

55th Annual Edition 2021-2022



IPA SALARY, BENEFIT, CAREER PLANNING & JOB SATISFACTION STUDY



In partnership with: **HYA** | HAZARD
YOUNG
ATTEA
ASSOCIATES

Background

The Illinois Principals Association (IPA) is pleased to provide you with the 55th annual Salary, Benefit, Career Planning & Job Satisfaction Study. This study was conducted by IPA in partnership with Hazard, Young, Attea & Associates (HYA), a national educational executive search, consulting and leadership firm. This study plays a critical role in informing school leaders across Illinois of salary and benefit data and remains the only statewide survey of its kind. The information contained in this report would not be possible without the participation and dedication of school leaders across Illinois. Thank you to everyone that responded to the survey and who made this publication possible.

Survey Methodology

In November and December of 2021, IPA sent survey invitations to all principals, assistant principals and deans in public and private schools across Illinois, including both IPA members and non-members. A total of 1,173 individuals responded to all or a portion of the survey. Of those who responded, 790 identified themselves as principals and 383 identified themselves as assistant principals, associate principals or deans. Respondents who identified themselves as holding another type of school leadership position have been excluded from the report due to insufficient data.

Throughout the report there are references to district and school geography, referred to as locale. The categories for district locale include City of Chicago, Chicago Suburbs North (Cook County North plus Lake and McHenry counties), Chicago Suburbs West (Cook County West plus DuPage and Kane counties), Chicago Suburbs South (Cook County south plus Will County), and Rural or Other, which encompasses all other areas of Illinois.

Of note is the much lower response rate this year. About 500 fewer individuals took the survey, with the decrease in participation coming almost exclusively from the collar counties. Thus, 80% of respondents categorized their district as rural. Also, not all respondents answered all questions, which accounts for the different "n" value of the same group for different analyses.

New Salary Model

For the second year, IPA is providing a salary model, which allows members to create more personalized salary benchmarks. The salary model allows school leaders to generate an average salary based on unique combinations of district and school characteristics, geography and administrative experience. The salary model was developed using machine learning to build and validate a predictive model that takes as inputs a variety of variables and predicts the average salary for the combination of variables and values provided. Using predictive models allows for a more robust understanding of how certain variables affect salaries and allows for more granular average salary estimates. The salary model can be found on page 8, or accessed at the link below.

Predictive Salary Model:

<https://hyasearch.com/ipa>

Profile of a School Leader

This year, 38% of principals who responded identified themselves as female, while 42% of assistant principals/deans reported being female. The average age of principals who responded was 45.5, while the average age of assistant principals was 42.7. The youngest respondent was 27, while the oldest was 68 years old.

The majority of principals (69.0%) and assistant principals/deans (83.9%) reported a master’s degree as their highest earned degree, while 20.4% of principals and 12.3% of assistant principals/deans hold an advanced certificate, and 10.6% of principals and 3.8% of assistant principals/deans hold a doctorate degree.

A larger percentage of principals reported that they plan to retire in the next five years (23%) compared to last year (21%), while 11.1% of assistant principals/deans plan to retire in the next five years compared to 12% in last year’s survey. The anticipated average retirement age was between 58 and 63 years old. This higher expected retirement rate is consistent with national data. In late-2021, a survey conducted by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) found that 38% of principals expect to leave the profession in the next three years.

Job Experience

Principals in this year’s survey had an average of 11.1 years of experience as an administrator in any district and 6.2 years of experience in their current position. Assistant principals/deans have an average of 7.9 years of experience as an administrator in any district and 5.4 years of experience in their current position. The job experience profile can be seen in Table 1, below.

**Table 1:
Job Experience Profile of Principals (P) and Assistant Principals/Deans (APD):
Means, Standard Deviations, and Ranges**

