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# A Study Of New Jersey Public School Teachers' Attitudes And Perceptions Of Leadership Skills Associated With The Principalship

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**A STUDY OF NEW JERSEY PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS'  
ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP SKILLS  
ASSOCIATED WITH THE PRINCIPALSHIP**

**BY**

**ANTHONY G. BARBARY**

**Dissertation Committee**

**Anthony J. Colella, Ph.D., Mentor**

**Dorothy L. Baldwin, Ed.D.**

**James Bender, Ph.D.**

**James Caulfield, Ed.D.**

**Submitted in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Education**

**Seton Hall University**

**1999**

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## Chapter I

### INTRODUCTION

This dissertation conducts an investigation of attitudes and perceptions of selected teachers with respect to the leadership qualities of school principals with generic standards as established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Just as principals themselves possess convictions of effective and appropriate leadership skills, other groups within the educational community also maintain their views of effective leadership proficiencies. Some of these groups include superintendents and assistant superintendents, directors, assistant and vice principals, central office district supervisors, department chairpersons and coordinators, board of education members, parents, students, as well as teachers.

Considering that no group aside from the teaching cadre has a greater impact on the success of the educational process, teachers should realize, whether consciously or unconsciously, that leadership attitudes and abilities of principals, such as support, motivation, participation, and evaluation (DeRoche, 1985) are crucial in achieving the effectiveness of a school. Moreover, since principals by tradition have been teachers originally, it stands to reason that the teacher who earns the qualifications and desires to be eventually elevated to the position of principal, will possess knowledge of those particular skills and related styles that one would need as a principal to be an effective

leader. Since teachers work closely with principals, and many of them may work with several principals during their teaching career, it appears that useful information could be obtained from teachers in helping to define leadership skills.

At this point, there should be some focus on the term leadership. According to general explanations of the word, leadership means to provide direction, guidance, and instruction from varying levels of authority. Some other explanations (Smith and Piele, 1996) attribute leadership to bringing about change or moving forward, such as James Lipman's definition (Lipman and Daresh, 1979) expressing that leadership is the behavior of an individual initiating a new structure in interaction within a social system.

Other definitions of leadership do certainly exist either alone or in combination with the explanation of management. One particular interpretation is offered by Carl Welte (1989) who defined management as both physical and mental efforts used to coordinate activities in bringing about desired outcomes. Leadership, as interpreted by Welte, took on a personal role in using natural and learned abilities to form interpersonal relations which would lead to influencing subordinates to bring about desired outcomes. Other existing definitions of leadership rely on the forming and maintaining of personal relations to advise, manage conflict, inspire trust and loyalty, and motivate individuals with the desire to remain on the job and achieve designated results.

While any presented definition could be used to appropriately interpret leadership, it is the explanation of George Terry (1960) however, which seems to properly address the question of adequately defining leadership. Indicating that leadership is an activity that influences people to willingly strive for group-established goals, Terry's definition is one

that is to be considered as teachers' perceptions of leadership skills are compared to twelve established leadership standards as listed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. For it should be remembered as Edward DeRoche (1985) has so thoroughly stated:

The school principal is the, not a, major influence on the quality of education in a school. The school principal, also known as the middle manager and the site administrator - is the major influence on whether education is effective or ineffective; whether morale is high or low; whether the school climate is positive or negative; whether personnel are satisfied or dissatisfied; whether students achieve or don't achieve; whether parents and the public are cooperative or uncooperative; and whether there is effective or ineffective management and leadership. (p. v )

#### Problem Statement

Leadership, as seen through the eyes of individuals possessing diverse backgrounds, can take the form of varied and distinct connotations. Within the educational setting, it is the school leader, most often called the school principal, who commits the staff, namely teachers, into operation. Though there may exist several layers of intermediary administrative and supervisory staff between the principal and the faculty, such as vice principals or assistant principals, supervisors, or coordinators, it is the principal who creates the platform for the utmost direction and actions to take place.

As research indicates (Buffie, 1989), principals are the key to effective school improvement. They have a far more complex role today than those educational leaders of the past. Especially in today's fast-moving and technologically-advancing society, the

principal must be knowledgeable and adept about the processes of change, improvement, and school and community culture in order to bring about the establishment and maintaining of educational excellence. Through any period, be it a week or a school day, Schmieder and Cairns (1996) state that the principal is a curriculum coordinator, crisis facilitator, therapist, advocate for oppressed children, bus stop monitor, temporary custodian, and the maker of difficult decisions.

To achieve the myriad of the diverse goals of the educational leader, examinations will reveal that principals perform their duties in different ways. There are those principals who are visible and outspoken, and who exhibit bombastic and flamboyant traits. Others make their presence known in subtle ways, by quietly observing and listening, and briefly commenting and reflecting through the use of short bytes rather than long, drawn-out commentaries. There are those educational leaders who portray visions of grandeur and great dreams, while others constantly experiment with the organization's functions. In addition, there are principals who quickly tackle projects, innovative methods, and novel procedures, while others seek proven research before beginning any new venture.

Smith and Piele (1996) report that from the late 1940's, researchers began looking at leadership behavioral patterns and styles in addition to observing and studying merely leadership traits. What was noted were the existence of particular administrative patterns, such as task-driven leaders who focused on complex and elaborate attempts in reaching organizational goals, and humanistic leaders, who were involved with the human dimension of the job, incorporating human motivation and heightened communication.

Ultimately, the focus led to leadership skills, which could be defined as those



attributes in which a leader used power, made decisions, and interacted with others within the organization. Styles (Smith and Piele, 1996) also were quickly accepted as an important component in leadership, partly because such styles contributed to understandable explanations of everyday experiences. Leadership skills, specifically however, could be viewed as proficiencies, abilities, or skills that would usually require learning or training to master, and most likely foster a mastery of leadership.

With the focus on the views of members of the teaching staff providing their perceptions of leadership skills, the improvement of staff performance and morale may be realized by an analysis of this dimension. There have been studies of principal effectiveness having positive influences on the teaching staff rather than the stress and use of formal authority. Conclusions were drawn by Isherwood (1973) who found that principals who displayed charisma, leadership expertise, and human relations skills heightened teacher loyalty and improved teacher satisfaction.

#### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate, through the oral interview, the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals. In addition, the researcher was interested in focusing the study to contain selected New Jersey schools that have earned recognition as having building programs labeled Best Practices by the State Department of Education. In noting the investigation, no specific reference was made to such items as distinctive school populations, teacher advanced degree attainments, or job experience. With regard to District Factor Groupings (DFGs), eight (8) teachers were selected from eight schools

representing groups A through J which will be discussed throughout the study.

### Hypothesis

The following hypothesis has been developed from the problem statement of this study: Since effective teachers, working with effective principals in effective schools are part of an educational environment where proven learning and success have taken place, the teachers are in a convincing position to express their perceptions of principals' leadership skills. By focusing on designated New Jersey successful schools classified as "Best Practices Schools" from 1993 through 1995, it is hypothesized that interviewed teachers will include in their highest rated selections, skills that are compatible with those twelve standards as listed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).

Since Best Practices Schools are those schools who have developed innovative programs successfully addressing specific educational needs and achievements of students across eighteen categories, they will be focused upon as being effective places of learning where principals have established an overall environment for teachers to perform, grow, and develop. To obtain the attitudes and perceptions of the respondents with respect to the leadership skills of principals, research questions used in the interviews are found in Appendix E, pp 121-123.

### Limitations

The total number of institutions in New Jersey earning the distinction within the 1993-1995 Biennial Report of the Best Practices program was 118 (N=118) schools covering 102 Best Practices programs. Note that in some cases, several schools within a

district were each recognized as having developed the same Best Practices program, therefore resulting in a differing number of recognized programs and represented institutions. Therefore, the actual number of schools that may participate in this study can be no more than 118, made up of a combination of elementary, middle, and high schools. In reality, but also resulting in limiting this study, eight teachers, chosen from lists supplied by the building principal of selected Best Practices schools to participate in an interview, have furnished their particular insights on the leadership skills of principals.

Limitations of this study are also noticeable by observing an existence of commonality within the interviewed focus group. Since the schools targeted represent institutions earning the Best Practices designation, it could be assumed that the perceptions of leadership skills in such schools that exhibit such educational programs judged to earn the special State designation, would contain principals who display those leadership traits that would be comparable to the standards as established by the NASSP. Thus, the educators in presumably effective schools that contained Best Practices Programs would perceive leadership skills as evidenced by their principals as also effective.

There are other considerations regarding the target group that also play a sizable factor when documenting limitations of this study. Various designated groups could have been targeted, such as staff of Star Schools or Blue Ribbon Schools. Other less obvious, but nevertheless possible, target groups that could have been included are those schools which surpass the New Jersey State Department of Education cost per pupil standard, which is supposed to provide a thorough and efficient education. Schools in districts

surpassing the State cost per pupil standard could lead to the belief that the extra expenditures would produce more effective learning institutions leading to perceptions that the leadership skills displayed would closely resemble the established standards.

Moreover, the focus group could have contained only schools within districts of New Jersey that are: (a) designated Special Needs districts; (b) schools in the three districts where State takeover has occurred; and (c) selected schools only representing one or two District Factor Groupings (DFGs). Moreover, since the study includes those Best Practices public schools found within the Northern New Jersey area, additional insights may be derived from the Best Practices public schools found within other parts of the State.

These limitations signify results that may not be reflective of teachers within various other mid-Atlantic states, the eastern part of the nation, a cross-section of the United States, or similarly situated non-public schools in various regions.

Lastly, but of significant importance, is the use of the leadership standards of the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) for the study. Since teachers interviewed in this study are associated with three educational levels: (a) elementary schools, (b) middle schools, and (c) high schools, it can be contended that the compared skills may cover a narrow passage, those of high school leaders. It should be noted that the skills discussed by the NASSP are generic in nature (Brockel, 1989), and would apply to school principals in any educational level. In referring to the section entitled "Summary of Established Listings of Leadership Skills" in Chapter 2 of this study, it will be noted that with the established listings of leadership skills that are discussed, the

leadership skills contained within the listings complement one another.

Also of notable importance is the question of why the particular listing of the NASSP has been focused upon when other leadership skill listings also exist. Some of the many established leadership scales are highlighted in Chapter 2 to include those by Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes (1992) and Bennis and Nannus (1985), listings by principals in California and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and skill proficiency listings by the National Association of Elementary School Principals. Contributing to the decision that led to focus on the NASSP skills is the fact that the National Association of Secondary School Principals had formulated a plan to aid school districts in the development of highly skilled school leaders. Through the Association's research, that had considered input from a committee of industrial psychologists and the American Psychological Association, a group of twelve leadership skills was recognized as being important to the success of principals. Ultimately, there was the formation of an Assessment Center that served as a training site for educational leaders.

#### Definition of Terms

**Best Practices Schools.** For the purpose of this study, Best Practices Schools refers to educational institutions who have instituted innovative educational strategies within their confines. These schools, through their leadership, have created unique opportunities for students to demonstrate high levels of achievement.

**DFG.** District Factor Grouping (DFG) is an indicator of the socioeconomic status of the citizens residing within the boundaries of each New Jersey school district. Incorporating seven variables from the United States Census, District Factor Groupings

consider: (a) occupational status, (b) educational levels, (c) number of persons within each household, (d) the percentage of the district considered urban, (e) the median family income, (f) the percentage of the work force receiving unemployment compensation, and (g), the percentage of residents living below the established poverty level. DFGs range from "A" (the lowest socioeconomic status) to "J" (signifying the highest socioeconomic status).

**Leadership Skills.** For the purpose of this study, leadership skills refer to proficiencies and abilities that are influenced by learning and training. Skills may be interchanged with styles in referring to the mode in which principals function.

**National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP).** For the purpose of this study, the NASSP represents a professional association of educators to mainly include principals and assistant principals in public, private, and parochial secondary schools, central office administrators, and professors of secondary education.

**Perceptions.** For the purpose of this study, perceptions refer to factors of insight, knowledge, or the development of an intuitive judgement.

**Principal.** For the purpose of this study, the principal is the chief administrator of a school. They are perceived to be the most significant and influential person in the school, who is an effective educational leader. Such qualities as performance, expectations, tasks, and responsibilities are some that are required for the principal to achieve maximum effectiveness as a leader.

**Teacher.** For the purpose of the study, a teacher refers to a certificated (licensed)

professional who instructs students. The teacher is in a subordinate position to the principal.

### **Organization of the Study**

Chapter I presents background information pertaining to leadership skills and related styles of school principals. Included in the chapter are the following segments: Introduction, a statement of the problem, study objectives, limitations of the study, definition of terms within the study, and a hypothesis.

Chapter II displays a review of relevant and related literature regarding various leadership skills of school principals. The focus will include an analysis of leadership functions, a study of the leadership skills as highlighted by the NASSP, and a discussion of various leadership models incorporating specific skills.

Chapter III investigates the methods and approaches of research used in the study. Included in this chapter are a review of the materials, research applications, and procedures utilized in conducting the modes of research, the use of an interview format, and the utilized method of data interpretation.

Chapter IV presents a detailed synopsis of the distribution of the interview instrument, treatment and analyses of the received data, and support of the stated hypothesis.

In Chapter V, a summation of the study is presented. Following are presentations of various conclusions and recommendation for further studies.

Presented at the conclusion of the study is a reference section that serves as a bibliography, an offering for proposals for additional research, and transcripts of the interviews of the teachers.



## Chapter II

### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Within this chapter, the examination of related, relevant literature and research is divided into three sections. The first section supplies a general review of established leadership theories dealing with leadership style and skill development. The second section provides an overview of various established listings of leadership skills, along with related rationales, theories, and styles as applicable within the educational management sector. The third and main sections focus upon the twelve leadership skills as established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). In addition to listing the skills, this section provides some explanations and interpretations of them. It is these skills that are the basis upon which this study is conducted.

#### Review of Leadership Theories

Referring to the view of George Terry (1960) that acquired aspects of knowledge, values, structure, and skills are necessary for an educational leader to inspire members of the educational community to work together toward group goals in striving for an excellent education for all students, school principals must be capable of making decisions in a logical fashion rather than by unsound, disorganized methods. Since considerable research has been performed within the area of management, several theories and viewpoints have been formulated throughout the span of many years. It is in these theories that lie the basis for logical, organized, and popular models of leadership.

Within the classical organization theory, scientific management was advocated by Frederick Taylor (1911) who examined management from the viewpoint of the individual. Taylor developed four basic principles:

1. **Scientific Job Analysis:** Tasks should be observed by what had to be done and determining the best way to perform that job.

2. **Selection of Personnel:** This principle considered the acquisition of the right person to be trained and thus perform the job according to established organizational standards.

3. **Management Cooperation:** There must be cooperation between managers and employees to ensure that tasks are performed according to expectations.

4. **Functional Supervising:** All members of the organization are expected to perform within the scopes of their duties. Managers should spend their time managing, organizing, and supervising; employees should be performing the tasks for which they were hired.

To summarize, scientific management theory is based upon the notion of scientifically studying a task and thus determining the best method in which the task could be ascertained. Moreover, almost all aspects of worker activity are controlled by existing rules and regulations as the following principles represent the essence of this theory:

1. Efficiency is measured in terms of productivity.
2. Human beings are presumed to act rationally.
3. Each person has a clearly defined task.
4. Workers are motivated only by economic rewards and the threat of punishment.

5. People do not like to work and thus need close supervision.
6. Authority lies at the top of the hierarchy and tasks and power are delegated downward.
7. Creating a good physical setting and having the best tools results in workers increasing productivity.

As the scientific management viewpoint is shown to deal with the individual, another perspective within the classical organizational theory considers the whole organization. This theory is credited to Fayol (1949), Gulick and Uruick (1937), and Weber (1947) in which they agreed that managers within organizations perform five basic tasks: (a) planning, (b) organizing, (c) commanding, (d) coordinating, and (e) controlling.

It was the conviction of French Industrialist Henri Fayol (1949), that managers were the individuals to exert the authority within the organization, and that the workers were to obey the directives set by the managers. Above all, the concerns of the organization were first and foremost and should take precedence over the interests of the individuals who worked for the organization. Moreover, there was adherence to a strictly observed chain-of-command.

Furthermore, Fayol (1949) believed that a high level of efficiency would result if management would order its efforts following the sequence of actions: (a) planning, (b) organizing, (c) commanding, (d) coordinating, and (e) controlling. Luther Gulick and Lyndall Uruick (1937) further advocated the need for unity in the chain of command in order to achieve the purposes of administrative organization: (a) planning, (b) organizing, (c) staffing, (d) directing, (e) coordinating, (f) reporting, and (g) budgeting. These

ideologies lead to a closely related "Theory of Bureaucracy" by Max Weber (1947). His convictions, which are widely thought to exist in almost all organizations, contain features of his model to include the existence of:

1. A division of labor based on functional specialization;
2. A well-defined hierarchical structure;
3. A system of rules covering the rights and obligations of employees;
4. A system of procedures dealing with work situations;
5. An indifferent view of interpersonal relations; and
6. A process of worker selection and subsequent promotions based on technical competence.

Realizing that an organization's success often rested with the efforts of its work force, there were others who were proponents of an alternate approach, appropriately called the Human Relations Theory style of management. This conviction placed the psychological needs of the individual workers ahead of the needs of the organization, and concluded that workers could be motivated with other things besides monetary compensation.

Believing that the human element must be taken into account, Mayo (1933) and Lewin (1939) supported the concepts that it was important how employees worked together; how they felt about their jobs; and how their morale could be sustained to a high degree of satisfaction. It was also maintained that groups which participated in decisions and were more democratic, were more productive, and achieved group goals better than those groups under the traditional authoritarian control such as those of the scientific

management theory.

Considering the existence of contrary convictions of the Scientific Management Theory and the Human Relations Theory, the Behavioral Science Theory (Argyris, 1971) was developed. It considered that both the goals of the organization as well as those goals of the individual needed to be realized. According to this concept, managers were required to possess the skills needed to achieve the goals for the success of the organization, and simultaneously, possess those human relations leadership skills that were required to assist the workers to achieve their individual goals as well.

Since it was believed there was an ever-present strife between the worker and the organization, and that the organization often attempted to dominate the workers, an environment of frustration and indifference within the workplace often developed. Hence, as a result of this strife, the Behavioral Science Theory advocated the philosophy that employees should be given favorable recognition by the organization if they remained members of that organization over a long period of time, since their needs would have eventually changed as well.

Observing that managers possessed differing assumptions of their employees, either instinctive or impulsive, Douglas McGregor (1960) introduced two prominent concepts, Theory X and Theory Y. The convictions of Theory X deal with:

1. Lazy workers - Workers dislike work and seek ways to avoid the work, when possible.
2. Strict supervision of workers, since they are lazy and seek to avoid work.
3. The employees performing better when they are directed and controlled by the

manager.

4. The lack of employee creativity in solving organizational problems and tasks.

The convictions of Theory Y deal with managers believing that:

1. Work is a natural occurrence along with play and rest.
2. Rewarding workers for their achievements makes them more dedicated to the

goals of the organization.

3. Workers welcome and ask for responsibilities if they are treated in a proper

manner.

4. The capacity for creativity in solving organizational problems and tasks is

wholly present.

The philosophy of Theory Z (Ouchi, 1981) was founded through a study of Japanese businesses. This ideology looked at the entire organization rather than viewing it from the perspective of the manager as in Theory X and Theory Y. The philosophy of Theory Z deals with a total, long-term dedication to the organization, in which the employees are involved in shared decision-making, are provided with individual responsibilities, and are given a commitment by the organization to the worker and the family. Some additional principles of Theory Z include the following:

1. People look to the organization for a sense of belonging.
2. Organizations view people as the sole key to increased productivity.
3. Decisions made are consensual and arrived at by broad-based participation.
4. Long term goals are emphasized and relationships among the organization's

members are strengthened.

5. Cooperation among the members of the organization and the establishment of trust.
6. Favorable working conditions increase productivity and profits to the company and also build self-esteem among the employees.
7. Organizations established according to the philosophies of Theory Z are viewed as culturally homogeneous organizations in which the members share a common set of objectives in achieving their goals.

#### Summary of Established Listings of Leadership Skills

Skills, also referred to as proficiencies, abilities, or dexterities (Schmieder and Cairns, 1996) usually require experience and training to master. Parkay, Currie, and Rhodes (1992) assembled a study in which a five-stage path was developed that paved the way toward acquiring and focusing on leadership skills. Though principals could enter this path at various points, the qualities of survival, control, stability, educational leadership, and professional actualization would be experienced and developed prior to specific leadership skills surfacing and being realized. Once this five-stage continuum was faced, principals would be capable of enhancing their role as educational leaders by focusing on specific leadership skills to master.

Leadership skills, thought by many as abilities to provide direction, guidance, enlightenment, administration, and influence, are not easily defined. They are known however, to exist in varying degrees within educational settings and reflect upon the school's effectiveness if such skills are proficiently employed.

It must be remembered however, that leadership skills are not interpreted as

leadership functions. Actual leadership functions, are those tasks that exist as part of the principal's scope of duties and would fall under various headings of lists of skills. Such functions would include, but would not be limited to supervising classroom performance (Smith & Piele, 1997), while (a) furnishing feedback on teachers' instructional skills and providing direction to individual staff members in need of support; (b) furnishing staff-development training to inservice teachers on various instructional techniques; (c) evaluating teachers, to include formally observing teaching lessons, giving guidance, and focusing on the improvement of teaching; (d) staff selection for needed teaching positions within the school, to include contacting teacher-candidate references and following up on new personnel appointments with adequate staff development sessions; (e) setting and monitoring the academic standards of the school; (f) overseeing and facilitating the selection of instructional materials keeping within an established multi-year plan; (g) balancing specific program objectives with overall school goals; (h) planning collaboratively by establishing various staff committees to provide input and insights on educational viewpoints, materials selection, and program and staff evaluation; (I) providing a reward and recognition program acknowledging teaching and learning achievements; and (j) setting high expectations and clear goals for student and teacher performances. Leadership skills are those competencies that serve as specific proficiencies, in which leadership functions, including the few that have been mentioned, would follow and serve as effects of the skills.

Since the literature of educational improvement is filled with calls for better and stronger leadership, there have been an abundance of listings of specific leadership skills



developed over the years. Some of the existing lists that may be of relevance can be found in the following study. A survey of 450 principals conducted within schools in California (Schmieder & Cairns, 1996) lists the ten top critical skills necessary for the principal to be effective and successful. These ten skills include:

1. Having a vision along with an understanding of the steps needed to achieve relevant goals.
2. Demonstrating a desire to make a significant difference in the lives of staff and students.
3. Knowing how to evaluate staff.
4. Understanding that change is ongoing and that it results in a continually changing vision of the principalship.
5. Being aware of one's biases, strengths, and weaknesses.
6. Knowing how to facilitate/conduct group meetings.
7. Portraying a sense of self-confidence on the job.
8. Knowing how to assess job responsibilities in terms of the 'real role' of the principalship.
9. Knowing how to encourage involvement by all parties in the educational community.
10. Knowing where the ethical limits exist within the district or building and balancing that knowledge with one's own professional values.

As discussed by Daresh & Playko (1997), the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development has compiled a list leadership skills to include the following

items that the principal:

1. **Provides a sense of vision to the school:** The principal demonstrates the ability to articulate what a school is supposed to attain.
2. **Engages in participative management:** The principal inspires a better organizational climate within the school by empowering teachers to participate in decision making.
3. **Provides support for instruction:** The principal's primary focus concerns the commitment to establish and maintain quality instruction.
4. **Monitors instruction:** The principal is cognizant as to what is occurring within the school's classrooms.
5. **Is resourceful:** The principal's primary charge is to rarely allow circumstances within their organizations to obstruct the successes of their school's educational programs.

Stephen Covey (1991) notes the following leadership characteristics as he refers to Principle-centered Leaders:

1. **They are continually learning:** Principle-centered individuals are continually educated by their experiences.
2. **They are service oriented:** Principle-centered individuals view life as a mission.
3. **They radiate positive energy:** Principle-centered individuals are cheerful, pleasant, and happy.
4. **They believe in other people:** Principle-centered individuals do not overreact to criticism or negative behaviors.
5. **They lead balanced lives:** Principle-centered individuals maintain knowledge of

current affairs and events.

6. **They see life as an adventure:** Principle-centered individuals enjoy life and the interaction with people and events.

7. **They are synergistic:** Principle-centered individuals act as catalysts for change.

8. **They exercise for self-renewal:** Principle-centered individuals are constantly aware of the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual characteristics of people.

Noting that successful educational leaders engage in specific approaches, Bennis and Nanus (1991) discuss leadership skills through their listing of five strategies:

1. **Strategy I - Attention through vision:** Educational leaders develop and employ a focal point within their organization and in their personal agenda. It is through this focus that their utmost concern deals with specific outcomes, products, and results.

2. **Strategy II - Meaning through communication:** In order for leadership to be effective, the principal must demonstrate the ability to effectively communicate through verbal and written means.

3. **Strategy III - Trust through positioning:** In order to be effective, leaders must be trusted. Bennis & Nanus believe that leaders who are trusted by their colleagues, associates, and subordinates, make themselves known and make their positions clear.

4. **Strategy IV - The deployment of self through positive self-regard:** Leaders possess positive self-images and confidence, but are not self-centered or arrogant.

5. **Strategy V - The deployment of self through the 'Wallenda Factor':** Karl Wallenda was a famous aerialist who was said to become more engrossed with not failing than with succeeding. This strategy suggests that effective leaders are to constantly focus

their energies on being successful.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) also has established a listing of leadership skills aptly called leadership proficiencies. The proficiencies, placed into 8 categories are as follows (NAESP, 1997): (a) Leadership Behavior; (b) Communication Skills; (c) Group Processes; (d) Curriculum and Instruction; (e) Assessment; (f) Organizational Management; (g) Fiscal Management; and (h) Political Management.

To confirm that the NAESP proficiencies contain skills that are congruent to other skill listings, several examples of leadership proficiencies are presented. Following are leadership skills as discussed by the NAESP (1997). It asserts that the proficient principal:

Demonstrates vision and provides leadership that appropriately involves the school community in the creation of shared beliefs and values.

Demonstrates moral and ethical judgement.

Demonstrates creativity and innovative thinking.

Involves the school community in identifying and accomplishing the school's mission.

Recognizes the individual needs and contributions of all staff and students.

Applies effective interpersonal skills.

Facilitates the leadership of others.

Conducts needs assessments and uses data to make decisions and to plan for school improvement.

Identifies, pursues, and creatively coordinates the use of available human, material,

and financial resources to achieve the school's mission and goals.

Explores, assesses, and implements educational concepts that enhance teaching and learning.

Understands the dynamics of change and the change process:

Is knowledgeable about change.

Is able to assess the organization's readiness for change.

Understands the dynamics of resistance to change and how it can be reduced.

Advances the profession through participation as a member of local, state, and national professional groups.

Initiates and effectively coordinates collaborative endeavors with local and state agencies.

Participates in professional development to enhance personal leadership skills. (pp. 6-7)

#### Leadership Skills of the NASSP

Schools, whether they are on the elementary school level, middle school level, or high school level, are complex entities and require several leadership, supervisory, and administrative proficiencies (NAESP, 1991). Though teachers, staff, parents, and the community are integral components that form a school's effectiveness, the one person who is directly involved in every aspect of the school's operation is the principal. Above all, where there is an effective school, there is an outstanding principal as its administrator.

Effective schools have as principals, educational leaders who play a proactive role

in engaging constructive and meaningful changes within their schools. Moreover, they possess the skills necessary to generate receptive responses of their staff, students, parents, and community to constantly improve.

As established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, the following proficiencies generically represent twelve leadership skills of effective principals. As discussed previously in this chapter, in the section entitled Summary of Established Listings of Leadership Skills, many of the leadership proficiencies that have been characterized by various researchers, educators, or organizations, contain skills that are congruous to each other. Moreover, since the skills represent generic characteristics, related aspects, to serve as examples of possible conclusions or outcomes, will be discussed.

1. **Problem Analysis:** This skill deals with the proficiency needed to conduct applicable inquiries usually required to determine the major elements of a given condition or situation within the educational setting. Such information gathering is vital and purposeful since it will be, as a result of skillfully searching for information, an action that can ultimately lead to change in order to ameliorate a condition or program within the school.

Important factors that should be included in the skills needed for problem analysis and ultimate organizational change involve the consideration of other members within the educational community. Edward DeRoche (1985) suggests that when the administrator assists the faculty, staff, and elements of the local citizenry to enact change based on an analysis of a problem, certain conditions must be established in order to ensure success. It

is essential that the principal: (a) demonstrate respect for each person as an individual; (b) rely on group approaches for problem solving; (c) have confidence in the abilities and talents of the group; (d) employ shared decision-making processes; (e) encourage open, honest communication among the group; (f) respect the ideas, criticism, and concerns of the group; and (g) know himself and have confidence in his abilities to provide leadership.

