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# A Study of Highly Successful Middle Level Schools and their Principals: *Leaders and Leadership*

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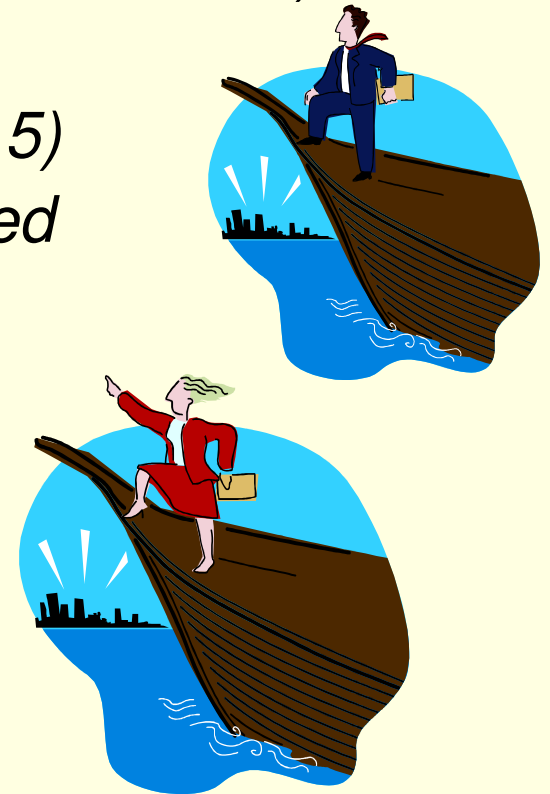
# Leaders and Leadership: Major Conclusions

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- Principals of highly successful schools (HSS) and principals of national sample schools (NSS) are **more alike than different**, but...
- **Youth** is not a disadvantage
- **Longevity** counts
- **Middle level knowledge matters**
- **Work smarter (and longer?)**
- **AND**
- **Recruit**
  - Recruit
    - Recruit

# We are more alike than different

- *Assistant Principal experience (also see slide 4, 7)*
- *Certification (also see slide 5)*
- *Highest Degree Earned (also see slide 5)*
- *Teacher leadership is extensively utilized*
  - *Leadership teams*
  - *Team leaders*
  - *Faculty as a whole*
- *Biggest roadblocks are*
  - *Time*
  - *District and State Mandates*
  - *Funding (also see slide 21)*
- *Over 60% do not intend to be in these positions in 5 years (also see slide 23)*



# Professional Backgrounds

<u>Assistant Principal: All levels (2.26)</u>	<u>HSS</u>	<u>NSS</u>
No such experience	18	23
1-3 years	33	32
4-6 years	33	26
7 or more years	16	19
<u>Assistant Principal: Middle Level (2.27)</u>		
No middle level AP experience	39	45
1-3 years	33	29
4-6 years	16	17
7 or more years	12	10

# Professional Backgrounds

<u>Principal Certification</u> (2.15)	<u>HSS</u>	<u>NSS</u>
<b>K-12</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>Secondary</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>Middle</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>
<u>Highest Degree Earned</u> (2.14)		
<b>Master's Degree</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Master's +</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Educational Specialist</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Master's Degree + All</b>		
<b>Coursework toward</b>		
<b>Doctorate</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Doctor of Education</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Doctor of Philosophy</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3</b>

# Youth is NOT a Disadvantage

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- *Highly successful school principals (male and female) were appointed to their first assistant principal position at a younger age than were their national sample school counterparts.*
- *Males in both groups were consistently appointed to leadership positions at a younger age than females*
  - *Correspondingly, females bring more teaching experience to the Principalship than do their male counterparts.*

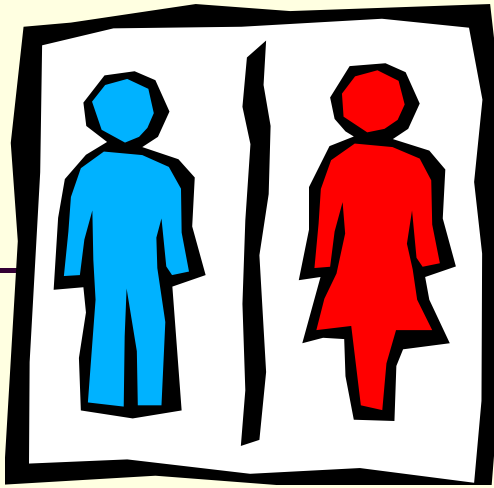
# Age Appointed to First Assistant Principalship