Characteristic	Group	n	M	SD	Range
Yrs. Served in current position	P	492	6.2	4.7	0-28
	APD	208	5.4	5.1	0-28
Yrs. Experience as an administrator in any district	P	491	11.1	6.1	0-41
	APD	208	7.9	5.6	0-26
Projected retirement age	P	48	58	5.0	0-75
	APD	203	59	3.8	50-70
Current age	P	494	45.5	7.1	27-68
	APD	210	42.7	7.2	28-65

n = Sample Size | M = Mean | SD = Standard Deviation

Contractual Information and Duties

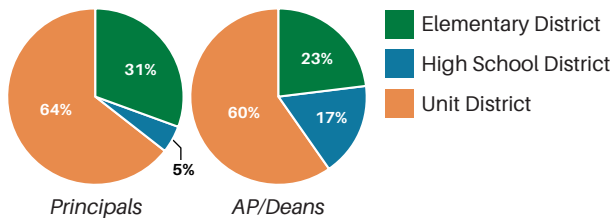
Just over half of principals (53.2%) and the majority of assistant principals/deans (79.8%) reported having an annual contract, while 46.8% of principals and 20.2% of assistant principals/deans reported having multi-year contracts. Most principals had a contract length of 12 months (65.5%) while (42%) assistant principals/deans had 12-month contracts. Both principals and assistant principals/deans with 12-month contracts had higher average salaries than their counterparts with shorter contracts. This data has been consistent over the past several years.

Many principals and assistant principals/deans reported being responsible for various additional duties, with the most common additional duties reported for principals being curriculum (n=236) and personnel (n=229), while the most reported additional duties for assistant principals/deans were athletics/activities (n=175).

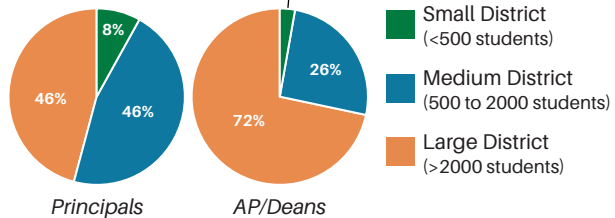
Statistical Profiles

Detailed statistics can be found in Table 2.

