
Educational leadership in Serbia: Needs analysis FINAL REPORT

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Educational leadership in Serbia: Needs analysis

Final report

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INTRODUCTION

This report was produced within TEMPUS project Master program in Educational Leadership (EdLead), Working package 1 Needs analysis and review of state of art, Activity 1.1. Lead partner in this working package was Institute for Educational Research from Belgrade, Serbia.

The aim of this report is to provide the analysis of state of affairs in terms of school leadership in Serbia, especially in the domain of professional development needs of school principals, in order to inform and assist project in developing top-quality master program in educational leadership. This report is accompanied with the review of current theory, research and preparatory programs in educational leadership and concept proposal for the master program.

The report begins with a short overview of the Serbian education system focusing on those segments that are of the utmost relevance for school principals. This is followed by the main part of the text comprising reports from both the qualitative and the quantitative study, ending with the integration of its results. Guides for focus groups and interviews and the questionnaire used for the quantitative study are to be found in the annex.

OVERVIEW OF THE SERBIAN EDUCATION SYSTEM

Principalship¹

Formal requirements for principals

The principal can be a person that meets the following general requirements:

- He/she has adequate education meaning 1) second degree studies (graduate academic studies – master, specialist academic studies or specialist professional studies), as of 10 September 2005; or 2) initial studies lasting for at least four years, pursuant to the regulation regulating higher education until 10 September 2005;
- He/she has psychological, physical and health capacities to work with children and students;
- He/she has not been convicted of a crime...;
- He/she is the citizen of the Republic of Serbia.

The principal of a preschool institution may be a person that has adequate education level (see first bullet under this heading) for a preschool teacher or (pre)school counselor² and a license to work as a preschool teacher or (pre)school counselor, that has undergone training and passed

¹ The text is based on the Law on the fundamentals of education system (Zakon o osnovama sistema obrazovanja i vaspitanja) and the Rulebook for standards for competences of leaders of educational institutions (Pravilnik o standardima kompetencija direktora ustanova obrazovanja i vaspitanja).

² School counselors are usually school pedagogues and school psychologists.

the exam necessary for a principal and five years of work experience in a preschool institution after acquiring the appropriate education.

The principal of a preschool institution may be a person that has acquired first degree studies (initial academic or initial professional studies) and studies lasting for up to three years or college education for a preschool teacher or (pre)school counselor, has a license to work as a preschool teacher or (pre)school counselor, has undergone training and passed the exam necessary for a principal and ten years of work experience in a preschool institution after acquiring the appropriate education.

The principal of a school may be a person that has adequate education level (see first bullet under this heading) for a teacher of that type of a school or for school counselor, has a license to work as a teacher or school counselor, has undergone training and passed the exam necessary for a principal and five years of work experience in a school after acquiring the appropriate education.

Exceptionally, elementary school principal may be a person that has acquired first degree studies (initial academic or initial professional studies) and studies lasting for up to three years or college education for a teacher of that type of school, has a license to work as a teacher, has undergone training and passed the exam necessary for a principal and at least ten years of work experience in the institution after acquiring the appropriate education, if no candidates with appropriate higher level of education have applied.

Exam and a principal license

The exam necessary for a principal may be taken by a person meeting conditions necessary for a principal and who can prove that he/she has attended training program.

A person who successfully passes the exam acquires the principal work permit (principal license). Appointed principal who did not take this exam, has to pass it within one year from the day he/she assumes the duty. Principal, who does not pass the exam within one year from the day he/she had assumed the duty, will be relieved of the duty.

Principal's license will be terminated if the principal has been convicted and sentenced for a criminal offence or fraud while performing his/her duties and responsibilities.

Principal's mandate

The principal is selected for a period of four years.

The employment status of a principal where he/she has been working is put on hold during the first appointment period as a principal.

The election/appointment of principal

The principal is selected by the governing body of an institution on the basis of a publicly announced competition, following the receipt of the opinion given by the pedagogical preschool council (for preschools), teachers' council or teachers' and pedagogical council (for schools). The council's opinion is reached at a special session attended by all employees who then vote for candidates by secret ballot.

The competition for the appointment of a principal is publicly announced three months at the latest prior to the expiry of the mandate of a principal.

The decision accompanied by documentation on the selected candidate is submitted to the minister for approval. The decision of the governing body on the appointment of principal is considered as final or as having received the minister's approval if within the period of 30 days from the day the decision has been submitted the minister has not passed an official decision denying approval. After the prescribed period of time has passed, the governing body passes an official decision appointing the principal and submits it to the applicants. The official decision determines the time when the newly appointed principal is to assume duty and the responsibility of taking the exam for the principal.

The minister passes the document denying approval if it is ascertained during the procedure that the decision has not been made in accordance with the law or if the passing of the decision has jeopardized the functioning of the institution. If the minister adopts a document denying approval to the decision on the appointment of the principal, a new competition has to be publicly announced.

Authority of principal

The principal is responsible for the legality of operation and successful performance of the institution. He/she is held accountable for his/her work and activities by the governing body and the minister.

The principal:

1. Plans and organizes the implementation of the education program and all other activities of the institution;
2. Ensures quality assurance, self-evaluation, accomplishment of achievement standards, and improvement of education within institution;
3. Ensures the implementation of the development plan of the institution;
4. Decides on the utilization of funds allocated in financial plan and is responsible for approving and utilizing of those funds in legal manner;
5. Cooperates with the local self government bodies, organizations and associations;
6. Organizes and performs pedagogical review and monitors the quality of educational activities and pedagogical practice, and undertakes measures aimed at improving and enhancing the performance of teachers, preschool teachers and psychologist/pedagogue;
7. Plans and monitors professional development and conducts the title acquisition procedure for teachers, preschool teachers and psychologist/pedagogue;
8. Take measures in case of violations of prohibitions and against indecent behavior of an employee and its negative impact on children and students;
9. Undertakes measures geared to the implementation of orders given by the education inspector and education advisor, as well as other inspection bodies;
10. Ensures a timely and precise data entry and provide for the maintenance of an updated data base on institutions within a uniform information system of the ministry;
11. Ensures timely information provision to employees, students and parents, expert bodies and governing bodies, on all issues of interest for the operation of the institution and these bodies;
12. Convenes and chairs the meetings of the pedagogical (preschool) council, teacher council or pedagogical council, without a right to vote;

13. Establishes expert bodies and teams and directs and harmonizes their;
14. Cooperates with parents of children and students;
15. Submits regular reports on his/her work and activities and the operation of the institution to the governing body at least twice per year;
16. Passes general documents on organization and classification of job positions;
17. Decides on rights, obligations and responsibilities of students and employees in accordance with relevant laws;

Termination of principal's mandate

The duties and obligations of a principal may cease due to: mandate expiry, personal request, emerging of conditions for the employment status to be put on hold or the termination of employment or by relieving him/her of his/her duty. The decision on the termination of principal's mandate is made by the governing body.

The governing body relieves the principal of his/her duties if it has been ascertained that:

1. The institution has not adopted the education program in a timely manner or it is not delivering the educational program or has not taken measures aimed at attaining the principles, objectives and achievement standards;
2. The institution is not implementing child and student safety and protection measures;
3. The principal has not taken or has taken but in an untimely manner appropriate measures in cases of violation of prohibitions;
4. The proper keeping of records and documentation in the institution has not been provided for;
5. The records in the institution and public documents are issued contrary to this and the pertaining law;
6. The principal does not meet the prescribed requirements for the position;
7. The principal has not been acting according to the order or is not implementing the measures of the competent authority aimed at remedying the detected deficiencies and irregularities

8. The principal has proposed illegal decisions, has employed partial, untimely and incorrect information or has called the meetings contrary to the rules of procedure, and has in this way impaired the work and operation of the governing bodies and employees;
9. The principal has not enabled a timely and correct data entry process within a unique information system of the ministry or the maintenance of an updated data on institution;
10. He/she has employed a person on full time basis or is outsourcing that person contrary to the legal regulations;
11. The principal has intentionally or grossly negligent done omission in making decisions in disciplinary action, which is the final court verdict overturned as unlawful if the institution is bound to damages in an amount that may compromise the regular operations of the institution.

The principal is responsible for all damage deliberately or by gross negligence cause the institution.

The governing body relieves the principal of his/her duties if he/she is subject to a disciplinary procedure leading to employment termination due to an aggravated violation of work obligation or conditions for work contract termination have emerged in keeping with general labor regulations. The governing body relieves the principal of his/her duty before the mandate expiry date if the final document of a competent body ascertains that the institution or the principal is responsible for the violation of law, fraud or criminal offence in the performance of his/her duties and obligations. The governing body relieves principal of his/her duty following the measure ordered by the education inspection, within eight days from the receipt of the order.

The decision of the governing body on the relieving of duty of the principal is considered as final or as having received the minister's approval if within the period of 15 days from the day the decision has been submitted the minister has not passed an official decision denying approval. The minister passes the document denying approval if it is ascertained during the procedure that the decision has not been made in accordance with law or if the passing of the decision has jeopardized the functioning of the institution. If the governing body fails to take an official decision on relieving the principal when it is ascertained that the institution or the

principal is responsible for the violation of law, fraud or criminal offence in the performance of his/her duties and obligations, the minister will relieve the principal of his/her duty within 15 days from the receipt of the record showing that the order has not been fulfilled.

Rights of the principal following the termination of mandate

The principal whose second or any of the following mandates have expired or who has been relieved of duty at personal request is to be assigned to a job corresponding to the level and type of his/her education. If no job position is available in that or another institution, the person has the same rights as the person whose services are no longer necessary. The employment of a principal who has been relieved of duty during his/her second or any of the following mandates without having his/her employment terminated, and who cannot be assigned to a job corresponding to his/her level of education, his/her employment will be terminated and he/she shall be entitled to a severance pay in accordance with the law.

Assistant principal

An institution may have an assistant principal in accordance with the regulations governing the criteria and standards for the funding of the institution. A teacher, preschool teacher or (pre)school counselor with established professional reputation and experience in the institution, can be appointed as assistant principal for each school or working year by an official decision issued by the principal.

The assistant principal organizes, leads and is accountable for the pedagogical work and activities of the institution; he/she coordinates the work and activities of expert teams and other expert bodies of the institution and performs other work in accordance with the statute of the institution. The assistant principal works as a teacher, preschool teacher or (pre)school counselor pursuant to the decision of the principal.

Standards of competencies for principals

Standards of competencies of principals are prescribed by bylaw (i.e. rulebook). Competence of principals are defined as functionally integrated knowledge, abilities, skills and value systems that are the basis for the successful performance of and tasks in pre-school, primary and secondary education.

Standards of competence for principals determine those criteria which ensure successful leading and managing of these institutions.

Competency standards describe in detail the key activities that the director must be able to do in order to successfully lead the institution and to ensure the achievement of its goals.

The purpose of the standards is to ensure and improve the quality of the work, thereby contributing to the overall outcome of education defined by the law.

Standards are set out in the framework of the six areas of work of principals³:

- managing the process care and the learning of a child in preschool, or management of the educational process in the school;
- Planning, organization and control of the institution;
- Monitoring and improving the work of employees;
- Development of cooperation with parents / guardians, the governing body, the representative trade unions and the wider community;
- Financial and administrative management of the institution;
- Ensuring the legality of the work of institution.

Standards are applied in the process of licensing of principals and form the basis for adoption of training programs, the examination program for principals and for self-evaluation.

Further regulations

The minister shall prescribe in more detail the conditions for the appointment of a principal, training programs in keeping with the competences of a principal, the exam program,

³ The complete list of standards are to be found in Annex in the report Educational leadership: review of current theory, research and preparatory programs.

the manner and procedure of taking the exam, the composition and manner of operation of the Ministry's commission or the competent body of an autonomous province administering the exam, the content and the look of the principal's license form, the content and manner of keeping the register, the exam fees, the fees of the members of the commission and other issues related to the exam and acquiring the license of a principal.

Educational institutions

Types of educational institutions

The educational institutions in the education system of the Republic of Serbia are as follows:

- In preschool education – preschool institution;
- In elementary education – an elementary school, elementary school for the education of adults, elementary music school, elementary ballet school and elementary school for the education of students with developmental disabilities;
- In secondary education – secondary school, namely: gymnasium (general and specialized gymnasiums), vocational school, joint school (gymnasium and vocational or music school), arts school, secondary school for the education of adults and secondary school for students with developmental disabilities;
- The school may provide board and lodging for students (boarding school).

Establishing an institution

Educational institution can be established by the Republic of Serbia, an autonomous province, a local self government, national council of national minority and other legal or a private entity.

Detached department of an institution

Educational institution performs its work and activities in the place where its seat is located. An institution may perform its work and activities in another facility, by organizing a detached (branch, satellite) department. Branch department is not considered as a legal entity.

Expanded work and activities of an institution

An institution may perform other work and activities having an educational function (expanded work and activities) provided that they do not impair educational work and activities. The expanded work and activities of an institution may include the provision of services, production, sales and other activities which promote or contribute to a more rational and improved quality delivery of education. A secondary school may deliver training programs in accordance with the needs of the labor market. The decision on the expansion of work and activities shall be made by the governing body of the institution with the consent of the ministry. The decision on the expansion of work and activities of an institution founded by the Republic of Serbia, an autonomous province or a local self government unit contains a plan of revenues and expenditures necessary for the delivery of such expanded work and activities, manner of engaging students and employees and the plan for allocation and utilization of earned funds, in accordance with the regulations governing the budget system.

Autonomy of an institution

The autonomy of an institution implies the right to:

- Pass a statute, education programs, development plan, annual operation plan, rules of conduct within the institution and other institution documents of general nature;
- Pass an in-service training and professional development plan for teachers, preschool teachers and psychologists/pedagogues;
- Conduct self evaluation of the institution;
- Select the employees and employees' representative to a governing body and to professional bodies;
- Determine the internal organization and manner of operation of professional bodies;
- Establish modes of cooperation with institutions in the area of education, health, social and child protection, public enterprises, companies and other organizations, for the purpose of ensuring the rights of children, students and employees.

The institution passes general and other official documents abiding by general principles and objectives of education and those enabling the most effective attainment of general education outcomes.

The statute of an institution

An institution has its statute. The statute is the basic general legal document of an institution, closely stipulating the organization, manner of operation, governance and management of an institution, actions of the institution's bodies for the purpose of ensuring the exercise of the rights of children and students, protection and security of children, students and employees, manner of publicizing general legal documents and notifying all stakeholders on the decisions taken by institution bodies as well as other issues.

Quality assurance of an institution

An institution independently and in cooperation with the local self government unit, works on providing and improving the conditions for development of all forms of educational activities, educational programs, and conditions in which they are delivered. For the purpose of quality assurance, an institution evaluates the realization of objectives and standards of achievement, educational programs, development plan and satisfaction of students and parents. Quality evaluation is done through self-evaluation and external evaluation. Through self-evaluation an institution assesses: quality of education program and its delivery, all forms and modalities of educational activities, in-service training and professional development, conditions in which education is delivered, and satisfaction of students and parents.

