



Summary of Responses

Miami-Dade County Public Schools 2008 Survey of Assistant Principals

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December 2009



Notes about Stanford Survey of M-DCPS Assistant Principals

In May and June of 2008, IREPP administered a survey to Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS) assistant principals. This survey asked assistant principals about their school, how leadership responsibilities are distributed at their school, how prepared they feel to be a principal, how effective they believe their principal is at particular tasks, how they use informal classroom observations, and their preferences for different types of schools.

All of the assistant principals in the district were emailed links to the online survey. We received survey responses from 585 assistant principals in M-DCPS (representing an 85 percent response rate). This report highlights some of the aggregated responses of these assistant principals. Completing the survey was voluntary, as was answering each of the individual questions. The responses presented in this report represent the sum or proportion of the responses for each question (i.e., missing responses are omitted). We have a low rate of non-response (less than ten percent) for most questions. Combined with our 85 percent response rate overall, we are quite confident that the aggregated responses reported here are representative of the population of assistant principals in M-DCPS.

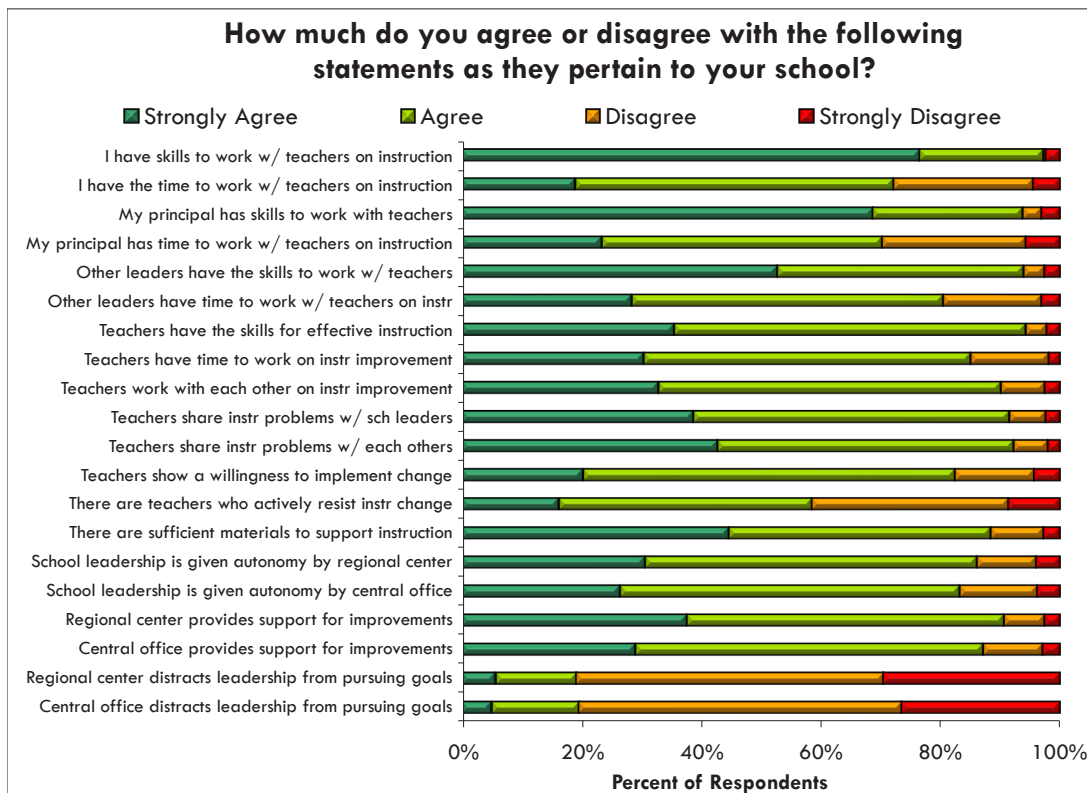
This survey is part of IREPP's School Leadership Research (SLR) project, which examines the career paths of principals and teachers, district policies that affect the distribution of human resources across schools, and the impact of educator characteristics and mobility patterns on student outcomes. The research is funded by organizations interested in evaluating existing education policies in order to identify ways to improve those policies or develop new policies as needed. We have received financial support from The Spencer Foundation, The Joyce Foundation, and the Stanford University K-12 Education Initiative. More information about this project can be found at: www.schoolleadershipresearch.org



