principals	Interviews, observations, focus groups	3,	1, 2, 3, 6, 7
Cattonar et al. (2006)	Pan Canadian: 2144 principals	Surveys	1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 10
CPCO (2004)	Ontario: 951 Catholic principals and vice-principals	Surveys	1, 2, 3, 4, 8	1, 3, 9, 10
CPCO (2009)	Ontario: 150 Catholic principals	Census survey	1, 4, 8	1, 6, 9, 10
Fink (2010)	US and Canada: 8 schools	Longitudinal (30years) case studies	1, 2, 7	1, 3, 4, 5, 8, 9
Flessa et al. (2010)	Ontario: 11 schools in low SES neighbourhoods	School visits, interviews, and document analysis	5	3, 6, 7
French (n.d.)	British Columbia: principals and vice principals	Surveys	2, 7	1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9
Love (2000)	British Columbia: principals	In-depth study of successful principals	1, 3, 5, 6	4
MacNeill (2009)	Prince Edward Island: principals, vice-principals, secretaries	Surveys and interviews	1	1, 2, 4, 7
Moos et al. (2008)	7 countries: Australia, Canada, China, Denmark, England, Norway, Sweden & the U.S.	9 years of 100 case studies of sustainable principalship	1, 2	3, 4, 5, 7, 8
Newton &	Alberta:	Interviews	1	1

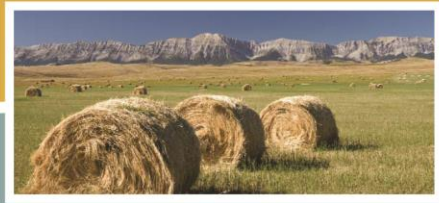
Tunison (2010)	25 elementary principals from 1 district			
Savoie-Zajc et al. (2002)	Quebec: 544 principals	Surveys and interviews	1, 4	3, 5, 6, 7
Smith (2009)	Ontario: 6 principals from 2 districts	Interviews	1, 2, 5	2, 8
Stewart (2010)	Ontario: 13 principals	Interviews	1, 2, 4	8
Sumanik (2003)	British Columbia: principals	Surveys	1	1
The Learning Partnership (2008)	Ontario: principals, vice-principals, and superintendents from 20 schools	Interviews and surveys	1, 4, 5	1, 3, 4, 8, 9
Volante, et al. (2008)	Southern ON: 5 secondary and 4 elementary administrators	Interviews	1, 2	4, 5
Williams (2001)	Ontario: 947 principals and vice-principals	Surveys and interviews	1, 2, 3, 4, 8	1, 8, 10

* The numbers in the columns correspond to the rank of a factor or a change in the prominence list in the literature review.

Appendix B: Changing Landscapes Brochure

Changing Landscapes

in co-creating a Learning Canada



Shaping a Preferred Future 2012-2032

A discussion guide to support
The Future of the Principalship Project

The future is not some place we are going to, but one we are creating. The paths are not to be found, but made, and the activity of making them, changes both the maker and the destination.

– John Scharr

The Alberta Teachers' Association

Canadian Association of Principals
Association Canadienne des Directeurs D'ecole

TREND 1 Primary resource dependence

Canada's wealth continues to depend on primary resources and commodities in spite of the growth in many new enterprises and the decades-old emphasis placed on economic diversification. *What are the implications of this dependence for the future of Canada?*

Individuals, relationships and community

A paradox of plenty

- Albertans are the oil-richest people on the planet with 51,900 barrels per person in proven reserves.
- Currently, one out of seven Alberta children live in poverty and 50% of women earn less than $25,000 per annum.

Our eggs in one (dirty little) basket?

- Canada's economy is currently stagnant with GDP per capita $600 below 2008/09 recession levels.
- Manufacturing has dropped from 20% to 12% of total economic activity in the last decade.
- Key sectors, notably government and manufacturing, will continue to contract while energy projects boom.

– Jim Stanford, Canadian Auto Workers

Work and the economy

Investing in future technologies – are we putting our money where our mouth is?

Canada ranks at the bottom of global rankings on economic stimulus spending on clean energy technologies.

Steven Guilbeault, Co-founder of Equiterre

Energy superpower or marginal player?

Western Canada is the largest independent energy area in the free world.

Wal van Lierop, President and CEO of Vancouver-based Chrysalix Energy Venture Capital

Our complex brittle systems

- We have been doing something right, and it would be good to know what it is.

– Steven Pinker, Professor of Psychology, Harvard University

Governance, governments and politics

Our addiction to growth

Managing Without Growth – Slower by Design, not Disaster

Peter Victor, York University

Shifting trade partners

In 2011, China represented 30% of B.C. lumber sales, compared with 40% for the U.S. This was a major shift from 2010, when the U.S. bought half of B.C.'s lumber, and China took about 20%. Sales to China later stalls as housing boom slows.

Globe and Mail, Feb. 14, 2012

Emerging technologies

Geo-engineering

- Large scale environmental engineering projects are attempting to mitigate the effects of global warming.

Work – what and who will work?

- The next seven years alone will see the economy coming up short by about 156,000 skilled tradespeople.

– Canadian Energy Research Institute, 2012

- It is already the case that the top ten jobs in 2010 did not exist in 2004. And it is more likely the top ten jobs in 2015 do not exist now.

– Stephen Murgatroyd, Innovation Expedition

TREND 2 Environmental crises

Public awareness and concern are growing as governments struggle to effectively respond to current environmental crises. Aside from the obvious implications of these critical environmental issues, in the context of our wealth and obvious advantages, we are faced with the question, *what should Canadians expect of themselves and what should the world expect from Canada?*

Who gets a voice in our communities?

Canada's failed legacy – an inconvenient truth

The grizzly bears' decline continues largely unchecked in Canada. And the front line in this centuries-old battle for survival has shifted to western Alberta and southern BC, where outdated mythologies, rapacious industry and disingenuous governments continue to push the Great Bear into the mountains and toward a future that may not have room for them at all.

Jeff Gailus, The Grizzly Manifesto

Canadian governments at all levels disregard Aboriginal treaty rights, contaminate and deplete water, expropriate resources.

Schindler et al, www.scienceforpeace.ca/the-alberta-tar-sands

Smart movers?

- The typical Alberta high school student spends 3.5 hours per week on the bus.
- An average Canadian spends 275 hours per year commuting to and from work – more than 34 eight-hour workdays.
- Roughly 82% of commuters travelled to work by car in 2010, while 12% took public transit and 6% walked or bicycled.

– Statistics Canada, 2010

Transformation one small step at a time

- A series of free neighbourhood walking tours that helps put people in touch with their environment and each other. Since its inception in 2007 *Jane's Walk* in Toronto honours the legacy and ideas of urban activist and writer Jane Jacobs who championed the interests of local residents and pedestrians over a car-centered approach to planning.

– www.janeswalk.net/walk

Constitutional rights for nature?

- Ecuador – the first country to recognize natural communities and ecosystems as possessing an inalienable and fundamental right to exist and flourish.

A Continental Divide?

80% of Canadians believe there is solid evidence of global warming compared to 58% of Americans.

–

91% of this former group believe it is a serious problem.

Public Policy Forum

Is there peak oil, and so what?

- The World Energy Council predicts: "a possible 'peaking' of conventional oil in the coming 10-20 years and of conventional natural gas before 2050." But by 2011, new technology meant new reserves of shale gas flooded the market and viability of renewable energy is in doubt without new ways to value the environment.

Health an intergenerational issue

- It's not fair that we leave our descendants to pay with their health and security for the environmental damage we created, knowingly or unknowingly.

– Peggy Olive, Scientist Emeritus at the British Columbia Cancer Agency

TREND 3 The impact of globalization

Whether it is Brazil for lumber, Texas for oil or the University of Phoenix for students, the world increasingly operates as a deeply interconnected, economic, cultural and political entity. There is only one planet. *How are we being impacted by our growing global interdependence?*

The Janus face of globalization

- ***Vulnerable and brittle systems***

  The Eurozone tries to stay intact by back-stopping Greece then Italy then what?

  – *The Economist*, June 25, 2011

- Net international migration accounted for two-thirds of Canada's population growth during the last 10 years, and natural increase (the difference between births and deaths) for about one-third.

  – Statistics Canada, *The Daily*, Feb. 8, 2012

China and India – our new friends?

The rise in their middle classes to 50% of the total means a consumption boom the rest of the world will feed.

"Shaping Alberta's Future" 2011 report of Premier's Council for Economic Strategy

Working hard – growing disparity of income and opportunity

Among peer countries, Canada ranks 17th out of 20 in terms of income inequality.

–

With respect to overall poverty, Canada ranks 15th out of 20, and drops to 16th spot in terms of child poverty.

–

Every year since 1990, at least 1 million Canadian children have lived in poverty. These are our future knowledge workers.

www.progressive-economics.ca

The corporatization and marketization of research

- Educators, along with universities, are caught up in the drive to "academic capitalism" that limits research in priority areas such as mental health, community development and the environment.

Global drivers of health care spending

Health care services in areas with high levels of private involvement are the biggest cost drivers. Between 1975 and 2009, hospital spending fell by over a third as a portion of the provincial budget while pharmaceuticals costs more than doubled. Cutting hospital beds will not help control costs.

Diana Gibson, Parkland Institute

We must ensure that the global market is embedded in broadly shared values and practices that reflect global social needs, and that all the world's people share the benefits of globalization.

Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations 1997 - 2006

The next disruption

- Work is in progress to find new ways of powering vehicles and ending our reliance on oil. Just as downloading has disrupted the music industry, so too will the hydrogen economy disrupt the oil-gas economy.

Key drivers of work intensification are technologies like BlackBerries, which create the expectation that employees will be available 24/7. That probably explains why 43% of women say their partners work too much. More than a third of men say the same.

– Linda Duxbury, Carleton University

The next war will be digitized

A British security expert has uncovered new evidence in the Stuxnet virus attack on Iran's nuclear programme.

The Telegraph, Jan. 21, 2011

TREND 4 Broadening learning opportunities

Expanded and instant access to "point and touch" digital technologies and the need to be connected to others in both the virtual and the physical worlds, are expanding the interest and capacity to offer broadened learning opportunities. *How will Canadians address issues such as core learnings, commodification of content and student assessment as these opportunities unfold?*

Ready to learn?

- Canada is at the bottom of the 25 economically advanced countries with respect to children's readiness to learn by age 6.
  – UNICEF 2009

By 2031, more than 15 million Canadian adults — three million more than today — will have low literacy levels. The number of Canadian adults with low literacy levels will increase 25% in the next two decades, creating a "literacy dilemma" if the problem isn't addressed immediately.

Canadian Council on Learning, The Future of Literacy in Canada's Largest Cities report, Sept. 8, 2010

Lost opportunities

- Since the mid-1990s, government grants as a share of operating revenue has dropped from 80% to 50%. The share of university operating budgets funded by tuition rose from 14% to 34% between 1986 and 2007.
- Student debt levels have led to lower completion levels and fewer people studying beyond a bachelor's degree or college diploma.
  – Canadian Federation of University Women, Brief to Standing Committee on Finance, August, 2011

The intensification of childhood

- One third of Canadian parents have hired a tutor for their child. Typically, the child is already an honours student.
- 88% of parents expect their children to attend post-secondary – 57% expect university attendance.

Facing the music

Researchers are embracing the overwhelming evidence that demonstrates the positive influence of music and the arts on learning.

James Catterall, Chair of the Faculty at the UCLA Graduate School of Education and Information Studies

The Toronto District School Board, Canada's largest, reverses a rule that personal devices should be turned off and out of sight within its schools, after trustees recognized that smartphones and other devices might actually enhance student learning.

Maclean's, Jan. 10, 2012

Barred options

- Public response to isolated incidents of violent crime committed by youth is not an effective basis for changing public policy.
  – Canadian Council of Child and Youth Advocates
- Canada incarcerates more convicted youth than almost any similarly industrialized country.
- Two out of three people in the youth justice system have two or more mental-health disorders.
  – *Globe and Mail*, July18, 2011

- California currently spends 45% more on prisons than on higher education.
  – afhimelfarb.wordpress.com

Cyber Charter Schools

- What are the implications for public education and society if learning is to be enacted any time, any place and at any pace in boundless environments?

The intelligent swarm

Collective intelligence in a wiki world?

National Geographic, July 2007

TREND 5 Rethinking citizenship and civil society

Governmental efforts to assess public mood using current public consultation models are being met with scepticism and mistrust. Opinion polls and focus groups are becoming less effective as measures of public opinion on complex issues in a democratic society. *How will the rise of social media and ubiquitous connectivity among opinion-leaders and 'influentials' shift policy deliberation and public accountability?*

Climate change – leaders or followers?

- 77% of Canadian thought leaders rate Canada's efforts at addressing climate change as poor or very poor, while 75% say the same about Canada's performance at developing a greener economy.
- 68% rate Canada's efforts to expand renewable energy as poor or very poor.
- Analysis shows a total of $1.4 billion per year in federal subsidies, $840 million of which are special tax breaks, with a disproportionate share going to dirty fuels such as the Alberta Tar Sands.
  – www.davidsuzuki.org/issues/climate-change

Shifting political (dis)engagements?

- First Nations seek nation-to-nation political relationships with governments.
- The proportion of the public with a "great deal of confidence" in public schools remains high, just below that of the Supreme Court and churches.

Privateering: privatization and profiteering meet

– George Lakoff

- The federal government suggests money for sports arenas could come out of the $1-billion budget of Public-Private Partnerships Canada.
- *Full Count: Inside Public-Private Partnerships for Major League Sports Facilities*
  – Judith Grant Long

A bear market?

The federal government lists the polar bear a species at risk after calculating that the tourism value of each bear ($7 million) surpasses hunting, fur and meat consumption ($1.4 million).

– *CBC News*, July 15, 2011

Shifting power relations

- Social media and peer-to-peer communications such as *YouTube* have become a platform for online engagement and political action.

Transforming school governance

– Rethinking Leadership: Creating great schools for all students, 2012

Whose transparency? Whose accountability?

- WikiLeaks as simultaneous social good and social evil
  – Joshua Noble (Dalton Camp Award winner)

A revolution about a revolution

- The blocking of MSN and Internet sites in China and Iran have been unsuccessful – Twitter and other applications for connectivity triumph.
- Social media is enhancing public engagement like television did in the days of the Vietnam War.
  – Ken Chapman, Cambridge Strategies

The new agora – the media is a public space

- 29 million votes for *Canadian Idol* contestants before the final in 2008 while 13.9 million of 23.6 million eligible Canadians voted in 2008 federal election.

TREND 6 Fluid personal identity

Personal identity, once "set for a lifetime", is now more fluid and increasingly a matter for personal exploration, conviction and commitment. *How will the expectation we each have to find our own identity and meaning impact relationships, organizations, learning and institutions? How will we know that meaning has been found in our lives?*

Rekindled narratives for Canadians and Canada

- ***Finding*** – One in six marriages are based in internet matching. Those seeking partners are increasily having difficulty finding partners that match their expectations.
- ***Separating*** – 38% of recent marriages will end in divorce before the 30th anniversary.
  – Vanier Institute of the Family, 2009
- ***Re-locating*** – Canada tops labour mobility in 29 developed countries surveyed.
  – Randstad Canada's latest global Workmonitor survey, January, 2012

Shifting identities in the workplace

- The average worker entering the work force in 2010 will have up to 35 job changes in their working life.
- The average woman in the workforce is delaying having children until age 31.
- 17% of teachers leave teaching within three years and take up different professional work; one out of two will not be teaching in the same school in five years.
- 40% of Canadian women say they have put their careers on hold to raise their children, compared with 13% of men.

The challenge for today's youth?

- How to resist the manufactured cynicism, moral despair, and social Darwinism (with its cult of competitiveness and war against all ethic) served up in all the spheres of public life and mirrored daily in reality TV shows such as *Survivor, Temptation Island, The Biggest Loser*, and *The Bachelor*? Democratic politics needs leaders, while manufactured cynicism needs celebrity idols.

– Henry Giroux, Convocation address, Memorial University, 2005

If we don't teach children how to be alone, they will only know how to be lonely.
Sherry Turkle, MIT technology and society specialist

31% of teenage boys and 25% of teenage girls are overweight (doubled obesity rates since 1981). By 2026, 70% of adults in Canada will be overweight, up from 59% today.
Childhood Obesity Foundation, 2012

Blurring the line between connection and connectivity

- One in 14 persons on the planet is a registered Facebook user. 75% of all social media traffic is driven by this one site.
- There are 50 million Tweets sent each day.

We want to be interrupted, because each interruption brings us a valuable piece of information... And so we ask the Internet to keep interrupting us, in ever more and different ways.
Nicholas Carr, The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains

Misplaced distress

- Children's ability to roam has basically been destroyed. Letting your child out to bike around the neighbourhood is seen as terrifying now, even though, by all measures, life is safer for kids today… We need to give kids the freedom to explore and experience things online and offline that might actually help them.

– Professor Dannah Boyd, New York University

TREND 7 Blurring boundaries and emerging technologies

Canadians of all ages are tangling with the promises of technology that expand into new creative, social and work relationships while dissolving the boundaries between person and machine, inner and public lives, information and entertainment, and domains of knowledge. Increasingly, technologies once adopted by a society are seen as much *social as natural. How might we use technologies to become empowered citizens rather than passive consumers?*

- From the moment this generation met technology it was the competition. In many ways children see technology as a main competitor for their parents' attention.
  – Sherry Turkle, MIT professor

Growing screen time

- Among Canadian youth in Grades 6-10, screen time on weekends was 7 hours and 25 minutes per day, while weekdays amounted to 5 hours and 56 minutes per day.
  – Active Healthy Kids Canada

Recommendation

No screen time for children under two years of age and a maximum of 2 hours for children older than two years of age.
The Canadian Paediatric Society

While the Internet promises more connectivity, the number of meaningful personal connections an individual can have remains fixed at 125.
–
95% of blogs are abandoned after 120 days.
technocrats.com

- Smartphones add 10 days every year to workloads in the UK.
  – Nectar Business Study

Remote access is all WET

A recent study of 33,000 workers illustrates work extension technologies (WET) have removed communication etiquette and increased work and stress levels.

- 70% report workloads increased.
- 76% experienced increased stress levels.
- More than 90% of managers indicated workload and stress had increased.

– Linda Duxbury, Carleton University

Our naked data and digital footprints

In Canada, the average digital footprint begins around six months of age with 9% of newborns being given an e-mail address.
–
85% of Canadian mothers post photos of their children online before age two and 8% have created social networking profiles for these infants.
–
More than a third of Canadian mothers post their pre-natal sonograms online.
Vancouver Sun, Oct. 7, 2010

The digital divide persists

- The vast majority (94%) of people from households with incomes of $85,000 or more used the Internet, compared with 56% among households with incomes of $30,000 or less. The respective proportions in 2007 were 90% and 48%.
  – Statistics Canada

'New' is already old

Facebook lost users in 2010 in North America & EU. While e-mail use dropped 60% for 12-17 year olds in favour of other social networking sites.
Time Magazine, Feb. 2011

On the horizon

- The distinction between us and robots is going to disappear.
  – Rodney Brooks
- The 'Internet of things' (i.e., live connection to the Web creates 'smart objects' such as vehicles with GPS locators).
- The Semantic Web: a world where online/offline boundaries are increasingly blurred (i.e., customized consumer product recommendations such as amazon.ca).

Video available at http://vimeo.com/38657681

Appendix C: Focus Group Protocol

(Based on the Canadian Institute for Cultural Affairs Technology of Participation Methodology)

Overview

This process plan is designed for groups ranging in size from 5 to 50 or more. The optimal group size is 20 to 25 participants. Ideally, participants should be seated at tables of 5 or 6 each. If the total group consists of 12 or fewer members, participants can be seated around one meeting table. Depending on the size of the group, the session should run for approximately 2 hours.

Introductions (10 minutes)

The host for the gathering will do the following:

- Welcome the participants and thank them for taking part in this important national study.
- Introduce the facilitator.

The facilitator will review the ***three goals*** of the session that reflect the broader national study objectives:

1. To gather data on participants' perspectives about the future of their work as principals.
2. To provide participants with the experience of sharing their views on the current and long-term societal trends that are influencing and shaping the changing role and work of school principals.
3. To gather input on the sources of support that would enhance the work of school principals in the short- and long-term.

