

1990

# Identifying discriminating items for student feedback to principals

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**Identifying discriminating items for student feedback to  
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**Iowa State University, 1990**

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Identifying discriminating items  
for student feedback to principals

by

James Peter Ferrare

A Dissertation Submitted to the  
Graduate Faculty in Partial Fulfillment of the  
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Iowa State University  
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1990

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## CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, our nation's schools have suffered a serious loss of public confidence. The public's support dwindled as a steady stream of stories emerged about violence in the schools, declining student achievement, and the poor preparations and performance of teachers. A panel of educational leaders delivered the final blow when it concluded that our schools had deteriorated to such an extent that "our nation is at risk" (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983).

Into this troubled arena, into its very center, the school principal has been thrust by those who have successfully resurrected an old maxim: effective principal, effective school (Armor, 1976; Brookover, 1973; Venezky and Winfield, 1979; Weber, 1971). Edmonds (1979), for example, asserted that "one of the most tangible and indispensable characteristics of effective schools is strong administrative leadership without which the disparate elements of good schooling can neither be brought together nor kept together."

Time and again the literature on effective schools identifies the principal as an important factor that sets an effective school apart. Madden (1976) and colleagues pinpointed "strong principal support" as separating effective from ineffective schools. Lezotte, Edmonds, and Ratner (1975) also identified "the principal as an instructional leader" as one characteristic of effective schools. Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, and Lee (1982), Greenfield (1982), and Yukl (1982) all focus on the role of the principal in creating effective schools. Gardner (1988) stated that "a key to enduring, sustained, effective educational services is the site

administrator, especially the building principal." D'Amico (1982) observed, "the behavior of the designated school or program leader is crucial in determining school success."

Against this background, the importance of the principal as an instructional leader has been stressed. The principal is the vital actor in the school setting who can bridge context and school policy and program, means and ends. The principal's importance emerges from that position: He/she has the greatest access to the wishes and needs of teachers, students, district leaders, and parents (Dwyer, Barnett, and Lee, 1987). Many principals carry visions of quality schools into the very thick of the complexities and difficulties facing schools today. Their patient routines can move their organizations toward the realization of their visions. Because principals work in many different types of schools, the situational context of leadership should also be considered when discussing the leadership characteristics of the principal. Fiedler's Contingency Theory states that effective leadership is the result of an interaction between the leader and the needs of the environment (Fiedler, in Look, 1983). Gates, Blanchard, and Hersey (1976) supported the belief that there is no best style of leadership. Dwyer (1984) criticized many recent studies of effective principals because the role of contextual factors in shaping the relation between leadership and school effectiveness had been neglected. He argued for the inclusion of the contingency theory in future studies of school leadership. Valentine and Bowman (1988) indicate that the leadership role of the principal goes beyond instructional management and classroom supervision. The principal

manages a complex organization that must have direction, operate efficiently, instill confidence among employees and students, and promote the personal growth of all personnel.

To fulfill this ever expanding role, the school principal must continually and consistently obtain feedback from all personnel. Manatt (1988) insists that "feedback, not Wheaties, is the breakfast of champions." Effective schools research reinforces the principal as the school's instructional leader (Blum, 1987; Brookover, 1973; Edmonds, 1979; Manatt, 1988; Rosenberg, 1971; Vornberg, 1988). As a result, effective principal performance evaluation is vital to the effective school (Manatt, 1988; Redfern 1981; Rosenberg, 1971). Efforts at the elementary and secondary levels of education have focused on evaluation of principals by school superintendents, assistant superintendents, teachers, peers, and in some instances, parents (Herman, 1988). All are willing to assist in improving principal performance. The more knowledge gained about principal performance, the better goals for improvement can be identified (Valentine and Bowman, 1988).

One valuable source of feedback in principal performance, students, is seldom, if ever, used at the elementary or secondary level. The role of pupils in structuring the school organization has remained largely unrecognized and unexamined (Judkins, 1987). Few instruments exist for gathering student feedback on principal performance. Almost none exist exclusively for this purpose. Of those that do exist, most are subsumed within comprehensive assessment instruments aimed at measuring a variety of areas within a school or district. Additionally, these instruments

were developed prior to recent improvements aimed at measuring a variety of areas within a school or district.

A review of literature indicates that current research and knowledge on administrative performance evaluation has resulted in a list of valid, reliable, and discriminating behaviors that make a difference in teacher and student achievement (Look and Manatt, 1983; Look, 1983; Manatt, 1988). Look (1983) reported that the behavior contained on such lists and based on competency statements are repeated on checklists by a variety of authors. Few differences are evident between the items on the checklists designed for elementary principals and those designed for secondary principals. Thus, there remains a need for different principal performance rating items to be delivered for use by elementary and secondary students based on current research and knowledge.

#### Statement of the Problem

Administrative performance evaluation, specifically principal performance evaluation, is crucial to the effective school movement (Look and Manatt, 1983; Manatt, 1988). Improving the principal's performance is a key to improving teacher performance and student achievement. Gathering, analyzing, and responding to feedback from all groups interacting with the building principal will provide a comprehensive base to examine strengths and weaknesses. Presently, principal evaluation focuses on supervisor, and less frequently, teacher input. Student feedback is seldom utilized, although students are directly influenced by the competencies of the principal.

The problem for this study, in an effort to include students in the feedback process, was to develop and test a pool of principal evaluation items representative of current research on effective principal behaviors. This study identified valid, reliable, and discriminating items for rating differences in principal performance. A pool of items was identified for grades 5, 8, and 11 after careful scrutiny by a valid readability instrument (Fry, 1968).

Step one identified a list of principal competencies based on a review of literature and the finding of the School Improvement Model Project (Stow and Manatt, 1982). Next, a pool of items was developed and completed by elementary students in grade 5, middle school students in grade 8, and high school students in grade 11.

All items were tested to ensure proper readability for students completing the items (Fry, 1968). Upon completion of the feedback instrument, a list of discriminating items from the pool of items was identified using the Menne and Tolsma method of analysis to determine item discrimination (Menne and Tolsma, 1971). Look (1983) adapted and utilized this method to identify effective criteria for evaluating building principals. Judkins (1987), in identifying discriminating items for student evaluation of teachers, and Uhl (1988), in selecting criteria for the evaluation of counselors, also used the Menne-Tolsma method. A discriminating item is defined by Menne and Tolsma as one which elicits similar responses from members of the group rating a particular principal, and elicits maximum differences in ratings among principals being rated.

The literature review reveals disagreement on the effect student-held preconceptions of the principal will have on the ratings of principals. During completion of the "student feedback to principals" questionnaire, students provided information on the like or dislike of the principal's performance, their attendance patterns, and their interest in school. Responses to these items were correlated to responses on all other items that have been identified as discriminating using the Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Techniques.

The problem can be more clearly defined by the following questions:

1. What items on a student questionnaire made up of items selected from the literature will have discriminating power?
2. Do differences exist among discriminating items identified for public and nonpublic schools?
3. Are there differences between the discriminating items identified for male and female principals?
4. Are there differences in the principal discriminating items based on school enrollment?
5. Are there differences in the principal discriminating items based on student grade level?
6. What items on a student questionnaire made up of items selected from the literature will have discriminating power at the .05 level of significance?

#### The Hypotheses

This study attempted to identify valid, reliable, and discriminating items for use by elementary and secondary students in providing feedback to principals about principal performance. Additionally, the effect of student attitudes and preconceptions on the ratings were tested. The study can further be defined by the following null hypotheses.



1. There will be no significant difference in the discriminating power of the items used on the principal feedback survey.
2. There will be no significant difference between the items which discriminate for male and female principals.
3. There will be no significant difference in the principal feedback items which discriminate for principals in public and nonpublic schools.
4. There will be no significant difference in the principal evaluation items which discriminate based on school enrollment.
5. There will be no significant difference in the principal feedback items which discriminate based on student grade level.

#### Basic Assumptions

1. Principal performance can be described in terms of competencies and descriptors.
2. The principal's performance can be measured in terms of competencies and descriptors.
3. A discriminating item will be identified when an item elicits both similar responses from members of the group rating a particular principal and receives maximum different responses between principals being rated.
4. The raters will each complete the survey instrument independently.
5. The schools selected to participate were chosen randomly from a list of volunteers responding to a request to participate.
6. Participating students will be able to complete this questionnaire.
7. Building principals will volunteer to participate in this study.

### Definition of Terms

The following definitions will be used in this investigation and report.

1. **Student Feedback:** The process of having students rate the frequency of specified principal behaviors.
2. **Evaluation:** Making judgments regarding the value of certain events, behaviors, and/or results of behaviors.
3. **Discriminating Power:** Those items which elicit maximum differences among principals being rated and minimum variances among the raters.
4. **Rater:** A student member of a school organization who provides feedback on an instrument for that purpose or who assesses the value or importance of a given behavior on an instrument designed for that purpose.
5. **Readability:** Capable of being read easily; legible.
6. **Validity:** Items on an instrument measure what they are intended to measure.
7. **Reliability:** Raters of a particular principal rate that individual similarly on a specific item.

### Delimitations of the Study

The following delimitations were observed for this investigation: (1) Elementary and secondary principals from selected schools were rated; (2) rating for specific observable behaviors were used; (3) items were limited to those which met the reading level of specifications as measured by the Fry Readability Instrument; (4) only principals and students in selected volunteer schools were involved in the study; (5) student achievement was not correlated with the ratings; (6) the study was conducted during the fall of the 1989-90 school year; (7) to obtain the approval of the Human

Subjects Research Committee to conduct this study, subjects were permitted to not return the feedback questionnaires and principals were permitted to retain the completed questionnaires if they chose not to participate in the data analysis.

## CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"If principals are to become true educational leaders then they must focus on the goal of helping students learn. That's what schools are for, and that's what instructional leadership must be about" (Albrecht, 1988). Effective schools research has clearly established the importance of the principal's instructional leadership role (Herman and Stephens, 1989). Dedicated principals carry visions of quality schools into the very thick of the complexities and difficulties facing schools today. The principal manages a complex organization that must have direction, operate efficiently, instill confidence among employees and students, and promote the personal growth of all personnel (Dwyer, Barnett, and Lee, 1987). To fulfill this ever expanding role, the school principal must continually and consistently obtain feedback from all personnel. Manatt (1988) insists that "feedback, not Wheaties, is the breakfast of champions."

This review of literature and related research concentrates on the areas of principal leadership, principal evaluation, and student participation in the evaluation feedback process. Utilizing the research, an attempt will be made to identify the key elements of principal leadership, principal evaluation, and student feedback to principals which impacts positively on school effectiveness.

#### Principal Leadership

"You lead people; you manage things" (Slezak, 1984). The ideal leader brings out the best in a group, an organization, or country. A leader inspires cooperation within a team of winners rather than within only the

few who tend to rise to the top. A leader energizes the system, generates the magic that makes everyone want to do something extra, and exhibits the optimism it takes for progress to occur. A leader imagines that every employee is wearing a sign: "Make me feel important." A leader does (Slezak, 1984).

Two positive elements identify the ideal leader. First, a leader is concerned with self-development in the best sense: development of one's reasoning and talents, and development of responsibility for one's own health, well being, and life. Second, the ideal leader, who is more tolerant and more flexible than leaders of the past, is willing to share power with those being lead (Gersten et al., 1982).

The importance of school leadership is emphasized by Richard Andrews' concluding remarks in an interview by Ron Brandt (1987). "Frankly, I never anticipated that we would find such a powerful relationship between leadership of the principal and student outcomes.... But what we found is: the teachers' perception of their environment is so important, the power of the principal's leadership so pervasive, that it has a measurable impact on student learning" (Duttweiler, 1988). Successful leaders in both schools and the private sector recognize that organizational enterprises operate far more loosely than the organizational chart depicts. Successful leaders emphasize cultural dimensions that function as bonds to provide necessary connections. They recognize the task of the leader is to create a bond between people through a common culture rather than to link people through design (Blase, 1987).

In the past several years, the leadership role of the school principal has received a great deal of attention with most people concluding that principals are essential to having a successful school (Valentine and Bowman, 1988). Numerous studies have verified that the principal indeed is a key factor in the school's attempts to alter achievement norms (Brookover and Lezotte, 1979; Edmonds, 1979; Levine and Stark, 1981). Sweeney (1982) suggests that the direct responsibility for improving instruction and learning rests in the hands of school principals. The Maryland Commission on School-Based Administration (1987) insists that principals provide both educational leadership and managerial direction for a school. The commission defined educational leadership as the initiation, implementation, and institutionalization of school-wide change that results in improvement in student educational achievement and opportunity. Principals of effective schools provide leadership by promoting a sense of purpose and direction through well-defined and articulated goals. Educational management is the maintenance of the stability and security of the school as it is directed on its course. Effective principals have learned to be proactive within their work environment (Manasse, 1982). Leadership without management can result in little more than rhetoric, while management without leadership rarely results in lasting changes (Sergiovanni, 1987).

