

THE MINNESOTA PRINCIPALS SURVEY

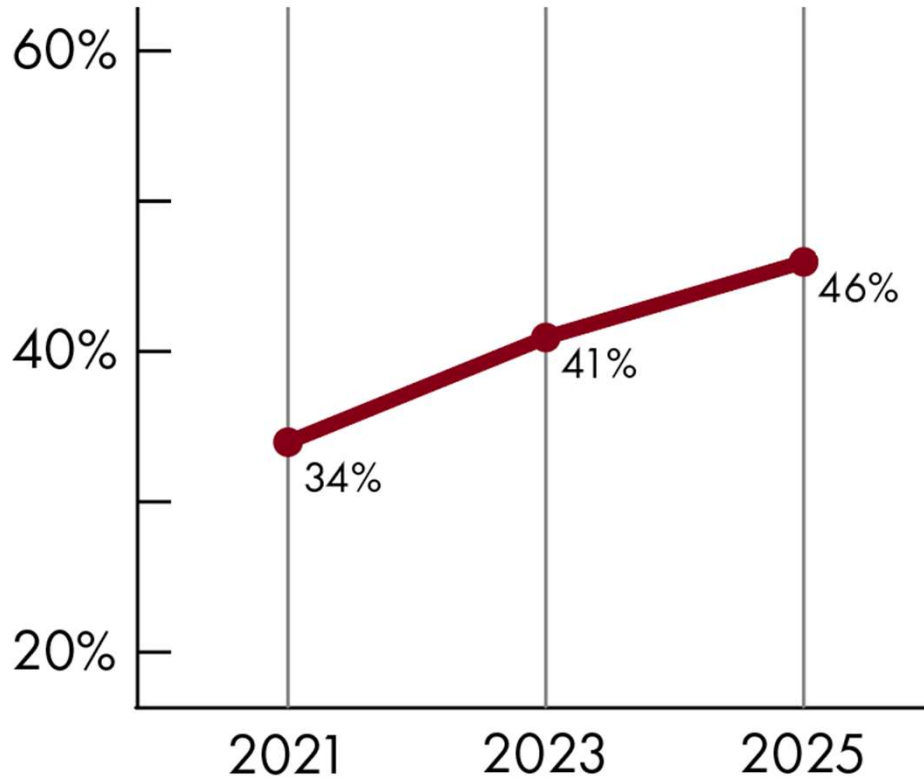
Select Findings from the 2025 Survey

Senate Education Finance Committee

April 14, 2026

**Katie Pikel, EdD
Sara Kemper, PhD**

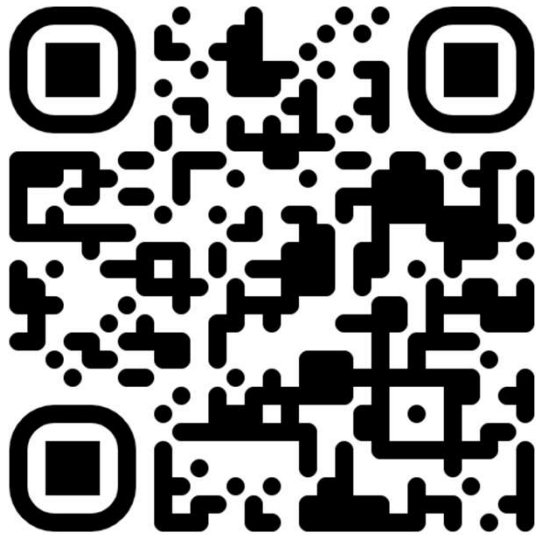
Who Responded in 2025?



| | Response Rate | Greater MN | Metro Area |
|-------------|------------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| 2021 | 34% (779 / 2,323) | 46% (362) | 54% (412) |
| 2023 | 41% (991 / 2,406) | 50% (496) | 50% (491) |
| 2025 | 46% (1130 / 2,461) | 49% (557) | 51% (573) |

Survey Data and Reports

MnPS Homepage



z.umn.edu/MnPS

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KEY TAKEAWAYS

Taken together, these themes highlight the increasing complexity of school leadership and the competing demands on leaders' time and capacity:

1. School leaders (still) don't have time for instructional leadership.
2. Student mental health remains a top challenge.
3. Disruptive behavior is interfering with learning, compromising safety in "extreme" cases.
4. Chronic absenteeism is attributed to mental health, student/family beliefs.
5. Leaders face challenges partnering with parents and caregivers.
6. The READ Act is burdensome—but impactful.
7. Principals feel that schools are "doing more with less."
8. ...and yet, they continue to find satisfaction in their jobs.

In this report, we use "principals" and "charter school leaders" interchangeably, and include assistant and associate principals when using these terms.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: 2025 SURVEY

Over 2,400 school leaders in Minnesota were invited to take the third biennial Minnesota Principals Survey (MnPS) in November 2025. The MnPS seeks to elevate the voices of Minnesota principals, assistant principals, and charter school leaders in state and local decisions bearing on PreK-12 education. The survey was originally developed in 2021 by researchers at the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota in collaboration with a diverse group of educators and partners. It has now been administered three times, in 2021, 2023, and 2025.

The 2025 MnPS included questions on the following topics:

- Career Information
- Job Satisfaction
- Preparation and Licensure
- Professional Development
- Working Conditions
- Leadership Self-Efficacy and Needed Supports
- Culturally Responsive School Leadership
- Impact of Recent Legislation
- Perceptions of Local Support
- Challenges & Successes with Student Behavior
- Chronic Absenteeism

Individuals working as a principal, assistant or associate principal, director, co-director, or in some other school-level leadership role in a Minnesota publicly-funded elementary, middle, and/or secondary school are eligible to take the MnPS. In 2025, 1,130 of 2,461 eligible school leaders (46%) took the 2025 MnPS, representing an increase in response rates from 2021 (34%) and 2023 (41%).

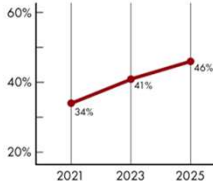
Among 2025 respondents¹

- 49% were from Greater Minnesota and 51% were from the seven county Twin Cities metropolitan area.
- 49% worked in elementary schools, 47% worked in secondary schools, and 2% worked in other kinds of schools (e.g., K-12 schools).
- 93% worked in district schools and 7% worked in charter schools.
- 68% were principals, directors, or co-directors; 29% were assistant or associate principals; and 3% had other school-level leadership roles.
- 89% were White, 10% were Black, Indigenous, or people of color (BIPOC), and 2% preferred not to disclose their racial/ethnic identity.

1. For a more comprehensive and detailed breakdown of survey data, access our 2025 Data Visualizer at z.umn.edu/mnps25va.

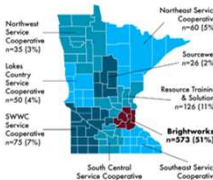
2. School-level information was unknown for 2% of respondents; as such, percentages may not add to 100% for all school-level variables.

Figure 1. MnPS response rates, by year



| Year | Response Rate |
|------|---------------|
| 2021 | 34% |
| 2023 | 41% |
| 2025 | 46% |

