

Managerial and Financial Skills of School Principals: Facing Per Capita Funding

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Abstract

Kazakhstani education policy introduced a model of schools' per capita funding in 2019. However, school principals, being subject teachers, do not possess the necessary knowledge/skills in general and financial management to effectively administer State investments. About 1,500 school principals have retrained for pilot school financing, while there are 7,475 schools in Kazakhstan. Accordingly, the action research included: Are formal/informal training required for school principals in managerial/financial knowledge/practices? Should continuing education programs be organized by the Ministry of Education or other government bodies? A national online survey of school principals and in-depth interviews were conducted in different regions. The data exposed urban and remote school principals fully support the per capita funding policy and rate it as more efficient and fairer. Respondents noted disciplines on educational management and finance are to be in the formal programs of pedagogical majors. There is a lack of principals competent in educational management/leadership and financing. Therefore, a candidate for a school principal must have a certificate of completion for training/upskilling in the fundamentals of educational management and financing. Current programs/courses are insufficient or do not provide this field of knowledge and practice. The action research outcome for school principals is a new training program with a built-in module on management and finance. This program is innovative in the State education policy and will allow school principals to remain relevant in the education market.

Keywords: education; Kazakhstan; leadership; policy; training