School districts have responded to the job expectations of the 1980s by directing the principal's leadership to managing instruction. Simultaneously, the research community has studied effective schools to learn what principals and teachers do that influences student achievement

gains (DeBevoise, 1984; Dwyer, 1984; Gardner, 1988; Gersten et al., 1982). The central job thrust for principals has been redirected from a school maintenance focus to an instructional leadership emphasis. Student achievement has clearly surfaced as the single most important outcome of schooling, and it is to that product end that the principal's behavior has now been redirected (Snyder and Johnson, 1985). Principals want the skills to become successful school leaders. Principals went training in the basic elements and skills of annual school-wide planning, designing successful staff development programs, providing on-the-job teacher coaching, monitoring performance and program development, implementation, and evaluation. Furthermore, they want to assess their own personal tendencies and leadership styles and the influence of these on their management performance (Snyder and Johnson, 1985).

Sweeney (1982) states that there are six leadership behaviors that have been consistently associated with schools that are well-managed and whose students achieve. Effective principals:

1. Emphasize Achievement
2. Set Instructional Strategies
3. Provide an Orderly Atmosphere
4. Coordinate Instructional Program
5. Support Teachers
6. Frequently Monitor Student Progress.

Effective principals provide a productive school work climate through various goal-based collaborative staff practices which focus on school improvement planning, staff development, instructional program development, and school assessment (Snyder and Johnson, 1985). Herman and Stephens (1989) emphasize that effective schools research has clearly

established the importance of the principal's instructional leadership role but have not dealt with the tools the principal needs to bring about school improvement. To be an effective instructional leader, the principal must be granted four conditions:

1. Autonomy
2. Authority
3. Responsibility
4. Central office and board support.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1986) goes on to say that to be considered proficient in the exercise of leadership skills the principal must:

1. Inspire all concerned to join in accomplishing the school's mission.
2. Apply effective human relations skills.
3. Encourage the leadership of others.
4. Analyze information, make decisions, and delegate responsibility.
5. Create a powerful esprit de corps.
6. Exercise vision.

Doggett (1987) emphasizes that to become a productive instructional leader, the principal must translate the wealth of research on school excellence into an ongoing, school-based development program that will help teachers deliver classroom instruction that increases student academic achievement. Effective leadership entails making the bureaucracy work by developing a climate that minimizes uncertainty and assures emotional support for teachers and students (Pfeifer, 1986). Roueche and Baker (1986) summarized the principal behaviors that appear to form the foundation for leadership effectiveness. Among those behaviors were the following:



1. Effective principals are flexible in their approach to leadership. They encourage innovation and at the same time tolerate failure.
2. Teachers are trusted as responsible professionals, and collaborative planning, direction, and order are established.
3. Effective principals build cohesiveness within the organization by communicating values shared by those within the school.
4. Effective principals recognize and reward staff accomplishments as well as willingly confront unacceptable performance and behavior.
5. Effective principals solve problems through collaboration.

Four characteristics can be said to be basic to success as a school principal. Three are a direct function of training; a liberal arts education that provides a solid background in the fundamental aspects of the curriculum, advanced skills in the teaching and learning processes, and a thorough understanding of practical applications of child growth and development. The fourth, and in some ways the most important, is a strong sense of caring, a sincere commitment to children's welfare and progress (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1986).

The five correlates of the Effective Schools Formula, focus on instruction, emphasis on achievement, monitor student progress, instructional leadership by the principal, and a safe and orderly environment, have been widely embraced throughout the nation in the belief that adoption of these factors would increase the achievement of students. Purkey and Smith (1982), however, found only two findings that were consistent across the studies, strong instructional leadership from the principal, and high expectations by the staff for student achievement. The evidence clearly indicates that principals do make a difference. Clearly, implications are that school effectiveness is enhanced by

principals who emphasize achievement, provide an orderly school atmosphere, set instructional strategies, and frequently evaluate pupil progress (Sweeney, 1982). The success or failure of future growth in any school becomes the responsibility of the building principal.

Tyler (1988) suggests that other developments help to explain the current emphasis upon the educational leadership of the school principal. One is the finding that significant improvements in the educational effectiveness of schools cannot be brought about just from pressures at the federal, state, or even school district level. Schools that have made great improvements in the learning of their students accomplished this through the concerted efforts of their teachers with cooperation from parents and other interested persons in their community. This finding could have been anticipated. It is well known that schools vary widely in terms of their student bodies, their community environments, and the resources that help to support them. Each school needs to identify its own significant educational problems and develop a solution that is based on the resources it can employ. This requires leadership within the school, the leadership of the principal.

#### Principal Evaluation

"The best organizations don't just measure your competence, they train you to be more competent" (Manatt, 1988). Effective schools research reinforces the principal as the school's instructional leader (Armor, 1976; Brookover, 1973; Edmonds, 1979; Lipham, 1981; Redfern, 1980; Venezky and Winfield, 1979). As a result, effective principal performance

evaluation is a key element in a total systems approach to administrator evaluation (Manatt, 1988; Pharis, 1973; Redfern, 1980).

Administrator performance evaluation is improving, most notably principal evaluation. Manatt (1988) reported that in 1972, fifteen states had implemented administrative evaluation requirements. By 1985, twenty-seven states had mandated administrative performance evaluation in various forms. Typically, these state mandates will fall into one of three categories (Williams, in progress): (1) A state mandate that requires a local school district to evaluate principals with no guidelines provided; (2) states will provide model guidelines or evaluation instruments for districts to consider; (3) states may develop guidelines or instruments and require local districts to use them. In an effort to assist states and local districts, the NAEP and the NASSP have spearheaded training and assessment center projects which have better defined competencies of principals and how to assess them. A solid methodology for developing performance evaluation systems has evolved. Job descriptions are better written, procedures defined, and job improvement targets utilized (Manatt, 1988). Efforts at the elementary and secondary levels of education have focused on evaluation of principals by school superintendents, assistant superintendents, teachers, peers, and in some instances, parents (Herman, 1988). All are willing to assist in improving principal performance. The more knowledge gained about a principal's performance, the better goals for improvement can be identified (Valentine and Bowman, 1988).

What does the research say about effective principals? Cawelti (1984) stresses that "effective principals are not and cannot be all alike."

Research by Ron Edmonds (1979) lists five patterns of behaviors principals exhibit as instructional leaders:

1. Effective principals have vision.
2. Effective principals create a participative management atmosphere.
3. Effective principals provide specific support for instruction.
4. Effective principals engage in monitoring.
5. Effective principals are resourceful.

Some characteristics seem to be the same for effective and ineffective principals. Principals spend time responding to others' problems. Principals move around; they don't stay in their office. Principals are engaged in many different activities throughout the school day (Manatt, 1988). Thomson (1988) stresses that a successful principal stands on a professional base supported by three legs: management, leadership, and knowledge of schooling. The Texas LEAD Center (Texas Association of School Administrators, 1988) lists principal job performance statements which include (1) communication and promotion of high expectation levels for staff and student performance, (2) establishes and maintains an environment which is conducive to positive staff morale, (3) fosters collegiality and team-building among staff, (4) communicates effectively with students, (5) assesses the school climate and uses resultant data to develop improvement plans, (6) has a clear sense of the school's mission, (7) provides instructional resources and materials, (8) works with staff to plan, implement, and evaluate the curriculum, (9) systematically and continuously monitors instruction, and (10) articulates the school's mission to the community.

A review of literature indicates that current research and knowledge on administrative performance evaluation has resulted in a list of valid, reliable, and discriminating behaviors that make a difference in teacher and student achievement (Manatt, 1988; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 1986; Texas Association of School Administrators, 1988). Principal job performance statements, validated using the Delphi Method (Texas Association of School Administrators, 1988), list the following eight criteria which should be considered in the development of a principal performance evaluation process:

1. School Climate
2. School Improvement
3. Instructional Management
4. Personnel Management
5. Administration and Fiscal/Facilities Management
6. Student Achievement
7. Professional Growth
8. School/Community Relations.

Evaluation of principals is effective only if the principals being evaluated and the superintendent or supervisor who are evaluating them understand the components of the evaluation process (Harrison and Peterson, 1988). Evaluation techniques of principals haven't changed much during the last decade; conventional procedures are still widely used, and evaluations are expressed in the form of checklists, scales, and descriptive assessments. The principal's immediate superior is usually the evaluator, although multiple evaluators are often favored on the grounds that they provide greater accuracy and more comparability (Redfern, 1980; Manatt, 1988). States such as Iowa have attempted to increase the professionalism of principal performance evaluation by

requiring continual evaluator training (Iowa LEAD Project, 1988). Thirty hours of evaluator training is required of all Iowa administrators responsible for performance evaluation. Other states have principals establish goals and then evaluate them against these goals (ERIC, 1980). Missouri requires that the evaluator review the principal's goal statements throughout the year to assure compliance. The regulations in Delaware mandate a minimum of two annual conferences between evaluator and principal to provide feedback on the progress the principal is making in meeting the goals (Williams, in progress).

Manatt (1988) suggests some administrator performance evaluation systems stress how the evaluatee performed (behaviorally-based); others are concerned with what the evaluatee accomplished (effective-based). The best evaluation systems integrate behaviorally-based and effective-based models and then follow up with a written agreement for development and improved performance in the future. Stow and Manatt (1982) reported that Administrator Performance Evaluation is based on an analysis or measurement of progress made toward accomplishment of predetermined objectives. Performance evaluation is oriented to process and asks the following four questions:

1. What do we expect each administrator to accomplish?
2. How do we expect each administrator to perform?
3. What changes in behavior do we want?
4. How does the principal's performance interrelate with that of others?

Noriega (1985) incorporated research-based discriminating items in evaluating school principals (Look and Manatt, 1983). Criteria for principal evaluation were developed for each of the discriminatory items

with graduated levels recommended for measured performance. The third level was designated as the standard level of district performance. Redfern (1981) recommends that school administrators be evaluated by performance objectives. This plan calls for the principal to develop performance goals to achieve outcomes. Next, the principal and evaluator assess the status of current performance and determine needs and an action plan to address these needs. The use of objective strategies for principal improvement are recognized by researchers (Andrisek, 1982; Bottoni, 1984; Henthorn, 1980; Human Synergistics, Inc., 1984; Irwin, 1985) as an important facet for principal performance improvement. In utilizing objective strategies, with mutual agreement of the principal and evaluator, the intent for improvement of principal performance is maintained through a continuum of leadership effort striving for school improvement (Mueller, 1988).

Principal evaluation research conducted by Look and Manatt (1983) identified research-based discriminating items for use in the evaluation of school principals. A discriminating item was identified as one which elicits similar responses from members of a group rating an individual and maximum differences among the individuals being rated (Menne and Tolsma, 1971). Discriminating items are necessary to assist the evaluator in determining differences between high and low performance. Look and Manatt (1983) reported that the role of the principal contained three major factors: instrumental leadership behaviors, important managerial functions, and elementary or secondary school assignment.

An evaluation of a principal's role performance should attempt to identify a supervisor's expectations prior to the selection of an evaluation approach. This would preclude confusing situations such as a job description that lists managerial responsibilities and a supervisor's expectation that the principal provide leadership in staff development and instruction (Henthorn, 1980). An effective policy for the evaluation of the principal's role performance should include an assistance program equal to that offered teachers. Job performance appraisals have focused on at least two areas: skills (standard of performance) and accomplishments (job targets) (Mueller, 1988). The skills approach stressed the development of those capabilities that are believed to be important for the successful performance of the job assignment (Henthorn, 1980). McCleary (1979) recommends the competency based approach to administration as also appropriate for the evaluation of principals. Rosenberg (1971) suggests areas in which actual on-the-job skills of principals should be assessed. These include school organization; instructional program; schedules; accounts; relations with students, staff, and community; the climate of the school; and facilities.

Stow and Manatt (1982) advocate a total-systems approach to administrator evaluation. This process is research-based and has repeatedly shown that administrator morale, educational climate, and student achievement improve. Development of a total-systems approach includes formation of a stakeholders committee made up of school and community representatives. In year one, a custom-tailored performance evaluation system is planned by the stakeholders committee and several



sub-committees to guide the development of the system. Crucial to the process are the following key components:

1. Administrative Philosophy
2. Performance Factors
3. Critical Work Activities
4. Job Improvement Targets
5. Field-test.

During year two, after board approval, each administrative position is involved in a test-and-try of the proposed system. Year three emphasizes specific inservice activities for appropriate administrative personnel. Stow and Manatt indicate that an administrator performance evaluation system utilizing this process will prove to be effective in the overall improvement of a district's management, will improve the perception of leadership, and create a climate of communication and feedback.

If principals are to improve their performance, the stages of the evaluation process must be clear, concise, and understood by both the principal and supervisor. Superintendents must make their expectations for principal performance clear, ensuring that principals understand expectations, criteria used to assess performance, the type of data used, and the ways performance outcomes are assessed. Additionally, more frequent communication between the principal and supervisor regarding principal performance would provide principals with useful information about what they can correct, maintain, or improve (Harrison and Peterson, 1988). The movement toward revision of existing evaluation procedures has begun. The pressure for greater accountability in the delivery of educational services will only succeed where administrator, particularly principal, evaluation becomes the key component (Stow and Manatt, 1982).