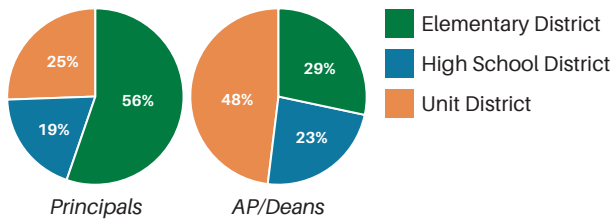
District Type



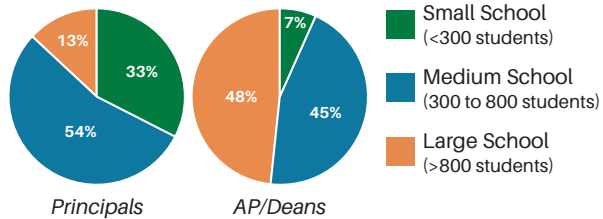
District Size



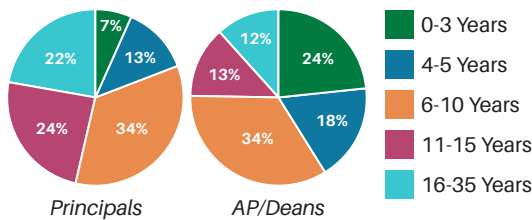
School Type



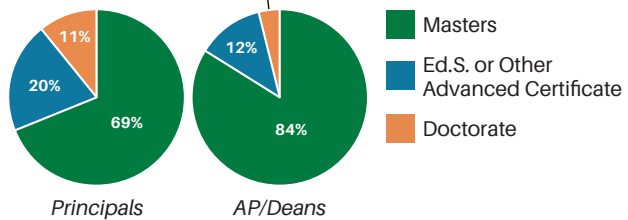
School Size



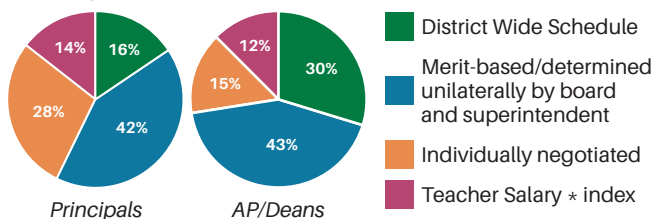
Years of Experience



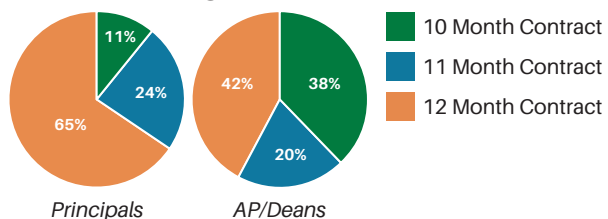
Highest Degree



Salary Method



Contract Length



**Table 2:
Description of Principals and Assistant Principals/Deans: Frequencies and Percentages**

	Principal		Assistant Principal/Dean	
	%	n	%	n
District Type				
Elementary District	30.78%	225	23.06%	83
High School District	4.79%	35	17.22%	62
Unit District	64.43%	471	59.72%	215
District Size				
Small (<500 students)	8.21%	60	2.79%	10
Medium (500 to 2000 students)	45.96%	336	25.70%	92
Large (>2000 students)	45.83%	335	71.51%	256
School Type				
Elementary School	55.54%	396	28.53%	101
Middle School	19.07%	136	23.45%	83
High School	25.39%	181	48.02%	170
School Size				
Small (<300 students)	32.54%	245	6.87%	25
Medium (300-800 students)	54.45%	410	45.05%	164
Large (>800 students)	13.01%	98	48.08%	175
Locale				
Chicago Suburbs - North	4.52%	33	7.52%	27
Chicago Suburbs - West	4.51%	33	3.34%	12
Chicago Suburbs - South	5.20%	38	8.64%	31
City of Chicago	5.06%	37	5.57%	20
Rural or Other	80.71%	590	74.93%	269
Years of Experience				
0-3 Years of Experience	6.73%	33	23.56%	49
4-5 Years of Experience	12.65%	62	17.79%	37
6-10 Years of Experience	34.29%	168	34.13%	71
11-15 Years of Experience	24.29%	119	12.98%	27
16-35 Years of Experience	22.04%	108	11.54%	24
Contract Length				
10 Month Contract	10.98%	54	37.89%	72
11 Month Contract	23.57%	116	20.00%	38
12 Month Contract	65.45%	332	42.11%	80
Type of Contract				
Annual Contract	53.17%	268	79.81%	170
Multi-Year Contract	46.83%	236	20.19%	43
Gender				
Male	62.35%	308	58.55%	122
Female	37.65%	186	41.63%	87
Highest Degree				
Masters	69.04%	339	83.89%	177
Ed. S. or Other Advanced Certificate	20.37%	100	12.32%	26
Doctorate	10.59%	52	3.79%	8
Salary Method				
District Wide Schedule	15.80%	79	29.86%	63
Merit-Based/Determined Unilaterally by Board and Superintendent	41.60%	208	42.65%	90
Individually Negotiated	28.20%	141	15.17%	32
Teacher Salary Index	14.40%	72	12.32%	26

n = Sample Size

Salary Data

The average principal salary reported by those who completed the survey this year was \$105,753, compared to \$101,553 in 2021, \$101,062 in 2020 and \$99,470 in 2019. This represents a 4.14% increase compared to last year's average principal salary. This is a bit of an anomaly, as the average annual salary increase for principals over the last three years has been below 2%. The average salary for assistant principals/deans for this year was \$92,510, compared to \$88,826 in 2021, \$87,969 in 2020 and \$85,662 in 2019. Again, this represents an unusually large average salary increase of 4.14% over last year.

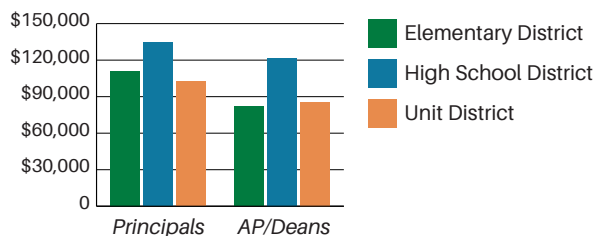
We believe that this significant boost in average principal and assistant principal/dean salaries is attributable to the growing shortage of building administrators and significantly higher average starting salaries for first year building administrators. In fact, when referring to the Salary Model on page 8, the data showed a negative correlation between salary and initial job experience. Specifically, the data showed that principal salaries were higher for first year principals than for principals with 4 to 10 years of job experience.

Table 3 examines salary comparisons for principals and assistant principals/deans, broken out by category. Results indicate that administrators in larger districts and schools tend to have higher salaries, and high school administrators earn more than elementary school administrators. Additionally, higher salaries were reported for principals with higher degrees or extra endorsements. The locale of the district also had an impact, with administrators working in the city of Chicago earning a higher average salary than those in the suburbs of Chicago or other areas in the state.