Expert bodies, parents' council, student parliament, principal and governing body of the institution participate in the process of self-evaluation. Self-evaluation is to be conducted each year for individual evaluation areas while an overall self-evaluation is to be performed once in four or five years. The self-evaluation report on the operation of an institution is to be submitted by the principal to the educational council, teacher council or pedagogical council, the parents' council and the governing body.

External evaluation of the operation of an institution is done through expert pedagogical supervision of the Ministry and by the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation.

Institution development plan

An institution has a development plan. It is a strategic development plan of the institution which includes priorities in educational work, a plan and those implementing the activities, criteria and evaluation benchmarks for planned activities and other issues of significance for the development of an institution. The institution development plan is passed on the basis of a self-evaluation report and the report on the attainment of achievement standards and other quality indicators of the operation of an institution. The development is passed by a governing body, at the proposal of an expert team for development planning for a period of three to five years. In the procedure of quality assurance of the operation of an institution the implementation of the institution's development plan is also subject to evaluation.

Governing bodies of an institution

The governing body in a preschool institution is governing board. The governing body in a school is school board. The work of chairperson and governing body is without is not paid.

Composition and appointment of the governing body

A governing body has nine members including the chairperson. The members of the governing board of an institution is appointed and relieved of their duty by the assembly of the local self government unit, while the chairperson is selected by majority vote of members out of the total number of governing body's members. The governing body of an institution consists of three representatives from each group: the employees, parents and local self government unit. The governing body members representing the employees are proposed by the pedagogical, i.e. teacher council – while parents' representatives are proposed by the parents' council – in both cases by secret ballot. The assembly of the local self government unit decides on the proposal of the authorized mover by passing an official decision.

Mandate of the governing body

The mandate of the governing body is four years.

The governing body of an institution:

- Adopts a statute, rules of conduct in an institution and other documents of general nature, and approve the organization and job classification document;
- Passes preschool, school or pedagogical program, development plan, annual work plan; adopt reports on their implementation, evaluation and self-evaluation;
- Determines the proposal for the financial plan for the preparation of the budget of the Republic of Serbia;
- Passes the financial plan of an institution;
- Adopts reports on business operation, annual statement of accounts and a report on field trips or retreats;
- Makes public job announcements and appoints principal;
- Reviews the adherence to principles, attainment of prescribed objectives of education and achievement standards and takes measures for the purpose of improving the working conditions and facilitating the educational work and activities;
- Reviews the in-service training plans for employees and adopts the report on its implementation;
- Decides on appeals or complaints launched against a decision of a principal.

The Parents' Council

An institution has a parents' council except for the school for the education of adults. The parents' council consists of one representative of parents of students of each class, i.e. preschool group if a school offers preschool programs.

The parents' council:

- Proposes parents of children or students as the members of the governing body;
- Proposes its member to be a representative in the experts' team tasked with development planning as well as other teams of the institution;

- Proposes measures for quality assurance and the improvement of educational work and activities;
- Participates in the procedure for proposing elective subjects and in the procedure of textbook selection;
- Reviews the proposal of the education program, development plan, annual work plan, reports on their implementation, evaluation and self-evaluation and assessment;
- Reviews the utilization of funds received as donations and revenues from the expanded activities of the institution;
- Proposes to the governing body the allocation of funds earned by the student cooperative and received from parents;
- Reviews the working conditions in the institution, the conditions for children's and students' development and learning as well as their safety and protection;
- Participates in the procedure of prescribing measures, manner and procedure for the protection and safety of children and students during the time they spend within the institution as well as other activities organized by the institution;
- Gives approval to program and organization of field trips or retreats and review reports on their delivery.

The parents' council forwards its proposals, questions and opinions to the governing body, the principal and expert bodies of the institution. The manner of electing the parents council of an institution is governed by the statute of the institution, while its work and activities is governed by the Rules of procedure of the council.

EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

Qualitative study

The aim of the research was to gain insight into the barriers faced by school principals in Serbia, their potential solutions, as well as the competencies that the principals need to improve their performance.

Participants in the research were: (1) principals, teachers and school counselors from pre-schools, primary and secondary schools in Serbia. There were 10 focus groups (6 with principals, 3 with teachers and 1 with school counselors) coming from urban and suburban schools in Belgrade, Novi Sad, Kragujevac and Niš; (2) heads of the regional school authorities of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia, representatives of the local government, the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation and the Institute for the Improvement of Education. There were 7 interviews with these representatives. Considering the sample, the prevalent perceptions in this report are those of school employees.

Data collection and research procedure. Selected techniques for data collection were focus groups and individual interviews. The semi-structured guides were designed for the purpose of their conduction. The questions in the guides referred to three main topics: (1) barriers to leadership, (2) potential solutions to barriers faced by school principals, (3) knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership. (See the guides for the focus groups and interviews in the Appendix). For the purpose of constructing the guides for the focus groups and interviews, prior to the main study a pilot study was conducted with the aim of mapping the most important problems of leadership in schools in Serbia. In the pilot study we discussed with a group of three principals of primary and secondary schools which are the representatives of the Board of school principals of Novi Sad (one of the partners in the project). The data from the pilot study on barriers to successful leadership are sorted according to the standards of the competencies of school principals in Serbia (Pravilnik o standardima kompetencija direktora

ustanova obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2013) and incorporated in the guides as incentive for group discussions. The main study was conducted during March and April 2014.

Table 1.

Number of focus groups and interviews and its participants

Focus groups	Interviews
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6 with school principals: 1 pre-school, 2 primary schools, 3 secondary schools • 3 with teachers • 1 with school counselors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 with heads of the regional school authorities • 1 with the representative of the the Institute for Education Quality and Evaluation • 1 with the representative of the Institute for Improvement of Education • 1 with the representative of the local government • 1 with school counselor

Focus groups (each lasting about 2 hours) and interviews (each lasting about 1 hour and 30 minutes) were conducted in the schools and the regional educational authorities. The focus groups and the interviews were moderated by the members of the TEMPUS project. After the consent of all participants was obtained, focus groups and interviews were audio recorded and transcribed.

Data analysis. The transcribed materials were analyzed using a combination of deductive and inductive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). We started from three main themes, which were defined in the phase of data collection. The process further included the identification of sub-themes and categories within each theme,

based on the transcribed material. The inductive analysis was performed through the following steps:

- *Making familiar with the data.* All team members read the research material in order to become more familiar with the data. They also recorded the initial ideas about the meanings that appear in participants' conversations.
- *Coding.* Based on the initial list of ideas it was sketched a diagram with codes that were the product of consensus among all team members. Under the code means characteristic or information which appears in the "raw" data and it is estimated as significant from the perspective of the research question.
- *Defining the categories and sub-themes.* Systematic analysis and thematic gathering of the codes was used to define categories and then the categories were organized into more general sub-themes within each of the three main themes. Once we had defined a category or sub-theme we "looked back" to the code scheme as well as the responses of the research participants, in order to increase the interpretative validity of our categorization. Sometimes the categories overlap, which required revision of sub-themes. At the end of this stage it was made the final list of the sub-themes and categories.

Results of the analysis

Table 2. *Scheme of categorization of sub-themes within the three main themes*

Barriers to effective leadership	Potential solutions	Knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers related to the system as a whole • Barriers related to the school as an organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples of good leadership practice • Suggestions for improvement of the system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instructional leadership • Development and management of human resources • Organizational development • Communication

		<p>competences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge of the education system and direction of education policies • Financial management • Law and administration • Project management • Establishing identity as a leader
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Theme I: Barriers to effective leadership

The analysis of the responses of participants to the question which factors are the biggest obstacles to effective leadership identified two sub-themes and categories within each of them: (a) barriers related to the system as a whole, and (b) barriers related the school as an organization. Given that significant differences were not observed between the two groups of study participants, both in terms of content categories and in terms of their frequency, the results of the analysis are presented for the entire sample.

(A) Barriers related to the system as a whole. Six categories are identified within the sub-theme (categories are displayed by specifying the degree of frequency of appearance):

- A1. Insufficient and insecure school funding
- A2. Employment policy and evaluation of teachers' work
- A3. Inadequate selection of school principals and lack of their continuing professional development Election of school principals, preparation, training and evaluation of their work
- A4. Legislative issues
- A5. Mismatch between the work of different institutions
- A6. Negative image of educational institutions in society

A1. Insufficient and insecure school funding. The participants most frequently cited lack of funds as an obstacle to effective school leadership. Being aware of the generally poor economic situation in the society, research participants indicate its consequences in the field of education and school leadership. In addition to the low salaries of school principals (and other employees in education), the participants highlighted the a lack of financial resources for everyday function of schools, as well as for the purchase of equipment necessary for the implementation of high-quality education, professional development of employees and stimulating work of high-quality teachers. Also, the principals complain about the non-transparent and inequitable distribution of finances from local authorities which are responsible for the funding of schools and they believe that such distribution is politically motivated. Another problem is that the legislation restricts the possibilities of school principals to use the alternative financial resources.

A2. Employment policy and evaluating the work of teachers. A major obstacle in the work of school principals represents the legislation which regulates the employment of teachers - the selection is limited to the surplus teachers from other schools. Furthermore, due to the fact that teachers are employed for an indefinite time period, principals are not able to fire low quality teachers or teachers who make serious offenses at work (drunkenness at work, inappropriate behavior towards students or colleagues, refusing to perform work duties). Also, school principals are reluctant to punish teachers because their decisions are usually not supported by the institutions such as courts. In other words, it almost always happens that a court decides to return the problematic teacher to work on the basis of false evidence (e.g. medical certificate). The instruments of rewarding and sanctioning employees are not elaborated at the system-level, and procedures developed at the school-level are perceived as insufficiently effective.

A3. Inadequate selection of school principals and lack of their continuing professional development. The participants claim that the election of school principals is politically biased. In this sense, it often happens that local governments put pressure on the school board and teachers to vote for a particular candidate. The competences of candidates applying for the position of school principal are less important criterion in that case. Another problem may arise if the mandate of school principal becomes limited to two terms of four years each, as such proposal is currently being considered in Serbia. This would prevent those principals who prove

themselves as good managers to continue to perform this function. The participants also emphasized that there is no organized form of pre-service education and induction of school principals. In addition, the programs of professional development of school leaders are insufficient and there are no mentoring or other forms of professional support. In a somewhat better position are principals of vocational schools because they have had the opportunity to be involved in various forms of professional development during the educational reform. The participants believe in defined standards of competencies for school principals as a positive step towards improving the management of schools, but they find that the standards are very complex and demanding ("Who can fulfill all of these roles?").

A4. Legislative issues. The main objection with regard to the legislation in the field of education, but also in other relevant areas, is that different laws and regulations are not mutually agreed and they change frequently. School principals are also mentioning the lack of clear and consistent interpretation of legislation in certain situations which force them to refer to multiple "addresses". Thus, in relation to the law, all research participants describe their actions as "walking the thin line" or "being in the gray zone" because school principals are often forced to rely on themselves in situations that are not precisely defined by law.

A5. Mismatch between the work of different institutions. The participants indicate that various requests sent to school principals by the relevant institutions, such as the Ministry of Education, regional school authorities and two national Institutes are often redundant and not aligned with each other causing increased paperwork and creating resistance among employees. Also the problem is that local courts do not recognize the competence and authority of school principals in initiating disciplinary measures against the teacher, which led to delays in the process and the inability to sanction violations.

A6. Negative image of educational institutions in society. The participants complain about the negative attitude of the society towards school, which is particularly evident in parents' disapproving attitude toward teachers. They explain that media greatly create bad image of the school by reporting only negative events in schools in a sensationalistic manner.

(B) Barriers related the school as an organization. This sub-theme includes barriers to high quality management that come from school principals, teachers, parents and other school staff.

Analysis of discussion about this type of barriers shows that there are differences in perception between the two groups of the participants, school principals and other participants. Table 2 presents the categories (listed by the frequency of appearance).

Table 3.

Barriers that impede high quality school management from the perspective of the school principals and other actors

The perspective of the school principals	The perspective of other actors
1. Teachers as the barrier	1. School principals as the barrier
2. School principals as the barrier	2. Teachers as the barrier
3. Parents as the barrier	3. Other school staff as the barrier
	4. Parents as the barrier

The first difference that was observed was that the school principals most often cited teachers as the barriers, while other participants most frequently cited school principals as the barriers. In addition, the other participants point out the factors related to employees in the law and economic services in schools. They believe that the lack of expertise, insufficient number of employees in these positions compared to the large volume of work and the frequent change of officers significantly hamper the high quality management of school. The analysis of the factors within each of the categories of barriers is following.

School principals as the barrier. Although both groups of participants believe that factors related to school principals present serious obstacles for high quality management of school, there is a significant difference as to what factors they considered responsible. The school principals are primarily appeal to a large burden of the various roles and responsibilities, as well as having all the responsibility solely on them. Furthermore, they point out that one of the biggest problems is the fact that too much of “the managerial job” prevents them from paying serious attention to the quality of teaching. Other participants, however, suggest that school principals lack the knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership. This difference is somewhat expected since it is rare that the professionals who participate in research honestly report that they are not competent for carrying out their work. So, the other participants argue

that school principals are insufficiently familiar with the teaching methods and evaluation of its quality. As a special problem they point out that, in their opinion, school principals rarely visit school classes, and when even they do it they do not have the competence to give feedback to teachers on the observation. They find that school principals are insufficiently familiar with the legislation, they do not have enough knowledge about legal and economic affairs, and they have difficulties in balancing between the two main roles of school leaders, pedagogical executives and managers (which the school principals cited as the barrier also). An additional problem lies in the lack of motivation of school principals to develop their skills and point out that they prefer seminars that are designed for improving the knowledge and skills necessary for managerial jobs (legal and economic issues, administration, finance). Underdeveloped skills for teamwork and team leadership have been also cited as barrier to high quality management.

Teachers as the barrier. Both groups of the participants cited similar factors as barriers related to teachers. They point out that a large number of teachers are insufficiently motivated for work, especially for the work in school teams. It is perceived that many teachers are reluctant to accept the fact that their working time does not end with the realization of classes ("You cannot delegate to teacher a responsibility which is not in the job description, even if she has only three lectures"). Therefore, conflicts between school principals and teachers are frequent and school principals are forced to rely on a small number of motivated teachers. The participants also comment that teachers are not professional enough, namely that they are not critical to the quality of their teaching, but these comments are less frequent.

Parents as the barrier. Although both groups of the participants point out some factors related to the parents as the barrier to high quality management, school principals do it in a significantly greater extent. This finding is also expected because the serious conflicts that occur between teachers and parents are "diverted" to school principals. School principals are responsible for the outcome of communication with parents. The school principals believe that parents are given too much rights and authority. This is especially true for the Council of parents which is, in their opinion, too much involved in making important decisions such as the selection of textbooks, organization of elective courses and the like, without being competent enough. In addition, the school principals estimate that a significant number of parents are not interested in education of their children but have high expectations of the school.