Note that the national study of principals in which they are participating will include a comprehensive literature review being conducted by researchers at the Ontario Institute for the Study of Education. The facilitator will do the following:

- Provide a brief (3 to 5 minute) overview of the session and the focus question: ***What are the current conditions of practice that enhance and /or limit your work as a school principal and what are broader societal trends that will shape your work in the future?***
- Note the availability of the following materials at the tables:
  Informed Consent Form; *Changing Landscapes in Co-creating a Learning Canada; Participant's Workbook* (Note: the workbooks should be pre-numbered by hand, "1, 2, 3…. " in the top right-hand corner prior to the session. This will allow participants to have their workbook pulled from the study as described in the *Informed Consent Form*.)
- **Note that the evening will consist of three rounds of discussion.** In the first round, participants will share their views on the larger societal influences affecting the work of principals. The second round will allow participants to explore deeper some of these impacts and influences. The session will conclude with round three where participants will consider the implications in terms of the short- and long-term supports that principals will need in the years ahead.
- If they have not done so already, ask participants at each table to introduce themselves by (1) stating their name, (2) giving the name and size of their school and (3) sharing one interesting moment in their school that day. (5 minutes)
- Explain that the process is based on the following working assumptions:
  - Everyone in this room has wisdom.
  - We need all of this wisdom for the best results.
  - There are no wrong answers.

- Ask participants to read and sign an informed-consent form attesting to their willingness to participate in the focus group. Highlighting key provisions from this document may be helpful such as anonymity in order to create a 'safe-place' for everyone in the room (items 3 and 4) and the provision to have ones workbook pulled from the study within two weeks of the focus group session (item 6).
- Ask whether participants have any questions or concerns about the agenda or the plan for the session.

Round One (20 minutes)

The facilitator will do the following:

- Ask each table group to select a table recorder. (This is an informal assignment simply asking the group to identify someone who will help keep track of the key points raised in discussions.)
- Explain that each participant in the table group is to take ten minutes to answer the following question: ***What three social changes or influence have had the most powerful impact on your work as a principal?***
- Note that participants are to write their answers to this question in the **top half** of *pages 2, 3 and 4* of their workbooks in the section entitled "Social Change/Influence #1, #2, #3. Where possible, participants will describe how the influence is playing out today (in the left-hand box) and in the future (right-hand box).

When participants have completed their three responses, table recorders will do the following:

- Ask each participant in the group to share his or her Number 1 change/influence.
- Invite table participants to discuss commonalities and differences in the social changes/influences that they have shared. *(5-10 minutes*)

Round Two (30 minutes)

The facilitator will do the following:

- Call the entire group back together and thank them for the work they have completed so far.
- Invite two or three participants to share highlights from their discussions. (3-5 minutes) Observe that the common themes and differences that the groups have identified obviously reflect some very early thinking on what are very complex issues.
- Explain that participants will now be asked to quickly **consider the drivers or sources of the societal influences and trends** identified in Round One with reference to the document, *Changing Landscapes in Co-creating a Learning Canada*, which is at their tables. Note that the document identifies seven trends and broad societal forces that are currently affecting public education in Canada and are expected to continue affecting education for the next 20 years. Emphasize that *Changing Landscapes* is intended not as a definitive environmental scan of the entire country but as a point of departure to prompt reflection and further discussion. This document is also accompanied by a student-produced video that provides their perspectives on the impacts of these seven societal trends.
- Ask participants to (1) look for possible connections between the three social changes/influences that they identified earlier and the trends outlined in *Changing Landscapes* and (2) individually complete the "external drivers" section on the bottom half of pages 2, 3, and 4 in their workbooks. (10 minutes)
- Introduce and play the video *Changing Landscapes* by indicating it represents some Canadian students' views of the seven trends in the document (10 minutes).
- Give participants five to ten minutes of silent reading time to skim through the seven trends identified in *Changing Landscapes* document and video. While doing this review and quiet reflection, invite participants at their tables to reword/reconsider (if they wish) the social

changes/influences that they initially identified in light of the trends outlined in *Changing Landscapes.*

- Ask the recorder at each table to invite participants to (1) review the themes that the group noted at the end of Round One and (2) reconsider/revise these themes in light of the subsequent discussion. **(***10 to 15 minutes***)**
- Ask the groups to come back together and thank them for their work.

Round Three (30 minutes)

Part A: Short-Term Aspirations and Support

The facilitator will do the following:

- Ask participants to reflect on this question: *Considering the immediate social changes/influences affecting my work as a school principal, what supports do I need in the short term (the next one to three years) to help me be the principal that I aspire to be?*
- To encourage participants to be specific about the supports they need, immediately provide a few concrete examples: (a) more training/learning about societal issues and how to manage them; (b) more central office support and recognition around these demands; (c) greater collegiality and mutual support among principals; (d) more support staff; (e) more administrative staff; and (f) clearer direction from central office on setting priorities and managing competing demands.
- Instruct participants to record, on ***page 5*** of their workbook, the short-term supports that they have identified and the social changes/influences that make these supports necessary. **(***5 to 10 minutes***).** If time is short, stress that participants do not need to feel compelled to complete left-hand column (identifying the societal changes/influences attached to each support).
- Give table participants a chance to discuss the supports that they have identified. (*5 minutes*)

Part B: Long-Term Aspirations and Supports

The facilitator will do the following:

- Invite participants to call out common responses.
- Invite participants to consider the themes that have been posted on the wall, the *Changing Landscapes* document and their thoughtful discussions.
- Ask participants to reflect on the following question: ***Considering the forces that will affect education and the work of the school principal in the next 3 years and beyond to the next two decades, what supports will I need in the long term to be the principal that I aspire to be?***
- Instruct participants to record, on ***page 6*** of their workbook, the supports that they have identified and the social changes/influences that make these supports necessary. *(5 to 10 minutes)*
- Give table participants a chance to discuss the supports that they have identified. *(5 minutes)*
- Call on the group to share a few responses.

Closing (*5 to 10 minutes*)

The facilitator will do the following:

- Outline the timeline for the completion of the national study. (Focus groups completed by June with the analysis completed over the summer and the final report due September 1, 2012).
- Instruct participants to individually **complete the "Demographic Information About Your School"** section on page 7 of the workbook, which asks them to provide information about their schools and about themselves. Explain that all focus groups across the country are being

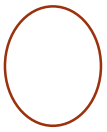
asked to provide this same basic demographic information that cannot be used to identify any one individual or school. (5 minutes).

- Collect the consent forms and the workbooks.
- Invite closing observations from the group.
- Thank the participants. Adjourn.

Upon completion of the focus group session, courier the workbooks and Informed Consent Forms to:

JC Couture, Associate Coordinator, Research
The Alberta Teachers' Association
11010 142 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5N 2R1
Main Line: 1-800-232-7208
Fax: 780-455-6481
Email: jc.couture@ata.ab.ca
Include a brief covering note indicating the date and location of the focus group, along with the contact information of the host and/or facilitator.

Participant Number



The Future of the Principalship in Canada: A Research Study

Participant's Workbook

The Alberta Teachers' Association

Canadian Association of Principals

Social Change/Influence #1: In a sentence or two, describe a key societal change factor or influence that is creating opportunities and/or challenges for your work as a principal:	
How is this social change/influence affecting your practice TODAY?	How might this social change/influence affect your practice IN THE FUTURE?

The external drivers of influence #1: Using *Changing Landscapes of Public Education in Canada* to stimulate your thinking, identify up to three social forces, trends or issues that are contributing to the influence you identified above.		
1	**2**	**3**

Social Change/Influence #2: In a sentence or two, describe a key societal change factor or influence that is creating opportunities and/or challenges for your work as a principal:	
How is this social change/influence affecting your practice TODAY?	How might this social change/influence affect your practice IN THE FUTURE?

The external drivers of influence #2: Using *Changing Landscapes of Public Education in Canada* to stimulate your thinking, identify up to three social forces, trends or issues that are contributing to the influence you identified above.		
1	**2**	**3**

Social Change/Influence #3: In a sentence or two, describe a key societal change factor or influence that is creating opportunities and/or challenges for your work as a principal:	
How is this social change/influence affecting your practice TODAY?	How might this social change/influence affect your practice IN THE FUTURE?

The external drivers of influence #3: Using *Changing Landscapes of Public Education in Canada* to stimulate your thinking, identify up to three social forces, trends or issues that are contributing to the influence you identified above.		
1	**2**	**3**

Needed Short-Term Supports (in the next one to three years)	
Support #1	I need support #1 to help me respond to these societal changes/influences:
Support #2	I need support #2 to help me respond to these societal changes/influences:
Support #3	I need support #3 to help me respond to these societal changes/influences:

Use the space below to further discuss the short-term supports you need to succeed as a school administrator. How will these supports improve teaching and learning conditions? How will these supports improve your school for your students and staff?

Needed Long-Term Supports (three years and beyond)	
Support #1:	I need support #1 to help me respond to these societal changes/influences:
Support #2:	I need support #2 to help me respond to these societal changes/influences:
Support #3:	I need support #3 to help me respond to these societal changes/influences:

Use the space below to further discuss the long-term supports you need to succeed as a school administrator. How will these supports improve teaching and learning conditions? How will these supports improve your school for your students and staff?

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL

1. Approximately how many students attend your school? _____

2. What grades are taught at your school? (Circle all that apply.)

   ALL *or* 11 K 12 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

3. Approximately what percentage of your student population is First Nations, Inuit or Métis?

   Circle one: 10% or less 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% or more

4. Approximately what percentage of your student population comes from low to very low socioeconomic backgrounds?

   Circle one: 10% or less 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% or more

5. Approximately what percentage of your student population is culturally and/or linguistically diverse?

   Circle one: 10% or less 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% or more

6. How would you describe your school?

   ☐ Urban/Large City ☐ Small Satellite or Commuter City/Town
   ☐ Rural ☐ Other (specify):
   _____

7. What else would you like us to know about your school? For example, does your school face unique conditions?

   _____
   _____
   _____

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ABOUT YOU

8. I am ☐ Male ☐ Female

9. Do you have a post-graduate degree related to education?

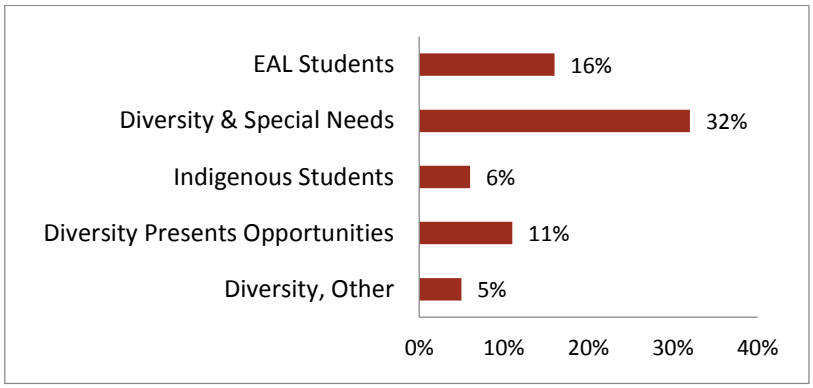
   ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Master's degree in process ☐ Doctoral degree in process
   ☐ Other (please describe): _____

Appendix E: Atlantic Provinces Data Charts

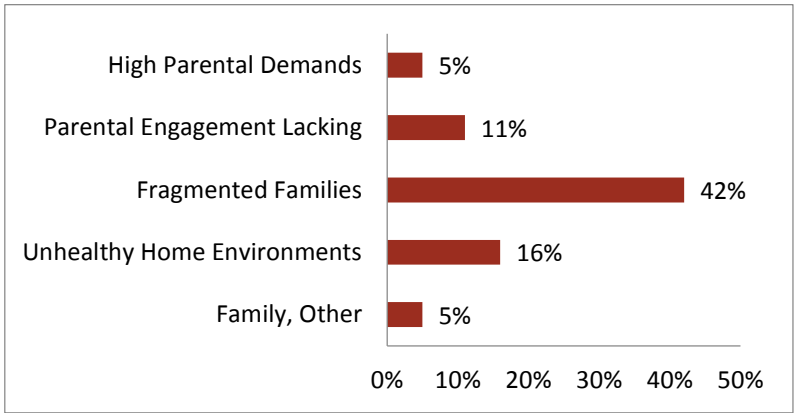
(For all data charts, n = 87)

A. Social Changes and Influences

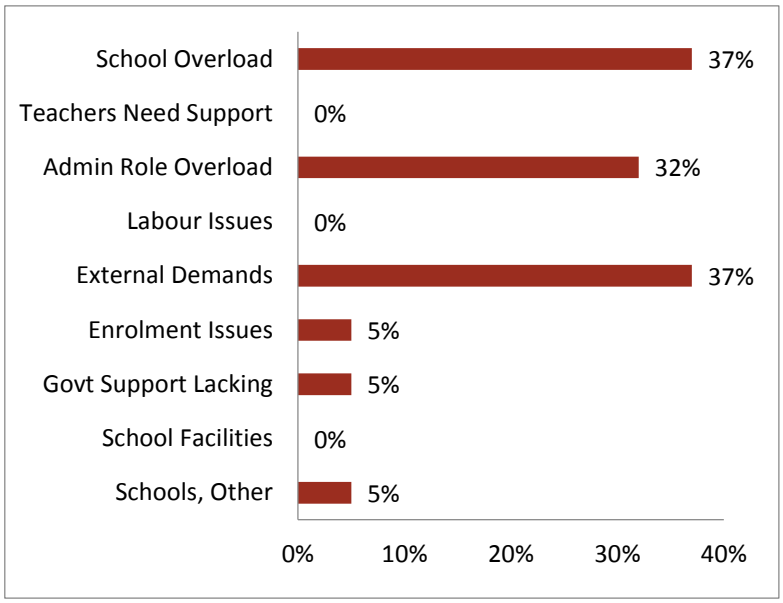
Diversity



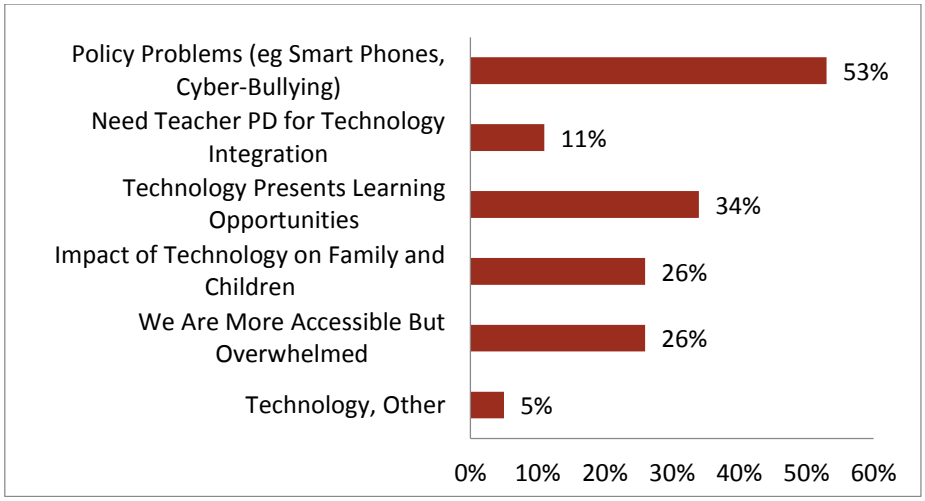
Family



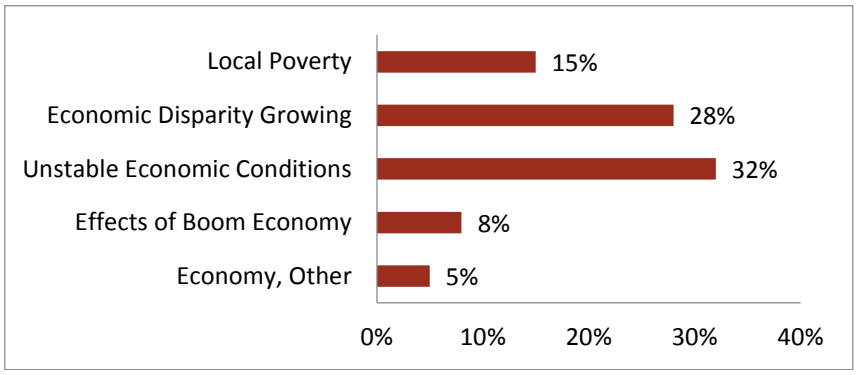
Schools



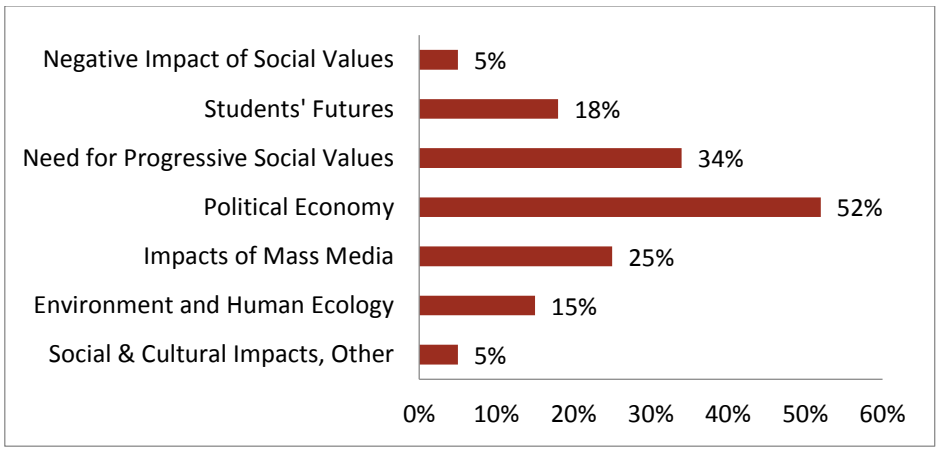
Technology



Economy

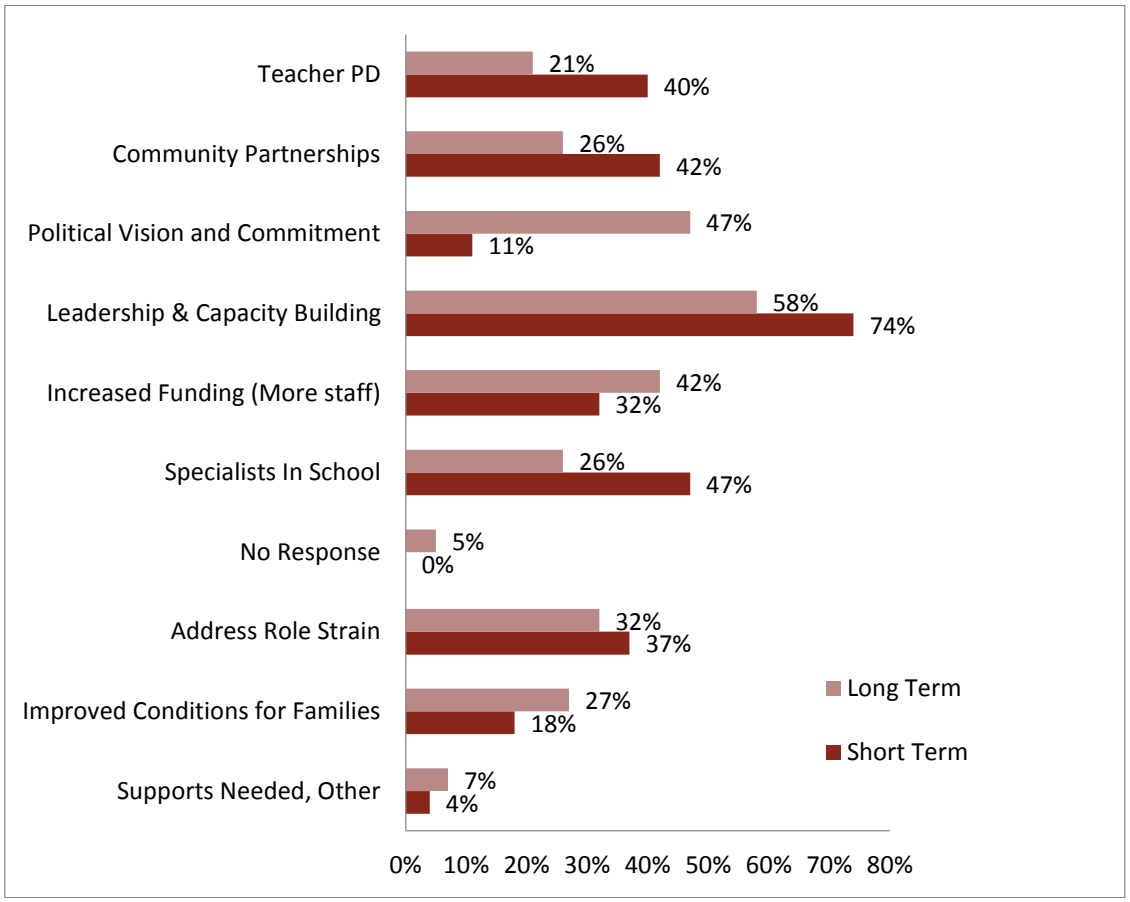


Society



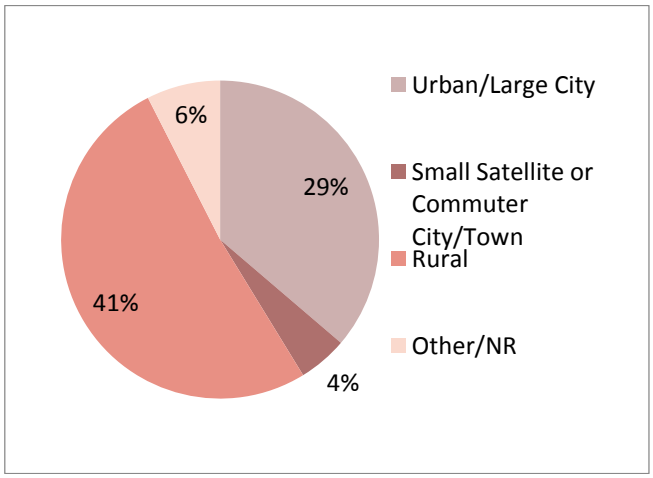
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