### Student Feedback

Much has been written on the issue of who evaluates principals. Traditionally, performance appraisals, regardless of their intended use, have been made only by an employee's direct supervisor (Peterson, 1988). Devries (1981), in a review of literature, reported that in 93 percent of the systems studied in business and industry, the employee's immediate supervisor took the sole responsibility for doing the performance appraisal. Similar practices have been documented in teacher evaluation, with the building principal providing the sole input in the teacher evaluation process (Duke and Stiggins, 1986). Duckett (1985), however, noted that there are numerous people who evaluate, or contribute to the evaluation of teachers, those being parents, peers, central administrators, and community members.

One valuable source in principal performance, students, is seldom, if ever, used at the elementary or secondary level. The role of pupils in structuring the school organization has remained largely unrecognized and unexamined (Angus, 1986). Few instruments exist for gathering student feedback on principal performance. Almost none exist exclusively for this purpose. Of those that do exist, most are subsumed within comprehensive assessment instruments aimed at measuring a variety of areas within a school or district. Additionally, many existing instruments were developed prior to recent improvements in the validity, reliability, and discrimination power of administrative performance evaluation criteria.

A review of literature has uncovered little to support the role of students in the principal performance evaluation process. Research does,

however, reinforce the belief that appropriate leadership behavior by the principal enhances student achievement (Cawelti, 1980). Kean et al. (1979) reported that achievement of elementary pupils increased when the principal had experience in the field of reading and observed in the classroom. A Maryland State Department of Education study (1978) found that schools with high student achievement had principals with organizational capabilities, high expectations of students, self, and staff, and spent a quarter of their time in classrooms. Preparing the principal for these expectations is a key to improving teacher performance and student achievement (Stow and Manatt, 1982). Gathering, analyzing, and responding to feedback from all groups interacting with the building principal will provide a comprehensive base to examine principal performance. Presently, principal evaluation focuses on supervisor and less frequently teacher input (Herman, 1988). Student feedback is seldom utilized, although students are directly influenced by the competencies of the principal (Clark, 1987). Some principals report that not knowing the criteria used for evaluation, infrequent evaluation, and the lack of feedback from parents, staff, and students has diminished the impact of principal performance evaluation (Deal, Dornsbush, and Crawford, 1977). The more that is known about principal's performance, the better the strengths and weaknesses of that performance can be identified and the performance improved.

Collection of student input is increasingly regarded as a valuable source of data in the implementation of successful teacher evaluation systems (Harvey and Barker, 1970; Hook and Rosenshine, 1979; Levine, 1981;

Peterson, 1988). Student ratings have been used frequently at colleges and universities, and in that context have been studied by a number of researchers. Doyle (1983) cited studies indicating that student evaluations of their instructor were highly reliable with coefficients in the .80s and .90s, and were consistent across items used on the evaluation instrument. The use of student ratings in elementary and secondary schools has not, however, been implemented as a major source of evaluation data, and therefore generalizations cannot be made at those levels (Peterson, 1988).

The lack of adequate instruments to gather valid, reliable, and discriminating information from students has been a major roadblock preventing widespread use of student feedback in principal performance evaluation. Judkins (1987), however, validated student evaluation instruments in reporting student perceptions of life in the classroom. More than 3,500 students participated in the study that resulted in separate instruments being validated for use at the K-2, 3-6, 7-8, and 9-12 grade levels. McGreal (1983) reports that there is support for allowing the student to give the teacher feedback on his or her perception of life in the classroom. Savage (1982) believes that student perceptions can be an important "artifact of teaching." Principals too, then, would benefit from student feedback. Schools need to include in their implementation of principal performance appraisal systems, immediate and direct feedback from the various groups affected by the principal's performance. Numerous studies suggest that immediate and direct feedback from the appraiser to the employee is important both for promoting the

validity and reliability of the data and for fostering a climate that is conducive to improvement on the part of the person being evaluated (Oliver, 1983; Chirnside, 1984).

Manatt, in suggesting that "feedback, not Wheaties, is the breakfast of champions," reinforces the value of feedback in the improvement of performance process. Fletcher and Williams (1985) cited conditions necessary for consideration in establishing a constructive feedback system, among them:

1. The amount of feedback. Many evaluatees appear to be able to deal effectively with two aspects of their performance in any one appraisal session.
2. Positive feedback. Reinforcement should balance criticism of the principal's performance.
3. Performance focus. Primary focus of the appraisal session should center on the performance of the appraisee and not on the person. Appraisee's are better prepared to deal with their actions than with matters relating to their personal characteristics.

Student feedback of principal performance is the forgotten link in the principal performance evaluation process. While student input may be challenged, with some arguing that students are biased or unqualified, many argue that there may be no more valid source of information on the school environment than the students in the classroom (Duke and Stiggins, 1986).

### Summary

The effective school's movement consistently supports the building principal as the instructional leader and key player in a school's efforts to reinforce positive student achievement. Experts agree that the school principal plays an influential role in the success or failure of the school program. It has been suggested that the role of the principal in promoting student learning is that of the stimulator of teachers and parents to assist in identifying serious educational problems the school is facing in its efforts to educate all children.

Research suggests that the following characteristics support the effective principal in this leadership role. The effective principal establishes high expectation levels for staff and student performance, the maintenance of an environment which is conducive to positive staff morale, team-building among staff, effectively communicates with students, assesses the school climate and uses resultant data to develop improvement plans, has a clear sense of the school's mission, provides instructional resources and materials, systematically monitors instruction, and articulates the school's mission to the community.

With the literature reinforcing the role of the principal within the school organization, principal performance evaluation is important. Efforts at the elementary and secondary levels of education have focused on evaluation of principals by school superintendents, assistant superintendents, teachers, peers, and in some instances, parents. It has been concluded that the more knowledge gained about a principal's performance, the better goals for improvement can be identified. If

principals are to improve their performance, the stages of the evaluation process must be clear, concise, and understood by both the principal and supervisor. Superintendents must make their expectations for principal performance clear, ensuring that principals understand expectations, criteria used to assess performance, the type of data used, and the ways performance outcomes are assessed.

Much has been written on the issue of who evaluates principals. Traditionally, performance appraisals have been made only by a principal's direct supervisor. Numerous studies recommend that immediate and direct feedback from the various groups affected by the principal's performance can be included in the principal performance appraisal system. Principals themselves report that not knowing the criteria used for evaluation and the lack of input from parents, staff, and students has diminished the impact of the appraisal process. Manatt, in suggesting that feedback, not Wheaties, is the breakfast of champions, stresses the importance of communicating with all groups affected by the principal's performance. Although research indicates that teacher, parent, and student participation could facilitate communication and provide a source of relevant information, few systems incorporate this input.

One valuable source in principal performance evaluation, students, is seldom, if ever, used at the elementary or secondary level. The role of pupils in structuring the school organization has remained largely unrecognized and unexamined. Few instruments exist for gathering student feedback on principal performance. The literature has uncovered little to support the role of students in the principal performance evaluation

process. Research does, however, reinforce the belief that appropriate leadership behavior by the principal enhances student achievement. For this study, a student questionnaire was developed utilizing items selected from a review of the five correlates of the effective school, Look's selection of criteria for the evaluation of school principals, and criteria developed through efforts of the School Improvement Model.

Collection of student input is increasingly regarded as a valuable source of data in the implementation of successful teacher evaluation systems. Student ratings have been used frequently at colleges and universities, and in that context have been studied by a number of researchers. The lack of adequate instruments to gather valid, reliable, and discriminating information from students has been a major roadblock preventing widespread use of student feedback in principal performance evaluation. Student feedback of principal performance is the forgotten link in the principal performance evaluation process. While student input may be challenged, with some arguing that students are biased or unqualified, many argue that there may be no more valid source of information in the school environment than the students in the classroom.



## CHAPTER III. METHODS

This study developed and tested a pool of items for student feedback to principals based upon the discrimination power of the items. The questionnaire was completed by students in grades 5, 8, and 11. The questionnaire, subjects who participated, data collection procedures, and statistical analyses are reviewed in this chapter.

The initial phase of the study involved developing a pool of items for students to complete regarding principal performance activities. The items were developed from a thorough review of the literature and existing principal performance evaluation systems. All items were then tested for their reading level using the Frye readability procedure. Items were then modified or eliminated to ensure that the reading level of the remaining items were at or below the fifth grade reading level.

After the pool of items was developed and categorized within the five correlates by a team of experts consisting of two building principals and two school teachers, a field test was conducted followed by students responding to a six-point, Likert-type scale to rate the performance of their principal. Principals did not see the individual rating of the students. Uniform procedures for administering the questionnaire were established and followed based upon recommendations reviewed from the literature and peer consultation. The data from the questionnaires were analyzed separately using the Menne and Tolsma method (1971) to determine item discrimination power as applied by Hidlebaugh (1973), Look (1983), and Uhl (1988). Items which discriminated at the .05 level of significance or beyond were identified.

As the second phase of the study, all items identified as discriminating among principals were then correlated with student's responses as to their like or dislike of the principal's performance, their perceived attitude toward school, and their attendance patterns. The Pearson correlation was used to determine the association between these variables. The correlation coefficients were tested for the .05 level of significance.

#### Construction of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire, the first phase of the study (Appendix A), consisted of developing items to be completed by the student describing their perceptions of the performance of the principal. The items were selected based on a review of literature of effective schools and effective principals. Specifically, the five correlates of effective schools and the principal evaluation criteria developed through the efforts of the School Improvement Model (Manatt, 1988) were used as a guide to develop items for the student feedback to principals questionnaire.

Uniform and specific directions for administering the questionnaire were prepared reflecting the research on student participation in the feedback process. Directions were provided for the person administering the questionnaire to read to the students (Appendix B). After the items were developed and tested for readability levels and the directions were prepared, a small field test was conducted utilizing volunteer students and administrators who made suggestions of modifying the directions and

who observed difficulties students had with questions, directions, or answer sheets. The field test was conducted in the Millcreek School District in Pennsylvania in one classroom of grades 5, 8, and 11. Modifications of questions, directions, and answer sheets followed the field test.

#### Selection of Sample and Collection of Data

All students and principals who participated in the administration and completion of the questionnaire represented schools voluntarily participating in the study. All data were collected in the fall of 1989. The questionnaire was administered to students by an adult who was not the principal being rated. The school systems that participated in the study are shown on Table 1.

Table 2 describes the number of students completing the questionnaire and the number of students and principals for which the data were used in identifying discriminating items. A minimum of 15 raters was established to meet the requirements of the Menne-Tolsma formula. Data collected on principals with fewer than 15 students completing the items were discarded.

#### Human Subjects Release

The Iowa State University Committee on the Use of Human Subjects in Research reviewed this project and concluded that the rights and welfare of the human subjects were adequately protected, that risks were outweighed by the potential benefits and expected value of the knowledge sought, that confidentiality of data was assured, and that informed consent was obtained by appropriate procedures.

Table 1. Participating schools

School name	Location	Enrollment	Grade sampled
Centerville City Schools	Ohio	2450	11
Blair High School	Wisconsin	199	8
Fort Scott USD #234	Kansas	520	5
Pecatonica Area School	Wisconsin	125	11
Starmount Middle School	Iowa	950	8
Indianola High School	Iowa	640	11
Sunset Elementary	Wisconsin	295	5
Lincoln High School	Wisconsin	187	11
Taylor Elementary School	Wisconsin	163	5
Arcadia High School	Wisconsin	275	11
Iroquois Jr./Sr. High School	Pennsylvania	670	11
Villa Maria Academy	Pennsylvania	490	11
Diehl Elementary School	Pennsylvania	315	5
Our Lady's Christian School	Pennsylvania	497	8
Westlake Middle School	Pennsylvania	670	8
Lawrence Park Elementary School	Pennsylvania	372	5
Wright Elementary School	Pennsylvania	390	5
Chaplin Elementary School	Connecticut	208	5
Alma Center Elementary School	Wisconsin	315	5
Southern Col Middle School	Iowa	151	8
Starmount High School	Iowa	260	11
Gilbert High School	Iowa	265	8

Table 1. Continued

School name	Location	Enrollment	Grade sampled
Clinton Jr. High School	Iowa	375	8
Hampton Consolidated School	Connecticut	133	5
Clover Street School	Connecticut	459	5
Oliver Ellsworth School	Connecticut	619	5
St. Andrew School	Pennsylvania	257	5
Broadview Jr. High School	Connecticut	834	8
Tyrrell School	Connecticut	329	5
Gilbert Junior High	Iowa	390	8
Fogarty Memorial School	Rhode Island	496	5
St. Luke School	Pennsylvania	380	8

Table 2. Student/principal population

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Data gathered

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<u>Grade 5:</u>	<u>Grade 8:</u>	<u>Grade 11:</u>
16 Principals asked	11 Principals asked	10 Principals asked
14 Principals responded	9 Principals responded	9 Principals responded
.87%	.82%	.90%
284 Students responded	131 Students responded	184 Students responded
Totals: 32 Principals responded		599 Students participated
87%		

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#### Treatment of Data

Hidlebaugh's (1973) and Judkins' (1987) application of the Menne and Tolsma (1971) methodology for determining item discrimination power based upon group responses to questions was used to identify those questionnaire items which discriminated among principals. This procedure uses the percentage of the total sum of squares due to between-groups. This procedure, when compared to the usual analysis of variance methods, is more advantageous according to Hidlebaugh and Judkins. Utilizing the usual analysis of variance procedures, the ratio of between- to within-group mean squares varies as the F statistic is greatly influenced by the size of the sample.

