

**The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher:
Challenges for School Leadership**

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The MetLife Survey of *THE AMERICAN TEACHER*

Challenges for School Leadership

A Survey of Teachers and Principals

Conducted for:
MetLife, Inc.

Survey Field Dates:
Teachers: October 5 – November 11, 2012
Principals: October 9 – November 9, 2012

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Message from MetLife

Leadership encompasses many roles and styles. Its effectiveness often depends on the level and frequency of communications between leaders and constituents. Asking good questions is part of both making good decisions and implementing them successfully.

With years of debate, many American policymakers and leaders have come to a clearer consensus about what effective education looks like. There is agreement across most states about how to prepare students for success in postsecondary education and careers, and to compete and collaborate in a global economy. The focus is now shifting from *what* education for the future should be to *how* best to implement these changes and the role of leadership in these efforts.

MetLife supports education as an investment in the future. Part of its contribution for 29 years has been the annual MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, which asks important questions about issues in education intended to give teachers a voice with leaders and policymakers.

In recent years, the MetLife Survey has examined the issue of college and career readiness from many angles. It has explored what educators, as well as students, parents, and Fortune 1000 business executives, think the term means; if and how teachers, students and principals collaborate as a community focused on student success; and the effects on the classroom of factors outside of the school, including families, communities, and the economy. This year the survey focuses on how teachers and principals view the responsibilities and challenges of leadership in schools as they begin to implement more ambitious standards to increase student success in school and beyond.

Schools are important because the future resides there. We hope the findings of this survey will help us all pose and address questions about school leadership that can turn challenges into opportunities for education.

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Introduction

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership (2012) was conducted by Harris Interactive and is the twenty-ninth in a series sponsored annually by MetLife since 1984 to give voice to those closest to the classroom. This report examines the views of teachers and principals on the responsibilities and challenges facing school leaders, including the changing roles of principals and teachers, budget and resources, professional satisfaction, and implementation of the Common Core State Standards for college and career readiness.

Reports for the entire series are available online at www.metlife.com/teachersurvey with links to the ERIC (Education Resources Information Center) website: <http://eric.ed.gov>.

Research Methods

This research combined both quantitative and qualitative methods to gain a clear picture of attitudes and perceptions among teachers and principals.

Survey of Teachers

The survey of teachers was conducted by telephone between October 5 and November 11, 2012 among 1,000 U.S. K-12 public school teachers. The data were weighted where necessary to key demographic variables to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

Survey of Principals

The survey of principals was conducted by telephone between October 9 and November 9, 2012 among 500 U.S. K-12 public school principals. The data were weighted where necessary to key demographic variables to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. No estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

In-depth Telephone Interviews among Thought Leaders in Education

To inform the development of the survey, in-depth telephone interviews with five education thought leaders and policy experts were conducted between August 14 and August 17, 2012. Thought leaders were drawn from different education organizations from a list provided by MetLife and offered a range of knowledge and expertise in education leadership from principals' and teachers' perspectives, in Common Core State Standards, and in assessment.

A full methodology is included in the Appendix of the report.

A Note on Reading the Figures

An asterisk (*) signals a value of less than one-half percent (0.5%). A dash (–) represents a value of zero. Percentages may not always add up to 100% because of computer rounding or the acceptance of multiple answers from respondents. Calculations of responses discussed in the text are based on raw numbers and not percentages, therefore these figures may differ slightly from calculations based on percentages. The base for each question is the total number of respondents answering that question. Note that in some cases results may be based on small sample sizes. This is typically true when questions were asked of subgroups. Caution should be used in drawing any conclusions from the results based on these small samples. Percentages depicted may not add up to 100% because some answer categories may be excluded from the figure.

About MetLife

MetLife is a leading global provider of insurance, annuities and employee benefit programs. Through its subsidiaries and affiliates, MetLife holds leading market positions in the United States, Japan, Latin America, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East. MetLife Foundation draws on the findings of the annual MetLife Survey of the American Teacher to inform its support for education. For more information about MetLife, please visit the company's web site at www.metlife.com. Additional information about the Foundation is available at www.metlife.org.

About Harris Interactive

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries and serves clients in over 215 countries and territories. For more information, please visit www.harrisinteractive.com.

Executive Summary

Within the U.S. education system, teachers and principals have the most direct responsibility for the achievement of students and the performance of schools. *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Challenges for School Leadership* (2012) captures the viewpoints and experiences of teachers and principals working to meet those responsibilities in an environment of continued strained resources and increased expectations to strengthen educational outcomes. With the introduction of the Common Core State Standards, educators in 46 states and the District of Columbia are now being called to transform their professional practice further to ensure that **all** students—not just some—master content and are able to apply knowledge that will prepare them for success beyond high school in college or careers. School leaders—principals, school leadership teams, and teacher leaders—face new challenges of finding and reallocating resources, introducing changes in curriculum and instruction, and ensuring professional learning needed to implement the Common Core.

Among responsibilities that school leaders face, those that teachers and principals identify as most challenging result from conditions that originate beyond school doors. A majority of teachers and principals report that their school’s budget has decreased in the last 12 months, and even greater proportions of teachers and principals indicate that it is challenging or very challenging for school leaders to manage budgets and resources to meet school needs. Teachers and principals also rate the responsibilities of addressing the individual needs of diverse learners and engaging parents and the community in improving the education of students as significant leadership challenges.

Of lesser concern, but still seen by more than half of teachers and principals as challenging or very challenging, are instructional leadership responsibilities of implementing the Common Core, creating and maintaining an academically rigorous learning environment, and evaluating teacher effectiveness. Principals and teachers also cite the need to provide professional development opportunities for teachers and maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers as sizable but lower-tier challenges.

Teachers in schools where budgets have decreased, however, say that providing opportunities for them to build their competence and skills is a significant challenge. Greater proportions of teachers and principals in high-needs, than in other, schools report that maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers and engaging parents and the community present challenges for their school leaders.

The responsibilities of school leadership have changed significantly in recent years, leading to a job that principals say has become too complex and highly stressful. Although principals generally feel personally accountable for everything that happens to the children in their schools, they see differences in their jobs compared to just five years ago. Overall, teachers also hold the principal responsible for everything that happens to the children in a school, and more so today than teachers did a quarter-century ago.

Three-quarters of all principals say that the job has become too complex, and nearly half report feeling under great stress several days a week or more. Principals in secondary schools and schools where only some students are reaching grade level in English language arts and mathematics indicate the greatest stress. While most principals report having a great deal of control in hiring teachers and making decisions about teachers’ schedules, fewer than half have great control over removing teachers or over curriculum and instruction. Principals say they have the least control in making decisions about school finances.

Principal and teacher job satisfaction is declining. Principals' satisfaction with their jobs in the public schools has decreased nine percentage points since it was last measured in 2008. In that same period, teacher satisfaction has dropped precipitously by 23 percentage points, including a five-point decrease in the last year, to the lowest level it has been in the survey in 25 years. A majority of teachers report that they feel under great stress at least several days a week, a significant increase from 1985 when this was last measured.

Principals and teachers with low job satisfaction report higher levels of stress than do other educators and are more likely to work in high-needs schools. Less satisfied principals are more likely to find it challenging to maintain an academically rigorous environment and an adequate supply of effective teachers in their schools, while less satisfied teachers are more likely to be working in schools where budgets and time for professional development and collaboration have decreased in the last 12 months.

Principals and teachers give each other high marks but disagree somewhat on the skills and experiences school leaders need. Teachers provide a positive report on the job their principal is doing, and nearly all principals give high ratings to the classroom teachers in their schools—as do teachers to the other teachers in their schools. Principals and teachers do not fully agree, however, on what experiences and skills they think are necessary for a principal to be effective. While principals place greatest importance on being able to use data about student performance to improve instruction as well as to lead the development of strong teaching capacity across a school, teachers say that it is most important for a principal to have had experience as a classroom teacher.

The survey underscores the fact that teachers today play a key part in the leadership of their schools. Half of teachers now function in formal leadership roles such as department chair, instructional resource, teacher mentor, or leadership team member. These teacher leaders are more likely than others to feel that an effective principal should be able to develop a strong teaching capacity across a school, share leadership with teachers and other staff, and evaluate teachers using multiple measures. Few teachers want to become principals, but half are interested in hybrid, part-time classroom teaching combined with other roles in their school or district.

Teachers and principals have more confidence that teachers can teach the Common Core than they have that the Common Core will benefit students. Most principals and a majority of teachers consider implementation of the Common Core a challenge for their schools, and a majority of teachers and nearly half of principals report that teachers are already using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching. Virtually all teachers and principals report to be knowledgeable about the Common Core and express confidence in the abilities of teachers in their school to teach according to the Common Core standards. Comparatively fewer educators, however, are confident that the Common Core will improve student achievement and better prepare students for college and the workforce. Among educators overall who are more knowledgeable of the Common Core, and in schools where teachers are reporting using the standards a great deal in their teaching, there is a greater level of confidence that the standards will improve student achievement.

The survey documents that as schools move to implement the Common Core, school leaders are striving to meet significant challenges to educating all students at higher levels while continuing to balance limited resources to address their needs.

Major Findings

Principals take responsibility for leadership of their schools.

- Nine in 10 (89%) principals say that ultimately a principal should be held accountable for everything that happens to the children in a school; 74% of teachers agree in 2012, compared with 60% in 1989.

The job of principal is becoming more complex and stressful.

- Three-quarters (75%) of principals feel the job has become too complex.
- Seven in 10 (69%) principals say the job responsibilities are not very similar to five years ago.
- Job satisfaction among principals has decreased nine percentage points in less than five years, to 59% very satisfied from 68% very satisfied in 2008.
- Half (48%) of principals feel under great stress several days a week.
- Only about four in 10 principals say they have a great deal of control over curriculum and instruction (42%), and making decisions about removing teachers (43%).

Teachers take leadership in schools and think principals are doing a good job.

- Half (51%) of teachers have a leadership role in their school, such as department chair, instructional resource, teacher mentor, or leadership team member.
- Half (51%) of teachers are at least somewhat interested in teaching in the classroom part-time combined with other roles or responsibilities in their school or district, including 23% who are extremely or very interested in this option.
- Eighty-five percent of teachers rate the job their principal is doing as excellent or pretty good.
- Nearly all principals (98%) rate the teachers in their school as doing an excellent or pretty good job.
- Most teachers (69%) say they are not at all interested in becoming a principal.

The biggest challenges leaders face are beyond the capacity of schools alone to address.

- More than half of principals (53%) and teachers (56%) report that their school's budget has decreased in the past 12 months.
- Half (50%) of teachers and 40% of principals say managing the school budget and resources to meet school needs is **very** challenging; overall, 86% of teachers and 78% of principals say this is challenging or very challenging for school leaders.

- More than seven in 10 educators identify addressing the individual needs of diverse learners (83% of principals; 78% of teachers) and engaging parents and the community in improving education for students (72% of principals; 73% of teachers) as challenging or very challenging for school leaders.

Principals and teachers have similar views on academic challenges, but diverge somewhat on their priorities for leadership.

- A majority of educators say implementing the Common Core State Standards (67% of principals; 59% of teachers), creating and maintaining an academically rigorous environment (64% of principals; 62% of teachers), and evaluating teacher effectiveness (53% of principals; 56% of teachers) are challenging or very challenging.
- Principals are most likely to say it is very important for principals to be able to use data about student performance to improve instruction (85%) and to lead development of strong teaching capacity across the school (84%) to be an effective school leader.
- Teachers are most likely to say it is very important for a principal to have been a classroom teacher (79%) and give less importance to leading the development of strong teaching capacity across the school (69%) and using data about student performance to improve instruction (53%).

Teacher satisfaction continues to decline.

- Teacher satisfaction has declined 23 percentage points since 2008, from 62% to 39% very satisfied, including five percentage points since last year, to the lowest level in 25 years.
- Half (51%) of teachers report feeling under great stress several days a week, an increase of 15 percentage points over 36% of teachers reporting that level in 1985.
- Less satisfied teachers are more likely than very satisfied teachers to be in schools where budgets declined in the last 12 months (61% vs. 47%) and to identify maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers (58% vs. 43%) and creating and maintaining an academically rigorous learning environment (66% vs. 56%) as challenging or very challenging for school leaders.
- Less satisfied teachers are more likely to be located in schools that had declines in professional development (21% vs. 14%) and in time for collaboration with other teachers (29% vs. 16%) in the last 12 months.
- Nearly all teachers (97%) give high ratings to other teachers in their schools.

Challenges cited by educators are greater in high-needs schools.

- More principals find it challenging to maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers in urban schools (60% vs. 43% in suburban schools and 44% in rural schools) and in schools with two-thirds or more low-income students (58% vs. 37% in schools with one-third or fewer).
- Principals in schools with at least two-thirds low-income students are more likely than those with one-third or fewer to say that engaging parents and the community in improving the education of students (86% vs. 46%) is very challenging or challenging.

- Principals who feel great stress several days a week are more likely to work in schools where no more than some students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts or math (57% vs. 43% of those in schools where most students perform at or above grade level).
- In schools with at least two-thirds low-income students, 37% of principals and 27% of teachers say that most of their students are performing at or above grade level. In contrast, in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students, 91% of principals and 83% of teachers say that most of their students are achieving at this level.
- Teachers and principals in schools with more than two-thirds low-income students are less likely than those in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students to give their teachers an excellent rating (48% vs. 73% for teachers; and 51% vs. 75% for principals).

Educators are confident about implementing the Common Core, less so about its potential for increasing student success.

- Nine in 10 principals (93%) and teachers (92%) say they are knowledgeable about the Common Core.
- Nine in 10 principals (90%) and teachers (93%) believe that teachers in their schools already have the academic skills and abilities to implement the Common Core in their classrooms.
- Teachers and principals are more likely to be **very** confident that teachers have the ability to implement the Common Core (53% of teachers; 38% of principals) than they are **very** confident that the Common Core will improve the achievement of students (17% of teachers; 22% of principals) or better prepare students for college and the workforce (20% of teachers; 24% of principals).
- A majority of teachers (62%) and a smaller proportion of principals (46%) say teachers in their schools are already using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching this year.

Background

As an annual series, the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher examines significant changes and trends over time, highlights important current issues, and explores topics relevant to the future of education, teaching and student success. An important theme throughout the survey series has been leadership. In 1986, an early survey in the series included state and local education leaders, in addition to teachers, to understand views on proposals for restructuring the teaching profession; and the role of the principal was later prominent in *Key Elements of Quality Schools* (2001).^{1,2} A decade ago, the survey first focused specifically on *An Examination of School Leadership* (2003), sharing the views of teachers, principals, parents and students on the role of school leaders and relationships among members of the school community.³ Over the last decade, the survey has often included principals as well as teachers because both groups have distinctive leadership roles and share responsibility as part of teams. By comparing and contrasting their views, the survey has explored the significance of communication and collaboration for school communities, their members and leaders.

The recent adoption of the Common Core State Standards (Common Core) by most states demonstrates a clear, unprecedented consensus among policymakers and state education leaders across the nation about what effective education must entail at every level. Leaders in the movement emphasize that the Common Core standards “provide an opportunity to realize systemic change and ensure that American students are held to the same high expectations in mathematics and literacy as their global peers—regardless of state or zip code.”⁴ The transition is from varied standards of high school graduation, which have not prepared enough students well for what is next, to new, common standards and assessments that clearly define readiness for postsecondary education and careers and put **all** students on the pathway to achieve them. With that transition comes a new responsibility for school leaders and teachers to assure effective implementation. This year the MetLife Survey returns to a specific focus on school leadership because it is important for educators at all levels, policymakers and the public to hear from those closest to the classroom, whose work every day will be crucial in determining if and how well the new reforms succeed.

Teachers are widely acknowledged as the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement and principals are the key factor in building and sustaining a school culture in which both teachers and students can succeed. Research has shown that an effective principal can account for 25% of a whole school’s impact on student achievement gains, while teacher effectiveness accounts for 33%.⁵ Increasingly school leadership, traditionally concentrated in principals, has become more widely shared and collaborative. As the job of the principal has become more complex with the need to balance instructional leadership, high-stakes accountability, and non-academic management, the survey has documented the emergence of teachers more prominently as leaders in their schools, districts and beyond. The voice of the teacher as an educator has also become a voice of leadership in education.

In recent years, the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher series has revealed two prominent issues that may have particular relevance as schools begin to implement and assess higher standards for **all** students. The first issue is a persistent gap between teacher and student perceptions and expectations about academic success, particularly in secondary schools and those serving low-income students. The second issue is how best to address the diverse needs of learners to help **all** students succeed.

Teachers generally have expressed greater confidence in their capacity to teach than in the capacity of their students to learn. In 2009, most teachers (84%) said they can enable all of their students to

succeed academically, yet only 36% strongly agreed that all of their students have the ability to succeed academically.⁶ In 2010, the survey revealed a strong consensus among secondary school educators, students, and parents, as well as Fortune 1000 business executives, about the importance of preparation for postsecondary education, but concern existed about achieving this goal for all students. More than eight in 10 middle and high school teachers agreed that “graduating each and every student from high school ready for college and career” should be a priority for education.⁷ Yet in 2008, half of secondary school teachers said that their classes had become so mixed in terms of students’ learning abilities they could not teach them effectively.⁸

Even prior to the implementation of Common Core, educators generally believed in the importance of high expectations and high standards for all students, and also that teachers in their school held students to high standards.⁹ Survey findings in 2010 showed that nine in 10 middle and high school teachers believed that their schools had “clearly defined and set specific standards for what constitutes college and career readiness for students,” and 83% agreed that they “assess every student’s readiness for college.” On average, secondary school teachers rated their schools as excellent or good in preparing students for college.¹⁰

In contrast to teacher perceptions, students have high expectations for college that have grown steadily over the years of the survey series. The 2010 survey showed that most middle and high school students (79%) planned to attend college, and believed that they understood what they needed to do to succeed in college (88%). It is of concern that just slightly more than half of students felt very confident they would achieve their goals for the future and strongly agreed that all of their teachers wanted them to succeed.¹¹

Postsecondary education statistics challenge perceptions about how well students are prepared for college. Research by ACT and by the U.S. Department of Education shows that 34% of high school graduates do not meet the benchmarks for college readiness in English, 58% do not meet the benchmarks for math, and about 40% of all first-year students will need remedial education before they can enroll in credit-bearing courses.¹²

It is important to note that as educators begin to implement new, higher standards, many face other competing mandates related to teacher and student assessment as well as decreasing teacher morale, and reductions in budgets and other resources such as staff, professional learning opportunities, and time for collaboration.^{13,14} When asked about limited resources and what would help them most in addressing the needs of diverse learners, majorities of teachers consistently say **other teachers**. In 2009, nine in 10 teachers agreed that other teachers contribute to their success in the classroom, including 51% who strongly agreed. Most teachers and principals also said that greater collaboration among teachers and school leaders would have a major impact on improving student achievement.¹⁵ Given limited resources, teachers believed opportunities for collaborative teaching would have a major impact on their ability to address different learning needs of individual students.¹⁶ Yet most teachers continued to report that their time to work with other teachers remained the same or had been reduced.¹⁷

At this time in American education, policymakers, leaders and practitioners are seeking ways to assure that the challenges of higher standards and limited resources are captured as an opportunity. This year’s survey results can inform, affirm and challenge them in that process, and provide a baseline useful for gauging progress.

Chapter 1: Responsibilities and Challenges of Leadership

Today’s school leaders—principals, teacher leaders, and leadership teams—face many responsibilities that often compete for time, attention, and other limited resources. They must prioritize and balance these resources carefully in order to address the individual needs of students and the expectations of parents, school systems, government, and the public that all students be taught effectively and achieve at high levels.