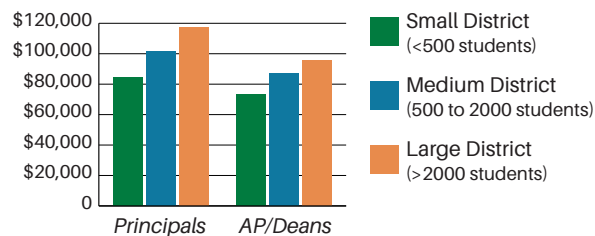
Salary Averages

For full details, including averages, standard deviations and more, explore Table 3.

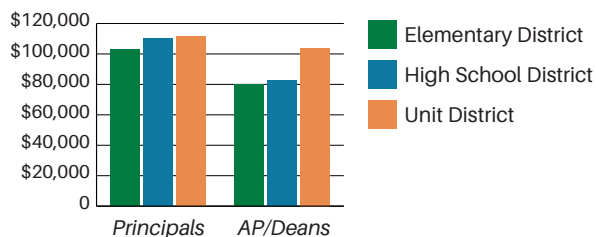
District Type



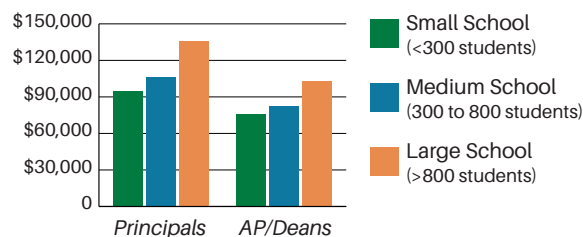
District Size



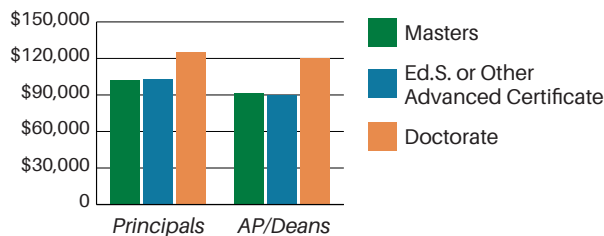
School Type



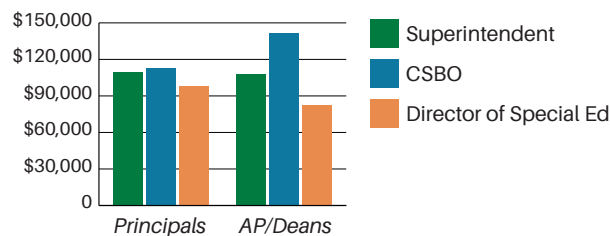
School Size



Highest Degree



Additional Certificate



**Table 3:
Principals and Assistant Principals/Dean Salaries by Various Categories**

Variable	Principal			Assistant Principal/Dean		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
Base Salary	\$105,753	\$25,573	530	\$92,510	\$24,883	224
District Type						
Elementary District	\$110,970	\$22,988	150	\$81,758	\$14,241	50
High School District	\$134,645	\$37,009	28	\$121,604	\$28,672	40
Unit District	\$102,606	\$23,039	319	\$85,544	\$19,930	131
District Size						
Small (<500 students)	\$84,689	\$14,484	46	\$73,565	\$8,752	6
Medium (500 to 2000 students)	\$101,657	\$21,270	236	\$87,330	\$22,603	63
Large (>2000 students)	\$117,489	\$26,076	215	\$95,411	\$25,668	151
School Type						
Elementary School	\$103,015	\$22,608	255	\$79,712	\$16,116	54
Middle School	\$110,320	\$22,807	90	\$82,747	\$13,884	58
High School	\$111,659	\$29,533	139	\$103,996	\$27,864	108
School Size						
Small (<300 students)	\$94,422	\$19,439	169	\$75,772	\$12,639	14
Medium (300-800 students)	\$106,251	\$21,653	279	\$82,619	\$15,656	100
Large (>800 students)	\$136,140	\$29,797	67	\$103,391	\$27,840	109
Locale						
Chicago Suburbs - North	\$139,689	\$23,099	22	\$122,269	\$32,936	19
Chicago Suburbs - West	\$121,291	\$22,530	24	\$102,862	\$30,095	6
Chicago Suburbs - South	\$113,303	\$19,623	28	\$94,956	\$29,860	20
City of Chicago	\$146,845	\$25,166	18	\$118,025	\$15,059	8
Rural or Other	\$101,025	\$22,892	438	\$87,361	\$20,022	171
Years of Experience						
0-3 Years of Experience	\$84,268	\$14,488	33	\$77,222	\$13,592	49
4-5 Years of Experience	\$91,510	\$20,375	62	\$85,842	\$18,885	37
6-10 Years of Experience	\$99,970	\$19,671	167	\$96,691	\$23,730	70
11-15 Years of Experience	\$109,240	\$22,944	118	\$109,534	\$30,302	27
16-35 Years of Experience	\$121,600	\$27,292	107	\$106,223	\$22,103	23
Contract Length						
10 Month Contract	\$93,322	\$19,760	54	\$83,314	\$17,260	72
11 Month Contract	\$99,475	\$18,933	116	\$87,708	\$17,504	38
12 Month Contract	\$110,411	\$27,258	319	\$105,781	\$29,839	77
Type of Contract						
Annual Contract	\$105,956	\$24,177	266	\$92,263	\$23,404	168
Multi-year Contract	\$104,428	\$26,049	235	\$94,791	\$29,891	43
Gender						
Male	\$107,377	\$26,537	306	\$93,756	\$25,455	121
Female	\$101,128	\$22,081	185	\$90,396	\$22,426	86
Highest Degree						
Masters	\$102,380	\$23,469	337	\$91,875	\$24,440	176
Ed.S. or Other Advanced Certificate	\$103,010	\$20,307	92	\$90,205	\$17,958	19
Doctorate	\$125,570	\$31,751	52	\$120,497	\$28,929	8
Additional Certificate						
Superintendent	\$109,675	\$26,874	143	\$108,244	\$25,575	26
