


In the spring of 2019, the Ontario Institute for Education Leadership (IEL) engaged the community in a conversation about how to best support leaders with their well-being, in their districts. Participants were invited to share thoughts, rate the thoughts of others and discover the results of the exchange. The IEL would like to thank all those who participated in the on-line collaboration by sharing thoughts and/or rating thoughts.



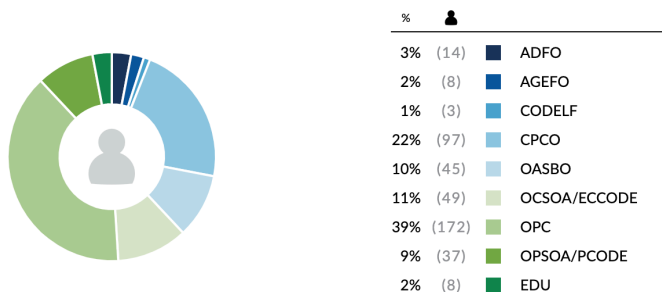
 **493**
Participants

 **452**
Thoughts

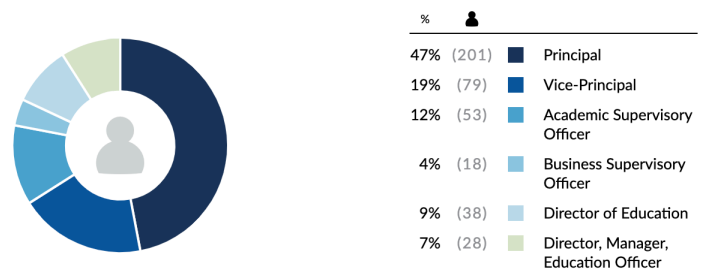
 **10,551**
Ratings

Q: What is working well and what other ways can the well-being of school and system leaders be supported?

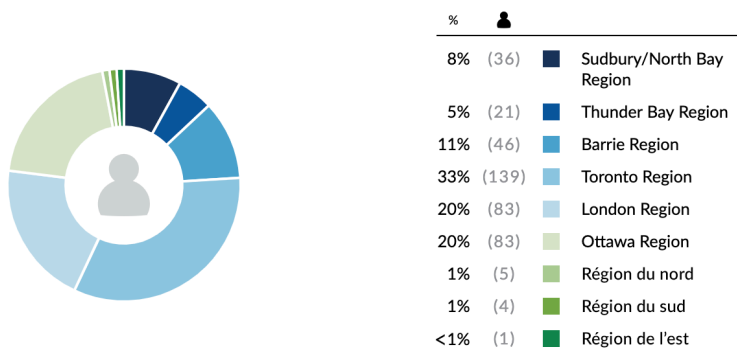
PARTICIPATION BY PROFESSIONAL ASSOCIATION



PARTICIPATION BY ROLE



PARTICIPATION BY DISTRICT REGION



TOP THOUGHTS

The following thoughts showcase the highest rated thoughts in the exchange.

What is working well and what other ways can the well-being of school and system leaders be supported?

ALL schools need more supports to deal with the unrelenting daily demands of students. More child and youth workers, social workers, behaviour support. Our student population has changed. If we truly want to service students, we need experts in the building to do it.

School systems do not seem equipped to manage the abundance of mental health and trauma behaviours that are presenting. Staff and student safety, staff and student stress and anxiety level in response to other students outbursts.

VP time should not only be based on the number of students in building, but also, on the needs of the school.

Eliminate Reg 274. Human Resources are at a critical point and something needs to be done.

Well-being can be supported by being aware of mistreatment of school administrators/principals by adults in schools (teachers, parents, support staff). It is important to the well-being of principals as school leaders deserve to work in a safe school workplace.

For very high needs situations, community resources are invaluable in supporting students and staff. We need additional support to meet the mental health needs of students and staff. Inclusion is dependent on the resources available to support.

Greater focus needs to be paid to the workload of our principals and to the number of students with high needs who are in our buildings. Too many are taking stress leaves.

Open communication with Senior Team. Having support from superiors builds confidence and supports well-being.

School psychologists/counsellors - at least one assigned for every school. Teach meditation, mindfulness strategies to both staff (at staff meetings) and classes, be available to meet with students AND staff who need support.

There is a lot pressure to support the well-being of our staff, but there's really nothing in place to support our well-being. Supporting our mental health and well-being is crucial to our success as leaders, and our ability to support our staff and students.



DIFFERENCES

Differences are thoughts considered interesting or highly engaging to groups of participants but may not be reflected in the top themes. They consist of **Different ratings** and **Common ratings**. The algorithm identifies a group of people who rate thoughts both high and low, showing an area of disagreement, or Different ratings. It then takes this same group and finds the thoughts that they all rate high. This shows where the group agrees, or Common ratings.

What is working well and what other ways can the well-being of school and system leaders be supported?

GROUP 2



Group A



Group B









Notable demographic breakdowns are as follows:

- 31% of participants in **Group A** are in the Toronto Region compared to 17% of participants in **Group B**.
- 23% of participants in **Group B** are in the London Region compared to 14% of participants in **Group A**.