Theme II: The potential solutions

Discussing how they can overcome the barriers that school principals face, the participants cited specific examples of good practice in the management of their own experiences or the experiences of their colleagues. They also gave suggestions for improvements of the system that would, in their opinion, contributed to better school management. All the examples of good practice and recommendations for change are categorized by similarity and presented within the two sub-themes for the entire sample.

(A) Examples of good management practice. Five categories are made based on the analysis of the examples. These categories relate to:

- A1. Improving the quality of teaching;
- A2. Motivating and rewarding good teachers;
- A3. Promoting cooperation with parents;
- A4. Providing additional funding and resources;
- A5. Promoting the school in the public.

Most examples of good practice cited by the participants are under the first two categories which would indirectly lead to the conclusion about the importance of these fields.

A1. Improving the quality of teaching

- *Base of video recorded lectures of good teachers.* These records serve as a tool for continuous professional development of teachers. A school principal together with the teachers in subject departments creates the plan of subject teachers' watching the records, analyzing them and discussing the important issues of teaching.
- *Base of preparations for lectures.* A school principal introduced the rule that all teachers are required to enter the preparations for lectures into a single in order to facilitate the work of teachers and encourage the spread of good practice.
- *Realizing distinguished lectures.* A school principal formed a special team for the improvement of teaching and along with the team members creates the plan of

implementation of distinguished lectures. Under the plan, teachers are required to attend these lectures.

- *Forming a team for the development of the evaluation list for the observation of the lectures.* A school principal has formed a team of good teachers in order to develop criteria for evaluating the quality of lectures. These criteria adopted by the teachers' council, and their goals are to "institutionalize" the practice of observing lectures and to allow the current and future school principals to use this list to evaluate lectures.
- *Planning a visit to classes.* A school principal at the beginning of the school year makes a plan of visits to the classes and informs all teachers about it. After each observation, he writes feedback based on the discussion with the teacher about the positive and negative aspects of the teacher's work. A teacher must sign this note and it is kept in the school records. A school principal also goes sometimes to unannounced visits to the classes to determine whether teachers improve the quality of their work based on the feedback.
- *Linking school with the relevant faculties.* A school principal has established and formalized cooperation with the Faculty of Special Education to improve inclusive education. Collaboration is done by a graduate student helping teachers to work with pupils with disabilities and this kind of work is recognized as a mandatory practice for the student.
- *Lessons for pupils who had been absent from school.* A school principal has arranged for pupils who are sick and absence for a prolonged time from school to attend on-line lessons. In this way the work of both students and teachers is facilitated.

A2. Motivating and rewarding good teachers. Due to lack of funds and legal mechanisms that allow additional incentives for good teachers it is recommended to school principal to define clear criteria for the rewarding together with teachers (internal awarding regulations). The participants cited as the most effective ways of rewarding:

- publicly praise the teachers at the teacher council;
- giving teachers time off as a reward for the extra effort and the results achieved;
- obtaining an additional equipment for good teachers;

- study trips for good teachers in the projects being implemented in the school or in the framework of cooperation with schools from other countries;
- provision of free textbooks for children of good teachers or free attendance to the programs or courses which are implemented in the school (language, sports activities).

A3. Promoting cooperation with parents

- *Organizing the School for parenthood.* A school principal creates at the beginning of the school year a plan of giving lectures and workshops to parents on topics that can help them help in the upbringing of their children. The experts in different fields are invited. In addition to parent education, the goal of these events is to encourage the parents to know each other and share their experiences. Also it is an opportunity for teachers (who are interested to attend) to gather information about the family context of their pupils.
- *A formalized communication with parents.* Given that serious conflicts between teachers and parents are frequent and parents, according to the participants, come to school usually when they want to solve a problem, a school principal introduced the following rule: when a teacher assesses that the communication with parents will be difficult, parents are required to formulate their objections in writing, signed a statement and make an appointment with the teacher. The participation in the appointment takes another person (usually a school counselor) and the records of the conversation are signed by all present. (The participants who cited this example of good practice report on reducing the number of conflicts with parents when communication is formalized in this way).

A4. Providing additional funding and resources

- School principals initiate the involvement of their schools in international projects and projects of the Ministry of Education and Science, which provide additional equipment and funding.
- School principals organize fund raising dinners for the representatives of local governments and the parents who are the representatives of different organizations and

successful companies. The dinners are opportunities for school principals to raise additional funds by presenting the visions of school development.

- School principals organized an action involving pupils and parents with the aim of improving the school environment (school painting, decorating the school yard).
- School principals encouraged the teachers to prepare teaching aids and materials needed for teaching together with the pupils.
- A school principal suggests to council of parents to make a decision on the establishment of a fund for school. If the council of parents agrees, then it is allowed to raise funds from parents.

A5. Promoting the school in the public

- School principals together with school counselors prepare periodically information on the various positive events in the school (for example, the success of pupils in competitions, various successful campaigns conducted in schools, exhibitions of pupils' work, successful work of teachers etc.). They invite the media to promote the information in public.
- School principals formed a team of teachers in charge of the editing the site (for example, ICT teacher and foreign languages teachers) comprising all the important information about school activities published in several languages. (This proved to be one of the most effective ways to connect a school with schools in other countries).

(B) Suggestions for changes in the system framework. In assessing systemic framework as too centralized and outdated, the general assessment of the participants is that what is needed is its decentralization, in the sense that greater powers should be given to regional school authorities – starting from the enrollment of pupils in the school to proposing new courses in secondary schools. The main proposals relating to the legislation are to harmonize laws and bylaws, to implement clear procedures for the entire system and to change the laws or parts of the laws. Other suggestions of the participants, for better visibility, are classified into three categories of proposals:

- B1. Proposals relating to school principals;
- B2. Proposals relating to teachers;
- B3. Proposals relating to the funding of schools.

B1. Proposals relating to school principals. The participants' proposals related to the selection, preparation and evaluation of school principals as well as to important aspects of the performance of their function are the most important from the standpoint of the research goals.

- When it comes to the selection of candidates, the participants believe that the most important thing is to abolish the criterion of election of school principals by political affiliation. Although they do not have a clear idea of how to "test" the candidate for school principals, the majority of participants agreed that school principal should be a person with a vision for the future development of the school. One of the proposals is that the future school principal should present their vision to the local community in which the school is located.
- The general attitude of the participants is that there should be an institutionalized training for school principals and that should last at least a year, and that the emphasis in that training should be on pedagogical competencies that would "strengthen" the role of school principal as the instructional leader. In addition, it is suggested a mandatory phase "of introducing school principal to work" for a period of one year, in which "the outgoing" school principal prepares his successor for a variety of roles and tasks. Although the participants, especially the school principals, assess competency standards for school principals as a very demanding and complex, they agreed that their introduction is an important step towards improving the management of school. However, they believe it is necessary to introduce a license for school principals in order to complete the professionalization of their position. It is interesting that in the discussion among the participants on whether school principals should have more autonomy appeared the proposal that the law should certainly allow greater autonomy for principals but only after mastering the necessary competencies to be able to properly take advantage of autonomy.

- The participants pointed that the overload of school principals is one of the major obstacles to successful school leadership and they propose to formalize the distributed leadership (to introduce competency standards and license to assistant principals, to promote the pedagogical collegiums as a "middle management", a part of the responsibility of school principals to transfer to the legal and financial service, etc.).

B2. Proposals relating to teachers. The essence of the proposals relating to the regulation of teachers' work comes down to the need to make changes to employment law.

- It is necessary to introduce more working hours for teachers (in addition to those relating to the implementation of the lessons), so that school principals would be able to ensure the participation of teachers in different teams.
- The legal mechanisms for clearly regulation of the system of sanctions and rewards of teachers should be introduced, which would significantly facilitate the management of the quality of teaching. This, among other things, involves giving legal rights of school principals to suspend teachers with negative evaluations or those who seriously violate the labor discipline. The school principals themselves emphasize the need to define standards for assessing the quality of teachers, which would be used as the basis for the rewarding and punishment.

B3. Proposals relating to the funding of schools. In addition to the proposal to increase the salaries of school principals, it is proposed to introduce "pay grades" for school principals and teachers. Differences in salaries of school principals should take into account the differences between the management of a large school and the management of a small one (for example, a school with 1300 and the school with 300 pupils). The proposals are to allocate greater funds for schools from the budget and to adopt the legislation that allows school principals to manage these resources more flexible, especially when school principals are focused to the improvement of teaching. For example, the involvement of teaching assistants or speech therapist at school or salary increases to reward teachers who are doing well and have a higher workload.

Theme III: Knowledge and skills needed for effective leadership

As mentioned previously, the participants agree that the trainings and continuous professional development are necessary for the high quality of school leadership. In doing so, they cited a number of skills and knowledge in various fields relevant to the management of the school. In addition, they talked about the characteristics of successful leaders as well as personal and professional values which should be attached. Nine broad response categories were identified and then the specific knowledge, skills and attributes are categorized into each of them. The categorization could not be entirely exhaustive because many of the skills and knowledge are transferable.

(1) Instructional Leadership (referring to the knowledge and skills required to lead and organize the educational processes in school, i.e., planning, realization and evaluation of teaching, knowledge of modern methods of teaching, etc.):

- knowledge about the high quality teaching
- knowledge of modern methods of teaching
- knowledge of the sources of motivation
- knowledge and skills required for the assessment of the quality of the lectures
- written feedback after the observation of the lectures
- practical experience of teaching
- planning, realization and evaluation of teaching
- analysis of observed lectures with teachers
- classroom management
- motivation and praise of pupils
- establishing good relationships with pupils
- individualized teaching
- knowledge of the innovation of teaching
- developmental characteristics of children

- conducting interviews with the teacher (about the quality of the lectures)
- research in and on the educational practice
- knowledge of psychology and pedagogy that are important for primary education institutions (pedagogical psychology, developmental psychology, motivation theory and theories of education)
- knowledge in the field of violence prevention
- knowledge of the inclusive school

(2) Development and management of human resources (includes skills and knowledge relating to selection, monitoring and improvement of teachers and other employees):

- monitoring and improving the skills of the employees
- skills to motivate the employees
- strategy of rewarding and punishing teachers
- psychological assessment of the employees
- assessment of the candidates who should receive employment
- planning professional development of the employees
- monitoring the activities of school teams
- promoting the work of the subject departments
- delegating duties
- team formation and teamwork
- team management
- management of the resistance
- planning teacher development based on the observation of the lectures
- sensitization and orientation of employees (for example, through mentoring)
- leading the subject departments
- work with the council of parents
- membership in various national and international associations of teachers and school principals

(3) Organization management (refers to the knowledge and skills necessary to plan, organize, oversee and evaluate the work of school, i.e., planning and implementing changes based on evidence, seamless functioning of teams, etc.):

- defining and implementing the vision
- management of change
- organization and control of school
- organization of educational work
- planning school work
- strategic planning
- creation of portfolio
- planning based on the evaluation of data and standards
- managing the process of self-evaluation
- knowledge and skills of management of systems
- implementation of best practices through regulations (for instance, on the remuneration of teachers)
- creating good school climate (ethos, school affiliation, involvement of all members in a variety of common shares)
- knowledge and skills in statistics (to be followed by assessment of students, the movement penalties by quarter, half-year)
- distributed leadership
- balancing different roles (instructional leader and manager)
- marketing presentation of school)
- decision making
- skills to find relevant and timely information
- monitoring of research findings in order to improve the work of the school
- skills to analyze problems (e.g. SWOT analysis, analyzing the quality standards institutions)
- quality management and quality control of teacher

- skills to promote and implement innovations that contribute to the development of the school (for example, the interpretation and implementation of strategic documents)

(4) Communication competencies (related to knowledge and skills for effective communication and cooperation between different actors within and outside school):

- assertive communication
- constructive criticism
- active listening
- negotiation (winning others for their views)
- assessment of respondents (nonverbal communication)
- conflict resolution
- digital competence / literacy
- foreign languages
- public relation
- information of employees (with written records, instructions)
- team collaboration
- preparing and conducting meetings

(5) Knowledge of the education system and direction of education policies (with a comparative perspective);

- knowledge of educational policies
- knowledge of the school system in Serbia
- theories about the development of modern education systems in the world
- global directions of development of education

(6) Law and administration (refer to the knowledge and skills that are necessary to ensure the work of the school in accordance with legislation, i.e., knowledge of legislation in education, administrative procedures, etc);

- knowledge of law and economics at the general level

- knowledge of the legal aspects of the institution (especially knowledge of rules and conduct corrective actions, where possible in response to a complaint, etc.).
- interpretation of legislation
- knowledge of legislation (particularly in education)
- knowledge of the public procurement
- knowledge of legislation related to budget funding
- managerial skills
- administrative knowledge and skills
- basic knowledge of economics
- office management
- administrative management skills

(7) Financial management (related to knowledge and skills of accounting and finance):

- knowledge and skills in financial operations
- budget planning
- development of financial plans (yearly, monthly)
- providing additional funding for school
- finding donors and grants

(8) Project management (knowledge and skills needed to participate in projects that can provide additional financial and material resources for school, i.e., how to design evidence-based and sustainable projects, etc):

- knowledge and skills for applying the projects (how to make an outline of a project, how to formulate goals, the explanation of sustainability of a project)
- project management
- participation in projects that are not funded by the Ministry of Education

(9) Establishing identity as a leader (referring to the qualities and personal values of school principals, as well as planning their own personal and professional development):

- openness to suggestions and ideas
- optimism
- skills to establish and maintain authority
- consistency in the implementation of the measures and compliance with the principles
- flexibility, tolerance, democracy
- emotional stability (control) and well-integrated personality
- lack of vanity, empathy
- tolerance to frustration (readiness to continue when it encounters an obstacle)
- self-presentation
- morality, honesty
- planning continuing professional development
- social intelligence
- entrepreneurial skills, initiative, creativity, proactivity
- stress management

Quantitative study

The qualitative part of the study described in this report was performed with the idea to explore ideas of different stakeholder in the education process in respect to principals' competencies and necessities regarding their professional development. With that in mind the quantitative part of the study focuses on the needs assessment for improvement of principals' competencies from their point of view.

Sample. The sample in the quantitative study consisted of 200 principals from Belgrade, Vojvodina and Central Serbia. Breakdown in terms of the level and type of the school is shown in the Table 4.

Table 4.

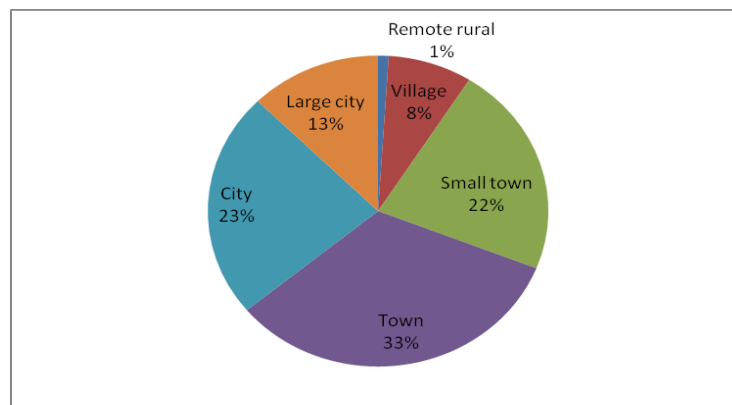
Number of primary and secondary schools in the sample

Primary schools	129 (64.5%)
Secondary schools	71 (35.5%)
Secondary vocational schools 53 (26.5%)	
Gymnasiums 16 (8%)	
Mixed schools (with gymnasium and vocational profiles) 2 (1%)	
Total	200 (100%)

Breakdown of the sample by the size of the where the school is located is shown in the graph 1.