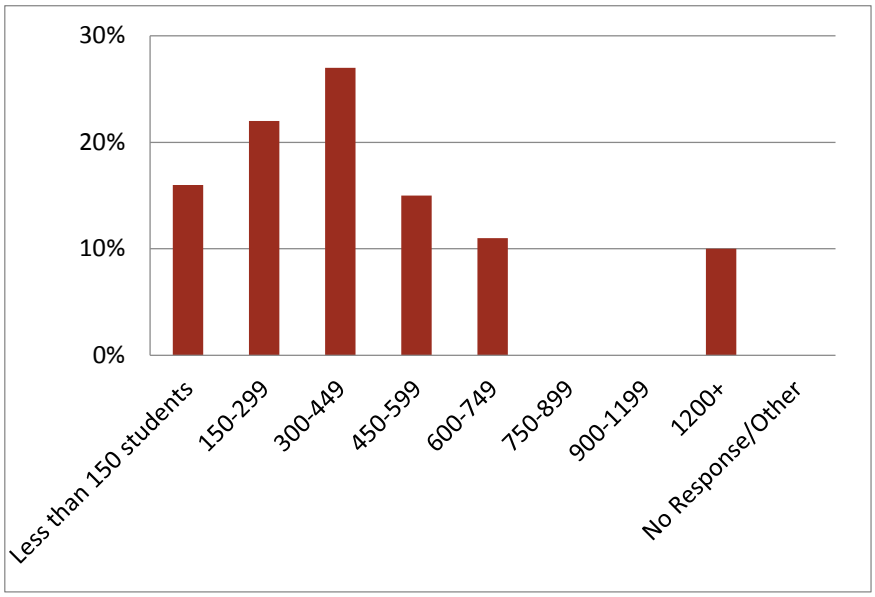


C. Demographics

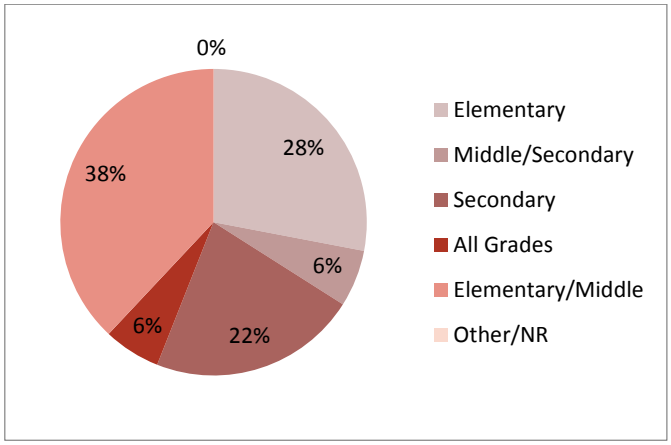
Population Density



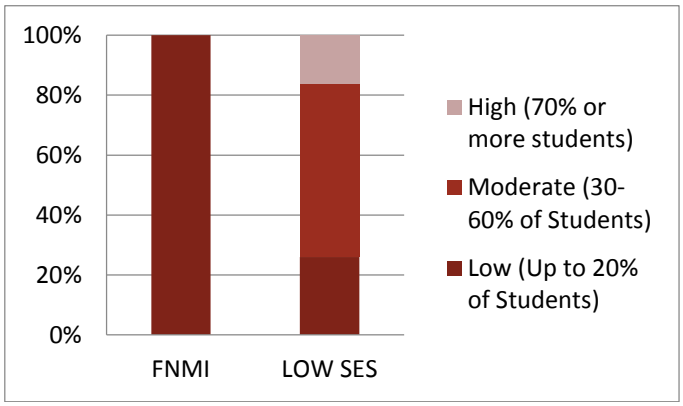
School Size



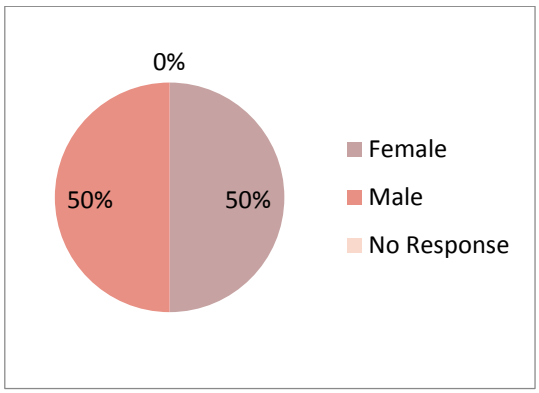
Grades Taught



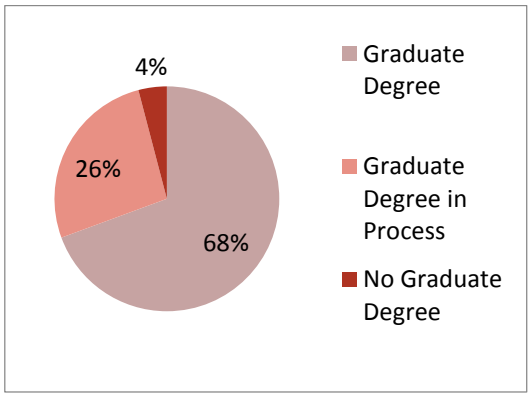
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level

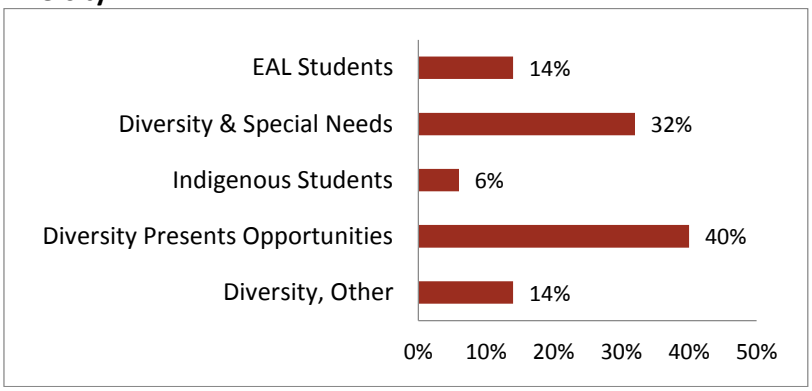


Appendix F: Quebec Data Charts

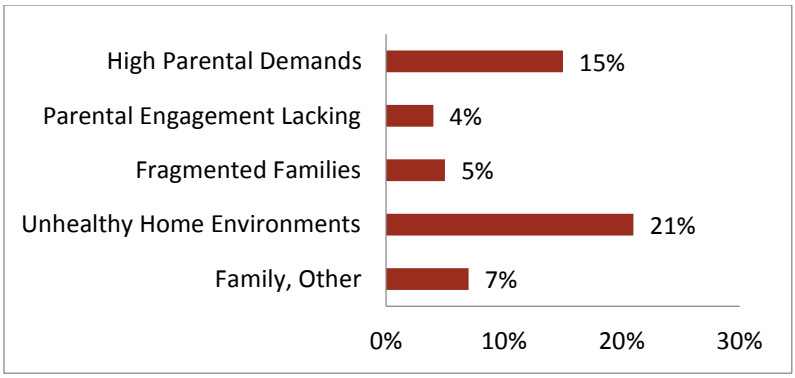
(For all data charts, n = 52)

A. Social Changes and Influences

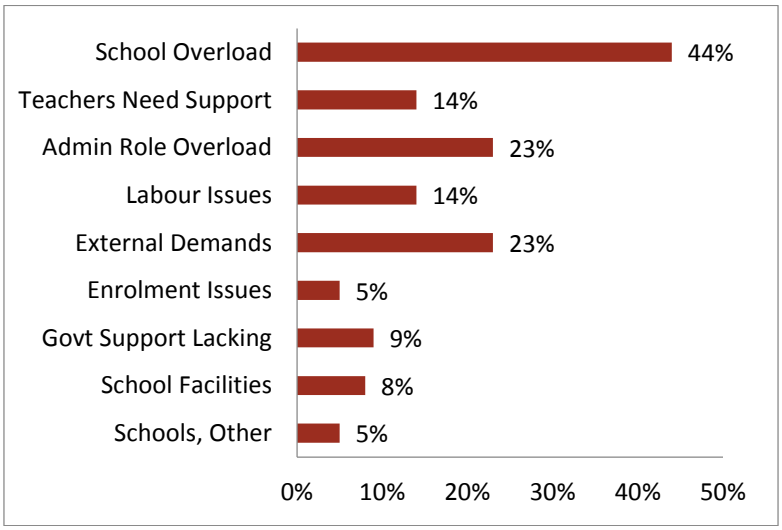
Diversity



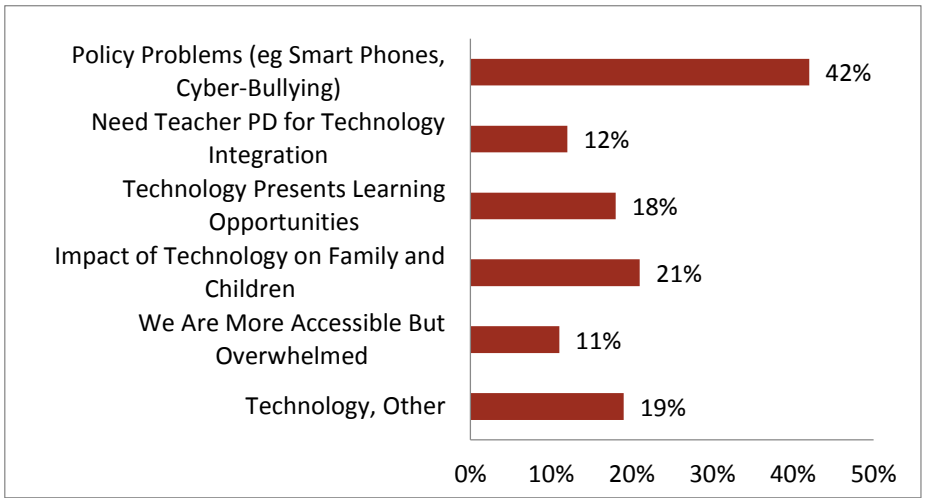
Family



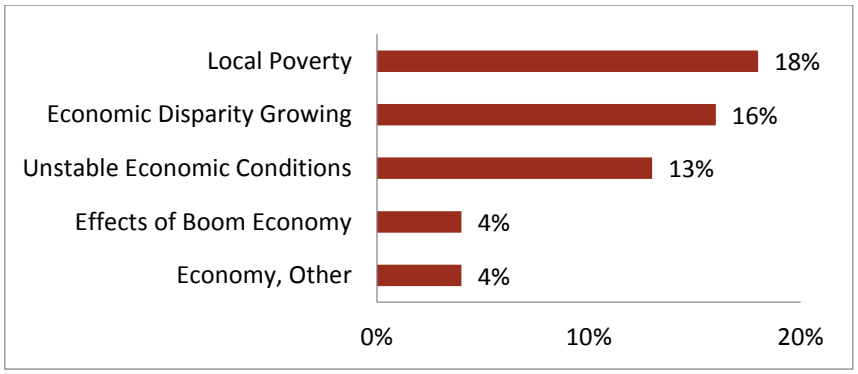
Schools



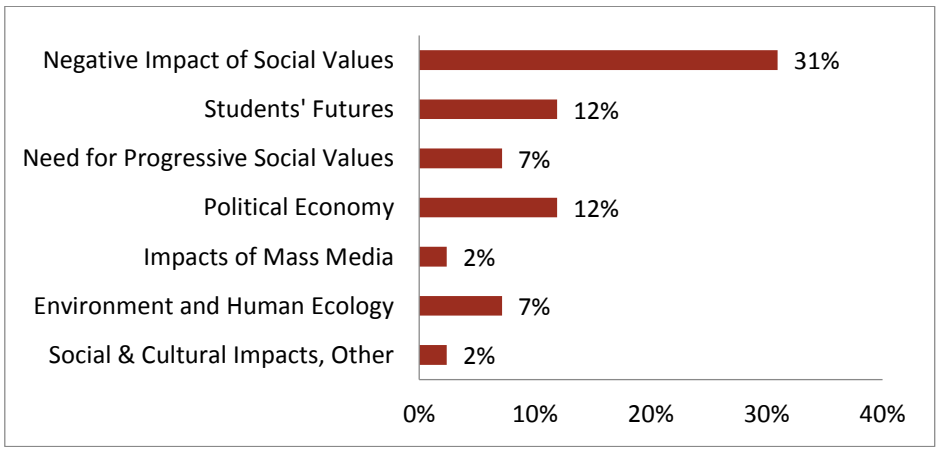
Technology



Economy

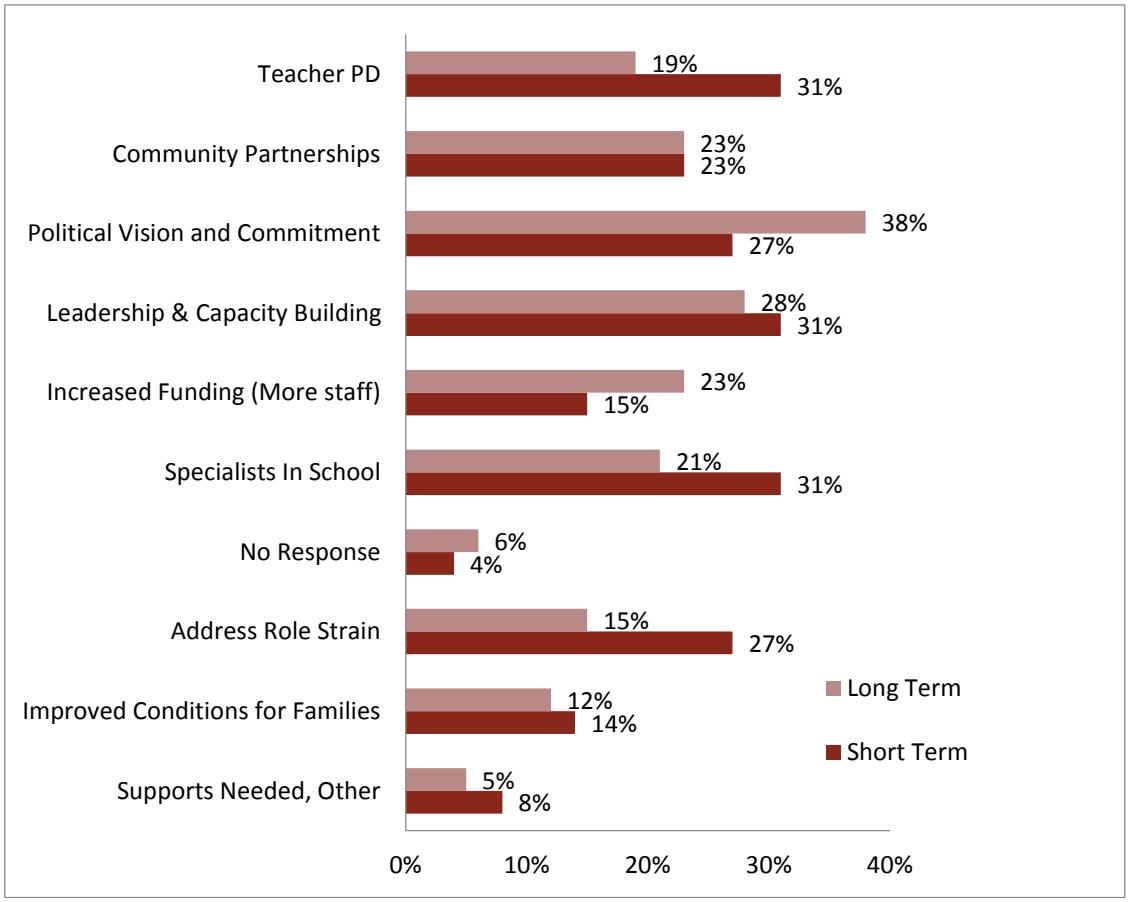


Society



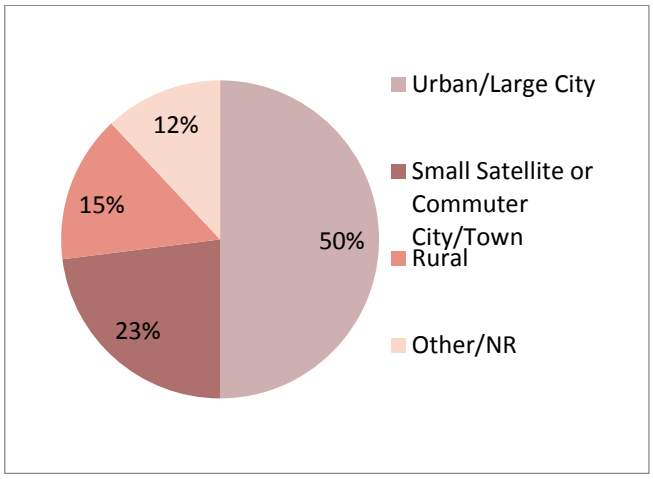
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