DIFFERENT RATINGS

Group A ↑ Group B ↓

Continued collaboration between S.O./Directors/Principal groups. Leadership at central level sets the tone.	4.6 ★	1.8 ★
Continue to build organizational conditions at the board level that commit all senior leaders to the mental health and well-being strategy. Sustainability and spread.	4.4 ★	1.7 ★
Collaborative communications. Similar efforts for staff and promotion of well-being should be increased, which impacts student well-being.	4.3 ★	1.5 ★

<p>School systems do not seem equipped to manage the abundance of mental health and trauma behaviour that are presenting. Staff and student safety, staff and student stress and anxiety level in response to other students' outbursts.</p>	4.7 	5.0 
<p>ALL schools need more supports to deal with the unrelenting daily demands of students. More child and youth workers, social workers, behaviour support. Our student population has changed. If we truly want to service students we need experts in the building to do it.</p>	4.9 	4.0 
<p>For very high needs situations, community resources are invaluable in supporting students and staff. We need additional support to meet the mental health needs of students and staff. Inclusion is dependent on the resources available to support.</p>	4.6 	5.0 



GROUP 3



Group A



Group B



Notable demographic breakdowns are as follows:

- 26% of participants in **Group A** are associated with OCSOA/ECCODE and OPSOA/PCODE compared to 0% of participants in **Group B**.







DIFFERENT RATINGS

Group A ↑ Group B ↓

Lieu/personal/compensatory days. These days show us we are valued for the extra time we work beyond the regular school day.	4.5 ★	2.3 ★
Lieu days. These are important for mental health. Having flexibility to take time away is key. We put exponential amounts of time in.	4.3 ★	1.9 ★
An increase in the number of admin, notably VP positions is required. Many of our Ps are in single admin schools that are large and complex places. I am at a school for the first time in which I have a VP. It is an amazing difference on work and stress load.	4.3 ★	1.7 ★

COMMON RATINGS

Group A  Group B 

Connecting with colleagues for support. Important to share/discuss challenges and hear others' perspectives.	4.4 	4.0 
Regular opportunities to share thinking, issues, and ideas with other administrators is helpful. There are many times when I work in isolation so when there is a chance to share ideas and issues with other administrators it's awesome.	4.3 	3.3 
Connecting individually with other admin for support, ideas, etc. works well. Helps keep from feeling isolated in a one-admin building. Helps keep things in perspective when a lot goes on. Not alone - same issues.	4.6 	5.0 



TOP THEMES

The thoughts collected in the exchange were grouped by topic to allow the creation of themes. There are three themes:

- COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION
- BUILDING CAPACITY
- WORK INTENSIFICATION

Each theme is divided into sub-themes.

COLLABORATION AND COMMUNICATION

APPRECIATIONS

- Participants in Région du nord and Région du sud had a higher average star rating for this theme.

Having colleagues to speak to and to share concerns/issues with. Important to be able to voice concerns and troubleshoot.

4.2 ★ 24

As administrators we support one another and especially look out for administrators in single administrator buildings. We all need to be able to talk to someone about our day and about challenging situations - we will not make it if we do not uplift one another.

4.1 ★ 23

OPPORTUNITIES FOR GROWTH

- There are no notable demographic differences for this theme.

ALL schools need more supports to deal with the unrelenting daily demands of students. More CYWs, social workers, behaviour support. Our student population has changed. If we truly want to service students we need experts in the building to do it.

4.4 ★ 25

Support from supervisory officers and the director with challenges. Important to know that concerns/challenges can be shared openly and that they are addressed collaboratively.


4.1 ★ 36

BUILDING CAPACITY


PROFESSIONAL LEARNING

- Academic Supervisory Officers had a higher average star rating for this theme.

Professional Development in the area of well-being. To assist administrators when working with both students and families.

4.1 ★ 24 


Strong mentor/mentee supports for new to the role Principals and VP's. Reduce isolation.

4.1 ★ 22 


INDIVIDUAL WELL-BEING

- Academic Supervisory Officers, Business Supervisory Officers and participants in Région du sud had a higher average star rating for this theme.

There is a lot pressure to support the well-being of our staff, but there's really nothing in place to support our well-being. Supporting our mental health and well-being is crucial to our success as leaders, and our ability to support our staff and students.

4.2 ★ 25 

Administrator burn-out is a major issue. Many P and VPs on leave (mental health and physical health). Ps and VPs support staff and student mental health. Lack of support for Ps and VPs - overworked and no one to check in with.

4.2 ★ 18 



WORK INTENSIFICATION

WORKING CONDITIONS

- Principals and participants in Thunder Bay and Toronto Regions had a higher average star rating for this theme.

Workload. Principals and system leaders are juggling a significant number of responsibilities and the demands on their time are ever increasing.

4.1 ★ 34 👤

No administrator should be left alone to run a school. A supportive partner is needed for collaboration and to meet all of the diverse needs of the community that seem to be growing rapidly with each year.

4.1 ★ 14 👤

STAFFING

- Principals, Vice-Principals and participants in Barrie and London Regions had a higher average star rating for this theme.

VP time should not only be based on the number of students in the building, but also on the needs of the school.

4.4 ★ 18 👤

For very high needs situations, community resources are invaluable in supporting students and staff. We need additional support to meet the mental health needs of students and staff. Inclusion is dependent on the resources available to support.

4.3 ★ 24 👤

FLEXIBILITY

- Principals, Academic Supervisory Officers and participants in the London Region had a higher average star rating for this theme.

Allow greater flexibility as related to lieu time. Self-efficacy and a sense of autonomy support well-being. 4.1 ★ 28 👤

Compensatory days have been helpful to address family issues. This allows me to be home without feeling guilty and to get things done that I don't have time to address because of work commitments 4.0 ★ 24 👤

You can dig into each exchange to discover additional topics that are important to your peers

my.thoughtexchange.com/#569774700