Figure 1.

School locations



The biggest portion of schools (33%) was located in towns (settlements with 15.001 to 100.000 people), and only 9 % was from villages and remote rural settlements (less than 3000 people).

Having more than 50% of student body with low economic status was reported by 39% of school principals, whereas only 9.5% of them reported running schools with more than 50% of students with higher economic status.

The schools whose principals we surveyed on average numbered 742 students (SD=358) and 66 teachers (SD=28). In regards to the number of students there are no significant differences between primary and secondary schools. However, there are significant differences

in terms of the number of teachers ($df=1$, $F=19.773$, $Sig.=0.000$). In primary schools there were 59 teachers on average ($SD=24$), while in secondary schools that number rises to 77 ($SD=31$).

There was slightly higher number of male principals in the sample (51.5% males in comparison to 48.5% females). Gender distribution differs in relation to the level of education. Women make 53.5% of all principals in primary schools, while this number drops to 39.4% in secondary schools ($df=1$, $Hi^2=3.620$, $Sig.=0.057$).

On average our participants were 51 years old ($M=50.8$; $SD=7.86$) at the time when the survey was conducted. University degree is a prerequisite for holding a position as a principal. All but one principal have higher education: 82.5% have university degree (pre-Bologna study system), 7.5% have MA degree, 0.5% have had specialization, 7% have magister degree and 2% hold PhD. On average principals in our sample had 7 years of prior experience on the position within the current school ($SD=4.86$), and just above 7.3 years in total as school principals ($SD=5.17$). Around a quarter (26%) of participants had prior experience as vice principals.

As for the experience prior to being appointed a principal, 27.7% of principals in primary schools have worked as classroom teachers (teachers of students of grade 1 to 4). 73.5% of all principals (both from primary and secondary schools) have worked as subject teachers previously, and 7.5% as school counselor. 72% principals have work experience only within the education sector.

In respect to current principal professional development 53.5% of them have taken courses specifically related to leadership in education; 13% on leadership related to public sector and 4.5% on leadership in business sector. On average they had spent 45.9 hours on professional development courses in the past five years, however taking into account high variance in responses ($SD=71.49$) this data should be taken with caution. Median is 24 hours.

Instrument. All participants filled in a questionnaire comprised of two parts. The first part gathered contextual information (described above) whereas the other part of the instrument was focused on principals' perceptions in respect to (a) how important they perceived specific tasks to be as part of their overall duties⁴ (answers were placed on a 4 type Likert scale, 1 – *do not*

⁴ To what extent do you agree that this is an important responsibility / task of the principal?

agree at all, 2 – mostly do not agree, 3 – mostly agree, 4 - fully agree) and (b) the extent to which they perceived the need to improve their knowledge and skills in order to perform each task more effectively⁵ (4 type Likert scale, 1 - I do not need it at all, 2 - I mostly do not need it, 3 - I mostly need it, 4 - I very much need it). In total there were 82 items (tasks) we asked the principals about. All tasks were divided in six categories corresponding to six domains of the Serbian Standards of competencies for school principals (Pravilnik o standardima kompetencija direktora ustanova obrazovanja i vaspitanja, 2013), though this was not the general outline of the instrument.

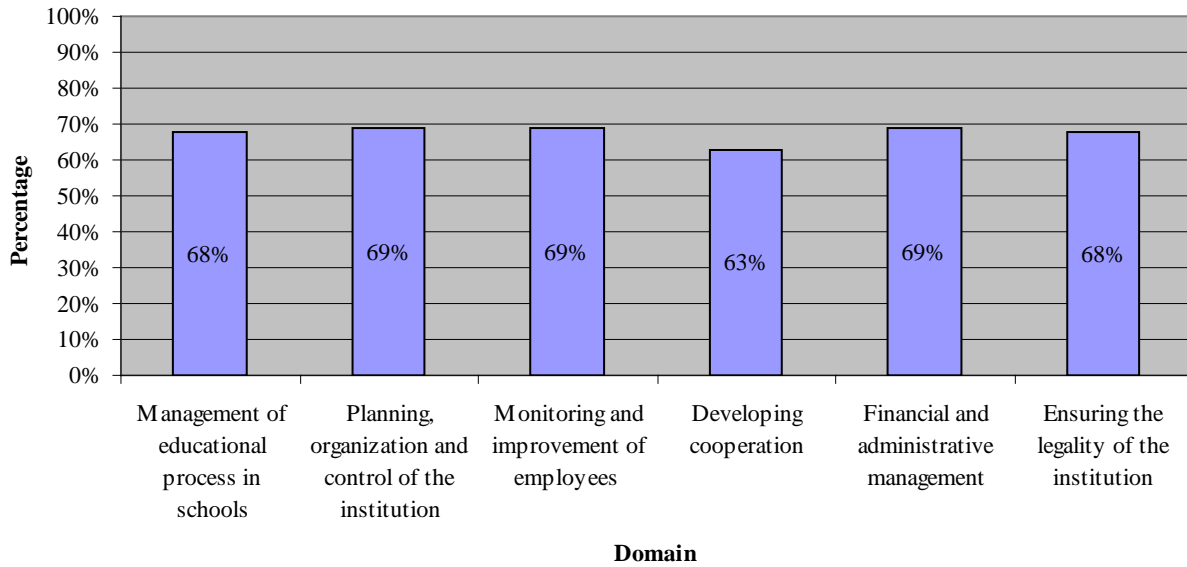
Results

The results point to a conclusion that most of the principals that took part in the study perceive that all tasks specified in the instrument (and, by extension, in the Standards of competencies) represent important professional duties of principals. These results are presented in the Annex of this report. Here the focus will be on the results in respect to their perception of the need to improve their knowledge and skills in order to perform each leadership task more effectively. The results suggest that most of the principals that took part in the study state that they either mostly need or very much need to improve their knowledge and skills on these tasks. On average, over two thirds of principals (67.60%) mostly need or very much need the improvement on the tasks listed. Furthermore, all domains of Standards are, to a certain extent, equally perceived as those where development of knowledge and skills is mostly or very much needed (Figure 2). On each of 82 tasks listed in the instrument, more than half of principals placed themselves in the “mostly need improvement” or “very much need improvement” category.

⁵ In your opinion, to what extent do you need to improve knowledge and skills for the following principals' responsibilities and tasks?

Figure 2

Percentage of principals perceiving they “mostly need” or “very much need” improvement



Due to the better statistics overview for the 82 items, they will be grouped in 6 domains: Management of educational process in schools, Planning, organization and control of the institution, Monitoring and improvement of employees, Developing cooperation, Financial and administrative management of the institution, Ensuring the legality of the institution.

Domain I: Management of educational process in schools

This set of items encompassed 5 subtopics, with 23 items in total. Table 5 contains descriptive data for each item.

Table 5.

Need for improvement: management of educational process in schools

	Item	I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it
1.1 Developing a culture of learning	Encouraging teachers to talk about teaching and exchange examples of good practice	5.1%	29.7%	38.5%	26.7%
	Clearly and continually promoting the view that teachers should have high expectations regarding pupil achievement	6.8%	28.4%	50.0%	14.7%
	Encouraging teachers to follow contemporary literature on education	10.3%	33.3%	35.4%	21.0%
	Creating school climate which promotes learning and puts it into a focus	6.7%	28.2%	36.4%	28.7%
	Creating school climate in which each pupil has the possibility to develop his/her potentials and interests.	5.6%	20.5%	44.6%	29.2%
1.2 The creation of safe and healthy conditions for learning and development of students	Installing effective mechanisms for maintaining discipline in school	7.6%	26.4%	30.5%	35.5%
	Installing effective mechanisms for protecting all from violence, abuse and discrimination in school	6.1%	20.8%	32.5%	40.6%
	Ensuring that school is a healthy environment with high hygienic standards	10.7%	30.5%	25.9%	33.0%
1.3 Development and provision of quality teaching and educational process at school	Continually following novelties in the education system and informing teachers about them	5.6%	20.8%	42.6%	31.0%
	Encouraging teachers to continually reflect on and improve their teaching	3.6%	23.0%	45.9%	27.6%
	Observing lessons in order to monitor and encourage quality in teaching	5.6%	25.0%	40.8%	28.6%
	Encouraging teachers to use teaching methods which develop functional knowledge and creativity of pupils	2.5%	18.8%	39.1%	39.6%
	Giving feedback to teachers about good and bad sides of their teaching	6.1%	28.4%	38.6%	26.9%

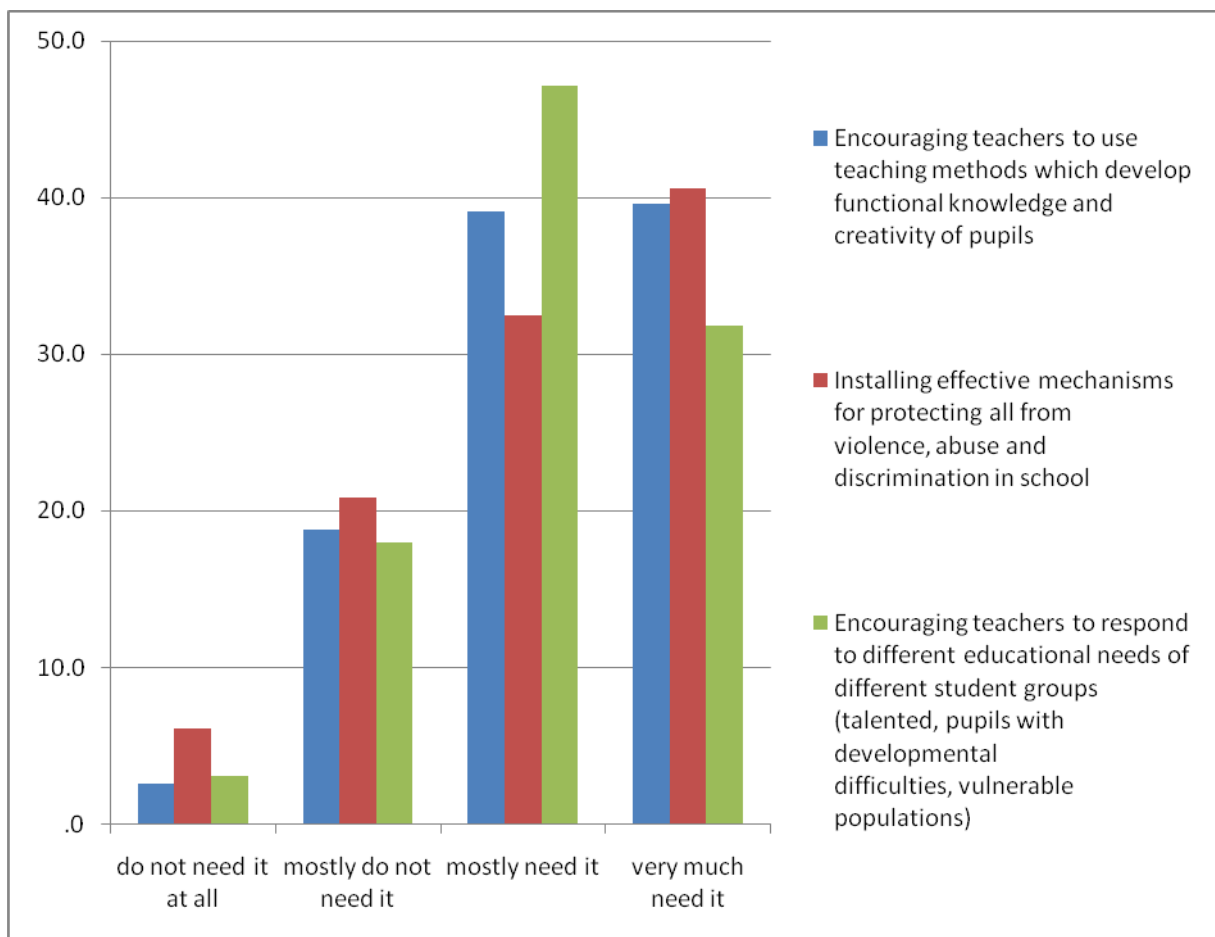
	Encouraging teachers to use principles of active teaching in their classes	5.1%	23.0%	43.4%	28.6%
	Providing conditions for realization of regular and high quality extracurricular activities	8.1%	28.3%	39.9%	23.7%
	Encouraging teachers to develop their pupils' social skills and healthy lifestyles	7.7%	26.3%	39.7%	26.3%
	Creating school climate in which individual differences are respected and multiculturalism promoted	8.2%	27.6%	36.7%	27.6%
	Creating climate in which children with developmental difficulties are equally included in class and extracurricular activities	6.2%	16.9%	39.5%	37.4%
1.4 Providing an inclusive approach	Monitoring implementation of the individual educational plans (IEPs)	5.8%	17.9%	40.0%	36.3%
	Encouraging teachers to respond to different educational needs of different student groups (talented, pupils with developmental difficulties, vulnerable populations)	3.1%	17.9%	47.2%	31.8%
1.5 Monitoring and encouraging student achievement	Holding individual and group meetings with teachers during which pupil achievement is analyzed and corrective measures planned	8.2%	24.6%	47.7%	19.5%
	Monitoring and analyzing pupil achievement at the level of school, class, and class sections	14.4%	28.7%	33.8%	23.1%
	Publicly noting and promoting pupil achievement	18.7%	33.2%	24.9%	23.3%

Results show that in respect to the Domain I of the Serbian Standards of competencies for school principals – Management of educational process in schools, on average 67.58% of Serbian principals perceive that they mostly need or very much need to improve their skills and knowledge (as presented earlier in the Figure 2). The most important tasks in this domain in terms of need for development are: encouraging teachers to use teaching methods which develop functional knowledge and creativity of pupils; Installing effective mechanisms for protecting all from violence, abuse and discrimination in school; creating climate in which

children with developmental difficulties are equally included in class and extracurricular activities; monitoring the implementation of IEPs; and encouraging teachers to respond to different educational needs of different groups of pupils. Over three quarters of principals responded that they either mostly need or very much need to advance their knowledge and skills on the above mentioned tasks. Graph 3 presents three leadership practices for which principals stated that they need support the most.

Graph 3.