<u>(2.9)</u>	Highly Successful Schools			National Sample Schools		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
24 and younger	1	2	0	<1	<1	0
<b>25 - 29</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>8</b>
30 - 34	19	21	18	21	24	14
35 - 39	26	17	33	20	20	19
<b>40 - 44</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>24</b>
45 - 49	4	2	6	7	6	10
50 - 54	2	0	4	1	<1	3
<b>Not Applicable</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>21</b>

# Age Appointed to First Principalship

<u>(2.10)</u>	Highly Successful Schools			National Sample Schools		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
24 and younger	0	0	0	<1	<1	0
25 - 29	9	15	4	7	9	3
30 - 34	20	28	14	18	21	11
35 - 39	28	30	26	24	26	18
40 - 44	24	13	33	22	21	26
45 - 49	12	13	12	19	16	27
50 +	7	2	12	19	6	15 <sub>8</sub>





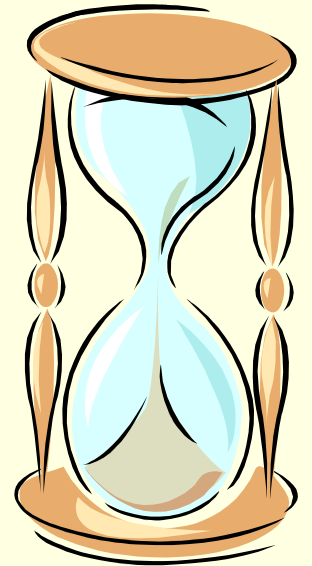
## A Few Interesting Gender Differences

- 52% of the HSS principals were female, compared to 27% of the national sample.
- In both groups, males were consistently appointed to administrative positions at a younger age than females.
- Female principals had taken more classes in middle education and were more likely to identify the improvement of curriculum and instruction as a reason for entering administration than were their male counterparts.

# Longevity Counts

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- Principals of highly successful schools have been middle level principals for longer than have their national sample counterparts.
- Principals of highly successful schools have generally served as principals in their current schools for a longer period of time than their national sample counterparts.



# Total Years as Principal

<u>(2.31)</u>	Highly Successful Schools			National Sample Schools		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1	5	2	8	10	9	12
2-3	9	4	14	20	18	26
4-6	15	15	16	22	21	26
7-9	20	23	18	14	13	16
10-14	30	28	31	16	17	15
15-19	12	17	8	9	11	3
20 or more years	8	10	6	9	11	1

# Total Years as Middle Level Principal

<u>(2.32)</u>	Highly Successful Schools			National Sample Schools		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
1	6	4	8	12	11	13
2-3	8	2	14	26	25	32
4-6	19	17	22	23	22	27
7-9	21	26	18	15	15	16
10-14	30	28	31	14	16	9
15-19	10	15	6	6	7	2
20 or more years	5	8	2	4	5	1

# Years as Principal of Current School

<u>(2.33)</u>	Highly Successful Schools			National Sample Schools		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>2-3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>4-14</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>44</b>

# Knowledge about Middle Level Issues Matters

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- Although only 18% of the highly successful school principals held graduate degrees with a major in middle level education, this was 60% more than the national sample respondents (11%) (2.13)
- More than half (54%) of the principals in highly successful schools had taken three or more courses specific to middle level education, compared to only 29% of their national sample counterparts. (2.16)
- 30% of HSS principals considered “lack of knowledge among staff regarding programs for middle level students” a moderate or serious roadblock, compared to 60% of the NSS principals. (2.57)

