

**TITLE** The Relationship between Transformational Leadership Practices and Developing a Professional Learning Community

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**OBJECTIVE** The purpose of this study is to investigate the extent to which school principals engage in the five practices of exemplary leadership and which leadership practices have allowed those leaders to successfully transform their schools into professional learning communities.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The participants comprised of 59 elementary school principals from 25 school districts in south central Pennsylvania (87% response rate). Respondents completed the Leadership Practices Inventory, the School of Professional Staff as Learning Community (SPSLC; Hord, 1996), and provided demographic information. Teachers (N = 50) from five schools completed the SPSLC. The typical principal respondent was female (54%), with a master's degree (98%), with less than 15 years of administrative experience (80%), from a school with 51-100 staff members (51%), and 48 percent of the schools had a student population between 400-599 pupils.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

The leadership practices most often engaged in according to principals were Enable and Model, followed by Encouraging, then Challenging and Inspiring. No statistical differences were found between male and female principals, and this was also true by level of education, years of administrative experience, size of school staff and size of the student body.

Significant relationships were found between the principals' reported use of the five leadership practices and a number of dimensions of the School Professional Staff as Learning Community. All five leadership practices were significantly correlated with the dimensions of Shared Visions for Improvement, Collective Creativity and Learning, and School Conditions and Capacities. Model, Enable and Encourage were significantly correlated as well with Principal's Facilitative Leadership, and Model was also significantly correlated with Classroom Observations and Feedback.