Three leadership practices for which principals need support the most: domain of management of educational process in schools



Differences between principals from primary and secondary schools

A few differences were observed between principals coming from primary and secondary schools. Secondary school principals proved to need more support than their colleagues from primary schools in the following:

- Encouraging teachers to talk about teaching and exchange examples of good practice (mean 3.04 to 2.77, $df=1$, $F=4.499$, $Sig.=0.035^6$)
- Creating school climate in which each pupil has the possibility to develop his/her potentials and interests (mean 3.21 to 2.85, $df=1$, $F=7.985$, $Sig.=0.005$)
- Encouraging teachers to continually reflect on and improve their teaching (mean 3.14 to 2.88, $df=1$, $F=4.848$, $Sig.=0.029$)
- Creating climate in which children with developmental difficulties are equally included in class and extracurricular activities (mean 3.32 to 2.95, $df=1$, $F=7.877$, $Sig.=0.006$)
- Monitoring implementation of the individual educational plans (IEPs) (mean 3.25 to 2.97, $df=1$, $F=4.603$, $Sig.=0.033$)

Domain II: Planning, organization and control of the institution

Planning, organization and establishing control within institution may be done in many ways, but effective organization asks for careful planning of not just activities, but also how these will be monitored and later on improved. The section is comprised of 21 items, gathered in 5 subgroups.

In the Domain II of the Standards – Planning, organization and control of the institution 68.59% of Serbian principals on average perceive that they mostly need or very much need to improve their skills and knowledge (Figure 2).

⁶ Significance of differences was calculated using data on means and F ratios.

Table 6.

Need for improvement: Planning, organization and control of the institution

	Item	I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it
2.1 Operational planning	Establishing clear priorities and goals for school development	7.6%	17.8%	39.6%	35.0%
	Initiating educational projects and pedagogical innovations in school	3.5%	15.7%	44.9%	35.9%
	Strategic planning of changes in school	2.1%	14.1%	44.8%	39.1%
	Producing school annual plan, school development plan and school program	11.1%	24.7%	33.3%	30.8%
	Writing project proposals for school improvement	2.5%	12.6%	36.4%	48.5%
2.2 Organization of the Institution	Negotiating with and winning over employees for achievement of school goals	7.6%	25.3%	36.4%	30.8%
	Efficiently coordinating work of school professional bodies, school teams and other departments necessary for school functioning.	8.6%	31.3%	34.3%	25.8%
	Forming efficient and competent school professional bodies (for example, commissions) and school teams.	8.6%	33.8%	34.3%	23.2%
	Sanctioning employees for smaller or larger work infractions.	4.5%	27.8%	36.9%	30.8%
	Efficiently delegating duties to the employees	8.1%	32.0%	35.5%	24.4%
	Sharing leadership tasks with others (e.g., assistant principal, school councilors)	10.2%	28.6%	32.1%	29.1%
	Including employees in decision making.	9.1%	28.3%	38.4%	24.2%
2.3 Control of institution	Monitoring and controlling school functioning	7.6%	22.8%	39.1%	30.5%
	Ensuring that employees fulfill their duties responsibly and timely.	7.6%	27.3%	34.8%	30.3%
	Timely reacting to noted irregularities in school functioning and undertaking corrective actions.	5.6%	31.8%	32.3%	30.3%

2.4 Managing information system	Efficiently managing school information system	6.6%	20.7%	36.4%	36.4%
	Timely and precisely informing important stakeholders (teachers, parents, school board) on school functioning and school results.	13.1%	35.4%	26.3%	25.3%
2.5 Quality Assurance system	Using the results of self-evaluations, external evaluations and exit exams for the school improvement.	7.1%	22.2%	36.9%	33.8%
	Ensuring regular and effective self- evaluation of school functioning.	7.1%	20.3%	45.7%	26.9%
	Encouraging teachers to assume greater responsibility for pupil achievement.	4.6%	18.9%	38.8%	37.8%
	Creating and implementing plans for the improvement of the teaching process as a response to recommendations of the pedagogical or school inspections and external evaluations.	4.5%	21.2%	42.9%	31.3%

When it comes to operational planning, *initiating educational projects and pedagogical innovations in school* and *writing project proposals for school improvement*, these are the tasks principals need help very much with. The latter is seen as something 48.5% of principals need help with very much, whereas 39.1% need very much support when it comes to strategic planning of school development. *Strategic planning of changes in the school* and *establishing clear priorities and goals for school development* are in the same category, all agree they are important and many need very much help in performing these two tasks effectively.

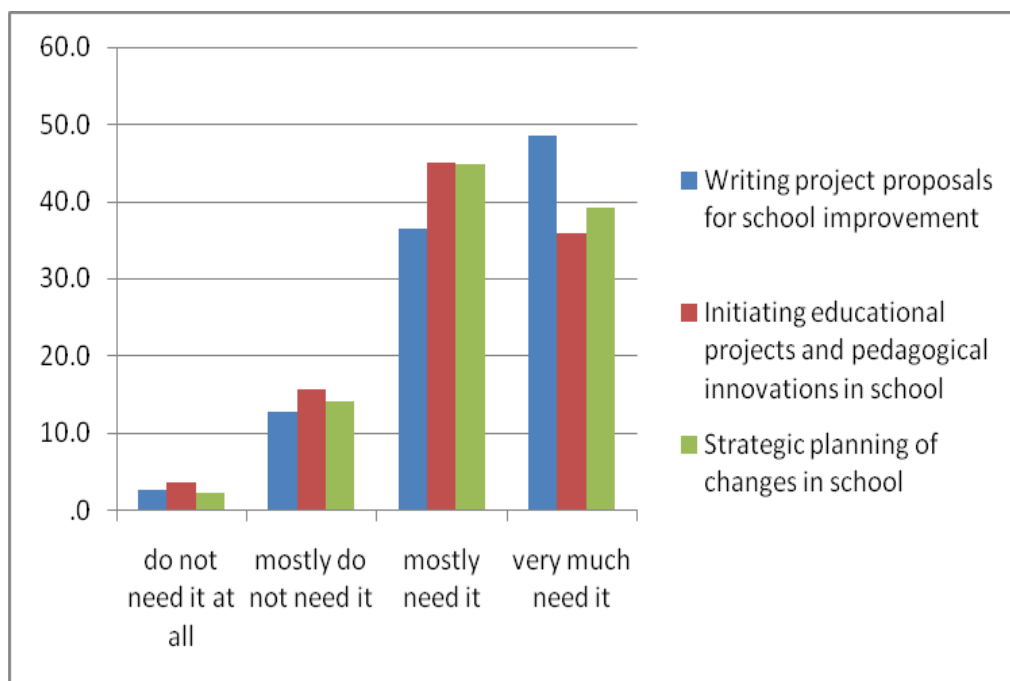
In respect to overall organization of the institution principals report between 23-31% of them feel in need to be very much supported in tasks related to this subcategory (e.g. *forming efficient and competent school professional bodies or sanctioning employees for smaller or larger work infractions*). Similar perceptions teachers exhibit when it comes to overall control of the institution.

Finally in respect to establishing quality assurance system within schools, seems principals need help the most in *encouraging teachers to assume greater responsibility for pupil achievement*. 38% of principals need very much support in the domain, whereas some 39% mostly need this support. Other aspects related to establishing quality assurance system seem to

be a nuance for around 30% of principals in the sample with them needing very much help on these tasks.

Graph 4

Three leadership practices for which principals need support the most: domain of planning, organization and control of the institution



Differences between principals from primary and secondary schools

Few differences were observed between principals coming from primary and secondary schools. Secondary school principals proved to need more support than their colleagues from primary schools in the following:

- Including employees in decision making (mean 2.99 to 2.66, $df=1$, $F=5.681$, $Sig.=0.018^7$)
- Monitoring and controlling school functioning (mean 3.12 to 2.82, $df=1$, $F=4.777$, $Sig.=0.030$)

⁷ Significance of differences was calculated using data on means and F ratios.

- Timely and precisely informing important stakeholders (teachers, parents, school board) on school functioning and school results (mean 2.83 to 2.53, $df=1$, $F=4.045$, $Sig.=0.046$)

Domain III: Monitoring and improvement of employees

Results related to the Domain III of the Standards – Monitoring and improvement of employees shows that 68.67% of principals on average declare themselves as needing improvement (presented earlier on Figure 2). This section in the questionnaire is covered by 13 items divided in 4 categories (Table 7).

Table 7.

Need for improvement: monitoring and improvement of employees

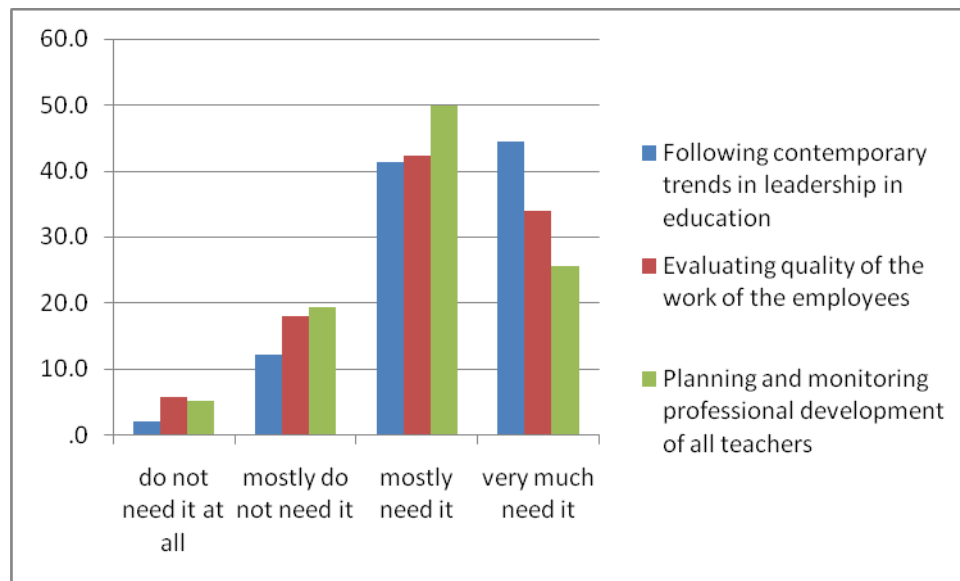
	Item	I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it
3.1 Planning, Selection and Staffing	Assessing quality of job applicants	9.8%	20.1%	36.1%	34.0%
	Planning and overseeing the induction of assistant principals, school councilors and teachers	9.7%	26.7%	41.0%	22.6%
3.2 Professional Development	Following contemporary trends in leadership in education	2.0%	12.2%	41.3%	44.4%
	Planning and monitoring professional development of all teachers (estimating needs, counseling, directing, etc.)	5.1%	19.4%	50.0%	25.5%
	Organizing various modes of professional development in school (exemplary lessons, round tables, etc.)	9.7%	27.0%	39.3%	24.0%
	Monitoring application of teachers' skills and knowledge gained during professional development	8.2%	23.5%	47.4%	20.9%

3.3 Improving interpersonal relationships	Creating climate of mutual respect and sense of belonging in school	10.2%	23.9%	35.5%	30.5%
	Developing and maintaining personal authority as a principal	10.2%	28.4%	34.5%	26.9%
	Encouraging employees to cooperate and participate in team work	7.1%	22.3%	39.1%	31.5%
	Communicating with employees and pupils in a clear and constructive manner.	10.7%	34.0%	26.4%	28.9%
	Mediating conflict situations in school and helping with conflict resolution	8.2%	25.0%	34.7%	32.1%
3.4 Evaluation of work results	Evaluating quality of the work of the employees	5.7%	18.0%	42.3%	34.0%
	Promoting and rewarding teachers for effort and high quality work.	8.1%	20.8%	33.5%	37.6%

Most principals stated the need for advancement of knowledge and skills is in the following tasks: following contemporary trends in leadership in education; planning and monitoring professional development of all teachers; and evaluating quality of the work of the employees. As before, the most pertinent tasks were those where more than 75% respondents placed themselves in the “mostly need” or “very much need” improvement response categories.

Graph 5

Three leadership practices for which principals need support the most: domain of monitoring and improvement of employees



No significant differences between principals from primary and secondary schools in this domain were observed.

Domain IV: Developing cooperation

In the Domain IV of the Standards – Developing cooperation, principals perceive that they cope somewhat better than in other domains. On average, 62.74% of principals think of themselves as mostly needing or very much needing improvement of their knowledge and skills in the domain (as presented earlier in Figure 2). The section is described through 10 items divided in four subcategories (Table 8).

Table 8

Need for improvement: Establishing cooperation with relevant stakeholders

	Item	I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it
4.1 Collaboration with parents	Developing constructive relationships with pupils' parents	9.1%	32.0%	36.0%	22.8%
	Planning and implementing activities that involve pupils' parents in school	4.0%	27.3%	49.0%	19.7%
4.2 Cooperation with the authorities of management and union	Developing constructive relationships with the school board, professional and advisory school bodies	9.6%	37.9%	28.3%	24.2%
	Cooperating with union representatives	12.2%	39.6%	37.6%	10.7%
4.3 Cooperation with state and local governments	Developing constructive relationships with municipality representatives in regards to school development and school needs	10.1%	31.3%	30.3%	28.3%
	Promoting school in local community.	12.2%	26.9%	29.4%	31.5%
	Developing cooperation with local community in order to create strategic partnerships	8.6%	21.8%	33.0%	36.5%
	Developing constructive relationships with representative of regional school authority	12.6%	28.8%	29.3%	29.3%
4.4 Collaboration with the wider community	Networking with other schools.	6.6%	25.0%	42.3%	26.0%
	Including school in national and international projects and cooperating with relevant educational institutions in the country (universities, science promotion centers, etc.)	3.0%	13.6%	35.9%	47.5%

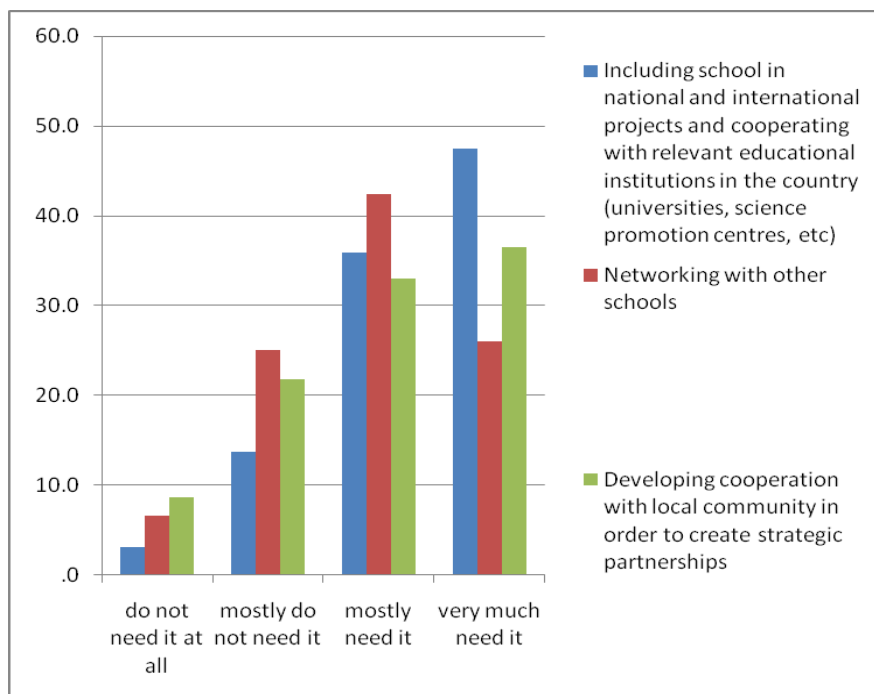
Within the subsection of *'collaboration with the parents'* the principals feel they need less help. Only 23% feels they need help very much in this area. The task *cooperating with union representatives* is also in this group and among all the tasks within the cooperation block of items the task is perceived as the one for which principals need the least help with.

