

TITLE A Study of the Relationship between Principal Leadership and Teacher Morale in a K-12 School Setting

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of the study was to understand best practices in relation to teacher morale and effective principal leadership strategies.

METHODOLOGY

A total of 64 schools located in northern New Jersey were randomly selected and contacted through email to participate in the research study by completing an online survey and 14 schools voluntarily participated. A total of 138 participants completed the survey; 31 participants (22%) were non-vested teachers/ paraprofessionals and 107 participants (78%) were vested teachers/ paraprofessionals. Forty-five percent taught in a subject area with high-stakes testing implications, 75 percent worked in a non-rural district. Participants completed the Leadership Practices Inventory-Observer and the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (Bentley & Rempel, 1972). However, only selected individual leadership behaviors were examined rather than the more traditional five practices framework.

KEY FINDINGS

The author notes: “Based on the research of Kouzes and Posner’s Five Practices of Exemplary Leadership, administrators working with teachers exposed to high-stakes testing environments should engage in professional development both personally and for their staff. This development will guide leaders on the path toward challenging the process and bringing innovative skills and tools into their classrooms” (p. 83).