



VERMONT PRINCIPALS' ASSOCIATION  
MEMO

From the Desk of Jay Nichols

*The Vermont Principals' Association supports school leaders to improve the equity and quality of educational opportunities for all students.*

- **"There are no good schools without good principals." - Robert Marzano and many other researchers**
- We have 577 official members to date including: principals, assistant principals, retired leaders, aspiring leaders, athletic directors, and other school or school system level leadership roles
- The VPA (formerly the Vermont Head Masters) has been in existence since 1915
- The governing board of the VPA is the Executive Council (EC). The EC hires an Executive Director and provides oversight of the organization. The EC has 15 members: 12 principals, 1 career center director, 1 assistant principal, and 1 retired principal. Council members can serve two terms of three years each

- We provide professional support and professional learning services to educational leaders throughout the state
- We regulate Vermont High School and Middle School sports for VPA member schools
- Principals are the school-level instructional leaders, culture builders, and managers of the day-to-day operations of the school
- The principalship can look quite different depending on the functionality of the system the principal is in, the size, location and demographics. There is no one-size-fits-all model of the principalship

Principal Turnover:

- In a typical year, Vermont “turns over” approximately 25% of our principals. This is pretty consistent with national averages. The reasons for principal turnover are numerous but the most-oft cited are as follows:
  - Moving to a different principalship, retiring, or moving to another position in education
  - When principals are asked why they are leaving a school they usually cite lack of support from either the school board, superintendent, or faculty as key factors as well as extra stress and responsibility without much extra pay
  - When we ask potentially aspiring principals why they haven’t taken the plunge we usually hear things such as: the job is too stressful, I see what my principal goes through, there isn’t enough money for me to do that job, the principalship has very little security in comparison to being a teacher
  - We have more individuals in Vermont with principal licenses that are not principals than actual principals - many people have the endorsement but do not pursue the principalship
  - Superintendents can attest that the hiring of principals in the last decade has become extremely difficult and is at a crisis level in much of the state