In contrast, *developing constructive relationships with municipality representatives in regards to school development and school needs, as well with the local community, is seen as an area where more support is needed (rises to one third of those needing help very much). Developing cooperation with the local community in order to create strategic partnerships is also in this group, as well as networking with other schools.*

However the area that is the most troublesome for our principals is the one connected with *including own school in national and international projects and cooperating with relevant educational institutions in the country. 47.5% of principals feel they need help very much with this task, and again 36% percent perceives this for the most part.*

Graph 6

Three leadership practices for which principals need support the most: domain of developing cooperation



Differences between principals from primary and secondary schools

Secondary school principal think of few practices as being more important than their colleagues from primary schools:

- Networking with other schools a (mean 3.70 to 3.47, $df=1$, $F=7.782$, $Sig.=0.006^8$)
- Including school in national and international projects and cooperating with relevant educational institutions in the country (universities, science promotion centers, etc.) (mean 3.84 to 3.69, $df=1$, $F=4.597$, $Sig.=0.033$)
- For networking with other schools secondary school principals pronounce more need for support (mean 3.06 to 2.78, $df=1$, $F=4.681$, $Sig.=0.032$)

Domain V: Financial and administrative management of the institution

This domain was covered by 9 items, in three subcategories (*management of financial resources, managing activities and management of administrative processes*). It is, to a degree, different from other domains. Even though the average percentage of principals who mostly need or very much need to improve knowledge and skills in this domain (68.99%) (as presented earlier in Figure 2) seems not to be much different from other domains, almost half of the tasks in this domain are perceived by principals as critical in terms of their improvement needs. These include: efficiently managing school finances; providing resources for unhindered school functioning; efficiently planning and implementing the public procurement of goods and services in line with legal regulations; and being familiar with legal and accounting tasks.

⁸ Significance of differences was calculated using data on means and F ratios.

Table 9

Need for improvement: financial and administrative management of the institution

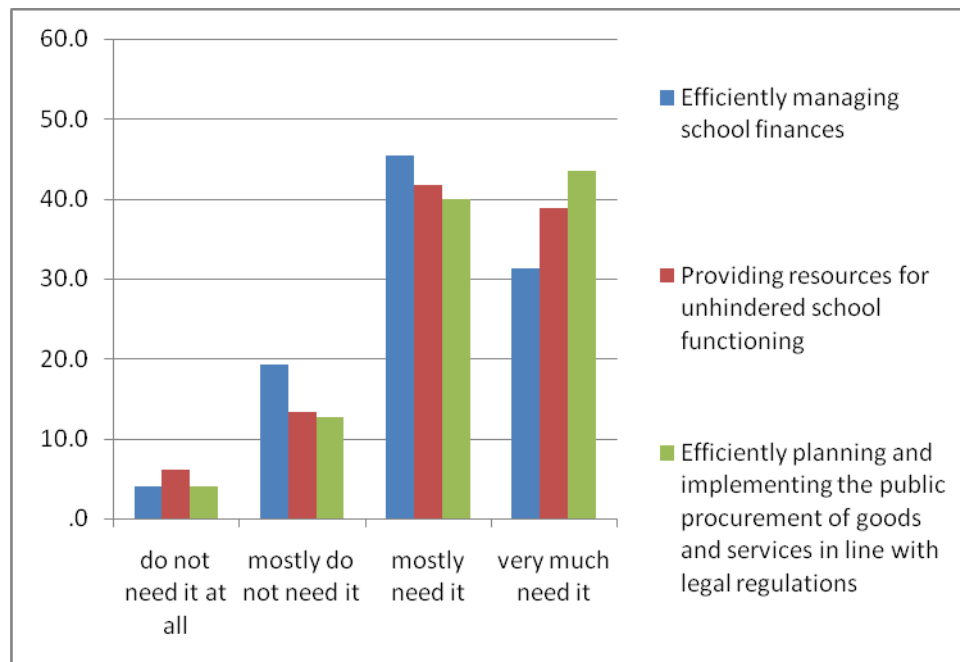
	Item	I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it
5.1 Management of financial resources	Efficiently managing school finances	4.0%	19.2%	45.5%	31.3%
	Developing school budget in cooperation with the accountant	7.6%	18.8%	36.0%	37.6%
	Providing resources for unhindered school functioning	6.1%	13.3%	41.8%	38.8%
5.2 Managing Activities	Efficiently planning and implementing the public procurement of goods and services in line with legal regulations	4.0%	12.6%	39.9%	43.4%
	Taking care of school property (equipment, building, school yard)	12.1%	33.3%	34.3%	20.2%
	Efficiently using school space and equipment in line with educational needs of pupils	10.6%	39.9%	32.8%	16.7%
5.3 Management of administrative processes	Efficiently managing administrative work in school	7.6%	27.9%	46.2%	18.3%
	Being familiar with legal and accounting tasks	4.0%	19.7%	57.6%	18.7%
	Ensuring quality of school documentation (school annual plan, school development plan, report on school functioning, evidence on pupils)	11.1%	27.3%	32.8%	28.8%

Due to all these reasons it is reasonable the domain itself represents an important pitfall in the tasks our principals meet on the position. Even more so the principals have not received direct training on this topic during their initial education and very little (if any) during their service as administrators. All these tasks are usually performed conjointly with the school's chief accountant. However principals cannot simply rely on the fact that someone else in the school might know the procedure, especially since they are the one being accountable. Again due to the constant lack of finances principals need to plan very purposively how any amount will be

spent and when. All these contribute them perceiving the domain as important, but also as the one they possibly need the help the most.

Graph 7

Three leadership practices for which principals need support the most: domain of financial and administrative management of the institution



No significant differences between principals from primary and secondary schools in this domain were observed.

Ensuring the legality of the institution

The category is covered by 6 items, spread in three subcategories (knowledge, understanding and monitoring regulations; making general acts and documentation and application of general laws and documentation). The results referring to the this domain of the Serbian Standards show that, on average, 67.65% of principals mostly need or very much need improvement in respect to the tasks that comprise the domain (as presented earlier in Figure 2).

At the first glance seems principals in our sample are fairly confident in own abilities to perform tasks related to ensuring legality of the institution. No specific task showed over 75%

responses in the “mostly need” or “very much need” category, which in no way diminishes the importance of developing knowledge and skills of principals in this area. However looking into specific items reveals around 25% of principals perceive this whole area (all 6 tasks) as the domain they very much need help with, whereas one third sees it as mostly needing help with the specific task. Specifically, understanding relevant laws and bylaws in education and using them properly in everyday school functioning and timely following changes in laws and bylaws relevant for school functioning seem to be the tasks the help is needed the most in respect to the relevance of the task itself.

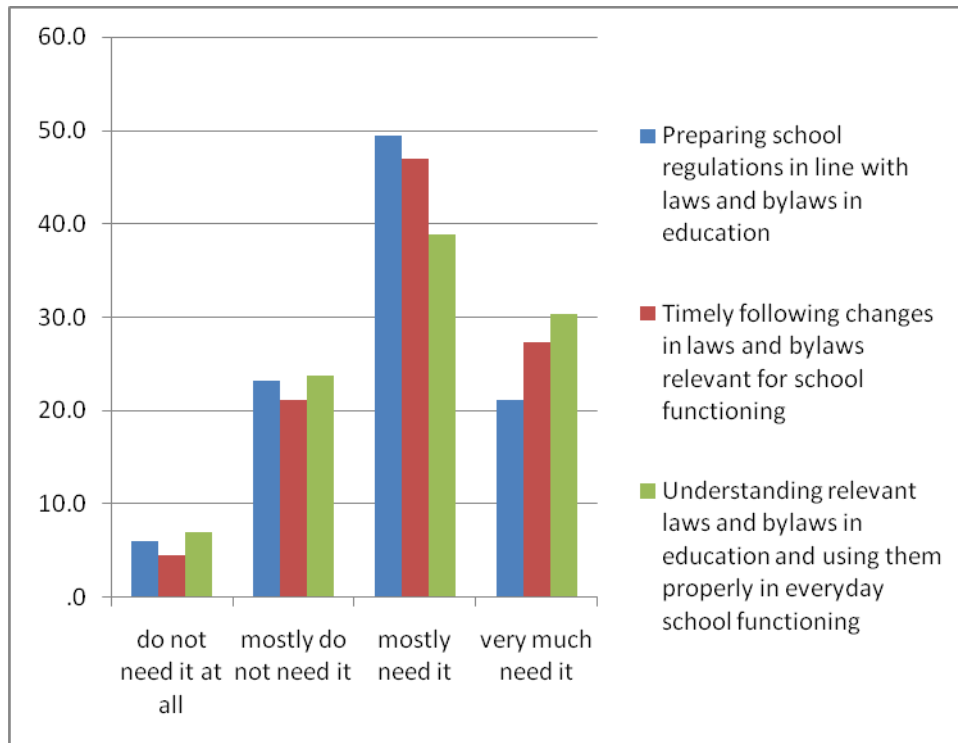
Table 10

Need for improvement: ensuring the legality of the institution category of items

	Item	I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it
6.1 Knowledge, understanding and monitoring regulations	Understanding relevant laws and bylaws in education and using them properly in everyday school functioning	7.1%	23.7%	38.9%	30.3%
	Timely following changes in laws and bylaws relevant for school functioning	4.5%	21.2%	47.0%	27.3%
6.2 Making general acts and documentation	Preparing school regulations in line with laws and bylaws in education.	6.1%	23.2%	49.5%	21.2%
	Providing conditions that school regulations are complete, clear and accessible to those to whom they are intended.	8.1%	25.3%	42.4%	24.2%
6.3 The application of general laws and documentation	Timely informing employees of their rights, obligations, responsibilities and relevant laws and bylaws	10.6%	29.3%	33.8%	26.3%
	Ensuring implementation of school regulations	9.1%	25.9%	38.6%	26.4%

Graph 8

Three leadership practices for which principals need support the most: domain of ensuring the legality of the institution



No significant differences between principals from primary and secondary schools in this domain were observed.

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ANNEXES

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

PRINCIPALS

Hello, my name is _____ and I will moderate this discussion. My task is to facilitate the conversation and to take care that we go through all what has been planned for today, giving each participant enough opportunities to express his/her opinions and feelings. At the beginning I would like to thank you for setting aside your time to participate in this focus group. The topic of our conversation is concerned with competencies of school principals and with barriers that they encounter while doing their job. It is important for us to hear your opinion; opinion of each participant is equally valuable, and your answers will not be judged as true or false. I would like you to say anything that crosses your mind in relation to this topic.

You will probably hear today some opinions and positions with which you do not agree. This is perfectly fine and please do not hesitate to express your disagreement with it.

Because we respect each and every opinion and because we want that all can hear what someone has told, the basic rule of this conversation would be at one moment only one person may speak. We want this conversation to go in a pleasant and civilized atmosphere. Therefore it is necessary to respect a person that is talking and to wait your turn.

We have to ask you for the permission to have this conversation audio recorded. It is important for us to note all your ideas, opinions and suggestions that will come up here, but this will not be possible if we do not record this interview. I would not be able to write down everything nor remember it all. Audio file will be used only for research purposes and your name will not be stated anywhere.

We may start by introducing ourselves. Please say a few things about yourself that would be useful for the group to know about you.

1. Which experiences related to your work as a school principal would you single out as most positive? Which are the most pleasant and enjoyable aspect of being school principle?

2. What are the biggest barriers that you encounter in your work?

(To moderator: encourage participants to think within the following fields: (1) instructional leadership and staff development; (2) planning, organizing and controlling school operations; (3) developing cooperation with parents, governing board, teacher union and local community; (4) financial and administrative management and assuring legality of school operations; (5) Not in the scope of principals' authority.)

On the flipchart write down five fields! Ask from participants to focus on barriers in one field at the time (put emphasis on the first field). Moderator should present additional barriers if they were not mentioned spontaneously:

(1) Instructional leadership and staff development

- Human resource policy (teacher employment presently limited to surpluses from other schools; inability to fire a teacher)
- Rewarding / sanctioning (rewarding only from schools own revenues, lessening the salary means that the money stays in state treasury, not in school)
- Lack of knowledge in relation to teaching and learning, observing and evaluation of teaching
- Students' overload
- Autonomy and teacher expertise as a barrier for them to listen to advice and suggestions

(2) Planning, organizing and controlling school operations

- Principals' fear that they will not be supported by teachers.
- Pressure form external evaluation
- Student discipline
- Motivation and engagement of staff (for school development planning, self-evaluation, for teamwork...)
- Lack of knowledge (for school development planning, self-evaluation)

(3) Developing cooperation with parents, governing board, teacher union and local community

- Too big interference of parents into school life
- Hostile stance of parents towards school
- One-direction communication with the district school authorities
- Overload of district school authorities hampers their potential to be true support to schools
- No real cooperation between preschools, primary and secondary schools from the same area

(4) Financial and administrative management and assuring legality of school operations

- Lack of knowledge (writing and submitting project proposals, project planning)
- Lack of knowledge in legal and financial matters.

(5) Not in the scope of principals' authority

- Principals are being appointed by political will.
- Principals are being confronted with 'money laundering' practices in local community
- Scarce finances
- Structure of school governing boards is poor (e.g. people whose highest level of education is primary school are delegated by municipality to sit in governing board)
- No clear division of responsibilities in school (bookkeeper and school secretary are not accountable, only the principal is)
- Principals mandate (term of office) is limited to 2 X 4 years
- Principals' salary is too low.
- Right to make financial plans and to allocate resources is limited
- In-service trainings for principals are inadequate
- Non-teaching staff has a say when it comes to status of principals.
- Law on education and Labour Law are in conflict (in relation to number of teaching hours and overtime work)
- Legislations change too often
- Lack of clear national educational strategy
- Inadequate school space and facilities
- Same salaries for principals all over Serbia, regardless of varying life standard
- Students can not be expelled from primary school
- There is no information system in education.
- Pressure coming form teacher unions.

When a certain number of barriers were listed then go over to the solutions. From each field select three most important barriers and discuss possible solutions to them and knowledge/skills needed to overcome those barriers. (Criteria of importance: how much the barrier hampers the students' welfare and achievement).