Understanding the perceptions of principals and teachers about the responsibilities and challenges that leadership entails can provide important insight into the types of preparation, professional development and support, and resources that they need to do their jobs well.

Educators See Biggest Challenges in Managing Resources and Addressing Individual Student Needs

Principals and teachers agree on the top challenges that school leaders face. The educators surveyed rated eight potential challenges for school leadership. Some of these responsibilities, such as managing the budget and resources, are longstanding issues for school leaders. Others, such as implementing the Common Core State Standards, are more recent. Overall, principals and teachers share similar perceptions about the areas that are most challenging.

The top school leadership challenges are managing resources, addressing individual student needs, and engaging parents. More than seven in 10 principals and teachers rate these responsibilities as being very challenging or challenging for school leaders: managing the budget and resources to meet school needs (principals: 78%; teachers: 86%), addressing the individual needs of diverse learners (principals: 83%; teachers: 78%) and engaging parents and the community in improving the education of students (principals: 72%; teachers: 73%).

Principals and teachers emphasize budget and resource management as a particular challenge. Four in 10 (40%) principals and half (50%) of teachers rate managing the budget and resources to meet school needs as **very** challenging, substantially more than assign this top rating to the two other most challenging responsibilities: engaging parents and the community in improving the education of students (principals: 28%; teachers: 32%) and addressing the individual needs of diverse learners (principals: 22%; teachers: 28%).

From the Survey Archives:

Principals and teachers in previous years of the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher have noted the challenge and importance of addressing the individual needs of diverse learners.

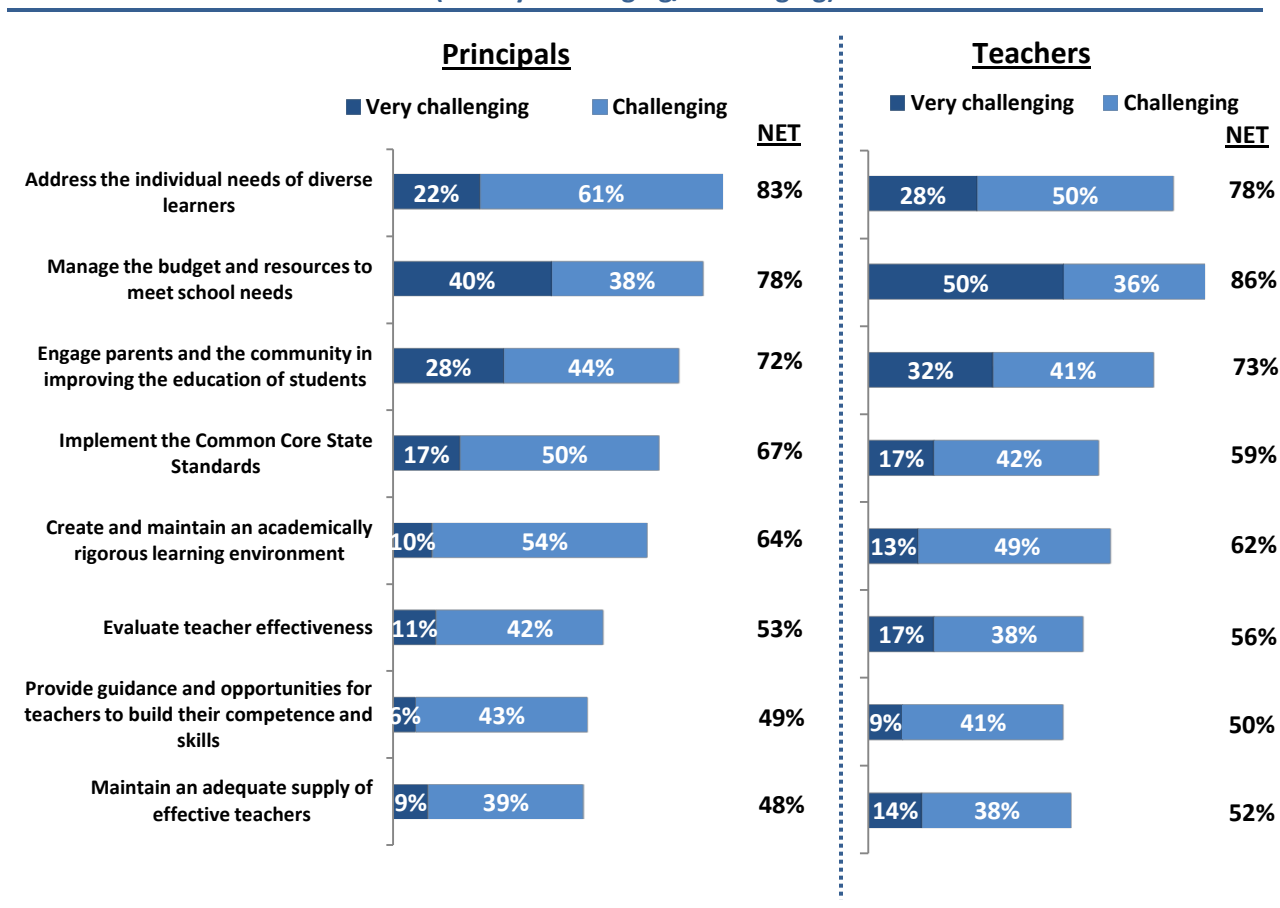
- In 2008, four in 10 (43%) teachers agreed that their classes have become so mixed in terms of students’ learning abilities that they can’t teach them effectively, an increase compared to 1988 (39%).
- In 2009, 86% of principals and 77% of teachers said that addressing the individual needs of diverse learners would have a major impact on improving student achievement.
- On a related note, 59% of secondary school teachers in 2010 said that strengthening programs and resources to help diverse learners with the highest needs meet college- and career-ready standards must be done as one of the highest priorities in education.

A majority of principals and teachers rated three other responsibilities as very challenging or challenging. Those responsibilities are: implementing the Common Core State Standards (principals: 67%; teachers: 59%); creating and maintaining an academically rigorous learning environment (principals: 64%; teachers: 62%); and evaluating teacher effectiveness (principals 53%; teachers: 56%).

Finally, about half of principals and teachers say that providing guidance and opportunities for teachers to build their competence and skills (principals: 49%; teachers: 50%) and maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers (principals: 48%; teachers: 52%) are very challenging or challenging for school leaders.

A gap exists between principals' and teachers' ratings of how challenging it is to implement the Common Core State Standards and manage school budgets and resources. Principals are more likely than teachers to say that implementing the Common Core is very challenging or challenging for a school leader (67% vs. 59%). In contrast, teachers are more likely than principals to rate managing the budget and resources to meet school needs as very challenging or challenging (86% vs. 78%).

Figure 1.1
Challenges Facing School Leaders
(% Very challenging/Challenging)



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q730: How challenging is it for a school's leaders to do each of the following? Very challenging, Challenging, Not too challenging, Not at all challenging

In general, the areas that principals and teachers consider to be most or least challenging do not vary by school demographic characteristics such as school level, school location, the proportion of low-income or minority students, or the proportion of students performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math. However, the magnitude of several of these challenges does differ by these characteristics.

Engaging parents and the community in improving students' education and maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers are greater in secondary and high-needs schools. Principals are more likely to say that it is very challenging or challenging for a school's leaders to engage parents and the community in improving the education of students when they are from secondary schools (82% vs. 68% of elementary school principals); urban schools (82% vs. 63% from suburban schools and 71% from rural schools); schools with two-thirds or more low-income students (86% vs. 46% from schools with one-third or fewer low-income students); schools with two-thirds or more minority students (86% vs. 63% from schools with one-third or fewer minority students); and schools where most students are not performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math (83% vs. 66% from schools with all or most students performing at or above grade level).¹⁸

Principals are more likely to say maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers is very challenging or challenging when they are from secondary schools (57% vs. 43% of elementary school principals); urban schools (60% vs. 43% from suburban schools and 44% from rural schools); schools with two-thirds or more low-income students (58% vs. 37% from schools with one-third or fewer low-income students); schools with two-thirds or more minority students (67% vs. 37% from schools with one-third or fewer minority students); and schools where most students are not performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math (57% vs. 43% from schools with all or most students performing at or above grade level). Teachers show a similar pattern of responses for each of these areas.





From the Survey Archives:

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher has examined several aspects of the challenge of engaging parents and the community over the years. The 2011 survey noted that “parent and community engagement has increased but remains a challenge for many schools,” and ratings of parent engagement were highest for elementary school and generally were lower at each subsequent school level, from middle to high school. Nine in 10 teachers and eight in 10 parents agreed that their/their child’s school helps all parents understand what they can do at home to support a student’s success in school. Many teachers and parents believed that lack of parent engagement is widespread:

- One-third of teachers and nearly half of parents said that most or many parents take too little interest in their children’s education.
- One-third of teachers and four in 10 parents said that most or many parents fail to motivate their children to learn in school.
- Four in 10 teachers and parents said that most or many parents leave their children alone too much after school.

The 2011 survey also noted that schools with high parent engagement perform better on a range of measures. For example, parents and teachers in schools with high parent engagement were more optimistic than those in schools with low engagement that student achievement will be better in five years. In addition, teachers in schools with high parent engagement were more than twice as likely as those in schools with low parent engagement to say they are very satisfied in their job.

In 2008, lack of parental support topped the list of problems that teachers said may interfere with learning for a quarter or more of their students. Half of teachers overall and nearly two-thirds of teachers in urban schools reported that lack of parental support is a problem for at least a quarter of their students.

Other challenges identified by principals and teachers in this year’s survey, such as managing budget and resources and implementing the Common Core State Standards, will be examined in more detail in subsequent chapters in this report.

Figure 1.2
Principal Ratings of Challenges Facing School Leaders
(% Very challenging/Challenging)

	Principals	School Level	
		Elementary	Middle/High (Net)
Address the individual needs of diverse learners			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	83%	80%	91%
Very challenging	22%	20%	26%
Challenging	61%	60%	65%
Manage the budget and resources to meet school needs			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	78%	75%	85%
Very challenging	40%	36%	47%
Challenging	38%	39%	38%
Engage parents and the community in improving the education of students			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	72%	68%	82%
Very challenging	28%	25%	36%
Challenging	44%	43%	46%
Implement the Common Core State Standards			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	67%	64%	73%
Very challenging	17%	16%	21%
Challenging	50%	48%	51%
Create and maintain an academically rigorous learning environment			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	64%	62%	66%
Very challenging	10%	8%	11%
Challenging	54%	54%	55%
Evaluate teacher effectiveness			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	53%	49%	62%
Very challenging	11%	10%	13%
Challenging	42%	39%	49%
Provide guidance and opportunities for teachers to build their competence and skills			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	49%	45%	57%
Very challenging	6%	6%	6%
Challenging	43%	39%	51%
Maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers			
Very challenging/Challenging (Net)	48%	43%	57%
Very challenging	9%	7%	14%
Challenging	39%	36%	44%

Base: Principals (n=500 [Elementary n=240; Middle/High (Net) n=229])

Q730: How challenging is it for a school's leaders to do each of the following? Very challenging, Challenging, Not too challenging, Not at all challenging

School Budget Cuts Continue and Are Linked to Greater Leadership Challenges

Teachers and principals believe that having adequate public funding and support for education is very important for improving student achievement.¹⁹ In this year's survey, educators emphasize that managing the budget and resources is among the most challenging responsibilities for school leaders. The challenge becomes particularly complex when schools are experiencing budget cuts. This year's survey finds that a majority of teachers are reporting decreased budgets, although a smaller proportion than did a year ago. Even in an environment of budget cuts, some teachers see increased time for collaboration and professional development opportunities—more than saw increases last year—potentially signaling a higher priority in the use of limited budgets.

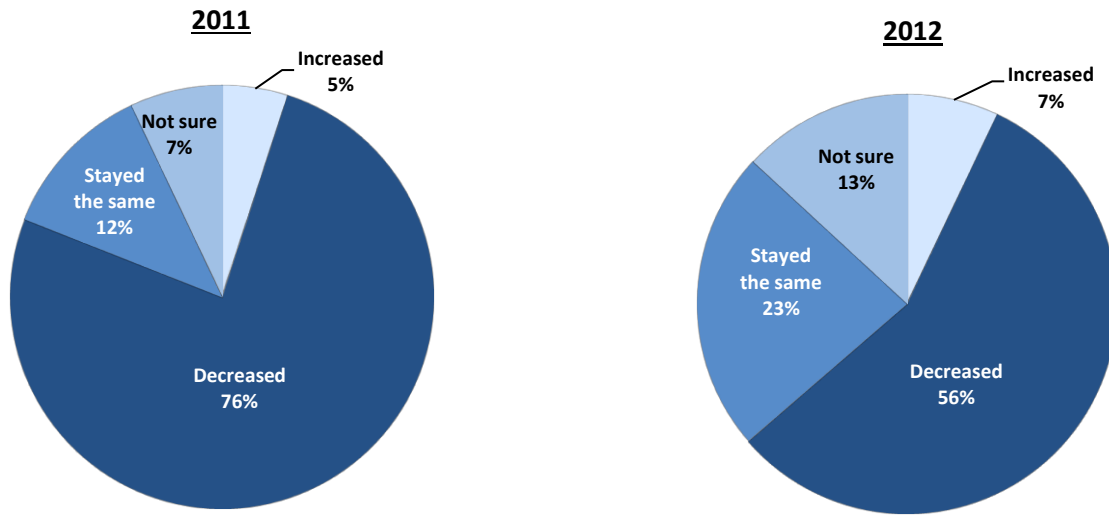
A majority of teachers report that budgets have decreased at their school. A majority (56%) of teachers report that their school budgets have decreased in the past year. This is a decline from last year's survey, which found that three-quarters (76%) of teachers said that they work at schools where the budget had decreased during the past 12 months.

Although fewer teachers report budget decreases, school budgets do not appear to be recovering from declines in recent years, with fewer than one in 10 (7%) teachers saying that their school budget has increased within the past 12 months. One-quarter (23%) say that the budget has stayed the same.

Over one-half of principals say that their school budgets have decreased within the past year, mirroring teachers' reports. Similar to teachers, over one-half (53%) of principals report that their school budgets have decreased within the past year. One in 10 (9%) say that their budget has increased, while one-third (35%) say that it has stayed the same. This question was not previously asked among principals, so no trending can be reported.

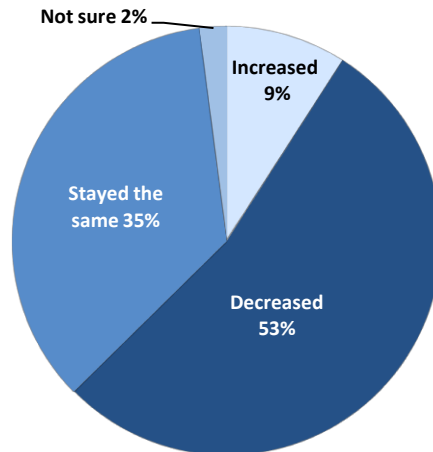


Figure 1.3
How School Budget Has Changed in Past 12 Months According to Teachers



Base: Teachers 2012 (n=1,000); Teachers 2011 (n=1,001)
 Q1020 (2012)/Q810 (2011): Thinking about the past 12 months, has each of the following increased, decreased or stayed the same at your school? Your school's budget

Figure 1.4
How School Budget Has Changed in Past 12 Months According to Principals



Base: Principals (n=500)
 Q1020: Thinking about the past 12 months, has each of the following increased, decreased or stayed the same at your school? Your school's budget

Declining school budgets can further exacerbate the challenge of managing school resources. Both principals and teachers at schools where the budget has decreased are more likely than those at schools where the budget has increased or stayed the same to say that it is very challenging or challenging for school leaders to manage the budget and resources to meet school needs (principals: 85% vs. 71%; teachers: 90% vs. 82%). It should be noted that even among principals and teachers at schools where the budget has not decreased, managing the budget and resources is still viewed as one of the most challenging responsibilities that school leaders face.

Teachers in schools with budget cuts also see providing guidance and opportunities for teachers to build their competence and skills as a greater challenge for school leaders than do teachers whose school budgets have not decreased (55% vs. 41%), perhaps indicating a perceived impact on opportunities for professional learning. However, principals' assessment of this challenge does not differ based on their experience with budget cuts.

Teachers and principals at schools with declining budgets share similar perceptions with those at schools with increasing or steady budgets on the degree of challenge in accomplishing the other educational leadership responsibilities that were evaluated: addressing the individual needs of diverse learners, engaging parents and the community in improving the education of students, maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers, implementing the Common Core, and creating and maintaining an academically rigorous learning environment.

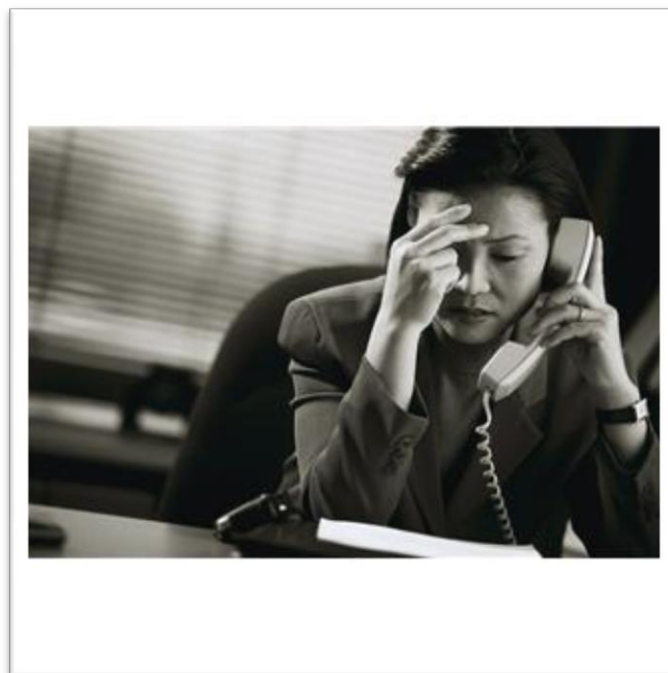


Figure 1.5
Challenges Facing School Leaders
By School Budget Changes in Past 12 Months
(% Very challenging/Challenging)

	Teachers		Principals	
	Budget Increased/ Stayed the same	Budget Decreased	Budget Increased/ Stayed the same	Budget Decreased
Manage the budget and resources to meet school needs	82%	90%	71%	85%
Address the individual needs of diverse learners	74%	79%	83%	83%
Engage parents and the community in improving the education of students	69%	74%	74%	69%
Create and maintain an academically rigorous learning environment	60%	63%	65%	61%
Implement the Common Core State Standards	59%	60%	69%	63%
Evaluate teacher effectiveness	54%	58%	53%	53%
Maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers	50%	54%	51%	45%
Provide guidance and opportunities for teachers to build their competence and skills	41%	55%	48%	49%

Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q730: How challenging is it for a school's leaders to do each of the following? Very challenging, Challenging, Not too challenging, Not at all challenging

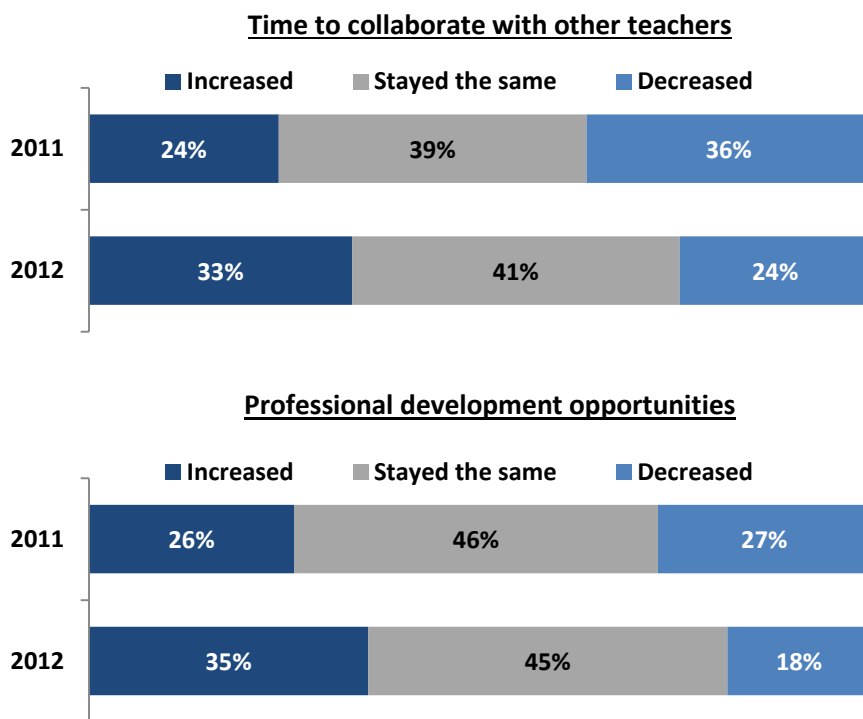
No Increases in Time for Collaboration and Professional Learning for Majority of Teachers

School resources include its human capital—teachers and staff—as well as equipment, materials, supplies, and funding. An additional resource is time and opportunity to develop educators' skills and abilities. Some aspects of teachers' professional environment regarding these resources have improved compared to a year ago.