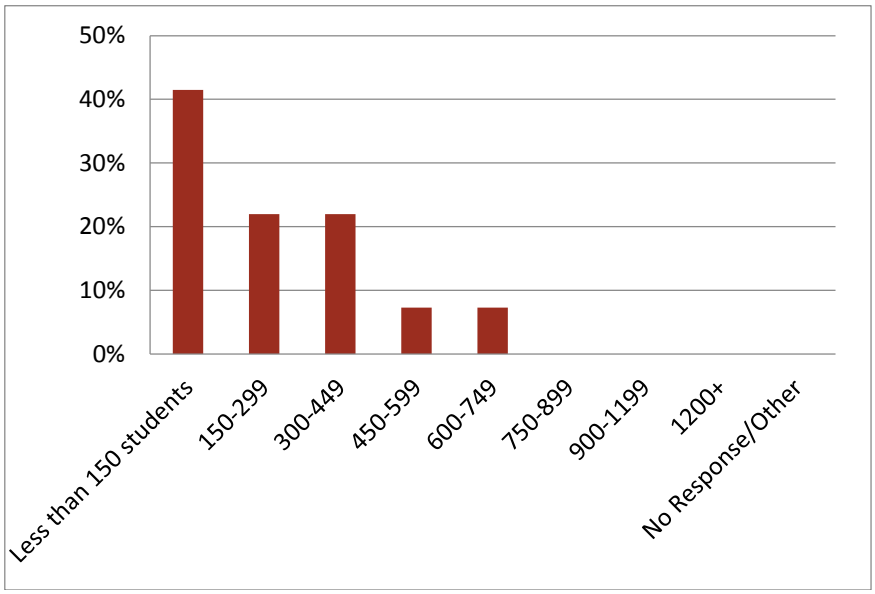


C. Demographics

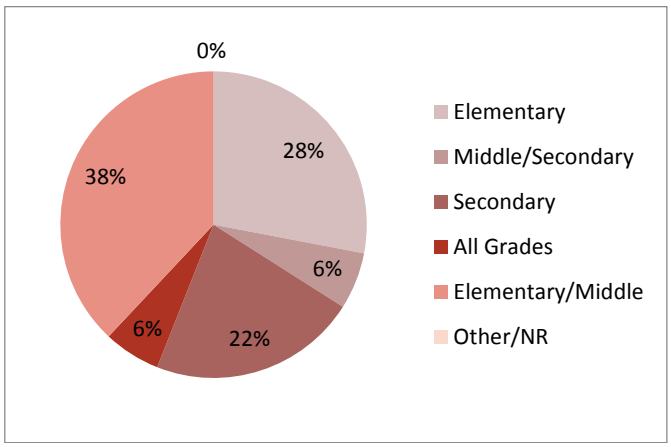
Population Density



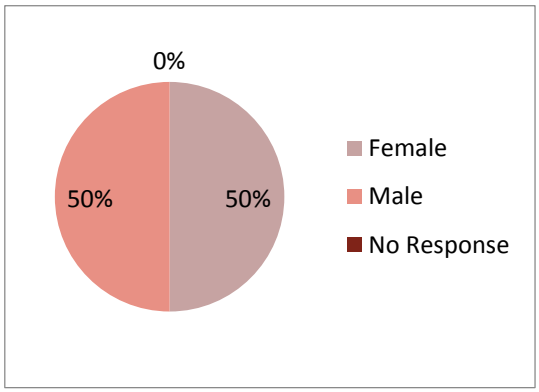
School Size



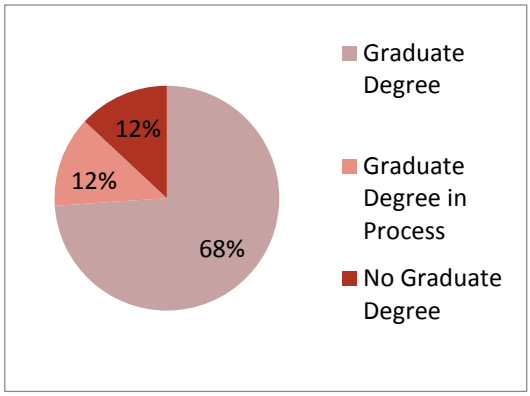
Grades Taught



Gender



Education Level

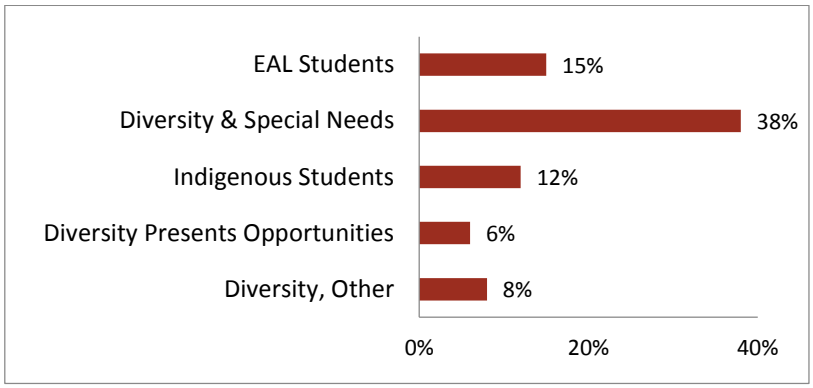


Appendix G: Ontario Data Charts

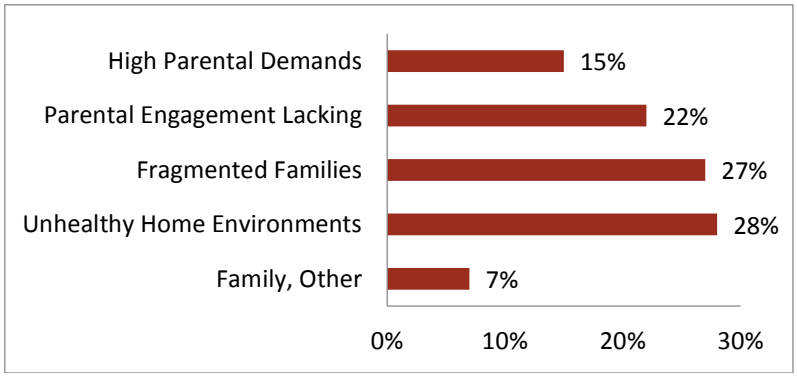
(For all data charts, n = 110)

A. Social Changes and Influences

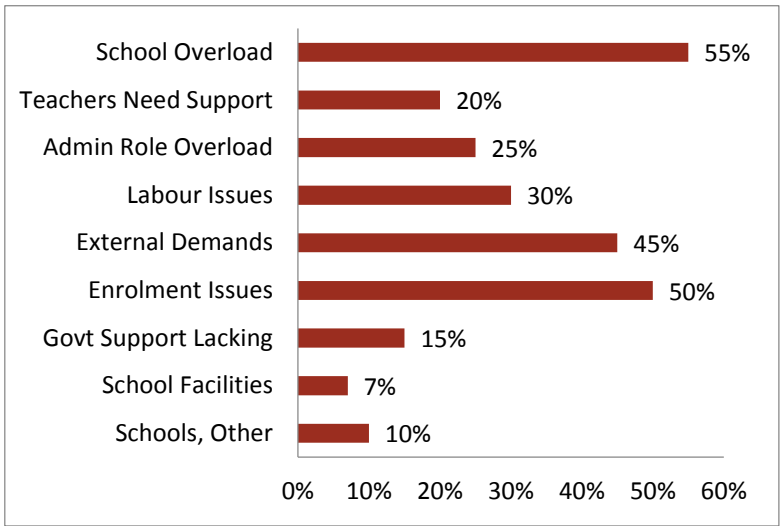
Diversity



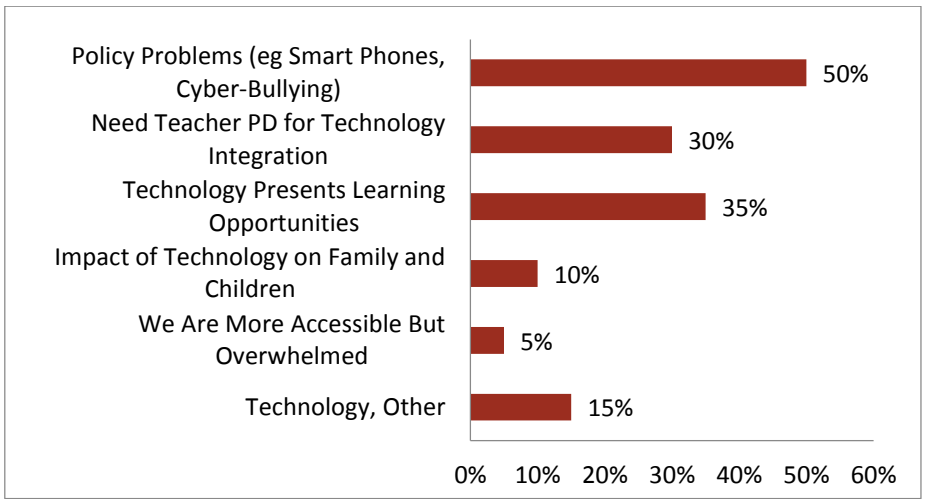
Family



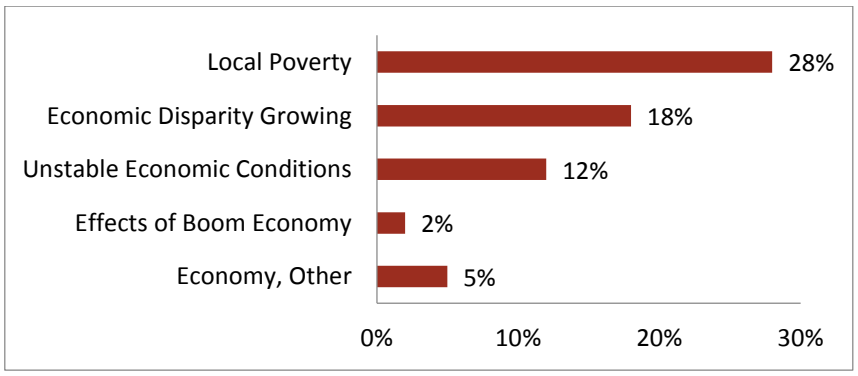
Schools



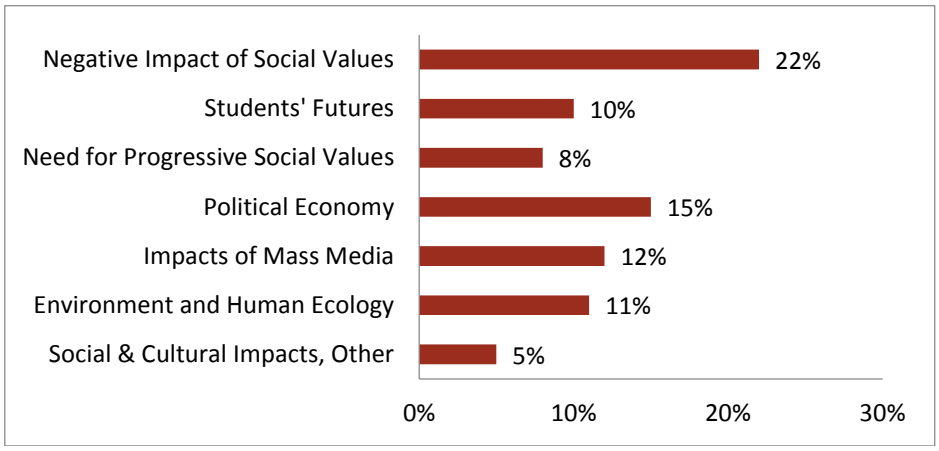
Technology



Economy

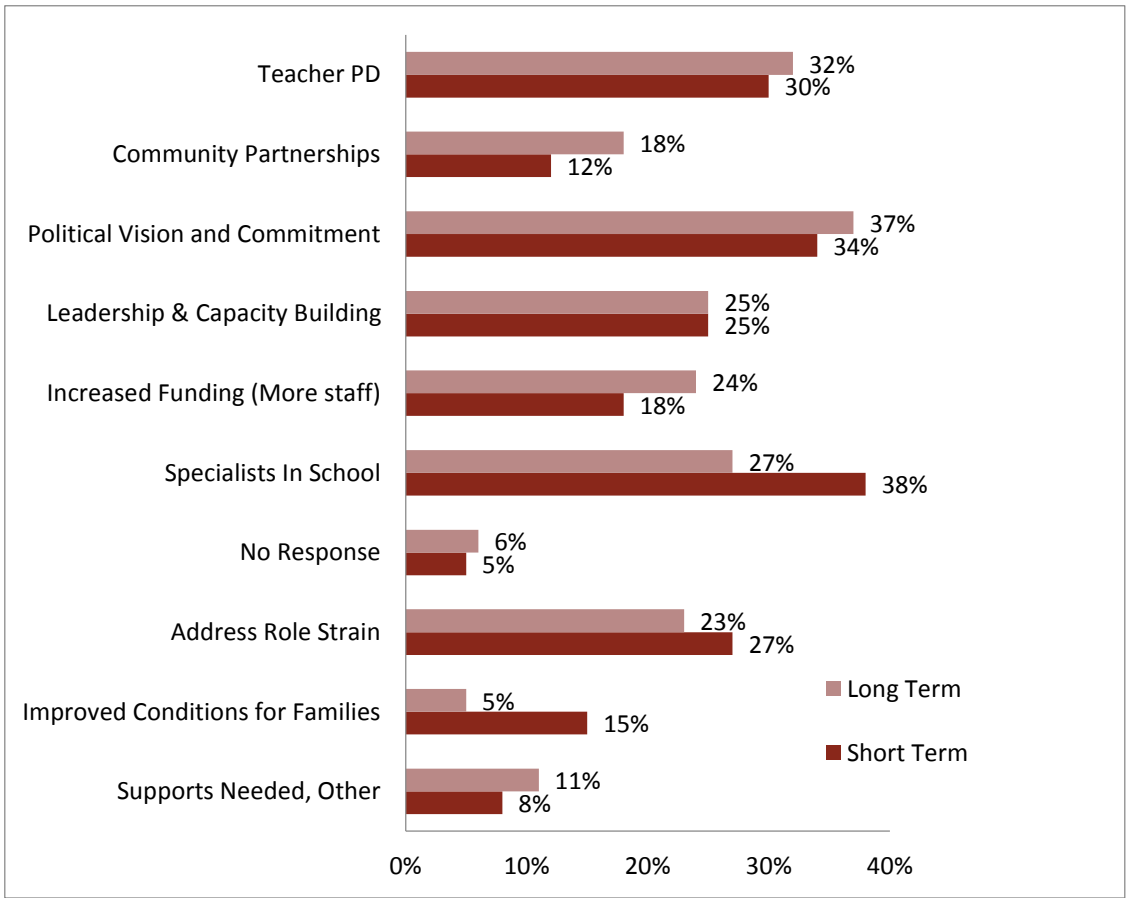


Society



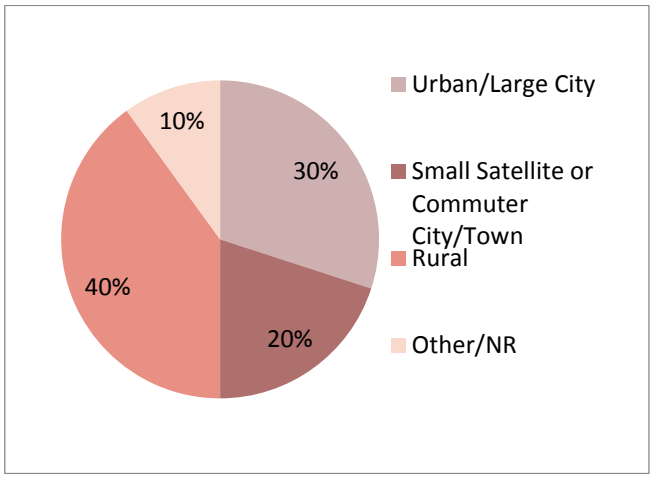
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

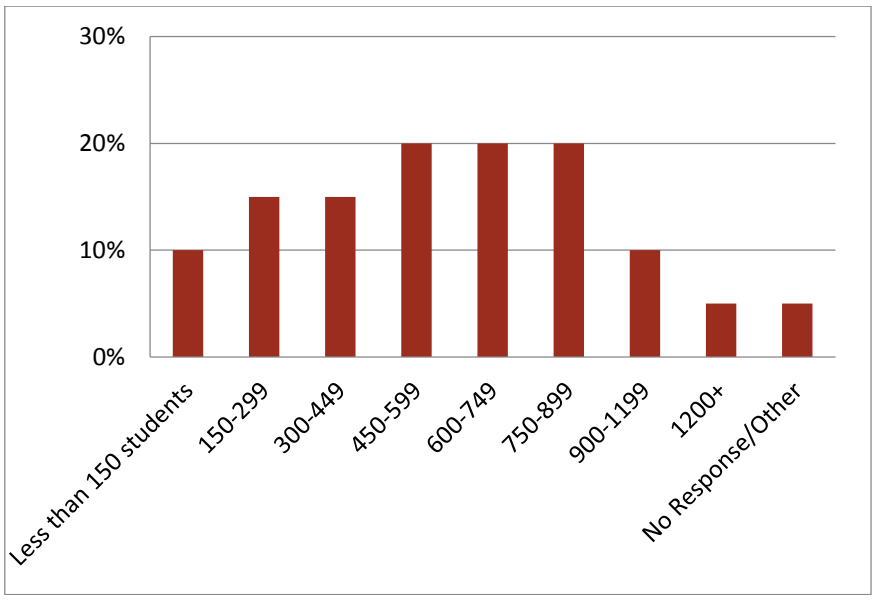


C. Demographics

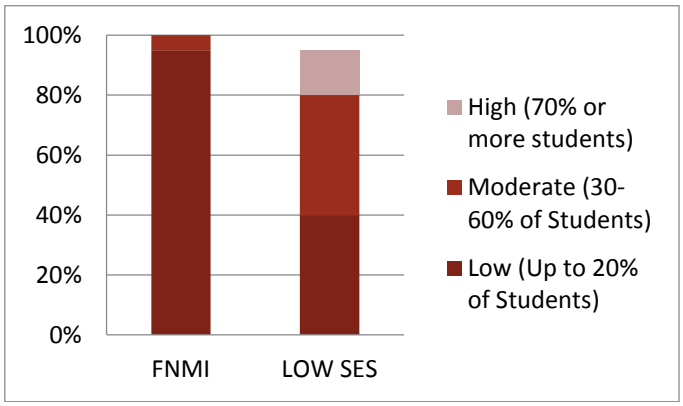
Population Density



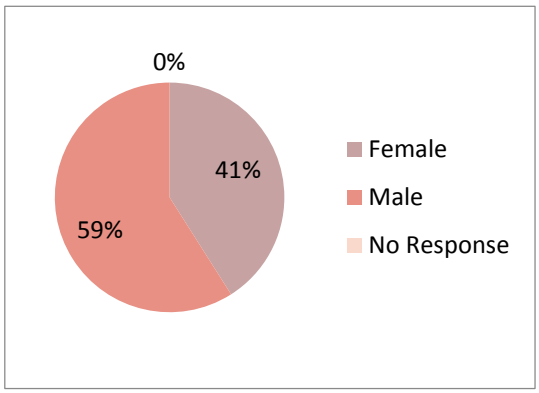
School Size



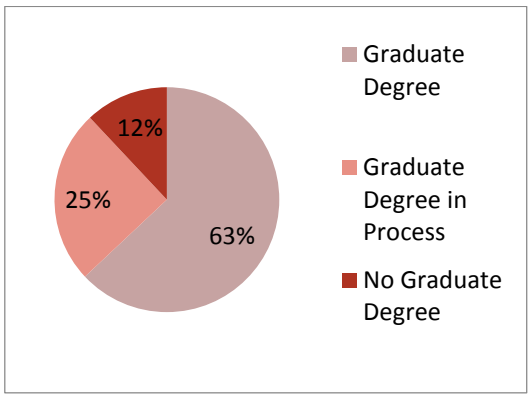
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level

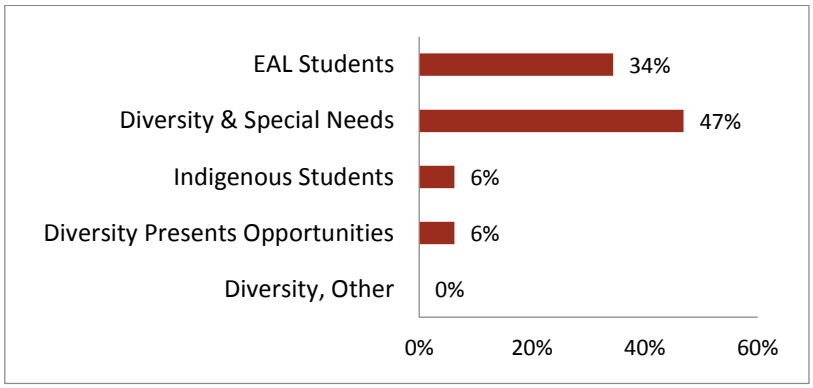


Appendix H: Manitoba Data Charts

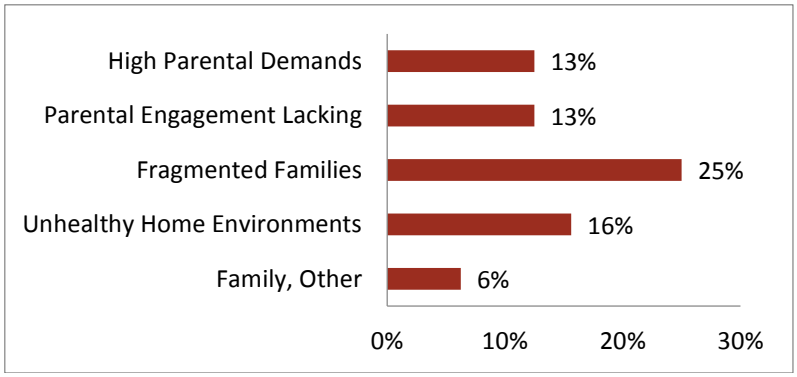
(For all data charts, n = 32)

