

PROFESSIONAL STAFFING ADMINISTRATION: PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS

School Administrators are responsible for program leadership and innovation, for maintaining and improving the quality of faculty and staff performance, for providing student support and addressing matters of student deportment, for serving as the interface between schools, parents and community, and for managing the day-to-day operations of buildings and programs.

In Weston, 14 full time administrators serve 2511 students and over 350 employees. Weston has fewer administrators per student and lower administration costs than the median in DRG A communities. This has been the case for a number of years.

MANDATED ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

Superintendent's and Principal's positions are required by law. Among their functions: interaction with governing boards and/or parent boards; public education about school programs and services; educational research and program improvement (outreach to identify best practices elsewhere, internal program development activity, e.g.); staff evaluation and supervision (including classroom visits, supervision/evaluation in collaboration with other supervisors); interaction with students, parents and teachers; problem resolution where issues have not been resolved at lower levels; budget development and management; facilities planning, development and management.

Other positions are determined as the result of Board of Education judgments about the appropriate level of support required to meet work demands, legal requirements, and community expectations.

DISTRICT LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

In addition to the Superintendent, district level administration consists of an Assistant Superintendent, responsible for curriculum and instruction, Director of Finance and Operations responsible for business and operations, and a Human Resources Director responsible for personnel and general administration. There is also a Director of Special Education and Pupil Personnel. In collaboration with the Superintendent, these administrators are responsible for program planning and development, for staff supervision as well as for day-to-day operations in their areas of responsibility.

SCHOOL LEVEL ADMINISTRATIVE POSITIONS

At the High School two Assistant Principals are responsible respectively for educational program and building management; student support/discipline and special needs services (including special education, 504 accommodations and non-classified students); and student support/discipline and student life (including orientation programs, service programs, extracurricular programs and other quality of life programs). They plan and develop programs in collaboration with the Principal, evaluate and supervise teachers and manage day-to-day operations in their areas.

At the Middle School and Elementary levels, the Assistant Principal is responsible for educational leadership and general oversight of grade levels of students and staff. This position is responsible for special needs services and, as at the high school, the Assistant Principals plan and manage programs in collaboration with the Principal, evaluate and supervise teachers and manage day-to-day operations in their areas. All building administrators serve as instructional leaders which defines the work in the Weston Public Schools.

In the private sector, supervisor/supervisee span of control is typically between 5 and 10 individuals, to allow for appropriate supervision and direction. In schools, it is usually higher. For example, the Weston High School Principal not only supervises the 2 Assistant Principals and Curriculum Instructional Leaders but also evaluates teaching and support staff. Assistant Principals directly support large numbers of students, supervise multiple teachers and evaluate support staff and faculty. Together, Principals and Assistant Principals are responsible for 60 to 70 faculty including aides, secretaries and custodians and other support staff not to mention nearly 800 students.

School administration has changed in the last 20 to 30 years as a result of dramatic growth in requirements such as special education law; accountability for student performance; conscious efforts to adopt a more humane, personalized problem solving approach to work with students and parents; and a growing focus on educational leadership as opposed to building management. The last shift, in particular, is consistent with research that identifies strong leadership as a critical force in excellent schools. This includes encouraging program change, working with troubled students, or helping a teacher and a parent resolve a conflict. The literature confirms the school leaders directly affect the lives they touch each day.

ECONOMIES

Financial economies could be created by reducing or eliminating time for educational leadership and improvement, student support and other areas identified above. Following a reduction in force, a smaller number of staff would fill the positions that remained. They would continue to perform as many as possible of the same functions as before. Since each individual would have more work in the same number of hours as before, however, triage would occur more often. In all, as a result, students, parents and teachers would receive less thoughtful, timely and personalized attention.

In short, this is really a “quality of care” decision. It is possible to run a hospital or school with greater or less personal considerations, attention to quality, or an emphasis on pro-activity, as opposed to reaction in crisis management. The patients/clients ultimately enjoy or suffer the consequences.