Majorities of teachers and principals report that time and opportunity for professional development has not increased in the past 12 months. More than six in 10 teachers say that time to collaborate with other teachers (65%) and professional development opportunities (63%) have either decreased or stayed the same during the past 12 months. However, more teachers now than a year ago are reporting increases in time for collaboration with other teachers (33% vs. 24%) and in professional development opportunities (35% vs. 26%). A majority of principals also report that time for teachers to collaborate (61%) and professional development opportunities (55%) have either decreased or stayed the same during the past 12 months, although more report increases than decreases. Nearly four in 10 (37%) principals report that time for teachers to collaborate with each other has increased during the past 12

months, compared to 11% who report that it has decreased and 50% who report that it has stayed the same. Four in 10 (43%) principals report that professional development opportunities have increased during the past 12 months, compared to 13% who report that these have decreased and 41% who report these have stayed the same.

Figure 1.6
Teacher-Reported Changes in Professional Learning Environment in Past 12 Months



Base: Teachers 2012 (n=1,000); Teachers 2011 (n=1,001)

Q1020 (2012)/Q810 (2011): Thinking about the past 12 months, has each of the following increased, decreased or stayed the same at your school? Time to collaborate with other teachers, Professional development opportunities

Budget decreases are associated with declines in a school’s professional environment. Teachers who report that their school’s budget has decreased in the past 12 months are three times as likely as others to report that there have been decreases in time to collaborate with other teachers (35% vs. 11%) and in professional development opportunities (27% vs. 8%).

Principals at schools with decreased budgets are also more likely than principals at schools with increased or steady budgets to say that professional development opportunities (21% vs. 5%) and time for teachers to collaborate with each other have decreased (18% vs. 3%).

Figure 1.7
Teacher-Reported Changes in Professional Learning Environment in Past 12 Months
By School Budget Changes

	Budget Increased/ Stayed the same	Budget Decreased
Professional development opportunities		
Increased	41%	30%
Stayed the same	51%	42%
Decreased	8%	27%
Time to collaborate with other teachers		
Increased	38%	30%
Stayed the same	50%	35%
Decreased	11%	35%

Base: Teachers (n=1,000)

Q1020: Thinking about the past 12 months, has each of the following increased, decreased or stayed the same at your school?

Time to collaborate with other teachers, Professional development opportunities

Conclusion

During an extended period of declining resources, educators face increasing expectations for teaching, learning and assessment. Principals and teachers describe an array of leadership responsibilities as challenging, chief among them managing budget and resources, addressing the individual needs of diverse learners, and engaging parents and the community. Implementing the Common Core State Standards is also viewed as challenging by a majority of educators. In the current education environment of changing and increased expectations for instruction and assessment, more than half of educators report school budget cuts in the past 12 months and most report no increases in professional development opportunities or time for teacher collaboration. Thus school leaders are faced with a strain on the fiscal and human resources they need to address higher expectations and standards.

Chapter 2: The Changing Role of Principals

Principals are the key factor in building and sustaining a school culture in which both teachers and students can succeed. Over the last decade, research has established the empirical link between school leadership and improved student achievement, and policy and practice have focused much attention on the role of the principal and what makes a principal effective.²⁰ In addition to their role as instructional leaders helping to develop good teaching, effective principals are also collaborators, cultivating the leadership of teachers and others in their schools.

In this chapter, we look at the changing role of principals; teachers' and principals' perspectives on the most important skills and training for principals to be an effective school leader; principals' job satisfaction; and how teachers and principals assess the performance of principals in their schools and districts.

Principals Say Their Jobs Have Changed and Become Too Complex

Most principals say that their responsibilities today have changed compared to five years ago and that the job has increased in complexity.

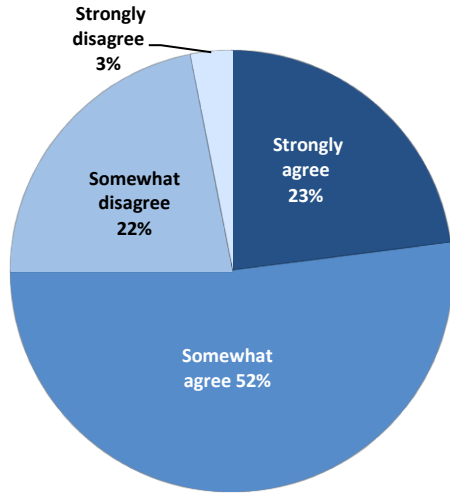
Seven in 10 (69%) principals disagree with the statement that a school principal's responsibilities today are very similar to his or her responsibilities five years ago. In schools where most students are not performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math, principals are more likely to hold this view than principals in schools where most students are performing at or above grade level (76% vs. 65%).



Moreover, three-quarters (75%) of principals agree that the job of the principal has become too complex, a view shared by principals regardless of demographic characteristics such as school level, school location, the proportion of low-income or minority students, or the proportion of students performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math.

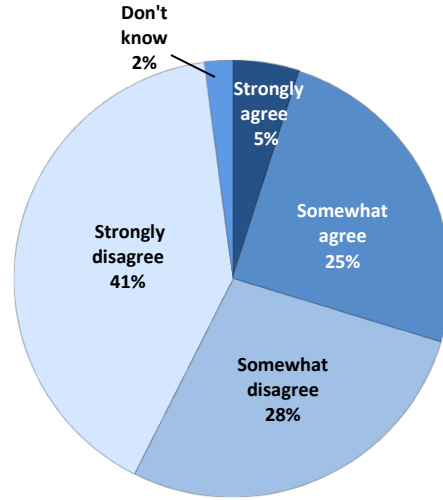
Figure 2.1
Principal Attitudes about the Job of the Principal

The job of the principal has become too complex



Strongly/Somewhat agree (Net): 75%
Strongly/Somewhat disagree (Net): 25%

A school principal's responsibilities today are very similar to his or her responsibilities five years ago



Strongly/Somewhat agree (Net): 30%
Strongly/Somewhat disagree (Net): 69%

Base: Principals (n=500)

Q820: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree

Principals and Teachers Differ in Their Perceptions of the Most Important Experiences and Skills for a School Principal

The ability to use student performance data to improve instruction is most important to principals, while teachers emphasize the experience of being a classroom teacher. Principals are most likely to say that it is very important that a principal uses data about student performance to improve instruction (85%) and has the ability to lead the development of strong teaching capacity across the school (84%) in order to be an effective school leader. In contrast, teachers are most likely to say that having been a classroom teacher is very important (79%). Substantially fewer teachers than principals indicate that it is very important that a principal uses data about student performance to improve instruction in order to be an effective leader (53% vs. 85%). Teachers are also less likely than principals to rate the ability to lead the development of strong teaching capacity across the school as very important (69% vs. 84%).

From the Survey Archives:

A decade ago, the survey asked principals and teachers to evaluate the most important aspects of a principal's job. In 2003, nearly nine in 10 principals and eight in 10 teachers said that the following are among the most important parts of a school principal's job:

- To make sure the school is safe (87% of principals; 83% of teachers);
- To encourage teachers and students to do their best (87% of principals; 83% of teachers); and
- To help teachers do their jobs well (85% of principals; 79% of teachers).

Principals and teachers are equally likely to say that having been a teacher is a very important experience for a principal (78% vs. 79%). However, principals are more likely to say it is very important that a principal can use data about student performance, has the ability to develop a strong teaching capacity, and evaluates teacher effectiveness using multiple measures than it is to have been a classroom teacher.

Spotlight on Principals' Teaching Experience:

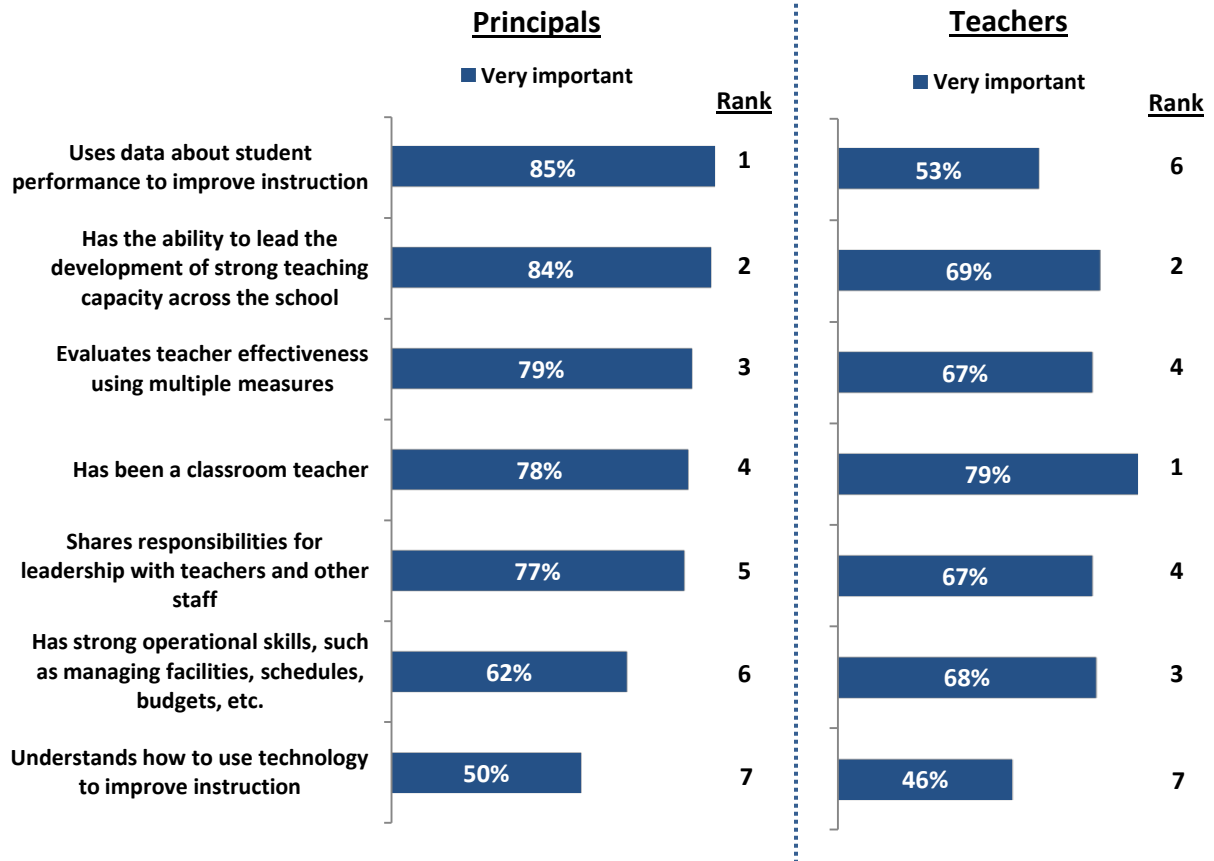
There are indications that the extent of teaching experience among principals may be declining. On average, principals in 2012 report having 12.5 years of experience teaching full-time in an elementary or secondary school classroom. In 2009, principals reported having 14 years of teaching experience. However, nearly all principals still have at least three years of teaching experience (99% in 2009 and in 2012).

Principals and teachers also diverge in their evaluations of the importance of having strong operational skills to be an effective school leader. Seven in 10 (68%) teachers rate this as a very important experience, comparable in importance to the ability to lead development of strong teaching capacity, to evaluate teacher effectiveness using multiple measures, and to share responsibilities for leadership with teachers and other staff. Six in 10 (62%) principals rate having strong operational skills as very important, more than rate understanding how to use

technology to improve instruction as very important but fewer than rate the other five skills evaluated as very important.

Overall, there is more consensus among principals than teachers on the importance of these factors for school leader effectiveness.

Figure 2.2
Experiences and Skills That Are Important for a School Principal to Have
(% Very important)



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q740: In order to be an effective school leader, how important is it that the school principal has the following experiences and skills? Very important, Important, Not too important, Not at all important

Elementary school principals and teachers are more likely than their high school counterparts to rate most of these skills as very important. Elementary school educators are more likely than high school educators to say that the following are very important skills for a principal to have in order to be an effective school leader:

- Uses data about student performance to improve instruction (principals: 89% vs. 71%; teachers: 62% vs. 44%);
- Evaluates teacher effectiveness using multiple measures (principals: 81% vs. 72%; teachers: 71% vs. 61%);
- Has been a classroom teacher (principals: 79% vs. 70%; teachers: 84% vs. 70%); and
- Understands how to use technology to improve instruction (principals: 54% vs. 39%; teachers: 50% vs. 39%).

In addition, elementary school teachers are more likely than high school teachers to say that having the ability to lead the development of strong teaching capacity across the school (74% vs. 64%) and having strong operational skills (72% vs. 62%) are very important skills for a principal to have in order to be an effective school leader. Elementary and high school principals do not differ in their ratings of importance on these measures. However, elementary school principals are more likely than high school principals to say that it is very important to share responsibilities for leadership with teachers and other staff (77% vs. 63%), while elementary and high school teachers do not differ in their ratings of how important they say this is.

Educators Emphasize Professional Accountability for Principals

Principals take responsibility for the leadership of their schools. Nine in 10 (89%) principals agree that, ultimately, the principal should be held accountable for everything that happens to the children in his or her school, including 45% who strongly agree with this view.

Principals in high-needs schools are less likely to agree that the principal should be held accountable for everything that happens to the children in his or her school. Although still the predominant belief, principals are less likely to hold this view when they are from schools with more than two-thirds low-income students (86% vs. 95% from schools with one-third or fewer low-income students); schools with more than two-thirds minority students (85% vs. 92% from schools with one-third or fewer minority students); and schools where no more than some students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math (84% vs. 92% from schools where most students perform at or above grade level).

Most teachers (74%) agree that principals should be held accountable for everything that happens to the children in his or her school, an increase compared to 1989 (60%). However, teachers are less likely than principals to hold this view (74% vs. 89%).

Observation:

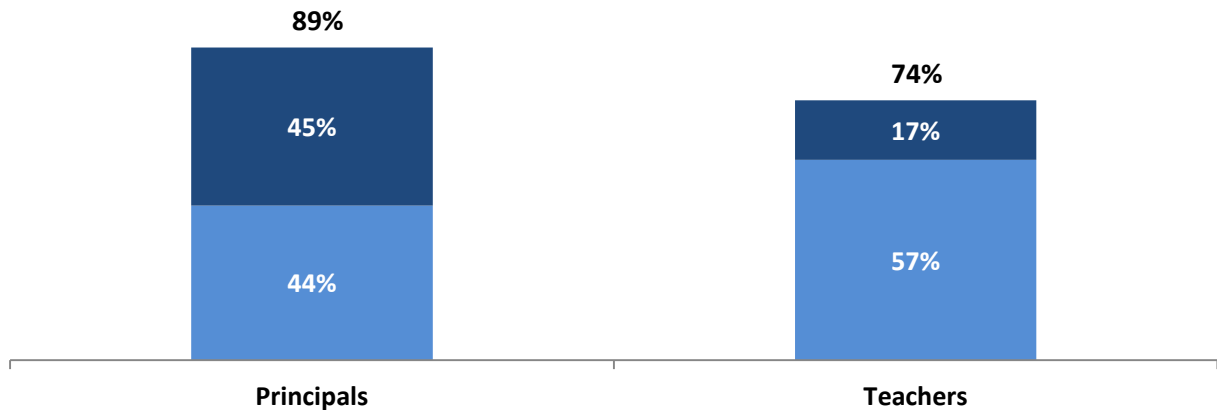
Using data about student performance to improve instruction is likely to become a more prominent issue as assessments for Common Core State Standards are implemented across grade levels and influence high school graduation requirements. Thus, it is of interest that fewer than half of high school teachers in 2012 indicate that using data is a very important skill for a principal to have in order to be an effective school leader.

More information about teachers' and principals' views on the Common Core is included in Chapter 4.

Figure 2.3
Principal Accountability
 (% Strongly/Somewhat agree)

■ Strongly agree ■ Somewhat agree

Ultimately, the principal should be held accountable for everything that happens to the children in his or her school



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q820: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree

Principals' Control over School Leadership Responsibilities Varies

While they believe in their professional accountability, principals report varying levels of control over decision making in key areas. Principals are least likely to report that they have a great deal of control in making decisions about finances (22%). Fewer than half of principals report having a great deal of control in making decisions about removing teachers (43%) or about curriculum and instruction (42%). In contrast, most principals say they have a great deal of control in making decisions about teachers' schedules (79%) and hiring teachers (74%). Elementary, middle and high school principals report similar levels of control, with the exception of teachers' schedules. High school principals are more likely than elementary school principals to say they have a great deal of control in making decisions about teachers' schedules (87% vs. 78%).

Figure 2.4
Principal Ratings of How Much Control They Have in Making Decisions
(% A great deal)

	Principals	School Level	
		Elementary	Middle/ High (Net)
Teachers' schedules	79%	78%	83%
Hiring teachers	74%	72%	79%
Removing teachers	43%	42%	45%
Curriculum and instruction	42%	41%	44%
Finances	22%	23%	19%

Base: Principals (n=500 [Elementary n=240; Secondary n=229])

Q810: How much control do you have in making decisions about each of the following? A great deal, Some, Not very much, None

Principals in high-needs schools are less likely to say they have a great deal of control in decisions about hiring and removing teachers. Principals are less likely to say they have a great deal of control in making decisions about hiring teachers when they are from urban schools (62% vs. 82% suburban and 77% rural schools); from schools with two-thirds or more low-income students (61% vs. 84% from schools with one-third or fewer low-income students); and from schools where no more than some students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math (67% vs. 78% from schools where most students are performing at or above grade level). A similar pattern is seen with regard to control over decisions on removing teachers. In addition, new principals with five or fewer years of experience are less likely to say they have a great deal of control in removing teachers (30% vs. 44% of those with six to 10 years of experience, and 53% of those with more than 10 years of experience).