CSBO	\$112,869	\$31,083	14	\$141,351	\$29,433	5
Director of Special Ed	\$98,490	\$12,657	24	\$82,400	-	1

n = Sample Size | SD = Standard Deviation

Salary Model

In order to compute the average salary for principals and assistant principals/deans on a more granular level, predictive models were built to estimate average salaries based on various school/district and leader characteristics. This approach results in salary estimates that are different from the estimates provided in the previous section using descriptive statistics. In the previous section, statistics are computed separately for each variable. The salary model approach contained in this section isolates the effects of variables while holding constant the values of other variables. Consequently, the additive models provided in the chart on this page allow the user to generate the average salary based on a specific set of characteristics.

Variables included in the salary model are shown in the chart. The starting value, or model constant in the first row of the chart, is value the user starts with before consideration of variables in the model. The user then adjusts the starting value up or down based on the values of variables in the model.

For example, to calculate the average salary for a principal of a medium size high school (300- 800 students) within a large high school district (> 2000 students) in Lake County (Chicago Suburbs - North) with 9 years of experience and a 10-month contract, the equation would be:

	\$94,550	(starting value)
+	\$0	(medium school size)
+	\$10,767	(high school)
+	\$11,776	(large district)
+	\$10,105	(high school district)
+	\$33,690	(Chicago Suburbs – North)
-	\$576	(6-10 years’ experience)
-	\$8,378	(10-month contract)
=	\$151,934	(predicted average salary)

**Table 4:
Salary Model**

	Principal	Assistant Principal/Dean
Variable	Salary Adjustment	Salary Adjustment
Starting Value (Constant)	\$94,550	\$73,677
District Type		
Elementary District	\$0	\$0
High School District	\$10,105	\$18,356
Unit District	(\$5,077)	(\$910)
District Size		
Small (<500 students)	(\$9,195)	(\$6,275)
Medium (500 to 2000 students)	\$0	\$0
Large (>2000 students)	\$11,776	\$5,103
School Type		
Elementary School	\$0	\$0
High School	\$10,767	\$8,768
Middle School	\$6,217	(\$3,713)
School Size		
Small (<300 students)	(\$4,391)	(\$2,497)
Medium (300-800 students)	\$0	\$0
Large (>800 students)	\$14,398	\$4,183
Locale		
Chicago Suburbs - North	\$33,690	\$27,668
Chicago Suburbs - West	\$13,194	\$4,495
Chicago Suburbs - South	\$8,967	\$3,292
City of Chicago	\$13,194	\$27,014
Rural or Other	\$0	\$0
Years of Experience		
0-3 Years of Experience	\$0	\$0
4-5 Years of Experience	(\$6,115)	\$4,563
6-10 Years of Experience	(\$576)	\$8,661
11-15 Years of Experience	\$2,949	\$21,204
16-35 Years of Experience	\$17,393	\$19,350
Contract Length		
10 Month Contract	(\$8,378)	(\$9,197)
11 Month Contract	(\$3,785)	(\$6,684)
12 Month Contract	\$0	\$0