A. Social Changes and Influences

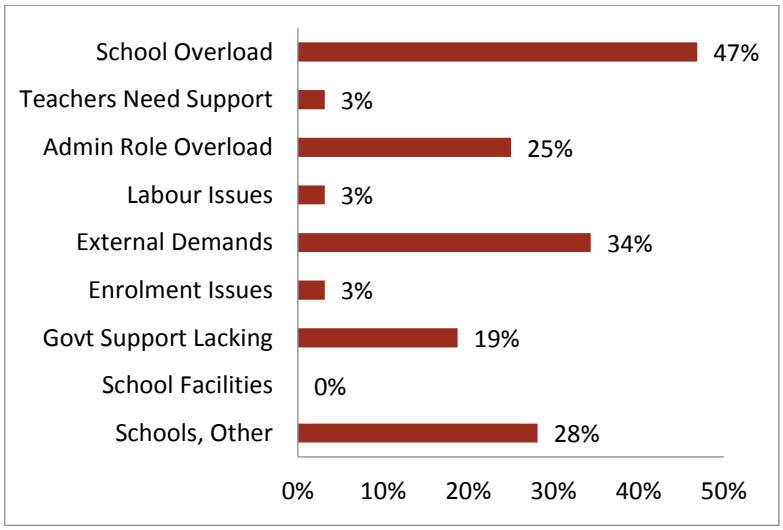
Diversity



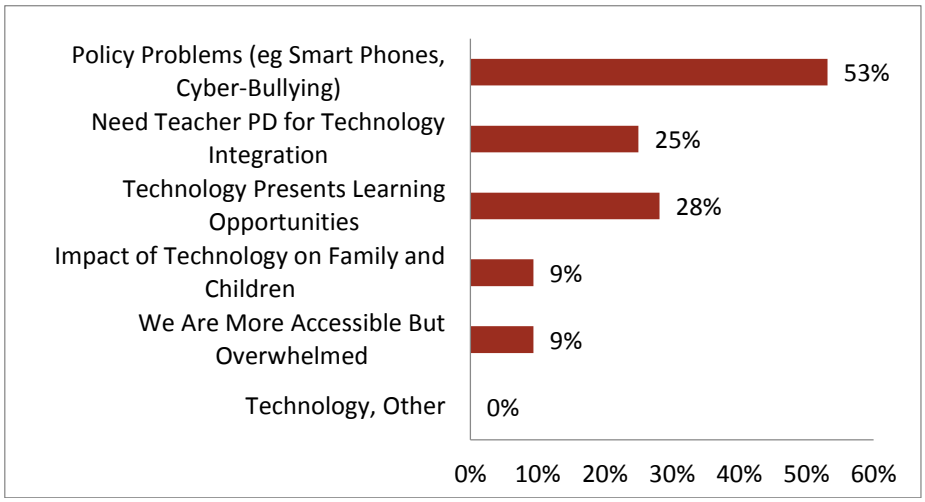
Family



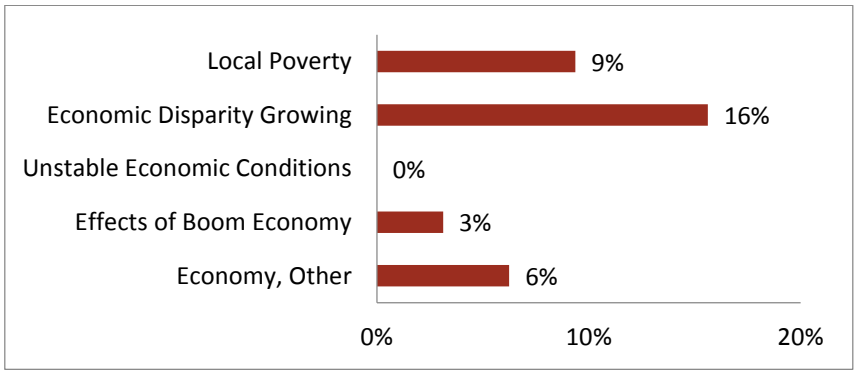
Schools



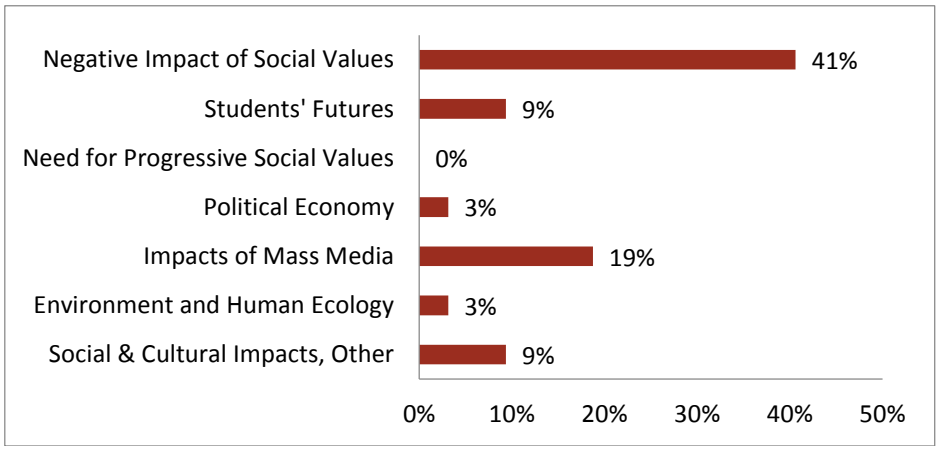
Technology



Economy

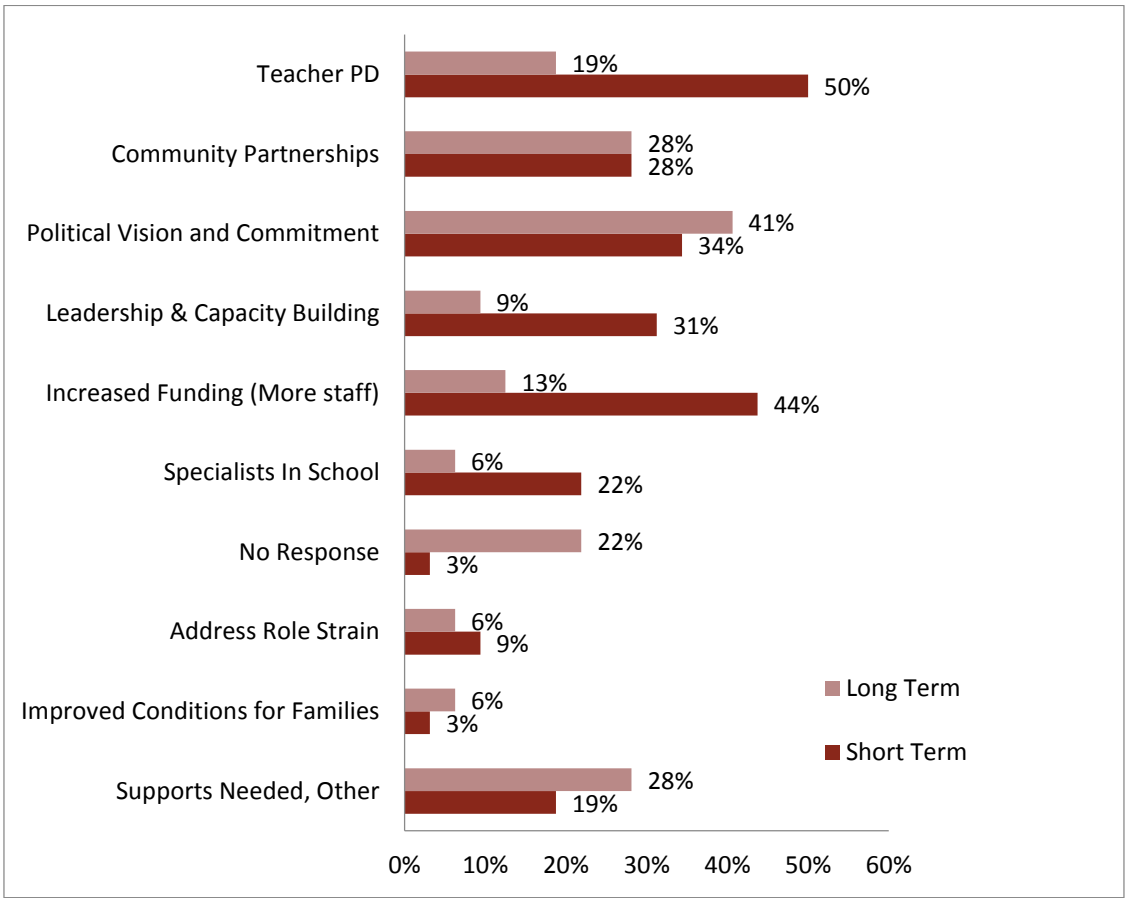


Society



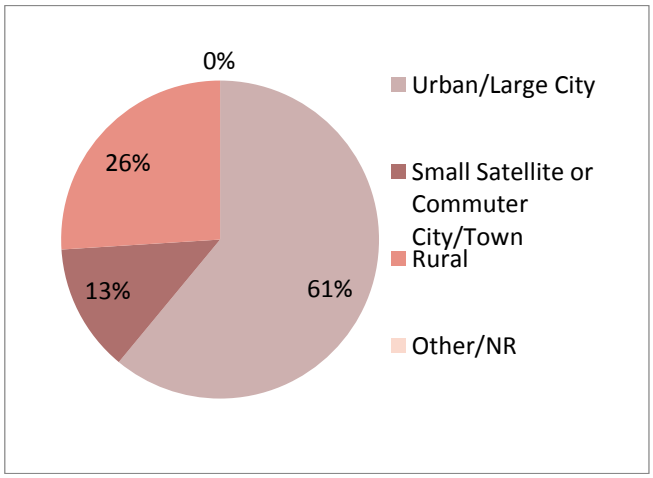
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

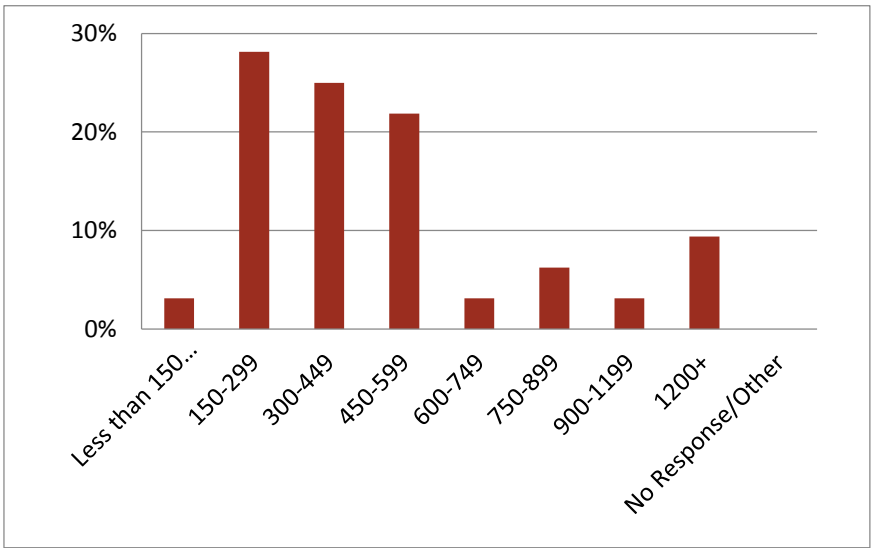


C. Demographics

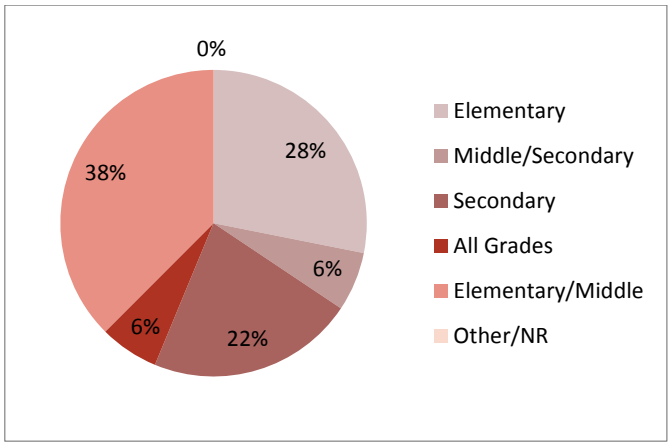
Population Density



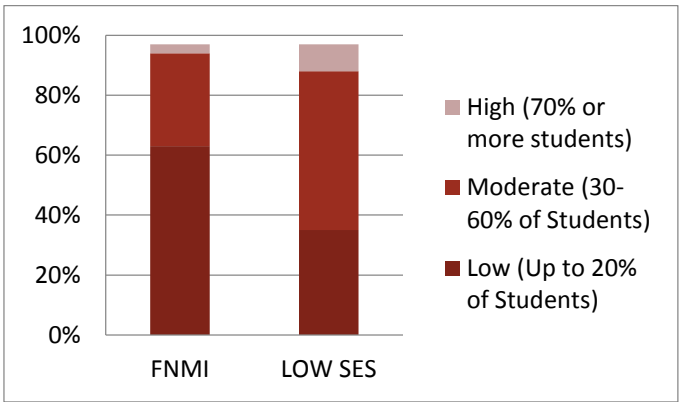
School Size



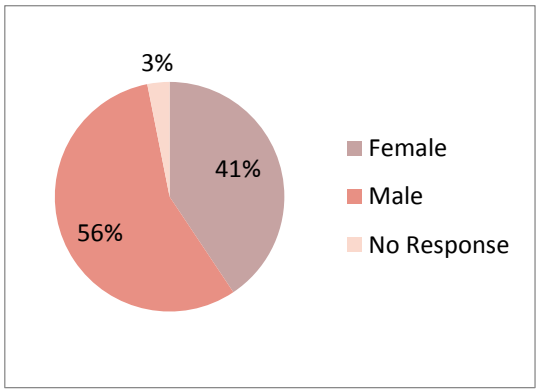
Grades Taught



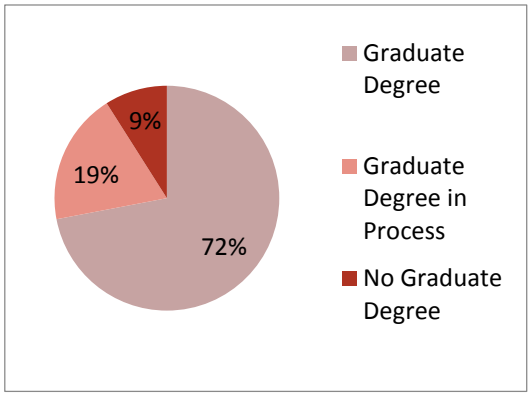
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level

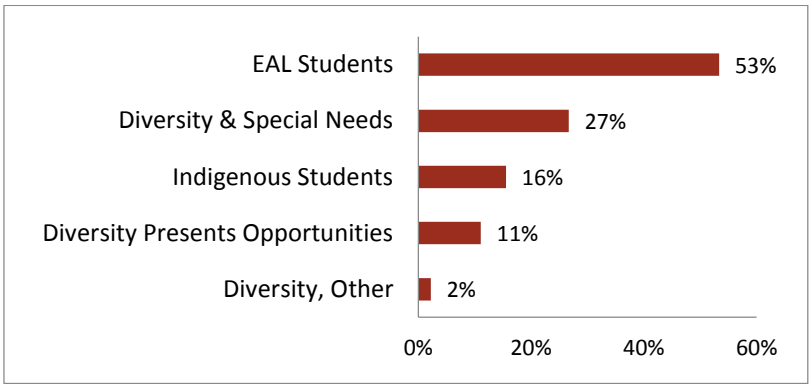


Appendix I: Saskatchewan Data Charts

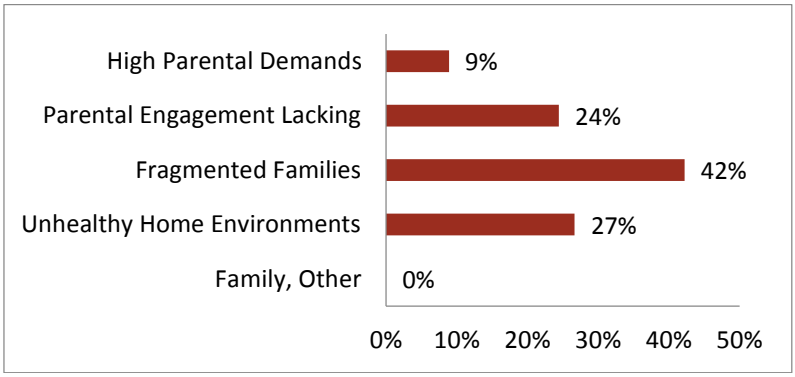
(For all data charts, n = 45)