For an item to discriminate, a certain minimum percentage of the total sum of squares must be due to the variance between principals (Judkins, 1987). The minimum percentage (15 raters), established for this investigation, was based on the theoretical minimum used by Menne and Tolsma (1971). Menne and Tolsma stated that

...if an item is a discriminating one in a situation involving a few small groups, then it will also be capable of discriminating among more numerous and/or larger groups. The reverse, of course, is not true.

The minimum was selected based on the assumption that most regular classrooms contain at least that many students. There is a possibility for an item to be discriminating in a situation where there are several large groups but not be discriminating in a situation where there are few small groups. Using a larger number of students could reduce the effect of the results of this study in smaller school districts. A smaller minimum number would increase the difficulty in finding discriminating items and not be representative of public or nonpublic class sizes. Tables 1 and 2 show the data analyzed in determining item discrimination.

Table 3 reflects the rationale for establishing 13 percent as a minimum for identifying discriminating items at the .05 level of significance. Hidlebaugh (1973) and Look (1983) utilized this identical method in previous research.

Thirteen percent is a between-group minimum percentage of the total sums of squares sufficient to discriminate at the .05 level of significance. This minimum percentage assumes that the item distinguishes between two principals each rated by 15 students. The fewest number of students participating was in grade 8, where 131 students were included in the data analyzed for the study. Grade 5 had 283 students complete the questionnaire, and grade 11 had 184 students participate. Utilizing the assumptions of Menne and Tolsma (1971), it can be concluded that the items selected using the 13 percent criteria will be discriminating items.

Table 3. Analysis of variance for two groups with 15 subjects per group

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Source				
Between groups	2-1	13%	13%	$13/87/28 = 4.20^*$
Within groups	$2(15-1) = 28$	87%	87/28	
Total	29	100%		

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Therefore:

$$\frac{X}{\frac{100-X}{28}} = 4.20$$

$$X = (4.20) \frac{100 - X}{28}$$

$$28x = 420 - 4.20x$$

$$(28 + 4.20) x = 420$$

$$32.2x = 420$$

$$x = 13.04$$

$$100 - x = 86.96$$


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\*The critical F value with 1 and 28 degrees of freedom at the .05 level is 4.20.

Using the theoretical minimum of 15 students rating each principal required disqualifying the data for principals who were rated by fewer than 15 students. Data for five principals were discarded because those principals did not have a minimum of 15 student raters. The decision to discard these data was based on the consideration that a representative sample of students must be obtained for each participating principal if



the data are to be interpreted as accurately reflecting the performance of the principal in question.

Discriminating items were selected for this investigation based on the analysis of data for all principals rated by 15 or more students. With the number of participating students, 599, and principals, 32, for whom data were analyzed, it is believed that the items identified as discriminating in this study are representative of items that, when answered by students, do measure differences between the performance of principals. These same items, however, may not be discriminating for principals rated by less than 15 students.

The Cronbach Alpha Coefficient was used in the second phase of the investigation to determine if a relationship existed between the students' ratings of principals on the items found to be discriminating and the students' like or dislike of the principals performance, their attendance patterns, and their like or dislike of school.

## CHAPTER IV. FINDINGS

## Introduction

The problem for this study was to create a pool of items for student feedback to school principals based upon item discrimination power. To complete this task, questionnaires were completed by students rating the performance of their building principal as to the frequency of occurrence of several behaviors. In addition, students responded to questions regarding their like or dislike of school, their attendance patterns, and their like or dislike of their principal's performance.

The study involved 599 students in grades 5, 8, and 11 representing 32 schools. Of the 32 schools, 14 were elementary schools, nine were middle or junior high schools, and nine were high schools. Twenty-eight of the participating schools were public schools and four participating schools were nonpublic or independent schools. Of the principals rated, 27 were male and five were female. For this study, a large school was identified as a school with more than 350 students, and a small school was identified to have less than 350 students enrolled. Nineteen participating schools had more than 350 students, thus were identified as large schools, and 13 participating schools had less than 350 students enrolled, thus identified as small schools.

Participating students completed an instrument of 32 items using a six-point Likert-type response mode. The questionnaire was designed to seek feedback regarding student perceptions of principal performance. Items which discriminated at the .05 level of significance were identified using the Menne and Tolsma method (1971) to determine item discrimination

power. Students also provided information about preconceived attitudes toward their principal and school to determine an association, if any, of these potentially biasing factors with their ratings of each discriminating item from the pool of items. A minimum of 15 raters for each principal was established for the item discrimination research, because it is possible for an item to be discriminating in a situation where there are several large groups but not discriminating in a situation involving some small groups. The results of the survey are shown in Table 4.

In this chapter, each research null hypothesis will be stated and the results of the statistical tests displayed in table form. The questionnaire used for the data collection can be found in Appendix B. Directions and specific questionnaire guidelines for administering the questionnaire can be found in Appendix A.

#### Item Discrimination Questionnaire

Research Question 1: What items on a student questionnaire made up of items selected from the literature will have discriminating power?

Research Null Hypothesis 1 stated that there would be no significant difference in the discriminating power of the items used on the principal feedback questionnaire. In determining if the discrimination power of the items differed, Hidlebaugh (1973) and Judkins' (1987) adaptation of the Menne and Tolsma methodology (1971) was applied to all items on the questionnaire using the responses of all students for all principals rated by at least 15 students.

Table 4. Survey results by grade level, mean score, standard deviation<sup>a</sup>

Item no.	Item	Mean (SD)			
		Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 11	Total
1	My principal cares how well I do in school.	2.15 (1.76)	2.68 (1.94)	2.91 (1.88)	2.50 (1.87)
2	My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.	2.18 (1.13)	2.13 (1.41)	1.99 (1.34)	2.11 (1.34)
3	My principal tells us that school is a place for learning.	2.38 (1.48)	2.29 (1.41)	2.00 (1.38)	2.24 (1.44)
4	My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.	2.18 (1.42)	2.04 (1.40)	2.37 (1.33)	2.21 (1.39)
5	My principal speaks to students when he/she sees them.	2.43 (1.23)	2.33 (1.38)	2.48 (1.30)	2.42 (1.29)
6	I can find my principal when I need his/her help.	2.44 (1.27)	2.67 (1.35)	2.89 (1.40)	2.63 (1.37)
7	My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows.	2.71 (1.76)	3.03 (1.91)	2.64 (1.76)	2.76 (1.80)
8	My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.	2.85 (1.52)	2.89 (1.60)	3.09 (1.49)	2.93 (1.53)
9	My principal visits in our classroom.	2.91 (1.06)	3.14 (1.08)	3.90 (1.11)	3.26 (1.08)
10	If I need help I know my principal will help me.	2.18 (1.63)	2.60 (1.68)	2.93 (1.73)	2.50 (1.70)
11	My principal asks my parents to make sure I do my homework.	4.59 (1.41)	4.78 (1.24)	4.81 (.99)	4.70 (1.26)

<sup>a</sup>Rating: 1 = Always, 2 = Most of the time, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Not very often, 5 = Never, and 6 = Don't know.

Table 4. Continued

Item no.	Item	Mean (SD)			
		Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 11	Total
12	I enjoy going to visit my principal.	3.06 (1.64)	3.63 (1.51)	3.84 (1.39)	3.42 (1.57)
13	My principal explains the rules of the school clearly to everyone.	1.79 (1.32)	1.99 (1.38)	2.23 (1.43)	1.97 (1.38)
14	I see my principal talking with teachers in school.	1.95 (1.06)	1.86 (.95)	2.11 (1.22)	1.98 (1.09)
15	My principal is friendly with me.	1.69 (1.14)	2.04 (1.39)	2.28 (1.54)	1.95 (1.35)
16	My principal treats all students equally.	2.08 (1.64)	2.51 (1.74)	2.81 (1.67)	2.40 (1.70)
17	I believe that my principal does a good job.	1.79 (1.28)	1.98 (1.09)	2.39 (1.45)	2.01 (1.32)
18	My principal makes me feel good when I do my work well.	2.84 (1.73)	3.36 (1.74)	3.92 (1.65)	3.29 (1.71)
19	Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.	2.87 (1.71)	3.45 (1.82)	3.82 (1.69)	3.29 (1.78)
20	I like my principal.	1.85 (1.25)	2.39 (1.41)	2.66 (1.47)	2.22 (1.40)
21	I believe it is important to do well in my studies.	1.24 (.71)	1.29 (.61)	1.35 (.82)	1.28 (.73)
22	I can goof around in class and not do my work.	4.68 (.85)	4.13 (.90)	3.89 (.90)	4.32 (.94)
23	Each school year, I am absent more than 5 days from school.	3.93 (1.50)	3.58 (1.49)	3.74 (1.39)	3.79 (1.47)
24	Extra help is provided for students who need it.	1.70 (1.17)	1.80 (1.18)	1.84 (1.11)	1.77 (1.16)
25	Our school is safe.	1.83 (1.39)	2.36 (1.45)	2.16 (1.40)	2.05 (1.42)

Table 4. Continued

Item no.	Item	Mean (SD)			Total
		Grade 5	Grade 8	Grade 11	
26	Our school is neat and clean.	2.03 (1.19)	2.34 (1.20)	2.13 (1.16)	2.13 (1.19)
27	I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.	4.43 (1.19)	4.57 (.90)	4.70 (.90)	4.54 (1.05)
28	I enjoy going to lunch in my school.	2.22 (1.36)	2.70 (1.49)	2.92 (1.51)	2.54 (1.47)
29	There are fights among students in my school.	3.29 (1.21)	3.12 (1.20)	3.38 (.93)	3.28 (1.14)
30	Students are told quickly and clearly why they are being scolded.	2.39 (1.59)	2.65 (1.60)	2.71 (1.34)	2.55 (1.52)
31	Students believe our school is a good school.	2.66 (1.64)	2.84 (1.64)	2.61 (1.33)	2.69 (1.55)
32	I enjoy being a student in this school.	1.97 (1.29)	2.07 (1.10)	2.17 (1.18)	2.05 (1.22)

Two items from this study had a sum of squares between-groups variance equal to or exceeding 13% of the total sums of squares variance, the criteria established for determination at the .05 level of significance as described in Chapter III. The Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient calculated to determine the internal consistency of all items with a discrimination value equal to or exceeding 13% was equal to .89% for part one of the study, which included items 1 through 20. These items were designed to gain student perceptions of their principal's performance utilizing the correlates of the effective schools research (Edmonds, 1979). Part two of the study, items 21-32, designed to determine the potential for rater bias, calculated a reliability coefficient of .47%. The discrimination value of each item is shown in Table 5.

Table 6 contains the Pearson correlation coefficient for each item in Part I of the questionnaire (items 1-20). Table 7 contains the Pearson correlation coefficient for each item in Part II of the questionnaire (items 21-32).

When reviewing the statistical analysis of samples of the size of this study, it should be noted that items can have a statistically significant correlation and still have a weak relationship if the sample is of significant size. One method of examining the Pearson correlation is by looking at the strength of the relationship. Correlations greater than a plus or minus .70 often are defined as describing a strong relationship. Correlations of between plus or minus .30 and .70 have been defined as a moderate relationship. Correlations of less than plus or minus .30 can describe weak relationships (Levine, 1981).

Table 5. Item discrimination power of student feedback to principals

Item no.	Item	Item discrimination (percent)
1	My principal cares how well I do in school.	3
2	My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.	1
3	My principal tells us that school is a place for learning.	1
4	My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.	1
5	My principal speaks to students when he/she sees them.	1
6	I can find my principal when I need his/her help.	2
7	My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows.	1
8	My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.	1
9	My principal visits in our classroom.	14*
10	If I need help I know my principal will help me.	4
11	My principal asks my parents to make sure I do my homework.	1
12	I enjoy going to visit my principal.	5
13	My principal explains the rules of the school clearly to everyone.	2
14	I see my principal talking with teachers in school.	1
15	My principal is friendly with me.	4
16	My principal treats all students equally.	4
17	I believe that my principal does a good job.	4
18	My principal makes me feel good when I do my work well.	7
19	Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.	6
20	I like my principal.	7
21	I believe it is important to do well in my studies.	1
22	I can goof around in class and not do my work.	14*
23	Each school year, I am absent more than 5 days from school.	1
24	Extra help is provided for students who need it.	1
25	Our school is safe.	2
26	Our school is neat and clean.	1
27	I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.	1
28	I enjoy going to lunch in my school.	5
29	There are fights among students in my school.	1
30	Students are told quickly and clearly why they are being scolded.	1
31	Students believe our school is a good school.	1
32	I enjoy being a student in this school.	1

\*Indicates items that discriminate at the .05 level of significance.



