

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

- TITLE** A Comparison of Management and Leadership Skills Critical to the Principalship as Perceived by Superintendents in Selected Independent School Districts in Texas
- RESEARCHER** Katherine A. White
College of Education
Texas A&M University
Unpublished doctoral dissertation: December 2005
- OBJECTIVE** The purpose of the study was to determine which management and leadership behaviors selected superintendents perceived as critical to the position of principalship.

METHODOLOGY

The population consisted of all female superintendents in Texas independent school districts (N=138) and randomly selected male superintendents from each Texas Educational Service Center area (N=301) from which 89 of the former (63%) and 201 of the latter (64%) responded. Respondents completed both the Peterson Managerial Instrument (Peterson, 2000) and the Leadership Practices Inventory from the perspective of behaviors that their best principal might use during the day. The typical respondent was Caucasian (85.2%), between 45-64 years of age (77.5%), held a graduate degree (96.6%), and nearly half had between 0-5 years on the job as a superintendent. Demographical information was also obtained. The overwhelming majority (91.4%) envisioned a principal who was currently active, and who was female (62%).

KEY FINDINGS

The envisioned best principal was seen as engaging most frequently in Modeling, followed by Encouraging and Enabling, and then by Inspiring and Challenging. One-way ANOVA demonstrated that the first three leadership practices were significantly different from the latter two. The perspectives of female superintendents were significantly higher on all five leadership practices than their male counterparts. No significant differences were found between the size of the district and how superintendents characterized leadership based on the LPI data.