A. Social Changes and Influences

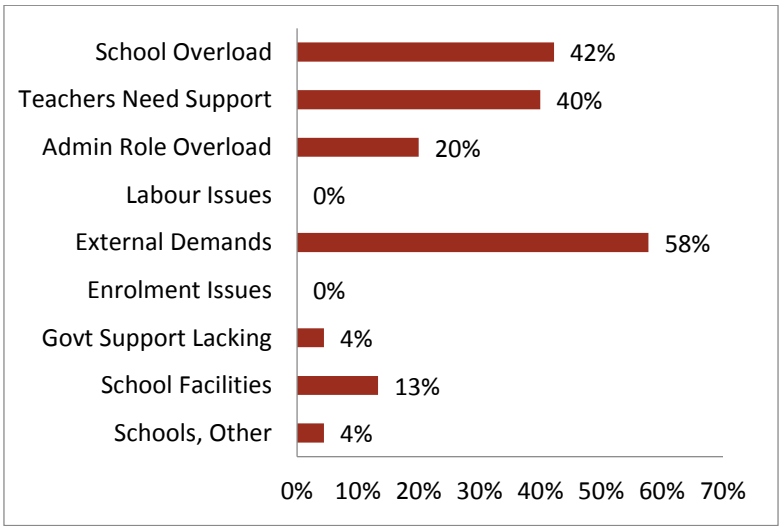
Diversity



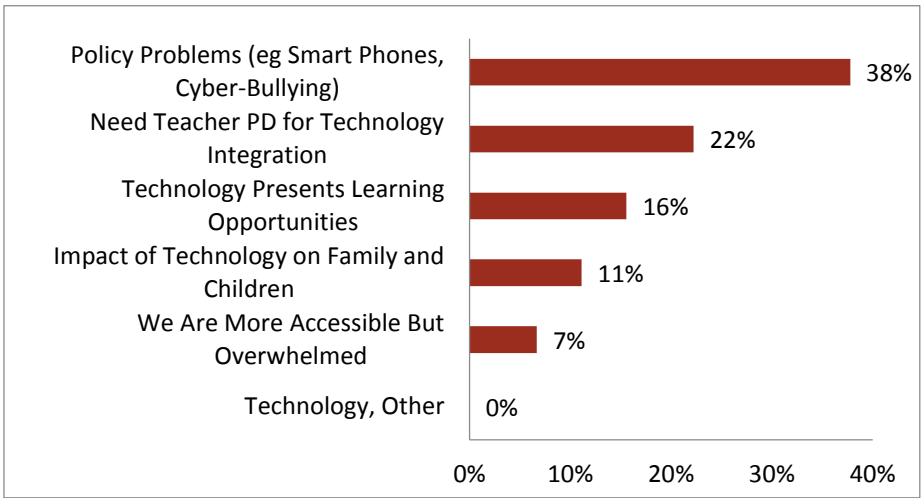
Family



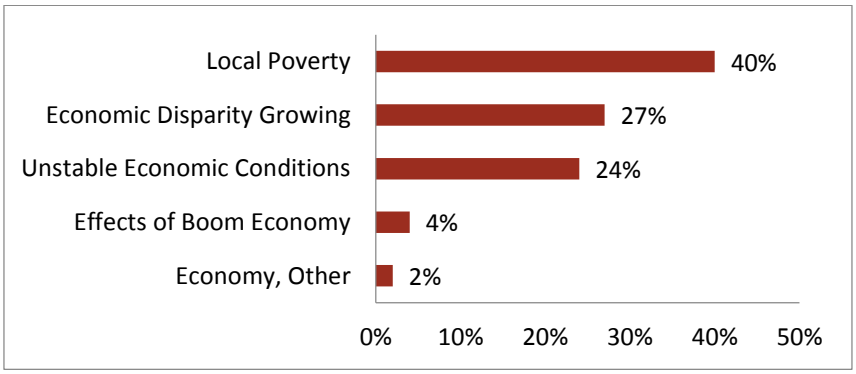
Schools



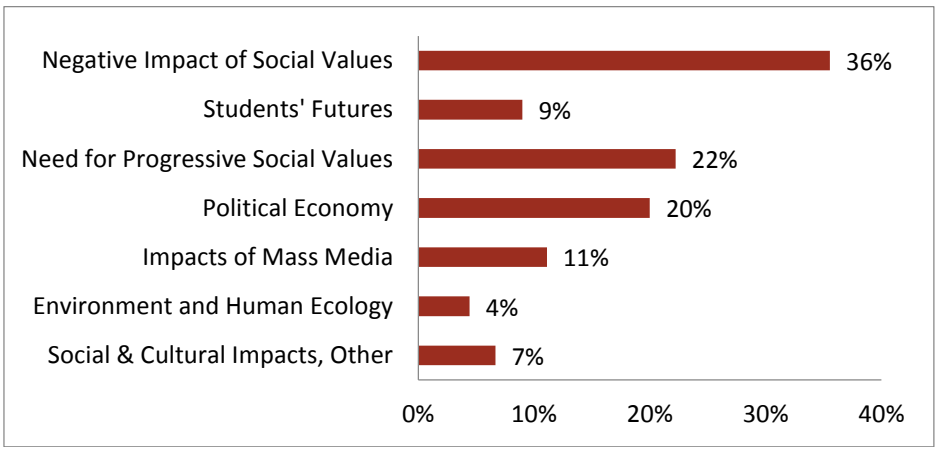
Technology



Economy

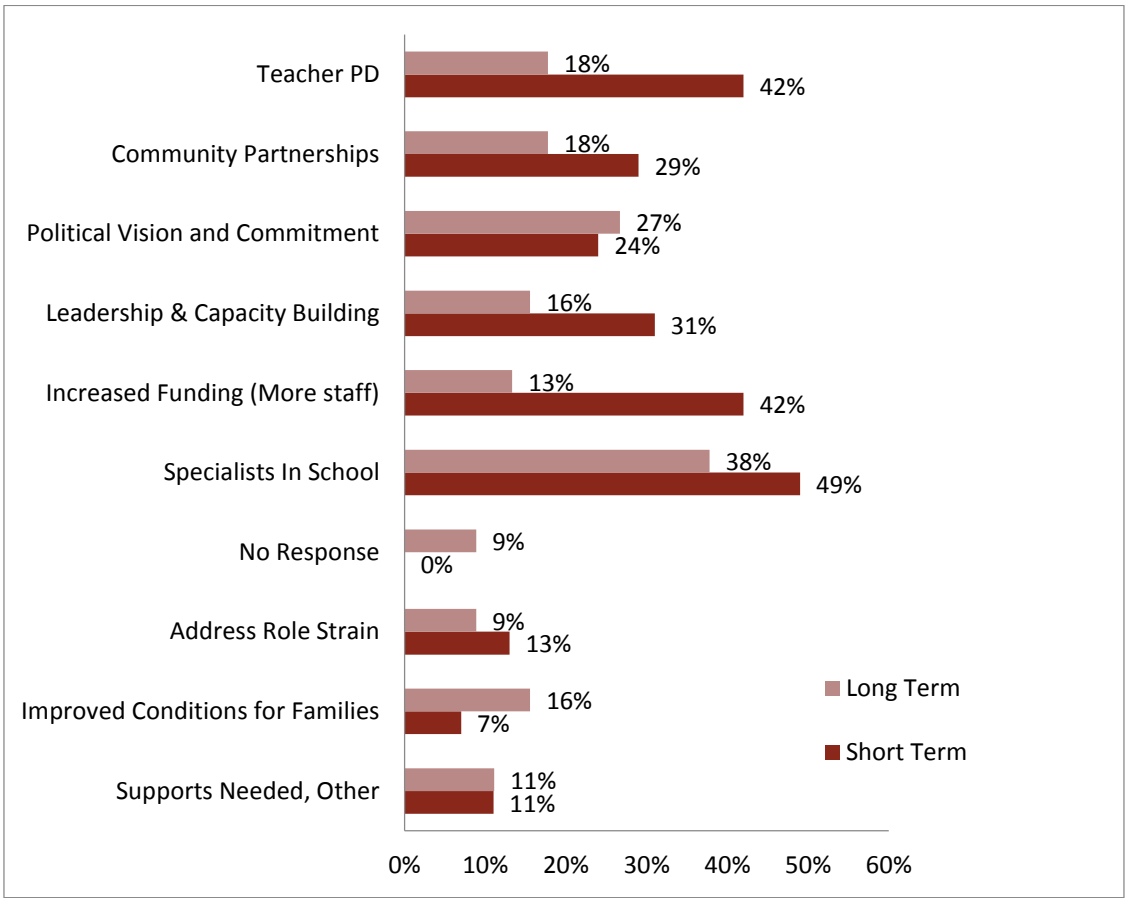


Society



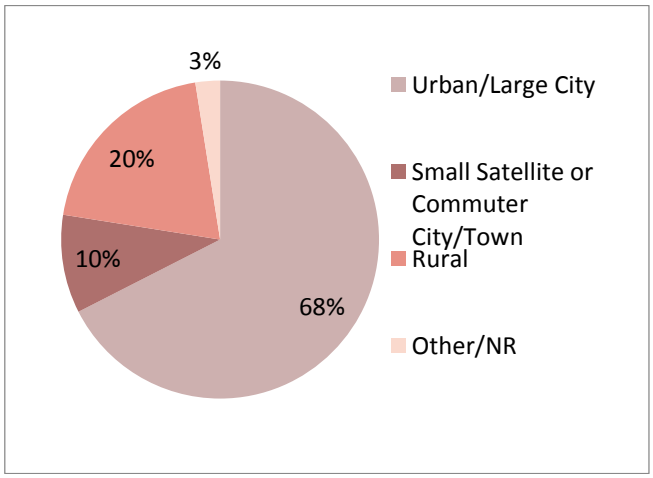
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

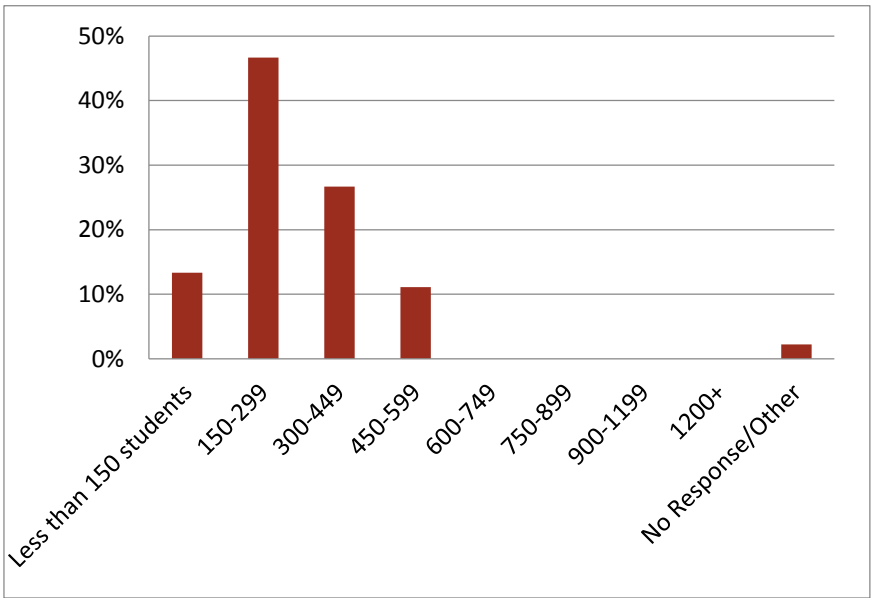


C. Demographics

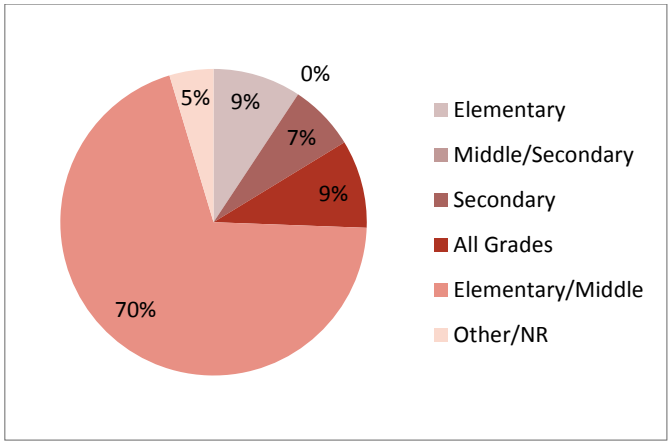
Population Density



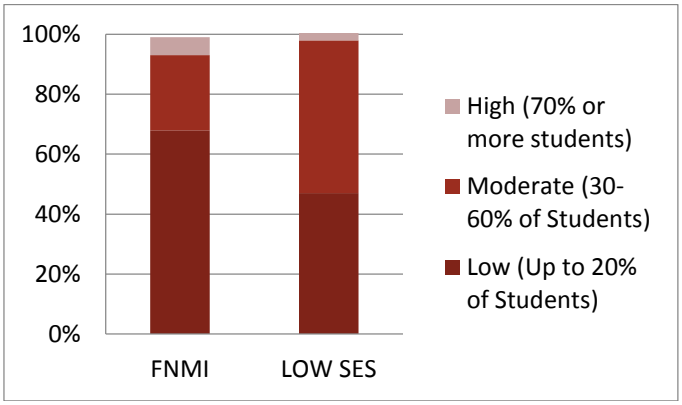
School Size



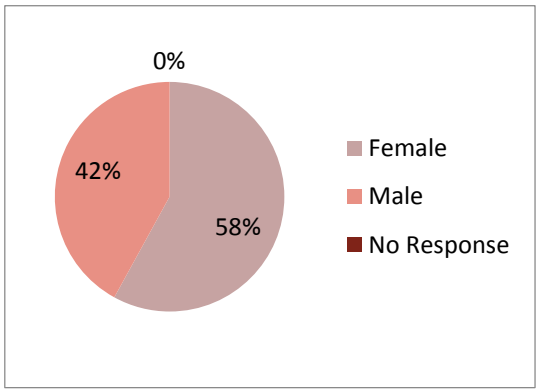
Grades Taught



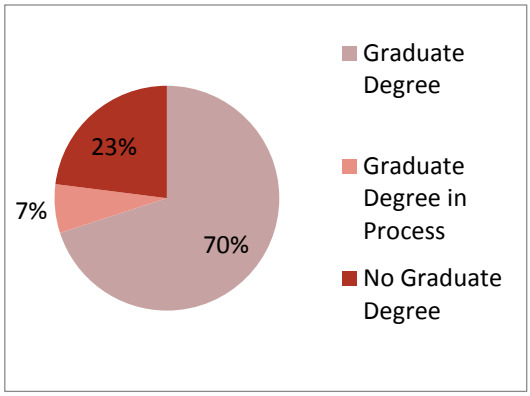
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level

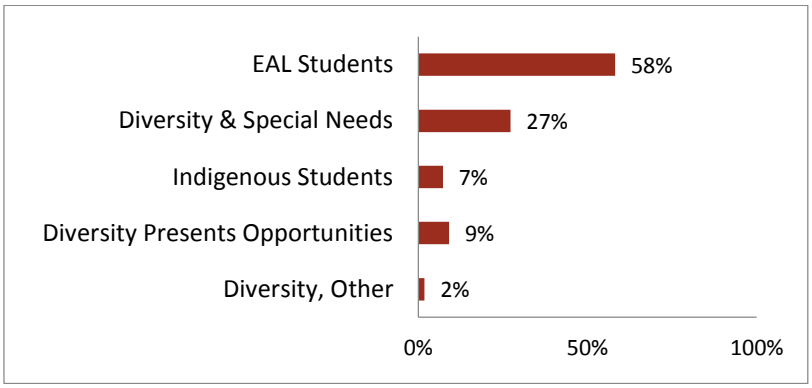


Appendix J: Alberta Data Charts

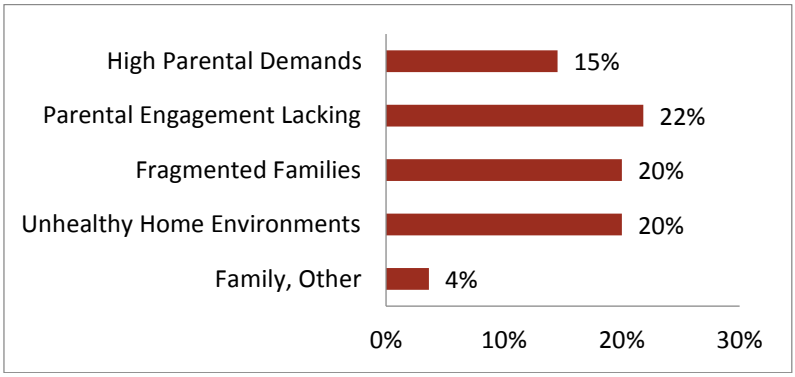
(For all data charts, n = 55)

A. Social Changes and Influences

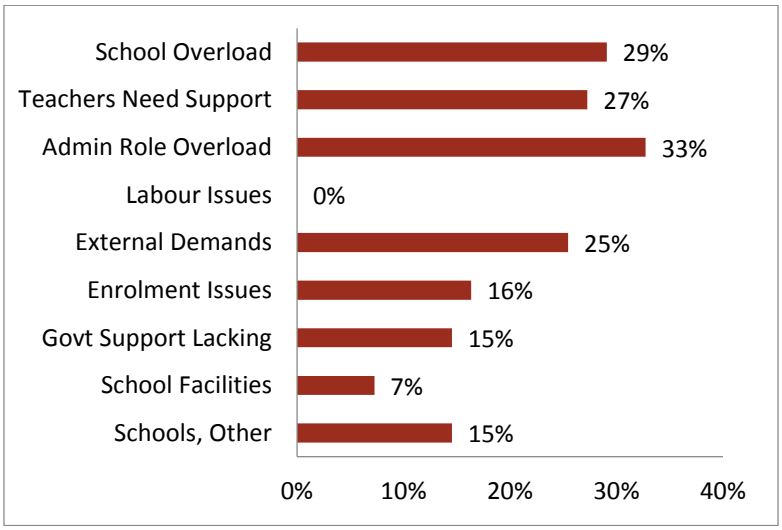
Diversity



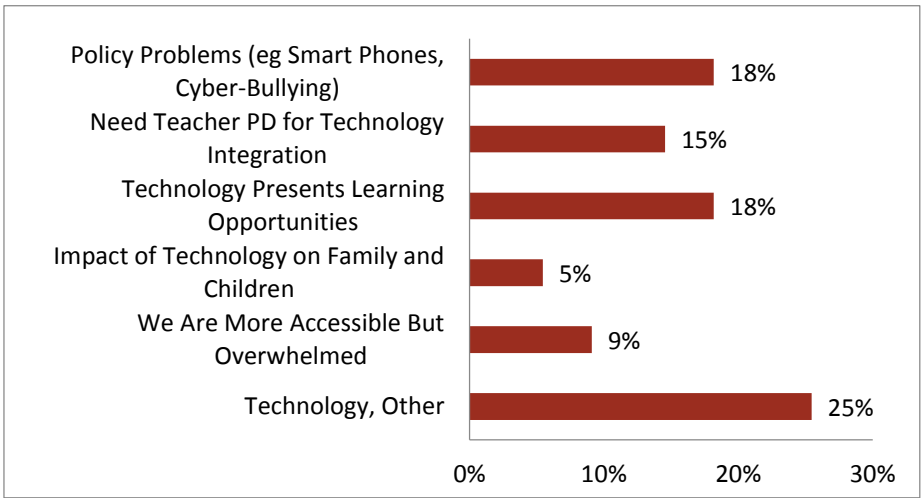
Family



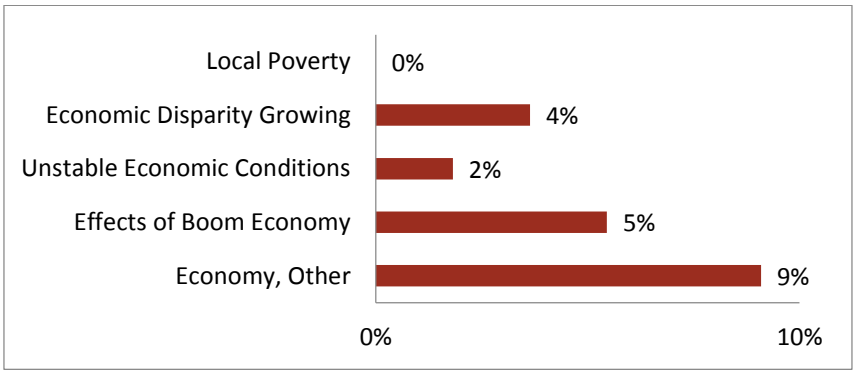
Schools



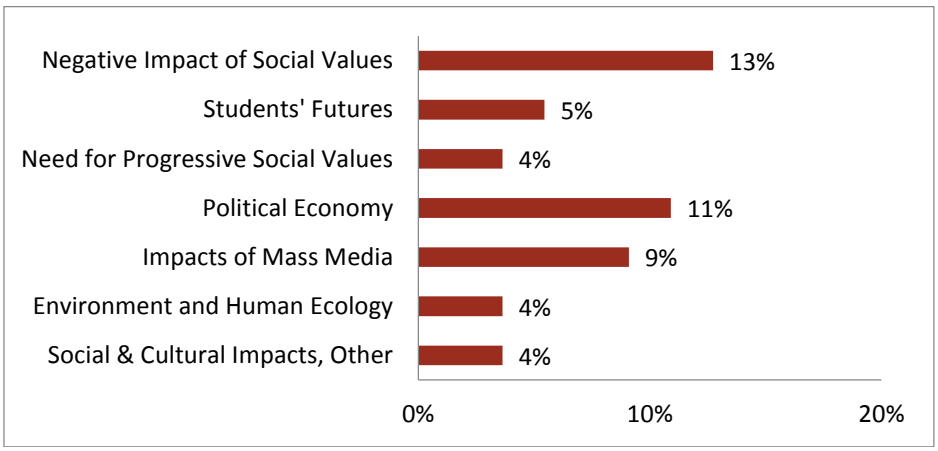
Technology



Economy

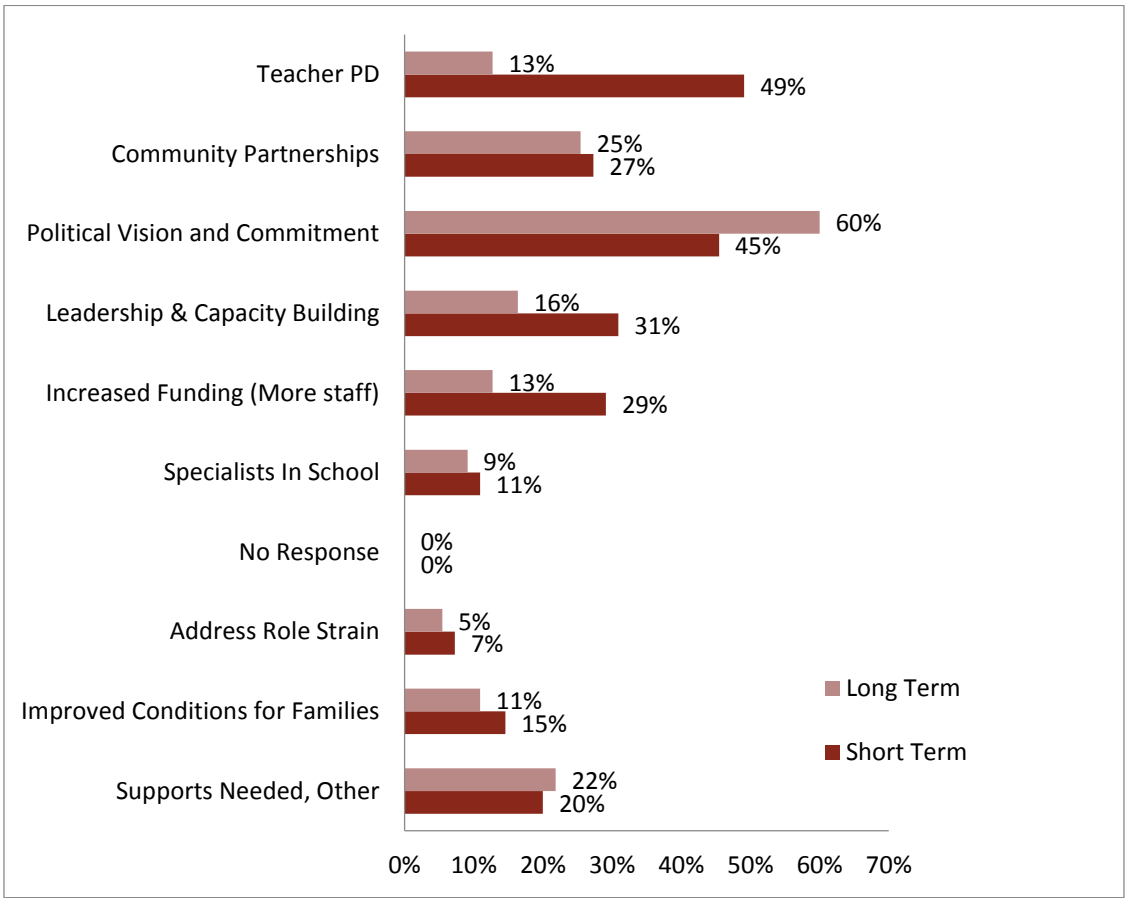


Society



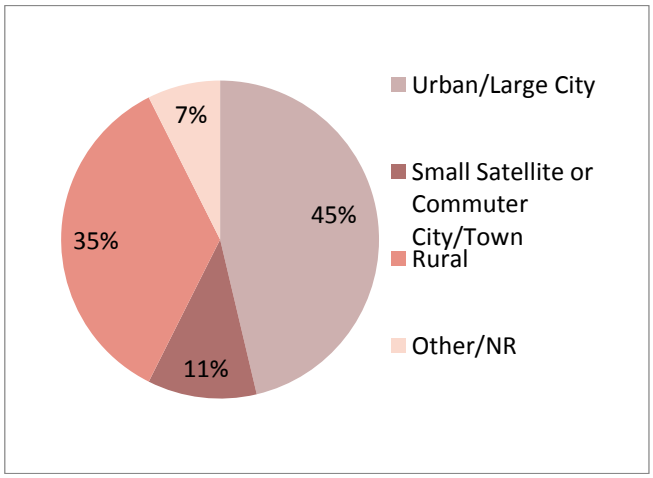
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