Figure 2. MnPS response rates, by Minnesota service cooperative

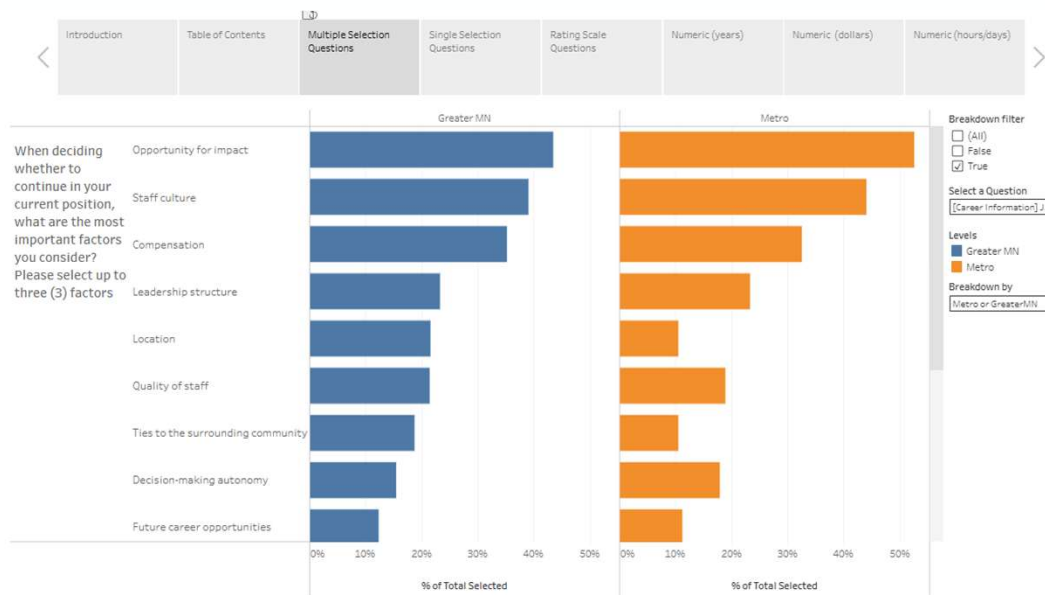


| Service Cooperative | n | % |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Northwest Service Cooperative | 35 | 3% |
| Lakes Country Service Cooperative | 50 | 4% |
| SWWC Service Cooperative | 75 | 7% |
| South Central Service Cooperative | 56 | 5% |
| Northeast Service Cooperative | 60 | 5% |
| Souriswell | 26 | 2% |
| Resource Training & Solutions | 124 | 11% |
| Brightworks | 373 | 34% |
| Southeast Service Cooperative | 129 | 11% |

MnPS Data Visualizer

Variables Include:

- Metro/Greater MN
- Elementary/Secondary
- Gender
- Years of Experience
- BIPOC/White
- District/Charter
- Service Coop
- Principal/AP
- Student Enrollment
- %BIPOC Students
- % FRP-Eligible Students



From z.umn.edu/mnps, click “Work with survey data in Tableau”

2025 Survey Topics

- Career Information
- Job Satisfaction
- Preparation and Licensure
- **Working Conditions**
- Perceptions of Local Support
- **Leadership Self Efficacy**
and Needed Supports
- **(Insert) Challenges & Successes with Student Behavior**
 - **Chronic Absenteeism**
- Professional Development
- **Impact of Recent Legislation**
- Culturally Responsive School Leadership

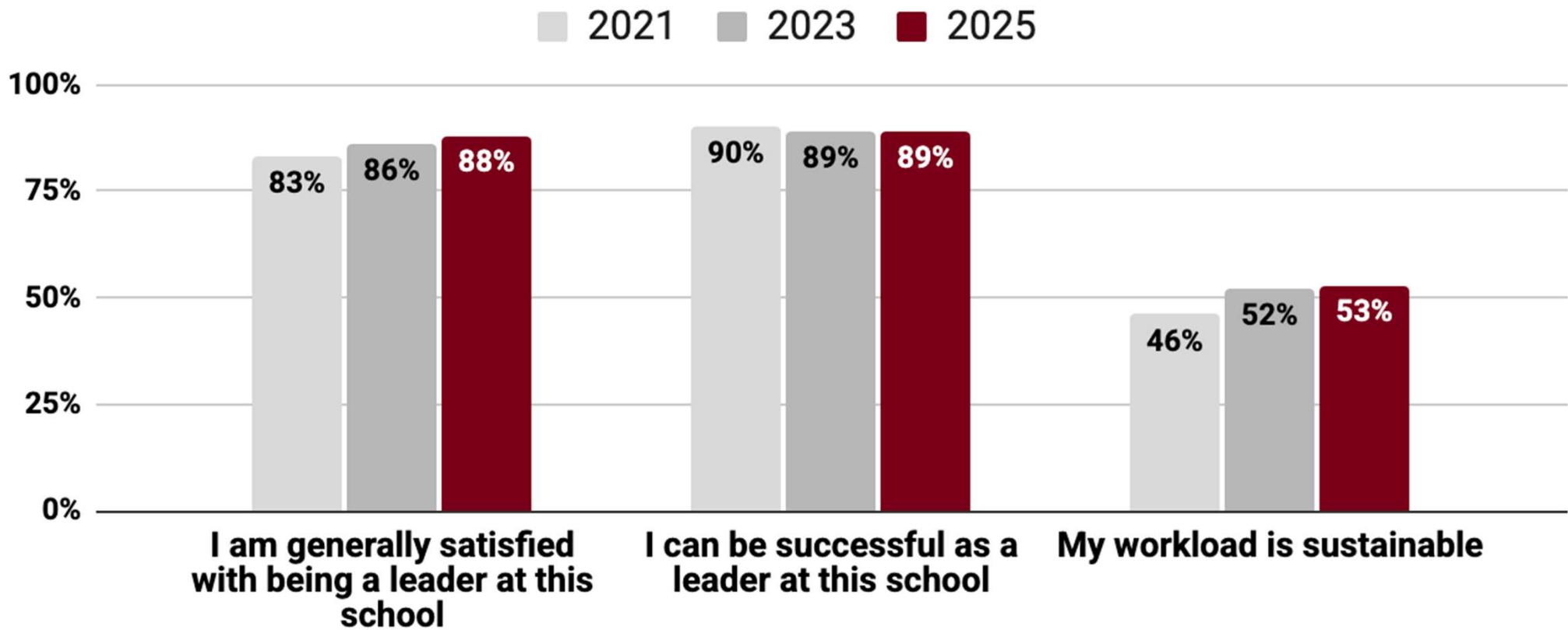


Working Conditions

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Working Conditions

Principals reported working on average **56.5 hours per week**.



% who *somewhat agreed* or *agreed* with the statements out of those who responded.

Time Spent on Tasks by Type

- **Internal administrative tasks:** personnel issues, scheduling, reports, budgeting, operational meetings
- **Instructional tasks:** curriculum, instruction, assessment, PLC meetings, data analysis, classroom observations, coaching
- **Student interactions:** academic guidance, discipline, seeking student voice, relationship building
- **Family and community interactions:** formal and informal interactions, attending events, seeking parent or community input
- **My own professional growth:** self-reflection, attending PD, reviewing research, reading, networking with other administrative colleagues