Furthermore, there must exist an awareness of the need for change based upon the performed analysis of searching for information with an objective. With this in mind, Stoops, Rafferty, and Johnson (1975) devised a model for change made up of three facets: a problem phase, preparation phase, and program phase.

Within the problem phase, there must be adequate information acquired about a problem that necessitates the need for change. Research to conduct a problem analysis may be performed in several ways in order to canvass the particular members of the organization. A practical format is the use of a checklist that could include several items that may need to be addressed with degrees of changes needed in order to carry-out the task. These items (DeRoche, 1985) could include such issues as (a) class size; (b) quality of instruction; (c) school-community relations; (d) student attitudes toward school; (e) staffing; (f) instructional resources; (g) discipline problems; (h) expectations of student achievement; (I) a rewards system for staff and students; (j) vandalism; (k) athletics; (l) student attitudes toward teachers; (m) teacher attitudes toward students; (n) teaching schedules; and (o) use of community resources.

It is in the second phase, the preparation phase, that the principal must demonstrate adeptness at problem analysis. The members of the organization will need to

be apprised of the problem as a result of the feedback acquired through the use of the survey. Their participation will be needed in determining objectives, analyzing existing and required resources, investigating alternatives, and ultimately arriving at a solution to the existing problem. It is apparent that if the faculty, staff, or others are included in the process of change, proper problem analysis would include the consideration of group dynamics, human relations, and leadership behavior (DeRoche, 1985).

The final facet, the program phase, includes the implementation of specific changes or innovative programs that have been based on the acquired leadership ability to conduct an analysis of the problem.

2. Judgment: This skill is essential in attaining rational, consistent conclusions that are based upon the ability to conduct analysis of needs, problems, or issues. Often, judgements are realized as a result of interpretations based upon a vision of the principal. The vision, a look at future accomplishments of a school, may be based on educational values, another NASSP skill that will be discussed later.

Formulating conclusive judgments can ultimately lead to positive results within an organization to include: (a) attracting commitment and energizing people; (b) generating meaning in the lives of workers; (c) establishing and maintaining a standard of educational excellence; and (d) linking the present to the future (Bennis and Nanus, 1985). These results would ultimately achieve a shared standard within the organization.

Another view of the process of judgements in managing an effective school involves the likely conclusion that conflict or disagreement exists within the organization. Conflict (Smith and Piele, 1996) persists customarily and leaders need to learn to



understand it and deal with it effectively.

Though many view the existence of conflict in a negative connotation, a logical conclusion is that the existence of conflict can be an source of creativity and constructive action. Though conflict can affect an organization negatively (Lippitt, 1983), positive outcomes can result if it is admitted that conflict does exist.

Within a negative implication, the ability to exercise judgement can demonstrate that conflict diverts energy from tasks, lowers staff morale, divides staff, deepens discord within the organization, hinders cooperative endeavors, promotes distrust, and lowers productivity.

Positively though, it could be judged that conflicts open an issue in a challenging manner uniting the members of the organization and increasing their involvement, display clarification of an outstanding issue, promote growth in the organization, and strengthen relationships when they are creatively settled.

Thus, when the skill of formulating judgments is accurately attained, and conflict is found, school administrators (Smith and Piele, 1996) should not seek to eliminate it. They should attempt to manage it by maximizing constructive conflict and minimizing destructive conflict.

3. **Organizational Ability:** This skill deals with the ability to efficiently carry-out the various leadership functions of the school administrator in a practical, organized manner. By utilizing various time-management techniques, the effective principal will have the ability to use time wisely to accomplish the myriad of required tasks needed to be undertaken, while effectively coping with the overall stress of the position.

To develop organizational abilities, principals should concentrate their efforts into an organized and prioritized list of responsibilities. Setting a goal to achieve proficiency at organizational skills, the administrator must: (a) develop a personal organization plan; (b) reduce task time through planned activities; (c) eliminate unnecessary tasks; (d) delegate tasks and selected responsibilities; (e) increase personal output and productivity; and (f) understand key time techniques (Amieri, 1982).

Other techniques available to develop proficient organizational skills include the recording of a task log, constructing a time-study checklist, creating a weekly time task chart, developing a principal's daily task analysis chart to determine the amount of time that is required to perform various duties, and the designing of a prioritized list of required duties (DeRoche, 1985).

Since the development of abilities to be organized on the job deal with the effective use of time management (Smith & Piele, 1996), there exists a four-part classical approach to time management in order to achieve adeptness at organizing duties and responsibilities:

1. Setting goals which lead to prioritizing tasks;
2. Developing and maintaining a daily time log which leads to the identification of time-consuming tasks;
3. Management of time-consuming tasks which lead to increased discretionary time; and
4. Wise use of discretionary time which leads to the accomplishment of those goals identified in step one.

It must be remembered that as the Humanistic Theorist, Peter Drucker (1966), indicated in his principle of management by objectives, effective organizational ability deals with an established plan: (a) the defining of specific goals, (b) the defining of objectives to achieve the goals, (c) the integration of the established goals and objectives into a plan of action, and (d) the determination of a system of measurement and control of the tasks at hand. Though Drucker's model deals with the decision-making process, developing a set plan will assist the administrator in managing in an organized manner. Then, with such a plan instituted, the principal will administer effectively.

4. **Decisiveness:** This leadership skill deals with the expertise of realizing when a decision is needed and acting on the decision in a prompt manner. Moreover (NAESP, 1990), principals of quality schools are good organizers as they make use of all available resources. They see time as an irreplaceable commodity as these principals effectively solve problems and make decisions on the acquired information at hand.

Successful principals realize that the leadership aspect of decisiveness is effective when it is thought of in terms of involving and empowering their teachers (Shockley, Tocha, & Tracy, 1992). Decisions reached in isolation may not only miss the target, they represent a failure to draw others into the decision-making process and thus compelling them to act as spectators. In acquiring the information needed to arrive at a necessary decision, obstacles are best negotiated when individuals of the organization take ownership of the information and problems at hand. The effective principal may be the sole individual to decide a matter, but will involve the staff in the sharing of relevant information.

In referring to discussions at an administrators' workshop on decision making, Edward DeRoche (1985) states that when it comes to making decisions, everyone wants to participate in the judgment. Generally though, everyone is content to rely on the administrator to implement the decree of the decision. Noting this, the premise of group involvement and consensus in the decision-making process is advocated.

Another perspective of the decision-making skill observes processes falling in a range with boss-centered actions at one end, and subordinate-centered actions at the other end (Tannenbaum & Schmidt, 1958). At the boss-centered range, the leader makes the decision and announces it to the staff. At the opposite end, the staff is given great liberty and flexible latitude in the process.

It was the view of Robert Tannenbaum & Warren Schmidt (Smith & Piele, 1996) that while subordinate-centered strategies were good for the organizational climate, the effective leader should not give the staff more involvement than the group could manage. The effective manager must accurately examine situations as they arise, and employ the appropriate decision-making style.

5. Leadership: The skill of leadership is broadly understood to signify the ability to provide direction for an organization as well as facilitate the process of establishing, developing, and maintaining a vision for the future. At the helm of the educational organization is the administrator, a leader who will play a key role in the effectiveness of schools as we enter the next century. Ceton and Gayle (1991) state "The principal will become a major change agent for schools. He or she will bear tremendous leadership responsibility in sharing governance with the staff of the school" (p. 229).

In agreement is Larry Lashway (1995), who discusses the evolution of school management issues from those early processes of managing schools from a businesslike standpoint to the more recent concept of managing in terms of instructional leadership, that is, leading an organization with its academic mission at the forefront.

Many other views concur that instructional leadership should promote a school culture that does not directly lead others, but encourages a climate that utilizes collaborative decision-making within the spirit of promoting facilitative leadership methods (Conley and Goldman, 1994).

Furthermore, many opinions are offered that specify the following responsibilities when focusing on leadership skills in a general sense. Some of these tasks include leading the faculty; training the staff; encouraging the pupils; creating a code of discipline; fostering a true feeling of school spirit; coordinating resources; scheduling and developing programs; maintaining a safe and clean learning environment; and involving parents and the community (Chernow and Chernow, 1992).

Above all, Stuart Smith and Philip Piele (1996) fully depict what leadership is as it is discussed within the perspective of a portrait of an effective educational leader:

This portrait shows leaders are competent, both intellectually and socially. They have a high degree of energy and initiative, but have also learned the value of patience. They get along well with people and are skilled communicators. They are psychologically well-balanced, integrating their diverse traits into a smoothly functioning whole. They have a distinctive set of beliefs and values that they communicate clearly. (p. 37)

6. **Sensitivity:** The skill of sensitivity can mean a variety of things to many people. One connotation of sensitivity is the ability to understand the needs of others, allowing the educational leader to become aware of people and situations with the insight to resolve conflicts.

Possessing tact and diplomacy are also other perceptions of the skill of sensitivity. During the course of the school year, principals will be required to be tactful and diplomatic. Also, they will need to bear different hats in an effort to assume varied roles at different times, demonstrating a sensitivity in each instance (Chernow and Chernow, 1992). To be mindful of the needs of the staff, the effective leader needs to make the correct decision in assuming a particular role. As Fred Chernow and Carol Chernow state, the principal will need to know which of six leadership hats to wear when being sensitive to the needs of the staff:

1. **Director's hat** - This is for giving specific instructions and supervising teachers and staff. This is good with first-year teachers, who need lots of structure and supervision.
2. **Coach's hat** - This is for explaining every decision and asking for suggestions from teachers. This works well with nontenured teachers, who are in the second or third year on the job. They're gaining confidence, but they still need a lot of encouragement.
3. **Backer's hat** - This is for making decisions together with staff members and backing or supporting their efforts toward performing tasks. This works well with creative teachers, backing them up and helping them reach their goals.

4. **Delegator's hat** - This is for turning over responsibility to experienced, capable teachers. This is good with staff members who have been successful in the past. Giving them a little latitude usually brings excellent results.
5. **Influencer's hat** - This is for handing over decisions and the responsibility for implementing them to staff members. This is a good style to use with teachers who regularly go above and beyond their basic duties. Putting a teacher in charge of the lunch room would be a good example. You would influence the teacher on basic routines and leave the decisions and responsibility to him or her.
6. **Owner's hat** - This is a hat you share with teachers, staff, and parents. In so doing, you convey a sense of ownership in a project before it begins. They buy into the project by planning with you and assuming certain responsibilities. This puts everyone at ease as long as you understand you may have to give up your own ideas when they aren't working. (pp. 270-271)

It must be remembered that the various positions and attitudes demonstrated by the effective principal will need to be varied and flexible. The proficient principal of an effective school (NAESP, 1991) will be sensitive to recognize the individual needs of the staff and students, considering the diversity of cultures, backgrounds, and abilities present in society.

7. **Stress Tolerance**: This skill deals with the ability to function, perform tasks, and continue to employ decision-making processes under varying levels of pressure. In essence, the school leader must endure the multitude of distractions, conflicts, and opposing forces which cause tensions and anxiety and can easily distract and divert

energies from the tasks at hand.

Possessing the abilities to regulate stress and to acquire a tolerance of stress are paramount to the success of the effective leader. A method of attaining the ability to perform under pressure is for principals to ensure that they take control of their schedules in the quest of taking care of themselves. Because of the pressures and long hours of the position (Robbins and Alvy, 1995), principals may see themselves in the beginning stages of burnout, possibly becoming ineffective, and eventually leaving the profession because of too much stress.

The effective school leader will know that stress has influenced job performance by being aware of the symptoms of stress in the workplace. Robert Ramsey (1996), has listed some of the indicators of negative stress to include: (a) Becoming argumentative and irritable, (b) Headaches, (c) Shouting, (d) Neck tension or pain, (e) Hostility, (f) Rapid pulse, (g) Indecisiveness, (h) Chest pains, (I) Lack of concentration, (j) Inconsistency, (k) Confusion, (l) Forgetfulness, (m) Insomnia, (n) Frequent stomach acidity (p. 362).

Since stress can alter the established leadership traits of the principal, and cause a departure from established and productive routines, it is important to list some mechanisms that can assist the principal to cope with stress on the job. Robert Ramsey (1996) has also listed some of the coping mechanisms for relieving stress to include:

- Change your routine
- Find a personal retreat
- Take brief 'mental vacations' during each day
- Adopt a wait-and-see attitude



- Quit judging yourself and others
- Build your own support group
- Admit mistakes and ask for help when it's needed
- Learn to pace yourself
- Simplify --get back to basics
- Walk off tension
- Delegate more
- Read to a child
- Try to remain positive and optimistic
- Always have a contingency plan
- Get organized
- Practice relaxation techniques
- Associate with positive, supportive people
- Employ time-management techniques
- Break down big jobs into small, manageable parts.

(pp. 365-366)

It must be remembered that stress can affect the well-being of the school leader and decrease job performance. Therefore, maintaining a focus on the physical awareness, physiological awareness, and psychological awareness levels of one's self (Robbins and Alvy, 1995), will allow the administrator to continue making an effective contribution to all members of the organization.

8. Oral Communication: Successful school principals have always needed to be

effective communicators possessing the ability to make clear presentations of facts, ideas, and beliefs. By communicators (Smith and Piele, 1996), it is meant that the art of listening carefully and expressing views clearly and succinctly are essential ingredients needed by the successful administrator. Moreover, as stated about distinguished principals in *Proficiencies for Principals Revised* (NAESP, 1991). "One of the most important (proficiencies) is the ability to communicate effectively. The image such principals project -- verbally, nonverbally, and in written communication -- forms the dominant perception of the school on the part of students, staff, parents, and the community" (p. 7).

Effective oral communication skills between the principal and the staff play a crucial role in determining the overall climate of the school, and employing these skills can serve as a foundation for openness, honesty, and integrity among the organization's members, fostering feelings of shared support, and service (DeRoche, 1985).

Of equal importance is the ability of the school leader to effectively communicate with the public, both with parents and with members of the community. Thought of in terms of public relations, effective oral communication will aid in building meaningful two-way relationships that support clear educational goals.

In addition to parents, who are likely to be the easiest group to reach since they are associated with the school through their children, groups that are more difficult but still important to contact include:

1. **Community leaders:** These individuals have access to large groups of people within the neighborhood and can aid in the dissemination of information in the quest for support of the school and its programs.

2. **Local realtors:** Since these people are asked about the school by parents considering relocating to a community, the principal should network with this group by inviting them to the school and witnessing the educational programs of the building.

3. **Senior citizen associations:** This group should be invited into the school and take part in special programs. They may be invited to read to various classes, have lunch with the children, take part in Grandparents Day activities, or simply shadow their grandchildren to designated classes.

4. **Local business groups:** By effectively communicating, the principal can attempt to enlist local businesses to provide support for special instructional programs, the donating of educational supplies, or sponsoring a work experience program (NAESP, 1997).

Mastering the art of effective oral communication skills can be a complicated and difficult affair. But the school principal who endures this process and learns to effectively communicate with students, parents, staff, colleagues, businesses, and members of the community, will reap the benefits of added support and understanding of the school and its viable place within the community (Smith and Piele, 1996).

9. **Written Communication:** Like the oral communication skill, successful school principals need to be effective written communicators, possessing the ability to write in a clear fashion and for varied audiences exhibiting diverse comprehension levels.

The leadership skill of communication is so significant, that twenty percent of successful principals, focusing on school improvement, cited a need for better communication skills to properly face future educational challenges. This percentage

places communication as the greatest measure of expressed needs, with the skills of instructional leadership, shared decision making, school management, motivation, technology, consensus building, positive school climate development, and flexible thinking, following in decreasing order, in amounts less than twenty percent (Ogden and Germinario, 1994a).

Since written communication is depicted as such a vital proficiency, it is important to note some characteristics of written communications that would be addressed to various members of the educational community to include the staff, students, parents, and the community.

In order to proficiently convey information to members of the staff, the successful principal can arrange communication items into prioritized groups. Such groups may include:

1. Information that is of immediate importance that needs to be conveyed within a time frame because there may be specific deadlines. Some examples of these types of written communications include schedules for staff duties and special subject (art, music, and physical education) instructional periods; notices of scheduled workshops and conferences; student essay or poster contests; job vacancies within the district; and upcoming assembly programs or performances.

2. Written communication that does not have a specific deadline. Examples of this category of written correspondence include the notification that new or additional educational resources have been delivered to the school; the introduction to a new procedure such as daily dismissals or student attendance recording; a review of a new

curriculum report; and the announcement of forthcoming student assessment dates.

3. The transmittal of information that may be of lesser importance, but should possibly be conveyed. Such examples include information about educational travel excursions for staff during recess period, and various college offerings for the staff.

4. Information that is of immediate importance that needs to be conveyed to selected personnel. Examples of this type of information include brochures for particular resources, memos detailing professional conferences on particular topics, and newsworthy items for the various groups of educational specialists within the building (Knoll, 1984).

The examples of the information listed above for building staff can be formatted into several types of written delivery systems to include bulletin boards, informational forms, formal and informal memoranda, formal letters, a staff handbook, and substitute teacher guide .

Utilizing effective written communications for students may include the use of posting items on strategically placed bulletin boards, sending letters of commendation to their homes that have been followed by a telephone conversation with their parents advising them of the good news, and hand-delivering short acknowledgments (happy gram or one-half page thank you note) of random acts of kindnesses or educational achievement.

For parents, principals should follow certain steps to ensure that written information will actually be read and ultimately achieve a positive reader response. Seven steps to consider in drafting a successful letter in order to achieve effective communication (Chernow and Chernow, 1992) include the following:

1. For maximum effectiveness, the opening paragraph in a letter should contain no more than seven words.
2. No single paragraph should have more than seven lines of copy. If it does, break it up to simplify communication.
3. Do not assume your reader knows anything about your purpose. Tell readers what you want them to know and what you want them to do.
4. Most people look at the letterhead of a letter first, then the salutation, the signature, and the postscript before reading the body. Design your letter to take advantage of this visual flow.
5. Letters with indented paragraphs are better than those without indentations. They appear to be less formal.
6. Use a postscript to increase understanding of the main point you are trying to make.
7. Make it easy for your reader to respond. Include a 'tear-off' or a reply form. (p. 140).

In dealing with the community, several methods are available in order to successfully transmit the written message. Successful school leaders can assemble and distribute a school report card which would detail the successes of the school year while supplying pertinent facts and figures; fact sheets highlighting the school budget, new courses and their requirements, graduation requirements, the percentage of graduating seniors attending institutions of higher learning, and the amount of scholarships that graduating seniors were awarded to attend schools of their choice; and information

regarding special community-wide special events (Sharp and Walter, 1997).

In addition, press releases can be generated to inform the public of noteworthy educational items, weekly or monthly space can be reserved in local newspapers to regularly list educational activities, a handbook for new members of the community can be prepared and distributed to local realtors that would list relevant facts and background information about the school, the local cable television channel can be reserved periodically to highlight various programs within the school and provide a telephone call-in segment, and a web page can be constructed and inserted on the Internet that would present an overview of the school, its programs, staff, and departments.

Perhaps Stuart Smith and Philip Piele (1996) provide an adequate summation of the communication process when they state the following:

Communicating can be a complex, difficult (as well as occasionally frustrating) business. Yet for the school leader who perseveres in understanding and communicating with students, parents, staff members, other administrators, and the community, there is a rich payoff. Effective communication with these groups can produce a positive school climate and good school-community relations. (p. 326)

10. Range of Interests: This skill deals with the ability to competently discuss a multitude of subjects dealing with education, politics, current events, fiscal concerns, and any other items that would correctly profile the principal as a pillar of the community and a strong, effective, respected, and true leader. In essence, the range of interests demonstrated would instill a realization that the school leader is truly interested, well-rounded on several notions, and shows a desire to actively participate in varied events

associated with the interests at hand.

Since this leadership skill is extremely broad in nature and can be interpreted in several ways, some distinct insights will be presented to further explain this proficiency. The school principal, who will be viewed by everyone within the educational population, the staff, students, parents, and community, must get involved and be visible while displaying a wide range of interests. At the heart of displaying these interests should be a plan to share information through two-way informational relationships that will support clear educational goals. As explained by the National Association of Elementary School Principals through its Educational Research Service (1997), displaying wide ranges of interests can be accomplished through successful community relations, in which the principal demonstrates his reflections on the school's overall mission and goals, and portrays the school as one that has developed and maintains a sound and effective educational environment.

Displaying a wide range of interests also suggests that the educational leader can model to all within the workplace that he or she is a lifelong learner (Robbins and Alvy, 1995). The principal may acquire, read, and share research performed on various educational matters. Moreover, the effective principal can demonstrate wide range of interests by participating in staff development sessions with the staff and sharing methods to implement the newly acquired information.

Spending time throughout the building, in halls, stairwells, and classrooms, will also demonstrate the utilization of the principal's wide range of interests. As the principal visits the various areas of the school, employing a style known as management by walking



around (Robbins and Alvy, 1995), the educational leader will have the opportunity to personally announce and share good news, dialogue with the students, assist the teachers in their supervising duties, participate in classroom lessons, and converse with the various support personnel.

At a time when the principal will become the major change agent for the advancements and improvements of our schools (Ceton and Gayle, 1991), employing a wide range of interests will aid in bringing about any needed transformations for the present as well as in the twenty-first century.

11. **Personal Motivation:** This skill deals with the ability to realize an undertaking and ultimate achievement of projects and goals that have been sought. In searching for the personal satisfaction that results when the school leader deals with the various projects and goals the within the duties of the principalship, it is the truly effective principal who brings this driving vision and motivation with regards to school management (Shockley, Tocha, and Tracy, 1992).

Seemingly, it is Robert Shockley, Robert Tocha, and Francis Tracy (1992) who place the leadership skill of personal motivation into an appropriate perspective when they state the following:

Effective principals go beyond the nuts and bolts of curriculum, scheduling, and discipline to announce a vision for their schools. This vision comes from experience and from the knowledge of what is possible when people possess a can-do attitude.

The principal sets the stage by communicating his vision to the staff in such a way

that it becomes a common vision. In dealing with teachers and students, it is important to develop themes and slogans that challenge and motivate. (p. 124)

Though the ability to achieve personal satisfaction on the job is paramount to successfully achieving the skill of personal motivation, the benefits of effectively accomplishing this goal go toward effective leadership by setting the proper example. They report that the successful principal will take this role-model responsibility very seriously since the most powerful form of leadership is leadership by example.

To observe the skill of personal motivation from another perspective, Edward DeRoche (1985) developed a self-awareness scale that enables the principal to gather information in several areas to include motivation and a related quality, self-respect. The following eight items would be answered by the school leader with either satisfactory, needs improvement, or unsatisfactory ratings.

1. Assumes principalship with primary motive of service and sharing in the teaching-learning process.
2. Knows and defines his or her educational, professional, and personal goals.
3. Has adequate self-expectations and perceptions.
4. Is satisfied with personal work produced, in terms of self-expectations and perceptions.
5. Stands up for personal convictions and ideas even when under pressure from others to change.
6. Is aware of his or her shortcomings but has a positive attitude toward overcoming them.

7. Has general appearance and grooming that are assets to his or her goal.

8. Has a sense of humor. (p.10)

In summarizing the discussion of the leadership skill of personal motivation, it is the effective educational leader who views the position of principal as one that radiates a great personal satisfaction of performing the variety of tasks associated with the position. This satisfaction helps to fuel the passion of the leadership role and the great influence the principal has in dealing with the entire school community.

12. Educational Values: This leadership skill deals with the educational leader possessing sensible and sound educational and leadership ideologies with the added important characteristic of being receptive to new ideas and to change.

It should be noted that in addition to tending to the roles and duties traditionally associated with the principalship, contemporary school leaders are required to assume new roles and responsibilities that are compatible with changes within our society. Some of these additional roles are discussed by Robert Ramsey (1996):

Champion of Children First - Children and youth aren't doing very well in American society. Look at the record: high infant mortality rate, child abuse, missing children, teenage crime and violence, teen pregnancy, runaways, adolescent drug use. With the disintegration of parenting, dysfunctional families, loss of sense of community, and poor public policy, children and teenagers are at risk more than ever before. We must focus again on producing leaders and contributing citizens. Society needs someone to champion the cause of strengthening families and putting children first if we are to have a better tomorrow. If

**school leaders don't do it, who will?**

**Dream Catcher** - Through visioning and strategic planning, today's principals are expected to help shape a dream of the school's future. More than ever before, effective principals have to be able to instruct and inspire pupils, parents, and the public about the possibilities of what their school can become.

**Prospector** - Principals in the 1990s need a radar for resources. Because of continuing downsizing, budget cuts, and fiscal restraints, educational leaders now have to scratch and claw for sufficient resources to maintain and improve school programs. Through non-traditional fund raising, creative reallocation of resources, and aggressive 'partnering' with businesses and other organizations, principals have to find new ways to supplement normal funding sources. Being 'resourceful' has taken on a new meaning for today's elementary and secondary principals.

**Counselor Without Portfolio** - Principals don't have to be lawyers, but they have to be aware of the labyrinth of legal pitfalls confronting school personnel and other professionals. School leaders must know how to buffer staffs from potential litigation and to operate the school within constantly shifting legal parameters.

**Matters of curriculum, instruction, and student discipline shouldn't have to be settled in the courts.** Savvy principals will keep educational decision-making within the educational community.

**Mosaic Maker** - Schools are more diverse and inclusive than ever before. It's up to the principal to help staff and community members accept today's classroom--one that is multicultural and accessible to students with disabilities--and to make

diversity a strength, rather than an excuse. Differing individuals and groups within the school can remain fragmented, or they can be blended into a meaningful human mosaic. Principals and teachers have to be mosaic makers today. (p. 6)

In addition to being receptive to new ideas, responsibilities, and to change, such as examples of those mentioned above, educational leaders must possess clear educational values. These values help set expectations regarding district and school policies as well as the personal values of the principal regarding proper and effective human interaction and school objectives. As Joseph Blase and Peggy Kirby (1992) state:

These principals are not mere messengers of expectations for district directives; they communicate their own personal visions of ideal school climate and processes related to respect for students, teacher classroom behavior, teacher-parent communication, curriculum, and pedagogy. (pp. 24-25)

Furthermore, it must be remembered that the educational values of the effective principal will reflect a sense of mission and a shared vision of the educational environment. As the months of the school year pass, the educational mission and shared vision need to be clearly stated and supported continuously with students, staff, parents, and the community (Shockley, Tocha, and Tracy, 1992).

In concert with the stating of the mission and vision of the school, the educational leader needs to exhibit several universal values or virtues that are essential to effectively lead all members of the educational community. For it must be recognized, leaders are people first, and as people who are presumed to be ethical and virtuous, they strive to live life correctly and in a fitting manner. In turn with this reasoning, the possessing of the

traits of honesty, loyalty, courage, respect, caring, justice, and grace contribute to the overall effectiveness of the principal (Smith and Piele, 1996). Perhaps, Stuart Smith and Philip Piele (1996) articulate it best when they summarize the manner in which the educational leader practices ethics, integrity, and values:

To be an ethical leader is not a matter of following a few simple rules. The leader's responsibility is complex and multi-dimensional, rooted less in technical expertise than in simple human integrity.

Leadership stretches that integrity, pitting it against a host of pressures and demands that threaten to deflect us from that purpose. Negotiating the turbulence requires a leader who thinks carefully and reflectively yet acts decisively; who cares about others but has the courage to confront them; who has a sense of history but also sees the world as it might be. Most of all it requires leaders who are fully aware of their own humanity, with all its faults and virtues. (p. 130)

#### Summary

The various leadership theories, styles, and skill development concepts addressed within this chapter were developed by various authors as a means to provide research towards the development of effective school principals. As discussed earlier, the principal, perceived by many to be the single most important person to a school's success, must be both an instructional leader and an effective manager (Sharp and Walter, 1997).

To demonstrate the varied and joint roles of the educational leader, William Sharp and James Walter (1997) seem to adequately summarize this discussion by listing some of the duties and related issues of a principal which detail both facets of the position, those of

**an instructional leader and manager:**

**(a) curriculum development, (b) instructional supervision, (c) evaluation of teachers, (d) program evaluation, (e) writing of grants, (f) pupil transportation, (g) food service, (h) legal problems, (I) facility management, (j) budget development, (k) community relations, (l) technology in the school, (m) contract management, (n) union relations, (o) grievance responses, (p) assisting with negotiations, (q) supervision of other administrators, (r) guidance services, (s) supervision of athletics, (t) department heads, (u) student activities, (v) special education, (w) coordination with other district principals, (x) vocational education, (y) working with central office, (z) working with area principals, (aa) health service, (bb) recommending staff for hire, (cc) discipline hearings, (dd) directing secretaries and clerks, (ee) student records, (ff) student management, (gg) accountability, (hh) student and staff scheduling, (ii) decreased funding, (jj) working with cooperatives in special education and vocational education (p. 5)**

**As this list shows, there are several duties and issues that the principal must oversee and govern in order to establish the development of a school environment made up of continuous improvement and commitment to student learning. To effectively and competently execute these items, Stuart Smith and Philip Piele (1996) indicate that the school leader must establish clear and compelling school goals, institute a sound professional development plan, conduct careful supervision and evaluative practices, and administer sound personnel practices.**

### Chapter III

#### METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

Chapter three describes the selection of the populations, collection of the data, and the research approach utilized to obtain the necessary information to conduct the study. The chapter is divided into three main areas followed by a summary section, in which a detailed broad description is included for each segment, the selection of the populations, collection of the data, and the research approach.