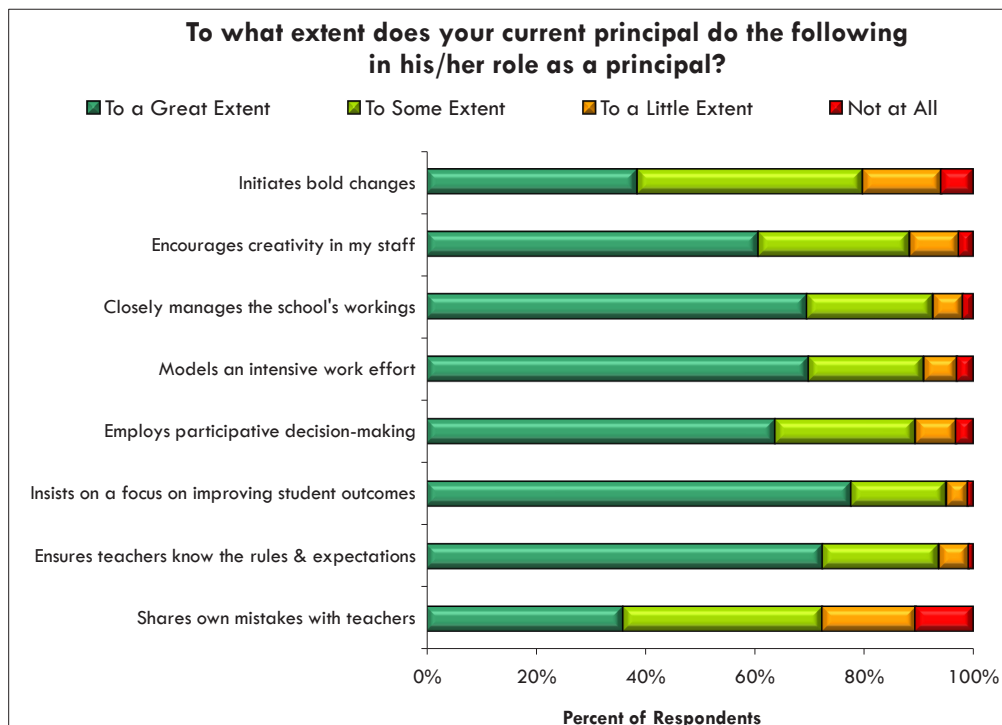
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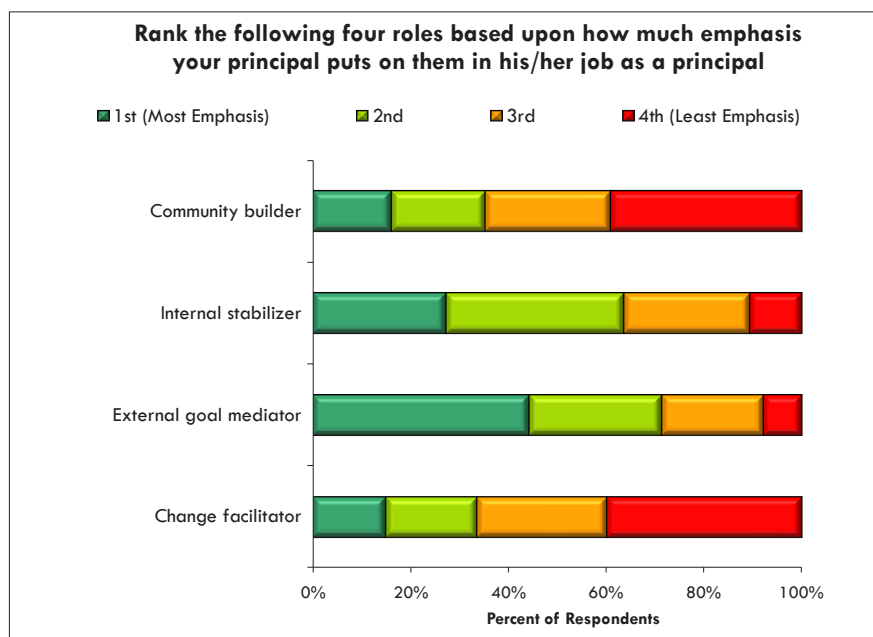
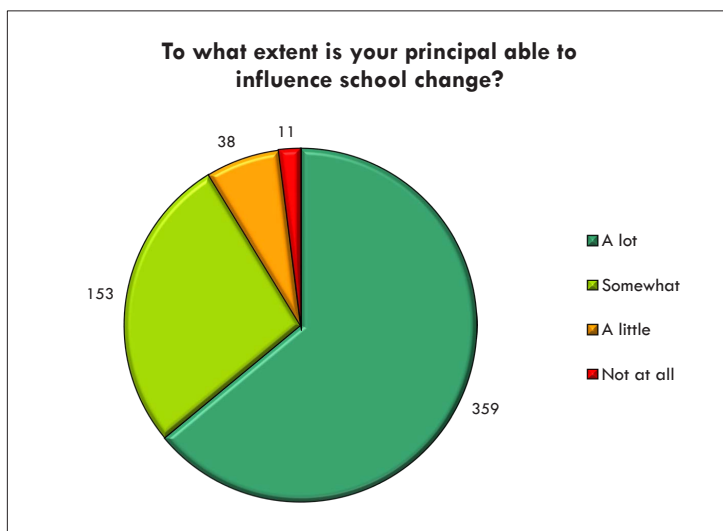


Over 90 percent of the respondents are confident that the school leadership has the skills and knowledge to work with teachers on instruction, however less feel that they have the time to do so. This parallels findings from our surveys of M-DCPS principals and teachers.



Most of the respondents feel that their principal does the following to a great extent: insists on a focus on improving student outcomes; ensures that all teachers know the rules and expectations; and models an intensive work effort. Again, this closely parallels what we find from principal self-reports and teachers' reports of principals.

The respondents generally report that their principal is able to influence school change. Sixty-four percent of the respondents believe they can do so a lot. However, almost ten percent of them think that their principal has little or no influence at all.