Response options

Much less time than I would like

Somewhat less time than I would like

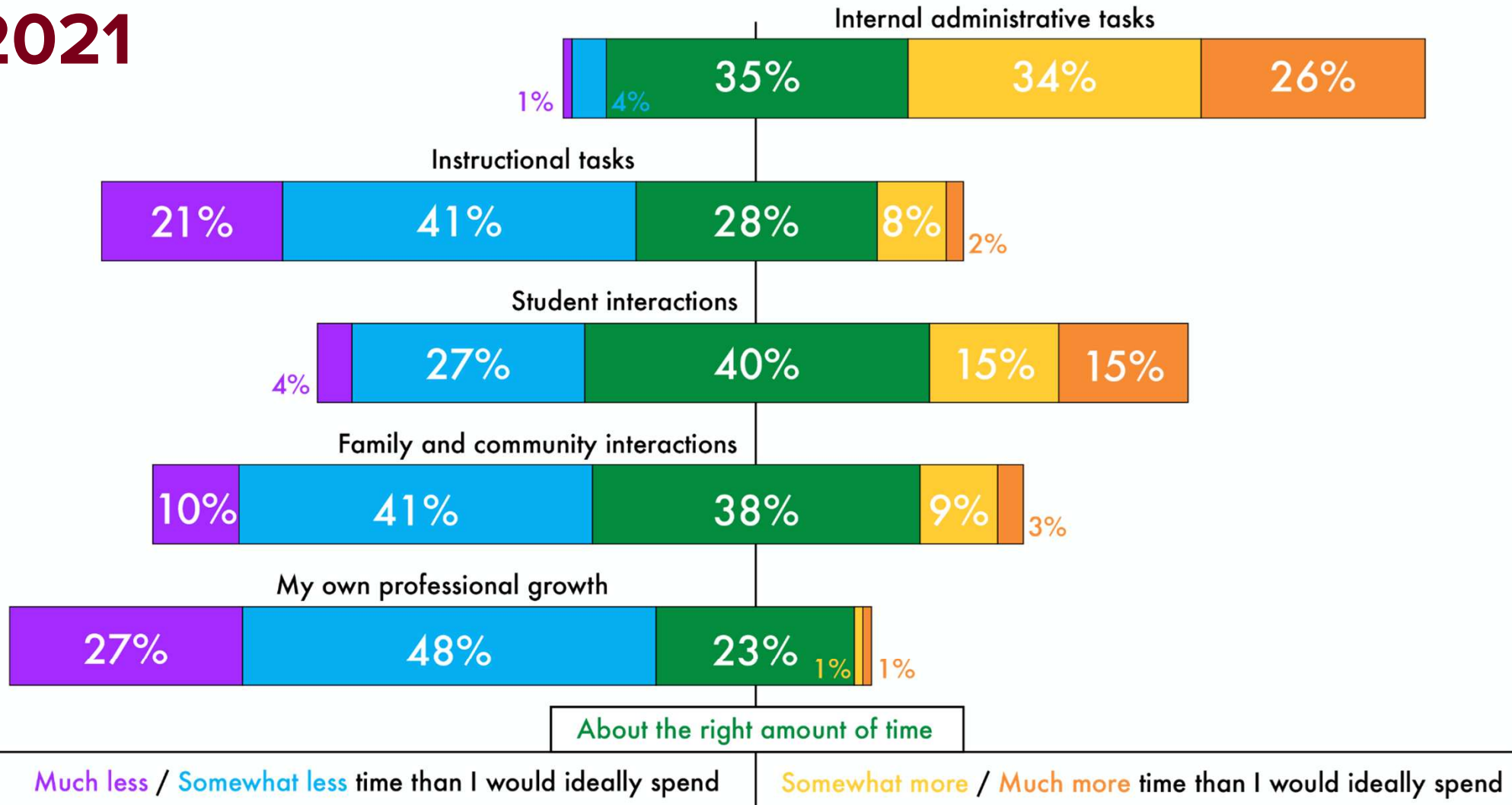
About the right amount of time

Somewhat more time than I would like

Much more time than I would like

P. 2

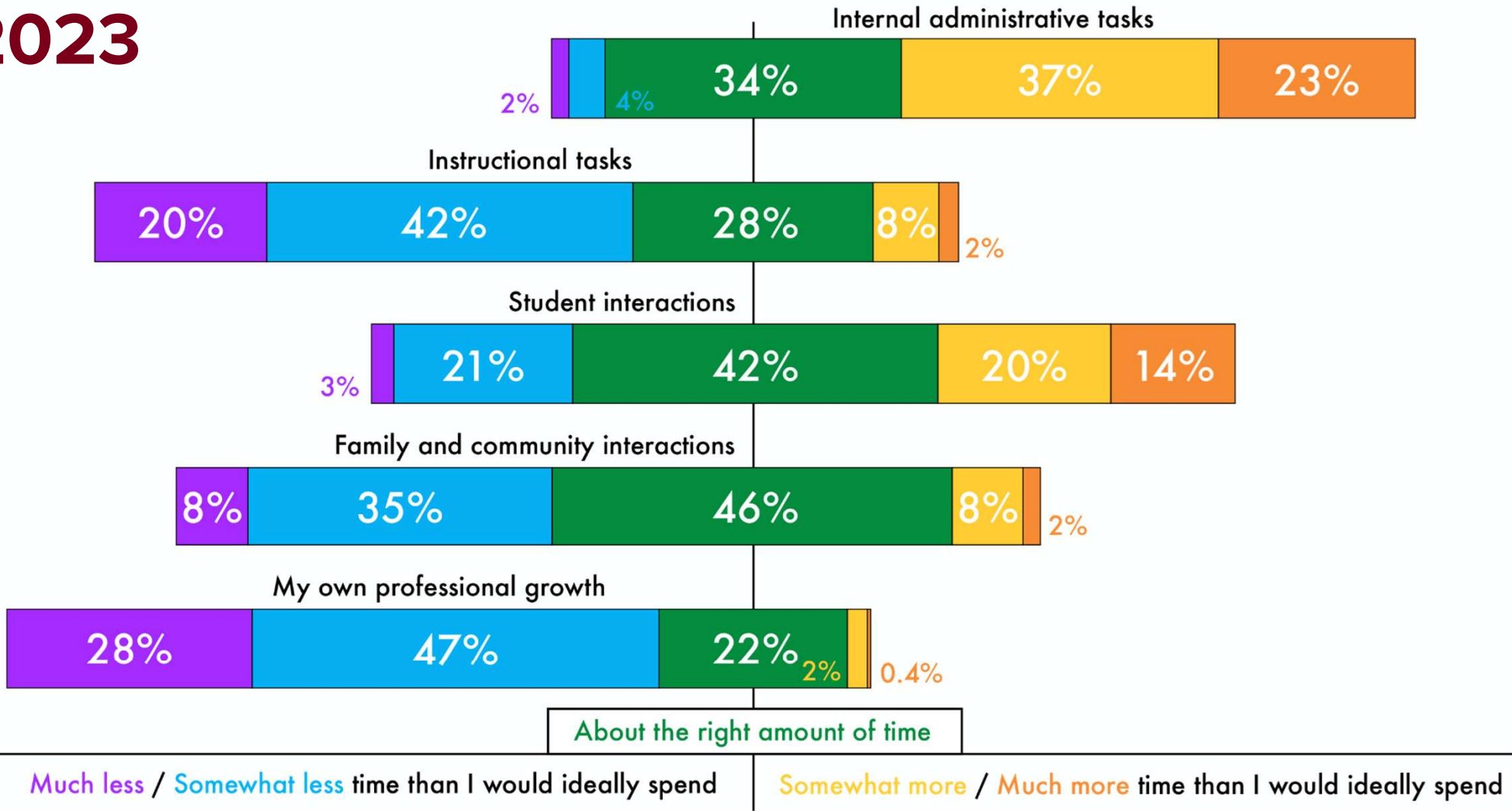
2021



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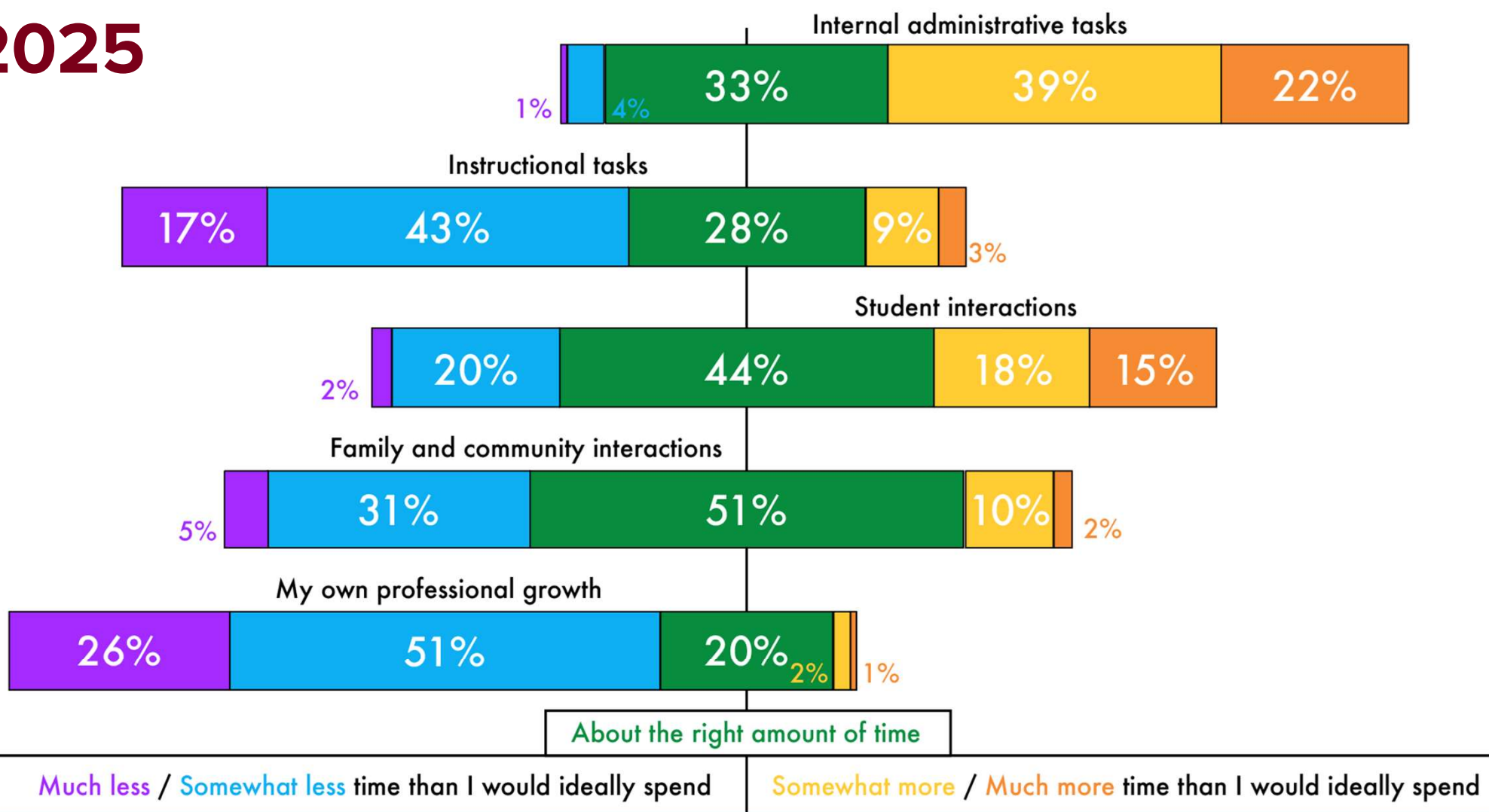
2023