The purpose of this study was to investigate, through the oral interview, the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals. Particularly, the researcher was interested in focusing the study to view a comparison of teachers' attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills within selected public schools of New Jersey that had earned recognition as having building programs labeled Best Practices by the State Department of Education in the years 1993 through 1995. In noting the comparisons, no specific references were made to such characteristics as distinctive school populations, advanced degree attainments of teachers, job experience, or other school attributes such as the particular program that earned the institution as a Best Practices school.

#### Participants and Population Selection

The participants of this study were eight teachers employed in selected public schools of New Jersey having earned the distinction of having programs that earned a Best Practices designation.

Since teachers, working with principals in schools that are part of an educational



environment where proven learning and success have taken place in the form of a designation of Best Practices, they are in a convincing position to express their attitudes and perceptions of principals' leadership skills. By focusing on designated New Jersey public schools classified as Best Practices Schools from the period of 1993 through 1995, it is theorized that interviewed teachers will include in their highest rated selections those skills that are compatible with the twelve generic leadership standards as listed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

To be chosen to possess the designation of Best Practices, schools must have developed innovative programs successfully addressing specific educational needs and achievements of students across eighteen categories. It is in such learning institutions bearing the classification of Best Practices that these schools have focused as being effective places of learning where principals have established an overall environment for teachers to perform, grow, develop, and cultivate specific successful educational practices.

The Best Practices categories include (New Jersey Department of Education, 1995) Administrative/Fiscal Efficiency, Visual and Performing Arts, Assessment/Evaluation, Bilingual/Multicultural Education, Citizenship/Tolerance, Educational Support, Educational Technology, Health and Physical Education, Language Arts/Literacy, Mathematics, Professional Development, Public Engagement, Safe Learning Environment, Science, School-to-Work/Career Education, Social Studies, Special Education, and World Languages.

The participants, teachers employed in schools having earned the Best Practices designation, were randomly chosen from a staff list supplied by the principal of the

school. Responding schools, where the principal was not the same as when the Best Practices designation was earned, were excluded from this study. Likewise, only teachers who were assigned to those designated schools when they earned the Best Practices recognition were included in this study.

Initial contact was achieved through a letter of introduction explaining the project and purposes of the study. Moreover, the participants in this study were guaranteed anonymity -- they would be assigned an interview letter, and the tape-recording transcript would also be indexed only by the participant's letter.

To realize diversity of the study with regard to the socioeconomic status of the school district location within the state, teachers were chosen from schools covering the eight various District Factor Groupings found between the range of A through J.

#### Collection of the Data

Letters describing the study were mailed to principals of the selected schools having earned the Best Practices designation. Also, the principals were requested to return, in a self-addressed, stamped envelope, a list of the teaching staff of the school from which a teacher would be randomly selected and contacted. This process would ensure that the chosen teacher would remain anonymous to the school leader.

Following, a letter describing the study along with a consent form and self-addressed, stamped envelope were forwarded to the randomly selected teachers. Contained on the consent form was an explanation of the study as well as requested times and dates of teacher availability along with a request for permission to tape the interview.

The intent of the interview format was to study the nature of the teacher's

discussion, along with the use of specific language in furnishing the attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills of the principal within a prescribed format of interview questions. The objective was to obtain a brief history of the teacher's professional background, to include educational degree and various certification attainments, former (if any) instructional assignments, either within or out of the same district, and a perspective of the relationship between the teacher and the principal. Moreover, the design of each interview session would remain the same in order to establish a common ground and structure within the context of each interview. Lastly, it was important to organize the interview data, search for patterns of responses, and locate connections among the received data to arrive at thematic profiles of acquired information.

Above all, there was care taken to provide two important criteria. First, there should be a sufficient number of subjects interviewed as a part of the study in order to reflect a broad range of participant viewpoints and backgrounds; and second, the study should approach a saturation of furnished data so that the acquired information would begin to repeat itself and be no longer unique (Seidman, 1991).

The qualitative approach was chosen over the quantitative style of research because of the nature of the study (Leedy, 1989). Since attitudes and perceptions of teachers were sought of the leadership skills of principals in schools that had earned the Best Practices designation, the qualitative research style provided an understanding of the study through the medium of personal opinions of teachers and not through the impersonal nature of statistical data collection methods found in quantitative methodologies.

### Research Approach

The data collected in this study was explored through the qualitative research approach. Within the qualitative research style, the researcher, acting as the assessment instrument (interviewer), used open-ended questioning to promote increased conclusions through the medium of the interview process. Using this methodology, the data was analyzed and synthesized to form a meaningful matrix of attitudes of the various leadership skills of principals in Best Practices schools. Through this method (Eisner, 1991), the qualitative research design also considered the use of expressive language and the attention to particular individual ideologies conducted through the interview process.

Moreover, the research design used to collect the data for this study from the interviewees enabled the researcher to find in detail, formed attitudes dealing with what teachers had experienced, heard, and seen with regard to leadership skills of the principals of their schools (Rubin and Rubin, 1995).

### Summary

Our society has extensively studied leadership in the twentieth century concluding that there is a lack of simple answers when referring to the establishment of standards regarding the traits and skills of leaders (Smith and Piele, 1996). For example, there seems to be no single accepted comprehensive list of leadership skills in existence as attested by the documentation of just a few of the several published listings of leadership skills as found in Chapter Two of this study. For every researcher who has studied leadership skills, there appear to be varying conclusions as to the characteristics of those leadership skills that are necessary for a principal to be an effective leader. Furthermore, since simple

checklists of those skills or leadership processes that are necessary for an effective principal to master do not seem to be readily available, school leaders need to find or devise opportunities for employing their skills in their everyday activities to address the needs of the teachers, students, and staff in their schools (Krug, 1992).

Since this study is focused on the perceptions and attitudes of teachers with regard to leadership skills of principals, the research should be of significant interest and value to principals themselves, for it presents responses in the form of an interview that could serve as a leadership skill evaluation from the perspective of subordinate members of the organization. For instance, if the principal viewed the administrative duty of supervising the student lunch sessions in the cafeteria as a purely contractual obligation, perspectives of teachers may view this requirement as a leadership activity for the principal to have direct contact with the children and get to know them on a personal, informal basis.

The study also would be of significant assistance to teachers themselves, for it would allow them to become aware of, or at least remind them of the myriad of leadership skills that are necessary for principals to master in order to be effective administrators, and develop and maintain effective schools. Additionally, this study would be of assistance to aspiring administrators coming from the teaching ranks, for it would allow them to focus upon some elements of the research and preparation models that could be implemented for the development of effective school leaders.

Perhaps no single statement best describes and subsequently reminds a teaching staff of the enormous and multiple responsibilities of the principal as the statement below declares (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1997):

Proficient principals understand their highest priority is to assure that students receive effective instruction. They carefully supervise curriculum, instruction, performance, and assessment, and involve staff in developing the curriculum. Collaboration also occurs in the development and implementation of effective teaching practices.

An effective principal ensures that the planning and delivery of instruction produce improved learning for all children. Working with the staff, the principal determines how well students are learning, teachers are teaching, and the instructional program is succeeding. These assessments determine whether a change is necessary or a program should be continued.

Proficient principals are instrumental in creating and sustaining a quality environment that contributes to the desired performance of students and teachers. They are the moral and ethical agents responsible for the welfare and development of students. But they cannot do the job alone. Teachers, parents, and community members also play vital roles in shaping the school's quality and character. The principal and other stakeholders share the responsibility for ensuring that all children receive an equal opportunity for an excellent education. In the final analysis, however, where you find an outstanding school, you will find an outstanding principal. Proficient principals are leaders of leaders. They understand the change process and are able to facilitate collaborative action that leads to improved student achievement. (p. 5)

As educational research has focused on the critical importance of principals as the

individuals who have an enormous impact on the educational accomplishments of their students and the level of effectiveness of their schools, the successful educational leader will clearly communicate a developed statement of purpose or mission of the school to all members of the educational community through the employment of the various leadership skills discussed in this study (Austin, 1979). Setting the tone for the functioning of the school will be accomplished by only a principal who is effective in employing those skills necessary to realize overall educational goals. Focusing on attitudes of leadership skills from the perspective of teachers will assist in ensuring that the educational leader is fulfilling the essence of true leadership.

In reflecting on the responsibilities of the principalship through the employment of leadership skills, Pam Robbins and Harvey Alvy (1995) seem to summarize this discussion most appropriately:

A school is much more than a physical structure; it is a community made up of adults and children engaged in a journey that will lead to greater understanding for all. To help students, a principal serves teachers by empowering them to be the best they can be. As servant leaders, school principals find that their professional vocation is, in many ways, a calling. When principals meet that calling and serve teachers, students, and parents effectively, students have a greater opportunity to enhance their skills in a climate that promises growth, understanding, and a love of learning. (p. 262)

## Chapter IV

### PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study is to investigate, through the oral interview, the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals. In addition, the researcher is interested in focusing the study to contain interviewed teachers of selected New Jersey public schools that have earned recognition as having building programs labeled Best Practices by the State Department of Education. In reference to the conducted research and the interviewees, there are no specific references or prerequisites made to items such as particular school populations, teacher degree and certification attainments, teacher gender, or length of job experience. Regarding District Factor Groupings, the interviewed teachers are employed in public school districts having DFGs ranging from A through J.

While this study is not meant to observe specific comparisons of teacher leadership skill perceptions among the interviewed educators, it serves to exhibit that those teachers involved in this study interpret leadership skills that are compatible with the twelve generic skills as listed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

This study adds to the body of research of leadership skills that should be of significant interest and value to principals, for it presents responses that could serve as an appraisal of acquired leadership skills from the perspective of the teaching staff. Moreover, teachers themselves could find this study useful by reminding them of the variety of leadership skills that are necessary for principals to be effective school leaders



and in turn, develop and maintain effective schools.

#### Nature of the Study

Eight teachers were interviewed by the researcher from eight selected public school districts that had earned the Best Practices designation by the New Jersey State Department of Education for the period of 1993 to 1995. Initially, principals were contacted with a letter of explanation as to the nature of the study. Within the letter of explanation, they were asked to forward, in a self-addressed, stamped envelope, a list of their teaching staff members from which a teacher would be randomly selected and contacted by the researcher to be part of the study. This process, reviewed and accepted by the Institutional Review Board of Seton Hall University, ensured that all participating subjects in this study would remain anonymous, especially from the viewpoint of the building principals.

A total of sixteen school principals were contacted resulting in ten responses of forwarded staff lists returned to the researcher. During the spring of 1998, letters of explanation, informed consent forms, and self-addressed, stamped envelopes were sent to teachers of the designated schools. After several efforts, eight teachers accepted to be a part of the interview process by checking the relevant statements indicating agreement to be part of the study, and signing and returning the informed consent forms with required signatures, availability times, and telephone numbers. Each of the eight respondents also represented Best Practices schools from each of the eight District Factor Grouping designations: A, B, CD, DE, FG, GH, I, and J.

The interviews were held in various places chosen by the interviewees to include

five at the homes of the participants, one at the home of the researcher, and two in conference rooms in the Seton Hall University Library. The interviews took place in 1998 during the months of June, July, August, and October. By means of the consent forms, the participants had listed the times and dates they would be available to conduct the interviews. Using the supplied telephone numbers and considering the available dates as they were listed on the completed consent forms, the participants were contacted and interview dates and times were chosen according to the conveniences of the teachers.

### Interview Questions

The interviewees were posed a series of open-ended questions worded and arranged with the purpose of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions and essentially the same words. This procedure helped to formulate the analysis of the attitudes and perceptions of each of the subjects focusing upon the subjective experiences of the interviewees (Seidman, 1998).

The questions, based upon the twelve leadership skills of effective principals as established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, were aimed at understanding the interpretative processes of the interviewees. The answers to the posed statements and questions at the interviews were intended to reflect attitudes, perceptions, intentions, and values of the respondents (Patton, 1990).

Within the structure of the interview sessions, the questioning was arranged into four sections. The first section asked for general background information about the interviewee to include the number of years teaching, the degree(s) and certification(s) acquired, the position(s) held in the school, and general views of the subject's perceived

relationship with the principal.

The second section asked for perceptions and interpretations of the established twelve NASSP leadership skills from personal convictions and as portrayed through observations of the principal.

The third and fourth sections included general statements about the principal to be answered by a yes or no, and general statements about the school environment to be answered by a yes or no. These sections, composed by the researcher, were related to the twelve skills, but presented a scenario from which to solicit responses linked to the twelve leadership skills in relation to the principal and to the school environment.

At times, when the researcher's educational and teaching experiences, attitudes, and perceptions connected to those of the interviewees, there was a brief sharing of such items in a frank and personal way to encourage the participants to continue reconstructing their own thoughts (Seidman, 1998).

All teachers were interviewed by the researcher in person and responses to questions were tape recorded and later transcribed. Notes were taken throughout the interviews and conversations often lasted well beyond the allotted time frame. The conversations at the conclusion of the interview were informal in nature and were not tape recorded or included in the study. They provided the researcher however, with additional insights of the taped narratives.

#### Presentation of the Data

As previously stated, the teachers who were interviewed for this study were randomly selected from staff lists supplied from the principals of their respective schools.

The interviewees confirmed their interest in the study based upon an informational letter of introduction accompanied by an informed consent form initially provided to them. In addition, the researcher presented further information and supplied answers to any posed questions during telephone calls made to schedule the actual interview sessions. These telephone conversations also allowed the subjects the opportunity to withdraw from their involvement in the study.

The interview sessions varied in length based upon the individual teacher's willingness to provide additional details in response to the posed questions. None of the participants objected to the interviews being tape recorded since they were reminded and reassured that all interviewees, principals, and schools would remain anonymous. To ensure that principals would not be identified, due to their gender or specific idiosyncrasies and characteristics of their behaviors or routines, all references to principals in the transcripts of the interviewed teachers are labeled with the word principal, or the letter P.

The first interview lasted one and three-quarter hours. Teacher A, a Physical Education and Health Instructor for grades K-6, possesses a Master of Arts degree. A twenty-three year veteran, she has taught the last twenty-one years at her present school in a district with a District Factor Grouping of GH.

In addition to teaching, Teacher A is a consultant with the New Jersey Education Association. This part-time position enables her to visit several public schools in New Jersey to consult and advise fellow NJEA members on matters ranging from individual unresolved grievances, building and department disputes, to district contract negotiation support. This consulting experience in turn, has provided this interviewee with a basis of

comparison of contrasting school atmospheres and educational climates with her own school.

While her perceptions of leadership skills coincided with those generic leadership skills of the NASSP, it was strongly implied that the effectiveness of her school, leading to the Best Practice designation, has been in large part due to the dedication and professionalism of the staff. The principal of this school, according to the interviewee, is not highly respected by the staff, but is held in high esteem by the parents and Board of Education because of the strong public relations efforts exhibited. The principal, as explained by the subject, does exhibit strong leadership skills but is not sensitive to the professional and emotional needs of the building staff. Though the principal lacks a compassionate style, the school is highly effective because of a caring staff. The principal is effective because a forceful, dynamic and controlling demeanor is exhibited. Moreover, the principal is energetic and dynamic, and takes an active, controlling part in all aspects of the school. These qualities also limit the creative attributes of the staff since they are seldom asked to be a part of the decision-making processes.

The second teacher interviewed has taught for twenty-four years. For the last six and one-half years, Teacher B has been teaching at her school in a district with a District Factor Grouping of J. Possessing graduate degrees in Education and English, she is certified as a Reading Specialist as well as a Teacher of English and Social Studies, K-12. Presently, Teacher B teaches Reading and Science in an elementary school.

Teacher B states that she has a very positive and healthy relationship with her principal. The school, located in an affluent and supportive community, runs very

smoothly due to the untiring efforts of the school leader. The principal, being very receptive to change and managing the school utilizing a facilitative style, maintains a collaborative relationship with all members of the staff. Regarding the community, Teacher B indicates that the principal is viewed as the catalyst by which the school and staff perform effectively. In addition, the second teacher indicated that the principal is highly respected by students, staff, parents, the Board of Education, and the community.

The third teacher interviewed for this study has taught a total of twenty-one years. This teacher, seeming introverted, was gracious in accepting to be interviewed in spite of being uncomfortable when speaking about her school and principal. Because of this, the interview lasted only about forty-five minutes. The participant has taught in her present school for the last thirteen years, possesses a Bachelor of Arts degree in Early Childhood Education, and teaches First Grade. The school is one of several schools in a district with a District Factor Grouping of DE.

Teacher C describes her relationship with the building principal as cordial and friendly. While the principal is viewed as effective in the eyes of the interviewee, Teacher C emphasized that the principal cannot tolerate change and often becomes anxious. This anxiousness often makes the staff uneasy and unable to perform in a comfortable and relaxed manner. Though the principal often makes impulsive judgements and always seems to be in a hurry to bring closure to projects, programs, and initiatives, either on a building level or district level, the school is perceived to be effective by the teacher, the staff, the district, and the middle-class, blue-collar community. In spite of these attributes however, the principal is a respected educational leader who cares, first and foremost, for safety,

welfare, and educational successes of the students.

Of the twenty-five and one-half years that Teacher D has taught, she has been on staff at her present school for twenty-three years. This school is located in a district with a District Factor Grouping of CD.

The fourth interviewee holds a Master of Arts degree in English plus has earned an additional sixty graduate credits. Certified in English and Social Studies, Teacher D has been a TAG (Talented and Gifted) Program Teacher and, most recently, teaches high school English. She is also an adjunct professor at a local university.

When asked to describe her relationship with her principal, there was a long pause and a look of reflection on the face of the participant. After several seconds of thinking, the relationship was stated as friendly, but not overly so. She stated that they do not socialize and have a professional relationship. At times, there is an adversarial relationship between the teacher and her principal, but Teacher D also stressed that there was a mutual respect between both parties present at all times.

Overall, the interviewee, not displaying a positive attitude of the school leader, demonstrated that successes and accomplishments of the school were mainly due to the concerted, hard-working efforts of the staff. The principal, though organized, lacks a vision, especially for the long term. Though the overall leadership skills of the principal were perceived and described to be poor, the interviewee stated that the staff, because of its integrity and professionalism, supports the principal.

The one item most accented in a negative connotation by Teacher D was the skill of sensitivity. She stated that the principal did not possess any sensitivity when dealing

with staff, parents, and students. The school leader, because of a lack of sensitivity, is not able to understand the needs, problems, and concerns of others within the educational community.

Teacher E has taught for all seven years of his teaching career in his present Best Practices school. The interviewee teaches Art to students in grades six, seven, and eight. His middle school is in a district having a District Factor Grouping of I.

Possessing a graduate degree, Teacher E has certifications in Art, K-12, Elementary Education, K-8, and has recently acquired a supervisor certification. In addition to teaching Art, the interviewee has a strong background in technology and has assisted in developing his district's Web page on the Internet. He will be taking a full-time sabbatical during the 1998-1999 school year to further pursue his technology background. Regarding the future, he is contemplating a change into administration and supervision.

In describing his views of his relationship with his principal, Teacher E feels that they have a very positive and open association. They communicate very well with each other, and, as the interviewee indicated, at any time, he can come to his principal to discuss ideas. The principal is always very receptive, excited, and enthusiastic about presented ideas and shows support in enacting and following-through on the presented proposals. Also, the principal is a very good listener and mentor as the subject indicated that he can comfortably meet with his principal whenever advice is sought when dealing with special projects and the involvement of the art projects with the building staff.

During the one and one-half hour interview, the participant said that he had been interviewed and subsequently recommended to be hired for his teaching position by his



principal. This fact made the teacher feel especially loyal and receptive to his principal. In discussing this aspect, the participant stated that since he was recommended for his position by his principal, the school leader must be interested in what he has to say and what the subject wants to bring to the school. This, from the outset, established a very positive relationship.

When asked to add any other information that may be relevant in terms of the background of the participant, Teacher E stated that he had not worked all of his adult life in education. Prior to teaching, he was a working artist, and working in a business outside of an educational situation. Moreover, he indicated that he is a very independent type of person.

The sixth interviewee, Teacher F, has been teaching eighteen of her twenty-three-year teaching career at her present Best Practices school. Teaching in a district with a District Factor Grouping of FG, Teacher F presently teaches Kindergarten on a part-time basis. This status has been varied depending on the number of half-day Kindergarten sessions established in any given school year. For several years, she has taught both morning and afternoon sessions as a full contract teacher. For the last five years however, she has taught morning session Kindergarten. Teacher F stated that as enrollments dictate additional sessions, she will once again consider a full-time status in the district.

During the seventy-five minute interview, Teacher F stated that she possesses a Bachelor of Arts degree with an Early Childhood certification. Other positions held in her school have included teaching Compensatory Education (remedial instructional program), three years as a First Grade teacher, and one year as a Second Grade teacher. During the

remaining years, she has taught Kindergarten, her favorite position.

As Teacher F described her relationship with her principal, she indicated that her principal is very approachable and she is very comfortable to visit the principal at any time with any problem. The principal makes the participant and the staff feel very comfortable. Alluding to a comparison with the principal assigned to this school before the present principal, if there were any difficulties, the staff was to solve them by themselves. The perception of Teacher F of the prior administrator was that staff who requested assistance with problems were considered as inadequate. The present principal however, always has an open door and invites teachers to visit at any time for assistance, guidance, and direction.

When asked if there was any additional information that the participant believed was relevant or important to this study, Teacher F stated no. Though honest and fairly open, this participant seemed very interested but somewhat shy, reserved, and hesitant at times, when asked to respond to acquired perceptions, attitudes, and opinions.

The seventh teacher interviewed in this study has been teaching nineteen of her twenty-nine years in her present school. Teacher G has earned a Bachelor of Arts degree plus an additional thirty graduate credits, and is certified to teach Mathematics and English. She presently teaches Algebra I and II to high school students in grades nine through twelve.

When asked to describe her views of the relationship between the participant and her principal, Teacher G replied that it is cordial. She indicated that they are not really close, but they are friendly to each other. She also indicated that they greet each other in a

friendly manner, and she feels free to talk to her principal at any time if she cares to.

When asked to supply any additional information regarding the teacher's background, Teacher G said that she had taught for several years, had stopped to raise her own children, and returned after they had grown. She also had taught junior high school in the past, and in private, parochial schools on the elementary and high school levels. The interview lasted approximately one and one-quarter hours.

Teacher H, the eighth respondent, has taught for thirteen years. She has taught the last twelve years in her present school, a high school that is located in a school district with a District Factor Grouping of B. Teacher H has earned two graduate degrees and is certified to teach English and English As A Second Language (ESL).

During the sixty-five minute interview, the participant stated that she has taught English to students in grades nine, ten, eleven, and twelve, and ESL courses to each of the four high school grades. Presently, the respondent teaches English.

When asked to describe her views on her relationship with her principal, Teacher H stated that she is one of the few staff members that can describe the relationship as good. She also added that she is very much aware of the difference between the principal and herself, and how the principal views other personnel in the school. She seemed happy that a good relationship does exist and considers herself lucky to have established this positive association with her principal.

Teacher H did not have any additional information to add regarding her professional background.

The information collected during the various interview sessions is presented in a

thematic format as a summary of responses within each leadership skill and subsequent yes or no questions, whose inquiries are directly related to the leadership skills. Since the teachers did not have a copy of the questions or the listing of the twelve leadership skills in advance of the interviews, there was no basis to believe that any of the responses could be prepared or formulated to present a preconceived notion of attitudes and perceptions of the skills.

Questions relating to the teachers themselves, such as listing the number of years teaching, degrees earned, certifications acquired, and instructional positions held at the school, served to provide background information and establish a feeling of comfort on the part of the interviewee, since the interviews were being recorded on audio cassette tapes. The teachers seemed to enjoy the conversations and the interest and sincerity posed by the researcher as they reflected upon their positions and perceptions of their school leaders throughout the interviews. Though some interviewees were more relaxed than others, all appeared completely candid about their particular attitudes and perceptions.

#### Qualitative Research Approach

It is important to reflect on the nature of the study and how this qualitative research project was approached by the researcher. The format of the interviews is to pursue an interest in the participants, and develop an understanding of their experiences and the meanings they make of those experiences (Seidman, 1998). Moreover, the researcher, presenting himself as a sincere and non-threatening individual, attempted to establish a comforting environment, thus making it possible for the person being interviewed to bring the interviewer into his or her world (Patton, 1990). By seeking what

is in and on the mind of each interviewee, that is, soliciting attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills through observations of their principals, the participants were presented with the twelve particular skills focused upon, and asked to elaborate upon them using their personal experiences and convictions as examples.

As Patton (1990) declares, the purpose of interviewing is to access the perspective of the person being interviewed. Patton continues by stating the following:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. The issue is not whether observational data is more desirable, valid, or meaningful than self-report data. The fact of the matter is that we cannot observe everything. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviors that took place at some previous point in time. We cannot observe situations that preclude the presence of an observer. We cannot observe how people have organized the world and the meanings they attach to what goes on in the world. We have to ask people questions about those things. The purpose of interviewing then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective. Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit (p. 278).

To further develop and organize the data collection process, items asked during the interviews, such as the listing of the twelve the leadership skills, and the follow-up sets of related yes or no questions were carefully worded and arranged. This was done with the intention of taking each of the interviewees through the same sequence and asking each subject the same questions with essentially the same words. This type of interview, the

standardized open-ended interview (Patton, 1990), has proven to be quite adequate, since interviewees, in reality, were available on a limited basis, and in the case of this study, were only accessible for a one-time meeting because of their personal schedules and obligations.

Some of the leadership skills evoked strong feelings, which at times, surprised the respondents themselves. The researcher, sensing these strong emotions, allowed the participants to continue expressing their personal rationales based upon developed perceptions of the leadership skills.

After four interviews, the researcher realized that the study had reached a point of saturation (Rubin and Rubin, 1995). Whether the participants were male or female, were based in elementary, middle, or high school settings, were located in areas with various District Factor Grouping classifications from low to high, were teaching various disciplines, and were employed with varying degrees of experience, the same attitudes and perceptions were expressed, which tested the concept of "dissimilarity sampling," ensuring that the perceptions and attitudes expressed and ascertained were similar in different situations and capacities.

Reflected in the tape recordings and transcripts of the interviews are the various expressed perceptions and attitudes of the subjects. Consistency was checked by examining the dialogue for any differences and similarities exhibited during the interviews. In addition, notes were taken by the researcher during the taped interviews. Moreover, the importance of the study was explained to each teacher prior to the taping of the interview, as well as the reasons the research could be of interest to others.

## Background Information Asked of Each Respondent

### Questions in Series 1

There were six questions asked in the first series which dealt with information on the background of each respondent. The topics included listing the number of years teaching, the number of years that the respondents have taught in their present Best Practices schools, the highest degrees earned and certifications attained, the teaching positions held in their present school, a sharing of the respondents' opinions of their relationships with their principals, and the providing of any other information that the respondents deemed relevant or important regarding their professional backgrounds in terms of the study.

Question 1.1 and 1.2 List the number of years you have been teaching. List the number of years you have been teaching in this (Best Practices) school.

In response to this inquiry, there were varied amounts of experience listed among the participating respondents. All of the participants in this study were tenured teachers and had professional experience ranging from seven years to twenty-five and one-half years.

If, as a result of the random selection process of respondent selection, a teacher did not possess tenure, then teacher experience could have been much less than the listed seven years. Tenure, a position that deems a teacher as a permanent staff member within a public school district, is an acquired status of New Jersey public school teachers who have taught for a minimum of three full school years and one day.

At this time it should be noted that one randomly selected teacher had returned the

Teacher Response/Informed Consent Form declining participating in the study. She noted on the form that a prime cause for not participating in the study was that she had not earned the status of tenure.

The amount of years that respondents taught in the Best Practices school ranged from all of their professional experience to portions varying from six and one-half of twenty-four total years, to all teaching experience occurring in the particular school.

Question 1.3 Specify your highest degree (s) and certification(s) held.

The participants covered the range of earned degrees from Bachelor to Master degrees with sixth year level status, a designation generally viewed as earning a minimum of thirty graduate credits beyond the Master degree attainment. One respondent had earned two graduate degrees, and one subject acquired sixty graduate credits above the graduate degree.

All interviewees had earned at least a certification corresponding to the teaching position they presently held in their current school. In some cases, teachers had acquired dual certifications qualifying them to teach various disciplines within two or more departments.