Fringe Benefits

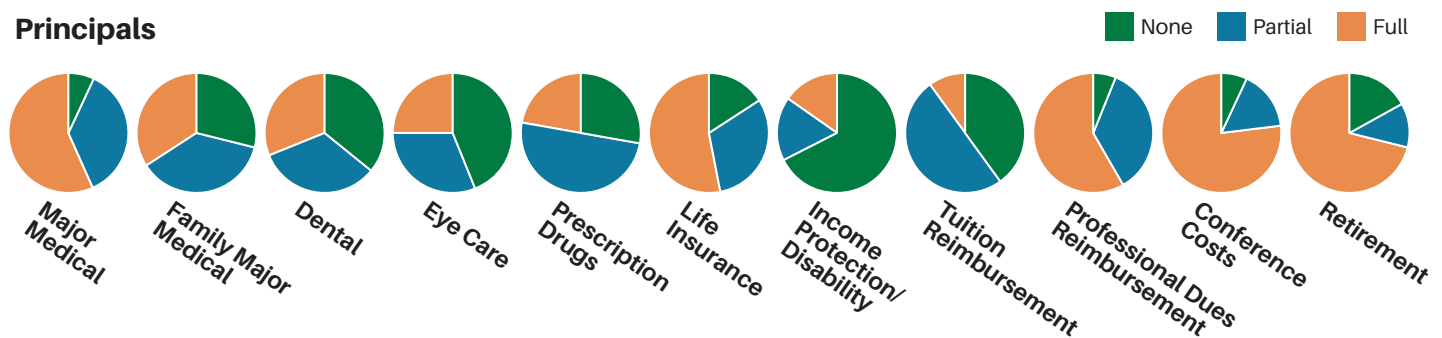
Most principals (92%) and assistant principals/deans (95%) reported that their employer paid some portion of their major medical insurance. The average dollar amount of this benefit was just under \$10,000 for both principals and assistant principals/deans, while the median amount received was closer to \$8,000. More than half of principals (59%) and assistant principals/deans (50%) receive full individual medical coverage while 36% of principals and 30% of assistant principals report receiving full family medical coverage. Refer to Table 5 for more detailed information.

Regarding retirement benefits, most principals (76%) and assistant principals/deans (73%) have their TRS retirement contribution fully paid by their school district. Half of principals and assistant principals/deans receive partial reimbursement for tuition costs, while about 10% of both groups receive full tuition reimbursement. Only 5.4% of principals and 5.1% of assistant principals reported a monthly car allowance, and of those who received this benefit, the average amount was \$102 for principals and \$178 for assistant principals/deans.