Principals in high-needs schools do not show consistent differences on control in making decisions about teachers' schedules, curriculum and instruction, or finances.

Figure 2.5
Principal Ratings of Control in Hiring and Removing Teachers
(% A great deal)

	Hiring Teachers	Removing Teachers
Total	74%	43%
School level		
Elementary	72%	42%
Middle/High School (Net)	79%	45%
Middle School	82%	53%
High School	79%	43%
School location		
Urban	62%	32%
Suburban	82%	47%
Rural	77%	47%
Percentage of students from low-income families		
0-33%	84%	51%
34-66%	81%	45%
67%+	61%	35%
Percentage of students from minority families		
0-33%	78%	46%
34-66%	86%	52%
67%+	59%	32%
Students at/above grade level in English language arts and math		
All/Most	78%	48%
Some/Very few/None	67%	34%
Years of teaching experience		
0 to 5	74%	30%
6 to 10	67%	44%
11+	80%	53%

Base: Principals (n=500)

Q810: How much control do you have in making decisions about each of the following? A great deal, Some, Not very much, None

Principal control in decisions about curriculum and instruction has declined during the past decade.

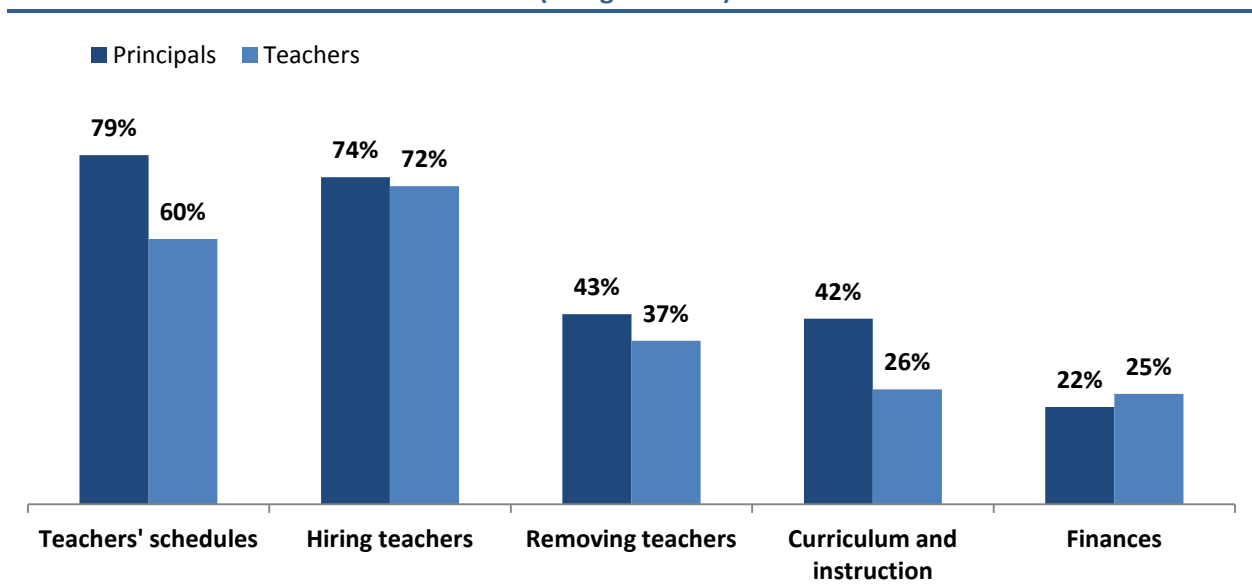
Fewer principals today than in 2003 say they have a great deal of control in making decisions about curriculum and instruction (42% vs. 53%). In contrast, principals' reports of a great deal of control over the other areas asked about in 2003—teachers' schedules, hiring teachers, and finances—have not changed significantly in this period.

In several areas, teachers are less likely than principals to believe that the principal has a great deal of control in making decisions.

Teachers are less likely than principals to think that their principal has a great deal of control in making decisions about teachers' schedules (60% vs. 79%), removing teachers (37% vs. 43%), and curriculum and instruction (26% vs. 42%). However, similar to principals, most teachers believe that their principal has a great deal of control in hiring teachers (teachers: 72%;

principals: 74%); and few teachers or principals believe the principal has a great deal of control about finances (teachers: 25%; principals: 22%).

Figure 2.6
How Much Control Principal Has in Making Decisions
(% A great deal)



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1000)

Q810: How much control do you have in making decisions about each of the following? A great deal, Some, Not very much, None

Principals in schools whose budgets have stayed the same or increased have greater control over finances. Principals and teachers at schools where the budget has increased or stayed the same in the past year are more likely than those at schools where the budget has decreased to say that the principal has a great deal of control over the school’s finances (principals: 26% vs. 17%; teachers: 33% vs. 21%). In addition, teachers in schools whose budgets have increased or stayed the same in the past year are more likely than others to say that the principal has a great deal of control over hiring teachers (79% vs. 69%) and removing teachers (43% vs. 35%). Principals’ reports of level of control in these areas, however, do not differ by budget changes.

Figure 2.7
How Much Control Principal Has in Making Decisions
By School Budget Changes in Past 12 Months
(% A great deal)

	Teachers		Principals	
	Budget Increased/ Stayed the same	Budget Decreased	Budget Increased/ Stayed the same	Budget Decreased
Hiring teachers	79%	69%	78%	71%
Teachers' schedules	65%	58%	81%	79%
Removing teachers	43%	35%	48%	39%
Curriculum and instruction	28%	25%	43%	40%
Finances	33%	21%	26%	17%

Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q810: How much control do you have in making decisions about each of the following? A great deal, Some, Not very much, None

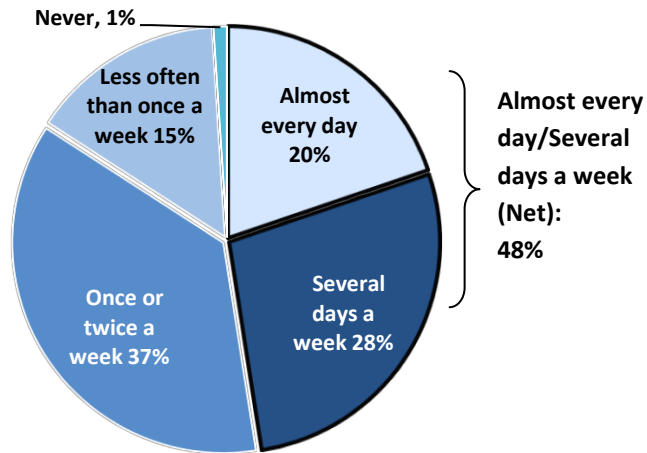
Principals Experience Frequent Stress

Half (48%) of principals feel under great stress several days a week or more. This finding is perhaps not surprising given the previously cited results that most principals feel their jobs are too complex, their responsibilities have changed during the past five years, and that they have a high degree of accountability with varying levels of control over decisions. Principals who feel under great stress several days a week or more are more likely to be in secondary schools (58% vs. 44% in elementary schools); and in schools where most students are not performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math (57% vs. 43% of those in schools where most students are performing at or above grade level).

 **Observation:**

Workplace stress is prevalent among other jobs as well. A report from the American Psychological Association indicates that more than one-third (36%) of employed adults in the U.S. report they are typically stressed out during the workday. Employees cite low salary, lack of opportunities for growth and advancement, heavy workload, unrealistic job expectations, and long hours as significant sources of stress.

Figure 2.8
Principal Frequency of Experiencing Great Stress



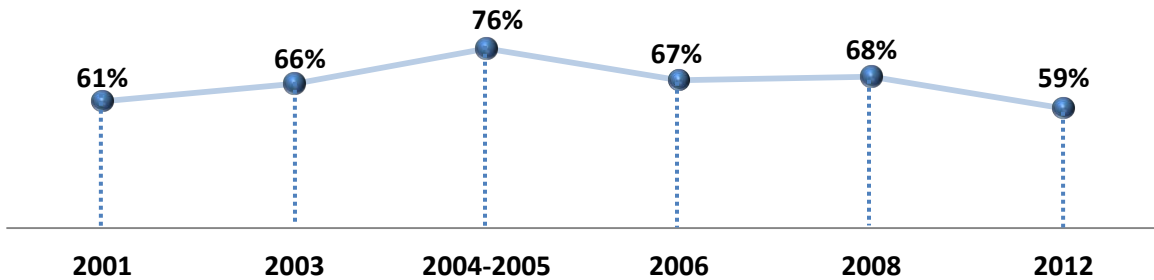
Base: Principals 2012 (n=500)

Q1190. In your job as school principal, how often do you feel under great stress? Almost every day, Several days a week, Once or twice a week, Less often than once a week, Never

Principal Job Satisfaction Has Decreased and One-third are Likely to Leave

Job satisfaction among principals has declined to its lowest point in over a decade. Fewer principals today than in 2008 say they are very satisfied with their job (59% vs. 68%), the lowest point since 2001. Stress is related to job satisfaction for principals, as well as control in decision making. Principals with lower job satisfaction are **more likely** than those with high job satisfaction to feel under great stress at least several days a week (64% vs. 36%). Principals with lower job satisfaction are **less likely** than those with high job satisfaction to say they have a great deal of control in making decisions about hiring teachers (69% vs. 78%), removing teachers (34% vs. 49%), and finances (15% vs. 26%).

Figure 2.9
Principal Job Satisfaction through the Years
(% Very satisfied)



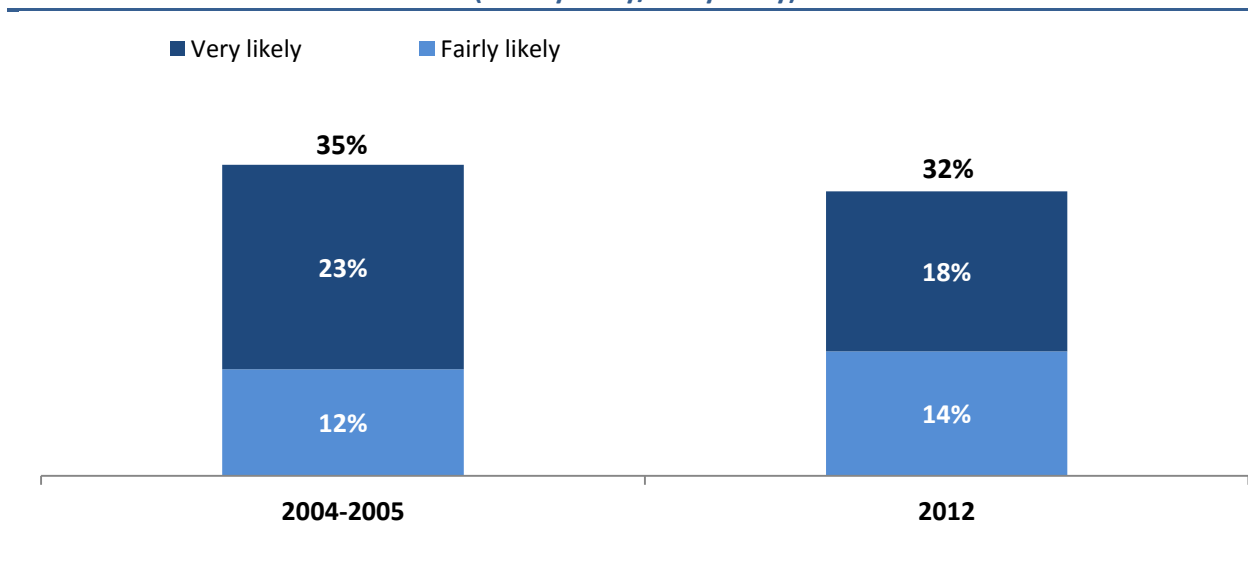
Base: Principals (2012 n=500)

Q840/Q705/Q1150: Question text in 2012, 2008, 2006, 2004-2005, 2003, 2001: All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job as a principal in the public schools? Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied

Principals with high job satisfaction differ from principals with lower job satisfaction in several other ways. Principals who are very satisfied with their jobs are **more** likely than those with lower satisfaction to be in suburban schools (34% vs. 23%), have most students performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math (72% vs. 55%), and to be Baby Boomers or older (61% vs. 50%). However, they are **less** likely to have two-thirds or more low-income students (33% vs. 44%) or minority students (25% vs. 35%), and to feel that the following are very challenging or challenging responsibilities for school leaders: [to] address the individual needs of diverse learners (80% vs. 88%), engage parents and the community in improving the education of students (65% vs. 81%), create and maintain an academically rigorous learning environment (56% vs. 74%), and maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers (43% vs. 56%). Interestingly, the job satisfaction of principals as well as principals' stress levels do not differ based on whether school budgets have decreased or not. This is in contrast to teachers' job satisfaction and stress, as will be seen in Chapter 3.

One-third (32%) of principals say they are very or fairly likely to leave their job as a school principal to go into some different occupation. This level is similar to the last time this question was asked (35% in 2004-2005), although job satisfaction was significantly higher at that time (76% very satisfied in 2004-2005 vs. 59% very satisfied in 2012). Principals today who are less than very satisfied with their job are more likely than others to say they are likely to leave the profession (38% vs. 27%).

Figure 2.10
Likelihood to Leave Job as Principal within Next Five Years
(% Very likely/Fairly likely)



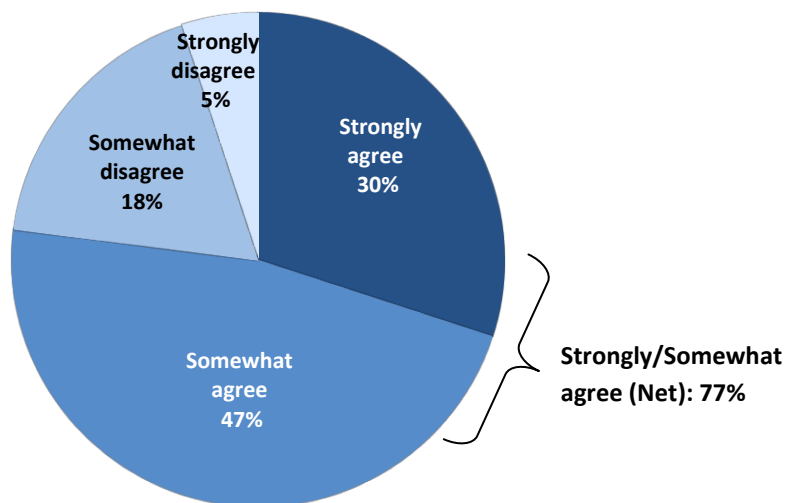
Base: Principals (2012 n=500); Principals (2004-2005 n=841)
Q735/Q1160. Question text in 2012, 2004-2005: Within the next five years, how likely is it that you will leave your job as a school principal to go into some different occupation? Very likely, Fairly likely, Not too likely, Not at all likely

Principals Feel Well Prepared and Participate in Professional Learning Communities

Most principals believe they were prepared well for their responsibilities as school principal. Three-quarters (77%) of principals agree that their training prepared them well for their responsibilities as a school principal, including 30% who strongly agree with this statement. Principals who agree that they

were prepared well are more likely than other principals to say that strong operational skills are very important for a school principal (65% vs. 51%). They are also more likely than other principals to agree that a school principal’s responsibilities today are very similar to his or her responsibilities five years ago (33% vs. 19%) and to have less than three years of experience (19% vs. 9%). However, in general they do not differ significantly from other principals in terms of the demographic characteristics of their schools.

Figure 2.11
Principal Ratings on How Well Their Training Prepared Them for Job Responsibilities

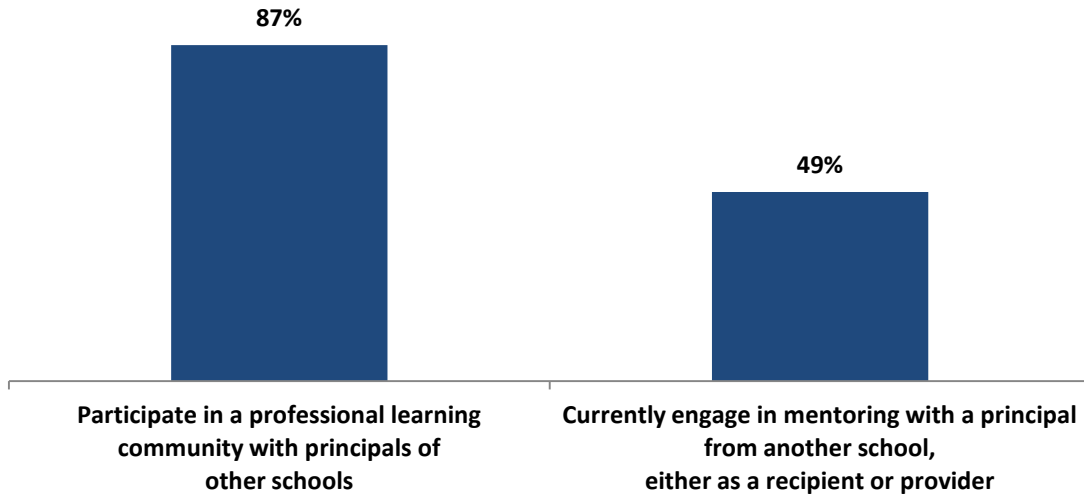


Base: Principals (n=500)

Q820: How much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements? Strongly agree, Somewhat agree, Somewhat disagree, Strongly disagree. Your training prepared you well for your responsibilities as school principal.

Most principals report that they participate in a professional learning community, but fewer engage in mentoring with another principal. Nearly nine in 10 (87%) principals participate in a professional learning community (PLC) with principals of other schools, while half (49%) currently engage in mentoring with a principal from another school, either as a recipient or a provider. In most instances, these experiences do not differ based on the characteristics of the school.

Figure 2.12
Principal Participation in Professional Learning Communities and Mentoring
(% Yes)



Base: Principals (n=500)
Q1170: Do you...or not? Yes or No

Higher job satisfaction is associated with principals feeling well prepared for their responsibilities and participating in a professional learning community (PLC) with other principals. Principals who are very satisfied with their job are more likely than less satisfied principals to agree that their training prepared them well for their responsibilities as school principal (82% vs. 70%) and that they participate in a PLC with principals of other schools (93% vs. 79%). In addition, participating in a PLC is more common among principals who say they are not likely to leave the profession than among those who say they are likely to leave (89% vs. 82%).



Teachers and Principals Give Positive Ratings to the Job Principals Are Doing

Most teachers give positive ratings to the principals in their school. More than eight in 10 (85%) teachers give positive ratings to the job their principals are doing, with 45% rating the principals' performance as excellent and 40% rating it pretty good. This represents an increase compared to when the survey asked this question in 1986, when 73% of teachers rated the performance of the principals in their schools as excellent or pretty good.

The majority of new teachers rate their principals as excellent. More than half (56%) of teachers with five years' or less experience rate the principals at their school as excellent, compared to 43% of teachers with six to 20 years of experience and 40% of teachers with more than 20 years' experience.

Teachers in high-needs schools give lower ratings to their principals' performance. Teachers in urban schools (38%) are less likely than those in suburban (48%) and rural (48%) schools to rate their principals as excellent. Teachers in schools with more than two-thirds low-income students are less likely than those in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students to give their principals an excellent rating (39% vs. 50%). A similar pattern is seen among teachers based on the proportion of minority students in their school (35% vs. 50%). In addition, teachers in schools where fewer than most students perform at or above grade level in English language arts and math are less likely than other teachers to rate their principals this highly (38% vs. 51%).

Teachers' highest ratings of principals also vary by school level. Elementary school teachers are more likely than those in middle or high school to rate their principals as excellent (52% vs. 37% vs. 36%).