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2025





Leadership Self-Efficacy

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Principal Leadership Responsibility Areas



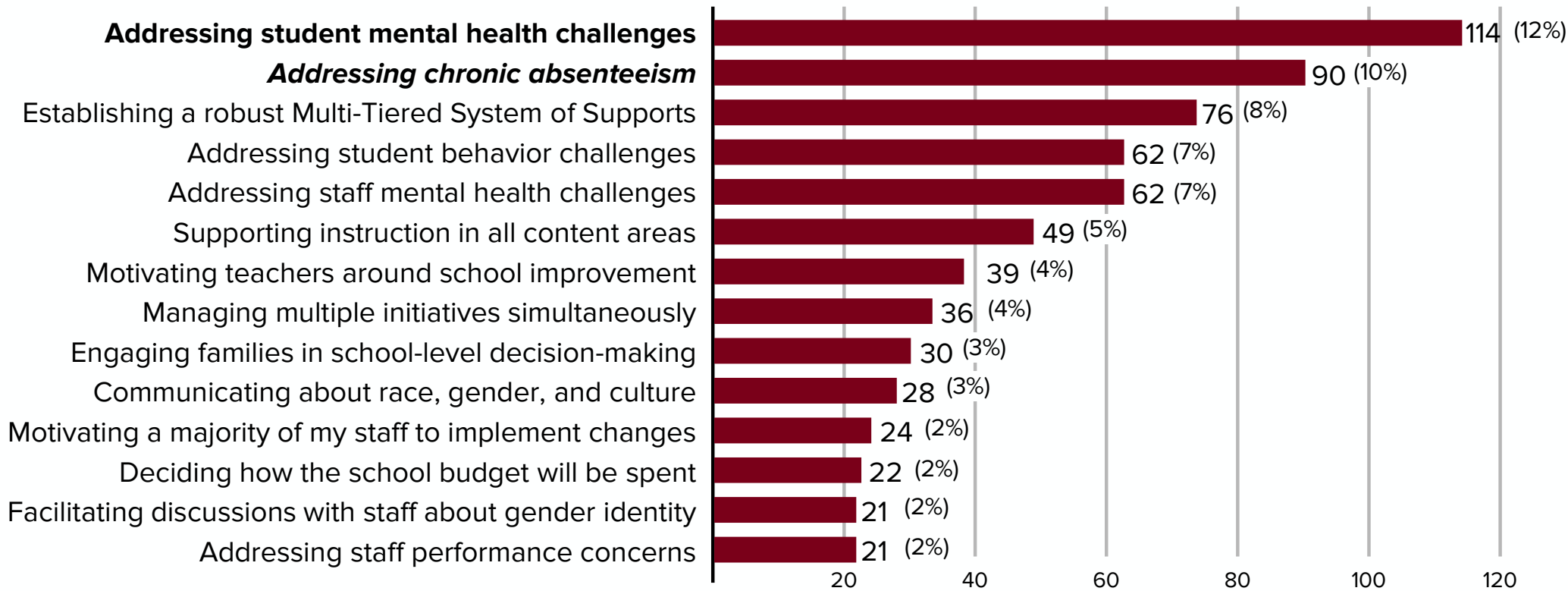
Tasks of Least Confidence

*% reporting
“Sufficient” or “More
than sufficient”
confidence*

| | | | |
|-----|------------------------------|---|-----|
| 45 | Culture & Climate | Addressing student mental health challenges | 51% |
| • | | | |
| 46 | Management & Decision-making | Engaging families in school-level decision-making | 48% |
| • | | | |
| 47. | Instructional Leadership | Designing culturally responsive curriculum | 46% |
| • | | | |
| 48 | Culture & Climate | Addressing staff mental health challenges | 43% |
| • | | | |
| 49 | Instructional Leadership | Creating culturally responsive assessments | 35% |
| • | | | |

Greatest challenges for respondents

If you had to choose just one, which activity poses the single greatest challenge to you?



P. 3



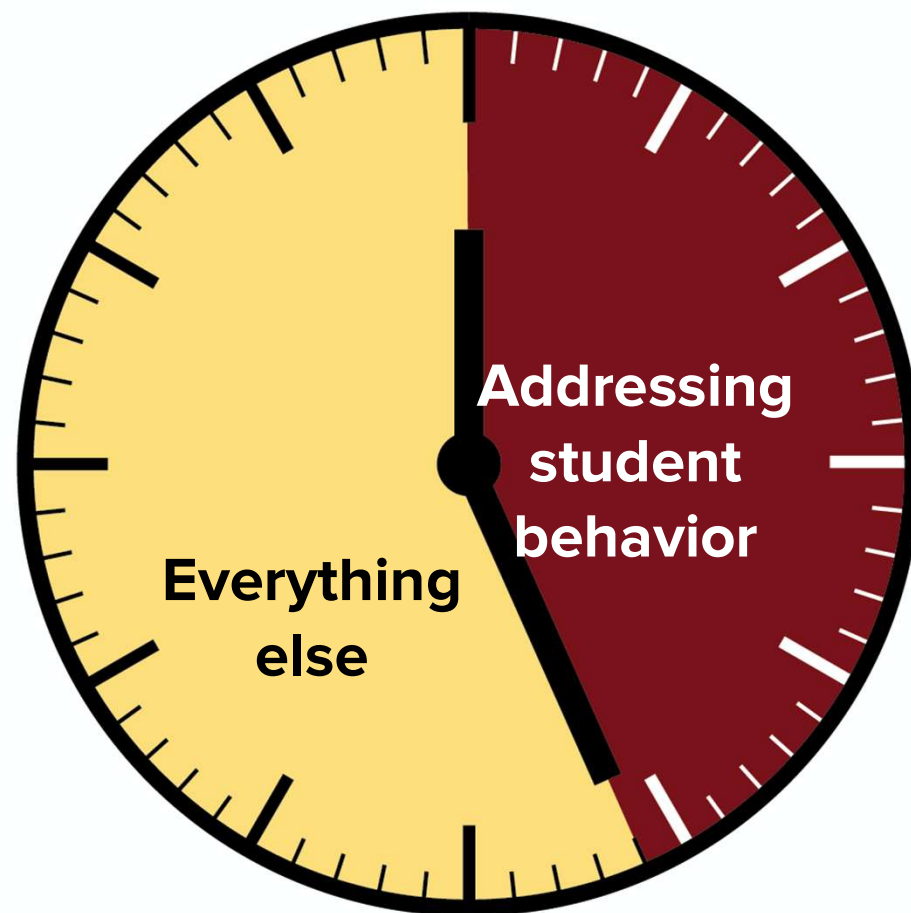
Challenges and Successes with Student Behavior

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Time on Behavior

Principals report spending an average of 43% of their work day responding to student behavior—that's **26 minutes out of every hour**.

