

The Negative Impact of Excessive Workload for Ontario's School Leaders

The Ontario Principals' Council (OPC) continues to express our concerns about the impacts that excessive workload is having in our schools.



Recommendations

Workload and Unceasing Ministry Initiatives

- Review and remove ministry initiatives that deter P/VPs from focusing on instructional leadership
- Streamline initiatives to focus on a limited number of priorities, eliminating outdated or unnecessary ones
- Separate responsibilities tied to instructional leadership from those related to operational tasks
- Balance any new responsibilities with the removal of equivalent existing ones
- Implement e-signatures for report cards in all boards

Staff Shortages

- Manage staff shortages without relying on P/VPs to fill in, with flexible staffing agreements, Letters of Understanding or temporary support staff
- Expand the number of Occasional Teachers in school boards to effectively cover staffing gaps
- Revert back to a 1-year Teacher's College program, offering paid co-op or mentoring placement, allowing candidates to gain practical experience while addressing staffing needs
- Increase the number of spaces in Teacher College programs

Violent Incidents

- Increase funding to school boards to ensure a full complement of school staff
- Enhance funding for mental health and social service staff (counselors, CYWs, psychologists, social workers)
- Give principals greater authority to suspend and expel students without excessive procedural barriers
- Enforce civility expectations for parents and caregivers liaising with school staff

Students with Special Needs

- Ensure full funding of Educational Assistants (EAs)
- Increase early intervention autism funding
- Enhance funding for programming for students with complex needs
- Increase support for managing complex needs of special education students
- Subsidize education costs of EAs to attract more into the field

Community Use of Schools

- Transfer responsibility for all aspects of the scheduling, managing and supervising of schools for community use to school boards

Work of Other Employee Groups

- Stipulate that P/VPs will not be responsible for carrying out the work of any other employee groups
- Remove teaching responsibilities from principals so they can be full-time school leaders

Mental Health and Well-being

- Provide additional funding to the P/VP benefits plan to ensure adequate access to practitioners and resources
- Provide additional funding for mentorship programs and leadership training for P/VPs
- Increase the number of treatment beds and resources in the community to meet the growing needs of our students

The recruitment and retention of principals and vice-principals is directly linked to all these factors. We must ensure the role is attractive to future leaders.