Teachers who say their principals are doing an excellent job are more likely than others to report that time for collaboration and that professional development opportunities have increased. Teachers who say their principal is doing an excellent job are more likely than those who rate their principal's performance as only fair or poor to say that, in the past 12 months, there has been an increase in time to collaborate with other teachers (40% vs. 24%) and an increase in professional development opportunities (42% vs. 28%).

The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: An Examination of School Leadership (2003) found a relationship between teacher job satisfaction and principals' performance. Teachers who were satisfied with their jobs were more likely than others to be satisfied with their relationship with their principal, to have more frequent contact with the principal, and to rate their principal more highly for such characteristics as respect, being a good listener, and providing opportunities for professional development.²¹

Observation:

Teachers who rate their principals higher on job performance rate leadership responsibilities as less challenging. Teachers who rate their principals' job performance as excellent are less likely than those who rate their principal as pretty good or only fair/poor to say that the following responsibilities are very challenging or challenging for school leaders:

- Address the individual needs of diverse learners (73% vs. 80% vs. 85%);
- Engage parents and the community in improving the education of students (68% vs. 76% vs. 79%);
- Create and maintain an academically rigorous learning environment (57% vs. 66% vs. 67%); and
- Maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers (46% vs. 56% vs. 61%).

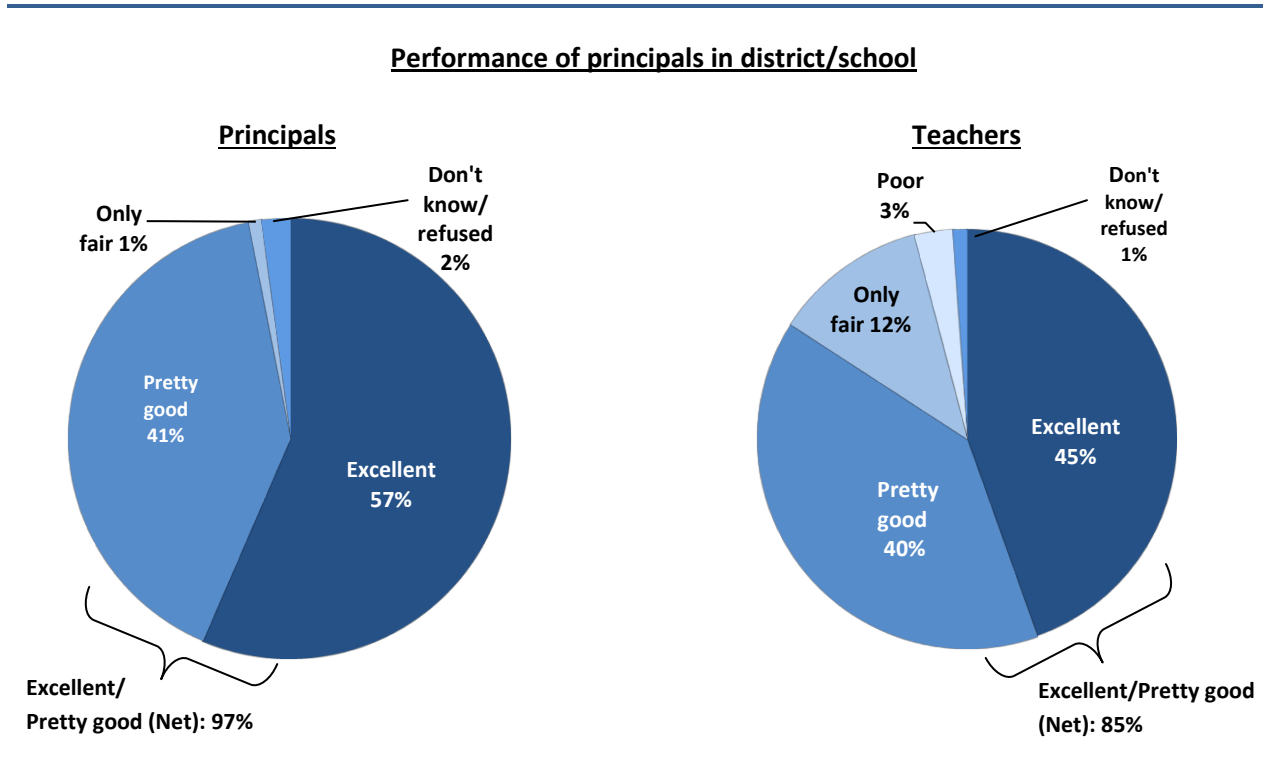
More to Come

More information on teacher job satisfaction overall and its relationship to principals' performance is included in Chapter 3.

Nearly all principals (97%) give positive ratings to the principals in their district. This level is similar to ratings provided by principals in 1986 (93%). The majority of principals today (57%) rate the job principals in their district are doing as excellent and 41% give a rating of pretty good.

Higher job satisfaction for principals is associated with higher ratings of their colleagues' performance. Principals who are very satisfied with their job are more likely than less satisfied principals to say that the principals in their district are excellent (63% vs. 47%). They are also more likely to give high ratings to the performance of the teachers in their school, as will be discussed in Chapter 3.

Figure 2.13
Ratings of How Well Principals Are Doing Their Jobs



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q710: How good a job do you think the following are doing? Excellent, Pretty good, Only fair, Poor. The principals in your district/school

Figure 2.14
Teacher Ratings of Principals' Performance
(% Excellent)

	Rated Excellent
Total	45%
School level	
Elementary	52%
Middle/High School (Net)	38%
Middle School	37%
High School	36%
School location	
Urban	38%
Suburban	48%
Rural	48%
Percentage of students from low-income families	
0-33%	50%
34-66%	46%
67%+	39%
Percentage of students from minority families	
0-33%	50%
34-66%	43%
67%+	35%
Students at/above grade level in English language arts and math	
All/Most	51%
Some/Very few/None	38%
Years of teaching experience	
0 to 5	56%
6 to 20	43%
21 or more	40%

Base: Teachers (n=1,000)

Q710: How good a job do you think the following are doing? Excellent, Pretty good, Only fair, Poor. The principals in your school

Conclusion

Principals report that their role as school leaders is changing and has become more complex, and principals are experiencing frequent stress and less job satisfaction. Overall they feel well prepared for their responsibilities and are participating in professional learning with other principals to improve their leadership skills. Principals and teachers differ in their priorities when it comes to the experience and skills they think a principal should have to be an effective school leader. Principals emphasize the importance of using student data to improve instruction, while teachers rate having classroom teaching experience as most important. Both principals and teachers give positive ratings to the job principals are doing, although teachers in high-needs schools, where the degree of the challenges leaders face is higher and the resources for professional development and collaboration are more constrained or have decreased, are less likely to express the highest-level rating of their principals' performance.

Chapter 3: Teachers, Professional Satisfaction and Leadership

Teachers are widely acknowledged as the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement. Second only to families, they may have the greatest influence on young lives and aspirations. It is important to note that the expertise and experience of teachers as well as their time and attention, morale, and innovation, are all important resources for the success of students, principals and schools. This year’s survey confirms leadership challenges in maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers, in providing guidance and opportunities for teachers to build their competence and skills, and in evaluating teacher effectiveness. It also identifies the ability to share responsibility for leadership with teachers as important to principal effectiveness.

Over the decades of the survey, teacher leadership has also developed as a distinctive resource in education and an important dimension of the teaching profession, involving both formal and informal roles in school, district and beyond. In the classroom, teachers have developed as coaches of learning rather than as simply transmitters of knowledge. Teachers have assumed roles as mentors of new teachers and as resources for colleagues on curriculum, instruction, and professional learning. They have become collaborators in school-wide and peer leadership as part of teams and in professional learning communities, as well as leaders of their profession through unions, state and national professional networks, and by providing thought leadership in articles and in sharing information and commentary through social media.

Traditionally, career progress for leadership in education has meant that effective teachers leave the classroom for school-based or district-level roles developing teaching and learning, or to become principals. Some teachers are committed to classroom teaching but also aspire to grow and contribute professionally in ways that the classroom alone cannot provide. Innovative teachers are defining “hybrid teaching roles” that keep them part-time in the classroom combined with other roles of service and leadership in education—“teacherpreneurs” in the phrase coined by one group of teacher leaders, in their vision of the future of their profession. These opportunities are envisioned as new pathways for leadership and as ways to strengthen the profession, job satisfaction, and retention of effective teachers.²²



From the Survey Archives:

In the 1986 survey, all principals agreed that principals should recognize and develop teachers’ leadership potential by involving them in decision making about school organization and curriculum, and 96% of principals reported that they do so. Nearly all teachers also supported this effort, but only seven in 10 said that this was actually occurring now in their school.

Principals and Teachers Give Positive Ratings to the Job Teachers Are Doing

Nearly all principals (98%) give positive ratings to the classroom teachers in their school. This level is similar to the ratings provided by principals in 1986 (95%). The majority of principals (63%) say that their teachers are doing an excellent job and an additional 35% describe the job teachers are doing as pretty good. In contrast to teachers’ ratings of their principals, the most experienced principals are most likely to rate their teachers highly. Principals with more than 10 years’ experience as a principal are more likely than those with six to 10 years’ experience or those with five years’ or less experience to rate the classroom teachers in their school as excellent (72% vs. 56% vs. 59%).

Principals in high-needs schools give lower ratings to their teachers. Principals in schools with more than two-thirds low-income students are less likely than those in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students to give their teachers an excellent rating (51% vs. 75%). A similar pattern is seen among principals based on the proportion of minority students in their school (50% vs. 72%). In addition, principals in schools where fewer than most students perform at or above grade level in English language arts and math are less likely than other principals to rate the teachers in their school so highly (44% vs. 74%). However, principals' ratings of teachers do not differ significantly based on whether their school is in an urban, suburban, or rural area.

Principals' assessment of their teachers' performance also varies by school level. Middle and high school principals are less likely than elementary school principals to rate their teachers as excellent (55% vs. 67%).

Principals who give their teachers lower ratings view leadership challenges differently and report having less control in decision making. Principals who rate the teachers in their school as less than excellent are more likely than other principals to say that it is very challenging or challenging for a school's leaders to do the following:

- Engage parents and the community in improving the education of students (83% vs. 66%);
- Create and maintain an academically rigorous learning environment (75% vs. 57%);
- Evaluate teacher effectiveness (62% vs. 49%); and
- Maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers (59% vs. 42%).

They are also less likely than principals who rate their teachers as excellent to say that they have a great deal of control in making decisions about removing teachers (34% vs. 48%); hiring teachers (69% vs. 78%); or teachers' schedules (74% vs. 83%).

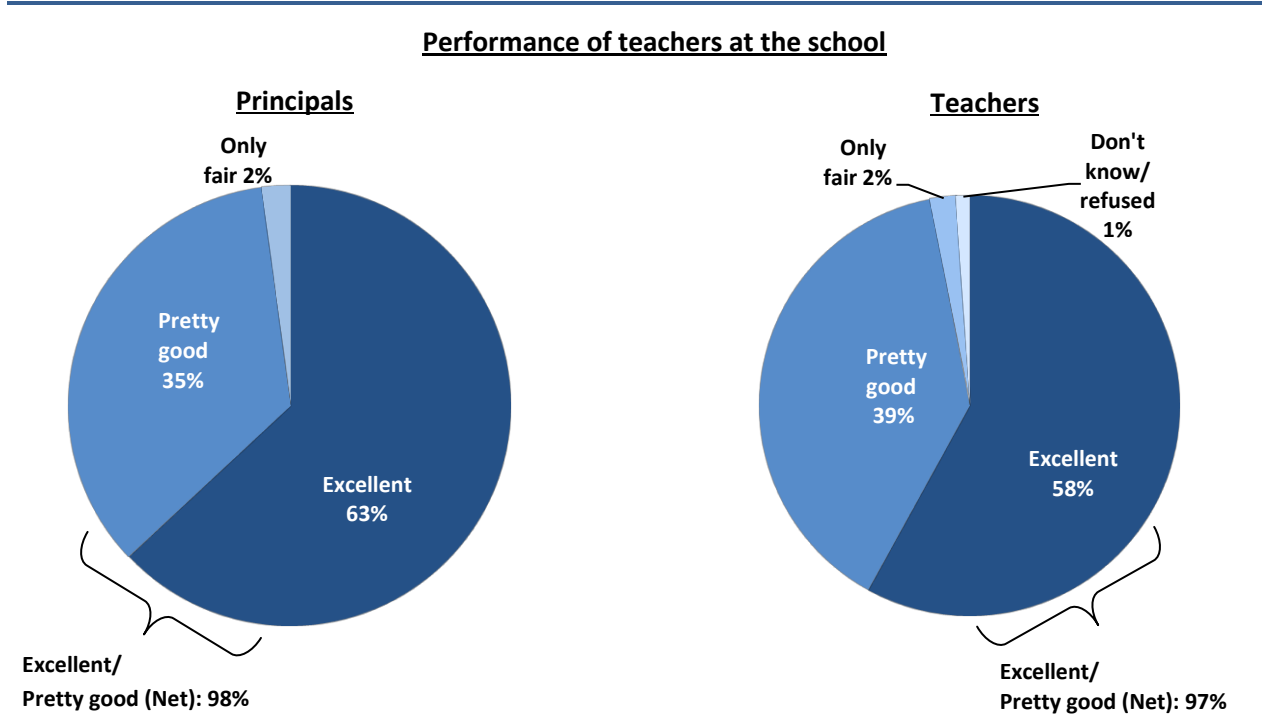
Higher job satisfaction for principals is associated with higher ratings of teachers' performance. Principals who are very satisfied with their job are more likely than less satisfied principals to say that the teachers in their school are excellent (72% vs. 50%). As discussed in Chapter 2, they are also more likely to give high ratings to the performance of other principals in their district.

Nearly all teachers (97%) give positive ratings to the classroom teachers in their school. This level is a slight improvement over the ratings provided by teachers in 1986 (93%). When it comes to rating their colleagues, it is the most experienced teachers who give the highest ratings. Teachers with more than twenty years of teaching experience are more likely than those with six to 20 years' experience or those with five years' or less experience to say that teachers in their school are doing an excellent job (67% vs. 57% vs. 50%).

Teachers in high-needs schools give lower ratings to the job other classroom teachers are doing in their school. Teachers in urban (51%) or rural (56%) schools are less likely than those in suburban (66%) schools to rate the teachers in their school as excellent. Teachers in schools with more than two-thirds low-income students are less likely than those in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students to give their colleagues an excellent rating (48% vs. 73%). A similar pattern is seen among teachers based on the proportion of minority students in their school (43% vs. 68%). In addition, teachers in schools where fewer than most students perform at or above grade level in English language arts and math are less likely than others to rate the other teachers this highly (43% vs. 70%).

Teachers' ratings of other teachers in their school also vary by school level. Middle school (56%) and high school (48%) teachers are less likely than elementary school (65%) teachers to rate the teachers in their school as excellent.

Figure 3.1
Ratings of How Well Teachers Are Doing Their Jobs



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q710: How good a job do you think the following are doing? Excellent, Pretty good, Only fair, Poor. Classroom teachers in your school

Figure 3.2
Ratings of Teachers' Performance
(% Excellent)

	Rated Teachers' Performance As Excellent	
	Principals	Teachers
Total	63%	58%
School level		
Elementary	67%	65%
Middle/High School	55%	51%
School location		
Urban	56%	51%
Suburban	67%	66%
Rural	66%	56%
Percentage of students from low-income families		
0-33%	75%	73%
34-66%	67%	55%
67%+	51%	48%
Percentage of students from minority families		
0-33%	72%	68%
34-66%	57%	56%
67%+	50%	43%
Students at/above grade level in English language arts and math		
All/Most	74%	70%
Some/Very few/None	44%	43%
Years of experience		
Principals		
0 to 5	59%	N/A
6 to 11	56%	N/A
11+	72%	N/A
Teachers		
0 to 5	N/A	50%
6 to 20	N/A	57%
21 or more	N/A	67%

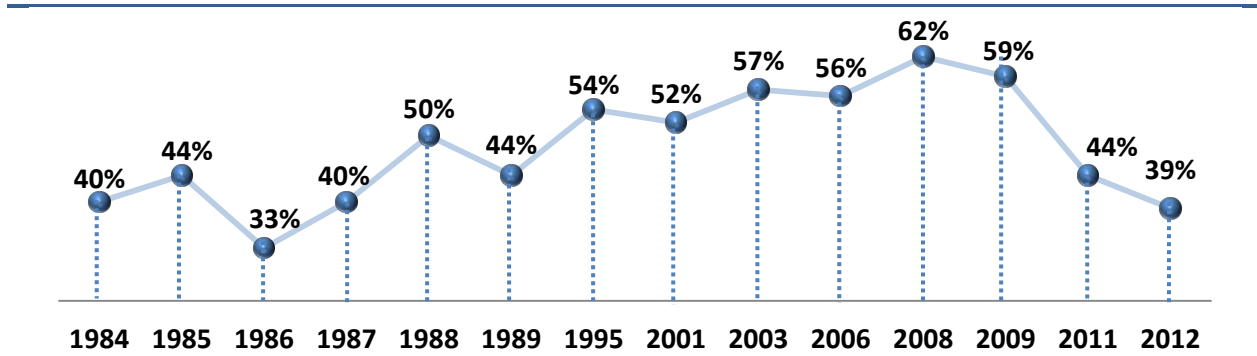
Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q710: How good a job do you think the following are doing? Excellent, Pretty good, Only fair, Poor. Classroom teachers in your school

Teacher Job Satisfaction Continues to Decline

Teacher satisfaction has declined to its lowest point in 25 years and has dropped five percentage points in the past year alone, from 44% to 39% very satisfied. This marks a continuation of a substantial decline noted in the 2011 MetLife Survey of the American Teacher; teacher satisfaction has now dropped 23 percentage points since 2008.