80% of respondents agree that the time they spend responding to challenging student behavior **interferes** with their ability to carry out other leadership responsibilities.



Student Behavior: Good News!

To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about student behavior?

Most students at my school exhibit expected behaviors most of the time

97% "agree" or "somewhat agree"

Student Behavior

To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about student behavior?

Challenging student behavior has become more prevalent in my school over the past 3 years.

67%

Challenges with student behavior represent a significant barrier to student learning at my school.

61%

Challenges with student behavior negatively impact staff morale at my school.

80%

Percent of respondents selecting *Agree or Somewhat Agree*

P. 4

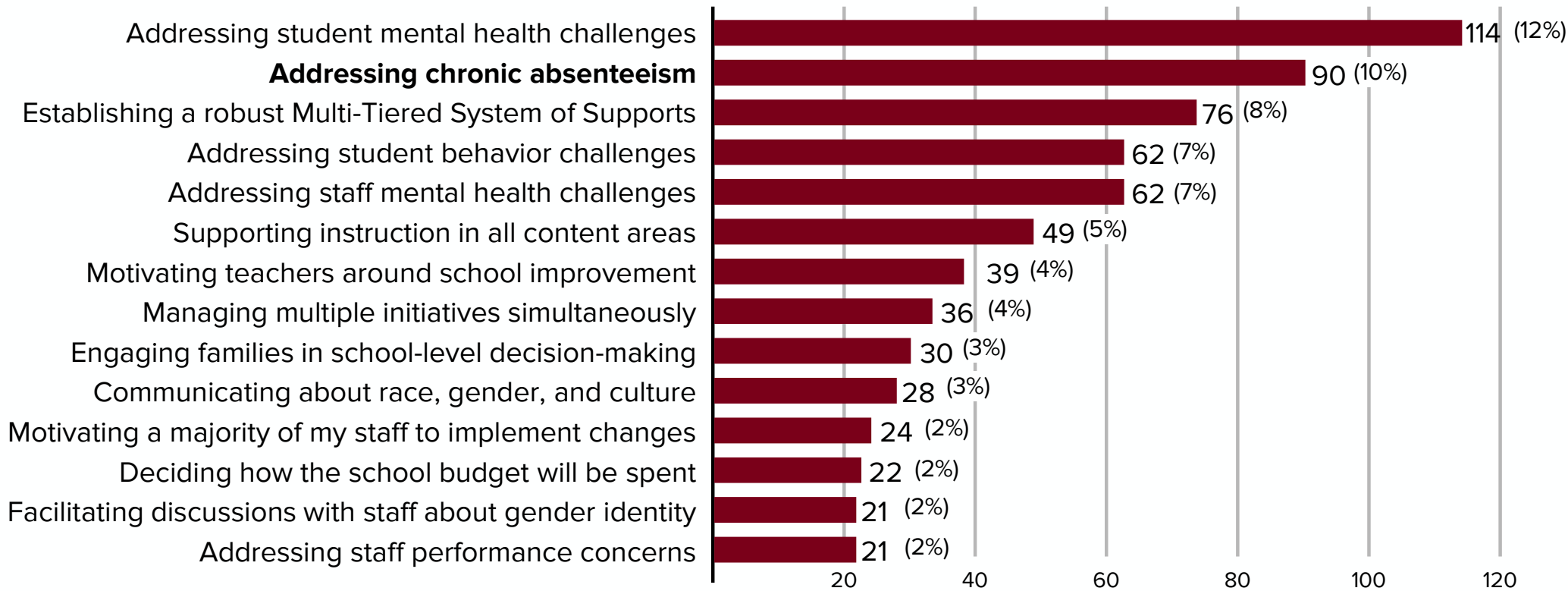


Student Attendance

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Chronic absenteeism was a top challenge for respondents

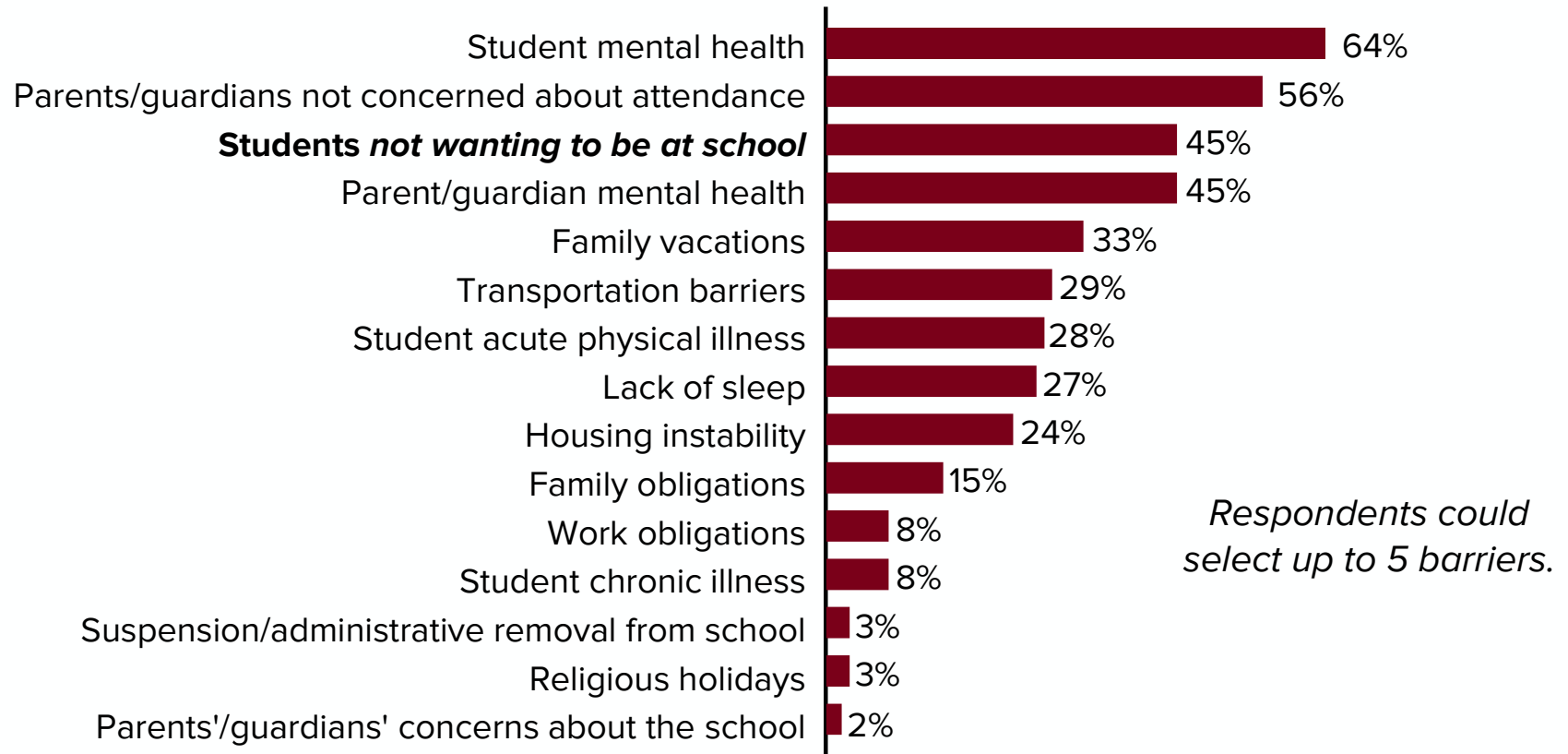
If you had to choose just one, which activity poses the single greatest challenge to you?