Question 1.4 Name the teaching position(s) you have held in this (Best Practices) school.

The random selection of participants leading to their participation in this study, in turn, led to an assortment of teaching positions represented. Participating teachers in this study were assigned within three levels of schools, elementary, middle and high school. Within these three levels, the interviewees taught an assortment of disciplines, to include



elementary classroom instruction, and middle and high school departmental assignments. Within the elementary setting, kindergarten through sixth grade was represented to include kindergarten, first grade, fourth grade, small-group remedial reading and science, and physical education and health. In addition, art instruction was represented within the middle school level, and English, Language Arts, English as a Second Language (ESL), and Talented and Gifted (TAG) were represented on the high school level.

Question 1.5 Please describe your views of your relationship between you and the (your) principal.

This inquiry led to a variety of responses, from reports of positive, supportive relationships, to feelings depicting cordial yet non-supportive relationships, to friendly, to adversarial alliances, but maintaining a mutual respect for one another. In essence, respondents generally maintained that they have a working relationship with their principals though they all do not always agree with their leadership ideologies.

Question 1.6 Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background in terms of this study?

The responses to this question also varied widely. Most of the interviewees indicated that they also held added responsibilities in addition to their teaching duties. Among the tasks were public relations work, yearbook and related publication coordination, building Reading and Language Arts representative, and work with the New Jersey Education Association (NJEA) as a part-time consultant. This last responsibility made the most impact as the researcher was advised that the respondent had an opportunity to visit many public school districts throughout the state. Because of this

charge, the subject stated that she could form a basis of comparison between her school and the schools she visited. In addition to obtaining a sense of the educational and professional environment upon entering visiting schools, she could contrast outcomes of various leadership skills of principals as perceived by her NJEA colleagues with those of her own principal.

#### **Information About the Attitudes and Perceptions of the Twelve Leadership Skills Questions in Series 2**

This next series dealt with each respondent's attitudes and perceptions of the leadership skills of their principals with those listed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. In each interview, the twelve skills were mentioned individually, allowing the participants to express their opinions and beliefs as they applied to the principal of the school in which they taught.

In many cases, as documented by the transcripts of the tape recorded interviews, the teachers responded quite candidly when discussing their school and principal. They revealed actual examples of the actions and on-the-job performances of their principals that displayed the possession of the leadership skills, in varying degrees, or the lack of them. To assure the respondents that their replies would remain anonymous, the researcher reminded them that all associations to the principals would be listed with the word "principal" or letter "P" to ensure that the gender of their school leaders would also remain unidentified.

#### **Question 2.1 Problem Analysis**

In response to the leadership skill of problem analysis, there were several replies

that indicated principals possessed this skill in varying degrees. One respondent, Teacher A, indicated that her principal tended to become fully involved in seeking out relevant data of the problem to the extent of excluding the teacher's input in the process, even though that teacher was involved in the issue at hand. Though it was appreciated that there was ample searching for information on the part of the principal, the teacher had wished that she would be included in the search process.

Other teachers presented responses of a general nature stating that their principals were effective at analyzing and solving problems. Teacher C indicated this as well, but stated that her principal rushed through the process. This teacher added that her principal should relax and slow down, and thus perform the process of problem analysis in a more efficient and complete manner. Teacher D indicated that her principal can analyze problems within a short-term view. Over the long-term however, the principal cannot determine the important elements of a problem situation. In addition, this administrator, as perceived by Teacher D, usually depends on a circle of friends who act as confidants.

The strongest and most positive perceptions of a principal came from Teacher E. Regarding the leadership skill of problem analysis, Teacher E indicated that his principal empowers the staff and leads through a facilitative approach. This leadership style allows the staff to be a part of the various processes of seeking relevant data to determine important elements of problems.

Teacher H indicated that her principal was effective at the skill of problem analysis depending on the particular problem faced at that time. Citing an example of applying procedures for giving the High School Proficiency Test (HSPT), Teacher H said that her

principal lacked the problem solving skills necessary to effectively execute the essential preparations and procedures for giving the test. At other times however, the principal was effective at acquiring information and obtaining all informational elements of a problem situation.

#### Question 2.2 Judgment.

Generally, the interviewed teachers said that their principals effectively possessed the leadership skill of judgment. Teacher D however, indicated that her principal was aware that he/she lacked good judgment. She said that her principal has told the staff that he/she possesses poor judgment.

Teacher H also admitted that her principal was weak when looking at all sides of situations when called upon to make a judgment. In addition, this principal is viewed as showing favoritism towards certain people. Because of this trait, honest and fair judgments cannot always be made when confronted with a problem situation.

#### Question 2.3 Organizational Ability.

Most respondents indicated that their principals were adequately skilled in organizational ability. Teacher C indicated that her principal was organized but stated that he/she becomes stressed because of the large volume of work. Also, this principal was perceived as being in a hurry to deal with the large amount of administrative responsibilities. This in turn, added a great deal of stress and pressure on the staff.

Teacher F also indicated that her principal was organized, but since this administrator has assumed many additional duties in addition to running the building, the staff is not always apprised of necessary information. Information therefore, if not

dispensed from the office, is usually shared through an informal network of the teachers of the building.

Teacher G added that there is a strong organizational ability present because her principal has many good and organized people as part of his/her administrative staff, such as supervisors and vice-principals. This principal also has an excellent secretary who organizes daily routines and who effectively manages and schedules the various responsibilities of the principal.

#### Question 2.4 Decisiveness.

Most of the respondents agreed that their principals possessed the ability to recognize when a decision was needed. Teacher C added that her principal seemed to make a decision too quickly and act upon it just as fast.

The principal of Teacher D is perceived to always say no to a request which requires a decision. With this behavior in mind, the staff knows to wait while the principal ponders the question at hand. Only after the principal has had sufficient time to weigh all of the particulars of a request, the staff has realized that in time, the decision will most probably be reversed.

Teacher G seemed to have the distinct opinion indicating that her principal was inconsistent in making a decision. Depending on the circumstances, the principal of Teacher G's school is known to have two capabilities: to be effective in decisiveness or to not deal with this skill very well.

#### Question 2.5 Leadership.

Most of the interviewed teachers recognized that their principals do possess the

skill of leadership. Teacher E indicated that his principal practices the skill of leadership by example.

Using an instance when the school staff was working together to be friendly and pleasant toward the students, the principal had already established a professional, courteous, and respected relationship with the staff. This established relationship was used as a platform in which to develop a kinder and friendlier relationship with the students. Teacher E added that the students observed the cordial relationship among the staff and noticed that treating teachers with respect, will bring on a new and added respect from the teachers themselves.

Teacher A stated that her principal is a good leader but does not agree with the methods by which her principal leads. Teacher A admitted that teachers will do what they are told mainly because the principal will retaliate by adding duties, or in more severe cases, have particular teachers transferred to another district school.

The principal in the school of Teacher D is not perceived as a good leader but is liked by the staff. Teacher D also stated that the school is good and effective because of the strong, caring, and dedicated staff.

#### Question 2.6 Sensitivity.

Regarding the skill of sensitivity, respondents showed mixed perceptions toward their administrators when their principals were required to resolve conflicts, deal tactfully with and equally with others, and possess the ability to sense the needs, concerns, and personal problems of others.

Teacher B stated that her principal is a very sensitive person and is sensitive to all

of the staff. In agreement with this perception was Teacher F. This respondent indicated that his principal is sensitive and humane toward everyone within the school community, to include the staff, children, and parents. Teacher G indicated that her principal is a people person. However, this administrator is perceived to be inconsistent in his/her dealings with others. If, Teacher G stated, the principal displayed sensitivity equally, then this administrator would be perfect at this particular skill.

Negative connotations of the skill of sensitivity were perceived by Teachers A, C, and D. In these three cases, the principals were viewed as having respectively, about ten percent, little, or no sensitivity toward others.

Teachers F and H implied that their principals were inconsistent when dealing with others. Since these principals seemed to show favoritism, they were sensitive in varying degrees depending on their particular contact at that time.

#### Question 2.7 Stress Tolerance.

The perceptions received regarding the skill of stress tolerance were also varied among the respondents. Teachers A, B, E, F, and H all indicated that their administrators showed a high level of stress tolerance. Teachers E and F added that their principals use humor as a release of stressful situations and moments.

Teacher C stated that her principal was inconsistent when performing under pressure and during periods of opposition. This principal is also known to be absent several times throughout the school year. Teacher C added that these absences seemed to be perceived as days the principal needed to rest and relax after there had been difficult periods of stress within the school.

Teachers D and G stated that their principals could not tolerate stress. The principal of Teacher D is known to lose his/her temper very quickly and later offer apologies to affected personnel. Teacher G added that her principal is very short-tempered. Moreover, this principal also shows that he/she is stressed.

#### Question 2.8 Oral Communication.

Five of the eight interviewees stated that their principals were effective oral communicators with their favorable perceptions ranging from excellent to good. The remaining three teachers said that their principals were poor at the skill of oral communication.

Teacher D, an English educator, indicated that she had discreetly corrected her principal several times when speaking. Also admitting that her principal was never angry at her constructive corrections of the use of poor grammar, this teacher ceased to help the principal because he/she never improved when speaking. Frustrated, Teacher D quit helping her principal.

Teachers G and H also stated that their principals were poor oral communicators. Teacher H added that she wishes that she would have her principal as a student in one of her own classes.

#### Question 2.9 Written Communication.

Regarding the skill of written communication, six of the eight respondents indicated that their principals were excellent, good, or fine at this task.

There were differing opinions from the subjects when they reflected on the amount of written communications that were sent to them or to the staff. Teacher A, while



admitting that her principal writes well and effectively, stated that the staff receives far too many written notices. Teacher C also indicated that the staff receives too many notices. In addition, the principal of Teacher C is known to write poorly to the staff, not always using correct grammatical terms. Teacher C also admitted that the quality of written letters sent to parents is better than those sent to the faculty and staff.

Teacher H stated that so many errors have existed in her principal's memoranda, that he/she has asked several people to proof read all letters and notices before distribution.

#### Question 2.10 Range of Interest.

Most of the interviewed teachers indicated that their principals had a range of interests possessing a competence to discuss a variety of participants and a desire to actively participate in related events.

Teachers A, B, C, E, and F stated that their principals maintained ranges of interests in varying degrees. The most diverse principal is the administrator of Teacher E's school. This principal is perceived to be well-read, to participate in sports and tournaments such as basketball and Scrabble, and to also have very positive relationships with children.

Teacher D indicated that her principal has a very limited range of interest. But in order to function effectively as an administrator, the principal is aware of this and has specific sources for needed information for any upcoming activity or project.

Teacher G admitted that she was not aware of, and had not noticed if her principal possessed a range of interests besides those directly involving the students, the school, and its administration. Teacher H also indicated that her principal seemed to have a limited

range of interests.

#### Question 2.11 Personal Motivation.

All respondents declared that their principals were motivated administrators. Of all leadership skills, the ability to be personally motivated was perceived to be present with each administrator. Teachers A and H added that their principals have had desires to become district superintendents following a period as administrators on the building level. The principal of Teacher E is also perceived to be a very focused and directed individual.

Teacher D however, remarked that her principal's motivation was varied and very much depended on the particular area of concern. If a particular field was not of importance or of particular interest to this principal, motivation would decrease.

#### Question 2.12 Educational Values.

All of the subjects agreed that their principals possessed the leadership skill of educational values, that is, having an educational philosophy and being receptive to new ideas and to change. Teacher E indicated that his principal possessed very solid educational values, and Teachers B, F, G, and H all added that their principals adequately had developed well-reasoned educational philosophies.

Teacher A did add that any changes needed to occur must originate from and be totally accepted by the principal. This principal is highly driven with firm educational values, but must be in control to drive the changes that are to occur.

The principal of Teacher C does try new ideas but seems to resist change. This principal is perceived to strongly favor the old, traditional values, and has difficulty accepting innovative ideas.

Teacher D added that her principal, while possessing educational values, did not pursue them. This principal is perceived to be well-read in the area of education, and thus be aware of fresh, innovative trends. But because of personal limitations, the administrator will not attempt to develop them for use in school programs.

#### **Additional Data About the Attitudes and Perceptions of the Twelve Leadership Skills Questions in Series 3**

There were twelve questions in this series that appeared in the form of statements. Each statement, preceded with the words 'The principal of my school,' was followed by a generic scenario that was associated with each of the twelve leadership skills that were previously discussed.

During the interviews, the subjects were requested to answer each statement with either a yes or no response. They were given the leeway however, to respond with the word 'sometimes' if the described situation did not necessarily conform to a definite yes or no answer. The statements in Series 3 allowed for a more general perception of the leadership skills of the principals, and not one based upon particular examples that varied with each respondent.

**Question 3.1 The principal of my school analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively (Problem analysis).**

Almost all of the respondents agreed that their principals did possess the leadership skill of Problem Analysis by way of the presented statement to them. Teacher G however, indicated that her principal sometimes exhibited the skill of problem analysis, while Teacher H replied to this statement with a no response.

Question 3.2 The principal of my school reached logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information (Judgment).

Five of the respondents replied that their principals do reach logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information and thus possess the leadership skill of judgment.

Teachers A and C indicated that their principals sometimes exhibited this skill, and Teacher D stated that her principal did not possess or demonstrate this leadership ability. Moreover, the response of Teacher D was compatible with the response provided in Series 2.

Question 3.3 The principal of my school demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner (Organizational Ability).

Once again, five of the participants responded to this statement with yes affirmations. Teachers F, G, and H however, indicated that their principals sometimes demonstrated the organizational skills needed to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner. Teacher H was the only respondent who indicated that her administrator was inconsistent when demonstrating the skill of organizational ability.

Question 3.4 The principal of my school recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly (Decisiveness).

Seven of the eight respondents stated yes to this statement. Teacher C added though, that her principal sometimes acted too quickly in reaching a decision. This response corresponded to Teacher C's earlier response that her principal acted to hastily during the course of his/her administrative duties.

Teacher D, also indicating that her principal did recognize when a decision is required and then acts quickly, added that even though decisions were made, he/she did not always effectively make the correct decision.

Question 3.5 The principal of my school interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task (Leadership).

Four of the eight respondents said that their principals did effectively interact with the staff in guiding them to the accomplishment of a task, and thus did possess the skill of leadership.

Teacher A, while admitting that her principal does possess the skill of leadership, added that the principal does not successfully interact with the staff of the school.

Teacher D also indicated that her principal does not effectively possess the skill of leadership. Differing for the reason furnished by Teacher A however, Teacher D stated that her principal is liked by the staff and is perceived to be a nice person, but is not perceived to be an overall good, effective leader. She added that the school is productive and successful because of the proficient and strong staff.

The two 'sometimes' responses of this question were furnished by Teachers C and H. Teacher H gave this particular reply because the skill of leadership by her principal depended on the particular staff member involved at the time. Teacher H had indicated that her principal was known to treat staff members differently depending if they were in his/her inner circle of associates.

Question 3.6 The principal of my school demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff (Sensitivity).

The responses obtained from the participants dealing with sensitivity issues were mixed with three teachers giving yes responses, three teachers furnishing no responses, and two indicating that their principals sometimes demonstrated sensitivity toward the staff. Only Teachers B, E and F stated that their principals demonstrate the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

Teachers A, D, and H indicated that their principals do not possess the leadership skill of sensitivity. Included in the transcripts of the taped interviews, Teacher A had stated that her principal maintained a 10 percent level of sensitivity, while Teacher D declared that her administrator was not a sensitive person.

Two participants, Teachers C and G had indicated that their principals showed favoritism, and thus were given sometimes responses. If they would treat all staff members equally, the teachers asserted, these administrators would have been perceived as always being sensitive to the needs of the staff.

Question 3.7 The principal of my school performs under pressure and during periods of opposition (Stress Tolerance).

Six of the eight respondents indicated that their principals did indeed perform their functions under pressure and during periods of opposition. Teacher A added that her principal most definitely did perform under pressure during the course of his/her duties.

Teacher D responded to this statement with a sometimes reply. This participant added that her principal did perform under pressure but not always well, concluding that the response could be divided between a sixty-forty split.

Teacher G also stated a sometimes answer indicating that her administrator did

also perform under pressure, but not really well.

Question 3.8 The principal of my school establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally (Oral Communication).

The majority of the respondents, six teachers, indicated that their principals did establish regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally. To her yes response, Teacher G added that her principal usually, but not always does accomplish this ability.

Two participants however, Teachers A and D, responded in a different manner. Teacher A indicated sometimes to this statement, adding that regular and clear channels of oral communication depend on the situation at hand.

Teacher D indicated that her principal absolutely did not perform the listed functions dealing with oral communication. She quickly altered her response however, to state that on an informal basis, her principal did perform this function. On a formal basis though, the administrator was given a no response.

Question 3.9 The principal of my school displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing (Written Communication).

Five of the eight participants did affirm that their principals do display the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

Teacher C however, stated that her principal sometimes performed this task. Teachers G and H though, indicated that their administrators did not exhibit the skill of written communication as specified within the presented statement.

Question 3.10 The principal of my school exhibits the desire to actively participate

in school and school-related events (Range of Interest).

Seven of the eight respondents provided yes replies to this statement. Teacher D however, responded in essence, with a sometimes answer. She indicated that the participation in school and school-related events by her principal depended on the type of event being held. This respondent added that her principal is less supportive of the more intellectual school events and thus, has a limited range of interest.

Question 3.11 The principal of my school shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students (Personal Motivation).

Seven of the eight participants stated that their principals did indeed show evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

Once again, Teacher D possessed a different conviction than those of the other respondents. Her response was a definite no to the statement. Moreover, Teacher D added to her no response by stating that her principal conceivably displayed a stoic demeanor but definitely did not show excitement regarding future possibilities.

Question 3.12 The principal of my school shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas (Educational Values).

The responses to Question 3.12 brought mixed reactions. Four of the eight participants, Teachers B, E, F, and H provided yes replies to this question dealing with the skill of Educational Values.

Indicating that their principals were inconsistent in showing a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas, three respondents, Teachers A, C, and G replied with sometimes responses.



Teacher D was the lone individual responding with a few statements constituting a sometimes reply to this question. She added that her administrator on occasion, showed a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas, and was thus inconsistent in exhibiting the leadership skill of educational values.

#### **Information About the Views of the Schools in Which the Respondents Teach** **Questions in Series 4**

The questions asked in Series 4 deal with views of the schools in which the respondents teach. They reflect upon the leadership skills of the various principals in establishing working environments dealing with the schools themselves, along with established feelings and convictions of the subjects themselves. Though the responses only require yes or no answers, these are questions aimed at understanding the emotional reactions of the respondents to their experiences and thoughts after having taught in a school that has been influenced by the leadership skills of the principal (Patton, 1990).

#### **Question 4.1 I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.**

All of the respondents except for one subject answered yes to this question indicating that information is provided in order to plan work effectively.

Teacher D however, indicated that she does not depend on information to plan her work effectively. When asked further if information is provided regardless if it is needed or not, the subject stated that she does not look for information, is a self-starter and independent, and is permitted to function in an independent fashion.

Question 4.2 Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

Once again, all of the respondents except for one answered yes, signifying that advice is indeed sought from them in making a decision. Teacher A was the lone individual who replied no to this question.

Question 4.3 The principal deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands on his/her time.

All of the participants responded with a yes reply. Teacher D added the administrator does deal with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands on his/her time but was not sure if the paperwork and time were dealt with in an effective manner.

Question 4.4 I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

Six of the eight participants responded to this question with yes replies. Teacher A gave a no response while Teacher D did not comply with the yes/no request.

When asked this question, Teacher D instead stated that the successes and failures of the school reflect on her and she is not a part of the decision-making process.

Question 4.5 If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

Once again, six of the eight participants supplied yes responses to Question 4.5. Two of the respondents, Teachers A and D differed.

Repeatedly, these two participants cast negative responses to the stated questions. Teacher A once again supplied a yes response. Teacher D once again, did not comply with

the yes/no request. She commented that her principal does listen to presented ideas, and if the proposal is to the principal's advantage, then it is supported.

Question 4.6 In this school, I am respected.

This was one of the few questions that conveyed positive yes responses by all of the respondents. Even Teacher A conceded that she is sometimes respected.

Teacher D responded with a yes reply to this question, but was quick to add that she is also hated by some because she speaks whatever is on her mind.

Question 4.7 Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

The responses to this question were evenly split between yes and no answers. Teachers A, D, F, and H indicated that teachers at their schools do frequently compete with each other.

Teachers B, C, E, and G all indicated that teachers at their schools do not frequently compete with each other.

Question 4.8 I receive a lot of attention.

Regarding Question 4.8, four of the eight participants, Teachers B, C, D, and E said yes, indicating that they do receive a lot of attention. Teacher D once again, added to her response, by stating that the attention given to her is both negative and positive.

Teachers A, F, G, and H replied with no responses indicating that they do not receive a lot of attention.

Question 4.9 Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

Seven of the eight participants answered yes to Question 4.9 indicating the

communication in their schools is frequent and informal.

Teacher A was the lone respondent who answered no to this question.

Question 4.10 I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

At first, it would seem that seven of the eight respondents had replied with yes responses to Question 4.10 signifying that they have a sense of loyalty to their school.

However, Teacher D chose not to abide by the request to respond with a yes or no answer to this question. Responding that she does not believe in blind loyalty, she indicated that she has a sense of loyalty when she feels they are right. Comprehending her reflections over the entire interview, Teacher D would not have a sense of loyalty to her principal as she intimated, but would be loyal to her school since she sees herself as a contributor to its effectiveness. Therefore, considering her remarks in their entirety, all of the respondents have indicated that they have a sense of loyalty to their school.

Question 4.11 In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

Seven of the eight respondents indicated that they have the feeling they can invent, create, and solve in their schools. Even Teacher D stated this, but added that she must be willing to work hard enough and fight hard enough for these feelings.

Teacher A was the sole individual who answered no to Question 4.11.

Question 4.12 I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

All participants responded to Question 4.12 with yes answers implying that they do seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regard to what their schools should be doing.

Once again, Teacher D added another dimension to her response by stating that the values of the teaching staff in her school are divided between the older teachers and the younger ones.

#### Additional Information that Respondents May Wish to Add

##### Responses in Series 5

This final section of the discussion with the respondents served to conclude the interview. It also allowed each of them the opportunity to specify any additional items, reflections, or leadership skills that had not been discussed which they may consider relevant to the study.

Question - I appreciate the time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

Teacher A. This respondent indicated that her school is an effective learning institution and one that has earned the Best Practices designation for two reasons. The first reason deals with the staff members, who are perceived by this subject to be a caring and concerned group of individuals.

The second reason deals with the principal. Teacher A stated that her principal has the ability to make people do what he/she wants them to do. The principal is forceful, dynamic, and a public-relations type of person. The respondent added that a superintendent of schools would prefer to have this type of principal in a district...one that has an open-door policy and openly cares about the school's perception in the community.

The respondent continued by comparing this principal with another in the same

district with whom she had worked for in the past. That principal she judged, is the opposite of her current administrator. He/she is not organized, is a nice person, and allows the staff to perform their duties with little supervision. Working for this administrator the participant added, allows the teachers to develop their creative abilities. With Teacher A's current principal, she indicated that the teachers are more molded. She concluded by stating that if a teacher needed guidance and supervision, Teacher A's present principal is the ideal administrator. Considering her responses though, Teacher A prefers to work for her former principal who allowed herself and the staff to be creative, develop their own challenges, and hone their own skills.

Teacher B. Initially, this participant stated that she probably did not have any additional statements to add. After a short pause however, Teacher B indicated that her principal should be aware of innovation concerning educational trends but also needs to remember that the trends need to be successful in keeping with the tradition of past instructional classroom successes within her district.

The comments of this respondent regarding educational innovations and maintaining successful traditions were explained by using an example of a non-tenured colleague and the use of alternate classroom teaching materials along with the discontinuance of the authorized textbooks.

Teacher C. This participant indicated that there were no additional thoughts, comments, or reflections to share regarding this study.

Teacher D. This respondent added that people within the educational world tend to believe their own publicity regarding the effectiveness of school administrators. She

indicated that educators have been told for so long that administrators are competent, that they have stopped inquiring what those qualities are that have made them so effective.

She added that since three-quarters of her district's administrators will soon be retiring, and that the district may not have qualified staff to fill those administrative vacancies, replacement personnel may need to be recruited from outside of the district. Additional problems arising from this scenario, according to Teacher D, may include a demand for high starting salaries and numerous benefits, especially medical benefits, requested by qualified applicants. This will be very difficult to attain in light of highly scrutinized school budgets by the public.

Teacher E. This respondent added that the issue of openness should be mentioned. Teacher E stated that his principal is open to things and interested in things which, according to the interviewee, promotes creativity and security within the staff.

Because the principal is perceived as being frank and forthright in his/her relationships with staff, students, and parents alike, the teachers in this school are always investigating innovative methodologies and projects to incorporate into the educational mainstream. The staff, like the students, as Teacher E stated, are very open to experimentation and learning.

Teacher F. This respondent added comments regarding the skill of stress tolerance and the ability of her principal to deal with since certain changes have recently occurred within the school.

She stated that there had been a harmonious relationship among the staff members for a long period of time. Since the advent of new contractual stipulations however,

dealing with perceived salary inequities, there has been increased friction among varied factions of the teachers resulting in the formation of cliques. Teacher F stated that she is very curious how her principal, who is perceived to be a nice person, will deal with this increasing tension.

Teacher G. This individual wished to state that the hardest working teachers make the best administrators. She added that her school has had educators appointed to the administrative ranks who she knew very well as teachers. Several of them, in her opinion, were lazy teachers who have become lazy administrators.

Some former dedicated and hard-working teachers within the school have also been promoted to administrative positions. These individuals, the respondent added, have been excellent administrators who are hard-working and effective professionals.

Teacher H. As a conclusion to her interview, Teacher H felt that she had to add additional information to the discussion. Since this particular administrator has been appointed as principal, the respondent believes that the school is becoming less effective because of a lack of fairness by him/her. She added that this lack of fairness applied to both students and staff.

When asked if this perception was an individual one, Teacher H stated that the staff is witnessing this. Certain staff members are permitted particular favors, while others are viewed differently.

Regarding the students, the participant explained that groups of them are permitted to break established policies while others are required to obey them. Because of this, overall discipline throughout the school is diminishing. Teacher H also added that a strong



and fair vice-principal is assigned to the group of students within her area of the high school. Therefore, the overall problem caused by the principal is lessened due to the efforts of her vice-principal.

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to investigate, through the oral interview, the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals. In addition, the researcher focused the study to contain interviewed teachers of selected New Jersey public schools that have earned recognition as having building programs labeled Best Practices by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Accordingly, eight teachers were interviewed for this study. They represented eight different schools located in districts each from the eight designated District Factor Groupings listed as A, B, CD, DE, FG, GH, I, and J.

Overall, the respondents appeared to be very open and honest in sharing their varied attitudes and perceptions of the listed leadership skills as observed through their principals. Moreover, they all gave the necessary time to conduct interviews that were not rushed or abbreviated due to other time constraints. Once we had agreed on a mutually convenient time and place for the interview, each of the interviewees appeared very interested, sincere, and concerned about the study, education in general, and their respective places within the educational profession.

Based upon the shared attitudes and perceptions of the respondents, all of the principals discussed utilized those twelve generic leadership skills as listed by the National

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However, based upon the individual personal opinions of the respondents themselves, the leadership skills of the principals were present in varying degrees covering the gamut from almost non-existent to extreme. The researcher interpreted these variances as naturally-developed personal biases formed by the teachers. As indicated in the transcripts of the interviews of this study, some of the subjects openly shared a dislike for their administrators as persons and professional colleagues, thus concealing true insights that would be formulated and based upon non-biased professional judgments.

Chapter Five will contain a detailed summation as well as formulated conclusions based upon the information acquired from the respondents.

## Chapter V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The final chapter is designed to provide a summary of the findings of the interviews which were conducted with eight teachers from New Jersey Public Schools having earned the Best Practices program designation as recognized by the New Jersey Department of Education.

This chapter is divided into three sections: (a) a summary of the major findings, (b) conclusion, and (c) recommendations for further study.

The purpose of the interviews was to provide attitudes and perceptions of eight teachers with respect to leadership skills associated with the principalship. The teachers were randomly selected from staff lists that had been provided by the principals and were later interviewed in person by the researcher.

The interviews were organized into five series to include procuring background information of each respondent, acquiring information about the teachers' attitudes and perceptions of the twelve leadership skills, obtaining additional data about the teachers' attitudes and perceptions of the twelve leadership skills, securing information about the views of the schools in which the respondents teach, and requesting for the subjects to add any appropriate or additional information they deemed relevant to the study.