Respondents were asked to rank the emphasis they and their principal place on the following four roles:

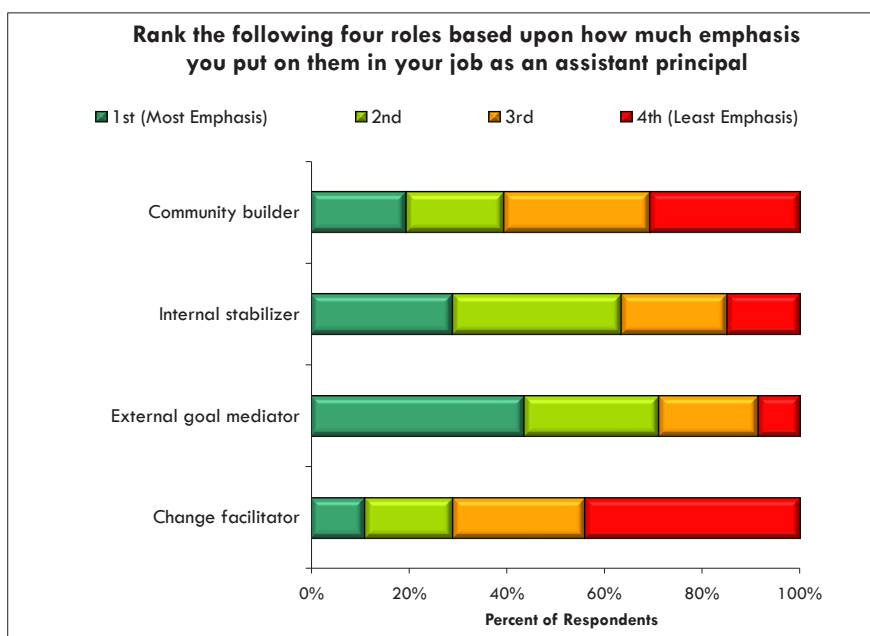
COMMUNITY BUILDER - Focuses on creating a positive community within the school by emphasizing human interactions.

INTERNAL STABILIZER - Focuses on stabilizing internal school operations so the school functions well.

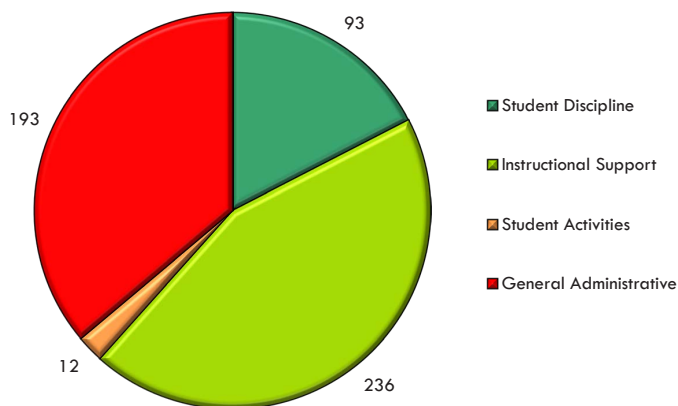
EXTERNAL GOAL MEDIATOR - Focuses on student outcomes and external accountability in a structured, well-organized manner.

CHANGE FACILITATOR - Focuses on envisioning and facilitating innovation and change.

The emphases assistant principals report for themselves (to the right) mirrors the emphases they report for their principals (above) as well as the emphases the principals self-report on our survey of M-DCPS principals.



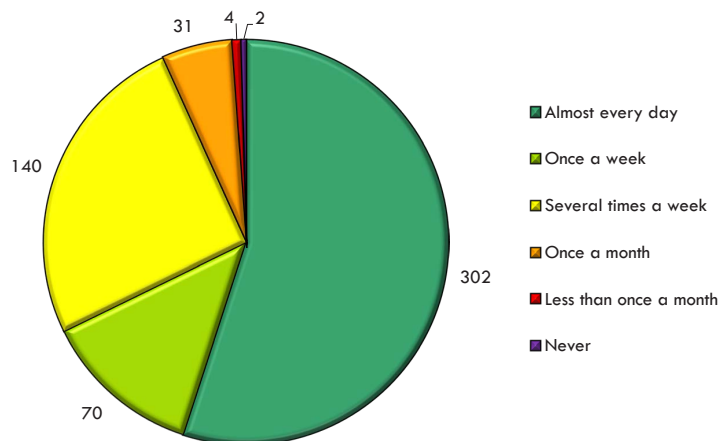
How would you describe your primary role as an assistant principal in your school?



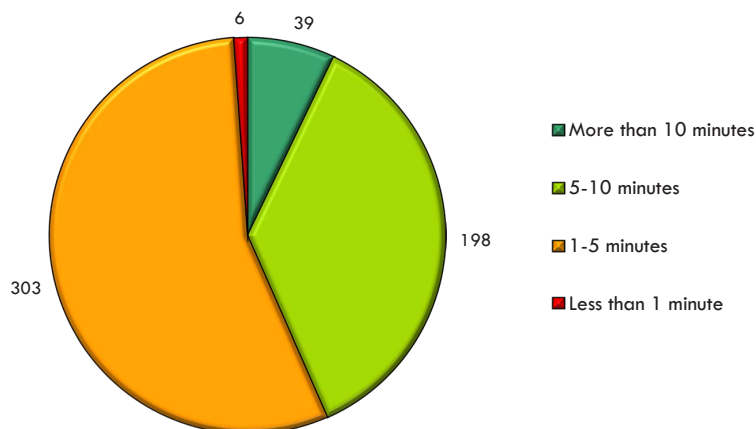
Assistant principals have different primary roles - 44 percent of the respondents report theirs is in instructional support, 36 percent in general administrative duties, 17 percent in student discipline, and two percent in student activities.

Almost all of the respondents informally observe classrooms at least several times a week, and more than half report observing classrooms almost every day. Only two state that they never informally observe classrooms.