P. 5

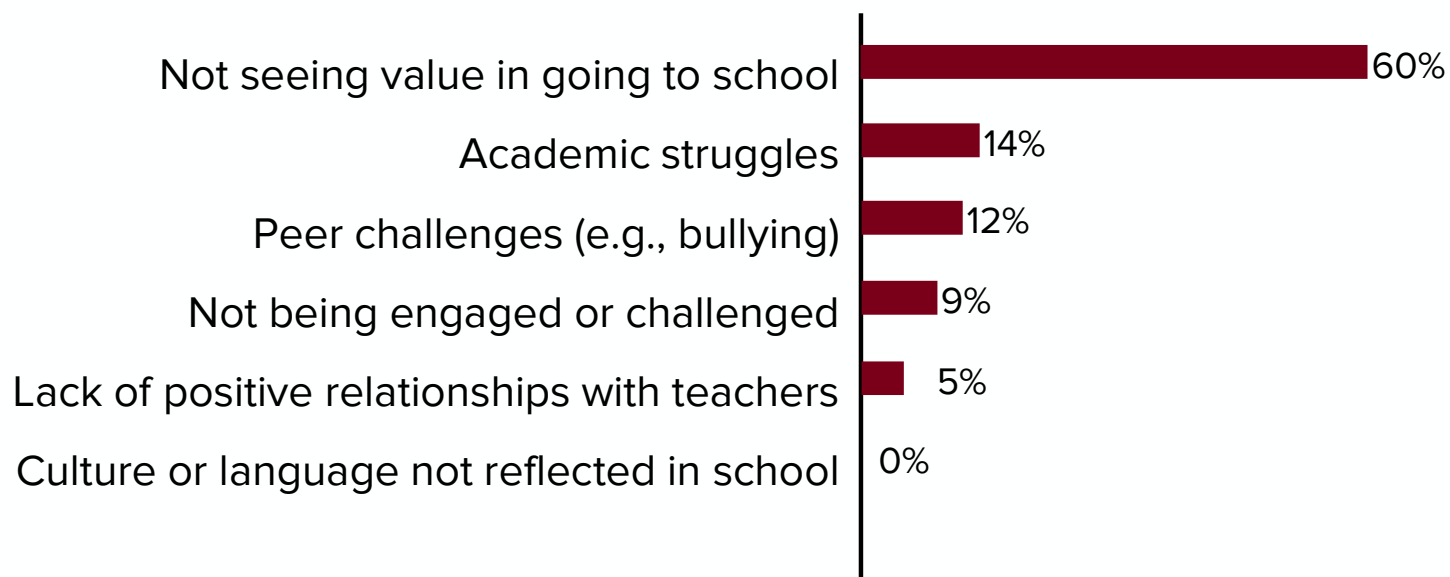
Chronic absenteeism: Common causes

What are the most common barriers to attendance for students in your school?



Chronic absenteeism: *Not wanting to be at school*

What do you believe is the most common reason why students don't want to be in school?



Percent of respondents ranking each as the top reason students do not want to be at school. Asked only of respondents who selected "students not wanting to be at school" as a common cause of absenteeism among their students.



State Education Policy

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Policy Area #1: the READ Act

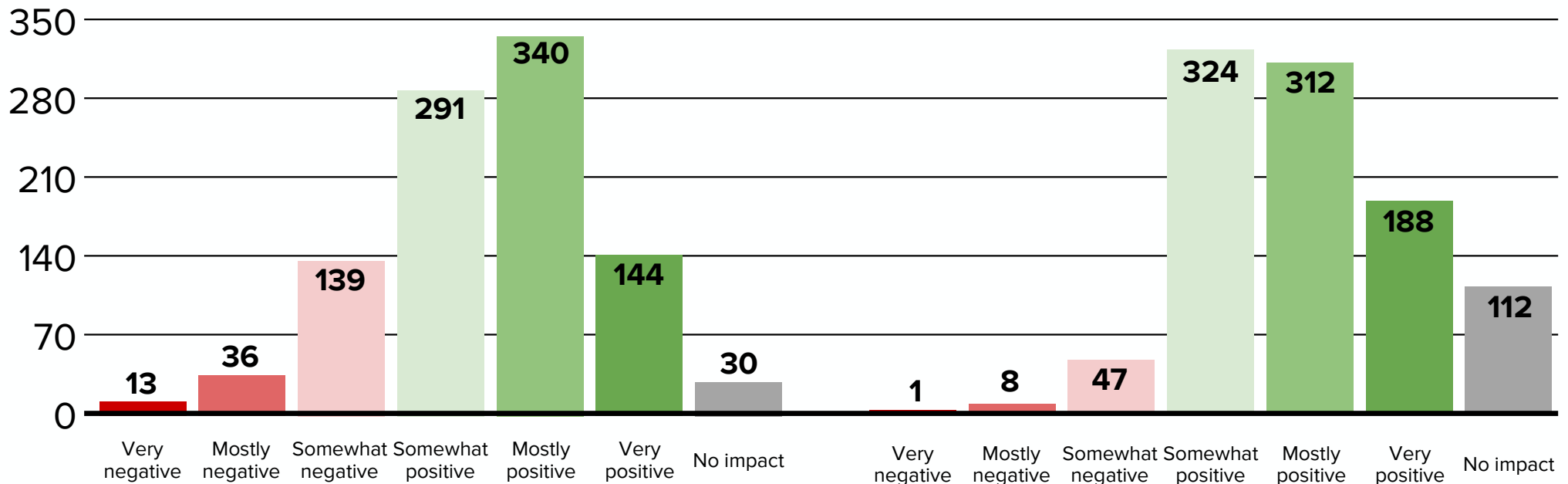
Policy Area #2: Non-Exclusionary Discipline

Policy Area #3: K-3 Suspension

Perceptions of READ Act Impact on Educators, Students

How would you characterize the impact of the READ Act on **educators** at your school?

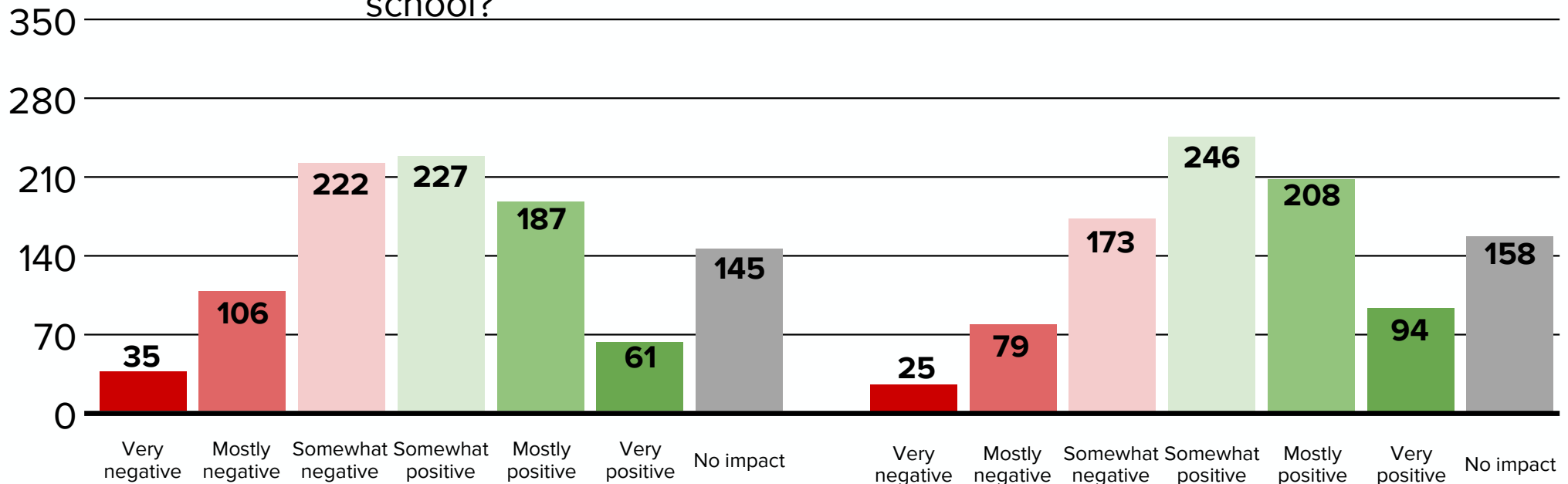
How would you characterize the impact of the READ Act on **students** at your school?



Perceptions of Non-Exclusionary Discipline Impact on Educators, Students

How would you characterize the impact of Non-Exclusionary Discipline legislation on **educators** at your school?

