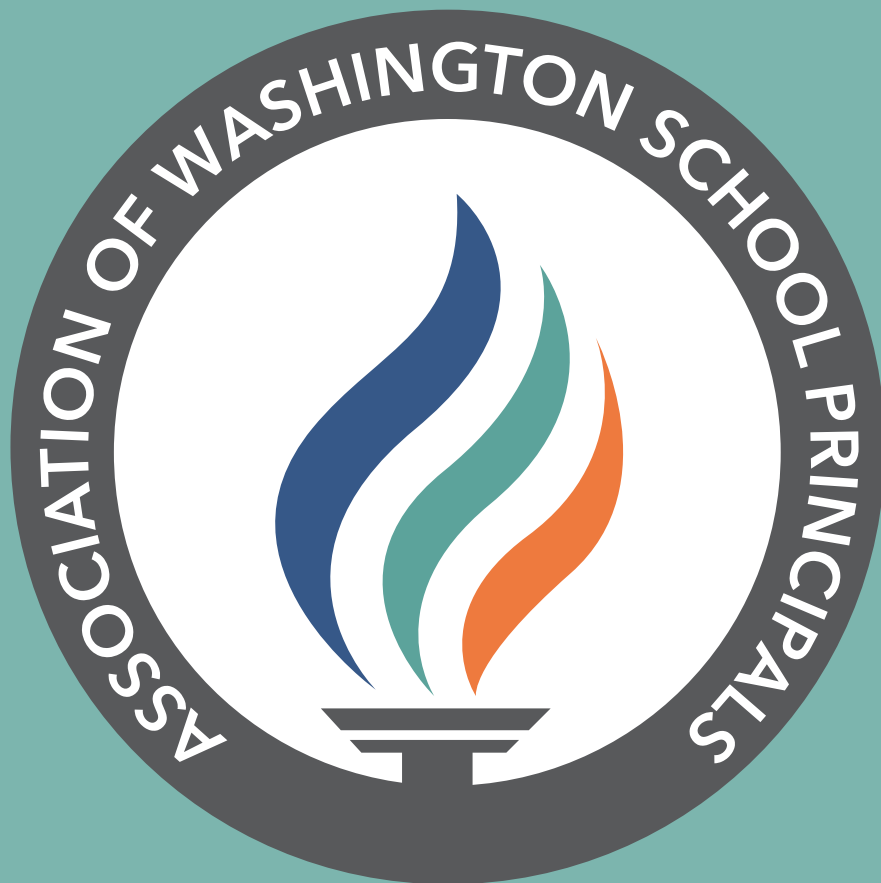


Recommendations to
RETAIN CURRENT PRINCIPALS *and*
RECRUIT FUTURE LEADERS
to Create a More Multicultural & Multilingual
PRINCIPAL WORKFORCE



*Supporting all principals and the principalship
in the education of each and every student.*

GROW | SUPPORT | SUSTAIN

WASHINGTON SCHOOL PRINCIPALS'
EDUCATION FOUNDATION



Workgroup Overview and Purpose

Legislation passed in 2021 directs OSPI to convene a K-12 Basic Education Compensation Advisory Committee to develop recommendations to the Governor and the Legislature that supports recruiting and retaining a multicultural and multilingual educator workforce. The focus of proposals should address how compensation could be structured, and what could be put in place to attract and retain a highly qualified, multilingual, and multicultural workforce.

Dear Members of the K-12 Basic Education Compensation Advisory Committee:

Thank you so much for allowing us to present to your group in February. We wanted to formally provide our input regarding principal and assistant principal salaries as you work to finalize your recommendations.

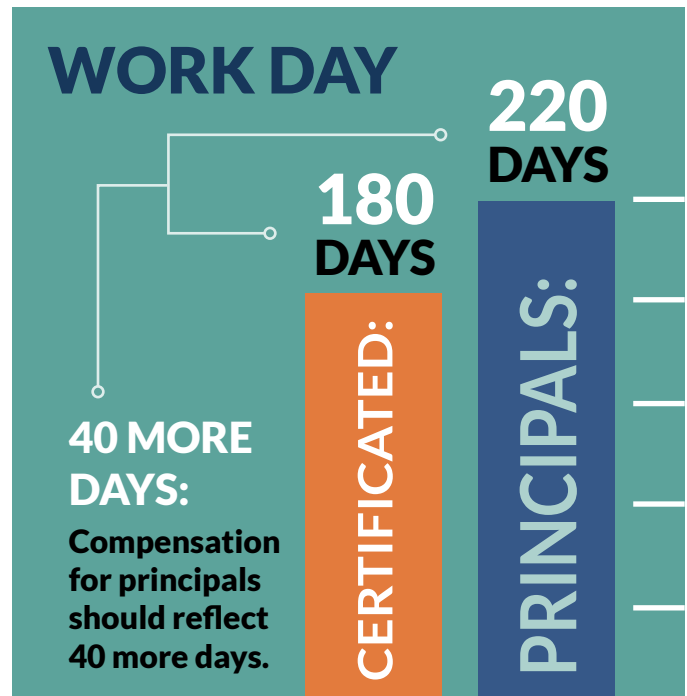
AWSP believes that every student in every school deserves a great leader. Principals are the second most important influence on student learning, just behind great teachers. Our priorities are to “Grow, Support, and Sustain” school leaders because the turnover of building leadership positions is costly in terms of time and money. More importantly, this turnover can negatively affect the culture of the school and the learning experiences of students. Our [2022 Principal Satisfaction Survey](#) shows that up to 40% of our building leaders may leave their positions this spring. This would be extremely detrimental to students in Washington and to our entire education system.