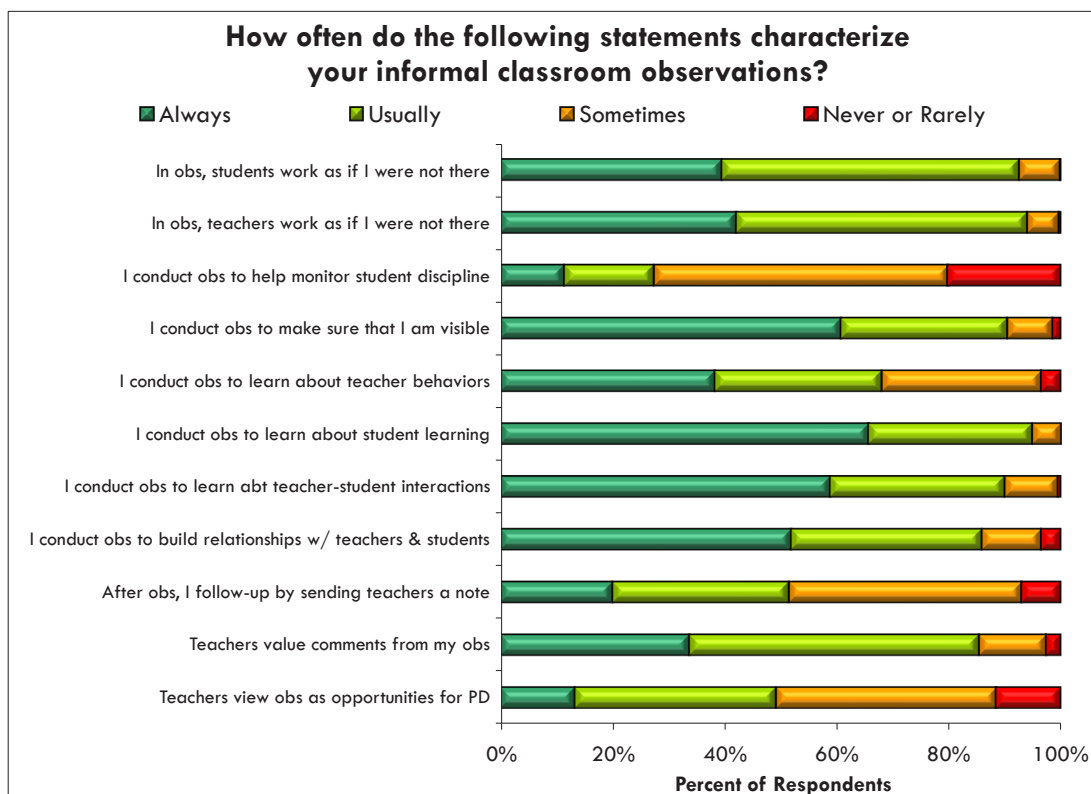
On average, how often do you informally observe classrooms?



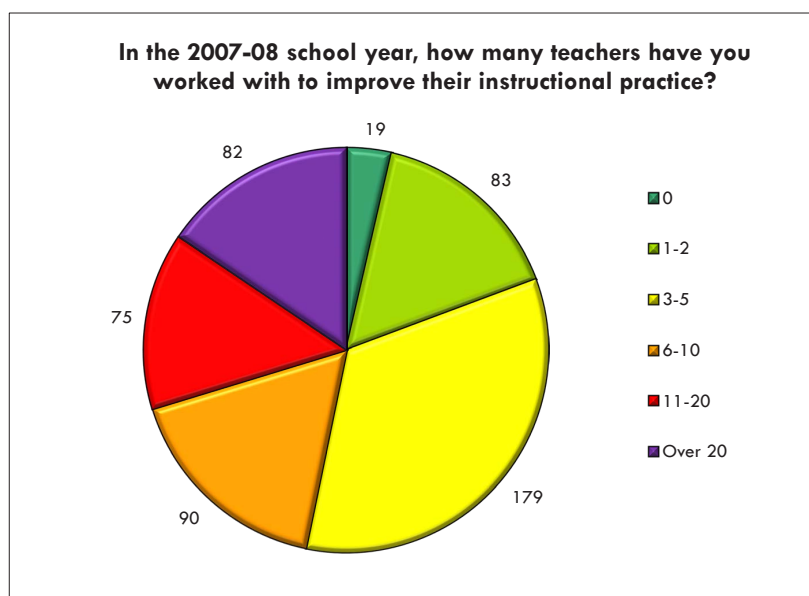
How long do you usually spend in a classroom for these informal observations?



Less than half of the respondents report spending more than five minutes per observation and only seven percent typically spend more than ten minutes per observation.

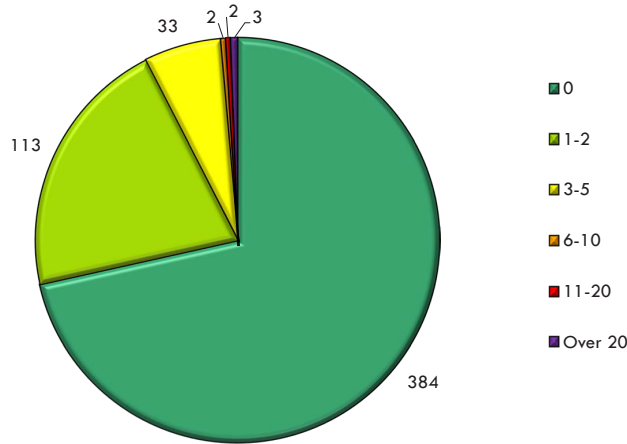


Most of the respondents conduct informal classroom visits to learn about student learning, observe teacher-student interactions, and/or to make sure that they are visible to student and teachers. Most feel that their visits do not interrupt classroom activities, but only half believe that teachers usually or always view these visits as opportunities for professional development.



During the 2007-08 school year, about half the respondents worked with either three to five or six to ten teachers intensively to improve instructional practice. Fifteen percent of them report that they worked intensively with over 20 teachers during the school year.

