



You Were Saying...

By Nelly Kelders, Program and PQP Coordinator

In October 2006, CPCO surveyed its members to assess the amount of scheduled and unscheduled supervision and teaching being done by principals and vice-principals each week. More than 50% of the membership responded to this survey. The results are as follows:

- 35.5% indicated that they had increased supervision duties in 2006-07;
- 63% reported that they supervise students more than one hour per week during unscheduled time;
- 42% supervise students more than two hours a week during scheduled time;
- 57% supervise students more than two hours a week during unscheduled time.

The following are comments from around the province regarding scheduled and unscheduled supervision of students and teaching time.

“Behavioural students take up more and more time as the supports for them dwindle. With no supply teachers for Special Education teachers and limited payment for emergency supply teachers, there is an increased amount of “emergency” coverage required when teachers are away.”

“Even though my supervisions give me the opportunity to meet and interact with many more students than otherwise, they take away from the time required to do my teaching and administrative duties as effectively as I would like.”

“There is so much that goes on in a school that requires immediate attention that an administrator can’t be bogged down with duties. Often we deal with emotional situations/people that can’t wait until a supervision duty is done.”

“Supervision is necessary in that it provides opportunities for administration to be visible, to interact with the students, and to keep updated with events in the school. It does take a huge amount of time, extending our work day well into the evening.”

“Changes to the teachers’ collective agreement have reduced their supervision time and increased ours. It is difficult for 2-5 administrators (depending on the size of the school) to compensate for the reduced supervision of 50-150 teachers.”

“Supervision can be very onerous; especially when there is a phone call or someone to see you. When we don’t have a full-time secretary, the phone is often ringing during my supervision time and parents complain it is not always answered.”

“I do not mind the contact time with students. In fact, it may prevent some of the need for disciplinary action. However, none

of my other duties/responsibilities has decreased to allow me to do the extra supervision, resulting in the pile-up of paperwork, late nights, lack of conversation time with staff and missed deadlines. I am also experiencing difficulty supervising students in trouble – detentions etc. because I am on the yard.”

“It is very difficult to find someone who will commit to taking the lunch supervision on the yard. We have advertised for the position several times this year, both in the school newsletter and in the Church bulletin. There has not been any response.”

“I enjoy the opportunity to spend time with students. I think it is beneficial to students and staff to see me in this role. I would prefer not to have it scheduled, as it causes issues when I am absent from the school.”

“I seldom get to eat lunch with my staff. Lunch hour is the most difficult time as most students remain at school for lunch. Lunch supervisors are not trained to handle discipline problems. They lack the experience and the strategies to deal with these issues.”

“Although I enjoy the supervision and it allows me to interact with students on a different level, it also takes me away from my work that I find myself doing on weekends and evenings on a regular basis. This can be challenging in terms of my own personal and family time.”

“It is very difficult to wear “two hats” that of an administrator and that of a teacher. It would be better if administrator positions were all full-time unless someone chooses to work part-time. A half-time vice-principal is not half-time in reality. When expected to teach half-time, it is assumed that you work through lunch and recess. Therefore, you do not get the same benefits as a teacher who gets 40 minutes uninterrupted lunch and planning time.”

“There is far too much supervision required of administration. We are highly paid lunchtime monitors! How can you be a curriculum leader or attempt to do meaningful performance appraisals when you are doing supervision for 33% of your day?”

“Principals continue to have more added to their portfolios without removing anything. I am most concerned about the health and wellness of our principals and especially concerned for the new principals.”

“Teachers remain the best trained and most competent professionals to supervise students for non-structured time during the school day. It is ironic that the Ministry is spending \$23 million on bullying prevention over the next 3 years, and is not supporting supervision by teachers trained in bullying prevention.”