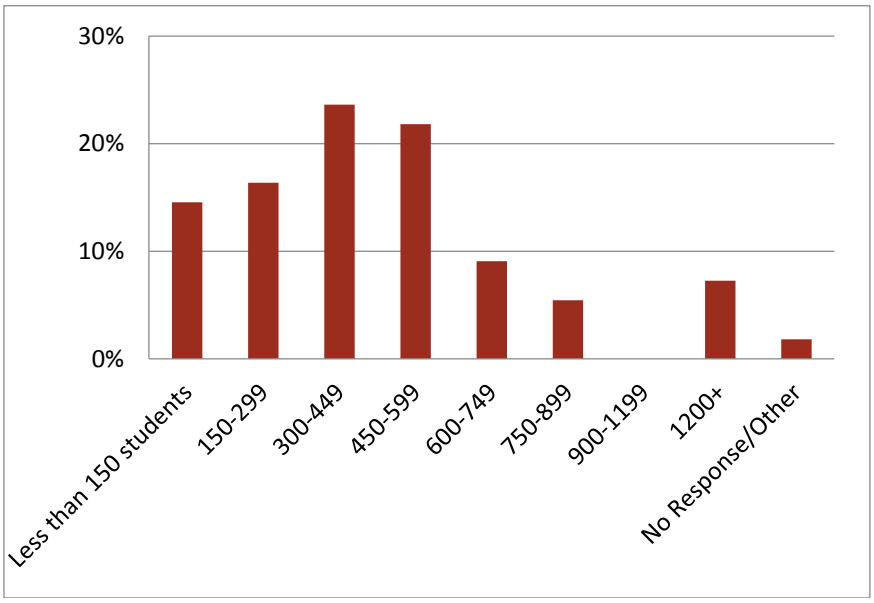


C. Demographics

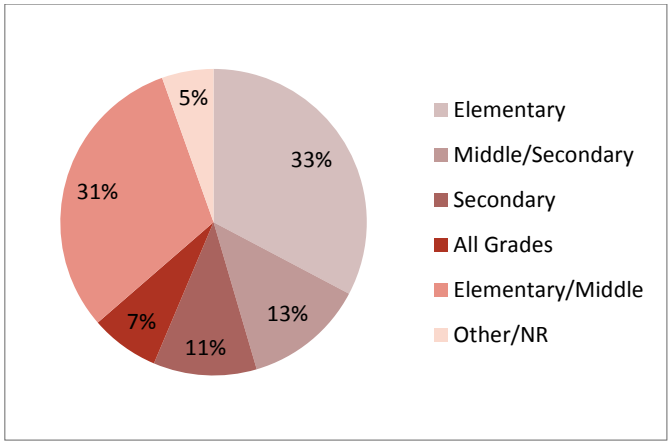
Population Density



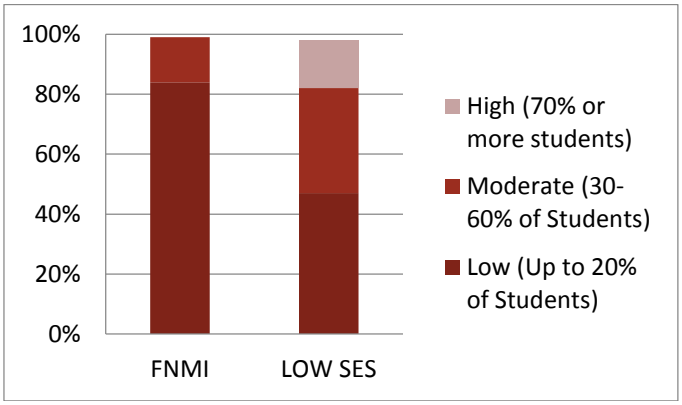
School Size



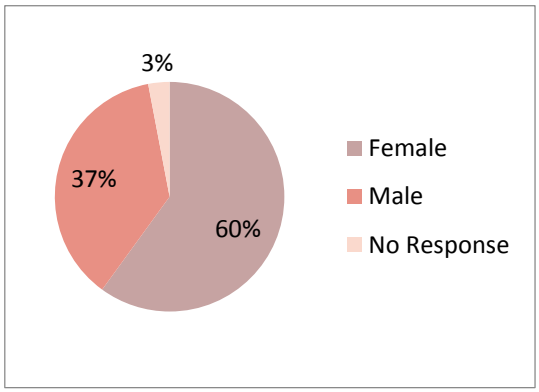
Grades Taught



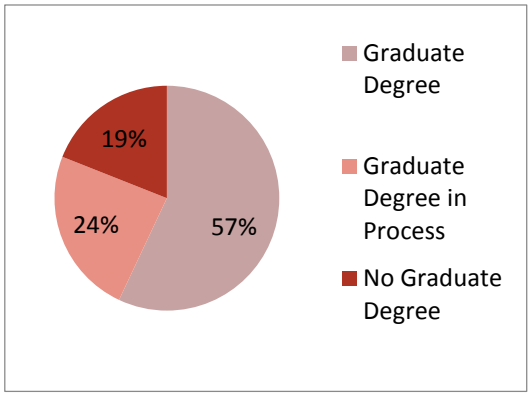
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level

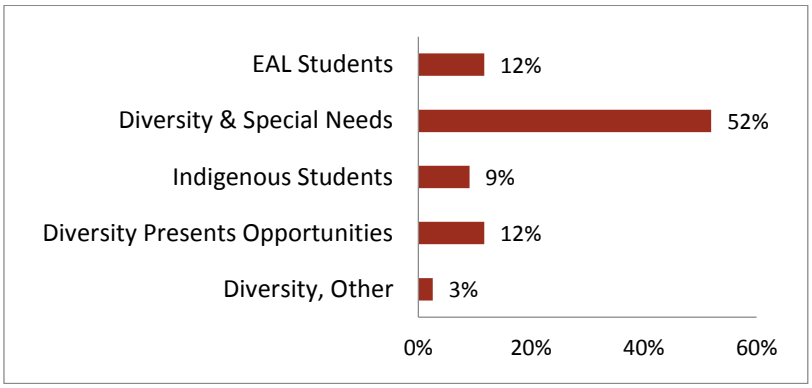


Appendix K: British Columbia Data Charts

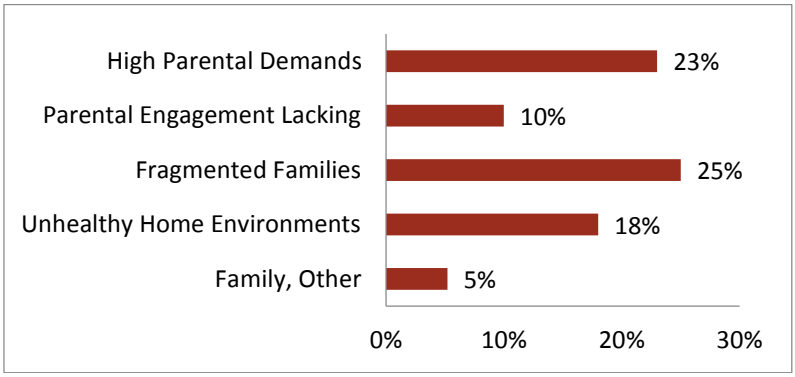
(For all data charts, n = 77)

A. Social Changes and Influences

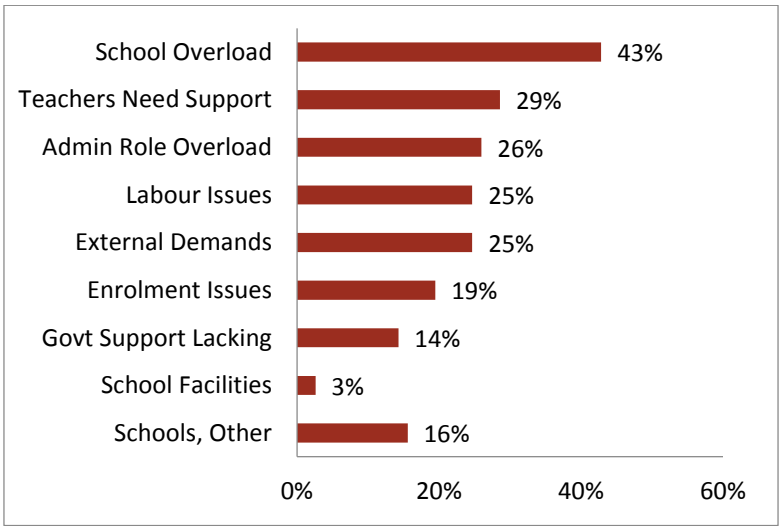
Diversity



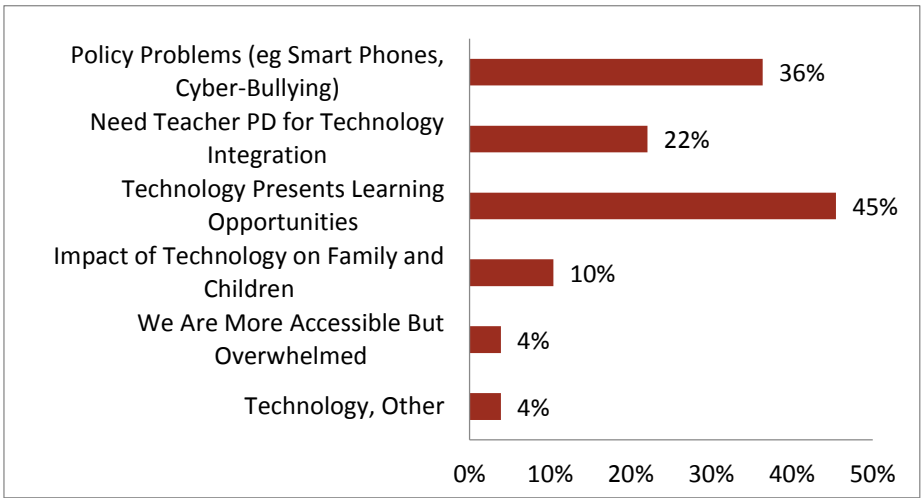
Family



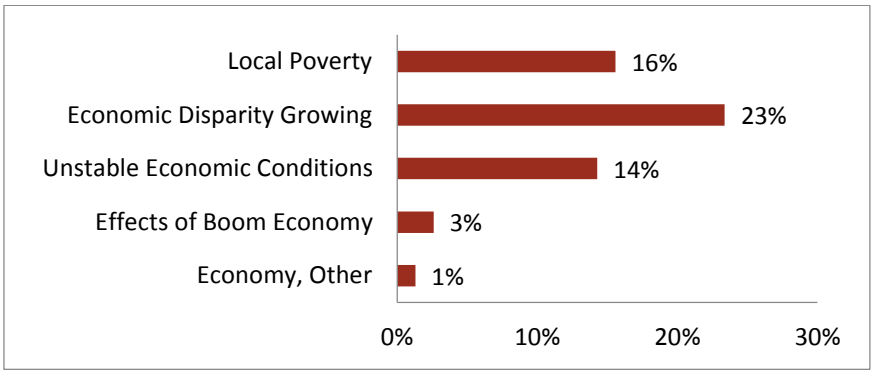
Schools



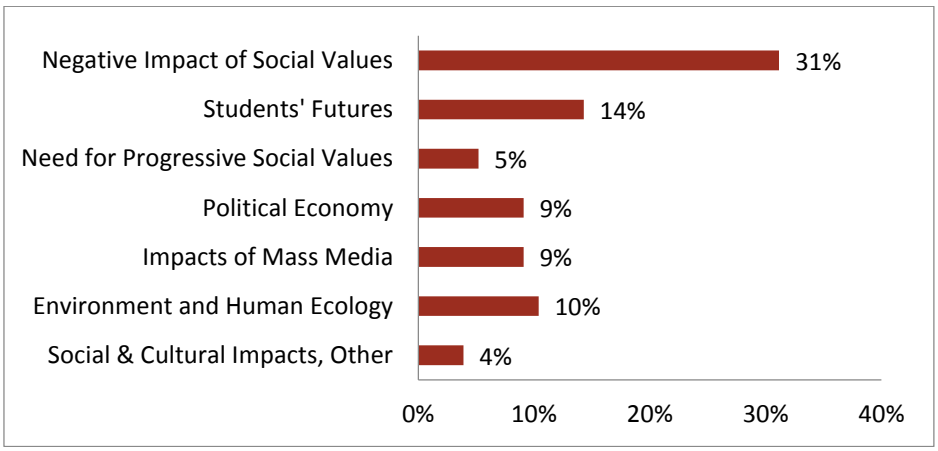
Technology



Economy

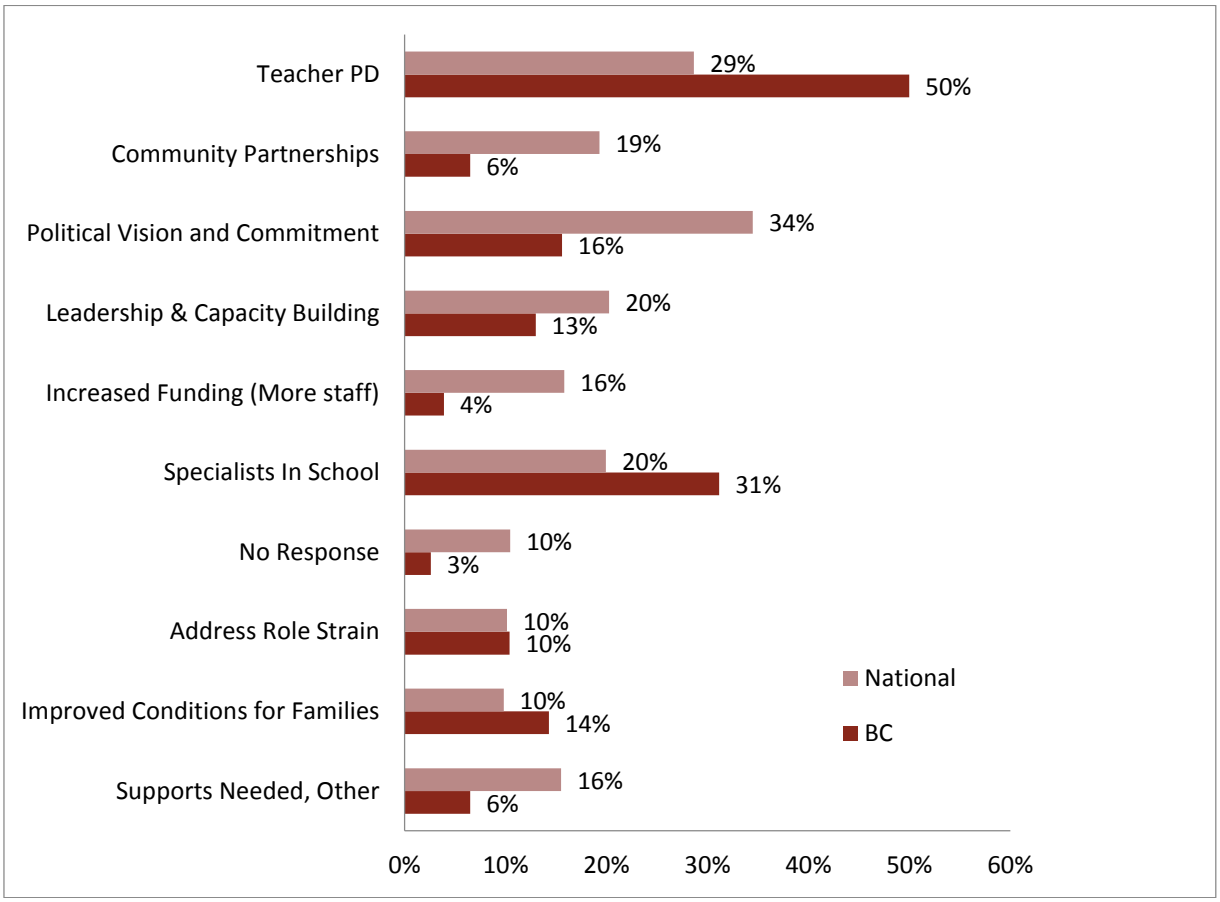


Society



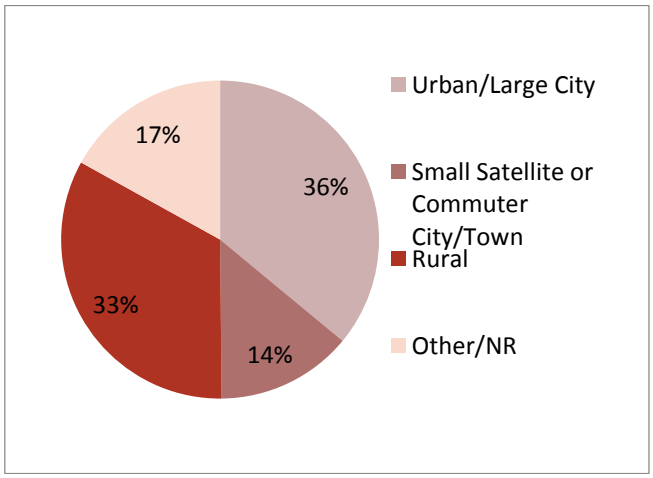
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