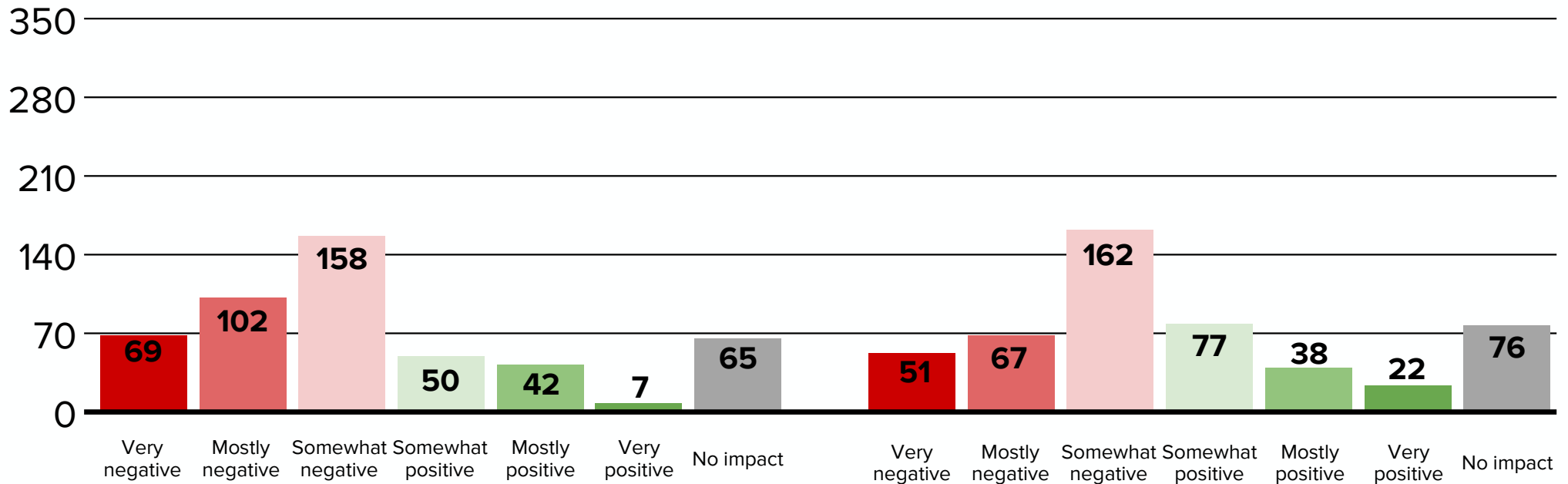
How would you characterize the impact of Non-Exclusionary Discipline legislation on **students** at your school?



Perceptions of K-3 Suspension legislation Impact on Educators, Students

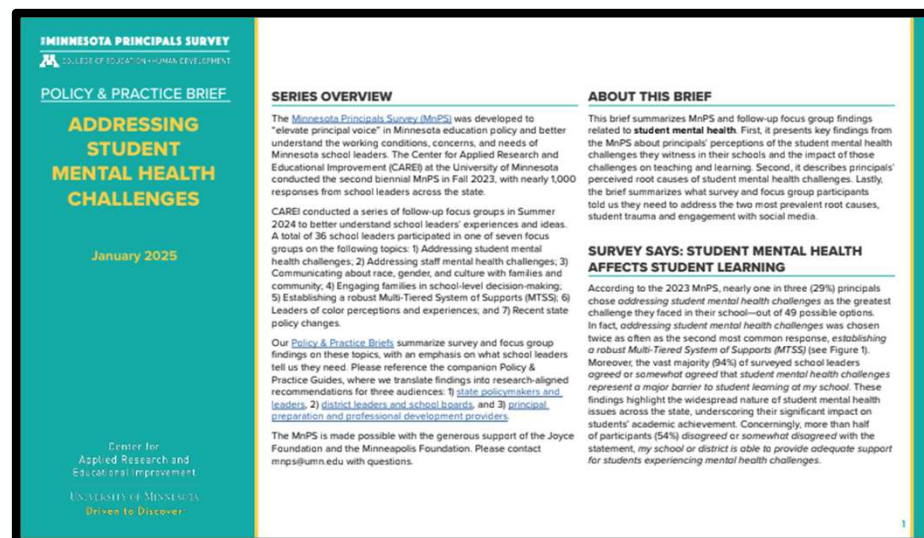
How would you characterize the impact of K-3 Suspension legislation on **educators** at your school?

How would you characterize the impact of K-3 Suspension legislation on **students** at your school?



MnPS Next Steps

- 2021-2025 MnPS Trends Dash - Early Summer 2026
- Follow-Up Focus Groups - Summer 2026
- Topical Policy and Practice Briefs - Fall 2026





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How to Cite this Presentation:

Pekel, K., Kemper, S., & Evenson, A. (2026). *Select Findings from the 2025 Minnesota Principals Survey* [Google Slides]. Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement, University of Minnesota. https://z.umn.edu/MnPS25_slides

Operation Metro Surge (OMS) Impact Survey

Summary of Findings Prepared for the MN Senate Education Finance Committee
April 14, 2026

Sara Kemper, Ph.D.