Table 6. Pearson correlations, means, and standard deviations for items on Part I  
(Questionnaire items 1-20)

Item no.	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	X	SD
1	.38	.22	.13	.31	.25	.19	.25	.26	.36	.17	.25	.28	.19	.33	.35	.36	.39	.28	.29	2.50	1.87
2		.48	.17	.24	.26	.18	.28	.11	.24	.09	.22	.29	.23	.30	.18	.32	.23	.20	.27	2.11	1.34
3			.26	.23	.14	.21	.29	.05	.18	.10	.19	.25	.18	.18	.20	.18	.13	.16	.16	2.24	1.44
4				.28	.22	.13	.30	.16	.25	.03	.27	.19	.20	.24	.24	.30	.21	.14	.34	2.21	1.39
5					.34	.25	.39	.27	.34	.02	.33	.29	.28	.43	.43	.40	.26	.25	.38	2.42	1.29
6						.24	.32	.26	.44	.13	.43	.25	.26	.41	.35	.42	.34	.21	.46	2.63	1.37
7							.26	.14	.18	.09	.17	.20	.23	.27	.29	.21	.27	.22	.20	2.76	1.80
8								.32	.37	.10	.42	.35	.28	.38	.30	.39	.37	.21	.41	2.93	1.54
9									.32	.06	.30	.24	.33	.27	.26	.30	.31	.23	.25	3.26	1.17
10										.11	.47	.33	.22	.46	.41	.48	.38	.23	.47	2.51	1.71
11											.15	.07	.08	.11	.12	.07	.24	.14	.09	4.69	1.26
12												.31	.21	.48	.37	.48	.46	.24	.56	3.42	1.57
13													.27	.28	.37	.32	.28	.20	.37	1.97	1.39
14														.28	.31	.31	.13	.15	.23	1.98	1.09
15															.46	.58	.40	.26	.62	1.95	1.36
16																.54	.34	.25	.49	2.40	1.70
17																	.39	.25	.69	2.02	1.33
18																		.44	.47	3.29	1.77
19																			.30	3.29	1.78
20																				2.22	1.40

Table 7. Pearson correlations, means, and standard deviations for items on Part II  
(Questionnaire items 21-32)

Item no.	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	X	SD
21	-.19	-.05	.24	.22	.21	-.17	.08	-.12	.12	.14	.33	1.29	.74
22		.15	-.10	-.12	-.01	.11	-.09	.03	-.09	-.03	-.20	4.32	.94
23			.01	.01	-.01	-.05	-.11	-.03	.02	.08	-.01	3.80	1.47
24				.22	.23	-.04	.13	-.08	.28	.28	.31	1.77	1.16
25					.43	-.08	.12	-.19	.28	.29	.34	2.05	1.42
26						-.11	.24	-.27	.22	.29	.35	2.13	1.18
27							.02	.09	-.01	.03	-.15	4.54	1.06
28								-.11	.14	.12	.23	2.54	1.47
29									-.03	-.11	-.19	3.28	1.14
30										.25	.26	2.55	1.53
31											.39	2.69	1.55
32												2.05	1.22

This study found several significant but moderate to weak relationships between a student's liking of his principal and the belief that his school is a good school ( $p > .30$ ). No strong relationships were found between a student's liking of his principal and the belief that his school is a good school ( $p > .70$ ). A moderate relationship was also found ( $p > .30$ ) between item 32, "I enjoy being a student in this school," and such items as item 6, "I can find my principal when I need his/her help," item 8, "My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns," and item 10, "If I need help I know my principal will help me." Seventeen items showed a moderate relationship with item 20, "I like my principal." Item 12, "I enjoy going to visit my principal," item 15, "My principal is friendly with me," and item 17, "I believe my principal does a good job," were moderate to strong in their relationship to item 20, "I like my principal" ( $p > .50$ ).

This study found numerous statistically significant but weak correlations ( $p < .30$ ) between student perceptions that they can goof around in class and not do their work and the frequency with which the principal visits the classroom, the importance the principal places on doing well in school, and the emphasis the principal stresses on school being a place for learning.

Items for the two parts of the questionnaire were designed utilizing criteria from the five correlates of the effective school (Edmonds, 1979), Look's (1983) selection of criteria for the evaluation of school principals, and criteria developed through the efforts of the School Improvement Model Projects (Stow and Manatt, 1982). Questionnaire items

were developed for the specific categories recognized as the five correlates of the effective school as shown in Table 8. For this study, four items were developed for Correlate 1, "There is a focus on instruction in the school." Twelve items were developed for Correlate 2, "Strong leadership guides the instructional program." Three items were developed for Correlate 3, "Student progress is monitored closely." Seven items were developed for Correlate 4, "There is a safe and orderly environment," and four items were developed for Correlate 5, "An emphasis is placed on achievement." The final two items developed for the questionnaire were designed to gain feedback on participating students' personal beliefs about their school and themselves.

Of the two discriminating items, item 9, "My principal visits in our classroom," was categorized for this study under Correlate 3, "Student progress is monitored closely." Item 22, "I can goof around in class and not do my work," was categorized under Correlate 1, "There is a focus on instruction in school."

For Research Question 1, the null hypothesis was rejected for items 9 and 22. Therefore, it is concluded, with the given data, that these two items do discriminate at the .05 level of significance.

Research Question 2: Are there differences between the discriminating items identified for male and female principals?

Research Question 2 led to the following null hypothesis: There would be no significant difference between the items which discriminate for male and female principals.

Table 8. Items designed by correlate

Correlate/Item	
Correlate 1:	Focus on instruction.
Item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.</li> <li>14. I see my principal talking with teachers in school.</li> <li>22. I can goof around in class and not do my work.</li> <li>24. Extra help is provided for students who need it.</li> </ul>
Correlate 2:	Strong leadership guides the instructional program.
Item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4. My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.</li> <li>5. My principal speaks to students when he/she sees them.</li> <li>6. I can find my principal when I need his/her help.</li> <li>7. My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows.</li> <li>8. My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.</li> <li>10. If I need help I know my principal will help me.</li> <li>12. I enjoy going to visit my principal.</li> <li>15. My principal is friendly with me.</li> <li>16. My principal treats all students equally.</li> <li>17. I believe my principal does a good job.</li> <li>20. I like my principal.</li> <li>30. Students are told quickly and clearly why they are being scolded.</li> </ul>
Correlate 3:	Student progress is monitored closely.
Item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. My principal cares how well I do in school.</li> <li>9. My principal visits in our classroom.</li> <li>11. My principal asks my parents to make sure I do my homework.</li> </ul>
Correlate 4:	There is a safe and orderly environment.
Item	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>13. My principal explains the rules of the school clearly to everyone.</li> <li>23. Each school year, I am absent more than 5 days from school.</li> <li>25. Our school is safe.</li> <li>26. Our school is neat and clean.</li> <li>27. I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.</li> <li>28. I enjoy going to lunch in my school.</li> <li>29. There are fights among students in my school.</li> </ul>

Table 8. Continued

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**Correlate/Item**

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**Correlate 5: There is an emphasis on achievement.**

- Item**
- 2. My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.
  - 18. My principal makes me feel good when I do my work well.
  - 19. Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.
  - 21. I believe it is important to do well in my studies.
-

In order to determine if there were significant differences between rater groups, a one-way analysis of variance was utilized to explore the relationship among the rankings of the three groups of raters. Table 9 reveals significant differences between rater positions on four of the questionnaire items at the .05 level of significance and beyond.

Table 9. Means, standard deviations, and one-way analysis of variance results for key items discriminating for male and female principals<sup>a</sup>

Item no.	Item	Male principals		Female principals		SD	F
		Mean	(N)	Mean	(N)		
8	My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.	3.00	506	2.62	92	1.37	4.71*
19	Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.	3.37	506	2.85	92	1.66	6.67**
28	I enjoy going to lunch in my school.	2.61	504	2.12	92	1.31	8.89**
29	There are fights among students in my school.	3.20	504	3.74	92	1.17	17.68***

<sup>a</sup>Rating: 1 - All the time, 2 - Most of the time, 3 - Sometimes, 4 - Not very often, 5 - Never, and 6 - Don't know.

\*p<.05.

\*\*p<.01.

\*\*\*p<.001.

Participating students rated male principals significantly different than female principals on item 8, "My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns." Five hundred six of the respondents indicated a mean score of 3.00 (Sometimes) on the questionnaire and a standard deviation of 1.56 when responding to the performance of a male principal. Ninety-two of the respondents indicated a mean score of 2.62 (Most of the time - sometimes) with a standard deviation of 1.37 when responding to the performance of a female principal. This reflects an absolute F value of 4.71, which discriminates at the .05 level of significance. Respondents rated male principals significantly different than female principals on item 19, "Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal." Five hundred four of the respondents indicated a mean score of 3.37 (Sometimes, not very often) on the questionnaire and a standard deviation of 1.79 when responding to the performance of a male principal. Ninety-two of the respondents indicated a mean score of 2.85 with a standard deviation of 1.66 when responding to the performance of a female principal. This indicates an absolute F value of 6.67, which discriminates at the .01 level of significance. Item 28, "I enjoy going to lunch in my school," also reflected a significant difference between male and female principals. Five hundred four participating students rated male principals with a mean of 2.61 and a standard deviation of 1.48. At the same time, 92 students rated female principals with a mean score of 2.12 and a standard deviation of 1.31. This calculated an F score of 8.89, which indicates a level of discrimination at the .05 level of significance.



Finally, item 29, "There are fights among students in my school," showed the most significant difference between male and female principals. Five hundred four students rated the performance of male principals with a mean score of 3.20 and a standard deviation of 1.11. Ninety-two students rated the performance of female principals with a mean score of 3.74 and a standard deviation of 1.17. This calculated an absolute F value of 17.68, which converts to a .001 level of significance.

The null hypothesis for Research Question 2 was rejected for items 8, 19, 28, and 29. Therefore, it can be concluded that students rated male principals and female principals significantly different on these items at the .05 level of significance or beyond.

Research Question 3: Do differences exist among discriminating items identified for public and nonpublic school principals?

Null Hypothesis 3 stated that there would be no significant difference in the principal feedback items which discriminate for principals in public and nonpublic schools.

To determine if a significant difference between rater groups existed, a one-way analysis of variance was utilized to explore the relationship among the rankings of the three groups of raters (grade 5, 8, and 11 students). Table 10 reveals significant differences between rater positions on four of the questionnaire items at the .05 level of significance and beyond (items 8, 19, 28, and 29).

Table 10. Means, standard deviations, and one-way ANOVA for key items discriminating for principals in public and nonpublic schools<sup>a</sup>

Item no.	Item	Public school			Nonpublic school			F
		Mean	(N)	SD	Mean	(N)	SD	
8	My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.	3.00	519	1.54	2.52	79	1.45	6.84*
19	Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.	3.40	519	1.77	2.54	79	1.69	16.25**
28	I enjoy going to lunch in my school.	2.60	517	1.49	2.13	79	1.22	7.18*
29	There are fights among students in my school.	3.22	517	1.13	3.71	79	1.10	12.78**

<sup>a</sup>Rating: 1 = Always, 2 = Most of the time, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Not very often, 5 = Never, and 6 = Don't know.

\* $p < .01$ .

\*\* $p < .001$ .

The one-way ANOVA found no significant difference in the mean scores of the three groups (grades 5, 8, and 11) rating the performance of building principals for item 8, "My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns." Grade 5 students rated their principal significantly lower (more favorable) than students in grades 8 and 11 on items 19, 28, and 29, as reported in Table 10.

For Research Question 3, the null hypothesis was rejected for items 8, 19, 28, and 29. It can be concluded that students in public schools rate the performance of their principal significantly different on these items than students in nonpublic schools at the .05 level of significance or beyond.

Research Question 4: Are there differences in the principal discriminating items based on school enrollment?

Null Hypothesis 4 stated that there would be no significant difference in the principal evaluation items which discriminate based on school enrollment.

Table 11 reports that five items (1, 4, 7, 27, and 28) revealed significant differences between rater positions. Item 1, "My principal cares how well I do in school," Item 4, "My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities," and item 27, "I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class," revealed significant differences between small school and large school participants at the .05 level of significance. Item 7, "My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows," revealed significant differences between small and large schools at the .01 level. Item 28, "I enjoy going to lunch in my school," revealed the most significant difference between small and large schools with a .001 level of significance reported.

For Research Question 4, "There will be no significant difference in the principal evaluation items which discriminate based on school enrollment," the null hypothesis was rejected for items 1, 4, 7, 27, and

28. Therefore, it can be interpreted that students in small schools rate the performance of their principal significantly different than students in large schools on the items identified at the .05 level of significance or beyond.

Table 11. Means, standard deviations, and one-way ANOVA for key items discriminating for principals based on school enrollment<sup>a</sup>

Item no.	Item	Small schools			Large schools			F
		Mean	(N)	SD	Mean	(N)	SD	
1	My principal cares how well I do in school.	2.26	235	1.68	2.65	363	1.97	6.28*
4	My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.	2.36	233	1.42	2.11	363	1.37	4.60*
7	My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical plays.	2.47	234	1.56	2.95	361	1.92	10.12**
27	I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.	4.43	232	1.19	4.61	359	.96	4.19*
28	I enjoy going to lunch in my school.	2.83	234	1.49	2.35	362	1.42	15.45***

<sup>a</sup>Rating: 1 = Always, 2 = Most of the time, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Not very often, 5 = Never, and 6 = Don't know.