The interview sessions were recorded on audio cassette tapes and listened to numerous times to obtain and observe underlying nuances and emotions that may have been overlooked during the initial interview. A strategy was then used in analyzing the

interviews according to a case analysis by grouping together responses from each of the subjects from the posed questions and central issues (Patton, 1990). Though an underlying commonality was established by including teachers in the study who were associated with schools all having earned a Best Practice designation, variations in attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills of principals were evident due to developed attitudes and personal convictions and biases. Thus, the replies from each respondent were crafted by the researcher according to the responses given as asked of each participant (Seidman, 1998).

#### Summary of the Major Findings

Teacher A. This respondent, a veteran teacher of twenty-one years, was one of two participants who were extremely outspoken. She openly showed a dislike for her principal though it was admitted several times throughout the interview that her school and its programs were a model of success and effectiveness. Since this participant openly displayed a strong-willed disposition and indicated that she performs part-time field work in several school districts as a union consultant, it was apparent to conclude that Teacher A favors working for an administrator whose leadership is not so assertive as practiced by her present principal.

Dealing with the leadership skills of problem analysis, organizational ability, decisiveness, leadership, stress tolerance, written communication, range of interest, and personal motivation, Teacher A indicated that her principal is effective at possessing and employing them.

The principal of Teacher A is perceived however, to sometimes effectively use the

skill of judgment in the workplace since staff members are not always given the leeway to make educational judgments in the presence of the principal.

Sensitivity was a particular skill that was severely lacking by the principal. The participant stated that she had never seen her principal to be truly sensitive in dealing with the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

The skill of oral communication was also lacking by the principal of Teacher A. The respondent indicated that the administrator says exactly what he/she feels and does not seem to be responsive to the concerns of the staff.

The leadership skill of educational values with regard to her principal was also questioned by the respondent. Though he/she possesses an educational philosophy, the principal only seems receptive to new ideas or change as long as the principal initiates it. Any ideas or suggestions from the staff are not usually considered.

Teacher B. This participant has been an educator for twenty-four years and stated that she has a very positive relationship with her principal. Unlike the reactions and replies of Teacher A, Teacher B seemed to respect her principal and to be happy and comfortable working in her school.

According to Teacher B, the principal was perceived to effectively possess and utilize the twelve leadership skills of problem analysis, judgment, organizational ability, decisiveness, leadership, sensitivity, stress tolerance, oral communication, written communication, range of interest, personal motivation, and educational values.

Teacher C. This respondent, teaching for thirteen years, indicated that she and her principal have a cordial relationship. She added that the principal often asks for her

opinions concerning the curriculum, as well as various happenings that occur at school.

Also, they often discuss dealings with parents and the students.

Teacher C indicated that the principal was perceived, in varying degrees, to possess and utilize the leadership skills of problem analysis, judgment, organizational ability, decisiveness, leadership, stress tolerance, oral communication, written communication, range of interest, personal motivation, and educational values. Regarding sensitivity however, the principal was perceived to require training in developing increased sensitivity towards staff and at times, the children's parents.

The respondent also added that the principal attempts to deal with items too quickly. Instead of handling responsibilities through a normal flow of speed and occurrences, he/she is in a hurry to resolve items and move on to the next event or duty. The participant indicated that her principal showed an overabundance of speed and anxiousness when dealing with the leadership skills of problem analysis, judgment, decisiveness, leadership.

The principal was also perceived to need improvement with the skills of stress tolerance and educational values. Teacher C stated that the principal handles stress at times, but was generally inconsistent to show the ability to adequately perform his/her duties under pressure.

In addition, the principal does not always show a receptiveness to new ideas and to change. According to the respondent, the principal believes in the old, proven educational traditions. With this philosophical mindset, the principal does not desire to study and possibly incorporate new and innovative proven educational trends. The principal always

seems to revert back to older educational traditions.

Teacher D. This respondent and Teacher A, were the two most outspoken subjects to be interviewed. Appearing to dislike and show a lack of respect for her principal, this subject, having taught for twenty-five and one-half years, reacted negatively and adversely to her principal when discussing the twelve leadership skills. Though the researcher observed that this respondent was a pleasant person during the interview process, she nevertheless showed an aggressiveness when candidly revealing her perceptions of her principal and his/her leadership skills.

When asked to describe the existing relationship between the participant and the principal, Teacher D stated that it is friendly and professional. But she quickly added that their relationship has been adversarial at times.

When the interviewer asked the participant to provide specific attitudes and perceptions of the twelve leadership skills, Teacher D replied but always seemed to add a negative response to each inquiry.

Specifically, when referring to the skill of problem analysis, the participant indicated that while an immediate problem may be handled, the principal lacks the vision and the long-range view of situations to effectively resolve difficulties.

Teacher D also stated that the principal possesses poor judgment and has openly admitted this shortcoming to the staff. She added that the teachers are accustomed to wait for favorable decisions to requests they have made since they know that their requests will always be initially declined but later ultimately changed. This trait is related to the perceived poor ability of the principal to be decisive.

When the researcher asked if the principal is a respected individual, Teacher D stated that he/she is liked but is mediocre at best at demonstrating the skill of leadership.

The principal is also perceived by the participant to adequately possess the leadership abilities of sensitivity, stress tolerance, and oral communication. Moreover, the administrator shows a limited ability dealing with the skills of range of interest and personal motivation.

Regarding the skill of educational values, the participant indicated that her principal is well-read but does not pursue issues. She presented an example of extensive research performed to enact certain school program changes over a two-year period. Following several staff presentations on the merits of the innovations, the issues to adopt or reject the programs were never brought to closure.

Teacher E. This respondent has been an educator for seven years. When asked to describe the relationship between the principal and himself, Teacher E characterized it as being a very positive, open relationship. He stated that he can present his principal with novel ideas, and they are always welcomed with enthusiasm and excitement.

Additionally, Teacher E indicated that he is very comfortable going to his principal for advice and for assistance in getting things done. Since this respondent was interviewed and ultimately hired by this particular administrator, he feels a special loyalty to the principal.

This respondent portrayed his principal in a very positive fashion as each of the twelve leadership skills were discussed. In addition, he provided further perceptions of his principal when asked if there were any additional comments that were thought to be



relevant to this study.

Teacher E explained that another important trait of effective administrators is openness. He added that his principal is open to things in general and is a very interested person. He/she is not afraid of trying new things and because of this openness and supportive nature, the attributes of creativity and security are instilled and cultivated within the staff.

Above all, Teacher E stated that his principal is a terrific person.

Teacher F. This participant, presently a kindergarten teacher, has been an educator for eighteen years. In addition to kindergarten, Teacher F has also taught first and second grades. She added, that by choice, she has been employed as a half-time contract teacher as well as a full-time teacher depending on particular kindergarten enrollments (the district has a half-day kindergarten program).

When asked to provide views on her relationship with her principal, Teacher F said that he/she is very approachable. She can always sit down comfortably with her principal and discuss any problem or issue that has arisen. She then compared the present principal to the previous administrator in this school who did not make him/herself available to assist the staff with any of their problems or support them in their endeavors. With that administrator, staff solved their own problems and were told that they were inadequate if they asked him/her for advice or support with any dilemma that had developed.

Generally, the participant's present principal was perceived to be effective as possessing and employing the twelve leadership skills. Teacher F indicated though, that her principal needed to be more organized in performing his/her administrative duties.

When asked to further explain this, the respondent revealed that since the administrator has assumed many duties in the district dealing with curricular committees, the principal's weak organizational skills were that more obvious to the staff. It was implied that perhaps, if the principal had less responsibilities on the district level and concentrated more on his/her building assignment, their organizational skills would improve.

Teacher G. This respondent is also a veteran educator having taught nineteen of her twenty-nine total years in her present school. Though certified to teach English and Mathematics, she has only taught Mathematics in her present school.

When asked to describe her relationship with her principal, the respondent stated that though it is cordial, they are not really close. They greet each other however, in a friendly way, and she feels free and relaxed to stop in and talk to him/her at any time.

Overall, Teacher G indicated she believed her principal's leadership skills to be generally adequate. When asked to discuss the skill of judgment, the participant did indicate that the principal does reach logical conclusions based upon available information, and tries to be fair, but does many things that are not in the best interests of the school. When asked to elaborate on her response, Teacher G replied that the principal will often play favorites with certain staff members and students as well. This type of unequal treatment, as perceived by the participant, will often impair the principal's ability to make fair judgments.

Teacher G added that her principal does not perform well under pressure and will often lose his/her temper when there are periods of opposition. Regarding communication skills, the principal expresses ideas very clearly in writing when dealing with staff,

students, and parents, but is very poor when speaking formally and informally to people within the educational community.

Regarding the skills of personal motivation and educational values, the respondent indicated that the principal generally performs these skills in an acceptable manner.

When asked to add any other items or personal reflections that may be relevant to the study, Teacher G stated that the hardest working teachers make the best administrators. She referred to other administrators she has known who were promoted to administrative positions not necessarily on their merits. These individuals, who were lazy teachers, went on to become ineffective and lazy principals and supervisors.

Teacher H. This English teacher, having taught a total of thirteen years, has been an educator in her present school for twelve years.

When asked to describe her relationship with her principal, she stated that she is considered one of the people who has a good rapport with him/her. Because of this, the respondent added that she is lucky to have such a positive relationship with him/her. When the researcher asked the participant to further elaborate on this, the respondent asked to continue with the next question.

When discussing the leadership skill of problem analysis, Teacher H replied that the principal was inconsistent at performing the various tasks related to problem analysis. It depended on the particular situation, if the principal had shown an interest in the situation, and if the administrator took the time to ask staff members to advise him/her of the particulars.

When the skill of sensitivity was addressed, the respondent again indicated that her principal was inconsistent at performing this skill in an adequate manner.

Teacher H added that the principal's ability to communicate clearly in writing was presently good due to the fact that he/she now uses people to help compose information and later proofread material before distribution. Originally, the principal had composed letters containing many factual and grammatical errors.

When the skill of oral communication was addressed, the respondent stated that the principal is a very poor speaker. She also added that as an English teacher, she would love to have the principal as a student in one of her classes.

Overall, the remaining leadership skills that were discussed were adequately performed by the principal according to the perceptions of the subject. When this respondent was asked to furnish any additional reflections however, she commented that the discipline within the school is quickly eroding. Presently, because of a lack of follow-up of student discipline matters, the staff has become disgusted and teacher morale is quickly disappearing. She added that there are cases of teachers not reporting student discipline matters because many of the reports of conduct infractions are not investigated, and consequences are thus not assigned to the students.

As a conclusion however, Teacher H shared the fact that her particular problems are minimal since she has a strong, effective, and supportive vice principal in her wing of the school.

#### Conclusion

The significance of this study was based upon the premise that effective teachers,

working with effective principals in effective schools, are part of an educational environment where proven learning and success have taken place in the form of a Best Practice designation. Within this scenario, it was hypothesized that interviewed teachers would include in their attitudes and perceptions, leadership skills of principals compatible with those twelve standards as listed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

The conclusions of this research were based on the analysis of the responses by teachers in selected public schools in New Jersey who work with principals demonstrating the utilization of twelve specific leadership skills. Accordingly, this study evaluated the leadership skills of principals based on the attitudes and perceptions of randomly selected teachers who were interviewed in person by the researcher. These interviewed teachers moreover, are assigned to public schools that have earned the Best Practices designation as recognized and awarded by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

Since the object of the interviews was to obtain attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills associated with the principalship, it was only natural for each of the respondents to reflect on the utilization of those skills through observations of their principal who has been the building administrator during the period of the granting of the Best Practice award.

Therefore, in conclusion, the findings of this study, as referenced through the transcripts of the interviewed teachers, do indicate that the attitudes and perceptions of interviewed teachers with regard to the leadership skills of principals, are compatible with those standards as established by the National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Moreover, as attested by the transcripts of the respondents in this study, the following leadership skills were perceived to be most commonly possessed by the principals: (a) range of interest, (b) personal motivation, and (c) educational values. Those leadership skills that were perceived to be least commonly possessed by the principals were sensitivity, stress tolerance, and oral communication.

Significant to the study, however, were the degrees of sharing and openness of the acquired attitudes and perceptions by the interviewed teachers. Having been assured that all aspects of district, school, principal, and teacher identities would remain anonymous, all eight of the educators responded to the interview questions in a most honest and candid manner.

The frank responses however, did offer some supplemental yet worthy conclusions. In some cases, the respondents did not agree with the administrative styles of their principals, and thus replied negatively to their principals when asked to discuss specific leadership skills. At various times during the interviews though, all of the respondents attested to the fact that their schools are effective, viable institutions of learning, even if the effectiveness was attributed to the teaching staff and not necessarily to the school administrator.

In addition, some participants stated that they philosophically disagreed with the administrative leadership style and use of the leadership skills that their principals employed in order to make their schools into such effective places of learning. All in all however, each school did possess a recognized Best Practice program that was awarded to educational organizations that developed, through innovative programs, particular

opportunities for students to demonstrate high levels of achievement. Such accomplishments, as have been discussed throughout this study, could only occur in effective places of learning where principals have established an overall environment for teachers to perform, grow, and develop.

#### **Recommendations for Further Study**

This study used qualitative data to study New Jersey public school teachers' attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills associated with the principalship. As a result of this inquiry, the investigator believes that additional research is needed in seeking the perceptions of teachers with regard to leadership skills since this group works more closely with principals than any other group of individuals.

Moreover teachers, over the course of their professional careers, may work with several principals. This fact, combined with the view that teachers are trained to evaluate successes and failures, makes the case that they are well-prepared to specify and explain various leadership skills and roles needed to improve education through their observations, attitudes, and perceptions of school leaders. In this ever-changing society, more information is required to adequately study how principals are perceived while they are performing the multitude of leadership functions necessary to maximize the effectiveness of schools. Accordingly, the investigator offers the following recommendations for further research:

1. Since one teacher within a school was interviewed out of a staff of many educators, the findings of this study report the attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills based upon the convictions of only a single representative per building. As

demonstrated within this study, certain interviewed respondents exhibited distinct beliefs of their principals that were influenced by the presence of a personal bias. By designing the study to interview two, three, or several teachers within the same school, and obtaining all of their attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills, a collective perspective could be formed based upon a cross-section of the replies of multiple subjects. This method of data collection would also increase the rationality of responses by showing the collective attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills based upon several individuals teaching in the same place and working for the same principal.

2. This study included interviews of eight teachers each from eight different schools in districts representing each of the eight District Factor Groupings (DFGs). An alternate method of data collection is to organize the study to establish a common denominator by including educators who teach in schools that are all located within the same single District Factor Grouping area.

This process would establish a method of studying teachers' attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills in localities possessing similar socioeconomic characteristics.

3. A study also involving eight respondents could be formulated to include four teachers from the lowest District Factor grouping of A, and four teachers from the highest District Factor Grouping of J.

This arrangement would establish a comparison of leadership skill attitudes and perceptions existing in poor communities and in wealthy localities. Such a study may reveal modified teacher attitudes of leadership skills that are influenced by dealing with at-



risk youth in communities with minimal parental and economic support, or perceptions developed among affluent students and parents in communities who generally support education and the schools.

To further vary future studies, the respondents from each District Factor Grouping could all teach in one school within a district, or from schools in several districts all having the same socioeconomic status or District Factor Grouping letter.

4. This study could be replicated by approaching the issue through the incorporation of a quantitative research approach. Such a study could measure and identify aspects of perceived leadership skills that may shape the quality of leadership associated with the principalship in order to positively shape school effectiveness, and in turn, positively have an impact on student learning and development.

5. A study could be developed that focuses on the importance of principals and their utilized leadership skills in promoting and increasing educational performance. Principals, as the sole educational leaders of a school, have a positive impact on the accomplishments of the students in their schools. These accomplishments may be advanced indirectly by the principal in shaping the school's overall educational climate, which in turn, can influence the attitudes of teachers and increase their professional performance.

In addition, a study can focus on the attitudes of students and parents toward education and its significance in society which can also be influenced by an effective principal employing useful and practical leadership skills.

6. A study could be developed that addresses the extent to which an organized

union or educational association influences the development of attitudes and perceptions of teachers with regard to leadership skills of principals.

7. A study could be developed that considers an in-depth listing of NASSP leadership skills such as ranking the most and least prevalent skills as perceived by teachers. Consideration of a quantitative assessment instrument could also be introduced to measure and rate the acquired attitudes and perceptions of the leadership skills.

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**Appendix A**  
**Letter of Introduction**

CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL FIVE  
136 VALLEY ROAD  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY 07013  
(973) 470-2386

Anthony G. Barbary  
Principal

May 1998

Dear Principal:

As the principal of a school that has earned the Best Practices designation by the New Jersey Department of Education, you are to be congratulated for your leadership leading to the promotion of student achievement. This is a tribute to you, your staff, your school, and your district.

As a fellow principal involved in the daily process of managing an elementary school, I request your participation in a project that I think will be of interest to you.

I am in the process of completing my dissertation at Seton Hall University, South Orange, New Jersey, working toward the Doctor of Education degree in the area of Educational Administration, K-12. The purpose of my research is to seek the attitudes and perceptions of teachers with regard to leadership skills associated with the principalship in schools having earned the Best Practices designation.

As part of my study, I am requesting that teachers be interviewed evaluating their attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills of the principalship. As your school was designated as having earned a Best Practices designation, I would like to request your help in sending me, in the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope, a listing of your teaching staff. From that roster, I shall contact a teacher who will be invited to participate in this study through the interview process.

All information will be confidential and no principal, school, district, or teacher will be identified in the study by name or location. It is my intention, upon completion of this study, to make a summary of the findings available to participating teachers and their principals should there be an interest in receiving this information.

I know how busy you are, and therefore, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your effort and the participation of your teacher in advance. It is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

---

Anthony G. Barbary  
Doctoral Candidate  
Seton Hall University  
South Orange, New Jersey

Enclosure

**Appendix B**

**Letter of Request for Teacher Participation**

CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
SCHOOL FIVE  
136 VALLEY ROAD  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY 07013  
(973) 470-2386

Anthony G. Barbary  
Principal

May 1998

Dear Teacher:

Recently I sent your principal a letter requesting a listing of teachers in your school. From that list, you have been randomly chosen to participate in a doctoral study of teachers' attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills associated with the principalship. This research is being conducted to learn how principals of schools that have earned the Best Practices designation are perceived in terms of their leadership skills.

I am sure your schedule is very busy. However, I would greatly appreciate your participation in this study. I am hoping that you will find the time to be interviewed, at a public place of your choice outside of school, in this study of leadership skills of principals.

The interview should take no more than one hour of your time and your contribution will add valuable knowledge about the attitudes and perceptions of teachers with regard to the leadership skills of principals. I will take handwritten notes of your responses and would like your permission to tape record our conversation. If you agree, note that the tapes will be secured under lock and key during the balance of the research, and they will be erased and discarded at the completion of the study. This information will be used solely for purposes of analysis. You reserve the right to withdraw from this study at any time. No individuals or school districts will be named on any reports in this study. Your comments will be confidential and anonymous and the principal will not be advised of what is said during the interview. Upon completion of this study, a summary of the findings can be made available to participants should there be an interest in receiving this information.

Whether or not you decide to participate, will you please complete the enclosed response form and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope. I look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you in advance for your help.

Yours very truly,

---

Anthony G. Barbary  
Doctoral Candidate  
Seton Hall University  
South Orange, New Jersey

Enclosures

**Appendix C**

**Statement to Subjects and Consent Form**

**TEACHER RESPONSE/INFORMED CONSENT FORM**  
**"Teachers' Attitudes and Perceptions of Leadership Skills**  
**Associated with the Principalship"**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I will be interviewed for the Leadership Study.

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes, I consent to have the interview tape recorded according to information contained in the following statement.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this hour-long activity in a public place of my choosing outside of school, and understand that my responses will be kept secured and confidential as well as the identities of myself, my principal, my school, and my district. Furthermore, my principal will not be advised of what is said during the interview. If consent is given, the interview will be tape recorded with the understanding that the recorded tapes will be kept under lock and key during the balance of the research, and that they will be erased and destroyed upon completion of this study. I will be provided an opportunity to receive a summary of all data compiled by the researcher upon completion of the project on request.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone No. (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Best times to contact you: \_\_\_\_\_

Can you be contacted at work? \_\_\_\_\_

Best times to contact you: \_\_\_\_\_

Best dates and times to contact you in.....

June, \_\_\_\_\_, July, \_\_\_\_\_, August \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ NO, I do not wish to be interviewed at this time for the Leadership Study.

Thank you for mailing this INFORMED CONSENT FORM back to me in the self-addressed, stamped, enclosed envelope. Your time is very much appreciated.

Yours very truly,

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Anthony G. Barbary, Doctoral Candidate  
 Seton Hall University  
 South Orange, New Jersey

This project has been reviewed and approved by the Seton Hall University Institutional Review Board for Human Subjects Research. The IRB believes that the research procedures adequately safeguard the subject's privacy, welfare, civil liberties, and rights. The Chairperson of the IRB may be reached through the Office of Grants and Research Services. The telephone number of the Office is (973) 378-9809.

I have read the material above, and any questions I asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in this activity, realizing that I may withdraw without prejudice at any time.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Subject or Authorized Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Date



**Appendix D**  
**Letter of Thanks**

CLIFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY  
SCHOOL FIVE  
136 VALLEY ROAD  
CLIFTON, NEW JERSEY 07013  
(973) 470-2386

Anthony G. Barbary  
Principal

September 1998

Dear Teacher:

You were very kind to allow me to interview you. I am pleased that you were a part of my study and I would like to thank you for being so generous with the details of your attitudes and perceptions regarding the leadership skills of principals.

It was a pleasure to become acquainted with you and I wish you the best in your professional pursuits.

Yours very truly,

---

Anthony G. Barbary  
Doctoral Candidate  
Seton Hall University  
South Orange, New Jersey

## **Appendix E**

### **Application of the Interview Instrument and the Interview Questions**

## APPLICATION OF THE INTERVIEW INSTRUMENT

The purpose of this study is to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals. The information contained within this study should assist principals, as well as teachers themselves, with a composite of responses of views and opinions of effective educational leadership. These beliefs come from within the confines of schools that have earned the Best Practices program designation as recognized by the New Jersey State Department of Education.

This study will add to the research of how the leadership skills of principals are perceived by members of the teaching staff which could lead to the overall result of achieving or advancing the effectiveness of public schools.

Though data is received from teachers through the interview process conducted along qualitative approaches, the questions have been established through the medium of the interview process and not through a written survey of leadership perceptions. References as to guidelines to seek attitudes and perceptions of leadership skills were modeled with references made from the insights of James Cox (*Your Opinion Please! How to Build the Best Questionnaires in the Field of Education*, 1996), and Michael Quinn Patton (*Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, 1990).

In order for the researcher to conduct a purposeful sampling of the subjects (teachers), a small homogeneous sample was employed. As Patton (1990) states:

Qualitative inquiry typically focuses in depth on relatively small samples, selected purposely. The logic and power of purposeful sampling lies in selecting

information-rich cases for study in depth. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the research, thus purposeful sampling. (p. 169)

Moreover, the strategy of employing small homogeneous samples has been useful in bringing together people of similar backgrounds and experiences, such as the teachers (focus group) interviewed in this study. Focus group interviews (Patton, 1990) involve conducting interviews with as little as five to eight people on specifically targeted or focused issues. The issues, to investigate the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals, have been investigated through the standardized open-ended interview format (Patton, 1990). This interview approach comprises a set of questions worded and arranged with the purpose of taking each respondent through the same sequence and asking each respondent the same questions and essentially the same words. Moreover, with the interview approach, Rubin and Rubin (1995), state that "qualitative interviewing requires intense listening, a respect for and curiosity about what people say, and a systematic effort to really hear and understand what people tell you" (p. 17).

Taking this discussion into perspective, the following survey questions will help formulate the analysis of the attitudes and perceptions of selected New Jersey teachers with respect to the leadership skills of their principals.

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

(Subjects will be encouraged to elaborate on their responses)

First, please tell me about yourself.

1. List the number of years you have been teaching \_\_\_\_\_.
2. List the number of years you have been teaching in this school \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Specify your highest earned degree(s) and certification(s) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Name the teaching position(s) you have held in this school \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and the principal.
6. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background in terms of this study?

I would like to know some things about your perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals. Please define your perceptions of these skills as they...

A. apply to your personal convictions, and

B. are portrayed through observations of your principal.

1. Problem Analysis
2. Judgement
3. Organizational Ability
4. Decisiveness
5. Leadership
6. Sensitivity
7. Stress Tolerance

8. Oral Communication
9. Written Communication
10. Range of Interest
11. Personal Motivation
12. Educational Values

Next, please respond to the following statements with a yes or a no.

The principal of my school...

1. Analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Performs under pressure and during periods of opposition. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing. \_\_\_\_\_

10. Exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events. \_\_\_\_\_
11. Shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students. \_\_\_\_\_
12. Shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas. \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

1. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Advice is sought from me in making a decision. \_\_\_\_\_
3. The administration deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands on their time. \_\_\_\_\_
4. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process. \_\_\_\_\_
5. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it. \_\_\_\_\_
6. In this school, I am respected. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other. \_\_\_\_\_
8. I receive a lot of attention. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Communication in our school is frequent and informal. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I have a sense of loyalty to my school. \_\_\_\_\_



11. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve. \_\_\_\_\_
12. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing. \_\_\_\_\_

I appreciate the time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

**Appendix F**

**Teacher Interview Transcripts**

*To ensure anonymity, "P" will be used interchangeably with the word principal when the interviewees specifically refer to their school leaders.*

Teacher A

Q. First, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself. Please tell me the number of years you have been teaching.

A. Twenty-three.

Q. And the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school...the school which earned the Best Practices recognition.

A. Twenty-one.

Q. And, your highest earned degree and any certifications you would like to list.

A. I have a Masters degree...M.A.

Q. And certification?

A. Physical Education and Health, K to 12.

Q. And what teaching positions have you held in this particular school?

A. Teaching Phys. Ed. and Health, K to 6.

Q. This is broad and general in nature. And if you are uncomfortable with it...

A. That's all right...

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. I've worked for two principals.

Q. Let's focus on your present school that earned the *Best Practices* award.

A. OK....We have a love-hate relationship...my principal and I. My principal is a very controlling person...since I'm the only teacher who teaches Phys. Ed., I basically run

that program. P (principal) needs to know everything...I'm not used to that. Other principals I've worked for basically say... just tell me what you're going to do, and go. With P, I feel like I'm a five-year-old. Today I'm going to do this...tomorrow I'm going to do this...I have a lot of projects and programs that I do other than teach Phys. Ed. P needs to know everything! P's a control freak. And actually...so am I! So that's where we butt heads. We're both the same kind of person.

Q. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background that you would like to mention?

A. Other than the fact that I work for NJEA part-time as a consultant...I'm in a numerous amount of schools within the area...so I get all the flavor of everything from (name of town) to (name of town), and everything in-between.

Q. You sure have a broad background and experience.

A. Yeah...so I've met a lot of principals, and a lot of administrators...some worse than mine, some definitely better than mine...uhm, so I get more of a comparison study. Sometimes I get to realize it's not so bad here and other times I wish I would like to get the (expletive deleted) out of here.

Q. Okay. So now I'm going to ask what you know about your perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals as they apply to your personal convictions and as they are portrayed through your principal.

A. Okay.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. My perception is that where problem analysis comes in...is that if there's a

problem I think, for me, in good schools there is a sort of a give-and-take relationship with the principal and the teacher. Where they sit down together, they assess the problem, they brainstorm for ways to solve it, and pick the one they think will work. The teacher goes through with it...it doesn't work, come back, we'll sit down together. That would be the ideal. Where I would feel comfortable enough where I could go and say, look Tony, we've got a problem....and well, I've got a problem, and I'm making it yours.

Q. I understand. We work together...

A. Exactly. Because the bottom line is if I can't solve it, you're going to hear about it. And if you don't know about it, you're going to have egg on your face and that doesn't work well for either one of us.

Q. Does that work that way with your principal?

A. Sometimes. Ah...usually, in my case, and I can only speak for myself, but I know it works with others, the stronger teacher...who sits down with my principal to try to do this, my principal will take over and say, I'll take care of that for you. And I'll let you know how it...what the conclusion is. And I will take care of everything and I will tell you about it when it's over.

Q. P must spend long hours at the school, right?

A. Yes. P's there early in the morning...and leaves usually late...P's there everyday in the summer. P takes vacations at weird times....three or four days at a time.

Q. I understand. P's level of detail of involvement....

A. Exactly.

Q. Judgement.

A. I think that a good teacher should make the calls in their presence. So I think, I think I'm a good teacher...so I think that any judgements to be made by me, not necessarily in discussing with P. If I make a poor judgement...P's welcome to call me on the carpet for it and say maybe we should have discussed this. But as far as the everyday things that go on, and we make judgements everyday.

Q. Well...teachers are educational leaders. That's obvious.

A. And if I'm not allowed to do that, then what you've done is tied my hands in more ways than one.

Q. Explain further.

A. In my dealings with kids, with parents, in my dealings with other staff members, because now...you've crippled me. I can't do my job effectively. So, get rid of me. You do my job! You take my job and do it!