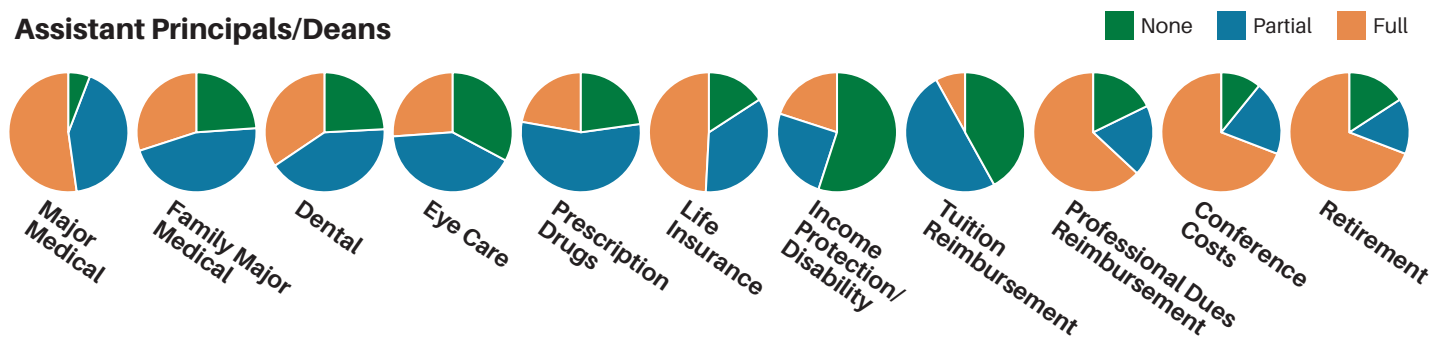
Fringe Benefits Funding Levels

Detailed statistics can be found in Table 5 on the following page.

Principals



Assistant Principals/Deans



**Table 5:
Fringe Benefits for Principals and Assistant Principals/Deans**

Funding level of Benefit	Principal				Assistant Principal/Dean			
	0%	Partial	100%	n	0%	Partial	100%	n
Major Medical	8%	33%	59%	485	6%	45%	50%	210
Family Major Medical	31%	33%	36%	486	25%	45%	30%	207
Dental	35%	30%	35%	492	21%	43%	36%	211
Eye care	42%	32%	26%	490	32%	42%	26%	209
Prescription drugs	28%	45%	27%	487	26%	53%	21%	209
Life Insurance	15%	31%	54%	488	17%	35%	48%	212
Income protection/disability	64%	20%	15%	476	52%	30%	18%	206
Tuition reimbursement	39%	51%	10%	484	43%	50%	7%	210
Professional dues reimbursement	6%	14%	80%	488	12%	19%	69%	212
Conference Costs	4%	17%	79%	487	8%	22%	70%	211
Retirement	12%	12%	76%	513	15%	12%	73%	219

n = Sample Size

Satisfaction

Principals and assistant principals/deans reported on their level of satisfaction with various aspects of their jobs and the results can be seen in Table 6. The highest levels of satisfaction for both groups was their impact on student learning, in contrast with last year's survey where the most satisfaction came from relationships with parents and the community. The lowest level of satisfaction for both groups continues to be their stress level.

Overall Job Satisfaction Principals/AP/Deans

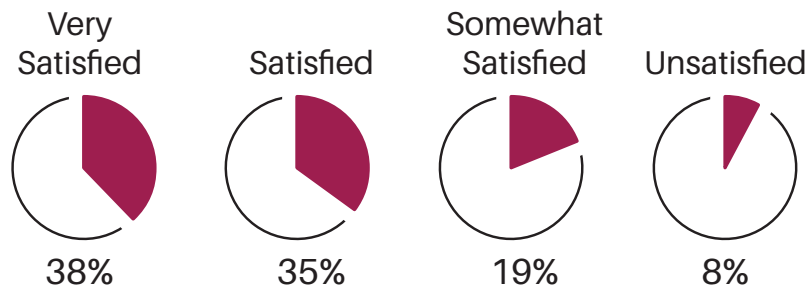


Table 6:
Principal and Assistant Principal/Deans Satisfaction

PRINCIPAL					
Overall Job Satisfaction	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Unsatisfied	n
Hours Worked	26%	46%	19%	9%	491
Salary & Benefits	21%	42%	24%	12%	492
Stress Level	5%	35%	34%	26%	492
Relationship with Superintendent/Board	53%	33%	11%	3%	492
Relationship with Teachers/Teachers' Union	46%	45%	6%	3%	490
Relationship with Parents/Community	48%	47%	5%	<1%	492
Financial Resources Available	47%	17%	32%	3%	492
Impact on Student Learning	59%	15%	24%	2%	492
ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL/DEAN					
Overall Job Satisfaction	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Unsatisfied	n
Hours Worked	28%	46%	21%	5%	208
Salary & Benefits	32%	49%	15%	4%	210
Stress Level	7%	34%	35%	26%	208
Relationship with Superintendent/Board	43%	34%	17%	7%	206
Relationship with Teachers/Teachers' Union	39%	45%	12%	4%	208
Relationship with Parents/Community	40%	51%	9%	<1%	209
Financial Resources Available	47%	16%	28%	8%	208
Impact on Student Learning	59%	13%	24%	4%	208

n = Sample Size



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