\*p<.05.

\*\*p<.01.

\*\*\*p<.001.

Research Question 5: Are there differences in the principal discriminating items based on student grade level?

Research Question 5 led to the following null hypothesis: There would be no significant difference in the principal feedback items which discriminate based on grade level.

In order to determine if there were significant differences between rater groups, a one-way analysis of variance was utilized to explore the relationship among the rankings of the three groups of raters, grade 5, 8, and 11 students.

For this study, 283 fifth grade students, 131 eighth grade students, and 184 eleventh grade students responded to the 32 survey items. Table 12 reveals that fifth grade students rated principals significantly lower (more favorable) than both 8th and 11th grade students on ten of the 32 items (1, 10, 12, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20, 25, and 28). Eighth grade students rated principals lower than fifth grade students on two items (22 and 23) and eleventh grade students on four items (9, 17, 18, and 29). Eleventh grade students rated principals lower than fifth grade students on two items (3 and 22) and eighth grade students on one item (22). It was determined that 11 items showed no significant differences between the three rating groups (2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 14, 21, 24, 31, and 32).

For Research Question 5, "There will be no significant difference in the principal feedback items which discriminate based on student grade level," the null hypothesis was rejected for items 1, 3, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 22, 25, 27, and 28. Thus, it can be said that for

Table 12. One-way analysis of variance, means, standard deviations, and Duncan multiple comparisons between rater positions based on responses to discrimination items in rank order by F-ratio<sup>a</sup>

Item no.	Item	Analysis of variance		Grade 5	
		F	P	Mean(N)	SD
22	I can goof around in class and not do my work.	49.13	.001	4.68(282)	.85
9	My principal visits in our classroom.	47.75	.001	2.91(282)	1.06
18	My principal makes me feel good when I do my work well.	22.46	.001	2.84(281)	1.73
20	I like my principal.	20.72	.001	1.86(283)	1.25
19	Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.	17.31	.001	2.87(283)	1.71
12	I enjoy going to visit my principal.	15.58	.001	3.06(282)	1.64
28	I enjoy going to lunch in my school.	14.11	.001	2.22(281)	1.36
17	I believe that my principal does a good job.	11.95	.001	1.79(282)	1.28
10	If I need help I know my principal will help me.	11.18	.001	2.18(282)	1.63
15	My principal is friendly with me.	11.15	.001	1.69(283)	1.14
16	My principal treats all students equally.	10.83	.001	2.08(283)	1.64
1	My principal cares how well I do in school.	10.30	.001	2.15(283)	1.76
25	Our school is safe.	6.95	.001	1.83(281)	1.39
6	I can find my principal when I need his/her help.	6.50	.002	2.43(282)	1.27
13	My principal explains the rules of the school clearly to everyone.	5.93	.003	1.79(282)	1.32
3	My principal tells us that school is a place for learning.	3.92	.020	2.38(283)	1.48
27	I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.	3.91	.021	4.43(281)	1.19
26	Our school is neat and clean.	2.96	.053	2.03(281)	1.19

<sup>a</sup>Rating: 1 = Always, 2 = Most of the time, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Not very often, 5 = Never, and 6 = Don't know.

<u>Grade 8</u>		<u>Grade 11</u>		Grand Mean(N)	Mean SD	Duncan multiple comparisons
Mean(N)	SD	Mean(N)	SD			
4.15(131)	.90	3.89(184)	.90	4.32(597)	.94	11<8 and 5; 8<5
3.13(130)	1.08	3.90(184)	1.11	3.26(597)	1.16	5<11; 8<11
3.34(131)	1.74	3.92(184)	1.65	3.29(596)	1.77	5<8 & 11; 8<11
2.37(131)	1.41	2.65(184)	1.47	2.22(598)	1.40	5<8 & 11
3.44(131)	1.82	3.82(184)	1.69	3.29(598)	1.78	5<8 & 11
3.62(131)	1.51	3.84(184)	1.39	3.42(597)	1.57	5<8 & 11
2.69(131)	1.49	2.92(184)	1.51	2.54(596)	1.47	5<8 & 11
1.96(131)	1.09	2.38(184)	1.45	2.01(597)	1.32	5<11; 8<11
1.57(129)	1.68	2.93(184)	1.73	2.50(595)	1.70	5<8 & 11
2.01(131)	1.39	2.28(184)	1.54	1.94(598)	1.35	5<8 & 11
2.50(131)	1.74	2.81(184)	1.67	2.40(598)	1.70	5<8 & 11
2.66(131)	1.94	2.91(184)	1.88	2.50(598)	1.87	5<8 & 11
2.34(131)	1.45	2.16(184)	1.40	2.04(596)	1.42	5<11 & 8
2.65(131)	1.35	2.89(184)	1.40	2.62(597)	1.37	5<11
1.96(131)	1.38	2.23(184)	1.43	1.96(597)	1.38	5<11
2.27(131)	1.41	2.00(184)	1.38	2.24(598)	1.44	11<5
4.58(128)	.90	4.70(182)	.90	4.54(591)	1.05	5<11
2.34(131)	1.20	2.13(183)	1.16	2.13(595)	1.19	5<8

Table 12. Continued

Item no.	Item	Analysis of variance		Grade 5	
		F	P	Mean(N)	SD
30	Students are told quickly and clearly why they are being scolded.	2.70	.068	2.39(281)	1.59
23	Each school year, I am absent more than 5 days from school.	2.44	.088	3.93(281)	1.50
29	There are fights among students in my school.	2.41	.090	3.30(281)	1.21
4	My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.	2.16	.116	2.18(282)	1.42
14	I see my principal talking with teachers in school.	2.16	.116	1.95(283)	1.06
11	My principal asks my parents to make sure I do my homework.	1.87	.155	4.59(283)	1.41
7	My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical plays.	1.75	.174	2.72(282)	1.76
8	My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.	1.40	.247	2.86(283)	1.52
32	I enjoy being a student in this school.	1.36	.257	1.98(283)	1.29
21	I believe it is important to do well in my studies.	1.35	.260	1.24(282)	.71
2	My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.	1.11	.329	2.18(282)	1.13
24	Extra help is provided for students who need it.	.79	.453	1.70(281)	1.17
31	Students believe our school is a good school.	.74	.479	2.66(283)	1.64
5	My principal speaks to students when he/she sees them.	.69	.501	2.43(282)	1.23

<sup>b</sup>NS - No significant difference.



<u>Grade 8</u>		<u>Grade 11</u>		Grand Mean(N)	Mean SD	Duncan multiple comparisons
Mean(N)	SD	Mean(N)	SD			
2.63(131)	1.60	2.71(184)	1.34	2.54(596)	1.52	5<11
3.60(130)	1.49	3.74(184)	1.39	3.80(595)	1.47	8<5
3.10(131)	1.20	3.38(184)	.93	3.28(596)	1.14	8<11
2.05(130)	1.40	2.37(184)	1.33	2.21(596)	1.39	NS <sup>b</sup>
1.87(131)	.95	2.11(184)	1.22	1.98(598)	1.09	NS
4.73(130)	1.24	4.82(184)	.99	4.69(597)	1.26	NS
3.01(129)	1.91	2.64(184)	1.76	2.75(595)	1.80	NS
2.87(131)	1.60	3.09(184)	1.49	2.92(598)	1.53	NS
2.05(127)	1.10	2.17(180)	1.18	2.05(590)	1.22	NS
1.27(130)	.61	1.35(184)	.82	1.28(596)	.73	NS
2.11(131)	1.41	1.99(184)	1.34	2.11(597)	1.34	NS
1.78(131)	1.18	1.84(183)	1.11	1.76(595)	1.16	NS
2.83(127)	1.64	2.62(182)	1.33	2.68(592)	1.55	NS
2.31(131)	1.38	2.48(184)	1.30	2.42(597)	1.29	NS

this study, student ratings of these items varied significantly by grade level at the .05 level of significance or beyond (Table 12).

CHAPTER V. SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS,  
LIMITATIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The purpose of this study, conducted in the fall of 1989, was to develop and test items for student evaluation of principal performance. The items were designed utilizing the five correlates of effective schools and current research on principal behaviors as defined by the School Improvement Model Project at Iowa State University. Although students do participate in the evaluation of teachers in some public and nonpublic schools as well as at the university level, few instruments exist for gathering student feedback on principal performance. The review of literature has uncovered scant evidence to support the role of students in the principal performance evaluation process.

This study involved 599 students in grades 5, 8, and 11 representing 32 schools from 24 public school districts and one Roman Catholic Diocese. Of the principals rated, 27 were male and five were female. Nineteen participating schools had a student population of more than 350 students, labeled as a large school for this study, and 13 participating schools had a student population of less than 350 students, considered a small school for this study. Participants represented seven states: Iowa, Pennsylvania, Kansas, Connecticut, Ohio, Wisconsin, and Rhode Island. Participating schools were asked to assign an adult, other than the principal, to randomly select a minimum of 15 students from the same grade (5, 8, or 11) to complete the questionnaire. The adult in charge was provided a packet of survey materials and specific instructions for

questionnaire administration. Individual students from the selected schools could choose not to return the questionnaires. The data from five schools were not analyzed because there was not a minimum of 15 raters for each principal.

Participating students completed a six-point Likert-type scale to rate the performance of their building principal. The questionnaire contained 32 items and was divided into two sections. The data from these questionnaires were analyzed using the Menne and Tolsma methodology (1971) to determine item discrimination power. Items which discriminated at the .05 level of significance were identified. The data were further analyzed utilizing a one-way analysis of variance and a Duncan multiple comparison between rater positions based on responses to discriminating items by rank order by F-ratio to determine if the different rater groups (grade 5, 8, or 11 students) ranked the performance of the building principal differently.

Items on the two sections of the questionnaire that were found to be discriminating between principals were analyzed to determine the correlation between student responses on the discrimination questionnaire and the potentially biasing factors of the student's like or dislike of the principal, attendance patterns, and his/her interest in school.

Items can have a statistically significant correlation and still have a very weak relationship if the sample is large enough. One method of viewing the Pearson correlation is the strength of the relationship. This study found several significant but moderate relationships ( $p > .30$ ) between a student's liking of his/her principal and the belief that

his/her school is a good school, and moderate to strong relationships ( $p > .50$ ) between a student's liking of his/her principal and the perception that the principal is friendly with the student and the belief that the principal does a good job.

It was hypothesized that differences in item discrimination power would be identified in the analysis of data between male and female principals, public and nonpublic school principals, large and small school principals, and between participating grade levels (5, 8, and 11).

#### Conclusions

1. Students in grades 5, 8, and 11 are capable of providing student feedback to principals that discriminates among principals.
2. The Menne and Tolsma methodology (1971) for determining item discrimination power in instruments using group responses can identify discriminating items for the development of a pool of items for student feedback to principals.
3. There is a difference in discrimination power of the items in each of the three grade levels participating in this study.
4. Some items discriminated similarly among the three grade levels of the test while others discriminated among one grade and not others.
5. Two items from the instrument used, "My principal visits in our classroom" and "I can goof around in class and not do my work," discriminated at the .05 level of significance. From these findings it is reasonable to conclude that these two items would provide discriminating

feedback to principals regarding student perceptions of principal performance.

6. Students rated the performance of female principals significantly lower (more favorable) than male principals on three items:

- My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.
- Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.
- I enjoy going to lunch in my school.

Male principals were rated significantly lower (more favorable) than female principals on one item:

- There are fights among students in my school.

Results suggest that female principals focus more attention on student concerns and are more cognizant of the effective school correlate indicating strong leadership by the principal guides the instructional program. Their male counterparts were perceived by students to operate a safer and more orderly school environment.

7. Students rated the performance of nonpublic school principals significantly lower (more favorable) than public school principals on four items:

- My principal talks to us about student problems and concerns.
- Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.
- I enjoy going to lunch in my school.
- There are fights among students in my school.

Results suggest that students perceive nonpublic school principals to be more readily available for assistance and that achievement is rewarded more frequently. Additionally, students perceive that the nonpublic

school is safer and operates in a more orderly manner. It should be noted that only four nonpublic school principals participated in the study. The four, however, reflect 12.5% of the sample used in this study, which exceeds the national percentage of nonpublic to public schools, which is 10%.

8. Students from small schools (less than 350 students) rated the performance of their principal more favorably than students from large schools (greater than 350 students) on the following items:

- My principal cares how well I do in school.
- My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows.
- I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.
- I enjoy going to lunch in my school.

Conclusions drawn from these results suggest that small school principals have an opportunity to get closer to the student population, and this perception is viewed favorably by students. Students from large schools rated the performance of their principal more favorably than students from small schools on one item:

- My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.

This conclusion may indicate that students perceive principals from large schools to be more management oriented and focus greater attention on the details of building operation and less attention on personal

contact with students, which was viewed more favorably by students from small schools.

