

**TITLE:** Leadership Skills, Practices, and Behaviors of Effective Principals in Effective Schools

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**OBJECTIVE:** To analyze the role of the principal in effecting educational outcomes in an unusually effective school; i.e., what are the characteristics and behaviors of principals of exemplary schools.

**METHODOLOGY:** The sample included six (out of seven) schools in San Diego County recognized by the State of California Secondary School Recognition Program (1991-1992).

Principals and their staff (vice principals, certificate and non-certificate staff) completed the LPI and the National Association of Secondary School Principal Assessment survey (98% response rate). Interviews and field site visits were also conducted. The typical principal was a man (83%), 49 years old, with 22 years of experience in education, with 4.6 years in his current school, and a master's degree.

**KEY FINDINGS:** LPI scores did not differ among the four respondent groups. The same was true for the NASSP Assessment survey. What operationalizes leadership in the exemplary schools were: "(1) Core values that shape the direction and form the school's goals and objectives; (2) A vision that is focused, clarified, and articulated among all groups; (3) Involvement of people who share in the process of improvement, which infuses the belief system; (4) School improvement as a continuous process; and (5) Establishment of mutual trust, love, warmth, and respect within the environment between all people" (89).