Q. This is a sensitive issue. You...

A. It sure is! I know that P has to make logical conclusions but based on all of the facts. My gripe is that P has to let us take care of our business initially than discuss it at P's level. But I don't mean to leave P out of anything...just allow all of us to function in our scope of duties.

Q. I understand. Judgement, sound and rational judgement, is critical for an administrator. You believe that you (the staff) should be allowed to make judgements in your world as well.

A. You said it! That's it.

Q. Organizational Ability.

A. I think, as a teacher, that's not my... I think poor teachers are poor organizers. There are so many things that go on. And my principal is supremely organized... and P tries very hard to... P's organized and P's a trainer. P basically trains other teachers in the school to be better organized also. That's P's big kick. P feels if we're organized we can do double the amount of work.

Q. So P has a strong organizational ability. And P does delegate?

A. To a degree. P's well organized. P's a well-organized machine but P does not uhm, I don't feel P to be... One of the things that I think P needs to work on in P's leadership skills is to delegate authority. I think that's P's major drawback. I mean if I was evaluating P, P's always evaluating me.... If I had the opportunity to evaluate P, that would be the number one thing I would stress. P does not delegate authority to anyone. P sits on almost every standing committee in the district. P sits on Language Arts, P sits of Art, P sits on Music, P sits on Phys. Ed. I mean, give it rest! I mean, everything goes through P.

Q. Let me ask this. You say your principal is highly organized but doesn't delegate authority?

A. Like I said earlier. I, and most of the staff, feel like five-year-olds. Give us some credit for being professionals! P is quite organized, extremely organized but won't delegate.

Q. With the lack of delegating, does your principal walk the halls...visit classes throughout the day?

A. Well. P's there early in the morning. P's never in my classroom. P's most visible

in the front hall and office area. P's not real visible in other parts of the building. Uhm...I don't see P...the Music Teacher, the Art Teacher, others. When P shows up at our door, that's trouble. It's never anything like, good morning, how are you? It's trouble.

Q. Does P walk the halls occasionally?

A. If P's on the way to do something, I'll see P walk the hall. If not, P's sitting behind P's desk, or walking around with a little pad in P's hand.

Q. Pad?

A. P only writes memos on (colored) paper. P has those little Post-Its...everything is the same color. None of us are allowed to use the same colored paper as P. Everything that comes out of the office of the principal is the same color. To the parents it's (color)...to the teachers it's (color). All the agendas...(color). Speaking of that color...We need (expletive deleted).

Q. Decisiveness.

A. Very important...and P is that. Oh, yes.

Q. And the ability to act quickly?

A. Oh, yes. One of the drawbacks is that sometimes, P's too quick to make decisions. And doesn't take into account the people that are involved and what they feel should be done. Sometimes P doesn't get the input that's necessary to make, what I think a is reasonable decision...a more reasonable judgement.

Q. Leadership.

A. Well, to be perfectly honest with you...P is a good leader. All right? P does get people to interact, P does get people involved, but I will tell you that people do it because,



if you cross P, P will make your life miserable. P has transferred teachers out of that school like that (snapped fingers). People that have worked there a long time, with good reputations...don't get me wrong, there are some lousy teachers. And they deserve a tap on the (expletive deleted) to get going, but P has moved teachers and had parents come to Board (of Education) meetings, coming and screaming at her...P is totally unaffected. P stays as cool as a cucumber. So P gets people to do what P wants. I don't know that the technique is a positive one, but...and the only way I can tell you that is when we sit down on the first day of school and P has a big agenda. And in it P has every committee that the district is going to run that year....and all of the slots are there for names. And P says it is my goal...and you will assist me in that goal. That there will be five of you sitting on every one of these committees. And, I swear Tony, by 12 o'clock, those slots are filled.

Q. Really?

A. You bet! Now in another school I'm familiar with, the principal will say we have space on committees. If you'd like to join those committees, please come and see me. But just let me tell you...we really need some input from this school on some of these committees, so think about it. I don't want anybody to be bogged down. In my present school, we have people that sat on nine different committees this year. That's not possible to do an effective job. We've got committees for committees. With a school district this size, it is amazing. You should sit there the first day of school. You would think there were thirty schools in this district. I wouldn't even ask teachers to sit on so many committees. I personally think, no teacher should sit on more than one educational committee per year, maybe two...I mean, if we're doing math and science in the same

year, and that's your niche, I'd like to see you on both of them, if that's possible.

Q. Right, I understand your point.

A. I wish I had a staff calendar. P publishes one that goes home with the kids, to their parents, and one that goes to the staff. I will tell you, that at least three days a week, and some weeks four, is a meeting. Three days, four days, three days, four days.....Language Arts, School Goals, and so on.

Q. Are these meeting held during the remedial periods after school? I mean...how are the committee time assigned with your contractual obligations in mind?

A. The only limit we have on meetings are faculty meetings. Okay? We negotiated a faculty meeting twice a month, on Mondays within a time frame. My principal wanted longer meetings. Okay? I knew where it was coming from. It had nothing to do with the Superintendent, the Board of Education...I know this was my principal's wish. We (the staff) fought that issue because it was really my P who was spearheading it. As far as all of the rest of the committees, they meet till very late.

Q. So this issue isn't contractual?

A. No, we don't have a contractual issue when it comes to committee meetings.  
Only faculty meetings.

Q. And you can leave when the meeting ends?

A. Some teachers walk out earlier. The principal loves to talk and P needs an audience to be heard, and that's P's forum...faculty meetings. We talk about the most bizarre things, most of us just sit there. P could tell us the information that we need in five minutes. P has already looked at the clock and said we have ten minutes, what else do we

have to discuss. Enough said, what's next?

Q. Sensitivity.

A. Ha. My principal has about.....(long pause), ten percent sensitivity. I have never seen my principal, never, seen P in a position dealing with a staff member where P has been sensitive. Truly sensitive, you know, to their needs, in really tough situations. About as sensitive as this table.

Q. Stress Tolerance.

A. P has all of those skills, perform under pressure, to think on P's own feet, and during periods of opposition, down to a science. It takes a lot to rattle P, and P does think quickly on P's feet. P's a smart person. There's no doubt about that. P should use some of that intelligence to be more sensitive, and maybe we'll all be fine.

Q. Oral Communication.

A. Oh, yes, P has no problem with that. P says exactly what P feels. There's never any misinterpretation of what P means. Never! P is very clear in P's dialogue and is willing to clarify P's position all of the time. It's always P's position!

Q. How about Written Communication?

A. Same thing. We get something from P several times a week in our mailboxes.

Q. Do you consider that a lot?

A. It's ridiculous. I would say that P should get out more...because P is sitting behind P's desk, behind P's computer, and just puts all of this stuff out. I've been teaching twenty-four years. I know what to do at school functions. I don't need a five-page dissertation on what I should be doing...the night of open house, or conferences.

A. I understand.

Q. If you have a problem and need to talk to new teachers, go right ahead. But you don't have to continue to dispense this every year. I know what to do at conferences, how to sit with a parent. I know how to get my point across...whether it's positive or negative. I know to start with a positive and follow up...I know all of those things. I don't need to be told. I don't need all of that stuff. I take it out of my mailbox, and I do it right in front of P. It comes out of my mailbox, I look at the subject...there happens to be a garbage pail right next to our mailboxes. It goes out, I look, and then I drop it. And I walk out of the office. At least three days a week...at least three days a week! No wonder we run out of paper.

Q. Range of Interest. This is very broad, I know it is. P's competent to discuss a variety of topics?

A. P thinks P is. P's a know-it-all. But P's real intelligence and capacity is very limited in scope. P is a guru in a few disciplines. P does workshops...P is all over. That's P's thing. P goes all over...all over the place. That's P's thing. But P thinks P knows everything about everything else. That's a perception in P's mind. But I will tell you...what P knows, in these few areas, P knows very well.

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. Oh! I could see P being superintendent. I don't see P looking outside the district right now, though.

Q. Has your principal been in the district a long time?

A. P came originally in the early to mid 1980's as a teacher and coordinator within

special areas (they are specifically listed during the interview). Then the former principal retired, and P was hired as the principal. P has about in total classroom experience, I'm not talking about special programs...

Q. Those are pull-out programs.

A. Right. That's what we're talking about. Three years total classroom experience.

Q. Educational Values. Again, this is broad...does P have a well-reasoned educational philosophy? Is P receptive to new ideas, to change?

A. Yes. P is receptive to change as long as it's driven through P. If we as teachers went to P and said, you know, we really need to change this...

Q. Do you call your principal by the first name?

A. Yes. P likes to initiate change, and P likes to be the vehicle of change. But it's got to come from P. And it's got to be P's idea. And sometimes if you're lucky enough, or you catch P at the right time, and you want to change something, and you allow P to think that it was P's idea, you may get it.

Q. Thank you. Next, please respond to the following statements with a yes or no. Since some of the statements may not necessarily be a yes or no... you may want to say maybe or sometimes...go right ahead. The statements all will begin with, The principal of my school...and then followed by the statement.

A. Fine.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. (Long pause) Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. No. The principal doesn't interact.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. No.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Yes. I could never say no to that.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Sometimes. It depends.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. Sometimes.

Q. Next, I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach.

Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

A. Okay.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. No.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.

A. Yes.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. No.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. No.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. By the administrator?

Q. Yes. Remember, we're dealing with your perceptions.

A. Sometimes.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. Yes.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. No.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. No.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. No.



Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Yes.

Q. I appreciate the time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. I will tell you that this is a Best Practice school for two reasons. One is because there are a group of teachers, a large group of teachers that really care. And, we'll head-butt the P and don't care. We've been there a long time...I don't mind going around the block with my principal...I have no problem with that. Uhm...and I'm not alone in that. So that's one reason.

A. And the second?

Q. The other reason that it's a Best Practice school is that the principal has the ability to make people do what the principal wants them to do. The principal is forceful, dynamic, a public relations person. If you were a superintendent, and you were looking to get a principal that has that front door wide open for anyone that will walk in...any parent, and P has their ear, and P is the one you'd want. P is the one you would pick.

Q. Is the principal viewed favorably by the parents, in your view?

A. It all depends on who they are. Let's say that the people that run the PTA (Parent Teachers Association), the committees, the ones that are in school all the time, high visibility...sometimes I think they are on the payroll...they think very positively about the principal because P allows them to come in, to walk in. I mean...I have PTA people

walking in my classroom more that P does. Feel free just to walk right in! The majority of parents don't have that kind of relationship. They come in when it's Back-to-School Night, for conferences. If a parent calls with a problem and wants to come in...you're in. There is never a wait. The P feels it's a very important part of the job, and a very important part of P's respectability, the P cares what they think. P doesn't care as much about what we think. Bur the principal very much cares about what the people of the community think of P. And if I was a superintendent and I needed someone...P's perfect.

Q. Anything else?

A. To compare with another principal I've worked for...that P is very popular. The people like that P. That P is almost the opposite...not organized, a nice person, organization is a weakness. But if you talk to another principal I've worked for...even if you don't get what you want, at least that P makes you feel like that P gave you the opportunity to speak your peace. And usually that P is the type to say, look, I respect the job you do, if you feel this is what you have to do, and this is the way you want to do it, you've got my blessing and go do it. Just let me know if there is any help you need, it's okay with me. So, teachers with another principal I've worked for are basically, more creative. The staff in my present school are more molded.

Q. Your preference?

A. I'd work for the other principal before here. If you need guidance, and you want supervision, this is the place to go. If you want space, and you want some creativity, and you want to develop your own challenges, and hone your own skills, then work for the other principal I have worked for.

Q. Thank you. I appreciate your honesty, openness, and time.

A. You're welcome.

Teacher B

Q. First, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself. Please tell me the number of years you have been teaching.

A. Twenty-four.

Q. And the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school...the school that earned the Best Practices recognition.

A. Six and one-half years.

Q. And please specify, your highest earned degree and any certifications you would like to list.

A. I have a Masters of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Education with a certification in reading.

Q. Any other certifications?

A. I have four certifications. I'm certified in English and Social Studies, K to 12, reading and elementary ed, all subjects, K to 8.

Q. Name the teaching positions have you held in present school?

A. I am reading specialist and third grade science lab teacher. The position of reading slash, science lab teacher, I've had for six and one-half years.

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. My relationship is that I work with the principal to, to, for the best...(long pause)...I have a very positive relationship with my principal. P considers me as someone

who will help out with everything that I can. And the principal knows that I cooperate because I believe that the total...the school program is very important, and that everyone must work cooperatively in order to make everything become successful. If all programs are successful, the children will do the best that they can. We have to have a cooperative relationship. Uhm...my administrator often asks me questions about my program...will ask me to give some input, uhm, and, I sit with P as a member of the school PAC (Pupil Assistance Committee) committee when we're discussing children who are in need, and possibly who may need to be put before the Child Study Team. Who might need to be referred for special testing. I am asked by P to give my input as to how I feel the child is working, succeeding. In terms of my science work, my administrator and I will meet periodically to discuss how the classroom teachers and I are working together to develop each module that we're working on in the curriculum. For example in science, we work on four modules. And I give a list of suggestions to the classroom teachers as to what kinds of hands-on science experiments they could be doing with their kids in their classrooms.

Q. So it's a positive relationship.

A. Oh, it's very, very positive. P's very appreciative

Q. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background that you would like to mention in terms of this study?

A. I do a lot of school publicity for the newspapers.

Q. You mean public relations?

A. I do a lot of public relations. People in my district will come to me with

photographs and information. On an unofficial basis, I coordinate the public relations duties for the district.

Q. Fine. That's great. I would now like to know some things about you're perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals. Please define your perceptions of these skills as they apply to your personal convictions, and as they are portrayed through observations of your principal.

A. All right. I'm ready.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. I consider this to be very important because...I consider that anyway to be something that applies to everybody in life. Because problems need to be solved, you have to think about what might happen, and to test that by observing...observing what goes on in your test. For example, if my administrator wants us to change the spelling program, P's going to know that P will have to come up with a meeting, meet with the teachers, and P's probably first going to have an idea how P thinks everyone will respond. What P's going to do...

Q. Do you see your principal as being effective when dealing with problem analysis?

A. Oh, very good.

Q. If there's a problem or conflict or concern, does the principal gather facts, search for all related information and so on, and come to a conclusion as a bottom line?

A. Yeah. I see that as very important and see my administrator being able to work

out problems very well. P goes through the problem-solving process when making a decision.

Q. Judgement.

A. Okay. I think that sometimes, my administrator might use...I think usually P uses very good judgement. P always thinks what's best for the children. But...sometimes, P feels that...P allows P's teachers too much to say. And if some parents will come with a problem, about the teacher...P seems to side with them a little bit too quickly.

Q. Sides with who? The parents? The teachers?

A. P will side with the teachers a little bit too quickly. Now I like the fact that P does side with the teachers...I like the fact that P is supportive of the teachers, but, I have seen where we have had very new teachers who did not necessarily follow the curriculum as well. And who were not that strict about the children learning certain skills.

Q. Go on.

A. I think that sometimes P's judgement is a little poor. P may not think about the parents' point of view.

Q. Organizational Ability.

A. Oh, I think that's a very important skill and our administrator is very organized. And I see how P is when we have our PAC (Pupil Assistance Committee) meetings and we meet on different things during the year. P has a book for everything. P uses a laptop (computer) and the office computer and communicates in the mail with us.

Q. Decisiveness.

A. Oh yes. What my administrator tries to do is to have us try different things and

we will meet and convene later on to discuss what has happened so that we could see how to act in the future.

Q. P makes decisions?

A. P will make decisions, yeah. But P is not someone who will act impulsively.

Q. So P acquires everything P needs before a decision is made?

A. Oh, yes.

Q. Leadership. Again, that is an all-encompassing, broad term so you may take it where you like according to your perceptions.

A. I think that P is excellent in that. I really do. P likes to get our input, P likes to keep us informed, uhm...I think P's an excellent leader.

Q. Okay.

A. And P really tries to get us to work together. And P doesn't like to pit one against another.

Q. Sensitivity.

A. To me personally, P's very sensitive...P's wonderful. I don't know if it's because P knows that I tend to get nervous all the time and I worry that something isn't going right. And P's always appreciative of me.

Q. But not maybe with all other teachers?

A. Yes. I have heard, although I did hear this from a colleague who though...she was not an ideal colleague, so I think that even though my administrator is sensitive to the needs of the staff, when P feels that P is dealing with somebody who is not competent, or not as competent, someone who is not as conscientious...P won't hold back, and P will

really let them have it, so to speak.

Q. Stress Tolerance. The ability to work under pressure, to think of P's feet...

A. All right. P's very, very good. P wears a lot of hats. But, once in a while, P will say, you know, there's so much going on right now...

Q. Does P ever lose it? In front of everybody?

A. I never. Once in a while...P's done it with the custodial staff. But with our custodial staff...it's probably understandable. Uhm...P will lose it if P's pushed to the edge, where P has lost all patience for somebody. P is the kind of person, though P will only do this when somebody who's not competent.

Q. Is P a patient person?

A. P is. I would say generally P is. But I have seen P stressed out. And I think pretty much it's because P's superintendent has put a lot on P.

Q. Oral Communication.

A. Very important. Our administrator keeps us informed, not only through P's memos, but we have meetings every Monday after school, we have grade level meetings that follow those meetings. Uhm...P's very good...in oral and written form.

Q. Well that's the next one...Written Communication.

A. Oh, excellent, excellent. Constantly sending us directives, and memos, and asking us for...

Q. Is it too much, though? That you get so much that you don't want to read them?

A. No. Because P's pretty much to the point and, and, P gives them when we need



to get them. P doesn't send anything trite.

Q. Range of Interest. The ability to be interested in a wide range of subjects.

A. I think that's important, too. Because, if you are limited in your interests that means that you might not be interested in hearing what someone is doing that's different. That's not something that's part of your own particular interest. I think a leader, an administrator must be versatile, and must be interested in a lot of things. Because the elementary school deals with a variety of subjects and, not only do you deal with a variety of subjects, you're dealing with Special Education as well as the mainstream. They have to know a lot about a lot of different things. I think administrators should like music, should like art, should, like math, should like reading...(laughs).

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. Uhm...to be personally motivated is important. I think all of these are important because, that means that you are sincerely interested. And that you're not motivated only because of financial gain, or political gain. You have to be personally motivated because you're truly interested in people.

Q. And your administrator is?

A. Oh, very much. And my administrator would never have to work because P's spouse is very wealthy.

Q. Educational Values.

A. All right. Let's see...

Q. Do you see that P has a developed philosophy? Or an administrative philosophy?

A. P does.

Q. And receptive to change and new ideas?

A. P's very receptive to change. And P really likes P's staff to be able to change when they should change and to keep up with the times. P's very innovative. But P will also question an innovation if it does not have a purpose, or if it's something that, uh, uh...

Q. Will P listen?

A. Oh, yes. P will always want to know.

Q. Thank you. Next, please respond to the following statements with a yes or no.

You might want to say sometimes if that's more appropriate.

A. All right.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Uhm...Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. Yes

Q. For the third and final part, I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

A. Okay.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. Yes.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.

A. Yes.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. Yes.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. No. In general, no. We've had some isolated instances in the past, though. As new staff are hired, uhm...there tends to be a better working relationship. There was a problem with some teachers who were there for years and years who were not innovated and they resented any kinds of change that the administrator would propose. As they have retired and other people have come in, there's more of a cooperative work among the staff.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. Yes.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Yes.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. Yes.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Yes.

Q. Thank you for your time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. No. Probably not. The only thing is though, I see a little problem in this. As much as I love the innovation, I still think that we seem to...in being innovative, we seem to sometimes lose what has worked in the classroom.

Q. In your particular school?

A. Yes. For example, some of the teachers in the classroom do not use their texts in teaching language. The ones who do have more success.

Q. Now how can that be transformed to a leadership skill to ensure...

A. Well, this is the problem. When I told you before. The principal is uhm...if P's supporting the teachers, P might not think clearly about what the parents are saying. For example, we had one parents who was upset because last year her child was in the third grade class with a very traditional teacher. This year the child was in a class with a very young teacher, while she was very good, did not use the language text at all. She herself would make spelling errors on papers that she sent home with the kids. And she seemed to be lax about the skills even though she was a hard worker, she didn't pay attention to the important things that needed to be addressed in the classroom. And the child dropped considerably in her tests, and the parent was upset because she felt that the child's penmanship declined from last year. What I would like to do is for the building administrator to be more aware of the fact that textbooks are...

Q. How could we apply that to a leadership skill? The principal knew of the situation but didn't do anything about it?

A. That's right. P didn't. P said not to worry, it's not important, don't worry. She's (the child) is just doing fine.

Q. Could it be the principal's educational values?

A. It might be P's philosophy that the child is happy...they're still working but in a different way.

Q. Was it a tenured teacher? Not using the text?

A. No. She's not tenured. That's what bothers me. I just feel that I would like the principal to keep the tradition that works. And yet, be innovative as long as it going to be successful with the children. I just think maybe...maybe if P gets more involved with the grade level and emphasizes that everyone should be using similar methods even though their personalities are going to be different. I mean, this one didn't even started working on the state of New Jersey until January of the school year. The other teachers had been doing it from the fall. Instead, the kids were learning about mummies instead of New Jersey.

A. Well, thank you for your time and for being so frank and honest.

Q. You're welcome. It was fun.

#### Teacher C

Q. First, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself. Please tell me the number of years you have been teaching.

A. Twenty-one.

Q. And please tell me the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school.

A. Thirteen.

Q. And, please tell me your highest earned degree and any certifications you have.

A. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree.

Q. And certification?

A. Early Childhood Education.

Q. And please list the teaching positions have you held in your present school?

A. I've taught first grade for all thirteen years.

Q. The next is general in nature. If you're not uncomfortable with it...please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. I have a cordial relationship with my principal. P asks my opinion concerning curriculum, and happenings at school...with dealings with parents and with the students. P observes my teaching once a year.

Q. Only once?

A. P conducts a formal observation, in written form once a year. P stops by frequently to show interest in what's being accomplished with students in the classroom.

Q. Is there any other information that you think is appropriate regarding your professional background in terms of the study?

A. Just that...besides teaching my first grade, I am the Reading and Language Arts representative for my building. Each school in our district has a rep who meets with the reading supervisor for our district. At our meetings...

Q. How often do you meet?

A. The reps meet with her about once a month. And the information from these meetings is reviewed with the principal. If P asks, I update the staff at our faculty meetings.



**Q. Are there any other duties of the reps?**

**A. I maintain all our school's reading materials, extra trade books. I keep inventories, order supplies, check in supplies, recommend what we need for next year's budget.**

**Q. Is there any extra compensation for this duty?**

**A. I receive about a few hundred dollars extra. Over the year that doesn't mean much when I think of all the extra work I do.**

**Q. Have you thought of asking the principal to relieve you of this job and assign another teacher?**

**A. No...not really. I know that no other teacher wants to do this. If I give it up, then one of my co-workers will get stuck. It's just easier to continue doing it.**

**Q. Anything else?**

**A. No.**

**Q. Next, I will ask what you know about your perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals as they apply to your personal convictions and as they are portrayed through your principal.**

**A. Good.**

**Q. Problem Analysis.**

**A. P always tries to get to the root of any of our problems quickly. P also tries to follow through.**

**Q. Is your principal successful at this?**

A. Sometimes. Sometimes, though, uh...p goes too fast. P is always going top speed. Instead of getting all the information within a natural flow, P gets anxious and tries to get to the bottom line fast, to be ready for the next thing to come up.

Q. So, is P effective at this?

A. Like I said, sometimes. If only P would relax, let everything fall together, and think rationally, then P would always be successful at this.

Q. How about Judgement?

A. P's judgement about educational matters is usually sound. P doesn't always have good judgement when it comes to people, relationships, you know, relationships on the job...professional associations. I guess to say...P often speaks first without think. This often makes P's judgement in general not always good...effective.

Q. Your perceptions of Organizational Ability.

A. P's very organized, but P gets overwhelmed when there's a lot of volume of work when it increases. And then, P gets very stressed out. If only P would calm down. (Pause)...P can't wait to hurry and complete something because P knows that there's more coming. Whether it's a report, a survey, anything, P's in a hurry. This is why there's not always good judgement, because my principal is too fast with everything, in a rush!

Q. I see.

A. Yes. There's a natural flow of events. If we (the teachers) could have the time, you know...some time to come up with solutions, facts, information, whatever, for the school and principal...then P would not be so stressed and then in turn, develop a stronger ability to be organized.

Q. Decisiveness.

A. P makes decisions very quickly and then carries them out just as fast. I've worked for other principals who never made a decision. That's the opposite. But for this principal, there's not often a time comes up that if P only waited, did a little bit more homework, you know from before? Problem analysis. Then more effective decisions...(pause) you know, correct decisions based on all, all of the facts would be made. All of us wouldn't be so harried! After a while, we all get as anxious as P.

Q. Leadership. I know this is a very broad term so you can take it as you see it. Let your perceptions lead the way.

A. Okay. P interacts with the teachers, but P has difficulty getting them to interact and be cooperative with one another. P has trouble bringing everyone together. I really think that sometimes, P doesn't think. P will say something to one teacher, then forget, or just not pay attention, and say something completely different to somebody else. I'll tell you...this school is effective because even though we're not all together, in spite of P's inconsistencies, the staff does the job.

Q. I see.

A. I mean...(pause) P is a hard worker, means well, is there for the kids. But if P were to just follow-through, think before P acts, and think before P speaks, so much more could be accomplished. We're in a rougher part of the town and have some rough kids. What's needed is some rational thinking and planning...not just shooting from the hip actions.

Q. Okay, the next skill...

A. Wait a minute. About bringing the staff together. We have one teacher who always comes late. So late at times that her kids are lined up at her door waiting for her. This has gone on for at least two years. I'll say that this late one is late...(pause) two to three times each week! What does P do? Nothing! We all see this. And if something happens to us, an emergency or something, P flies off the handle! What about the late one. This is what I mean.

Q. I sure see. What a follow-up to your comments, because the next skill is Sensitivity.

A. Oh, boy! P doesn't always do well in this area...with the needs of others, as you can guess. Sometimes, P puts up a wall, and when it comes to emotional issues...but P's beginning to show some progress in this area. Maybe it's because P is getting a little older and becoming a more mellow person. P's had some health problems and it could be that people haven't been too sensitive back to P. So...P's beginning to improve in this area...with the kids, the teachers, and the parents.

Q. Stress Tolerance.

A. P can deal with stress at times. But at other times, the stress causes P to lash out at others. And P may or may not apologize later. And, P takes P's share of days off. It must be for R and R (rest and relaxation). Compared to the other principals I've worked for, this one takes a good amount of single days off. I don't know how P does it. Maybe, P's going to retire soon!

Q. Oral Communication.

A. Oral communication is pretty good with the staff and clear. P just forgets

though, that some people hear things from P, but if they don't happen to be in the office at the right time, some of us will miss information if P gives it orally. Sometimes, in the other extreme, when P is asked too many questions, P will overly use the PA (public address) system during the day. Boy! This makes us crazy...with all the interruptions.

Q. How about Written Communication?

A. Written communication comes too often. So many people seem to overlook all of those memos. And they're not always clear. Very wordy, long, not always the best grammar, and too many.

Q. What about written communications to the parents?

A. But with parents, P has somewhat organized the letters sent home. The letters are now shorter and to the point, and sent home occasionally, not too many.

Q. Range of Interest.

A. P's interests are varied. But P tends to lean more toward the arts and feels everyone else should, too! P finds more interest in working with kids in the higher grades, grades four and five. And P has a lot of difficulty relating to the younger students. I think P's background was in high school teaching. I don't know why they do this...

Q. Who?

A. The Board (Board of Education), the superintendent. Why are so many former secondary teachers becoming principals in the elementary schools? With the young kids, you need a special feel for them. The little ones...they're babies...and there's a whole special way to deal with the little ones. Well I got that off my chest!

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. P is very well motivated, and work is a top priority. But I can't understand why there are so many days off. It must be the stress.

Q. Educational Values. This is also general...does P have a well-reasoned educational philosophy? Is P receptive to new ideas, to change?

A. P tries new ideas, but P has a lot of trouble when educational things change. P believes yesterday's values are much better than what's happening in education today. P always reverts back to that.

Q. Thank you. Now, please respond to the following statements with a yes or no. If you would rather, you may want to say sometimes if that's more appropriate.

A. Okay.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes. Too quickly if you ask me.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. Sometimes. But P's getting better at this.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. Sometimes.

Q. I would now like to know your views about the school in which you teach.

Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

A. Fine.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. Yes.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.

A. Yes.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. Yes.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes.



Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. (Long pause) No.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. Yes.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Yes.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. Yes.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Yes.

Q. Thank you for your time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. No. I really said it all.

Q. That's okay. Thanks again.

Teacher D

Q. First, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself. Please tell me the number of years you have been teaching.