FIELD:		
Barrier	Solution (as I see it)	Knowledge and skills (e.g. competencies)
	– What have you done to overcome this barrier?	– Which knowledge and skills has helped you to solve the problem?
	– How do you usually solve this kind of problem?	– Which knowledge and skills do you need in order to overcome those problems more successfully?
	– Has anyone of you been in a situation that all attempts to solve this problem have failed? If yes, what have you done in such a situation?	– If certain problem you did not manage to solve, which knowledge and skills would you need to find a solution?
	– Do you know someone who has solve this problem? How did he do it?	

FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

TEACHERS AND SCHOOL COUNSELORS

Hello, my name is _____ and I will moderate this discussion. My task is to facilitate the conversation and to take care that we go through all what has been planned for today, giving each participant enough opportunities to express his/her opinions and feelings. At the beginning I would like to thank you for setting aside your time to participate in this focus group. The topic of our conversation is concerned with competencies of school principals and with barriers that they encounter while doing their job. It is important for us to hear your opinion; opinion of each participant is equally valuable, and your answers will not be judged as true or false. I would like you to say anything that crosses your mind in relation to this topic.

You will probably hear today some opinions and positions with which you do not agree. This is perfectly fine and please do not hesitate to express your disagreement with it.

Because we respect each and every opinion and because we want that all can hear what someone has told, the basic rule of this conversation would be at one moment only one person may speak. We want this conversation to go in a pleasant and civilized atmosphere. Therefore it is necessary to respect a person that is talking and to wait your turn.

We have to ask you for the permission to have this conversation audio recorded. It is important for us to note all your ideas, opinions and suggestions that will come up here, but this will not be possible if we do not record this interview. I would not be able to write down everything nor remember it all. Audio file will be used only for research purposes and your name will not be stated anywhere.

We may start by introducing ourselves. Please say a few things about yourself that would be useful for the group to know about you.

1. What are your most positive experiences from cooperation with school principal? Which are, in your opinion, most positive aspects of the role of school principals?
2. What are the biggest barriers that your school principal encounters in his/her work?
(To moderator: encourage participants to think within the following fields: (1) instructional leadership and staff development; (2) planning, organizing and controlling school operations; (3) developing cooperation with parents, governing board, teacher union and local community; (4) financial and administrative management and assuring legality of school operations; (5) Not in the scope of principals' authority.)
On the flipchart write down five fields! Ask from participants to focus on barriers in one field at the time (put emphasis on the first field). Moderator should present additional barriers if they were not mentioned spontaneously:

(1) Instructional leadership and staff development

- Human resource policy (teacher employment presently limited to surpluses from other schools; inability to fire a teacher)
- Rewarding / sanctioning (rewarding only from schools own revenues, lessening the salary means that the money stays in state treasury, not in school)
- Lack of knowledge in relation to teaching and learning, observing and evaluation of teaching
- Students' overload
- Autonomy and teacher expertise as a barrier for them to listen to advice and suggestions

(2) Planning, organizing and controlling school operations

- Principals' fear that they will not be supported by teachers.
- Pressure from external evaluation
- Student discipline
- Motivation and engagement of staff (for school development planning, self-evaluation, for teamwork...)
- Lack of knowledge (for school development planning, self-evaluation)

(3) Developing cooperation with parents, governing board, teacher union and local community

- Too big interference of parents into school life
- Hostile stance of parents towards school
- One-direction communication with the district school authorities
- Overload of district school authorities hampers their potential to be true support to schools
- No real cooperation between preschools, primary and secondary schools from the same area

(4) Financial and administrative management and assuring legality of school operations

- Lack of knowledge (writing and submitting project proposals, project planning)

- Lack of knowledge in legal and financial matters.

(5) Not in the scope of principals’ authority

- Principals are being appointed by political will.
- Principals are being confronted with ‘money laundering’ practices in local community
- Scarce finances
- Structure of school governing boards is poor (e.g. people whose highest level of education is primary school are delegated by municipality to sit in governing board)
- No clear division of responsibilities in school (bookkeeper and school secretary are not accountable, only the principal is)
- Principals mandate (term of office) is limited to 2 X 4 years
- Principals’ salary is too low.
- Right to make financial plans and to allocate resources is limited
- In-service trainings for principals are inadequate
- Non-teaching staff has a say when it comes to status of principals.
- Law on education and Labour Law are in conflict (in relation to number of teaching hours and overtime work)
- Legislations change too often
- Lack of clear national educational strategy
- Inadequate school space and facilities
- Same salaries for principals all over Serbia, regardless of varying life standard
- Students can not be expelled from primary school
- There is no information system in education.
- Pressure coming form teacher unions.

When a certain number of barriers were listed then go over to the solutions. From each field select three most important barriers and discuss possible solutions to them and knowledge/skills needed to overcome those barriers. (Criteria of importance: how much the barrier hampers the students’ welfare and achievement).

FIELD:		
Barrier	Solution (as I see it)	Knowledge and skills (e.g. competencies)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – What did he/she do to overcome this barrier? – How does he/she usually solve this kind of problem? – If he/she had been in a situation that all attempts to solve this problem have failed, what did he/she do in such a situation? – Do you know some school principal that has solve this problem? How did he/she do it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Which knowledge and skills has helped your principal to solve the problem? – Which knowledge and skills does he/she need in order to overcome those problems more successfully? – If certain problem he/she did not manage to solve, which knowledge and skills would he/she need to find a Solution?

INTERVIEW GUIDE

At the beginning I would like to thank you for setting aside your time to participate in this interview. The topic of our conversation is concerned with competencies of school principals and with barriers that they encounter while doing their job. It is important for us to hear your opinion on which kind of competencies school principals do need in order to effectively lead schools. We will take your recommendations into account during the development of the program for the professional development of principals.

We have to ask you for the permission to have this conversation audio recorded. It is important for us to note all your ideas, opinions and suggestions that will come up here, but this will not be possible if we do not record this interview. I would not be able to write down everything nor remember it all. Audio file will be used only for research purposes and your name will not be stated anywhere.

1. In your opinion, how good our principals are (e.g. how good do they do their job)? How would you rate them on the scale from 1 to 5? Why?
2. What factors are making them less effective? What factors are hampering their leadership? *(To moderator: if not mentioned spontaneously, present the following barriers).*

(1) Instructional leadership and staff development

- Human resource policy (teacher employment presently limited to surpluses from other schools; inability to fire a teacher)
- Rewarding / sanctioning (rewarding only from schools own revenues, lessening the salary means that the money stays in state treasury, not in school)
- Lack of knowledge in relation to teaching and learning, observing and evaluation of teaching
- Students' overload
- Autonomy and teacher expertise as a barrier for them to listen to advice and suggestions

(2) Planning, organizing and controlling school operations

- Principals' fear that they will not be supported by teachers.
- Pressure form external evaluation
- Student discipline
- Motivation and engagement of staff (for school development planning, self-evaluation, for teamwork...)
- Lack of knowledge (for school development planning, self-evaluation)

(3) Developing cooperation with parents, governing board, teacher union and local community

- Too big interference of parents into school life
- Hostile stance of parents towards school
- One-direction communication with the district school authorities
- Overload of district school authorities hampers their potential to be true support to schools
- No real cooperation between preschools, primary and secondary schools from the same area

(4) Financial and administrative management and assuring legality of school operations

- Lack of knowledge (writing and submitting project proposals, project planning)
- Lack of knowledge in legal and financial matters.

(5) Not in the scope of principals' authority

- Principals are being appointed by political will.
- Principals are being confronted with 'money laundering' practices in local community
- Scarce finances
- Structure of school governing boards is poor (e.g. people whose highest level of education is primary school are delegated by municipality to sit in governing board)
- No clear division of responsibilities in school (bookkeeper and school secretary are not accountable, only the principal is)
- Principals mandate (term of office) is limited to 2 X 4 years
- Principals' salary is too low.
- Right to make financial plans and to allocate resources is limited
- In-service trainings for principals are inadequate
- Non-teaching staff has a say when it comes to status of principals.
- Law on education and Labour Law are in conflict (in relation to number of teaching hours and overtime work)
- Legislations change too often
- Lack of clear national educational strategy
- Inadequate school space and facilities
- Same salaries for principals all over Serbia, regardless of varying life standard
- Students can not be expelled from primary school
- There is no information system in education.
- Pressure coming from teacher unions.

3. In which roles our principals are at their best? In which do they have most difficulties? *(To moderator: direct the conversation towards the following fields: (1) instructional leadership and staff development; (2) planning, organizing and controlling school operations; (3) developing cooperation with parents, governing board, teacher union and local community; (4) financial and administrative management and assuring legality of school operations.)*

4. Which knowledge and skills are needed so school principals can become effective school leaders?

5.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1/___/___

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

About the project

For the purpose of TEMPUS project ‘Master Program in Educational Leadership’ a research on professional challenges and needs of principals of preschool institutions, primary and secondary schools in Serbia is being carried out. Its results will contribute in designing the master program and courses of professional development that will adequately address practical needs of educational leaders in our country. The research has been carried out by the Institute for Educational Research with highest ethical standards.

Confidentiality

All information that is collected in this study will be treated confidentially. You are guaranteed that neither you, this school nor any of its personnel will be identified in any report of the results of the study.

About this questionnaire

- The person who completes this questionnaire should be the principal of this school.
- This questionnaire should take approximately 30 minutes to complete.
- When you finish with filling in, place the questionnaire in a separate envelope with address on it that you had already received, seal it and send to the Institute for Educational Research (Dobrinjska 11/III, 11000 Belgrade).
- When in doubt about any aspect of the questionnaire, or if you would like more information about it or the study, you can reach us by phone and e-mail (phone: 011/2681-127, 011/2644-693; e-mail: ssevkusic@gmail.com, dstankovic@rcub.bg.ac.rs).

Thank you for your participation!

About you

1. Are you female or male??

Check **one answer only**.

- a) Female
- b) Male

2. How old are you?

Please round to the nearest whole number..

_____ years

3. What is the highest level of formal education you have completed?

Check **one answer only**.

- a) Secondary school
- b) High school
- c) Faculty degree
- d) Master degree
- e) Specialization
- f) Magisterial degree
- g) Doctorate degree

4. How many years of work experience do you have?

Please write a number **in each row**. Write 0 (zero) if you do not have work experience. Part of one year count as 1 full year.

- a) |_|_| Years of work experience as a principal of this school
- b) |_|_| Years of work experience as a principal in total
- c) |_|_| Years of work experience as a deputy principal
- d) |_|_| Years of work experience as a class teacher
- e) |_|_| Years of work experience as a subject teacher
- f) |_|_| Years of work experience as a school counselor
- g) |_|_| Years of work experience in other fields of work

5. Have you had in your formal education any programs or courses in the field of leadership / management?

Check your answer *in each row*.

- | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|
| a) Programs or courses in educational leadership / management | Yes | No |
| b) Programs or courses in public sector leadership / management | Yes | No |
| c) Programs or courses in business sector leadership / management | Yes | No |

6. In the past five years how many hours have you participated in professional development programs? Please count only those programs that are specifically targeted at school leadership personnel.

_____ hours

About your school

7. What level of education does your school belong to and what type of program does it offer?

Check answer *in each row*.

- | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|
| a) Primary education | Yes | No |
| b) Secondary education / gymnasium (general education programs) | Yes | No |
| c) Secondary education / vocational school (vocational and technical programs) | Yes | No |

8. What is the total enrollment of students in your school as of April 1, 2014, and how many teachers are employed?

_____ students

_____ teachers

9. Which of the following best describes the community in which this school is located??

Check *one answer only*.

- | | |
|--|---|
| a) Remote rural (less than 1000 people) | X |
| b) Village (1000 to 3000 people) | X |
| c) Small town (3001 to 15.000 people) | X |
| d) Town (15.001 to 100.000 people) | X |
| e) City (100.001 to 1.000.000 people) | X |
| f) Large city (more than 1.000.000 people) | X |

10. Approximately what percentage of students in your school have the following backgrounds??

Check *one answer in each row*.

- | | 0 to 10% | 11 to 25% | 26 to 50% | More than 50% |
|---|----------|-----------|-----------|---------------|
| a) Come from economically disadvantaged homes | X | X | X | X |
| b) Come from economically affluent homes | X | X | X | X |

Jobs and tasks of school principal

On the following pages there is a list of various jobs and tasks of school principals. For each item you should give two answers. **First answer** you should check on the left side of the page, by marking one of the four offered answers (number) to this question: According to your assessment, to what extent do you need **to improve** your knowledge and skills on the following jobs and tasks of **school principal**? Answers are: 1) I do not need it at all 2) I mostly do not need it 3) I mostly need it 4) I very much need it.

Second answer you should check on the right side of the page, by marking one of the four offered answers (number) to this question: To what extent do you agree that this is **an important** job / task of a **school principal**? Answers are: 1) do not agree at all 2) mostly do not agree 3) mostly agree 4) fully agree.

According to your assessment, to what extent do you need to improve your knowledge and skills on the following jobs and tasks of school principal?				JOBS / TASKS:	To what extent do you agree that this is an important job / task of a school principal?			
1 - I do not need it at all 2 - I mostly do need it 3 - I mostly need it 4 - I very much need it				Management of educational process in schools Monitoring and improvement of employees	1 - Do not agree at all 2 - Mostly do not agree 3 - Mostly agree 4 - Fully agree			
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to talk about teaching and exchange examples of good practice.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Clearly and continually promoting the view that teachers should have high expectations regarding pupil achievement.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to follow contemporary literature on education.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Creating school climate which promotes learning and puts it into a focus.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Creating school climate in which each pupil has the possibility to develop his/her potentials and interests.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Installing effective mechanisms for maintaining discipline in school.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Installing effective mechanisms for protecting all from violence, abuse and discrimination in school.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Ensuring that school is a healthy environment with high hygienic standards.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Continually following novelties in the education system and informing teachers about them.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to continually reflect on and improve their teaching.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Observing lessons in order to monitor and encourage quality in teaching.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to use teaching methods which develop functional knowledge and creativity of pupils.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Giving feedback to teachers about good and bad sides of their teaching.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Creating school climate in which individual differences are respected and multiculturalism promoted.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to use principles of active teaching in their classes.	1	2	3	4

I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it		Do not agree at all	Mostly do not agree	Mostly agree	Fully agree
1	2	3	4	Providing conditions for realization of regular and high quality extracurricular activities.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to develop their pupils' social skills and healthy lifestyles.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Creating climate in which children with developmental difficulties are equally included in class and extracurricular activities.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Monitoring implementation of the individual educational plans	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging teachers to respond to different educational needs of different student groups (talented, pupils with developmental difficulties, vulnerable populations).	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Holding individual and group meetings with teachers during which pupil achievement is analyzed and corrective measures planned.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Monitoring and analyzing pupil achievement at the level of school, class, and class sections.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Publicly noting and promoting pupil achievement.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Assessing quality of job applicants.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Planning and overseeing the induction of assistant principals, school councilors and teachers.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Following contemporary trends in leadership in education.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Planning and monitoring professional development of all teachers (estimating needs, counseling, directing, etc.).	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Organizing various modes of professional development in school (exemplary lessons, round tables, etc.).	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Monitoring application of teachers' skills and knowledge gained during professional development.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Creating climate of mutual respect and sense of belonging in school.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Developing and maintaining personal authority as a principal.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encouraging employees to cooperate and participate in team work.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Communicating with employees and pupils in a clear and constructive manner.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Mediating conflict situations in school and helping with conflict resolution.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Evaluating quality of the work of the employees.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Promoting and rewarding teachers for effort and quality work.	1	2	3	4

