

TITLE: The Identification of Leadership Characteristics and Their Perceived Correlation to Performance as Demonstrated by Principals of Nationally Recognized Schools of Excellence

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OBJECTIVE: To identify common practices of effective leaders and to determine if these practices were demonstrated by effective school administrators.

METHODOLOGY: Participants were the principals of 10 New York State elementary schools selected by the U.S. Department of Education as 1993-94 Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence. The 10 schools consisted of four suburban, four mid-size city, and two small town schools, and ranged in size from 240 to 974 students. Principals completed the LPI-Self, and superintendents, PTA presidents and faculties completed the LPI-Observer. Two randomly selected principals were interviewed and completed the Kouzes-Posner Personal Best Leadership Experience questionnaire. Seven of the principals were female.

KEY FINDINGS: “The principals were perceived as effective leaders exhibiting the leadership characteristics as identified by Kouzes' and Posner's Leadership Practices Inventory” (p. 244). The author also reports “congruency between the principals' and faculties' perception of the principals' leadership effectiveness” (p. 244) as well as “congruency between principals' and superintendents' perception” (p. 247), and “principals' and PTA presidents' perception” (p. 251).

“The results of this study support the assertion that while there is no single leadership style which will ensure effective leadership, there does exist a core of leadership characteristics that are possessed in varying degrees by effective leaders” (p. 262).