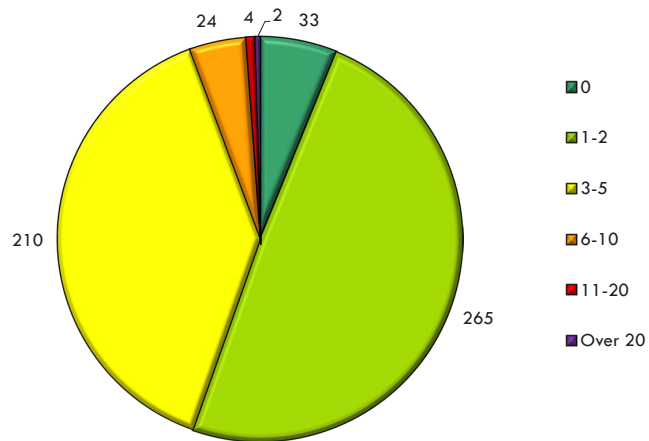
In the 2007-08 school year, how many teachers have you encouraged or asked to leave your school?



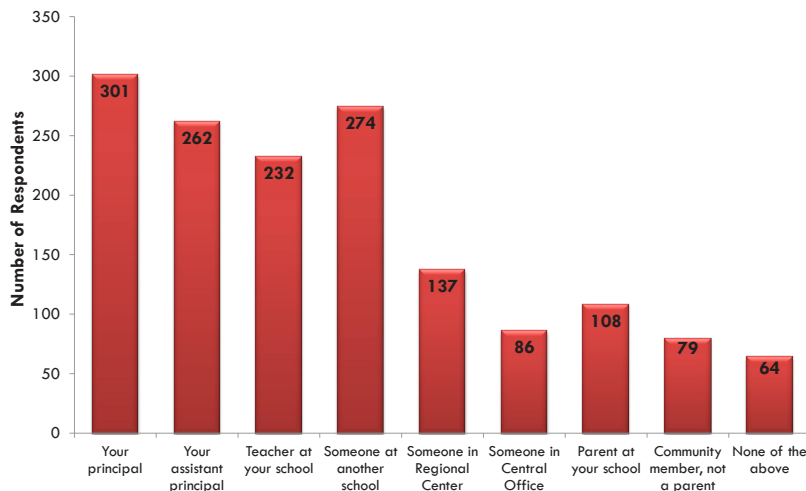
Most of the respondents (72 per-cent) did not attempt to counsel out any teachers in 2007-08.

During the 2007-08 school year, half of the respondents encouraged one or two teachers to become an assistant principal or principal, and an additional 40 percent encouraged three to five teachers to pursue school leadership.

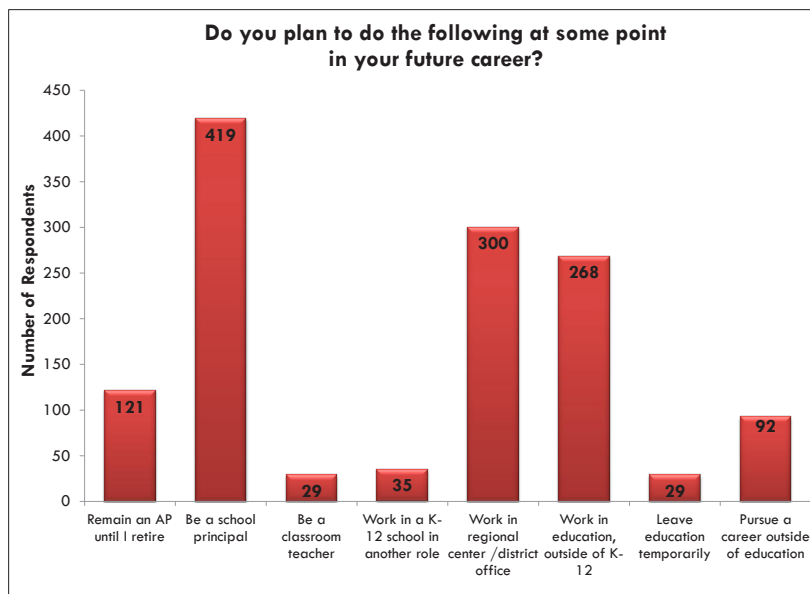
How many teachers have you encouraged to become an assistant principal or principal?



Did any of the following people approach you to suggest that you become an assistant principal?