9. Overall, fifth grade students rated the performance of their principal more favorably than eighth or eleventh grade students. Although not surprising, the results suggest that the perception of the school principal as the instructional leader, who emphasizes and rewards achievement, is friendly with students, and maintains a safe and orderly climate, influences student ratings of principal performance.

#### Limitations

The design of this study imposed several limitations which included:

1. Students participating in this study did so on a voluntary basis. Students were permitted to retain their feedback to principals form and the questionnaire if the decision was made not to participate.
2. Principals volunteered to participate in the study after participating in a School Improvement Study workshop or had an interest in personal growth or were encouraged by a superintendent or assistant superintendent.
3. Nonpublic school data were limited to four nonpublic schools volunteering to participate in this study.
4. All female principal ratings analyzed in this study came from five volunteer principals from schools throughout the nation; generalizations cannot be made outside that population.



5. Some of the data collected were eliminated from the study because the sample size was lower than the minimum number of 15 raters per participating principal that was established for this treatment.

6. Discriminating items were selected based on the analysis of data for all principals rated by 15 or more students. With the large number of raters for whom data were analyzed, it is believed that the items identified as discriminating in this study are representative of items which measure differences between principals. It can be concluded, however, that the same items may not be discriminating among principals rated by fewer raters.

7. This study examined items that describe specific observable school principal behaviors. Item selection, not the performance of the principal, was the focus. No attempt was made to rate principal effectiveness based on student input.

8. The discrimination value utilized for this study does not indicate high or low performance of a participating school principal. This methodology simply provides a method to determine how effectively an item measures differences in principal behaviors.

9. This study focused on identifying discriminating items utilizing the Menne and Tolsma methodology. No recommendations will be offered to participating schools and principals on the utilization of these results.

#### Discussion

The major purpose of this study was to identify discriminating items for use in gaining feedback from students on the performance of their

building principal. A discriminating item was described as an item which elicited similar responses from students rating the performance of a specific principal and elicited different responses from students rating the performance of another principal when this performance differed. For an item to have discrimination power, the variance within the group rating the performance of the same principal must be low in relationship to the variance between the groups rating the performance of different principals.

For this study, students utilized a Likert-type scale to rate the performance of their principal (Appendix B). Students participating in the study were selected from grades 5, 8, and 11. An adult, other than the principal being rated, distributed survey packets and read specific instructions to the participating students (Appendix A). The use of subjects at the elementary level, having had less contact with the principal than students in grades 8 and 11, may have influenced the level of the ratings.

Across grade levels, two of the 32 items discriminated at the .05 level of significance, "My principal visits in our classroom" and "I can goof around in class and not do my work." Such criteria were also found to be significant for principals being rated by teachers (Look, 1983). Many of the other items required students to rate principal behaviors that were either difficult for fifth grade students to rate or they had not been exposed to their principal enough to rate the performance with validity. Therefore, it would be unwise to assume, with any certainty,

that similar results would have occurred if students from other grade levels had rated the performance of their principal.

In past studies attempting to find discriminating items to rate the performance of school personnel, participating raters had almost daily contact with the ratee. Hidlebaugh (1973), in developing a model for teacher performance evaluation; Look (1983), when selecting criteria for the evaluation of school principals; Judkins (1987), in asking students to rate the performance of their teacher; and Uhl (1988), when selecting criteria for the evaluation of school counselors, all received feedback from raters having daily or almost daily contact with the individual being rated. As a result, each of these studies reported a significant number of discriminating items.

For this present study, an attempt was made to involve a more infrequent observer of principal behaviors. Many students interact infrequently with their building principal, and when contact is made, it is often ceremonial in nature. School assemblies, student council functions, award ceremonies, athletic events, and student-parent informational gatherings often constitute a student's interaction with the principal. Combined with the gestalt that students like their principal and have a perception that he/she is doing a good job, may account for the inability of students to identify single discriminating items.

The selection of urban, rural, large, and small school districts representing seven different states presented a unique opportunity to study student perceptions of principal performance from a variety of perspectives. The nature of the data base, coupled with the sampling

procedures, merits further discussion to clarify the conclusions relating to student feedback to principals.

#### Rating male and female principals

In examining student perceptions of the performance of male and female principals, it should be noted that although statistically consistent with national figures, approximately 13% (Iowa Department of Education, 1990), only five female principals voluntarily participated in the study (15%). Three of the 32 items found significant differences which favored female principals, "My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns," "Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal," and "I enjoy going to lunch in my school." Results suggest that female principals are more willing to listen to students and that there is a perception that the principal is approachable. Students also reported that achievement is rewarded more by female principals than their male counterparts. Regardless of the results, the gender imbalance should be noted. One might conclude that if this similar imbalance does exist in other school districts or nonpublic schools, then the general findings of this study would be strengthened. However, it is possible that in school districts or nonpublic schools in which the number of male and female principals is more evenly balanced, student ratings of principal performance would be similar. The perception of students across grade levels suggests that male principals run a safer and more orderly school. Results of the survey indicated that there were less fights among students in schools with male principals than female principals. Once again, the gender imbalance is worth noting.

Rating of principals in public and nonpublic schools

Student perceptions of principal performance in public and nonpublic schools suggests that some significant differences exist between principals in public and nonpublic schools. Students in nonpublic schools reported that their principals spent more time talking with students about problems and concerns. The data also reveal that nonpublic school principals reward students for classroom achievement more frequently and that students are less likely to get into fights and generally perceive the climate to be safer and more orderly. No significant differences favored public school principals although they rated favorable scores of many of the items. Similar to the gender imbalance, it should be noted that of the 32 participating schools, only four were nonpublic. Again, one might conclude that if this similar imbalance does exist within a school district or attendance area, the general findings of this study would be strengthened. However, if a larger number of nonpublic schools participate in future studies, student ratings of principal performance may be somewhat different. Another factor to consider is the ability of the nonpublic school to restrict attendance to those students meeting or exceeding predetermined entrance requirements. Additionally, nonpublic schools may remove students from the school for lack of academic achievement or failure to comply with discipline standards. This would tend to establish more of a homogeneous setting than what will be observed in the public school setting. The effects of these characteristics may indeed have an impact, positive or negative, on principal performance ratings by students.

Ratings of principal performance in large and small schools

Student ratings of principal performance in large and small schools yielded some not so surprising results. Students in small schools (less than 350 students) rated the performance of their principal more favorably on such items as "My principal cares how well I do in school" and "My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows." A conclusion drawn from data analysis suggests the small school setting is conducive to more personal contact between principal and student. Principals of small schools tend to share in building-wide responsibilities such as cafeteria and bus duty, hall monitoring, and after school activities. The very nature of the small school, generally located in more rural settings where a "family" climate may pervade, would lend itself to positive student perceptions of the principal, thus impacting the rating of a principal's performance. Principals of large schools (more than 350 students) received a more favorable rating from students on one item, "My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities." This favorable rating may be interpreted to mean that principals of large schools are perceived to be more management oriented and reflect a philosophy which includes goal setting and communication as a focus.

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (1986) summarized research regarding proficiencies of the school principal and reported that school principals must have skills to inspire all concerned to join in accomplishing the school's mission, apply effective human relations skills, encourage the leadership of others, and create a

powerful esprit de corps. No mention was made of the size of the school, its location, socio-economic status of its students, or the experience of its teaching staff. In examining student perceptions by size of school, this investigation suggests that principals exert strong leadership in the areas of the five correlates (Edmonds, 1979), i.e., a focus on instruction, strong leadership guides the instructional program, student progress is monitored, there is a safe and orderly environment, and there is an emphasis on achievement.

#### Ratings by grade level

Research Null Hypothesis 5 tested for differences in principal discriminating items based on student grade level. Grade 5 students rated the performance of their principal more favorably than grade 8 and grade 11 students on ten of the 32 items. Such items as "My principal cares how well I do in school" and "If I need help, I know my principal will help me" suggests that elementary principals approach their students with a more overtly caring attitude than do grade 8 or grade 11 principals. Other items which support this conclusion include "My principal is friendly with me," "My principal treats all students equally," and "I like my principal." The very nature of the elementary school with its climate of caring and sharing lends itself to favorable responses from students on items such as these. Generally, grade 5 students have a respect for authority and a need for acceptance, and are very willing to accept direction from their principal and teachers.

Eighth and eleventh grade students rated the performance of their principal more favorably on items which suggest a more management oriented philosophy. Such items as "Our school is safe," "Our school is neat and clean," and "My principal explains the rules of the school clearly to everyone" indicate that grade 8 and grade 11 principals are perceived as stressing a management style of leadership as opposed to an instructional leadership style which is more favored in current research. An argument can also be made that grade 8 and grade 11 students are more aware of the management items which play such an important role in their daily school lives, thus impacting ratings of their principal's performance.

Throughout this study, an attempt has been made to stress the importance of principals gaining feedback from all groups with which they interact. Manatt (1988), in suggesting that feedback, not Wheaties, is the breakfast of champions, reinforces this belief and supports the concept that the more information principals have regarding their performance the better decisions can be made to improve performance. If indeed educators are sincere about improving the quality of the educational system, and research reports that the building principal is a key figure in the effective school, then every effort must be made to improve and expand the feedback process.

#### Recommendations for Use

The results of this study indicate several suggestions for principals in gaining feedback from students.



1. When selecting items for use, the school principal should select from those items identified to be discriminating at the .05 level of significance and from those items that did not have a correlation coefficient with the potentially biasing factors of 0.30 or greater (Appendix C - Suggested items for principal use). Other items may be used if desired, but this study concluded that these items would not discriminate between school principals.

2. Items selected should be used with students in grades 5, 8, and 11, the same grade levels utilized for this study.

3. The directions developed for administering the questionnaire for this study should be followed if the items are to be used by students (Appendix A). An adult other than the principal should proctor the administration of the questionnaire and ensure that the principal not see the individual responses of the students rating their performance.

4. It will be important to randomly select students to participate in the study to protect, as much as possible, against rater bias.

5. Careful attention should be placed on the readability of any instrument used to gain feedback from students. There are many readability instruments, both manual and computerized, on the market today which will adequately serve this need.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this research suggest further research. For each suggested study, the sample size should be as large as possible.

1. This investigation should be replicated in other districts and nonpublic/independent schools. Additional studies are needed to determine if the items identified as being discriminating in this study would also be discriminating in grades 5, 8, and 11 in other school districts and nonpublic/independent schools.

2. Further studies should expand the research to include a larger sample of female principals. This would allow for more specific feedback as to differences in performance between male and female principals.

3. Further studies should expand the research to include a larger sample of nonpublic/independent schools. This would permit a more statistically valid comparison between the performance of public and nonpublic/independent school principals.

4. This study focused on the ratings of principal performance by students in grades 5, 8, and 11. Future research efforts should be broadened to include students in other grade levels within a school district and nonpublic/independent schools.

5. Further studies should expand the research to include items developed specifically for students who are more familiar with the building principal. This study may include student council members, student advisory council members, school safety patrols, and other students who maintain close contact with the school principal.

6. A further, and very feasible variation, might be to have a five-year follow-up of graduates who would be asked to rate their principal, faculty, and school program.

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Appreciation is also extended to the members of my doctoral committee. Dr. Manatt, my major professor, believed in me and gave me the opportunity for continued growth. He consistently demonstrated that there is a "right way" to get the job done. Dr. Stow consistently modeled the qualities necessary to become the ultimate professional. She was always available to offer advice and encouragement. Dr. Netusil presented the stiffest academic challenge, but taught me to think and supported me along the way. Dr. Merkley was so enthusiastic about education that it encouraged me to strive for excellence. Dr. Myers was always there to answer questions and demonstrate the dedication to education we so desperately seek. Educators are constantly searching for models to guide our efforts. I was very

fortunate to have been influenced and guided by these committee members; it was truly a privilege to work with them.

Appreciation is expressed to my colleagues and members of the education administration team. The collegial support and friendship of my fellow RA's will be cherished for a lifetime. To Katy Rice and Judy Weiland for the "little extras" that moved the process along so smoothly. To Dr. Sweeney and all the support staff for their guidance and cooperation.

I would also like to thank Bonnie Trede for her willingness to work with me and provide the support and quality in typing this dissertation. It has truly been the experience of a lifetime, one I will carry with me for my remaining years.

APPENDIX A. INSTRUCTION PACKET

INSTRUCTION PACKET FOR PERSON IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTERING THE SURVEY

Please find the following items within this packet:

1. Individual Classroom Directions (To be read aloud to students)
2. Instructions For Completing The Survey (To be read aloud to students)
3. Appraiser Form (Student Roster To Be Completed By Adult In Charge)

INDIVIDUAL CLASSROOM DIRECTIONS

## INSTRUCTIONS FOR ADULT IN CHARGE OF ADMINISTERING SURVEY TO STUDENTS

1. You will be in charge of this group of students for the 20-30 minutes needed by the students to respond to the Student Feedback to Principals Survey. Please be sure that all materials are ready for student participation.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING GENERAL DIRECTIONS, EXACTLY AS WRITTEN, TO ALL PARTICIPATING STUDENTS:

Today you are asked to participate in an experiment, designed by researchers at Iowa State University in Ames, Iowa, to develop questions that may help school principals to become better educational leaders. Answering the questions is voluntary, but we hope you will want to participate in this study.