According to your assessment, to what extent do you need to improve your knowledge and skills on the following jobs and tasks of school principal?					JOBS / TASKS:					To what extent do you agree that this is an important job / task of a school principal?				
1 - I do not need it at all					Developing cooperation					1 - Do not agree at all				
2 - I mostly do need it					Planning, organization and control of the work of institution					2 - Mostly do not agree				
3 - I mostly need it										3 - Mostly agree				
4 - I very much need it										4 - Fully agree				
1	2	3	4	Developing constructive relationships with pupils' parents.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Planning and implementing activities that involve pupils' parents in school.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Developing constructive relationships with the school board, professional and advisory school bodies.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Cooperating with union representatives.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Developing constructive relationships with municipality representatives in regards to school development and school needs.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Promoting school in local community.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Developing cooperation with local community in order to create strategic partnerships.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Networking with other schools.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Including school in national and international projects and cooperating with relevant educational institutions in the country (universities, science promotion centers, etc.).	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Developing constructive relationships with representative of regional school authority.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Establishing clear priorities and goals for school development.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Initiating educational projects and pedagogical innovations in school.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Strategic planning of changes in school.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Producing school annual plan, school development plan and school program.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Writing project proposals for school improvement.	1	2	3	4						
1	2	3	4	Negotiating with and winning over employees for achievement of school goals.	1	2	3	4						

I do not need it at all	I mostly do not need it	I mostly need it	I very much need it		Do not agree at all	Mostly do not agree	Mostly agree	Fully agree
1	2	3	4	Efficiently coordinating work of school professional bodies, school teams and other departments necessary for school functioning.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Forming efficient and competent school professional bodies (for example, commissions) and school teams.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Sanctioning employees for smaller or larger work infractions.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Efficiently delegating duties to the employees.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Sharing leadership tasks with others (e.g., assistant principal, school councilors).	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Including employees in decision making.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Monitoring and controlling school functioning.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Ensuring that employees fulfill their duties responsibly and timely.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Timely reacting to noted irregularities in school functioning and undertaking corrective actions.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Efficiently managing school information system.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Timely and precisely informing important stakeholders (teachers, parents, school board) on school functioning and school results.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Using the results of self-evaluations, external evaluations and exit exams for the school improvement.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Ensuring regular and effective self- evaluation of school functioning.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Encoring teachers to assume greater responsibility for pupil achievement.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Creating and implementing plans for the improvement of the teaching process as a response to recommendations of the pedagogical or school inspections and external evaluations.	1	2	3	4

According to your assessment, to what extent do you need to improve your knowledge and skills on the following jobs and tasks of school principal ?				JOBS / TASKS:	To what extent do you agree that this is an important job / task of a school principal ?			
1 - I do not need it at all 2 - I mostly do need it 3 - I mostly need it 4 - I very much need it				Financial and administrative management of the institution Ensuring the legality of the institution	1 - Do not agree at all 2 - Mostly do not agree 3 - Mostly agree 4 - Fully agree			
1	2	3	4	Efficiently managing school finances.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Developing school budget in cooperation with the accountant.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Providing resources for unhindered school functioning.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Efficiently planning and implementing the public procurement of goods and services in line with legal regulations.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Taking care of school property (equipment, building, school yard).	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Efficiently using school space and equipment in line with educational needs of pupils.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Efficiently managing administrative work in school.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Being familiar with legal and accounting tasks.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Ensuring quality of school documentation (school annual plan, school development plan, report on school functioning, evidence on pupils).	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Understanding relevant laws and bylaws in education and using them properly in everyday school functioning.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Timely following changes in laws and bylaws relevant for school functioning.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Preparing school regulations in line with laws and bylaws in education.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Providing conditions that school regulations are complete, clear and accessible to those to whom they are intended.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Timely informing employees of their rights, obligations, responsibilities and relevant laws and bylaws.	1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4	Ensuring implementation of school regulations.	1	2	3	4

Please check weather you have answered to all questions.

Thank you for your participation!

LETTER TO SCHOOLS FROM THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA



Република Србија
МИНИСТАРСТВО ПРОСВЕТЕ,
НАУКЕ И ТЕХНОЛОШКОГ РАЗВОЈА
Сектор за предшколско и основно образовање и
васпитање и образовање одраслих
Број: 610-00-00192/2014-07
Датум: 04. 04. 2014. године
Београд
Немањина 22-26
тг

ДИРЕКТОРУ ОСНОВНЕ ШКОЛЕ

Поштовани/а,

Министарство просвете, науке и технолошког развоја учествује у ТЕМПУС пројекту "Мастер програм лидерство у образовању", у оквиру кога се реализује истраживање о стручним изазовима и потребама директора предшколских установа, основних и средњих школа у Републици Србији.

Резултати истраживања допринеће томе да се у Републици Србији осмисли мастер програм, као и курсеви професионалног развоја који би адекватно одговорили на практичне потребе лидера у образовању у нашој земљи.

Упитник је базиран на Стандардима компетенција за директоре и дистрибуираће се основним школама Републике Србије од стране Института за педагошка истраживања из Београда. Молимо Вас, уколико имате додатна питања, обратите се сарадницима Института за педагошка истраживања (тел: 011/2681-127, 011/2644-693; е-пошта: ssevkusic@gmail.com, dstankovic@rcub.bg.ac.rs).

С поштовањем,


МИНИСТАР
проф. др Томислав Јовановић

Survey results: perceived importance of leadership tasks

Table 1

Task importance: management of educational process in schools

	Item	I do not agree at all	I mostly do not agree	I mostly agree	I fully agree
1.1 Developing a culture of learning	Encouraging teachers to talk about teaching and exchange examples of good practice	0	3,3	30,3	66,4
	Clearly and continually promoting the view that teachers should have high expectations regarding pupil achievement	0	9,4	48,7	41,9
	Encouraging teachers to follow contemporary literature on education	1,7	6,6	34,7	57,0
	Creating school climate which promotes learning and puts it into a focus	0	,8	19,8	79,3
	Creating school climate in which each pupil has the possibility to develop his/her potentials and interests.	0	0	18,9	81,1
1.2 The creation of safe and healthy conditions for learning and development of students	Installing effective mechanisms for maintaining discipline in school	0	,8	25,8	73,4
	Installing effective mechanisms for protecting all from violence, abuse and discrimination in school	0	,8	12,9	86,3
	Ensuring that school is a healthy environment with high hygienic standards	0	2,4	11,4	86,2
1.3 Development and provision of quality teaching and educational process at school	Continually following novelties in the education system and informing teachers about them	0	0	30,6	69,4
	Encouraging teachers to continually reflect on and improve their teaching	0	1,6	35,0	63,4
	Observing lessons in order to monitor and encourage quality in teaching	0	,8	36,3	62,9
	Encouraging teachers to use teaching methods which develop functional knowledge and creativity of pupils	0	2,4	18,5	79,0
	Giving feedback to teachers about good and bad sides of their teaching	0	3,2	33,9	62,9
	Encouraging teachers to use principles of active teaching in their classes	0	4,1	30,9	64,2

	Providing conditions for realization of regular and high quality extracurricular activities	0	2,5	36,1	61,5
	Encouraging teachers to develop their pupils' social skills and healthy lifestyles	,8	1,7	38,3	59,2
1.4 Providing an inclusive approach	Creating school climate in which individual differences are respected and multiculturalism promoted	0	2,4	24,2	73,4
	Creating climate in which children with developmental difficulties are equally included in class and extracurricular activities	0	3,3	25,6	71,1
	Monitoring implementation of the individual educational plans (IEPs)	0	5,9	29,7	64,4
	Encouraging teachers to respond to different educational needs of different student groups (talented, pupils with developmental difficulties, vulnerable populations)	0	4,1	28,9	66,9
1.5 Monitoring and encouraging student achievement	Holding individual and group meetings with teachers during which pupil achievement is analyzed and corrective measures planned	0	3,3	43,0	53,7
	Monitoring and analyzing pupil achievement at the level of school, class, and class sections	0	3,3	26,4	70,2
	Publicly noting and promoting pupil achievement	0	3,4	18,5	78,2

Table 2

Task importance: Planning, organization and control of the institution

	Item	I do not agree at all	I mostly do not agree	I mostly agree	I fully agree
2.1 Operational planning	Establishing clear priorities and goals for school development	0	0	19,8	80,2
	Initiating educational projects and pedagogical innovations in school	0	,8	27,0	72,1
	Strategic planning of changes in school	0	,8	31,4	67,8
	Producing school annual plan, school development plan and school program	0	1,6	21,3	77,0

	Writing project proposals for school improvement	0	2,5	28,1	69,4
2.2 Organization of the Institution	Negotiating with and winning over employees for achievement of school goals	0	2,5	28,7	68,9
	Efficiently coordinating work of school professional bodies, school teams and other departments necessary for school functioning.	0	0	29,3	70,7
	Forming efficient and competent school professional bodies (for example, commissions) and school teams.	0	2,5	30,3	67,2
	Sanctioning employees for smaller or larger work infractions.	0	7,3	38,2	54,5
	Efficiently delegating duties to the employees	0	,8	28,1	71,1
	Sharing leadership tasks with others (e.g., assistant principal, school councilors)	0	,8	24,0	75,2
	Including employees in decision making.	0	1,6	36,9	61,5
	2.3 Control of institution	Monitoring and controlling school functioning	0	0	18,0
Ensuring that employees fulfill their duties responsibly and timely.		0	,8	18,2	81,0
Timely reacting to noted irregularities in school functioning and undertaking corrective actions.		0	,8	23,8	75,4
2.4 Managing information system	Efficiently managing school information system	0	3,3	34,7	62,0
	Timely and precisely informing important stakeholders (teachers, parents, school board) on school functioning and school results.	0	1,6	20,5	77,9
2.5 Quality Assurance system	Using the results of self-evaluations, external evaluations and exit exams for the school improvement.	0	,8	16,4	82,8
	Ensuring regular and effective self- evaluation of school functioning.	0	,8	28,7	70,5
	Encouraging teachers to assume greater responsibility for pupil achievement.	0	,8	25,0	74,2
	Creating and implementing plans for the improvement of the teaching process as a response to recommendations of the pedagogical or school inspections and external evaluations.	0	2,5	25,4	72,1

Table 3

Task importance: monitoring and improvement of employees

	Item	I do not agree at all	I mostly do not agree	I mostly agree	I fully agree
3.1 Planning, Selection and Staffing	Assessing quality of job applicants	0	,8	18,3	80,8
	Planning and overseeing the induction of assistant principals, school councilors and teachers	0	1,7	36,4	62,0
3.2 Professional Development	Following contemporary trends in leadership in education	0	1,7	30,8	67,5
	Planning and monitoring professional development of all teachers (estimating needs, counseling, directing, etc.)	0	3,3	42,1	54,5
	Organizing various modes of professional development in school (exemplary lessons, round tables, etc.)	0	2,5	27,3	70,2
	Monitoring application of teachers' skills and knowledge gained during professional development	0	5,0	38,8	56,2
3.3 Improving interpersonal relationships	Creating climate of mutual respect and sense of belonging in school	0	0	17,5	82,5
	Developing and maintaining personal authority as a principal	0	2,5	27,5	70,0
	Encouraging employees to cooperate and participate in team work	0	,8	17,5	81,7
	Communicating with employees and pupils in a clear and constructive manner.	0	,8	15,0	84,2
	Mediating conflict situations in school and helping with conflict resolution	0	0	21,7	78,3
3.4 Evaluation of work results	Evaluating quality of the work of the employees	0	0	22,9	77,1
	Promoting and rewarding teachers for effort and high quality work.	0	,8	21,7	77,5

Table 4

Task importance: Establishing cooperation with relevant stakeholders

	Item	I do not agree at all	I mostly do not agree	I mostly agree	I fully agree
4.1 Collaboration with parents	Developing constructive relationships with pupils' parents	0	1,6	34,4	63,9
	Planning and implementing activities that involve pupils' parents in school	0	4,1	46,3	49,6
4.2 Cooperation with the authorities of management and union	Developing constructive relationships with the school board, professional and advisory school bodies	0	,8	23,0	76,2
	Cooperating with union representatives	0	7,4	52,5	40,2
4.3 Cooperation with state and local governments	Developing constructive relationships with municipality representatives in regards to school development and school needs	0	0	23,0	77,0
	Promoting school in local community.	0	0	18,9	81,1
	Developing cooperation with local community in order to create strategic partnerships	0	,8	30,8	68,3
	Developing constructive relationships with representative of regional school authority	0	0	18,2	81,8
4.4 Collaboration with the wider community	Networking with other schools.	0	5,0	42,1	52,9
	Including school in national and international projects and cooperating with relevant educational institutions in the country (universities, science promotion centers, etc.)	0	2,5	26,2	71,3

Table 5
Task importance: financial and administrative management of the institution

	Item	I do not agree at all	I mostly do not agree	I mostly agree	I fully agree
5.1 Management of financial resources	Efficiently managing school finances	0	0	23,6	76,4
	Developing school budget in cooperation with the accountant	0	0	22,8	77,2
	Providing resources for unhindered school functioning	,8	,8	21,3	77,0
5.2 Managing Activities	Efficiently planning and implementing the public procurement of goods and services in line with legal regulations	,8	4,8	28,2	66,1
	Taking care of school property (equipment, building, school yard)	,8	1,6	29,8	67,7
	Efficiently using school space and equipment in line with educational needs of pupils	1,6	2,4	37,1	58,9
5.3 Management of administrative processes	Efficiently managing administrative work in school	,8	10,5	37,9	50,8
	Being familiar with legal and accounting tasks	,8	8,1	45,2	46,0
	Ensuring quality of school documentation (school annual plan, school development plan, report on school functioning, evidence on pupils)	0	,8	26,6	72,6

Table 6

Task importance: ensuring the legality of the institution category of items

	Item	I do not agree at all	I mostly do not agree	I mostly agree	I fully agree
6.1 Knowledge, understanding and monitoring regulations	Understanding relevant laws and bylaws in education and using them properly in everyday school functioning	0	0	26,6	73,4
	Timely following changes in laws and bylaws relevant for school functioning	0	2,4	29,0	68,5
6.2 Making general acts and documentation	Preparing school regulations in line with laws and bylaws in education.	0	6,5	25,8	67,7
	Providing conditions that school regulations are complete, clear and accessible to those to whom they are intended.	,8	3,2	29,0	66,9
6.3 The application of general laws and documentation	Timely informing employees of their rights, obligations, responsibilities and relevant laws and bylaws	0	4,8	21,8	73,4
	Ensuring implementation of school regulations	0	3,2	22,6	74,2

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