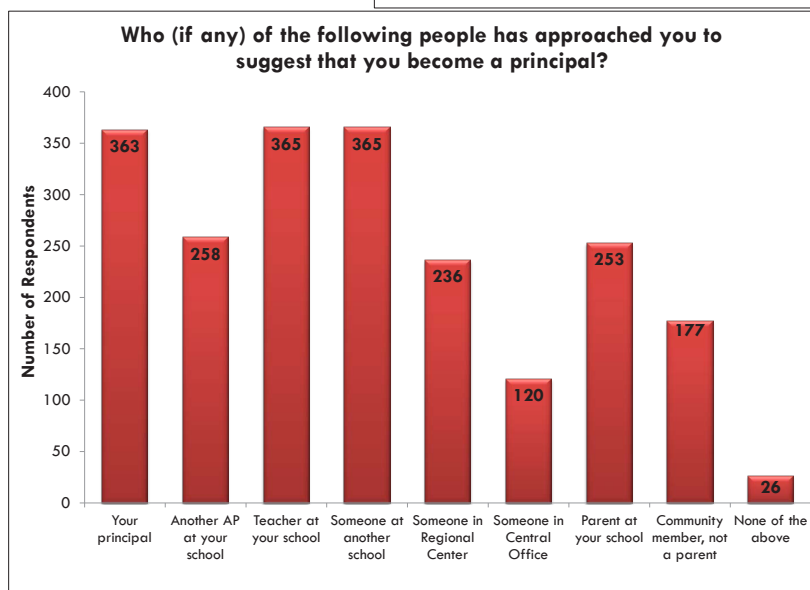
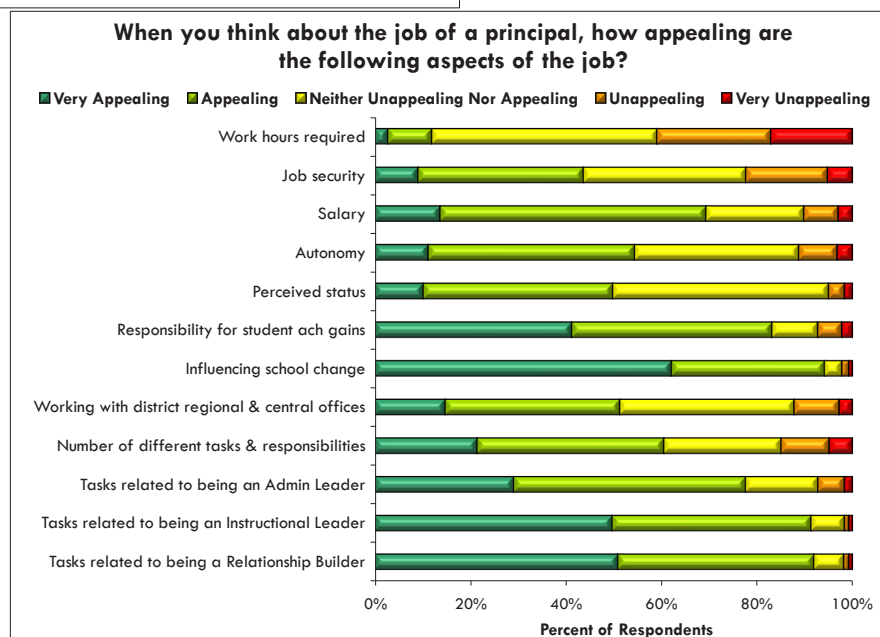
The respondents were most likely to be “tapped” to be an assistant principal when they were a teacher by their own principal or someone at another school, followed by their own assistant principal or another teacher at their school.



About 80 percent of the respondents plan on being a principal at some point in the future. More than half plan to work in a regional center/district office or in education outside of K-12 schools at some point in their future career.

Note that these were not presented as mutually-exclusive options. In other words, a respondent can be represented in more than one category.

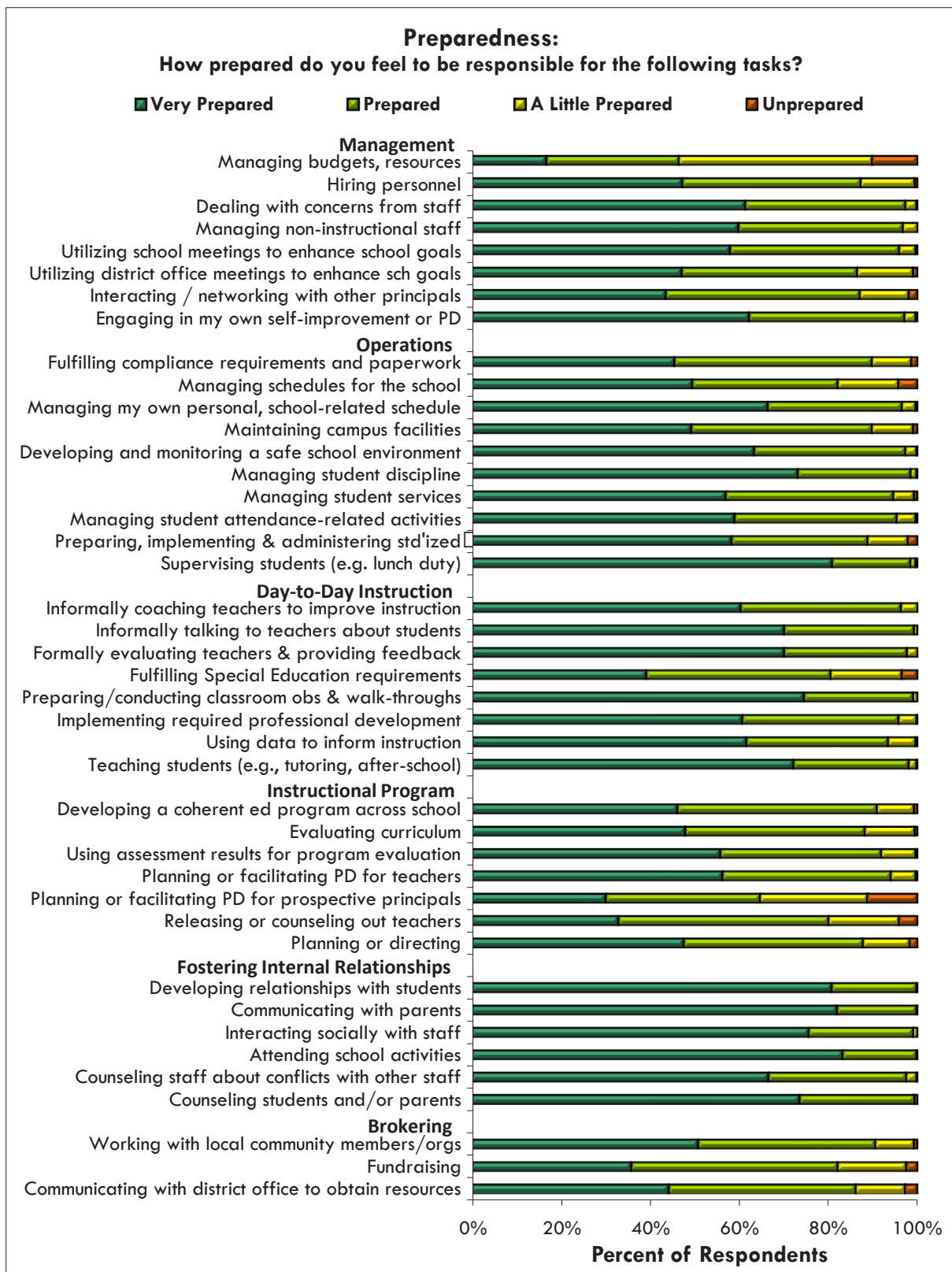
The respondents are most likely to rate the following three principal tasks as appealing or very appealing: influencing school change, tasks related to being an instructional leader, and tasks related to being an relationship builder. In contrast, very few respondents find the work hours required to be appealing.