Figure 3.3
Teacher Job Satisfaction Through the Years
(% Very satisfied)

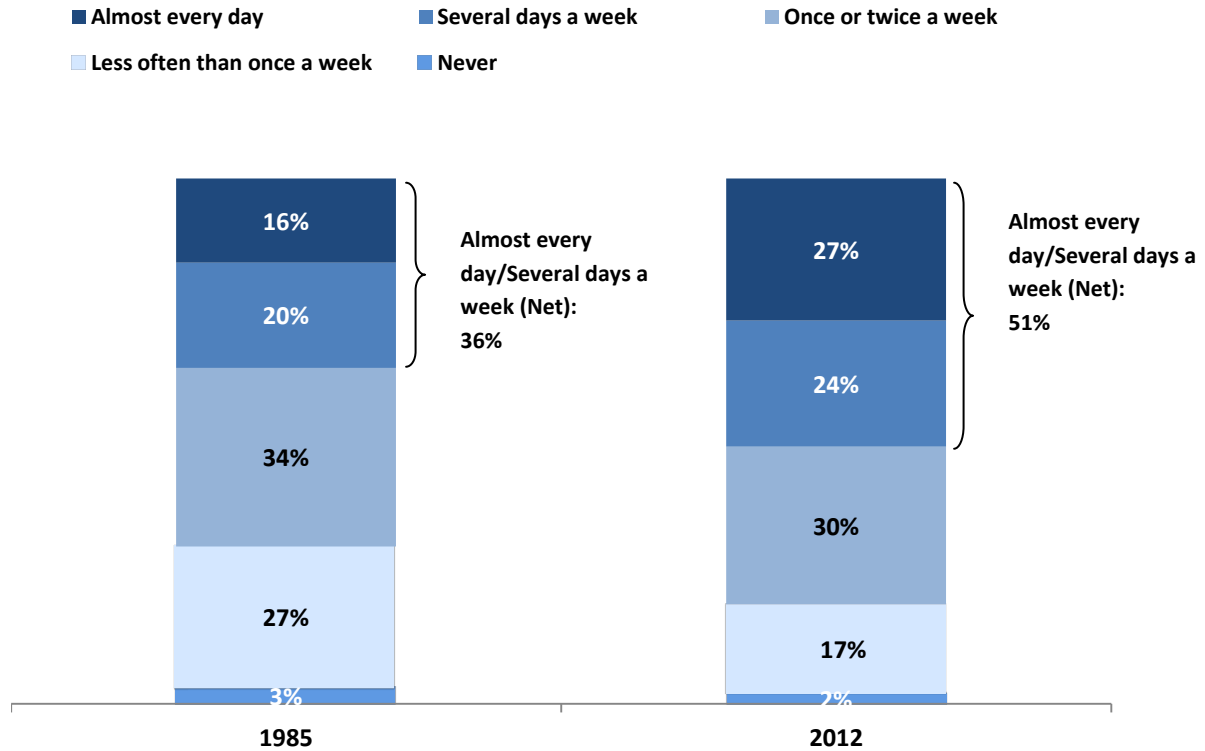


Base: Teachers (2012 n=1,000)

Q905/Q1110 (2012). Question text in 2012, 2011, 2001, 1987, 1986, 1984: All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job as a teacher in the public schools? Question text in 2009, 2008, 2006, 2003, 1995, 1989, 1988, 1985: All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with teaching as a career? Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied

Stress among teachers has increased since 1985. In 1985—the last time this question was asked and when job satisfaction was also low—more than one-third (36%) of teachers said they felt under great stress at least several days a week. Today, that number has increased; half (51%) of teachers feel under great stress at least several days a week. Elementary school teachers experience stress more frequently. They are more likely than middle school or high school teachers to say they feel under great stress at least several days a week (59% vs. 44% vs. 42%). The increase since 1985 in the number of elementary school teachers who experience great stress at least several days a week is also noteworthy—59% today compared to 35% in 1985.

Figure 3.4
Teacher Frequency of Experiencing Great Stress



Base: Teachers 2012 (n=1,000); Teachers 1985 (n=1,846)

Q1190 (2012)/QF1C (1985): Almost all people have some stress in their lives, but some have a great deal of stress. In your job as a teacher, how often do you feel under great stress? Almost every day, Several days a week, Once or twice a week, Less often than once a week, Never

Stress is related to job satisfaction for teachers. Teachers today with lower job satisfaction are more than twice as likely as those who say they are very satisfied with their job to feel under great stress several days a week or more (65% vs. 28%).

Teachers with lower job satisfaction are more likely to be mid-career teachers and less likely to be new teachers. In addition, they are more likely to teach in schools with two-thirds or more low-income students or in schools where most students are not performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics. However, teachers with lower job satisfaction do not differ from very satisfied teachers regarding other personal and school characteristics (see Profile of Teachers with Lower Job Satisfaction).

Budget decreases are associated with lower morale and greater stress among teachers. Teachers at schools where the budget has decreased within the past year are less likely than teachers at other schools to be very satisfied with their profession (33% vs. 48%). Furthermore, they are more likely to experience great stress on the job at least several days a week (55% vs. 46%). As discussed in Chapter 2,

unlike teachers, the job satisfaction of principals as well as principals' stress levels do not differ based on whether school budgets have decreased or not.

In addition, teachers who are highly satisfied with their careers are less likely than other teachers to report that there have been decreases in time to collaborate with other teachers (16% vs. 29%) or with professional development opportunities (14% vs. 21%).

Figure 3.5
Job Satisfaction and Frequency of Great Stress
By School Budget Changes in Past 12 Months

	Teachers		Principals	
	Budget Increased/ Stayed the Same	Budget Decreased	Budget Increased/ Stayed the Same	Budget Decreased
Very satisfied with job	48%	33%	64%	55%
Feel under great stress almost every day/several days a week	46%	55%	43%	51%
Principal has great deal of control in making decisions about finances	33%	21%	26%	17%
Rate principal's performance as excellent/pretty good	87%	83%	-	-

Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q1110 (Teachers)/Q1150 (Principals): All in all, how satisfied would you say you are with your job as a teacher/principal in the public schools? Very satisfied, Somewhat satisfied, Somewhat dissatisfied, Very dissatisfied

Q1190: Almost all people have some stress in their lives, but some have a great deal of stress. In your job as a teacher/school principal, how often do you feel under great stress? Almost every day, Several days a week, Once or twice a week, Less often than once a week, Never

Q810: How much control do you think your school principal has/you have in making decisions about each of the following? A great deal, Some, Not very much, None

Q710: How good a job do you think the following are doing? Excellent, Pretty good, Only fair, Poor

More to Come

More information about the relation between teacher job satisfaction and their views on Common Core State Standards is included in Chapter 4.

Profile of Teachers with Lower Job Satisfaction

Personal Characteristics

- **More than twice as likely to feel under great stress** several days a week or more (65% vs. 28%)
- **More likely to be mid-career** teachers (six to 20 years' experience) (56% vs. 48%)
- **Less likely to be new** teachers (16% vs. 27%)

School Characteristics

- **More likely to teach in schools with** two-thirds or more **low-income students** (42% vs. 33%)
- **Just as likely to teach in urban schools** (31% vs. 26%)
- **Just as likely to teach in schools with** two-thirds or more **minority students** (32% vs. 26%)
- **Just as likely to teach at the elementary** school level (49% vs. 53%), **middle** school level (16% vs. 17%) or **high** school level (28% vs. 24%)

Student Achievement, Curriculum and Instruction

- **Less likely** to report that all or most of their **students are performing at or above grade level** in English language arts and mathematics (50% vs. 61%)
- **More likely to say that it is very challenging or challenging** for a school's leaders **to address the individual needs of diverse learners** (81% vs. 73%) and **create and maintain an academically rigorous learning environment** (66% vs. 56%)
- **Just as likely to say that it is very challenging or challenging** for a school's leaders **to implement the Common Core State Standards** (61% vs. 57%)

Budget and Resource Changes in School

- **More likely to say it is very challenging or challenging** for a school's leaders **to manage the budget and resources** to meet school needs (88% vs. 82%)
- **More likely to say that their school's budget has decreased** in the past 12 months (61% vs. 47%)
- **More likely to say time to collaborate with other teachers has decreased** in the past 12 months (29% vs. 16%)
- **More likely to say that professional development opportunities have decreased** in the past 12 months (21% vs. 14%)

Leadership Pipeline

- **More likely to be** at least somewhat **interested in teaching in the classroom part-time combined with other roles** or responsibilities (56% vs. 43%)
- **Just as likely to have a formal leadership role** in their school (52% vs. 50%)
- **Just as likely to be** at least somewhat **interested in becoming a principal** (16% vs. 17%)

Views on Teachers and Principals

- **More likely to say it is very challenging or challenging** for a school's leaders **to maintain an adequate supply of effective teachers** (58% vs. 43%)
- **Less likely to think their principal has a great deal of control** in making decisions about **hiring teachers** (69% vs. 78%)
- **Less likely to rate** the job **their principal** is doing **as excellent** (35% vs. 60%)
- **Less likely to rate** the job **classroom teachers in their school** are doing **as excellent** (52% vs. 67%)

Teachers Are School Leaders; Many Have a Formal Leadership Role in Their School

Half (51%) of teachers currently have a formal leadership role in their school, such as department chair, instructional resource, teacher mentor, or leadership team member. Teachers who have a formal leadership role are more experienced; they are more likely than other teachers to have at least six years of teaching experience (86% vs. 73%). These teacher leaders are also more likely to report that their school's budget has decreased during the past 12 months (60% vs. 51%), perhaps reflecting a greater need among these schools to have teachers take on more responsibilities. However, whether or not a teacher has a formal leadership role does not vary by school demographic characteristics such as school level, school location, the proportion of low-income or minority students in the school, or the number of students performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math.

Teachers with a formal leadership role rate a range of skills and experiences as more important for a school principal than do other teachers. Teachers with a formal leadership role are more likely than other teachers to rate the following skills and experiences as very important for a principal to have in order to be an effective school leader:

- Has the ability to lead the development of strong teaching capacity across the school (73% vs. 65%);
- Shares responsibilities for leadership with teachers and other staff (71% vs. 63%);
- Evaluates teacher effectiveness using multiple measures (71% vs. 63%);
- Uses data about student performance to improve instruction (59% vs. 47%); and
- Understands how to use technology to improve instruction (51% vs. 41%).

However, teachers with formal leadership roles are still less likely than principals themselves to rate nearly all these areas as very important. The exception is understanding how to use technology to improve instruction; teachers with formal leadership roles are just as likely as principals to rate this as a very important skill (see Chapter 2).

More to Come

More information about the relation between teachers with formal leadership roles and their views on Common Core State Standards is included in Chapter 4.

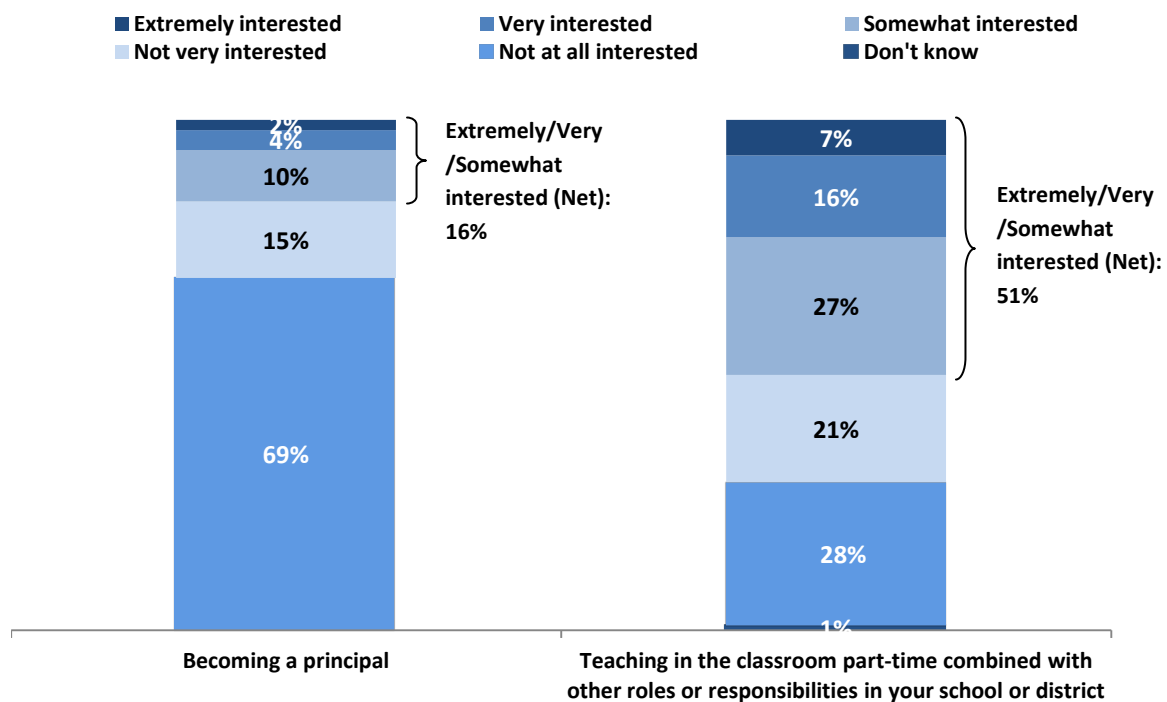
Many Teachers Are Interested in Responsibilities beyond the Classroom

Half of teachers are interested in a hybrid role that combines classroom teaching with other responsibilities, three times the number who are interested in becoming a principal. Half (51%) of teachers are at least somewhat interested in teaching in the classroom part-time combined with other roles or responsibilities in their school or district, including 23% who are extremely or very interested in this option. In contrast, fewer than two in 10 (16%) teachers are at least somewhat interested in becoming a principal, including only 6% who are extremely or very interested in this option. In fact, most teachers (69%) are not at all interested in becoming a principal.

 From the Survey Archives:

In 2009, four in 10 teachers agreed that they would like to teach in the classroom part-time combined with other roles or responsibilities in their school or district and half of principals reported that some teachers in their school already have taken on this hybrid role.

Figure 3.6
Teacher Interest in New Role



Base: Teachers (n=1,000)

Q1140: How interested are you in each of the following? Extremely interested, Very interested, Somewhat interested, Not very interested, Not at all interested

Current teacher leaders are more interested than other teachers in becoming a principal or in a hybrid teaching role. Teachers who currently have a formal leadership role are twice as likely to be at least somewhat interested in becoming a school principal (23% vs. 10%). They are also more likely than other teachers to be at least somewhat interested in teaching in the classroom part-time combined with other roles or responsibilities (58% vs. 43%). Teachers who are at least somewhat interested in becoming a

school principal are also more likely than other teachers to be at least somewhat interested in teaching in the classroom part-time in addition to taking on other roles or responsibilities (74% vs. 46%).

Interest in a hybrid teaching role is higher among mid-career teachers, high school teachers, and those in urban schools or schools with high proportions of low-income students. Mid-career teachers (six to 20 years' experience) are most likely to be at least somewhat interested in teaching in the classroom part-time combined with other roles or responsibilities (57% vs. 40% of new teachers and 47% of more experienced teachers). High school teachers are more likely than elementary school teachers to say they are at least somewhat interested in this hybrid role (57% vs. 47%). Teachers in urban schools are more likely than those in rural or suburban schools to be interested in a hybrid role (61% vs. 51% vs. 42%). In addition, teachers in schools with more than two-thirds low-income students are more likely than those with fewer than one-third low-income students to be at least somewhat interested in this role (57% vs. 46%).

Interest in becoming a principal is more common among new and mid-career teachers, high school teachers, or those in urban schools. New teachers (five years' experience or less) and mid-career teachers (six to 20 years' experience) are three times more likely than those with more than 20 years of experience to be at least somewhat interested in becoming a principal (20% vs. 20% vs. 6%). High school teachers are more likely than elementary school teachers to be at least somewhat interested in becoming a principal (22% vs. 13%). Teachers in urban schools are more likely than those in suburban schools to be interested in this role (21% vs. 13%), although they do not differ from teachers in rural schools (16%).

Conclusion

In the context of additional challenges for leading schools toward greater improvement, the continuing decline in teacher morale identifies itself as an urgent priority. During a time when expectations and standards are increasing for effective teaching and learning, teacher morale is yet another declining resource, one that is associated with schools with diminished budgets and other resources, fewer students meeting standards and fewer colleagues highly rated for how well they are doing their job. Teacher leadership emerges as a potential resource for translating big challenges into opportunities, served by hybrid roles for teachers as leaders and as a method for addressing professional growth and satisfaction.

Chapter 4: Implementation of Common Core State Standards

Over the years, the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher series has monitored teachers' and principals' views on student achievement and potential solutions to improve student performance. Teachers recognize that there is room for improvement. While 85% of middle and high school teachers believe that graduating each and every student from high school ready for college and a career is a priority in education today, far fewer teachers report that all students are reaching this goal. Teachers report that, on average, 63% of their students will graduate high school ready for college without the need for remedial coursework.²³ Furthermore, many teachers (43%) are pessimistic that student achievement will be better five years from now, including more than half (53%) of high school teachers.²⁴

In evaluating potential strategies to improve student achievement, nine in 10 teachers (90%) and principals (92%) say that providing all students with core reading, writing and math skills would have a major impact on improving student achievement and similarly large numbers of teachers (86%) and principals (89%) say that setting high expectations for all students would have a major impact.²⁵ Middle and high school teachers indicate that the critical components of being college- and career-ready focus more on higher-order thinking and performance skills—such as problem-solving skills, critical-thinking skills and the ability to write clearly and persuasively—than on knowledge of challenging content.

It is in this environment that the Common Core State Standards have been adopted in most states in the nation, in a state-led initiative to establish a shared set of clear educational standards for English language arts and mathematics that states can voluntarily adopt. These standards are designed to ensure that **all** students graduating from high school are prepared for postsecondary education or to enter the workforce and that parents, teachers, and students have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The standards are designed to include rigorous content and application of knowledge through higher-order skills and are benchmarked to international standards to guarantee that students are competitive in the emerging global marketplace.²⁶



From the Survey Archives:

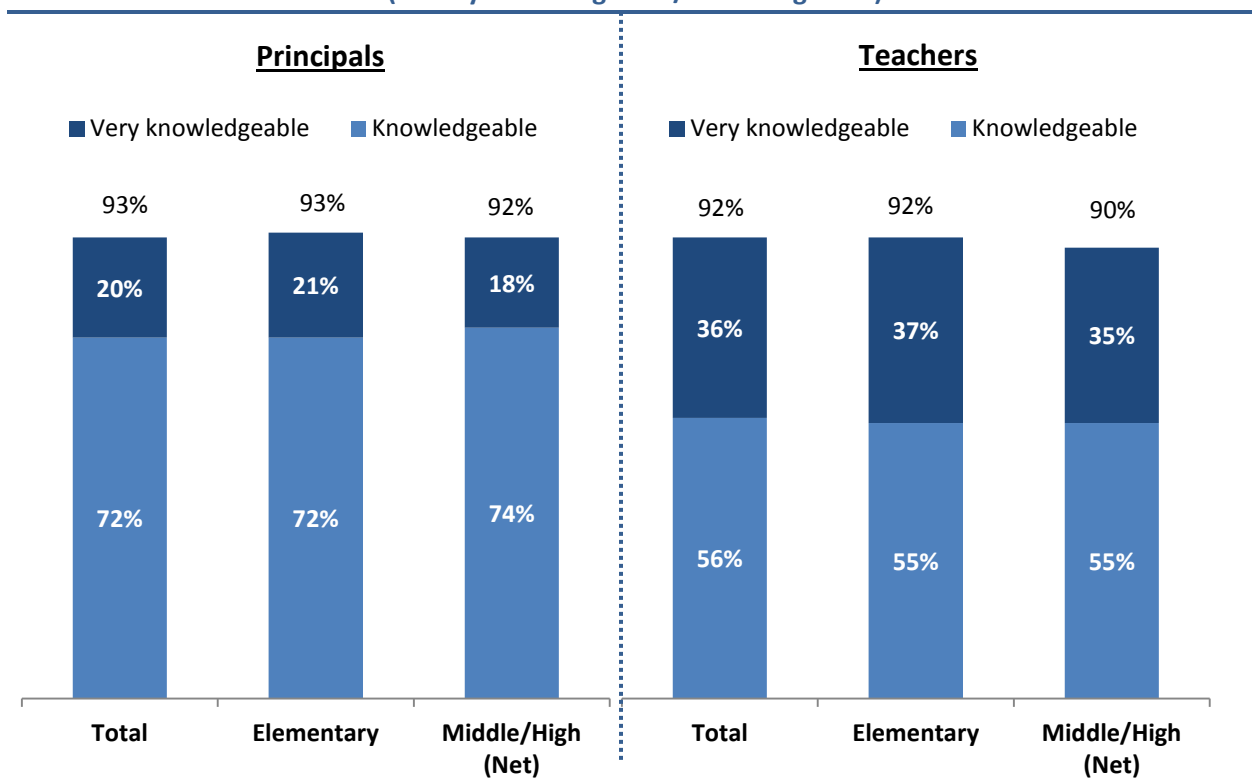
Between 1984 and 2008, the number of teachers who rated the academic standards at their school as excellent **doubled**, from 26% to 53%.