Since the impact of many administrative activities defies simple quantifications the effects of reduction in force can't be identified clearly. What we do know is that some mechanical matters (scheduling students, for example) demand attention and critical situations (drinking at the homecoming dance or an alleged bullying incident) can't be ignored. Ipso facto, the losses will be in the areas that are less important in the short term but important in the long run: improving the quality of teaching, changing school culture so that fewer crisis arise (addressing bullying, the 9th grade transition, obtaining support for the pre-anorexic student, and so on). Individual students, parents and teachers will experience these problems and preventable crisis will periodically occur. In Weston, the impact would be felt with any reduction of administration.

The charts on the following two pages provide data for schools in DRG A & B.

<u>DRG A</u>	<u>Town</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Assistant Principal</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>Students Enrolled</u>		
Darien		Hindley Elementary	1	PK-5	506		
		Royle Elementary	1	K-5	443		
		Tokeneke Elementary	1	PK-5	404		
		Holmes Elementary	1	PK-5	487		
		Ox Ridge Elementary	1	K-5	482		
Easton		Samuel Staples	1	K-5	603		
New Canaan		South School	1	K-4	518		
		West School	1	PK-4	521		
		East School	1	K-4	540		
Redding		Redding Elementary	1	K-4	627		
Ridgefield		Veteran's Park	0	K-5	339		
		Ridgebury Elementary	0	K-5	455		
		Farmingville Elementary	0	K-5	369		
		Scotland Elementary	0	K-5	389		
		Branchville Elementary	0	K-5	426		
		Barlow Mountain	0	3-5	385		
Weston		Hurlbutt Elementary	1	PK-2	528		
		Weston Intermediate	1	3-5	628		
Westport		Coleytown Elementary	1	PK-4	688		
		Green's Farms Kings Hgwy Intermediate	2	K-5	571		
		Long Lot School	2	K-5	672		
		Saugatuck Elementary	2	K-5	666		
Wilton		Miller Driscoll	1	PK-2	487		

DRG B

	<u>Town</u>	<u>School</u>	<u>Assistant Principal</u>	<u>Grades</u>	<u>Students Enrolled</u>
	Avon	Roaring Brook	1	PK-4	773
		Pine Grove	1	PK-4	605
	Brookfield	Center Elementary	0	PK-1	401
		Huckleberry Hill Elementary	1	2-4	614
	Cheshire	Chapman Elementary	0	1-6	331
		Darcey School	0	PK-K	301
		Highland Elementary	1	1-6	868
		Norton Elementary	1	1-6	471
		Doolittle Elementary	1	1-6	532
	Farmington	Union School	0	K-4	294
		Noah Wallace	0	K-4	338
		West District	0	K-4	351
		East Farms School	0	K-4	439
		West Woods Upper Elementary	1	5-6	662
	Greenwich	Cos Cob	1	K-5	393
		Julian Curtiss	1	K-5	326
		Glenville School	1	K-5	345
		Hamilton Ave	1	K-5	317
		New Lebanon	1	K-5	212
		North Mianus	1	K-5	454
		North Street	1	K-5	485
		Old Greenwich School	1	K-5	413
		Riverside School	2	K-5	497
		Parkway School	1	K-5	330
		International School at Dundee	1	K-5	371
	Guilford	Guilford Lakes School	0	PK-4	435
		Melissa Jones School	0	K-4	401
		Calvin Leete School	0	K-4	284
		A.W.Cox School	0	K-4	328
	Madison	J. Milton Jeffrey	1	K-4	547
		Island Ave Elementary	0	1-4	318
		Kathleen Ryerson Elementary	0	1-4	311
	New Fairfield	Consolidated School	1	PK-2	664
		Meeting House	1	3-5	668
	Simsbury	Central School	0	K-6	429
		Tariffville School	0	1-6	262
		Tootin Hills School	1	K-6	528
		Latimer Lane School	1	K-6	528
		Squadron Line School	1	K-6	779