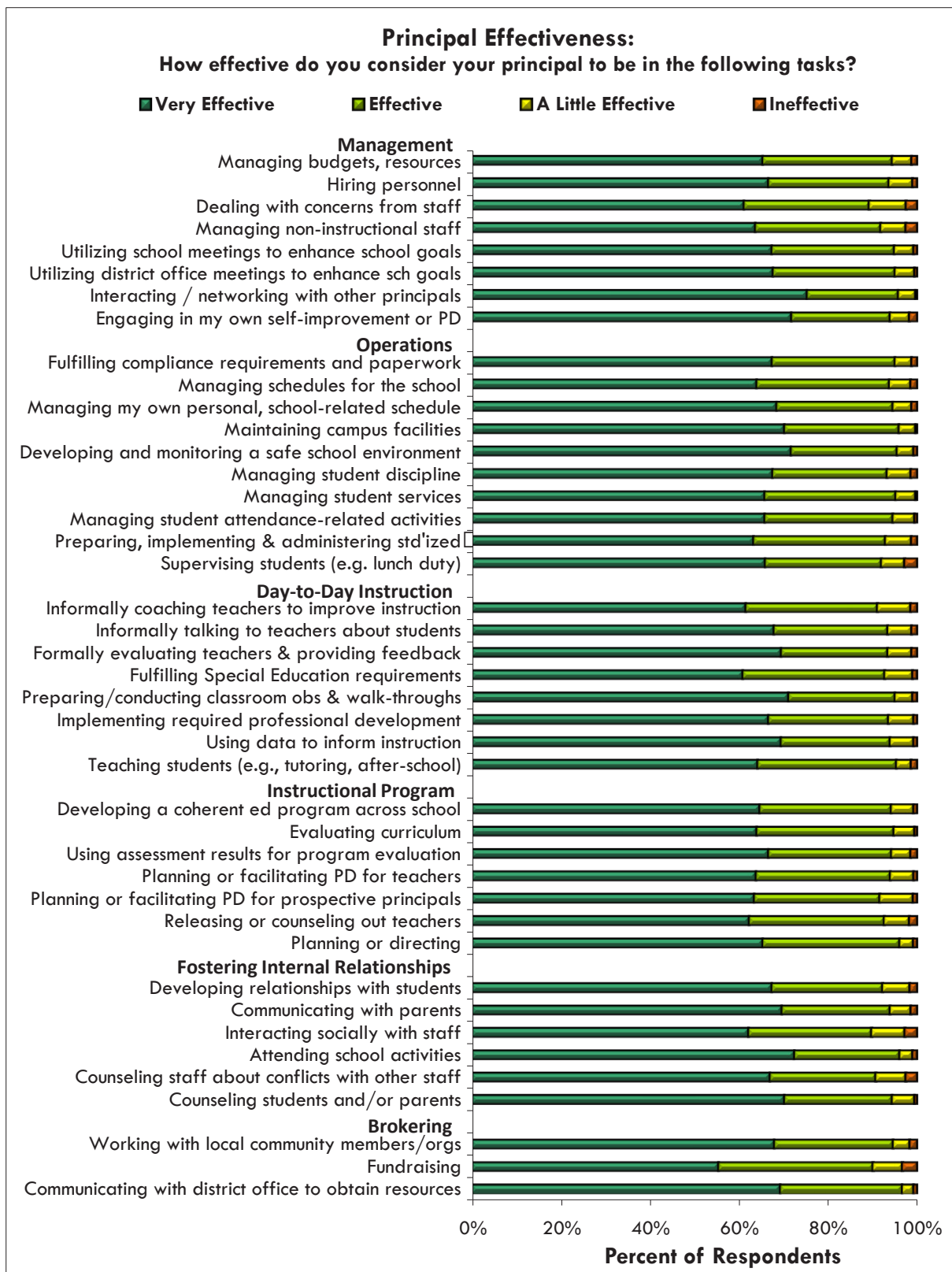
Two-thirds of the respondents have been encouraged by their principal, a teacher at their school, and/or someone at another school to become a principal.