In this year's survey, most teachers and principals identify addressing the individual needs of diverse learners as a challenge for school leadership. The Common Core is intended to help school leaders better address and meet those needs. Because implementation of the Common Core is currently at an early stage in most states and schools, the survey seeks to examine teachers' and principals' views on the initiative and its impact at this juncture to establish a benchmark by which to gauge changes over time.

Educators Believe They Are Knowledgeable about the Common Core

Both principals and teachers say they are knowledgeable about the Common Core, but more teachers than principals report a high level of knowledge about the standards. Nine in 10 principals (93%) and teachers (92%) say that they are very knowledgeable or knowledgeable about the Common Core standards.²⁷ However, teachers are more likely than principals to say that they are very knowledgeable (36% vs. 20%). Principals' and teachers' knowledge of the Common Core does not vary by school level or other school demographic characteristics.

Figure 4.1
Knowledge of the Common Core
 (% Very knowledgeable/Knowledgeable)



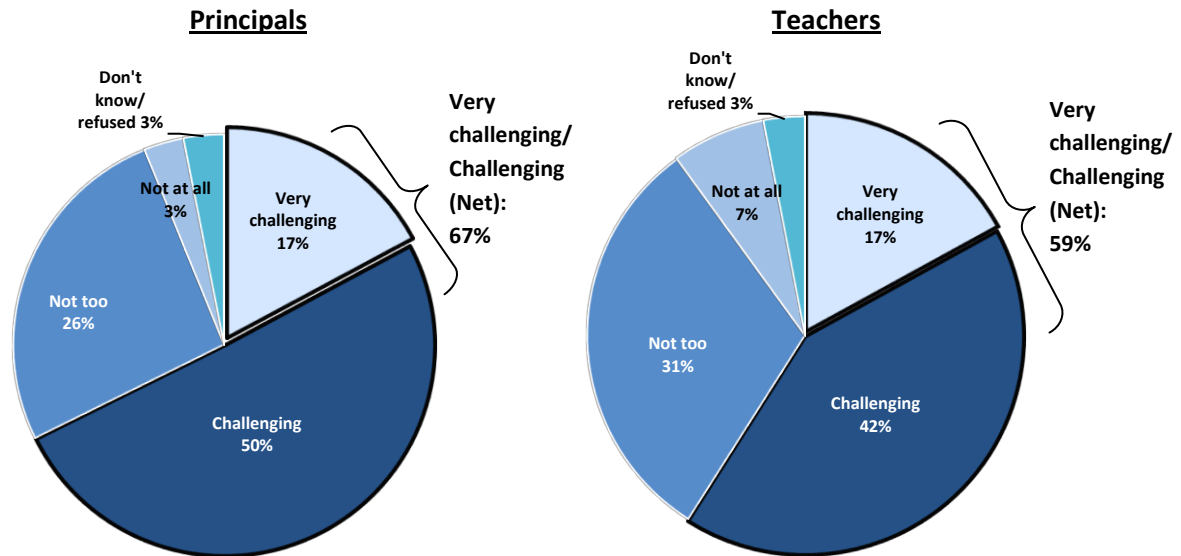
Base: Principals (n=500 [Elementary n=240; Middle/High (Net) n=229]); Teachers (n=1,000 [Elementary n=521; Middle/High (Net) n=438])

Q930: How knowledgeable are you about the Common Core State Standards? Very knowledgeable, Knowledgeable, Not too knowledgeable, Not at all knowledgeable

Educators View Common Core as Challenging to Implement, but are Confident that Teachers Can Teach the Standards

A majority of principals (67%) and teachers (59%) believe that implementing the Common Core standards is very challenging or challenging for school leaders. In addition, as noted in Chapter 1, most principals and teachers view addressing the individual needs of diverse learners, managing the school's budget and resources, and engaging parents and the community to be very challenging or challenging for school leaders. Each of these leadership responsibilities also has implications for the implementation of the Common Core.

Figure 4.2
Extent of Challenge to Implement the Common Core State Standards



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q730: How challenging is it for a school's leaders to...? Very challenging, challenging, Not too challenging, Not at all challenging. Implement the Common Core State Standards

Most principals and teachers believe that the teachers in their school have the academic abilities and skills to teach the Common Core. Nine in 10 principals (90%) and teachers (93%) are very confident or confident that teachers in their school currently have the academic abilities and skills to teach the Common Core State Standards. Middle school and high school principals (83%) are less likely than elementary school principals (93%) to hold this view; however teachers' views do not differ significantly by school level.

Figure 4.3
Confidence That Teachers Have the Academic Abilities and Skills to Teach Common Core

	Very Confident	Confident	Not too Confident	Not at all Confident	Don't know/refused
Principals					
Total	38%	51%	8%	1%	1%
School level					
Elementary	39%	54%	5%	1%	1%
Middle/High School (Net)	37%	46%	14%	1%	1%
Teachers					
Total	53%	40%	6%	*	1%
School level					
Elementary	52%	40%	6%	1%	1%
Middle/High School (Net)	55%	38%	6%	*	2%
Middle School	58%	35%	7%	-	*
High School	53%	41%	5%	*	1%

Base: Principals (n=500 [Elementary n=240; Middle/High School (Net) n=229]); Teachers (n=1,000 [Elementary n=521; Middle/High School (Net) n=438; Middle n=210; High n=203])

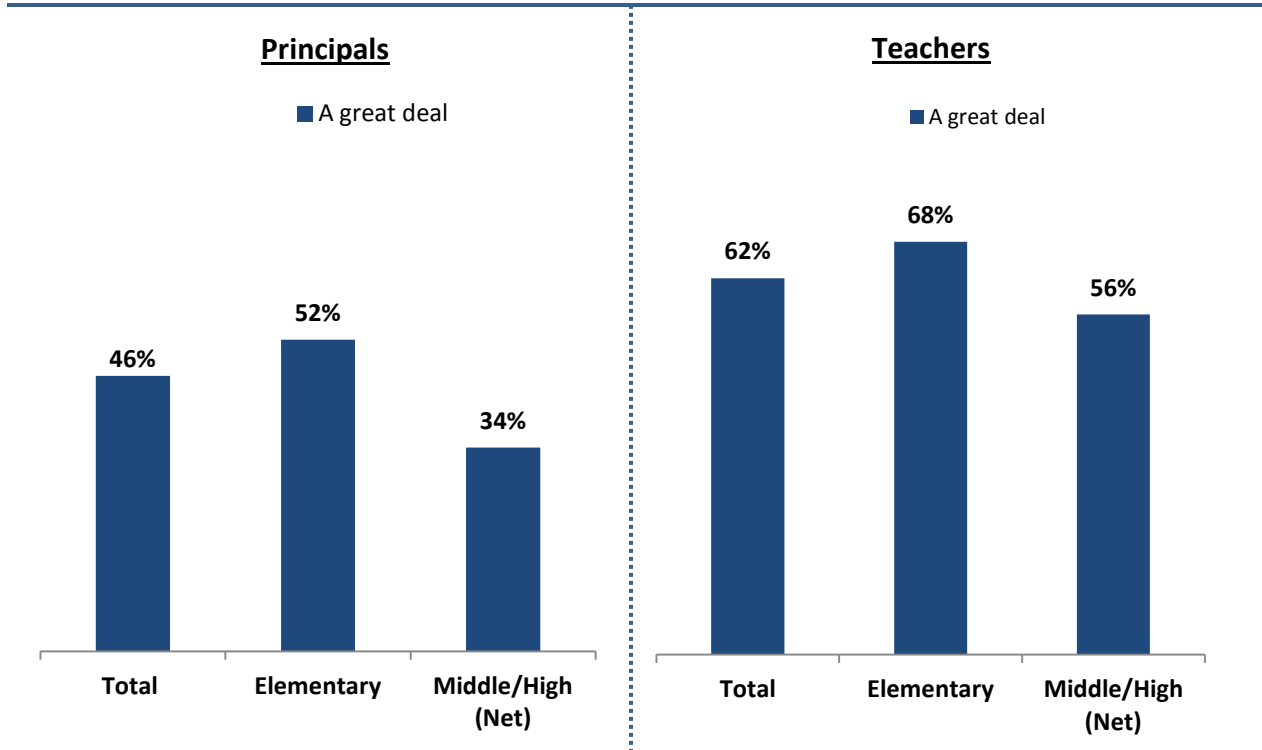
Q960: How confident are you that teachers in your school currently have the academic abilities and skills to teach to the Common Core State Standards? Very confident, Confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident

Teachers and Principals Say Their Schools Are Already Using the Common Core

Many teachers and principals report that teachers are currently using the Common Core in their teaching, particularly at the elementary school level. Even though the Common Core is in the early phases of implementation, a majority of teachers (62%) believe that teachers in their school are using the Common Core standards a great deal in their teaching this school year. The number of principals reporting a great deal of use in their school is smaller, but substantial (46%). Educators in elementary schools are more likely than those in high schools to report that teachers are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching (teachers: 68% vs. 53%; principals: 52% vs. 30%).

Another factor distinguishing educators' responses is the level of student performance at the school. Teachers in schools where most students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math are more likely than teachers in other schools to say that teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal (68% vs. 56%). Principals' reporting of the extent the Common Core is used in teaching at their school does not differ by this measure. In most instances, educators in high-needs schools do not differ from others in the extent to which teachers are using the Common Core. However, principals in schools with high proportions of low-income students are more likely than others to say teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal (52% vs. 41%).

Figure 4.4
Extent Using Common Core in Teaching
(% A great deal)



Base: Principals (n=500 [Elementary n=240; Middle/High (Net) n=229]); Teachers (n=1,000 [Elementary n=521; Middle/High (Net) n=438])

Q940: To what extent are the teachers in your school using the Common Core State Standards in their teaching this school year? A great deal, Somewhat, Not too much, Not at all

 From the Experts:

Forty-six states and the District of Columbia have adopted the Common Core State Standards and are in early stages of implementation, with some subject areas of the standards still under review. Two consortia of states are developing common assessments for use in the 2014-15 school year.

The public education thought leaders interviewed as part of the survey development process agree with principals and teachers that implementing the standards is a significant challenge for school leaders. In addition, the experts are concerned that some teachers and principals may be underestimating how large a shift in curriculum, teaching, and assessment may be required to implement the new standards fully.

- *“In all but a handful of states around the country, there are new academic standards that are being implemented that will demand very fundamental changes in teaching and learning; very fundamental changes in the instructional practices that teachers use in the classroom. Teachers say they’re aware of the standards and they like the standards; they’re not much different than what they’re doing now, which is generally not the case.”*
- *“The rigor is simply much harder or much more demanding than most states have had in the past, so dealing with the real benchmark of where you are as a teacher and your performance and your mastery of these standards and how well your students are going to do is kind of a... I don’t know whether the word is culture shock, when you start seeing the true benchmark as opposed to where you thought you were.”*



Educators who say that their schools' teachers are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching are more knowledgeable about the Common Core and more confident in teachers' abilities to teach the new standards. Principals who say that teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching are three times as likely to say they are very knowledgeable about the Common Core (31% vs. 11%). Teachers in schools where teachers are using the Common Core a great deal are also more likely to say they are very knowledgeable about the Common Core (45% vs. 19%).

Principals and teachers who say that teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching are also more likely to be very confident or confident that teachers in their school have the academic abilities and skills to teach to the Common Core (principals: 95% vs. 86%; teachers: 96% vs. 88%).

Teachers report that their colleagues are focusing on skills and knowledge consistent with the new priorities in the Common Core. Most teachers report that teachers in their school focus their instruction a great deal on the skills to read and comprehend literary and informational texts (84%) and to apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life (67%). Significantly fewer teachers say that teachers in their school focus a great deal on the skills of reasoning abstractly and quantitatively (54%) and assessing how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text (51%).

Elementary school teachers are more likely than middle school or high school teachers to report that teachers focus a great deal on skills to read and comprehend texts and to apply mathematics to solve problems in everyday life. Significant school-level differences do not exist for whether teachers are focusing instruction a great deal on abstract and quantitative reasoning skills or on assessing how point of view shapes a text.



Spotlight on Math Skills:

In this year's survey, about half of middle and high school teachers indicate that teachers in their school focus a great deal instructing students on the skills of applying the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life (56%) and on how to reason abstractly and quantitatively (52%).

Previous MetLife surveys in this series have revealed that higher-level math skills have not been viewed as important as other skills for preparation for college and a career and that student performance in this area has room for improvement. In 2010, 46% of middle and high school teachers said that knowledge and ability in higher-level mathematics, such as trigonometry or calculus, was absolutely essential or very important for a student to be ready for college and a career. In 2008, 53% of middle and high school teachers said that their students' skills are excellent or good in math.

Math teachers also face more challenges than other teachers in addressing the different learning needs of students within a class. In 2010, less than half of middle and high school math teachers said they can differentiate instruction a great deal, compared to 61% of middle and high school teachers overall.

Figure 4.5
Teachers' Focus on Instructional Practices
 (% A great deal)

	School Level				
	Teachers	Elementary	Middle/ High (Net)	Middle	High
To what extent do the teachers in your school focus on...in their instruction:					
To read and comprehend literary and informational texts	84%	89%	78%	80%	76%
To apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life	67%	76%	56%	62%	52%
To reason abstractly and quantitatively	54%	57%	52%	52%	53%
To assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text	51%	55%	48%	47%	48%

Base: Teachers (n=1,000 [Elementary n=521; Middle/High (Net) n=438; Middle n=210; High n=203])

Q925: To what extent do the teachers in your school focus on each of the following types of skills and knowledge in their instructions? A great deal, Somewhat, Not too much, Not at all

Teachers using the Common Core in their teaching and schools that have higher levels of student performance focus more on higher-order skills in instruction. Teachers in schools where teachers are using the Common Core a great deal are more likely than others to say that teachers are focusing their instruction a great deal on the following skills: to read and comprehend literary and informational texts (88% vs. 78%), to apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life (72% vs. 57%), to reason abstractly and quantitatively (62% vs. 42%), and to assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text (57% vs. 42%). In addition, teachers in schools where most students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and math are more likely than others to say that teachers are focusing their instruction a great deal on the following skills: to read and comprehend literary and informational texts (90% vs. 77%), to apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life (74% vs. 57%), to reason abstractly and quantitatively (61% vs. 46%), and to assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text (59% vs. 41%).

Teachers and Principals in High-Needs Schools Signal Hurdles for the Common Core

Current levels of student performance highlight the extent of the challenge of successfully implementing the more rigorous Common Core State Standards, which vertically align standards for progress from kindergarten through twelfth grade and clarify what students need to achieve to be better prepared for each subsequent grade level. Currently, however, many teachers and principals report that most students in their school are **not** performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics.

Student performance at or above grade level varies widely based on school resources and demographic characteristics.

Overall, two-thirds (65%) of principals and slightly more than one-half (54%) of teachers say that most or all of the students at their school are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics. Principals' and teachers' reports on the performance of their students differ by the demographic characteristics of the school and its student population. Elementary school principals and teachers are more likely than their counterparts at the middle or high school level to say that most of their students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics (principals: 67% vs. 61%; teachers: 59% vs. 49%).

Fewer educators in high-needs schools report that students perform at grade level.

In schools with at least two-thirds low-income students, 37% of principals and 27% of teachers say that most of their students are performing at or above grade level. In contrast, in schools with one-third or fewer low-income students, 91% of principals and 83% of teachers say that most of their students are achieving at this level. A similar pattern is seen among principals and teachers based on the proportion of minority students at their school. In addition, principals and teachers in urban schools are less likely than those in suburban schools to report that their students are performing at or above grade level (principals: 49% vs. 78%; teachers: 35% vs. 70%).

Teachers and principals in schools where the educators are doing an excellent job and have high morale are also more likely to report higher levels of student performance.

Teachers who rate their principals' performance as excellent are more likely than other teachers to say that most students are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics. Similarly, principals who rate the performance of the teachers in their school as excellent are more likely than other principals to say that most students are performing at or above grade level. Furthermore, teachers and principals with high job satisfaction are more likely than those with lower job satisfaction to report that most students are performing at or above grade level, and educators who experience great stress at least several days a week are less likely than others to report that most students in their school are achieving this level of performance (see Figure 4.7).

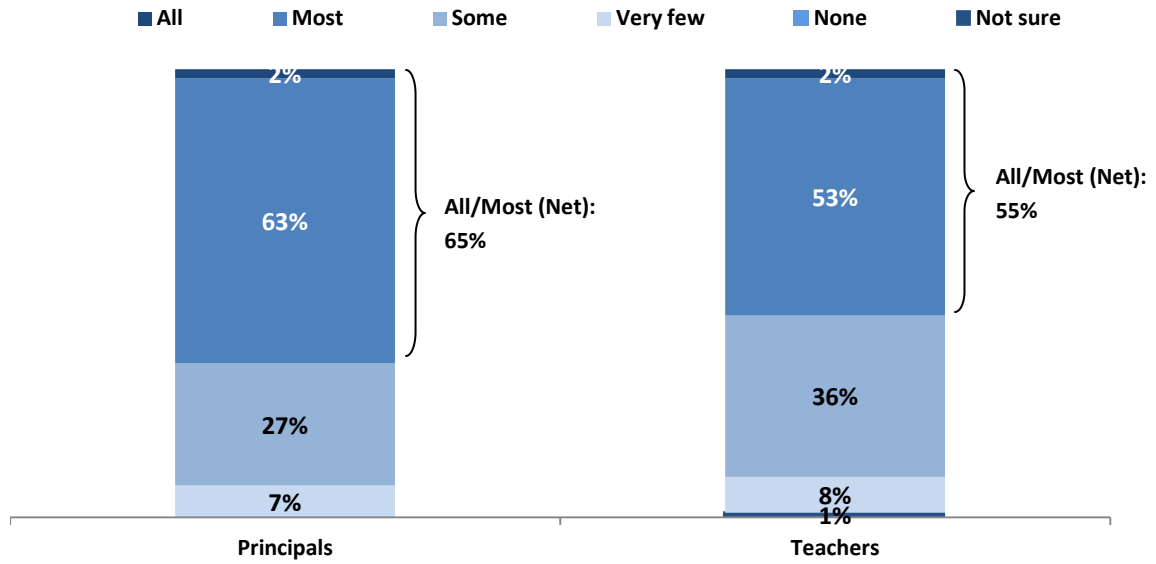


From the Survey Archives:

Findings from previous surveys in the series indicated some improvement in students' preparation for grade-level work. In the 2008 survey, 54% of teachers reported that at least three-quarters of their students arrive at school prepared to learn at grade level—an increase from the 44% of teachers who reported this in 1992.

However, in 2008, teachers in urban schools were more likely than teachers in rural or suburban schools to report that more than a quarter of their students arrive **not fully prepared** to learn at grade level (59% vs. 46% vs. 35%). A similar pattern was reported by principals in urban versus rural or suburban schools.

