

TITLE: Superintendents' Leadership Behavior Which Promote the Instructional Leadership of Principals

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OBJECTIVE: To determine possible differences between California superintendents' and principals' perspectives of leadership requirements and behaviors.

METHODOLOGY: The sample consisted of 83 superintendents participating in the California Advanced Academy for Executive Leadership (February 1990). Each superintendent identified three principals considered to be instructional leaders. The LPI was modified for use with this sample by an expert panel consisting of two superintendents, two principals, two assistant superintendents and one California Administrator Training Center Director resulting in a "Superintendent (or Principal) Instructional Leadership Support Survey." Pilot testing involved seven superintendents and nine principals. Test-retest reliability was .86 for the superintendent version and .79 for the principal version. Seventy-six percent of the superintendents responded (N=63) and 73 percent of the principals (N=183). Thirteen superintendents were female.

KEY FINDINGS: There were not statistically significant differences between superintendents and principals on the extent to which they valued the leadership behaviors associated with Challenging, Inspiring, and Encouraging nor were there differences between the two groups on the rank order of the leadership practices (Inspiring and Enabling chosen most frequently, Modeling and Encouraging chosen least frequently). For Enabling the largest differences were that superintendents placed greater value on "creating a climate of trust" than principals did and that principals placed a greater value than superintendents on "commits district resources." The greatest difference on Modeling occurred around "participates in group principal meetings" with principals placing greater importance on this than superintendents.

Regrading the implementation of these leadership behaviors by superintendents, the two groups differed significantly on all five leadership practices. Superintendents (Self) scores were consistently higher than those reported by their principals (Observers). The highest mean score from both groups was Inspiring, followed by Challenging and the lowest mean score from both groups was for Encouraging. Enabling was ranked third and Modeling fourth by superintendents and in the reverse order by principals.

"The moderating variables of gender, district size, and experience in the superintendency or principalship do not make a statistically significant difference most of the time concerning the superintendents' implementation of leadership behaviors." (97).