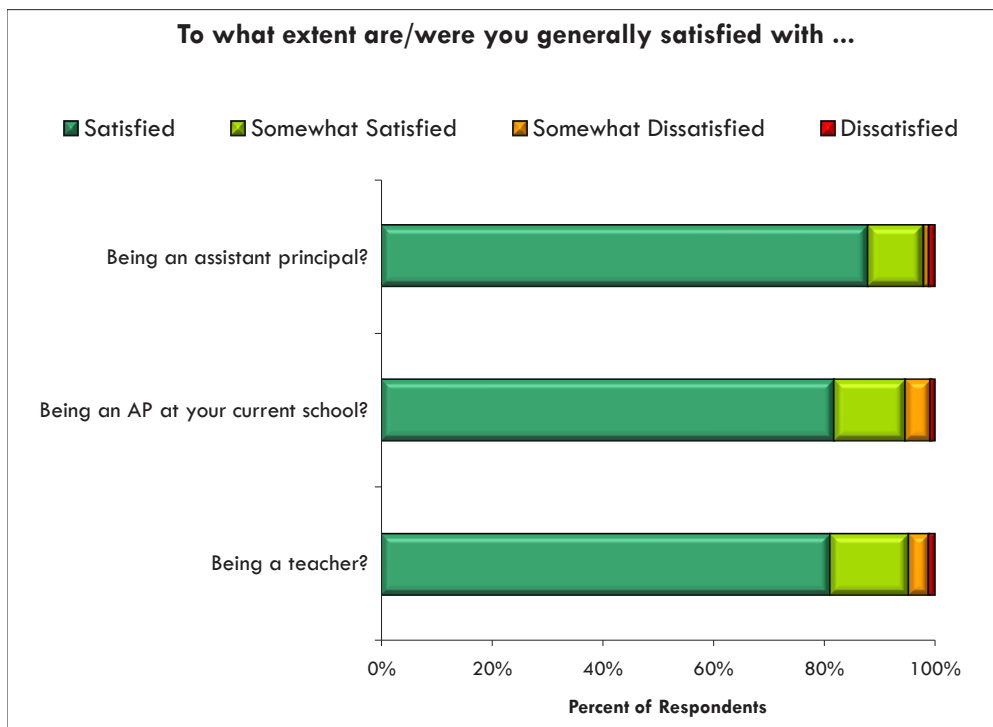
While the respondents report sharing most leadership tasks with other school leaders, they are more likely to be solely responsible for: preparing and administering standardized tests; managing school schedules; managing student discipline; managing student attendance-related activities; and fulfilling Special Education requirements. This mirrors findings from our survey of M-DCPS principals.



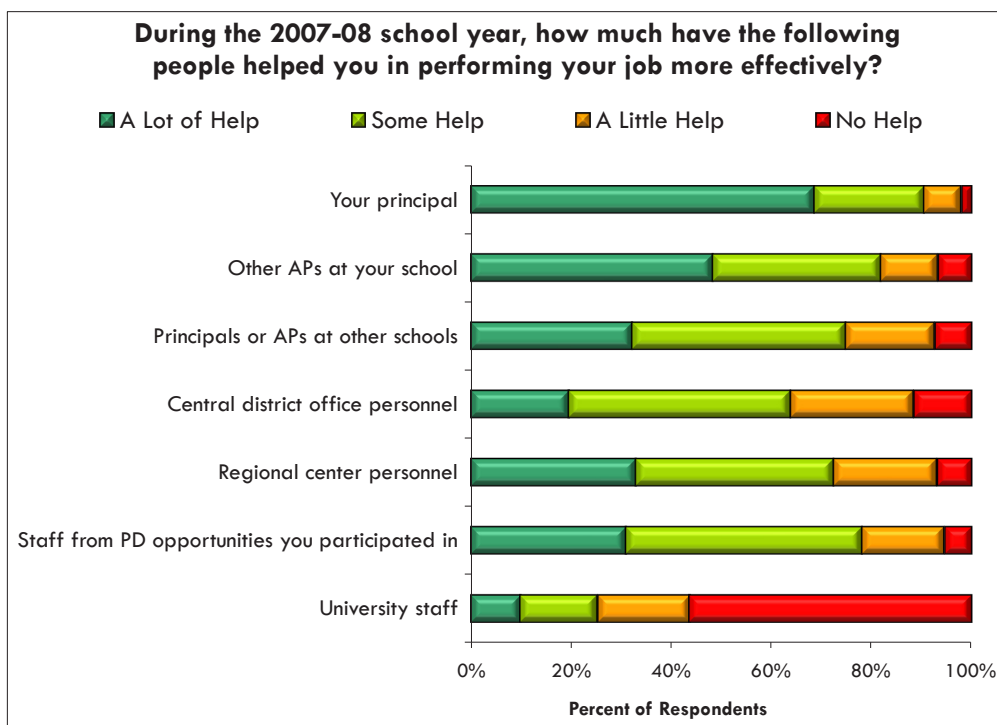
The respondents generally feel prepared for most school leadership tasks. However, some of them believe they are less prepared for the following tasks: managing budgets and resources; planning PD for prospective principals; and releasing or counseling out teachers.



The respondents generally rate their principals as effective or very effective at most school leadership tasks. However, about ten percent of them rate their principals are either a little effective or ineffective at the following tasks: dealing with concerns from staff; interacting socially with staff; and fundraising.



The respondents express a high level of satisfaction with being an assistant principal in general, however five percent of them are at least somewhat dissatisfied with being an AP at their current school.



Two-thirds of the respondents report that they receive a lot of help from their principal. A fair number also cite receiving support from other APs at their school, professional development staff, school leaders at other schools, and regional/central district office staff.

If you were to consider being a principal, in what type of school would you prefer to be a principal?

■ Most Important
 ■ Strongly Prefer
 ■ Prefer
 ■ Not a Consideration
 ■ Prefer NOT



Most of the respondents would prefer or strongly prefer to work in schools with the following qualities: a sense of safety on campus; good condition of school facilities; availability of resources; close proximity to home; and supportive parent participation. These are the same types of schools that are highly-valued by principals.