A. Twenty-five and six months.

Q. And how about the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school.

A. Twenty-three.

Q. And, what is your highest degree?

A. Master of Arts, plus forty-five (credits).

Q. And certifications?

A. English, Social Studies, and I'm an adjunct professor at a university.

Q. And name the teaching positions have you held in your present school?

A. Gifted and Talented first, and then to the present, English.

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. Friendly...but not overly so. We don't socialize. Uhm...professional, (long pause)...adversarial at times, but with mutual respect always.

Q. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background that you would like to mention?

A. Not really. I had both publications...the yearbook and the newspaper and had no trouble with that. I always had support for that.

Q. I'd like to know some things about your perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals as they apply to your personal convictions and as they are portrayed through observations of your principal.

A. My personal convictions?

Q. Yes. I'm going to give you a skill...and how it pertains to you.

A. Okay.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. Being able to see the long range effects of a decision or a solution to a present problem and being able to see both sides.

Q. How does it (this skill) apply to your principal?

A. P lacks vision. P lacks the long range view. P knows how to solve the immediate problem. But P does not understand it's long-range views.

Q. P's able to search for information with a purpose if P's doing background checks or calling all parties together?

A. P's very dependent on the last person P's spoke to. And P has a potpourri of the old friends network. And P depends on them. They've been together for a very long time. P respects other people but depends on this tight little group.

Q. How about Judgement?

A. P knows P has poor judgement. P kids P's self and P kids us (staff) that P has poor judgement. The immediate reaction to something is no. Then we'll all sit back and wait five minutes so P can say P will think about it. And P is aware of that shortcoming. So we all wait.

Q. Organizational Ability.

A. Well, I think, P is extremely organized. I don't always agree where P's organization is taking P. But, I think P is extremely organized.

Q. Decisiveness.

A. Well...everything is no. P's very decisive, until P says yes! Do I think P thinks

things through? No.

Q. Does P have an open mind towards ideas, thoughts brought to P?

A. P's not sure. It depends on P's mood, what just happened to P just five minutes ago.

Q. Leadership.

A. Mediocre at best. If P didn't have a strong staff, and independent and seasoned a staff, as P knows, P would fall flat on P's face. And as the staff leaves, in droves, and P has a mush younger staff, they're not going to carry P.

Q. Is your principal respected?

A. P is liked. And because P's liked, and because P is not evil, and because P is not vicious, and because P is not mean. If you are you asking if P is respected intellectually, then no. Is P respected as a human being? Yes.

Q. Sensitivity.

A. None. I'll give you an example (The example was requested to be deleted from the transcript. It dealt with insensitivity toward a teacher, and subsequent follow-up dealings with this same teacher that actually strained relationships with the entire staff). P just doesn't think.

Q. Stress Tolerance.

A. Ha...none. Blows, then apologizes later, but blows! And we all know that, and again, so, we all expect it, it's not a surprise, we know it's not going to last. It's not pleasant while it's happening, but...

Q. Oral Communication.

A. Poor. (Long pause) I have corrected P's grammar on occasions, and I have apologized for doing it. And I said to P, I'm not doing it to show you I know more than you do, but to save you embarrassment. When making announcements, P will often use the wrong tense, of the wrong subject, case. I gave up. Not that P got angry or anything. P thanked me. But P didn't correct it. So there's no sense in pursuing it.

Q. How about making P's ideas clear?

A. Terrible. P's an embarrassment. But P knows it! I mean, P admits it! P won't ask for help...it's been suggested to P. P mispronounces names and even has incorrectly stated the student's first name and important functions.

Q. How about Written Communication?

A. Better! Better than oral. Because P has time to reflect, redo...P reads it over. Much better. And it's P's, not from the secretary. I know P originates it (oral correspondence).

Q. Range of Interest.

A. Limited. P's no intellectual. I mean, good, solid, but does not read. But P knows who to go to for answers. P is not ashamed to ask. And P is not to say, I don't know. And that I respect P for, because P doesn't lie.

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. Meaning?

Q. The need to achieve in all activities attempted; evidence that work is important to personal satisfaction; the ability to be self-policing.

A. (Long pause) it depends on the area. There are certain things that are very

important to P...and P works at them very hard. There are other areas that P does not perceive as having the same importance, which I personally do. P's a very moral person. But P doesn't understand that certain things exist. There's anti-Asian feelings, anti-Semitism, anti-black...and you try and point this out to P and P says that it doesn't exist. And P really, honestly, truly believes it doesn't exist. That's the sensitivity issue.

**Q. Educational Values.**

A. P reads but doesn't pursue. They were hot to trot on program changes for two years, and then it died. We went through all kinds of experiments, we did all kinds of research, we did all kinds of presentations.

Q. Things aren't brought to closure?

A. That's right.

Q. Thank you. Now, please respond to the following statements with a yes or no. Since some of the statements may not necessarily have a yes or no answer, you may want to say maybe or sometimes...go right ahead. The statements all will begin with, The principal of my school...and then followed by the statement.

A. Okay.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Yes, P does it, but not in the depth that I would like P to do it. You'll never get a yes or no out of me...I'm not capable of it (laughing).

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. No, the P is not consistent in that area.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes. Not always effectively, but quickly.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. No.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. No. P thinks P does.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. P performs. Do I think P performs well? Sometimes...sixty-forty.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Absolutely not. Well, you added informally. Then, yes informally...no, formally.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. It depends on the event. P is supportive of some of the events...less supportive of the more intellectual events.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Excitement and my principal we do not ever put together. Stoic maybe, excitement, no.

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. On occasion. Certainly not consistent...no.

Q. I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

A. Okay.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. I don't depend on it.

Q. Is it provided?

A. I don't look for it so I can't answer that question. I'm a self-starter, I'm independent and they let me do my thing.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. Yes.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and



heavy demands of their time.

A. Effectively? Or deals with it.

Q. Effectively.

A. They deal with it. Effectively...I'm not so sure.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. It reflects on me. I don't participate in it.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. P listens. If it's to P's advantage, that P supports it (a specific example of a particular school program was given, but the subject asked that it not be transcribed).

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes. And hated by some because I say what's on my mind.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. Yes.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. Yes...both negative and positive.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Yes.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. When I feel they're right. I don't believe in blind loyalty. When I think they're

wrong, I will say they're wrong. In public...in private...anywhere.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. If I'm willing to work hard enough, and fight hard enough for it...yes. I would take the first, second, or third no, then no.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. The minority. Again it's a breakdown between the old teachers and the younger teachers.

Q. That's the last question. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study? Any other things on your mind?

A. I think we fall into a problem in which we believe our own publicity. And I think that's what is happening today. We've been told for so long that they're (administrators) good. That they stopped trying to figure out what made them good. And, they're resting on their morals. And they're not as good as they used to be. Three-quarters of our administration will be retiring in the next few years. That's not healthy.

Q. Will your district look from within to fill administrator positions?

A. It's a dual problem. The district has been unable to fill a position from the outside and weren't happy from what was available on the inside. There are two-tier systems...where new people do not have the same benefits until they get tenure. Or no family plan (health insurance) for the first three years. It's a horror. How can they do that

to people. That's why I said they believe in their own publicity...things are done that are short-sighted.

Q. Again, thank you for your time and honesty. I appreciate it.

A. Your welcome.

#### Teacher E

Q. First, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself. Please tell me the number of years you have been teaching.

A. I've been teaching for seven years. All of them at my present school.

Q. The school that has earned the Best Practices recognition?

A. Yes.

Q. And specify, your highest earned degree and any certifications you would like to list.

A. I have a Masters degree. I have a teaching certificate, and a supervision certification. I have K to 12 art certification, and I have kindergarten through grade eight elementary certification.

Q. Name the teaching positions have you held in present school?

A. I am the art teachers for grades six, seven, and eight.

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. Okay. I feel as though I have a very positive, open relationship with the principal. Ah, P and I communicate very well. What I like about P is that I can come to P with ideas, P's very receptive and enthusiastic and excited about the ideas that I come to P with. And he'll take those ideas and act on them. I'll be able to follow through on things

that I'd like to do. So, P's a very good sounding board, and I go to P for advice if I'm involved in projects with other teachers. P's very good in helping me through the ah, the forest in getting things done.

Q. That's great.

A. I think in my situation...I was hired by this principal. And so, the fact that P hired me made me feel very loyal to P. And I'm sure that's probably a factor. There's a new principal coming now, and so everything is up in the air. I don't start out with same loyalty to this person or the same receptiveness. In a sense there's a loyalty, but since I was hired by this person, uh, I assume that P's interested in the things that I have to say, and the things that I want to do. So that sets up a really positive relationship. In other words, now this is a new principal, and everything is open, there is a clean slate, and anything can happen.

Q. Good. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background that you would like to mention in terms of this study?

A. Well, I think...I have not worked all of my adult life in education. I was a working artist, and I was working in a business outside of school before I actually came to a school situation. And I think I'm also a very kind of independent type of person. Yea, I think those are the only issues.

Q. Okay. I would now like to know some things about you're perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals. Please define your perceptions of these skills as they apply to your personal convictions, and as they are

portrayed through observations of your principal.

A. So, the skills as I see them, and as my principal projects them?

Q. Right. They're your perceptions.

A. Okay.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. I think in terms of problem analysis, the best thing about P, is that P does not get hung up in little problems and make them big problems. Uhm, I think P has a very, and this is probably going to come out throughout the interview, I feel as if P has a very broad view. And, P does not take the bureaucratic approach, where P takes ah, one little thing and gets totally obsessed with like fixing one little thing, but rather lets it all happen and evolve. Ah, an instance of this would be when I was first starting out, my first school year there, I wound up taking ah, about a half a dozen kids to Buffalo for an art trip. And, P knew that as a beginning teacher, this would be a tremendous challenge, and there would be problems, and things to overcome. But I think P has enough faith and confidence in teachers' abilities, that he sort of lets them cope and deal with it. So it's not like you know, P will pull you aside and say you know you'll have to make sure that the kids are asleep by 10 o'clock and all this other stuff. I think that P doesn't sweat the details. P sort of lets...

Q. P empowers you

A. Right. P empowers the staff so that you don't feel as though ah, you are...you have to sort of worry about every minor point. And if there is a mistake made, P has a broad enough view so that it's like P won't have to go nuts about it.

Q. Would you describe your principal as a facilitator? Rather than the top down...

A. Well, P's a facilitator, an enabler. Sort of empowers the staff to do things. And you know, one of the reasons why I got involved in the arts is because I have a creative knack and I like to do things. And I feel as though P's a wonderful principal for me because P gave me the ability to do things. Ah, and I think that, that's great. When there is a problem, I think P's sort of very analytical about it. Cuts to the bone of the issue, and gets to sort of the human side of it and doesn't hung up on little details.

Q. P sounds like a very warm, very interested individual.

A. Yeah. P is. I'm very saddened to see P go and it's sort of made me reevaluate what I want to do and where I want to go in my career. Uh, now that P's gone, it's opened things up for me, too (The principal has left the district and will continue working in education, but not in a public school setting).

Q. Judgement.

A. Uhm...once again. There's very little to say that's negative about P. I think that throughout this, I'm going to wind up singing praises to P. It's the same theme of P. P has the big picture. P can look at a problem and make a decision, and P won't make sort of a snap decision, and P will make a humane decision. The one issue that always comes out for me is that P is a very concerned person about the well-being of the students. And, throughout the decisions that P makes, that's the one thing that comes through uhm...and I think P has the ability to make judgements uhm...by looking at them on the basis of their facts, and doesn't let uhm, sort of emotional things of color the way P responds to things.

Q. Organizational Ability.

A. Uhm...I think I've always been amazed by P in the sense that everything gets done, everything that needs to get done seems to get done, and P's desk is always clear and the door to P's office is always open. There is, you know, sort of a standard, sort of an unspoken thing, that when P's door is open, you can just go in and talk to P. And when P's door is closed, you know P is busy with something. And basically about the only time P's door is closed, is if P has a parent conference or a Child Study Team meeting, or something like that. That's the only time that P's not available to the staff. And so, I was always impressed with the fact that everything ran very, very smoothly, and yet, P was still always accessible and available.

Q. Does your principal walk the halls? Is P visible around the building? Does P stick P's head in the (classroom) door...

A. P walks a bit. P sort of has P's routine in the morning P hangs around the office, and P's always in that corridor, then P will go up to the cafeteria in the morning sort of to get kids going. Or P will go up to the gym to get kids going to homeroom, getting them there on time. Uhm...P started to come around a little more in the last year or so, but I mean if you invite P to come and take a look at stuff, P will always be there. So, P is always very accessible. And once again, you know as I said, things run very smoothly so that, it's almost like kind of magic. You wonder how P could have all this free time, and yet still manage to do everything well.

Q. Decisiveness.

A. Uhm...Yeah, I, I think P's sort of clear. P's kind of, like in terms of judgement,

P really...I have been in circumstances where I feel as though P's made considered decisions. P'll use P's judgement and decide something and then we can do it, and then we'll go ahead and that's it. So I've kind of felt as though P's...I haven't really felt P hedge on things. Uhm, I think that P will make a decision and then go with it, and live with it. And P will know at times that, that's where the chips have to fall.

Q. Leadership. This skill is as broad as broad can be. So please explain your perceptions as leadership applies to your thoughts.

A. Once again, P's a leader in two ways. There are things that P felt that are important, and P went ahead and then did things like that. One of the issues that P sort of pursued is...there's sort of a top down kind of atmosphere. I think P treats teachers professionally, with respect and courtesy, and with sympathy concerning their well-being. And in turn, P wants the teachers to treat the students that way. And so, P initiated a thing where if someone does something nice, then you give them an acknowledgment, to show appreciation for that. And so, there is a file drawer in the office where each teacher got a supply of acknowledgments so when the kids are nice, you'd give them one. And that was a very subtle way that P created a very positive atmosphere there. And P got the teachers to be nicer to the kids, and in turn, got the kids to be nicer to the teachers by P setting this program up. And, it's not something that's very obtrusive or demanding. It's not like...we have a meeting, and P sits down for an hour and a half after school and P says, and well, how can we be nice to kids. But rather P sets up this thing so that it's a very simple way that you can make a gesture to be nice to kids. And the kids kind of notice, and so it kind of changes them. Because, they know, gee, if I'm nice to the teachers, then I'll get an



acknowledgment. So, P shows leadership by doing things. And then P also shows leadership once again by supporting the things that teachers do. And supporting the things that teachers do well. And by taking an interest in that and doing what P can do as an administrator. One of the things I've been very involved in is technology, and I've built the school's Website. And I'm going on sabbatical this year to do more Internet work. And because of that interest, I've gotten good computers, and have Internet access, and P really gave me a very free reign in terms in doing the school's Website. It wasn't like...do this, this, and this, but once again, ah...treating me like a professional and empowering me to pursue things. And I can talk to P about it, and P is a bright person, so P's up on those things, so P understands the technology well enough so that I can talk to P about it. But yet P still acknowledges that I have more expertise than P does...and P's not afraid to do that. But P can understand what's going on and use it and be involved in it.

Q. It sounds like the ideal leader...administrator.

A. Yeah. And P has set up a very nice emotional atmosphere at the school. There is very little political discontent floating around and stuff like that. I guess the only thing I can say bad about P is that P's leaving.

Q. Sensitivity.

A. Again, I think P's humanity, the human quality of P is something that really comes through. And there is a sensitivity to kids, and there is a sensitivity to teachers, and there is a sensitivity to parents. And that's really reflected I think, in the quality of the relationships P has with everyone.

Q. The parents and kids must be saddened by P's leaving.

A. I don't think the kids realize it as much, so the kids may. I'm sure all the parents are upset.

Q. Stress Tolerance.

A. Well, I think that's where uhm...(pause) I think what's interesting is that P doesn't let on what's up, you know. And it doesn't color P's actions. I think that you know, P could be angry at something, but it won't color the interaction that you have with P. And so I think that P has a terrific capacity for that. And uhm, P uses humor to sort of uh, to break the tension. And I think P's use of humor in dealing with stress really helps. And P's ability to look at a situation philosophically from a humorous point of view... I'm talking about a meeting where a person just went nuts, and P says this person just went nuts, and it's ridiculous, it's absurd, you know! Instead of getting all bent out of shape about it.

Q. Oral Communication.

A. P was an English major, P's very good with communication skills. Just excellent skills. Just very clear thinking.

Q. And in fashion, Written Communication.

A. Yeah, P...if you go to our Website, P's written a principal's introduction, and I think that P is very, very good at stating things.

Q. How about the amount of memos to the staff and letters to the parents home.

A. To the staff...we don't get memos. We don't get memos. We have staff meetings that are...P tries to make them as short as possible, and P says what P has to say, and that's it. It's not like ah, what I've heard at some other schools, at the meeting, the

principal goes on and on and on about something, and the teachers are sitting there wondering when the P's going to shut up. That doesn't really happen here. Our principal has a very good sort of, approach to that where, P's almost like entertaining us. Like a good classroom teacher, short and to the point, and let's just do what we have to do. And people really appreciate that.

Q. Where read it, done, and let's go on...

A. The number of memos that we got from P basically are just informative. It's not like you know, this is gonna happen, and this, that, and the other thing. It's not like we get lengthy memos about something, it just doesn't happen.

Q. Range of Interest.

A. Very, very diverse. P has done things with Scrabble, P's done things on the Internet, P does basketball things. P ah, is a very well-rounded typical, average person. And I organized a museum trip for the entire eighth grade, I got a grant from the Dodge Foundation, and P went along on that trip as a chaperone. And P got a map, and P went with the kids...

Q. And P's interaction with kids is there?

A. Oh, absolutely. P's very popular with the kids.

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. P is very, very focused and very directed. I was in a meeting with P, and we were writing a grant, and I remember thinking well that's why P has this free time. When P sits down to do things, P goes right to the issue. P gets it done. And that's it. That one time when we were at a working meeting with about six people, and we were working on

this big grant, we have to do this, we'll do this. We have to do that, we'll do that. Very direct and very focused.

Q. And the last one, Educational Values.

A. P's educational values are very sound. In the middle school especially, P's primary concern is making sure that the kids have a good time, and are respected, and learn. When I say, have a good time I mean, uhm, have a good time learning. It's not like it's a party school, but rather, we're here to learn but it doesn't have to be painful. We're treated as individuals, we're treated well. And yes, some of us are more skilled in some things than other things, but that's okay. There's no reason to beat somebody up because they're not as good in math as somebody else.

Q. Sounds like quite a person.

A. Yeah, P's really a terrific person.

Q. Thanks. Next, please respond to the following statements with a yes or no. In some cases, you might want to say sometimes if that's more appropriate.

A. Okay.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and

supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Yes

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. Yes.

Q. For the final part, I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

A. Okay.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. Yes.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.

A. Yes. We don't have to do lesson plans.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. Yes.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. No.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. Yes.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Yes.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. Yes.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Yes.

Q. I appreciate the time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. I think just the issue of openness is just something that should be mentioned. That my principal is just open to things, and interested in things. And like, let's try it and see what happens kind of attitude I think promotes a lot of creativity and security in the staff. P's not afraid of trying something and having it not work. If you don't want to try something because if it fails you're called out on the carpet for it. You get instead, you try something and, it fails...they'll be an attitude of well let's understand how we can fix it, and let's go on from there. It's not like, if you fail, that the world will come to an end, or you'll be chastised, or made fun of or anything like that. It's more like it's very open to experimentation and learning for the teachers as well as the students.

Q. If a no response is given to something, are explanations or a rationale usually presented? Rather than just a no, we can't do that!

A. It's very hard for me to think of a thing that suggests that P has said no to. I think it's an interesting time in education because of all of the things that are being done with students...you talk about cooperative learning, group learning, and enabling students. And the teacher is not being the sage on the stage, but being part of the process. I think if you're in administration, if you're going to promote those values with your teachers, so they could do that with their students, you're going to have to do that too. So in effect, I don't think administrators can be like the Buddha that's on the hill, the judge that makes a decision about this or that, we really have to involve staff and incorporate them in that whole process so that they own it and are really to go ahead with that. And I think in most cases, my principal really does that. And there are times, that P goes out on a limb, because there are things that P feels important about, and so P pursues that, but P has a



very good ability to bring the staff in on those kinds of things, and why P's doing it is very clear. And if you don't like what P's doing about it, you can make fun of it, and like, poke P a little bit, and P won't go nuts. So I think that the openness to things is a very good quality.

Q. Well, thank you for a great interview. I appreciate your time during the summer, and for being so frank and honest. It sounds like you really have a great administrator.

A. We did.

Q. And best of luck to you on your upcoming sabbatical.

A. Thank you.

#### Teacher F

Q. First, I would like to ask you some general questions about yourself. Please tell me the number of years you have been teaching.

A. Twenty-three years. They are combined between full-time and part-time positions...the part-time contracts have been for the years that I've taught Kindergarten when there was only one session.

Q. Your district has half-day kindergarten sessions?

A. Right. It's fluctuated with enrollments between two sessions (morning and afternoon) and only one.

Q. And the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school...the Best Practices school.

A. About eighteen.

Q. And please specify, your highest earned degree and any certifications you would like to list.

A. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree plus fifteen graduate credits.

Q. And certification?

A. I have an Early Childhood Education certification.

Q. Name the teaching positions have you held in your present school?

A. I was a Comp. Ed. (Compensatory Education) teacher for a short time...a little under one year. Three and one-half years in first grade...and second grade for one year. The rest have been in kindergarten.

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. Well...P's very approachable, and I feel like I can go in to P with any problem.

Q. And the door's always open?

A. Yes. Yea. You don't really need an appointment. You can just knock and just say can I speak to you. P makes you feel very comfortable. (Long pause) Whereas in the past, when I first started, with the principal before this one...well, I was told by a colleague of mine, if I had any problems, I should solve them myself. And that's what we did...with this other principal. If you had a problem, then you were inadequate. The principal wanted you to solve your own problems. That's what we did when I first started here.

Q. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background that you would like to mention in terms of this study?

A. No...not really.

Q. Okay. Next, I would like to know some things about you're perceptions of the abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals. Please define your perceptions of these skills as they apply to your personal convictions, what and how you think about them, and as they are portrayed through observations of your principal.

A. Uh...

Q. Again, you might be able to take this in different directions. How you see them (leadership skills) personally, and how your principal deals with the skills. How they are portrayed as you see your principal performing leadership tasks. Whether dealing with them fully, just a little, effectively or not...

A. Okay.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. How well does P analyze problems?

Q. Yes.

A. Well, I haven't had a lot of problems. But with the few that I've had, uhm...I think that P was able to shed light on it...or thought of something maybe I didn't think of. Because I think that P is very good...P has good judgement, and good insights.

Q. Okay, which leads to the second one, Judgement.

A. Yea...I think I respect P's judgement. And in the few times I did have to seek some additional help, I think P had good ideas.

Q. Sees all dimensions?

A. Yea...P's very good that way.

Q. Organizational Ability.

A. I think that P takes on too many tasks, and P has so many things going...P's so big with technology and science, and P's involved in all of these outside projects. I don't think that P is very organized. And I think therefore, P's secretary, she's not a very organized person...she's older, and you know, has been there a long time. And it's hard to be a secretary, with all the...you know, you get bombarded with the students, the teachers. You have to, you know, in the past, as with a former principal, everything was done. If there was an assessment, a form would be in my box. We'd have everything organized. But with this principal, I'm the one that would think, oh my goodness, we didn't get the letter, we didn't do this. So I always have to go and be aware that there has to be a letter to go out, then the secretary would pull out the letter. Because with another school in the district, I talk to a colleague who's on my grade level, and she'd say, oh we had that out already. Because they're very organized in that school...the secretary and the principal. In our school...that's one thing that's a little lacking, organization.

Q. I'm identifying with you as I think of my teaching days. Having taught for so many principals, I saw so many levels of organization.

A. Yea...everything always gets done though. Somebody nudges somebody else, or if somebody remembers something. Oh yea, we need that...or, don't we need these forms? It's conference time. So that's one thing that's a little bit lacking. But I think a lot of times, I shouldn't say this, but my husband is a man and he's not as organized, and he can't remember. I think that women tend to...we doctor's appointments, have to give our kids medicine a special times...our minds are very organized. And I think my principal has

too much going. And P's not organized with schedules, and paper work. We always have things late. But in the beginning, because I had worked for a principal who was very organized, so I expected all of these things, so it bothered me at first. But now, you know...it will get done, and the forms will be out.

Q. Decisiveness. The ability to make decisions...

A. Yea, I think my principal has that quality. From what I see, once you bring the problem and P's organized enough (laugh), yes, I would say P has the ability to make decisions and act on them. Because P is a good leader I believe. People like P and respect P because P has a very nice way. P has that open door policy, and P does listen, though P might not agree with you, of course. But I think P is a good leader.

Q. Which leads to the next skill, Leadership.

A. (Long pause) Yea, I think P has all of those qualities, to help solve problems, and to provide direction and guidance.

Q. Does your principal empower the staff? Like when it comes to school-level goals, or projects, programs, activities? For instance, with one leader, everything would be laid out and done for everyone in advance. Another leader might work directly with the staff to enable them to develop, deal, refine, etc. with the task at hand, and then come to a conclusion...closure. For instance, with the school goals committee...does P let the committee develop the plan, offering guidance if needed, and let the committee set the various goals, actions, activities. And then, come back to P and report the committee findings, and recommendations?

A. Yes. P lets you report back with the findings and doesn't get in your way. Like

I said before. I think P's a good leader.

Q. Fine. Sensitivity.

A. Well, I don't think P's that sensitive sometimes with me and my kindergarten needs, at times, lately. (Nervous laugh) For instance, uhm...dividing the classes up. There's only one morning session and two afternoon sessions, and uhm...P will give me twenty-one children and the other classes will have thirteen or fourteen, because a lot of people want morning. But the way P approaches it, I don't think P's sensitive. This year I went in and I said how many children do I have? And I knew not to complain...P said you have about twenty and the afternoon has fourteen. And I didn't say anything. Well P said, if you want fourteen, teach in the afternoon. But I didn't say that...I guess the new children coming in will come to the afternoon. And P said not necessarily...some people need the morning. Or, once I said to P that I had twenty-four children and that's a lot of children in kindergarten, and P said that if you're in some other districts, they have many more children. So I don't feel P's sensitive to kindergarten needs at times, because I don't think P's aware of them. You know, P will come into the class at times and the kids will love P, because P's so nice and friendly, and they get so riled up and then P leaves. So a lot of the times I don't think P's sensitive. When administration makes decisions about placement of teachers, of course they have the right to do that...I shared a room with another teacher for the first time this past year. It worked out very well. For sharing, I thought we did well. So now you would hope that we would do it again...we're both teaching part time. Now, a new person comes back after a leave, and it's decided to move the teacher who worked so well sharing the classroom with me, we both have the same

type of personality...and moves her to another district school. And the new teacher that comes back, happens to come from that other district school, but now P's putting her with me, and this teacher has a different type personality. I couldn't see why you would make that move because there's no need, there's a part time here, and a part time there, and we had worked well together. She (the other teacher) was very upset when she was told that she would be in another building. So you know, I slept over that and thought about it and I said to P, I don't understand why...and my principal just said it's a done deal. Like I don't feel P was sensitive. It could be though, that my principal didn't have the final say...another principal could have, or the superintendent. And I didn't think P was sensitive because P said something like I don't know why you're upset (Teacher F). So there are times when I think P's not too sensitive to me, and other times P's very sweet and nice. So, I'd give P a low grade on sensitivity. I guess P couldn't reveal why they wanted to do this (making the staff transfers), and I didn't understand at that point, and then later on, I found out that the teacher coming back didn't get along with another administrator, so they make these moves where they change people, and people get very upset, and then they smokescreen it by moving a few other people. I was told it was a done deal and why was I asking questions? I could have been told that there were certain confidential reasons for this arrangement, left it this way, and treated with sensitivity. But I wasn't.

**Q. Stress Tolerance.**

A. I think P does very well. We had problems with a contract a few years ago, and P has that very friendly personality and could joke about what the teachers were going

through. But with a friend who teaches at another school, where the principal is a control person, uhm, didn't like how people responded during faculty meetings. And that principal went off the deep end. But my principal, used humor to lighten up the situation.

Q. Are there days where everybody says to steer clear of P? You know, bad days?

A. No, no. I mean no...I have never really seen P in a bad mood.

Q. P uses humor?

A. Yes, P does. P uses a lot of humor. P's a very good speaker...orally. And I was always impressed because he speaks well. And P spoke at an orientation, for teachers, parents...I don't remember exactly. But I remember P was so light, and I remember saying, gee, I don't have that gift of speaking. I wish I could speak that way. And P said that P didn't even prepare it. So P's a natural that way.

