

North Carolina Principal Working Conditions (NCPWC) Survey Pilot

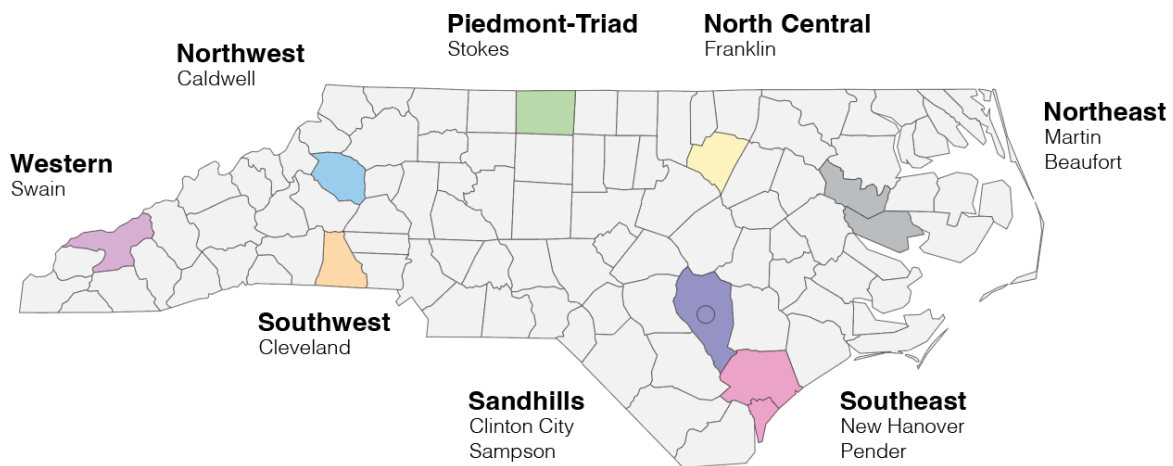
Background

As North Carolina updated the statewide Teacher Working Conditions (TWC) Survey, principals and assistant principals emphasized that the TWC does not sufficiently reflect the day-to-day conditions of school leadership. In response, they called for a dedicated Principal Working Conditions (PWC) survey that would systematically elevate leader voice and produce information useful for both district improvement and state policy. A Principal Advisory Committee—including representation connected to Principal- and Superintendent-of-the-Year networks—helped identify priority topics and intended uses, while an NC PWC Working Group (with NCDPI and partners) led the development. The pilot survey contains 58 items across 8 domains, including Overall Climate, School Executive Standards, District Leadership, Professional Learning & Support, Professional Development Needs, Non-Discrimination, Time, and Facilities and Resources.

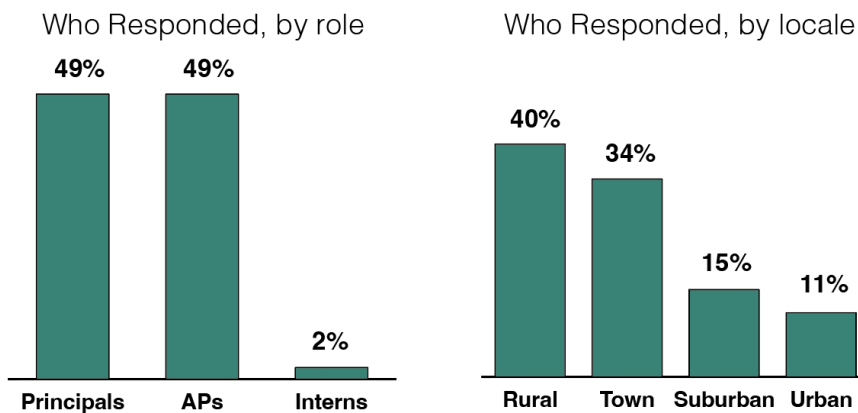
Pilot participation (11 districts across all 8 education regions)

NC Principal Working Conditions Survey 2025

Pilot Districts, by Education District



- High engagement: **90.9%** (381 of 419) leaders responded
- District participation: **84.2%–100%** (8 districts at 96%–100%)



Key findings

Overall climate is strong. 96.5% agree/strongly agree their district is a good place to work and learn; 92.6% would recommend working in their district. Trust is positive but the lowest-rated climate item (82.1% agree/strongly agree).

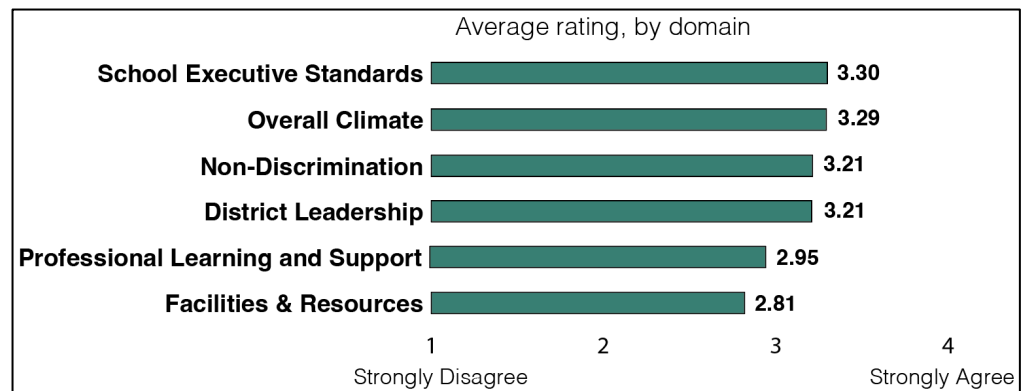
District support for core leadership work is high—especially data use. Support for continuous improvement through data use is the highest-rated School Executive Standards item (94.8% agree/strongly agree). Support is also high for vision-setting and school improvement planning, comparatively more mixed for community engagement and staff culture support.

Professional learning and leader wellness is a relative area for growth. About one quarter of leaders disagree that the district supports their overall wellness; items on differentiated PD and time to try/evaluate new ideas are also more mixed than other domains.

Non-Discrimination is rated positively, with a clear signal on special-population resources. Welcoming environments and fair recruitment/retention are rated highly. Adequate programs/resources for special populations draws the most disagreement (28.7% disagree/strongly disagree).

Facilities & Resources: staffing pressure plus a major concern about usable data.

A majority disagree their school is provided sufficient data/information to make informed decisions (63.3% disagree/strongly disagree). Leaders also report challenges with non-licensed staffing and auxiliary services staffing.



Time use signals workload intensity and the dominance of safety/student conduct.

About three quarters report working more than 50 hours/week; leaders spend the largest share of time on safety and managing student conduct

Top professional development needs (leaders selected 3)

- Support for behavior management and student conduct (35%).
- Curriculum for diverse learners (31%).
- Coaching and feedback practices (31%).

Implications for statewide policy and oversight

- Feasibility and demand: high participation suggests strong leader demand and that districts can administer the survey successfully and leaders want to share.
- Action items from the pilot: strengthen leader PD (differentiation, sustained support) and wellness; improve special population supports; improve access to timely, usable data for school decision-making.
- Next phase: psychometric validation (reliability/factor structure), refinement based on feedback, and recommendations on statewide administration.