Please answer the questions in PART I by selecting the response which best describes your school principal. Then, answer the questions in PART II by selecting the response which best describes how you feel about school.

Students can provide very valuable information to help school principals since students spend so much time in schools that are run by principals. Please answer the questions honestly and fairly, selecting the answer which best describes your principal in Part I and best describes your own feelings about school in Part II.

Place all of your answers on the computer answer sheet I will give to you in the next few minutes. DO NOT put your name on the survey or the computer answer sheet. Your school principal will never see your individual answers. I will not read your answers either. All of your answers will be sealed in an envelope and mailed to a researcher at Iowa State University.

Once you have completed this survey, sit quietly until all students have completed their work. There should be no talking. You will be given enough time to answer all questions.

Thank you.

NEXT: PASS OUT A SURVEY, COMPUTER ANSWER SHEET, AND A BROWN ENVELOPE, TO ALL STUDENTS

CALL STUDENT ATTENTION TO THE "INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY" INSIDE THE SURVEY BOOKLET AND READ THEM ALOUD AS THE STUDENTS READ THEM SILENTLY.

UPON COMPLETION OF THE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON THE COMPUTER ANSWER SHEET, AND CHECKING FOR ANY ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS, STUDENTS MAY BEGIN TO RESPOND TO THE QUESTIONS ON THE SURVEY. PLEASE ALLOW AS MUCH TIME AS NECESSARY FOR STUDENTS TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY.

ADULT IN CHARGE  
PLEASE READ TO PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY

1. When completing the survey please think of the principal whose name appears at the top of the answer sheet as you answer each question.
2. A computer scored answer sheet is enclosed to record your answers to the survey items. Use a No. 2 lead pencil to mark your answers.
3. DO NOT enter your name on the answer sheet.
4. Complete the box titled, "Sex" by darkening the circle under M if you are a male or F if you are a female.
5. Darken the box next to your present grade in school
6. Please read and answer each question by yourself without talking with anyone else.
7. Please do not fold the answer sheet.
8. When you are finished, place only the answer sheet in the envelope given to you, seal it, and give it to the person in charge. You may keep the survey.
9. Using the rating scale below, darken in the number on your answer sheet which most clearly describes your feelings. Mark only one answer for each question. Be sure to use a NO. 2 pencil.

Rating:

1. All the time
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Not very often
5. Never
6. Don't know

Example:

My principal cares if I do well in class.                    1 2 3 4 5 6

STUDENT FEEDBACK  
ITEM DISCRIMINATION QUESTIONNAIRE

Appraiser Form

Name of Principal receiving feedback \_\_\_\_\_

The following students have been given a principal feedback survey:

Name of Student	Grade
-----------------	-------

---

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.
- 8.
- 9.
- 10.
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.
- 16.
- 17.
- 18.
- 19.
- 20.

PLEASE INCLUDE THIS ROSTER WITH COMPLETED SURVEYS SUBMITTED TO THE DESIGNATED SECRETARY IN THE ENVELOPE PROVIDED.....THANK YOU.



INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE BUILDING PRINCIPAL

Thank you once again for agreeing to participate in this research effort. We sincerely hope that the results of this research process will assist principals in becoming more effective instructional leaders.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

A. Enclosed within this packet should be the following:

1. 20 Survey Instruments
2. 20 Computer Answer Sheets
3. 20 Student Envelopes
4. 1 Large Pre-Addressed Return Envelope
5. 1 Packet of Instructions for adult in charge of survey administration
6. 1 Appraiser Form (Roster of students completing survey)
7. 1 Survey Instrument Clearly Marked for the Principal to complete

UPON VERIFICATION THAT THE PACKET IS COMPLETE PLEASE PROCEED AS FOLLOWS:

- B. Assign an adult to administer the survey and provide them with the packet of materials.
- C. Select a minimum of 15 to a maximum of 20 students from grade to participate in this research. ALL STUDENTS MUST BE FROM THE SAME GRADE.
- D. Assign a time and location for all students to complete the survey. The survey should take no longer than 20-30 minutes to complete.
- E. Inform the secretary or contact person designated to return all materials of the timeline established for this project.
- COMPLETED SURVEYS MUST BE RETURNED TO IOWA STATE BY OCTOBER 16, 1989
- F. Complete the survey specifically marked for you, the building principal, and return it to the designated secretary for return to Iowa State.
- G. Please insure that total confidentiality and proper care is taken to make this experience a positive one for all involved.

SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THIS RESEARCH PLEASE CALL ME AT ANY TIME ..... Jamie Ferrare (515) 226-2721.....

Thank You.

PRINCIPAL ITEM DISCRIMINATION QUESTIONNAIRERESEARCH DATA FORM

A. Official Name of the School District \_\_\_\_\_

B. Name of Building Principal \_\_\_\_\_

C. Name and Address of School Building \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

D. School Enrollment (Anticipated 89-90) \_\_\_\_\_

E. Grade span served by this school \_\_\_\_\_

F. Public School \_\_\_\_ Nonpublic School \_\_\_\_ (Check One)

G. Sex of Principal: Male \_\_\_\_ Female \_\_\_\_

H. Name of secretary or contact person in the building who will be designated to receive and return the sealed envelopes with the questionnaire answer sheets for this building.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

I. I agree to participate in this research study \_\_\_\_

J. PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO:

**JAMES P. FERRARE**  
**1394 NW 90th STREET**  
**CLIVE, IOWA 50322**  
**(515) 224-6696 Home**  
**226-2721 Work**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION AND DEDICATION TO RESEARCH IN EDUCATION.**

APPENDIX B. QUESTIONNAIRE

**PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK**  
**BY KEY STUDENTS**

PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE  
STUDENT FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

## INTRODUCTION

Thank you for volunteering to participate in this research. In volunteering, you will be helping to develop a list of items to measure how students, like you, feel about the job their principal is doing. This valuable feedback from students will give the building principal additional information as to how well they are performing.

Your answers to the questions on this survey will be carefully studied, and the questions which help us decide how well a principal is performing will be analyzed. These items will give students a chance to be heard about their feelings toward the job being done by their principal.

The answers you give on this survey will be private with no one seeing your answers except the person from Iowa State University in charge of the research. Your principal will not see the answers you put on the survey answer sheet. Your turning in of a completed answer sheet will be accepted as a modified agreement to participate.

If you choose not to answer this survey, please place the unmarked answer sheet in the envelope given to you, seal it, and give it to the person in charge.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION IN THIS RESEARCH

Please Turn The Page

ADULT IN CHARGE  
PLEASE READ TO PARTICIPATING STUDENTS

INSTRUCTIONS FOR COMPLETING THE SURVEY

1. When completing the survey please think of the principal whose name appears at the top of the answer sheet as you answer each question.
2. A computer scored answer sheet is enclosed to record your answers to the survey items. Use a No. 2 lead pencil to mark your answers.
3. DO NOT enter your name on the answer sheet.
4. Complete the box titled, "Sex" by darkening the circle under M if you are a male or F if you are a female.
5. Darken the box next to your present grade in school
6. Please read and answer each question by yourself without talking with anyone else.
7. Please do not fold the answer sheet.
8. When you are finished, place only the answer sheet in the envelope given to you, seal it, and give it to the person in charge. You may keep the survey.
9. Using the rating scale below, darken in the number on your answer sheet which most clearly describes your feelings. Mark only one answer for each question. Be sure to use a NO. 2 pencil.

Rating:

1. All the time
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Not very often
5. Never
6. Don't know

Example:

My principal cares if I do well in class.            1 2 3 4 5 6

PLEASE NOTE: Completing this survey is voluntary. You may keep this form if you decide not to participate.

PART I.

DIRECTIONS: The statements on your survey are going to help us to find out about the job your principal is doing. For each question or statement, darken the number on your answer sheet that best describes your feelings about the job your principal is doing. This is not a test. DO NOT put your name on the answer sheet. Please answer all the statements and take as much time as you need. Listen carefully to the directions for marking your answers.

DARKEN #1 if the statement describes your principal all the time.

DARKEN #2 if the statement describes your principal most of the time.

DARKEN #3 if the statement describes your principal sometimes.

DARKEN #4 if the statement does not describe your principal very often.

DARKEN #5 if the statement never describes your principal.

DARKEN #6 if you do not know.

REMEMBER: PLACE ANSWERS ON THE COMPUTER ANSWER SHEET

PERFORMANCE RATINGS:

1. All the time
2. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
4. Not very often
5. Never
6. Don't know

- 
1. My principal cares how well I do in school.
  2. My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.
  3. My principal tells us that school is a place for learning.
  4. My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities.
  5. My principal speaks to students when he/she sees them.
  6. I can find my principal when I need his/her help.
  7. My principal attends school plays, sporting events, and musical shows
  8. My principal talks with us about student problems and concerns.
  9. My principal visits in our classroom.

PERFORMANCE RATINGS:

1. All the time
  2. Most of the time
  3. Sometimes
  4. Not very often
  5. Never
  6. Don't know
- 

10. If I need help I know my principal will help me.
11. My principal asks my parents to make sure I do my homework.
12. I enjoy going to visit my principal.
13. My principal explains the rules of the school clearly to everyone.
14. I see my principal talking with teachers in school.
15. My principal is friendly with me.
16. My principal treats all students equally.
17. I believe that my principal does a good job.
18. My principal makes me feel good when I do my work well.
19. Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.
20. I like my principal.

PLEASE GO ON TO PART II ON THE NEXT PAGE.....THANK YOU



PART II

DIRECTIONS: These statements are designed to find out more about you and your feelings toward school. Carefully listen to the directions and answer as you did in Part I.

DARKEN #1 if the statement describes how you feel all the time.

DARKEN #2 if the statement describes how you feel most of the time.

DARKEN #3 if the statement describes how you feel sometimes.

DARKEN #4 if the statement does not describe how you feel very often.

DARKEN #5 if the statement never describes how you feel.

DARKEN #6 if you do not know

---

REMEMBER: PLACE YOUR ANSWERS ON THE COMPUTER ANSWER SHEET

PERFORMANCE RATINGS:

1. All the time
  2. Most of the time
  3. Sometimes
  4. Not very often
  5. Never
  6. Don't know
- 

21. I believe it is important to do well in my studies.
22. I can goof around in class and not do my work.
23. Each school year, I am absent more than 5 days from school.
24. Extra help is provided for students who need it.
25. Our school is safe.
26. Our school is neat and clean.
27. I am sent to the principal's office because of my behavior in class.
28. I enjoy going to lunch in my school.
29. There are fights among students in my school.
30. Students are told quickly and clearly why they are being scolded.
31. Students believe our school is a good school.
32. I enjoy being a student in this school.

APPENDIX C.

RECOMMENDED ITEMS FOR STUDENT FEEDBACK TO PRINCIPALS

PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE FEEDBACK BY KEY STUDENTS

**DIRECTIONS:** The statements on your survey are going to help us to find out about the job your principal is doing. For each question or statement, circle the number on your survey that best describes your feelings about the job your principal is doing. This is not a test. DO NOT put your name on the survey booklet. Please answer all the statements and take as much time as you need. Listen carefully to the directions for marking your answers.

CIRCLE #5 if the statement describes your principal all the time.

CIRCLE #4 if the statement describes your principal most of the time.

CIRCLE #3 if the statement describes your principal sometimes.

CIRCLE #2 if the statement does not describe your principal very often.

CIRCLE #1 if the statement never describes your principal.

CIRCLE #0 if you do not know.

**PERFORMANCE RATINGS:**

5. All the time
4. Most of the time
3. Sometimes
2. Not very often
1. Never
0. Don't know

- |   |             |
|---|-------------|
| 1. My principal cares how well I do in school.                          | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 2. My principal tells us that it is important to do well in school.     | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 3. My principal tells us that school is a place for learning.           | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 4. My principal keeps students informed of school goals and activities. | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 5. My principal visits in our classroom.                                | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 6. My principal treats all students equally                             | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |
| 7. My principal makes me feel good when I do my work well.              | 5 4 3 2 1 0 |

## PERFORMANCE RATINGS:

- 5. All the time
  - 4. Most of the time
  - 3. Sometimes
  - 2. Not very often
  - 1. Never
  - 0. Don't know
- 

8. Students are rewarded for good grades by my principal.	5 4 3 2 1 0
9. I believe it is important to do well in my studies.	5 4 3 2 1 0
10. I can goof around in class and not do my work.	5 4 3 2 1 0
11. Each school year, I am absent more than 5 days from school.	5 4 3 2 1 0
12. Extra help is provided for students who need it.	5 4 3 2 1 0
13. Our school is safe.	5 4 3 2 1 0
14. There are fights among students in my school.	5 4 3 2 1 0
15. Students believe our school is a good school.	5 4 3 2 1 0
16. I enjoy being a student in this school.	5 4 3 2 1 0

THANK YOU FOR ANSWERING THE ITEMS ON THIS SURVEY