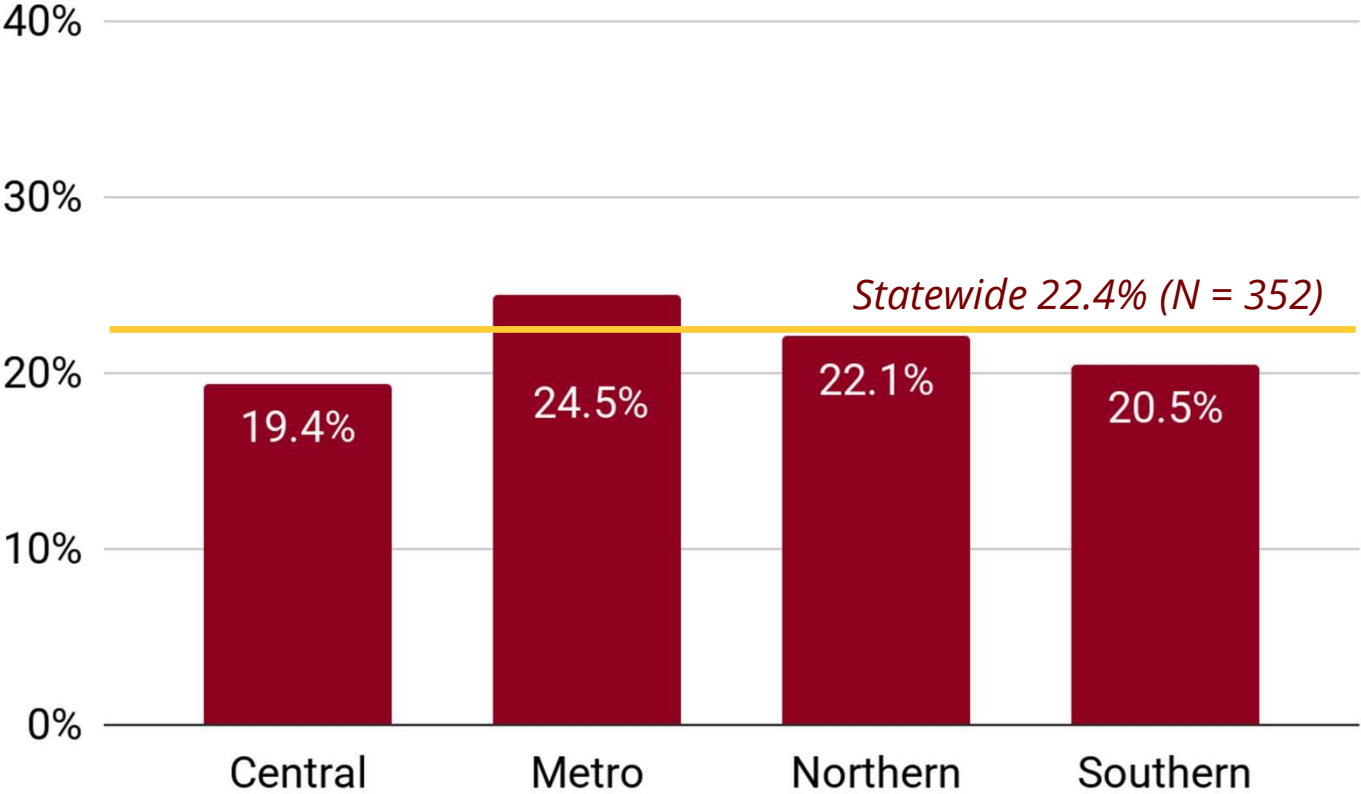


Operation Metro Surge (OMS) Impact Survey

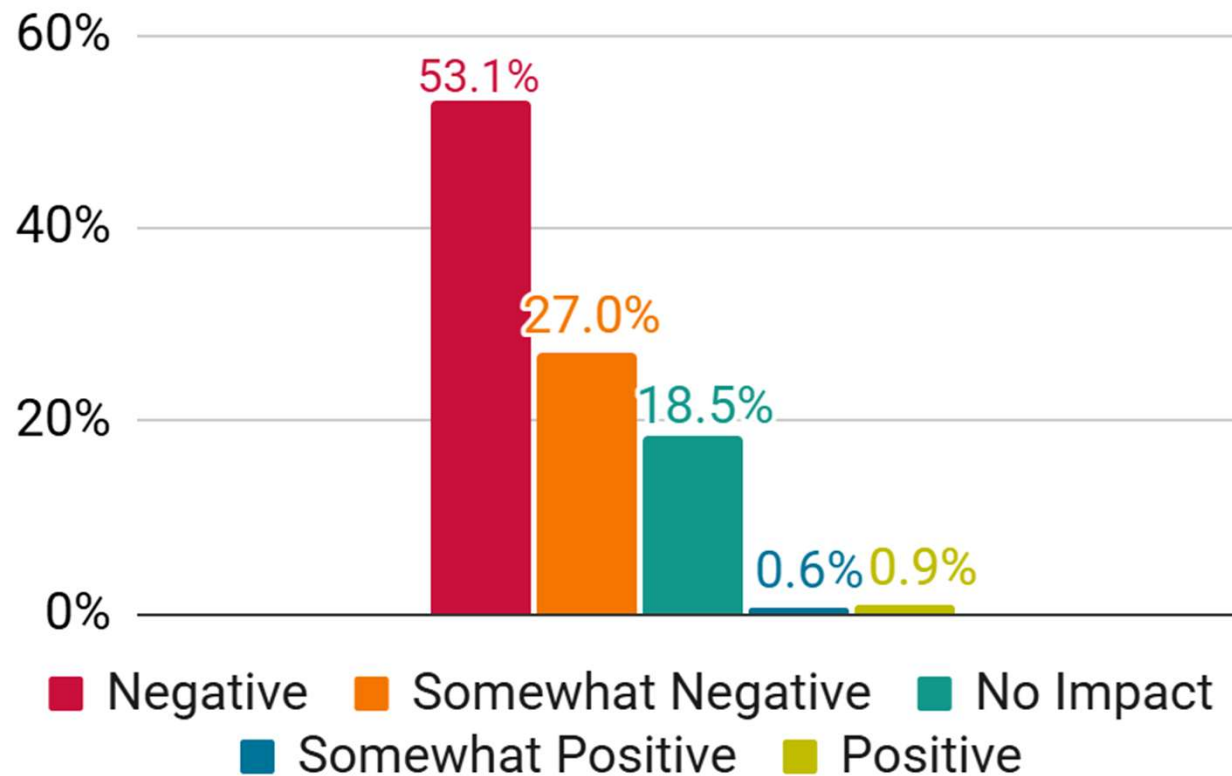
- Funded by The Minneapolis Foundation
- Purpose was to *understand the range, magnitude, and variation in impact* of OMS across four different regions of the state
- 1,572 MN public school principals and charter school directors were invited to participate
- Administration window: March 16-22, 2026



Response Rates by Region



Perception of impact of OMS on students' ability to learn



Specific impacts reported

1

Verified reports of immigration **officers on or near school property**

2

Detainments of students and parents or guardians

3

Impacts on **attendance** and **enrollment**

81% reported one or more impacts



Immigration officers on or near school property

- **28 MN schools** reported “verified reports of federal immigration officers on school property” (8%)
- **161 MN schools** reported officers within 2 blocks (46%)



Detainments

- **49 students** were reported detained across 23 schools
- **849 MN students** had parents or guardians detained across 157 schools



Attendance and enrollment

- **76%** of schools reported an **increase in student absences**
- **9,492 students** were reported to have been absent for one or more school days due to increased immigration enforcement
- **1,366 students** had unenrolled or stopped coming to school since December 2025
- **389 students** were reported to have enrolled in a new school, approximately **90% of whom enrolled in an online program**

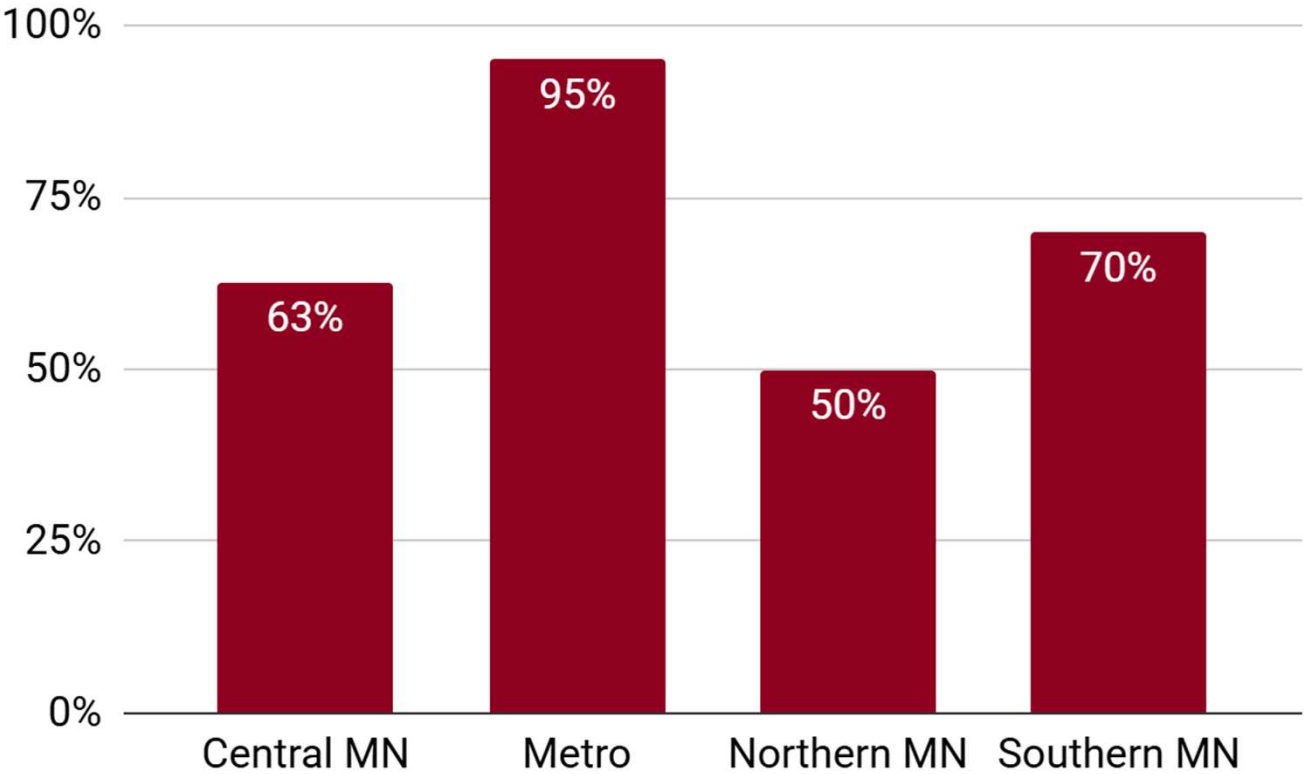


Other impacts (open-ended themes)

- Mental health impacts (stress, anxiety, fear)
- Material and financial hardship
- Time spent planning and communicating with families
- Political conflict, race-based bullying
- Fear disproportionate to threat
- No impact



Percent reporting negative impact on students' ability to learn, by region



Thank you!



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