Q. Oral Communication.

A. So I think P's very good with this as I just said. P's very clear with the facts, and adds humor to P's speeches.

Q. How about Written Communication? Not enough, too much, unclear...

A. I'd say, just enough. I don't feel like I'm bombarded with memos. We get the appropriate type memos, and hand-written notes if P wants to see you.

Q. Range of Interest.

A. Could you explain what this means?

Q. Sure. If P is competent to discuss a variety of subjects, not just with P's area of expertise, for instance.

A. Okay. I'd say that P has a very good range of interests. Because the first time I



met P, we went to a conference about kindergarten education and different things. And I was impressed that P knew the right questions to ask...that P knew more than me, and I'm the kindergarten teacher. I was really impressed with P's range because I thought it was one-sided, that P didn't know about early childhood education. But P does have a good range from what I see. P's not one-sided.

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. (Long pause) Is P personally motivated, or does P motivate the staff?

Q. No, is the principal personally motivated.

A. Well, P's been a principal at least nine years. So I don't think P's at the end of P's career. Whereas my old principal, P just had P's own goals and wasn't motivated at all. But P tries to get us interested in different issues and new things.

Q. Educational Values. Having a vision, a philosophy.

A. I think P is very open to new ideas. Especially in kindergarten, we don't have the same text series that the other teachers have. We could teach the curriculum any way we want. We don't have the same math series and the other grades. So if I go to P and say that I want to try this (to use an alternate series or method), P would say great, and let me know what you need. So P's receptive to new ideas and to change. P's a good leader.

Q. Okay, thank you. Next, would you please respond to the following statements with a yes or no. You might want to say sometimes if that's more appropriate. So feel free to respond as you see fit.

A. Okay.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide

information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Yes, most of the time.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. Yes.

Q. For the third and final part, I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. Yes, sometimes.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.

A. Yes.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. Yes.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. (Long pause) Yes. I would say that I see that, not on my grade level, but it happens, at times.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. No.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Yes.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. Yes.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff

with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Yes.

Q. Thank you for your time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. Uhm...no. I think our school unfortunately, there's a lot of... From the outside it looks like everybody gets along, and basically they did for awhile. But then, in the last couple of years, with the contract, and problems with that, some people broke away from the group, you know, with pay steps, and the bubble (salary bubble), like some got it and others didn't. And it seems like cliques developed. So I think right now we're going along with a little tension between different factions. And I don't know how our principal can deal with that. And there are grade changes, you know. People are changed that didn't ask to be changed. So there's a lot of tension and I'm curious how P's going to handle all of this. But it's a nice system to work in.

Q. Well, thank you for your time, especially making yourself available during the summer when school is closed.

A. You're welcome. I enjoyed it.

Teacher G

Q. First, I would like to ask you some things about yourself. Please tell me the number of years that you have been teaching.

A. Twenty-nine.

Q. And the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school?

A. Nineteen.

Q. And specify your highest earned degree and any certifications you have.

A. Uhm...Bachelor of Arts, plus thirty...B. A. plus thirty. I'm certified to teach Math and English. It's an old-fashioned certification...I could teach them from first through twelfth. When I graduated from college, you were certified teacher of Math, teacher of English, because that's what I majored in. I minored in education.

Q. Name the teaching position or positions have you held in your present school?

A. I'm a Math teacher, presently teaching Algebra I and Algebra II.

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal.

A. Cordial. It's a cordial relationship. Ah...I wouldn't say we're really close, but ah, it's cordial. We greet each other. I can feel free to go in and talk to P if I want to. Uhm...do I see P outside of School? No.

Q. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background in terms of this study?

A. Uhm...I don't know. I taught, I left teaching, I went back to teaching after my kids were grown. I've taught junior high school, elementary, and high school. Uhm...I've taught in Catholic schools and public schools. I've run the gamut.

Q. Great. For the next part, I would now like to know some things about you're perceptions of the following abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals. Please define your perceptions of these skills as they apply to your personal convictions, and as they are portrayed through observations of your principal.

A. Okay.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. I think...I've worked for a variety of principals because I've taught in a variety of schools over a number of years.

Q. Which will shape your perceptions.

A. Which shape my perceptions, right.

Q. That's okay.

A. We had a principal (at my present school) at one time that was a very hard as nails principal. P ah, controlled our school from the bottom up. But, nothing went wrong. P was on top of everything. We were afraid of P...yes. But this principal, you're not afraid of P. You feel comfortable with P. But does P control our school? I don't think so. And I think it's a total difference in style. In an inner-city school, I think you need more of a control and less of a relaxation. Yes, P will analyze problems...existing issues, but is very much relaxed. So relaxed...comfortable that P's not as effective as a principal should be.

Q. Okay. Judgement.

A. Uhm...that's difficult. P does judge things. I may not always agree, but the again...I won't always agree with anybody's judgement. But P does try to be fair...P does try to make fair judgements. P does try to do what P thinks is best for the school.

Uh...older teachers tend to be harder on principals than younger teachers. Because I think, we've seen so many varieties of principals. And ah, probably as I said, I'm probably a little harder on this one (principal), because P does a lot of things that I don't think is good for our school.

Q. Has P been principal at your school very long?

A. P's been principal here for four years. P was not a high school person to begin with. And our high school is unique. I'm sure everybody says that about their high school. But I feel our high school is very unusual. I see P playing favorites with students. P lives in town (where this school is located), and sometimes I don't think that's an advantage. And I see favoritism to certain students. And we never had that before...we have that now. And I don't think that's healthy for the school. Because when other teachers talk about P...and they do...you know, when we're sitting around...and you know teachers gripe. When they talk about something like that...

Q. Judgement? Or playing favorites?

A. Yes...the favorites because doing this sure clouds making good, rational judgements...fair judgements. Well when they talk about something like that...that is not a good perception for a principal to have. It should be even-handed. And uh, I don't see this (fair judgements) in this principal. It's almost like, the chain of command is broken down because, parents feel free to go to P instead of going to the teacher first, before they would go to the department head. And it's almost like the hand is coming down from above when you say, well why this particular student? And not that student!

Q. I see.

Q. I don't think a parent should not go to a principal...I think they should. But I also think the principal should not go immediately to the teacher and call the teacher in. I think maybe...it's better for P to refer to the chain of command. Rather than...you know, you get the note in your box...See me! When really, it was such a minor thing. And every teacher in the world, when they see (the note), See me, reacts. We all react...like little



kids. And when you see that note, you say, What did I do with that kid? The kid lost his notebook? I don't think that's a principal's problem. And this principal does that...but only for some kids. And this I think, is wrong. And, as I said, I'm not the only one who says it. Other teachers will talk to each other about it.

Q. I understand.

A. It's difficult. And as I said, it's not that I dislike P. I do like P. P's a very people-oriented principal. Very people-oriented. And that's P's great strength. P's a great people person. Sometimes not a good idea when you're principal.

Q. Organizational Ability.

A. P's got good people around P. P's got very good people around P.

Q. To keep P organized?

A. P's secretary is excellent. An excellent secretary. I think any business person, any principal, I'm sure anybody, a good secretary makes you or breaks you...really does. And P's got an excellent secretary.

Q. Decisiveness.

A. Uhm...sometimes. (Long pause) Uhm...sometimes not. And P will open things up to discussion, and P will say that P won't want to impose P's will, but the next time P will impose P's will on the conclusion. So you're never sure. Ah...is one method right or one method wrong? I don't know. As I said, the first principal I worked under in that school...that principal cracked the whip. However, the school ran well. You knew if you were not on your post, P was going to be there. That one day you missed...P would be standing there looking at how long you were late.

Q. This former principal...a term that I've heard before...a control freak?

A. Oh yes. However, the school ran. Now (with this principal), teachers don't go on their posts...oh well. And that's not good either. And we're (teachers) like little kids about that. It pits one teacher against another...some get away with things and P doesn't always make decisions. Again, what goes for your classroom, goes for your principal. If you're fair in your classroom, and even-handed, the kids respect it. They may not like it all the time, but they respect it. If it doesn't happen at the top, we don't like it either. And we don't respect it. So, you don't have to be a total control freak, but it's got to be even-handed. Don't come down on one person and let another person get away with it.

Q. Leadership.

A. Could I give P a grade?

Q. Sure, if you'd like.

A. B is the grade. P's there and P will try. You know, as I said, P will try hard.

Ah...P is very caring about this school. P really cares about it. And that's important. So, I hate to sound like I'm faulting P terribly, but it's, it's what I see. And ah, P can be a leader when P really wants to be. And P could really inspire people when P's in the mood. If P's in a bad mood, you know...stay away from P. But P can be...P can get you into something when P wants to. Which is good. P can get you enthusiastic...can get your motors revved up...but P's got to be in the mood to do it.

Q. I'm guessing...there are about one hundred and twenty-five staff?

A. I think a little over two hundred.

Q. Oh...

A. A big staff. It's a big staff. And one thing...P does know practically everybody's name. And that's nice. You know if P doesn't know your name because...usually if you raise your hand at a faculty meeting, P will call you by name. But one teacher said...P's going to learn my name sometime (laughing)! Well I said you're never over there, that's why...

Q. Sensitivity.

A. Yes...P's pretty sensitive. P is a people person. That's P's great strength...P's a people person...P is sensitive to others in the school. Like I said before though, maybe too sensitive toward some and not enough toward others. If only P would spread this fairly across the board. Then, it would be perfect.

Q. How about Stress Tolerance? How does your principal perform under pressure?

A. No. P boils over quickly. It ah....(long pause)...I don't know...P hasn't been on the job that long, about four years. P came in and P was acting (principal). P was in the district for a long while and worked up to this position. But P wasn't in a high school position before. So ah...sometimes I think P feels a little insecure. And of course we're a tough bunch in the high school. High schools teachers are tough. And we're used to...there's a difference between high school teachers and grade school teachers. Grade school teachers are much easier than high school teachers. High school teachers buck everything.

Q. Does your principal show that P is stressed?

A. You could see it with P. I mean it...it's like a stone-face!

Q. The skill of Oral Communication.

A. (Long pause) P doesn't have a great command of the English language. So unless P scripts...P speaks poorly and the teachers notice this. Older teachers notice this more! And that could be a problem for P. So you know, when P speaks off the cuff, P has to be very careful. And unfortunately, P isn't. Like I said, I'm being as honest as I can with you (the researcher) and we don't sound like lovely people, but it's the way we are. I would do anything to help P because I like this school and I like the kids a lot. We have some sweetheart kids. Really nice, nice kids. And I love what I do. I love teaching. But you know...you look at it and say hey...this shouldn't happen (deficiencies of the principal)...this shouldn't be happening. We shouldn't have this favoritism. You know, there's always favoritism. It shouldn't be a blatant thing, so totally noticed. And that's what's hurting school morale. School morale is going down. And P came in with the greatest wishes by everybody in that faculty.

Q. This thought just entered my mind. Has your school had past principals for long periods of time? Or was there a regular turnover of principals.

A. Over the nineteen years I have been here, this is our third principal. We had one principal there for awhile and then P went to central administration. Then we had the next principal for a very, very long time, about twelve years.

Q. How about Written Communication?

A. Good.

Q. Too much...too little? Is it effective, understandable?

A. It's understandable, effective. Like I said, P has an excellent secretary. And

everything is presented very nicely. Very, very nicely. So that's why...we have no problem with this. Like I said, when P scripts, P's excellent. But P should never go off the cuff.

**Q. Range of Interest.**

A. It's not something I've noticed. P uhm...doesn't share that kind of thing with the faculty in general. Probably with P's friends on the faculty though. But not with the faculty in general. Uhm...like I said, we're cordial, but I'm not one of P's inner circle people by any means.

**Q. The next skill is Personal Motivation.**

A. Oh, P is a very motivated person. P wants to succeed...P wants to be a success. P's very motivated. That's obvious.

Q. I'm sure the position brings with it very long hours, night activities...

A. P's involved. Along with our VP's (vice-principals), P's involved.

**Q. Educational Values.**

A. P's interested in improving the school. To see that the children do better. P wants them to achieve. And ah...P will never fight you on anything like that. I mean, if you have some strong concerns, P will be open to you. And P has strong concerns about the direction the school is heading.

Q. If a staff member has an idea for a program or activity, and it's burning a fire inside of that teacher, and the teacher comes in and says that they would like to try it. Is your principal open to these things?

A. Yes. P will give you a fair hearing. And P will probably refer it...clear it with central administration. But P will give you a fair hearing. And will be open to new ideas.

P's always open to new ideas. And changing things if necessary. P's very fair that way. And open-minded. Uhm...you 'd better succeed though! I mean you'd better have it well thought-out. Because P doesn't want failure. And it might be a great idea that just falls flat...but P's not going to like that. Because P looks at it as a reflection on P rather than we tried something and it didn't work. P almost looks at these things as if they're personal things if they fail.

Q. Thank you. Next, I would like to ask you to respond to the following statements with a yes or no. You might want to say sometimes if that's more appropriate.

A. Okay.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make decisions based upon available information.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes...usually.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to

the accomplishment of a task.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. Sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Not really well.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Usually...yes.

Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.

A. Yes. But in writing...No.

Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.

A. Sometimes.

Q. For the last section , I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.

A. All right.

Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.

A. Yes.

Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.

A. Yes.

Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.

A. Yes.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. Yes.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. Yes...usually.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.



A. No.

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. No.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Yes.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. School or principal?

Q. School.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. Yes.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Definitely.

Q. I appreciate the comments and thank you for your time and thoughts that you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. Yes. The hardest working teachers make the best administrators. We've had administrators that I knew as teachers...several of them they were lazy teachers...they're lazy administrators. Some of them were very hard-working teachers...they're excellent administrators. Because they really work! Okay...

A. Well, thanks again for your time and for being so frank and honest.

Q. I enjoyed this. And good luck to you.

Teacher H

Q. First, tell me some things about yourself. Please list the number of years that you have been teaching.

A. Okay, I've teaching thirteen years, thirteen years. Uhm...I'm an English teacher.

Q. Okay. Just wait because that will be addressed.

A. Oh, okay.

Q. Please list the number of years that you have been teaching in your present school.

A. It's actually twelve years in this school.

Q. And please specify, the highest degree earned and any certifications that you have as well.

A. Two Masters degrees and certifications in English and ESL.

Q. And name the teaching positions have you held in this school?

A. I've held the position as an English teacher for freshmen, sophomores, juniors, and seniors, and as an ESL teacher.

Q. Please describe your views of your relationship between you and your principal. How do you see them?

A. How do I see the relationship? Uhm...I think I'm considered one of the people that has a good relationship with P. But uhm...I'm very much aware of the difference between P and I and how P looks at other people and I count myself lucky that I'm not one of the people on P's (expletive deleted) list. I didn't mean to say that!

Q. I'll add blank instead of what you said.

A. Good. On the blank list (laughing)!

Q. Is there any other information that you believe is relevant or important regarding your professional background that you would like to mention in terms of this study?

A. Uhm...I don't think so.

Q. That's okay. Next, I would like to know some things about you're perceptions of the abilities that have been listed as leadership skills of principals. Please define your perceptions of these skills as they apply to your personal convictions, what and how you think about them, and as they are portrayed through observations of your principal.

A. Okay.

Q. Problem Analysis.

A. (Long pause) I would say that problem analysis is the ability to look at situations, let's say that P has to set up the HSPT (High School Proficiency Test). Without being told, look at this, this, and this, and P's got to predict some of the problems that will arise. And P has to make, uhm...plan on how to deal with some of the various problems, whether that may arise or they may not arise, but any sort of possibility that could happen with them.

Q. Would or does your principal effectively deal with this skill?

A. Uh...yes and no. Sometimes P's pretty good but P doesn't think of the minute details that are very obvious to a teacher. P thinks of it as...I think P's got a view of P's self as being a very strong leader, and P'll dictate what's going to happen. And that

precludes the possibility of P looking at the little things, you know? Could I give you an example?

Q. Sure.

A. We're doing the HSPT testing today. And P said, part of P's plan was that all homeroom teachers would take all of the students to the assembly area for the testing. Well P didn't have the ability to think that well you're going to have a senior class that's going to have maybe one kid that's going down to the testing area. So if you tell that teacher she's gotta take all twenty-five kids down to the testing area with her...that's absurd. And they (administration) never thought of that. And then when that was posed to them (administration) at the faculty meeting, they said, well just take them (the students) all! When then...finally there was an argument back and forth, when they (administration) found out that this affected at least ten to fifteen of the teachers and their classes. And it never occurred to P to think of that. Whereas that would have occurred to me or any homeroom teacher immediately. And I think P should be able to think of those things.

Q. Regarding this example of something similar...are opinions sought of the staff? Does your principal seek to be advised on matters?

A. It depends a lot on the situation. Sometimes P asks for your opinion, but P really wants a yes, you're right! Now, I've had a conference with P on an occasion about a student's grades. And P drew in a vice-principal to get their opinion. Because, my principal was saying one thing and I argued my point that I thought P was wrong, and I thought I was right about that situation...well obviously politely to one another. And so, P asked another vice-principal, and the vice-principal agreed with me. So, P's eyes opened

up and said, well yea, I guess you're right. So sometimes P will actually look for another opinion. Usually though, P is looking for a yes answer, a yes...you're right.

**Q. The leadership skill of Judgement.**

A. Uhm...I don't think P...to use judgement you have to be able to look at both sides of the issue. You have to be able to see both sides of the issue. Not have an opinion before you've looked at both sides. And I think our principal tends to have a one-sided view and have P's decision made before P even looks at the other side. I think P's very blinded by race (culture) issues, by sex (gender) issues, like if the teacher's male or female. His personal history with that particular teacher, things students have told him about a particular teacher. So that P's views about things are very often affected and then P's not objective when P's looking at something. P may decide at one point, in the student's career, in their freshman year, that's a bad kid. That kid remains a bad kid forever, and P never sees the other side of that kid. And I think that's a definite deficit of a principal.

**Q. Organizational Ability.**

A. Organizational ability? Well...I guess does P organize P's time, does P organize classes and so forth. (Pause) I guess P's pretty good at that. Uhm...P has everything run according to schedule. In other words, P does everything P is supposed to do according to P's schedule. But if P leaves it out for whatever personal reason, you know, then it's just not there. You know what I'm saying? It's just not there. I think P works a lot from P's personal feelings, P's heart, whatever...

**Q. Your principal is programmed to a set pattern?**

A. Right! But is a link of the pattern is missing of left out, then P won't notice it.

P will never notice it! Whereas I think a better principal would, would think, you know, oh, wait a minute, what about this? You know, I don't think P will notice it. P has a very selective view of things.

Q. Has P been a principal very long?

A. About two years, that's it. Before that, P was a vice-principal. And I thought P was an excellent vice-principal. But as a principal I think, P's letting P's personal vendettas if you will...you know. I think P's got something to prove. If you're a male, then you're right. But if you're female, you're wrong. But, P just happens to like me for whatever reason. I think because I stood my ground with P a few times. Like I think P does appreciate that, like P doesn't like you to argue with P, but when you stand your ground firmly, but without being disrespectful to P, P does appreciate that. So P's got a lot of personal history that P brings into the position.

Q. Uhm...

A. I'm very honest (laughing).

Q. Decisiveness.

A. I think P's very decisive. Yes, P makes a decision...that's it. Come (expletive deleted) or high water...that's it!

Q. And the next one...Leadership.

A. Well...you know, I think a leader is supposed to be above things. And you're not supposed to be into control so much of your leadership. You're supposed to lead gently, if you know what I mean.

Q. I've heard these two words from other teachers.

A. You mean, gently?

Q. No. The words...control freak.

A. Yes.

Q. I don't mean to put words into your mouth.

A. You're right. Well maybe when one goes to become a principal, they think they have to be a control freak. But you (the researcher) don't seem to be a control freak, and I've known other principals who aren't as well. But I think our principal is...P wants to be in control. Our principal likes to convince P's self that P is in control. And P will issue a dictate that is absolutely absurd. And P will be convinced that everybody is following it.

Q. Sensitivity.

A. I've seen P be very sensitive and I've seen P being very insensitive, I mean insensitive to certain issues. Well I'll give you an example, a personal example with this person. I had a fever once and it was an exam day...and I wanted to leave early. You can't leave early on an exam day. That is forbidden...you can't do that. But I had a fever of one-hundred and one. And I went to P and I said you know, I'm really sick. I have to go home. Well P said, I want you to go to the nurse and have your temperature taken by the nurse. And I'm like...what? I'm not a kid. So that I think was very insensitive. But yet, when I went to P and told P of serious personal problems, and I said that I'd like to leave early, P said that's no problem. So, P could be very sensitive and yet be insensitive depending on P's mood. But then again, that's true of any of us. And...P probably had ten teachers come to P and say they had fevers also!

Q. Stress Tolerance.

A. Ah...I think P deals with a lot of stress. And I think P deals with it relatively well. I think P doesn't show it a lot. Ah...P has to up with so much (expletive deleted) from teachers, because you know how teachers are. P's got almost about two hundred teachers. And P's got about two hundred different characters...and some of them are real looney tunes! Especially you see it in a faculty meeting when they come up with these stupid asinine questions. Or they're gabbing away just like a bunch of little kids. And P's up there trying to start the meeting and yet they'll (expletive deleted) and complain that P doesn't end it on time. I think that P deals with that very nicely, I have to say. That is one thing I think P deals with very well.

Q. And P doesn't show that P's stressed out?

A. Once in a while you'll see that P's stressed out...P gets very strict about it. But I've seen P handle situations that were really horrible, and P handled them well, with grace. But P's never outrageous. P might get very strict at certain points, but I think P has to, sometimes! When P's dealing with a bunch of kindergartners, who have certificates to teach! (Laughing)

Q. The skill of Oral Communication.

A. Ah...P's English is lousy. I'd love to have P in my class.

Q. And Written Communication?

A. Ah, oh well (laughing)...P's taken to giving it to someone to proof read.

Because P's had a few things go out with big errors.

Q. Do you know if your principal composes P's own memos? Or does P just jot



down the ideas and main points and have the secretary make up the letters, memos?

A. When P was composing them, the errors were really comical. I also teach remedial...P could had been one of my students. And after a few people would circle the errors are return them to the office, I guess P got the suggestion. P started giving it to someone, so now it's fine. But I don't think P has the ability to write well at all. P can't speak well...P can't write well, I'm sure. If you don't speak well, you can't write well!

Q. Range of Interest.

A. I don't think P's interested in many other things outside of P's closed little world. I think P's interested in the arts, and P's marginally interested in sports, and to some extent, P's interested in the students in this school. But I don't think P has range of interest...well if I came up with the idea of let's have a performance of a Shakespearean play, sure, but I mean we could enjoy watching it. You know what I'm saying?

Q. Right, right.

A. P wouldn't be interested in it, but P would go for it if P thought it would ne good for the school. Yea...I don't think P goes home and reads books. I doubt that very much.

Q. Personal Motivation.

A. Is P personally motivated? Yea, I think P is very personally motivated. P wants to be success in this world. For the longest time we were convinced P wanted to be superintendent. But I think the stress may have gotten to P and P seems content with P's present position. But this person has worked all of P's life, from the beginning, to be that principal.

Q. P's been in the district a long time?

A. I's say over twenty-five years. P's worked diligently, and has always look very professional, and has put on that image. P's like a very ambitious type of person.

Q. And the twelfth one is Educational Values.

A. I think P has P's concept of what educational values are and P ah...for example, teachers are told that they have to give homework every night. Doesn't make any difference if it's worthwhile homework, if the kids are going to get anything from the homework. You give them homework, because their parents want to see homework, and then they will know that we're teaching something. And then P says they cannot start the homework in class. Well you know as I do, some kids can't do the homework on their own, and if they don't start it in class, they're gonna be totally lost. But P's got these very strict ideas of what it's supposed to be...you know, P has values, but they're P's values. And they're very much geared to a set of rules.

Q. Just one thing. Is your principal a visible person?

A. Yes. P's all over. In the halls, all around the building.

Q. Next, please respond to the following statements with a yes or no. You might want to say sometimes if that's more appropriate. So feel free to respond as you see fit.

A. Okay.

Q. The principal of my school...analyzes and investigates data in order to provide information teachers need to plan their work effectively.

A. No.

Q. The principal of my school...reaches logical conclusions in order to make

decisions based upon available information.

A. (Long pause) Yes, I guess so.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to plan, schedule, and supervise the work of the staff in an organized manner.

A. It could be a yes and a no (laughing). Yea...I would say sometimes.

Q. The principal of my school...recognizes when a decision is required and acts quickly.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...interacts effectively with the staff to guide them to the accomplishment of a task.

A. That depends on the teacher. Sometimes P just cuts them off, and sometimes P deals with them effectively. It depends of what P's prior feelings are toward that particular teacher.

Q. The principal of my school...demonstrates the ability to perceive the needs, concerns, and personal problems of the staff.

A. No.

Q. The principal of my school...performs under pressure and during periods of opposition.

A. Yes.

Q. The principal of my school...establishes regular and clear channels of oral communication either formally or informally.

A. Yes.

**Q. The principal of my school...displays the skills necessary to express ideas clearly in writing.**

**A. No.**

**Q. The principal of my school...exhibits the desire to actively participate in school and school-related events.**

**A. Yes.**

**Q. The principal of my school...shows evidence of excitement about future possibilities to staff, parents, and students.**

**A. Yes.**

**Q. The principal of my school...shows a receptiveness to new and innovative ideas.**

**A. Yes.**

**Q. And for the final part, I would like to know your views about the school in which you teach. Please answer the following with a yes or a no considering your responses in a general nature and not based upon any one or two specific occurrences that could influence your reply.**

**Q. I am provided information that is needed to plan my work effectively.**

**A. Yes.**

**Q. Advice is sought from me in making a decision.**

**A. Yes.**

**Q. The administration (principal) deals with the heavy volume of paperwork and heavy demands of their time.**

A. Yes.

Q. I feel that I share in the successes and failures of the school after having had the opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

A. Yes.

Q. If I have an idea for a good proposal or program, the principal listens and supports it.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I am respected.

A. Yes.

Q. Disagreements occur because we (teachers) frequently compete with each other.

A. Oh, yea!

Q. I receive a lot of attention.

A. No.

Q. Communication in our school is frequent and informal.

A. Ah...(pause), between the principal and the teachers?

Q. Yes.

A. Yes, I guess so.

Q. I have a sense of loyalty to my school.

A. Yes.

Q. In this school, I have the feeling that I can invent, create, and solve.

A. Yes.

Q. I seem to have similar values and ideas with other members of the teaching staff with regards to what my school should be doing.

A. Yes.

Q. Thank you for your time and thoughts you have given. Are there any other items or reflections, such as additional leadership skills that have not been discussed, that you deem relevant in adding to this study?

A. Well, I think that the school is falling apart since P's become principal. Because you have your different factions. For example, certain students are looked at as being better than other students. Certain teachers are looked at as being better than other teachers. And discipline is falling apart because of that. Because, you'll have a certain student who is a nice kid, but now that kid knows that he can get over, and he's trying to get over. And he will get over! He gets to do what he wants when he gets over. Because he knows that he's got that backing. And so what happens, is things fall apart. The principal will issue certain dictates, not taking into consideration other things that may develop as a result of it. And P sticks to that! Even when everything else is falling apart. If you know what I mean. For example, if I stopped a kid in the hall and I said, take your hat off, and he says, (expletive deleted), and I then say, give me your name, and I eventually find out who this kid is, and I get his name...I might be told, you know, why are you making such a big deal out of it anyway? Why are you picking on the kid? So, you know, depending on who that kid is. Now if he's another kid, and he says, what? Then that kid could get in trouble. So everybody knows that discipline is just falling apart. It really is.

Q. And you have been there the amount of time that you have...to see how it was

run with another principal.

A. Right. The other principal had P's faults, but P was incredibly fair. P didn't care what you were, who you were. You were all the same to P. And so...P wasn't visible like our present principal is, P is much more visible than our former principal was.

Q. The feeling, feelings that are out there that you just described, the mood, or the environment, are these prevalent among the staff?

A. Absolutely. There's an undercurrent that's growing and growing. Teachers are getting very disgusted. I've seen a lot of teachers that in the past, would have stopped kids, and said...stop that, don't do that, whatever. And they just turn their backs now. Because you know you're on your own. You know you don't have any support. You know who you can talk to and who you can't. But meanwhile you see one kid walking down the hall, you tell him to take his hat off, you know he'll take it off. With another kid, he'll tell you (expletive deleted). So how can you tell one kid to take his hat off when you know you can't tell the other one. So things are falling apart. And I think in a few years, it's going to be like an inner-city type of school. Hopefully not, because this is a very good school. And the kids know it...they'll tell you, to your face. What are you going to do to me? You can't do anything to me! I don't have to go to detention.

Q. Oh...

A. Well, I don't have too much of a problem because there is one strong and fair vice-principal, and that person is assigned to my group of kids. So...in my particular case, it's pretty good. But not for other factions of the school.

**Q. Well, thank you so much for your time and honesty. I appreciate the contributions you have furnished toward this study.**

**A. You're welcome.**