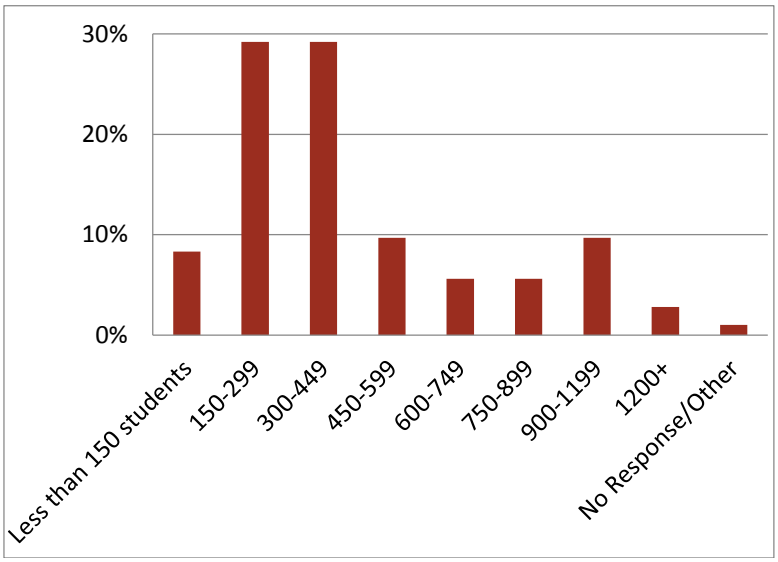


C. Demographics

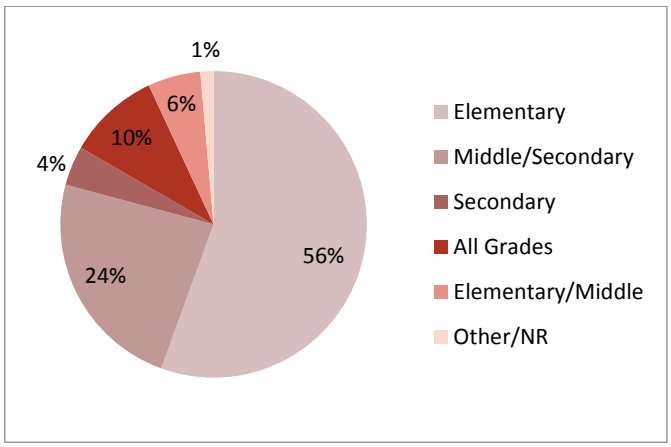
Population Density



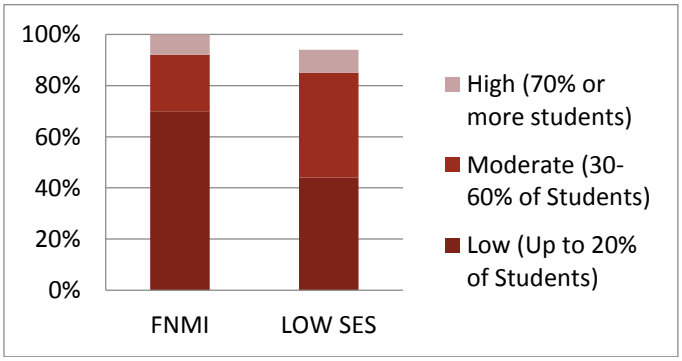
School Size



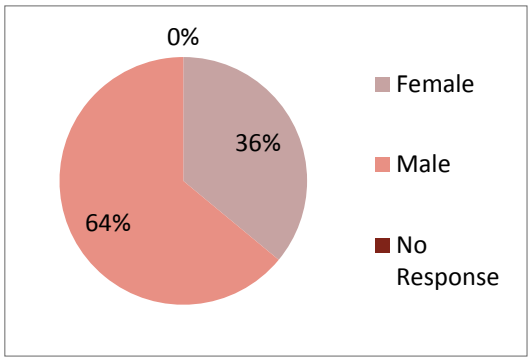
Grades Taught



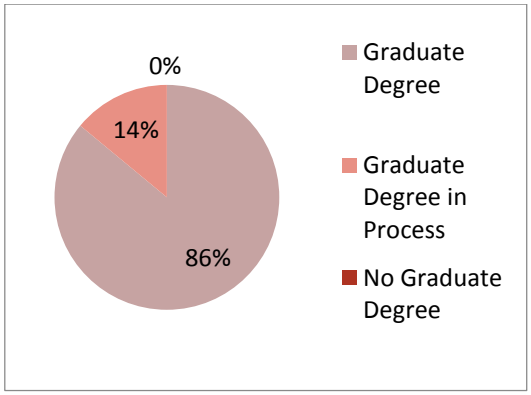
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level

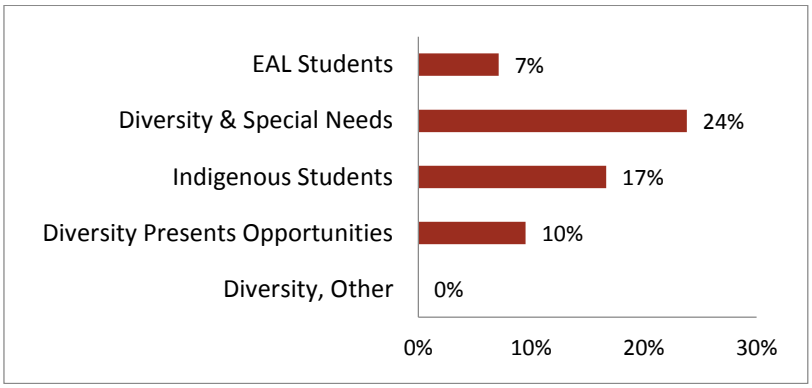


Appendix L: Northern Territories Data Charts

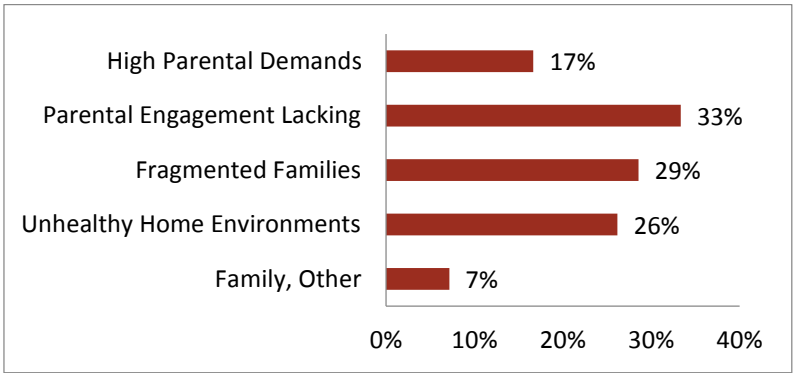
(For all data charts, n = 42)

A. Social Changes and Influences

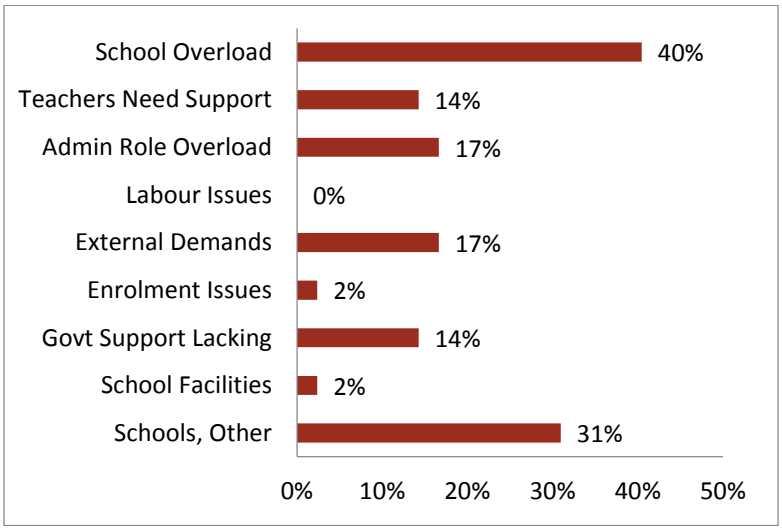
Diversity



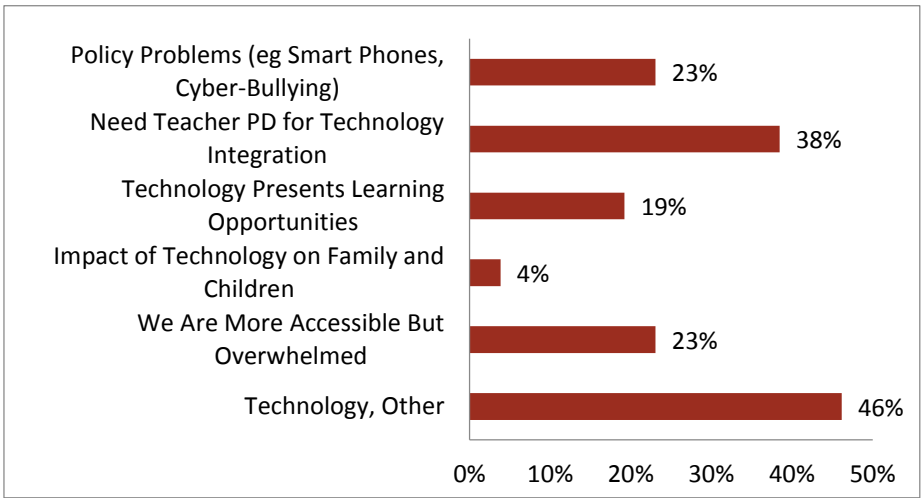
Family



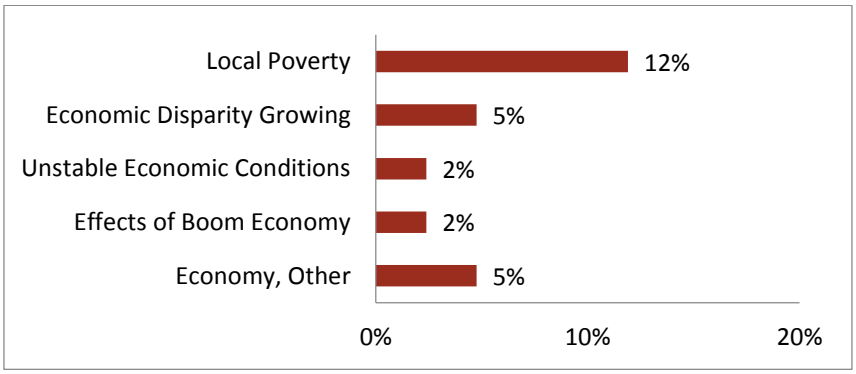
Schools



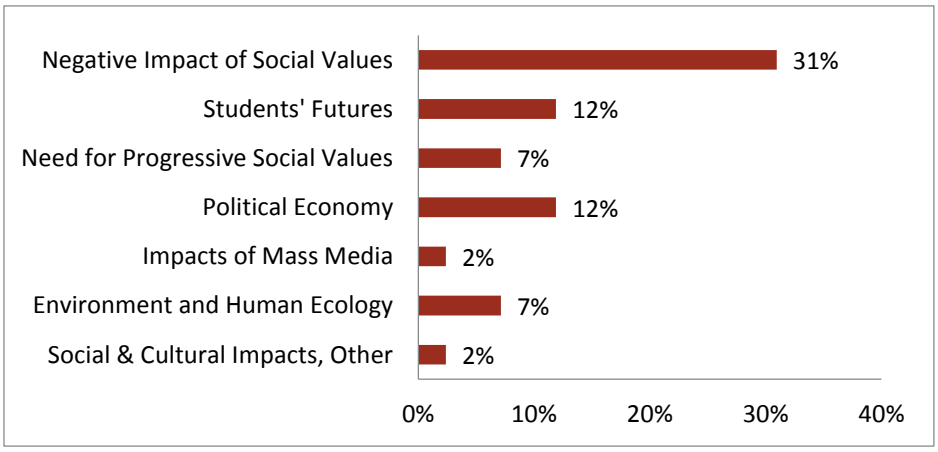
Technology



Economy

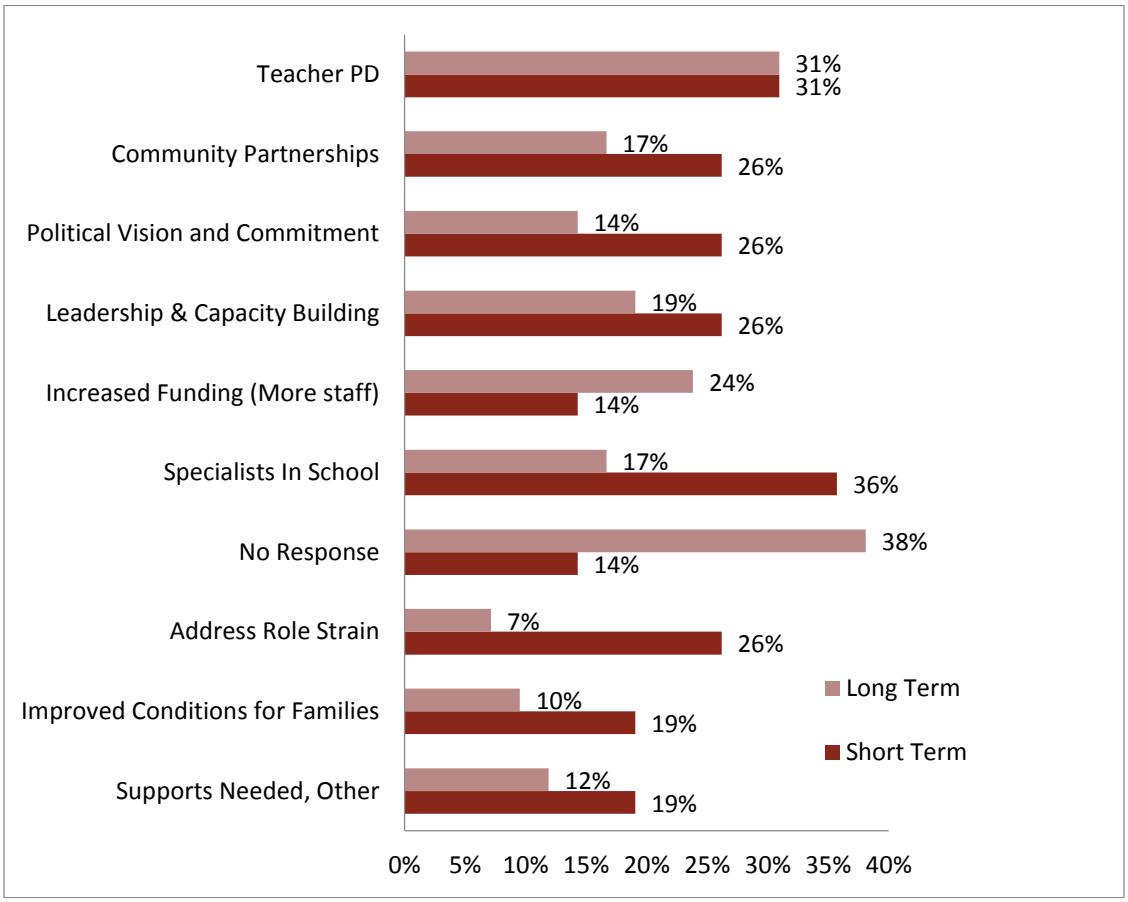


Society



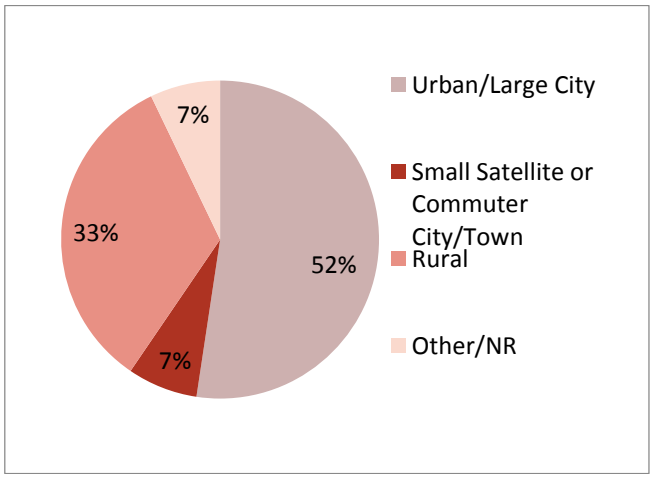
B. Short- and Long-Term Supports

Supports

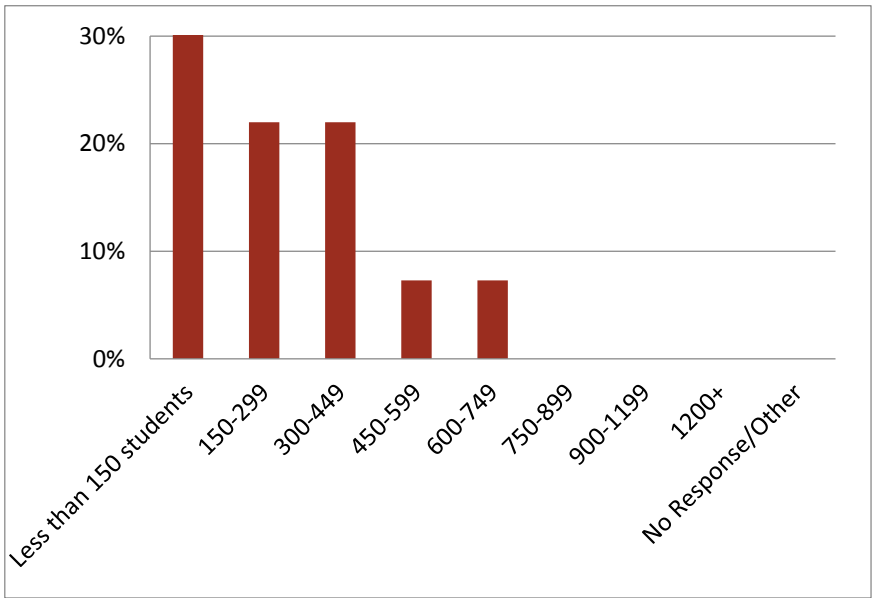


C. Demographics

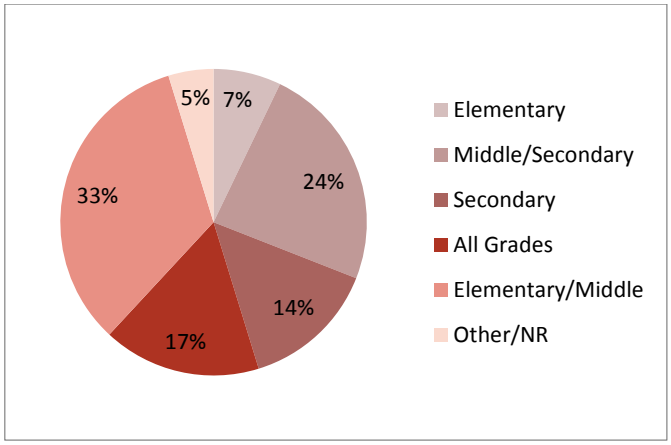
Population Density



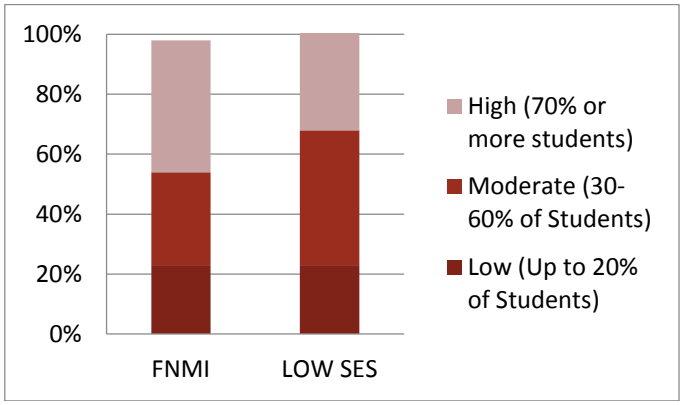
School Size



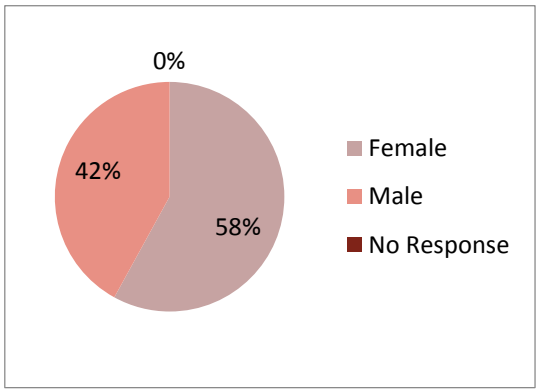
Grades Taught



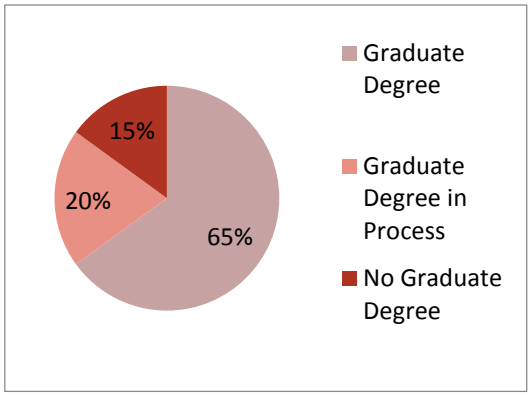
Composition of Student Body



Gender



Education Level



The Alberta Teachers' Association

Canadian Association of Principals
association canadienne des directeurs d'école

This publication is a joint effort of the Canadian Association of Principals and the Alberta Teachers' Association. Further background information about this publication is available from:

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