According to a [2020 study completed by the Learning Policy Institute \(LPI\)](#), building leaders may leave the profession due to inadequate preparation and professional development, poor working conditions, lack of decision-making authority, and high-stakes accountability. The increasing workload for building leaders (even prior to the COVID-19 pandemic) has become more and more challenging. Our state needs to fund more principal and assistant principal positions through the prototypical funding model so there are enough leaders in our buildings to adequately focus on instructional leadership.

This study by LPI also shows that building leaders may leave their position because they are “not being fairly compensated for their efforts,” and principals may be challenged by the cost of paying back student loans and the rising cost of housing. Salary concerns have existed since the McCleary decision changed our school funding structure and limitations were made on administrator salaries. Some of this has been remediated, but as former Governor Christine Gregoire said in an [interview with Dr. Scott Seaman](#), “This wage compression is a mistake that needs to be corrected, and soon.”

Your group has the opportunity to suggest solutions to change this.

According to our survey from the 2018-19 school year, 17% of principals and 46% of assistant principals reported that some teachers in their buildings made more per year than they did. In this same survey, 61% of principals and 71% of assistant principals reported that some teachers in their buildings made more on a per diem basis than they did. *Would we, as a system, allow a principal to make more on a per diem basis than a superintendent?*



Combined with working 20% more days per year, building leaders have a higher level of responsibility, accountability and vulnerability than certificated staff. In addition, principals rarely have the opportunity to receive extra stipends. Principal salaries need to reflect their longer work calendars and added duties, responsibilities, and vulnerability.

Recruiting and creating a pathway to school leadership is more important now than ever. This is especially true as we work to recruit and retain a more diverse workforce that is reflective of the student population. *How do we inspire leaders, including leaders of color, into the profession if salaries are not reflective of the number of days worked combined with higher levels of responsibility, accountability, and vulnerability?* Ed Week posted a [timely article in December](#) about how districts can strategically and intentionally work to increase the number of leaders of color, such as creating affinity groups within districts and regions.

Students, staff, and school communities benefit directly from consistent, sustained, and highly effective school leadership. One of the greatest inequities perpetuated across the system is principal turnover. If we truly want to move talking about equity into action, then focusing on supporting school leaders should be a statewide priority.

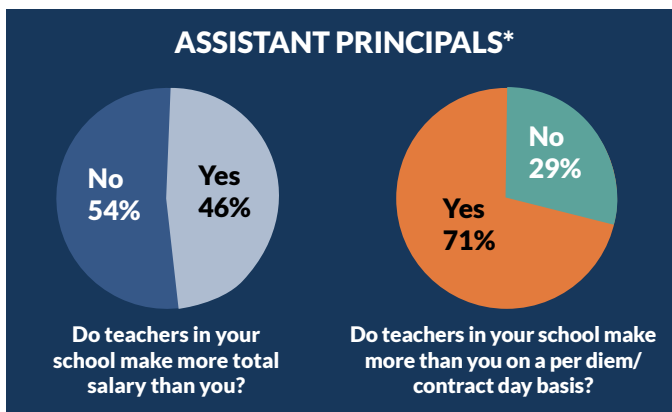
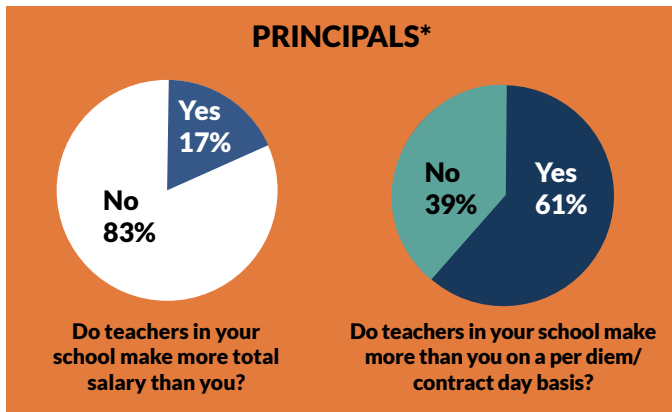
State funding should be allocated for educator salaries in a strategic manner as people progress to positions with greater account-

ability and responsibility (i.e. classified positions to teachers to school leaders). The state portion of salaries needs to address an increase in salary as teachers and principals gain experience and attain additional education or degrees related to their careers. By fully funding educator and administrator salaries at the state level, schools will be able to hire the best person for the position as opposed to what fits with their budget.

