

TITLE: Examine the Practice of Transformational Leadership within National Blue Ribbon Elementary Schools in Cuyahoga County

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Doctoral Dissertation: December 1995

OBJECTIVE: To examine the practice of transformational leadership within elementary schools in Cuyahoga County that have earned the distinction of being named National Blue Ribbon Schools.

METHODOLOGY: The sample involved the four elementary schools in Cuyahoga County who had been, between 1990 and 1995, recognized as National Blue Ribbon Schools. School principals and teachers (N=61) at each school completed the LPI. Three-to-five teachers from each school participated in voluntary telephone interviews, involving open-ended questions about their principals' leadership behaviors.

KEY FINDINGS: LPI scores for the four principals were all at the 99th percentile. LPI-Observer scores, from the teachers, were in the 97th percentile and above and generally consistent within each school setting between the principal and his staff. From the interviews: "...within each school, respondents' comments were very similar to one another, although the wording of the responses may have been different.... Likewise, in comparing the responses of teachers from the four schools, a sameness emerged, as a distinct pattern of behaviors were reported with common threads of the leadership practices evident" (p. 76)... the conclusions drawn from the descriptive data suggest that principals who espouse a belief in the tenets of transformational leadership style 'walk their talk' in quality schools" (p. 100). Little differences were found related to gender, ethnic background, years of experience, the presence of an assistant principal, or the school's demographic region (urban or suburban).