Figure 4.6
Students Performing At/Above Grade Level in English Language Arts and Mathematics



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q1237: Overall, how many students at your school do you think are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics? All, Most, Some, Very few, None

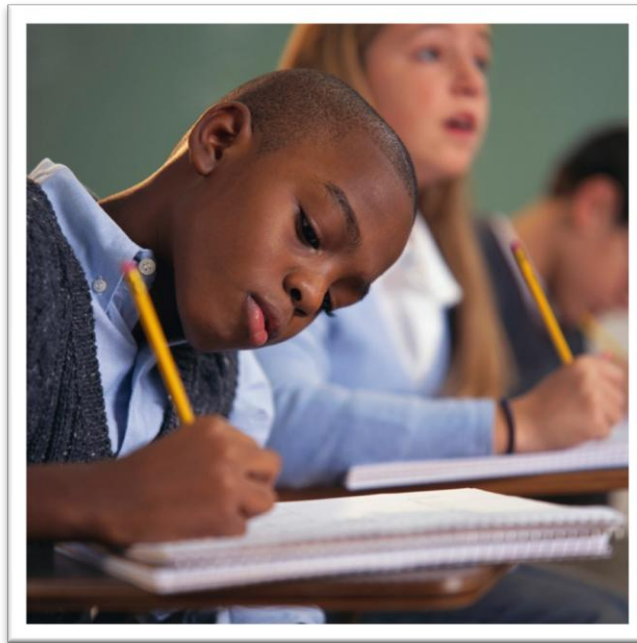


Figure 4.7
Students Performing At/Above Grade Level in English Language Arts and Mathematics
(% All/Most)

	Teachers	Principals
Total	54%	65%
School level		
Elementary	59%	67%
Middle/High School (Net)	49%	61%
Middle School	56%	67%
High School	44%	56%
School location		
Urban	35%	49%
Suburban	70%	78%
Rural	54%	68%
Percentage of students from low-income families		
0-33%	83%	91%
34-66%	57%	76%
67%+	27%	37%
Percentage of students from minority families		
0-33%	72%	79%
34-66%	56%	72%
67%+	23%	36%
Years of experience		
Principals		
0 to 5	N/A	56%
6 to 10	N/A	68%
11+	N/A	72%
Teachers		
0 to 5	48%	N/A
6 to 20	55%	N/A
21+	59%	N/A
Rating of school principal		
Excellent	62%	N/A
Pretty Good	52%	N/A
Only fair/ Poor	39%	N/A
Rating of teachers in school		
Excellent	N/A	77%
Pretty good/Only fair/Poor	N/A	46%
Job satisfaction		
High (Very satisfied)	61%	72%
Low (Less than very satisfied)	50%	55%
Frequency of great stress		
Every day/Several days a week	50%	59%
Once or twice a week or less	58%	71%

Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q1237: Overall, how many students at your school do you think are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics? All, Most, Some, Very few, None

Real-World Examples are Most Helpful for Implementing the Common Core

Most teachers believe that a variety of tools and supports would be helpful for teachers in implementing the Common Core, with a particular emphasis on real-world problems that students can solve. Eight in 10 teachers or more say that the types of tools and supports listed in Figure 4.8 would be very helpful or helpful for teachers in implementing the Common Core State Standards. A majority believe that real-world problems that students can solve (61%) and strategies and coaching to teach content more deeply (55%) would be very helpful for teachers. More elementary school than secondary school teachers say that these tools and supports would be very helpful for teachers. The exception is more effective tools for homework and review, which both elementary and secondary school teachers are least likely to say would be very helpful (36% and 33%, respectively).

Figure 4.8
Helpfulness of Tools and Supports in Implementing Common Core
 (% Very helpful/Helpful)

	School Level				
	Teachers	Elementary	Middle/ High (Net)	Middle	High
Real-world problems that students can solve					
Very helpful/Helpful (Net)	96%	96%	96%	96%	96%
Very helpful	61%	65%	55%	59%	53%
Helpful	35%	32%	40%	37%	43%
Strategies and coaching to teach content more deeply					
Very helpful/Helpful (Net)	93%	96%	90%	94%	87%
Very helpful	55%	62%	46%	54%	42%
Helpful	38%	34%	43%	40%	45%
Assessments aligned to standards that indicate mastery of concepts					
Very helpful/Helpful (Net)	93%	95%	91%	90%	92%
Very helpful	52%	59%	45%	52%	40%
Helpful	41%	37%	46%	37%	52%
Tools to track individual student progress on key standards					
Very helpful/Helpful (Net)	92%	94%	89%	90%	88%
Very helpful	47%	55%	38%	47%	33%
Helpful	45%	40%	50%	42%	55%
Simulations, games and demonstrations of key concepts and principles					
Very helpful/Helpful (Net)	92%	95%	88%	87%	88%
Very helpful	46%	51%	40%	41%	37%
Helpful	46%	44%	48%	47%	51%
More effective tools for homework and review					
Very helpful/Helpful (Net)	83%	83%	82%	82%	84%
Very helpful	35%	36%	33%	36%	31%
Helpful	48%	48%	49%	46%	53%

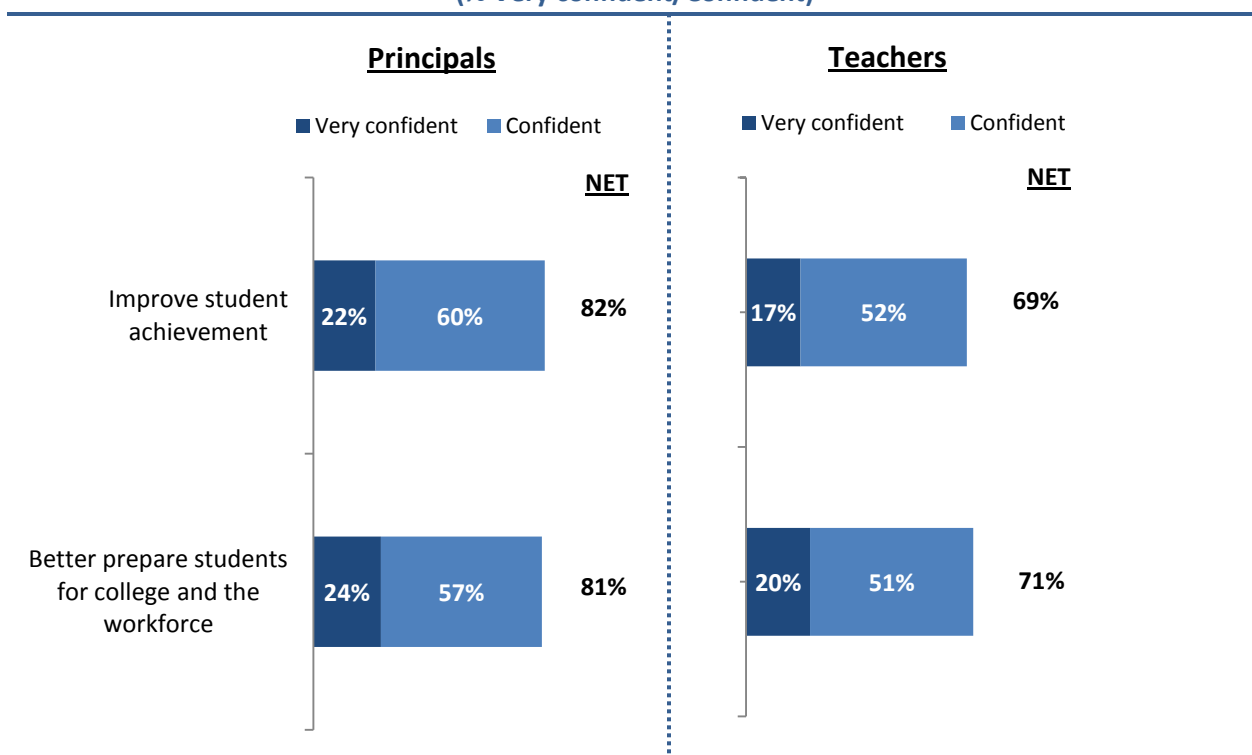
Base: Teachers (n=1,000 [Elementary n=521; Middle/High (Net) n=438; Middle n=210; High n=203])

Q970: How helpful would each of the following tools and supports be for teachers in implementing the Common Core State Standards? Very helpful, Helpful, Not too helpful, Not at all helpful

Principals and Teachers Believe in the Benefits of the Common Core

A majority of principals and a majority of teachers believe that the Common Core will have a positive impact on student achievement and preparation for college and the workforce. Eight in 10 principals are very confident or confident that implementation of the Common Core will improve student achievement (82%) and better prepare students for college and the workforce (81%). This is slightly more than the seven in 10 teachers who are very confident or confident that the Common Core will improve student achievement (69%) and better prepare students for college and the workforce (71%). While majorities of educators express confidence, their support is somewhat muted. Only two in 10 principals or teachers indicate that they are **very** confident that the Common Core will have these effects (see Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9
Confidence That the Common Core Will Benefit Students
 (% Very confident/Confident)



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q950: How confident are you that implementation of the Common Core State Standards will...? Very confident, Confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident

Fewer educators at the middle and high school levels have confidence in the impact of the Common Core on student achievement. Middle school and high school principals and teachers are less likely than their elementary school counterparts to be very confident or confident that the Common Core will improve student achievement (principals: 73% vs. 85%; teachers: 61% vs. 76%). Middle school and high school teachers are less likely than elementary school teachers to be very confident or confident that the Common Core will better prepare students for college and the workforce (63% vs. 78%); principals' views on this do not differ significantly by school level.

Figure 4.10
Teacher Confidence That Common Core Will Benefit Students
(% Very confident/Confident)

	Teachers	School Level			
		Elementary	Middle/ High (Net)	Middle	High
Improve student achievement					
Very confident/Confident (Net)	69%	76%	61%	67%	58%
Very confident	17%	19%	14%	15%	14%
Confident	52%	56%	47%	51%	44%
Better prepare students for college and the workforce					
Very confident/Confident (Net)	71%	78%	63%	64%	62%
Very confident	20%	22%	17%	22%	14%
Confident	51%	55%	46%	42%	48%

Base: Teachers (n=1,000 [Elementary n=521; Middle/High (Net) n=438; Middle n=210; High n=203])
 Q950: How confident are you that implementation of the Common Core State Standards will...? Very confident, Confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident

Figure 4.11
Principal Confidence That Common Core Will Benefit Students
(% Very confident/Confident)

	Principals	School Level	
		Elementary	Middle/ High (Net)
Improve student achievement			
Very confident/Confident (Net)	82%	85%	73%
Very confident	22%	26%	11%
Confident	60%	59%	62%
Better prepare students for college and the workforce			
Very confident/Confident (Net)	81%	83%	77%
Very confident	24%	29%	15%
Confident	57%	54%	61%

Base: Principals (n=500 [Elementary n=240; Middle/High (Net) n=229])
 Q950: How confident are you that implementation of the Common Core State Standards will...? Very confident, Confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident

Educators who are more knowledgeable about the Common Core are more confident of a positive impact on student achievement and preparedness. Principals and teachers who say they are very knowledgeable about the Common Core are more likely to be very confident that the Common Core will improve student achievement (principals: 33% vs. 19%; teachers: 23% vs. 14%). Principals who say they are very knowledgeable about the Common Core are also more likely to be very confident that the Common Core will better prepare students for college and the workforce (principals: 34% vs. 22%); however, teachers' confidence in this benefit does not differ by their level of knowledge.

Educators who say that teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching are more confident that it will benefit students. Principals and teachers who say that teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching are more likely to be very confident or confident that the Common Core will improve student achievement (principals: 90% vs. 75%; teachers: 75% vs. 60%) and will better prepare students for college and the workforce (principals: 89% vs. 75%; teachers: 76% vs. 63%).

Confidence in teachers' abilities to teach the Common Core exceeds confidence in the Common Core's impact on student outcomes. Teachers are more than twice as likely to be very confident that teachers in their school have the academic abilities and skills to teach to the Common Core as to be very confident that implementation of the Common Core will improve student achievement or better prepare students for college and the workforce (53% vs. 17% vs. 20%). A similar pattern is seen among principals, with principals more likely to be very confident that teachers in their school have the academic abilities and skills to teach to the Common Core than to be very confident that implementation of the Common Core will improve student achievement or better prepare students for college and the workforce (38% vs. 22% vs. 24%).

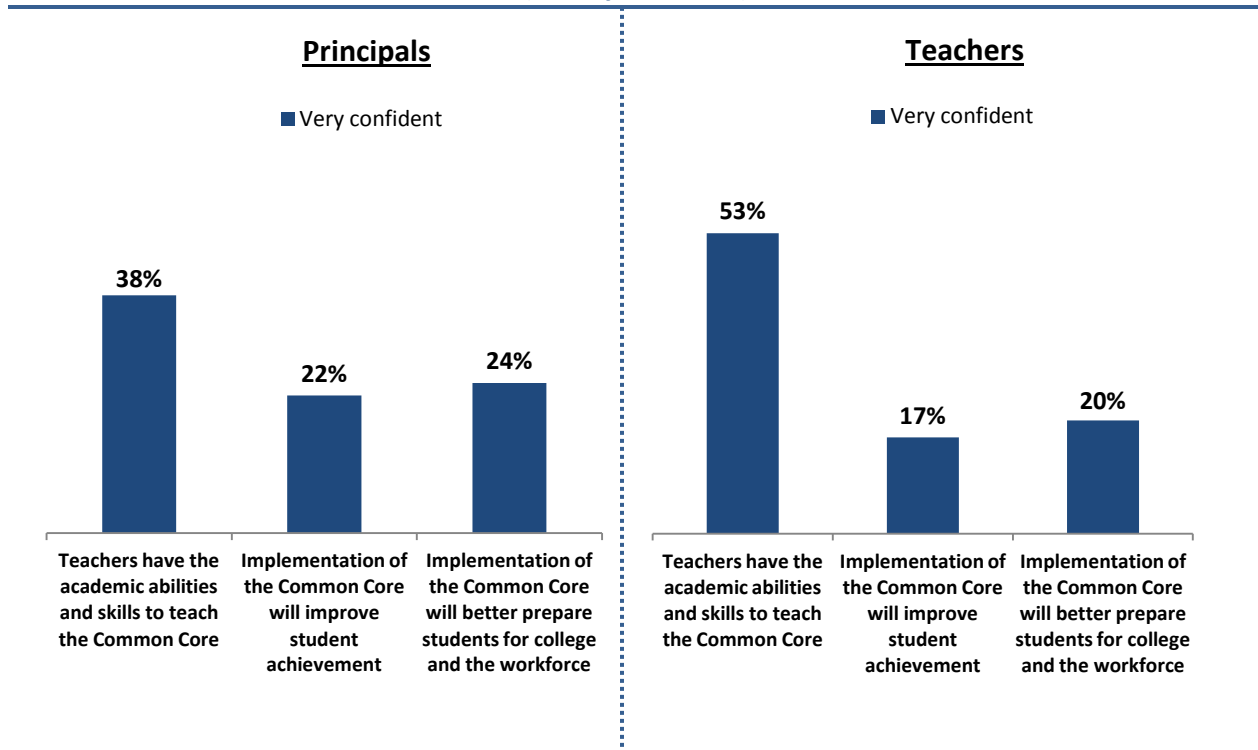
 **Observation:**

When it comes to the Common Core State Standards, there appears to be a gap between teachers' and principals' confidence that teachers can teach to these standards and in their confidence that the standards will improve student performance or better prepare students.

The 2010 survey also noted a gap in expectations—this time between teachers' and students' expectations for college. Middle and high school students had high expectations for college, with 75% who said it is very likely they will go to college. However, middle and high school teachers on average reported that 63% of their students will graduate high school ready for college without the need for remedial coursework and that 51% on average will graduate from college.

Similarly, the 2009 survey noted a gap between teachers' expectations for their students and their expectations for themselves. Only one-third (36%) of teachers believed that all of their students have the ability to succeed academically, yet most teachers (84%) were very confident that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to enable all of their students to succeed.

Figure 4.12
Confidence Gap between Teacher’s Competence and Benefit of Common Core
(% Very confident)



Base: Principals (n=500); Teachers (n=1,000)

Q950: How confident are you that implementation of the Common Core State Standards will...? Very confident, Confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident

Q960: How confident are you that teachers in your school currently have the academic abilities and skills to teach to the Common Core State Standards? Very confident, Confident, Not too confident, Not at all confident

Higher Levels of Implementation and Confidence in the Common Core Associated with a More Positive School Culture

Teachers with high-performing principals report greater use of the Common Core and greater confidence in its benefits. Teachers who say their principal is doing an excellent job are more likely than others to say that teachers in their school are using the Common Core a great deal in their teaching this year (69% vs. 60% who rate their principal “pretty good” vs. 50% who rate their principal “only fair/poor”). They are also more likely to say teachers in their school focus their instruction on skills and knowledge related to the Common Core. Teachers who give their principal an excellent rating are more likely than those who rate their principal as only fair or poor at their job to say that teachers in their school focus their instruction a great deal on the following:

- To apply the mathematics they know to solve problems arising in everyday life (75% vs. 48%);
- To assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text (59% vs. 40%);
- To reason abstractly and quantitatively (62% vs. 47%); and
- To read and comprehend literary and informational texts (87% vs. 74%).

Perhaps this is why they are also more likely to be very confident that the teachers in their school have the academic abilities and skills to teach the Common Core (64% vs. 36% who rate their principal “only

fair/poor”) and that implementation of the Common Core will improve student achievement (23% vs. 10%) and better prepare students for college and the workforce (25% vs. 13%). However, teachers who say their principal is doing an excellent job are not more likely to be knowledgeable about the Common Core.

Teachers with high job satisfaction have more confidence in their colleagues’ ability to teach the Common Core and in its benefits to students. As schools progress with implementation, the survey indicates that there is a relationship between teacher morale and confidence in the implementation and benefits of the Common Core. Teachers with high job satisfaction are more likely than those with lower job satisfaction to say that they are very confident that the teachers in their school have the academic abilities and skills to teach the Common Core (59% vs. 49%). They are also at least twice as likely to say that implementation of the Common Core will improve student achievement (26% vs. 11%) and better prepare students for college and the workforce (28% vs. 14%).

Conclusion

Educators who have begun to implement the Common Core are confident that they have the knowledge and skills to meet the challenge, but are less confident in the potential of the new standards to benefit students’ academic achievement and readiness for college and careers. Addressing the individual needs of diverse learners is a top challenge for school leaders, and educators in high-needs schools indicate the greater distance their schools need to go for all of their students to be college- and career-ready. The signal from teachers that real-world problems for students to solve would be particularly helpful tools for implementation of the standards may represent a practical opportunity for parents and communities, including businesses, to be supportive. Strong leadership from the principal and high teacher satisfaction may be important resources closely tied to successful implementation of the Common Core.

Endnotes

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- ¹⁴ Learning Forward. *Meet the Promise of Content Standards: The Principal* (2012): 25-27. Retrieved from <http://www.learningforward.org/docs/commoncore/meetpromiseprincipal.pdf>
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- ¹⁷ *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Teachers, Parents and the Economy.* (2011). Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED530021.pdf>
- ¹⁸ Educators were asked, "Overall, how many students at your school do you think are performing at or above grade level in English language arts and mathematics – all, most, some, very few or none?" This comparison is between educators who responded "some, very few or none" vs. those who responded "all or most".
- ¹⁹ *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: Collaborating for Student Success.* (2009). Retrieved from <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED509650.pdf>
- ²⁰ Wallace Foundation. *The School Principal as Leader: Guiding Schools to Better Teaching and Learning.* (New York: 2013). Retrieved from <http://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/school-leadership/effective-principal-leadership/Documents/The-School-Principal-as-Leader-Guiding-Schools-to-Better-Teaching-and-Learning-2nd-Ed.pdf>
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²⁶ *Common Core State Standards Initiative*. National Governors Association Center for Best Practices (NGA Center) and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO), 2012. <http://www.corestandards.org/>

²⁷ Unless otherwise noted, results are reported on total teachers and principals—those from the 46 states that have adopted the standards as well as those from non-adopter states. This approach was based on the following considerations: the standards have been adopted by most of the states; and the standards are influencing the national discussion, including those in states that have not officially adopted the Common Core.

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