In addition, as you consider solutions to better recruit and retain educators, principals also need adequate preparation, professional development, and support. In fact, [a groundbreaking 2019 RAND report](#) found schools in large districts that built pathways to the principalship markedly outperformed similar schools in comparison districts in both reading and math. From the Wallace Foundation:

“ ‘We found no other comprehensive district-wide initiatives with demonstrated positive effects of this magnitude on achievement,’ the authors say. The [pathways] also led to benefits in principal retention, according to the report. After three years, [these] districts had nearly eight fewer losses for every 100 newly placed principals than the comparison group. This is significant because principal turnover is disruptive to schools and costly, with districts spending an estimated \$75,000 to replace a principal. ”

We propose you recommend increased funding for the internship grant which is funded by our state. Currently, there are only enough state funds to cover the cost of 7-8 substitute days for administrative interns. This is extremely inadequate for the extensive preparation needed to become a building leader. Student teaching experiences usually last between 12-15 weeks. *How would we expect someone to be adequately prepared for a school leadership role with only 8 days of preparation and experiential learning?*



*From a fall survey of 357 principal and 195 assistant principal responses.

Once new administrators are hired in districts, they need to be supported with a mentor. Research presented [in a report from the Southern Educational Research Center](#) shows that “highly skilled school leaders are not born—effective new principals have been deliberately mentored in well-designed programs that immerse them in real-world leadership experiences.” Currently, state funding to the BEST program helps fund about 80 mentorships each year out of the approximately 250 new building administrators in our state. Additional funding should provide every new building administrator with a mentor.

TO EFFECTIVELY RECRUIT AND RETAIN PRINCIPALS:

- The state should fund principals and assistant principals at the ratio recommended by the [Staffing Enrichment Workgroup](#) of 300 students to 1 building administrator (it is currently a 319:1 ratio).
- Programs that fund additional staff like LAP, ELL, or other specialized programs, should fund more principal FTE in order to support the additional adults working in these programs.
- Fund base salaries for building administrators that are 18-20% higher per year than for certificated staff. This pay gap needs to show up in local salary schedules.
- Guarantee that statewide adjustments to the Inflation Price Deflator (IPD) are automatically provided to administrators.
- Strengthen compensation through other vehicles, such as loan forgiveness or housing supports.
- Increase funding to the internship grant program to provide a minimum of 20 release days and consider providing funding to support principal residencies.
- Increase funding for principal professional learning opportunities through coaching, mentoring (BEST program funding), and other networks, as well as professional development courses, workshops, and conferences. Some of this could be funded by using the optional three percent set-aside under ESSA, Title II, Part A.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of our request. Please feel free to reach out with questions.

Sincerely,

Dr. Scott Seaman, Executive Director
Roz Thompson, Government Relations and Advocacy Director
Scott Friedman, Associate Director

2022 SURVEY QUOTES:

“Why go into administration? **More work, more stress, more headaches for less money** than you make teaching? Outlook isn’t good for recruiting new administrators.”

“Potential school leaders who teach in my building said ‘no thanks’ when I’ve encouraged them to look at becoming a school administrator because **they would earn less and work more hours and days.**”

“We will not have enough qualified people in leadership positions (due to overworking and lack of pay), having to wear **too many hats** in the district/school, and having **too much expected** for our workload.”

“I have 13 students in my principal prep program right now. **Not a single one of them is going to apply** for an assistant principal or principal position this year. They’re all waiting to see what happens with salaries and workload.”



It’s about respect. Today a principal has so many challenges on their plate. For them, their life/work balance is out of whack. They are willing to do it. You don’t get into this profession thinking you are going to be a millionaire. But you do want to get compensated and it’s a matter of respect. This wage compression is a mistake that needs to be corrected, and soon.

Christine Gregoire,

Former Governor and CEO of Challenge Seattle



Principal Job Responsibilities 2010

- Manage the school facility and budget
- Hire staff
- Plan the master schedule
- Coordinate school safety
- Supervise activities
- **Salary gap between principals and teachers: 18-20%**



Principal Job Responsibilities 2022

Everything from 2010, plus:

- Lead learning for instruction, including new standards, frameworks and more robust teacher evaluation system
- Navigate yearly changes to assessments and graduation requirements
- Implement new discipline rules and systems to support students such as MTSS and PBIS
- Attend to increased social, emotional, and mental health issues with students
- Manage social media situations related to harassment, intimidation, bullying, and threats
- **Salary gap between principals and teachers: 4-6%**

AWSP Team

Dr. Scott Seaman, Executive Director
Roz Thompson, Government Relations & Advocacy Director
Scott Friedman, Associate Director

AWSP Board

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