# Graduate Study in Middle Level Education

<u>(2.16)</u>	Highly Successful Schools			National Sample Schools		
Number of Middle Level Courses Taken	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
None	14	14	14	37	37	40
1 or 2	33	34	31	34	34	35
3 to 5	34	37	31	20	21	15
6 or more	20	14	24	9	8	10

# Principal Recommendations for the Preparation of Middle Level Principals

•1 = Not Useful, 2 = Somewhat Useful, 3 = Very Useful, 4 = Essential

(2.17)	HSS Top 6	NSS (rank)
Interpersonal Skills/Relationships	3.64	3.5 (2)
Middle Level Best Practices	3.62	3.2 (11)
Collaborative Decision-Making	3.6	3.3 (5)
Staff Supervision/Evaluation	3.59	3.5 (1)
Instructional Leadership	3.58	3.4 (3)
Organizational Development/Change Process	3.51	3.2 (13)

NSS #4: Oral and Written Communication Skills (HSS #7)

NSS #6: Legal Issues (HSS #13)



# Teacher Quality Matters

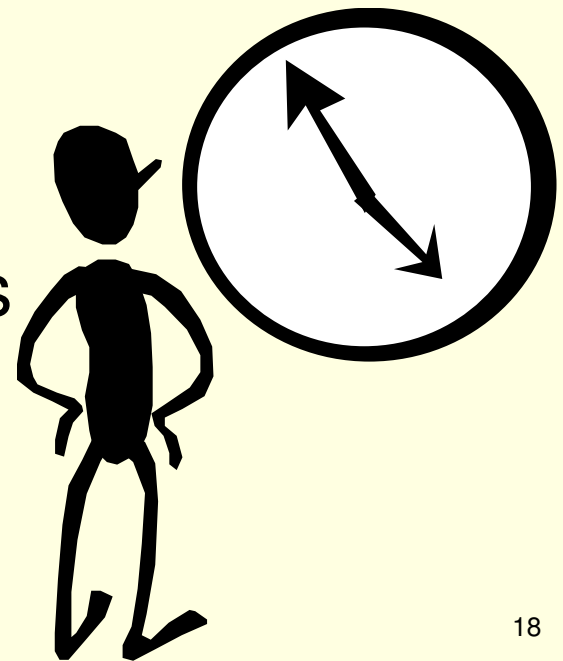


- 90% of the HSS principals rated their **classroom teachers** as “EXCELLENT” (67% NSS)
- 83% of the HSS principals rated their **special education teachers** as “EXCELLENT” (62% NSS)
- 70% of the NSS principals rated their **department chairs/team leaders** as “EXCELLENT” (54% NSS)
- 56% of the NSS principals rated their **superintendents** as “EXCELLENT” (47% NSS) (2.37)

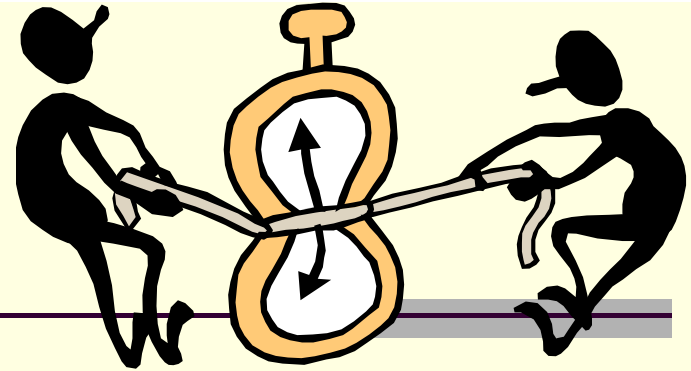
# Principals of Highly Successful Schools Work Differently

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- Both groups work L-O-N-G hours
- The principals of HSS spend their time more aligned with their priorities
- Principals of HSS use parents “differently”



## Principals Self-Reported Hours for an Average Work Week



<b>Hours (<u>2.62</u>)</b>	<b>Highly Successful Schools</b>	<b>National Sample Schools</b>
<b>40</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>40 - 49</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>50 - 59</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>46</b>
<b>60 - 69</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>70+</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>9</b>

## Principals Rank Order of Time Allocation for a Typical Work Week

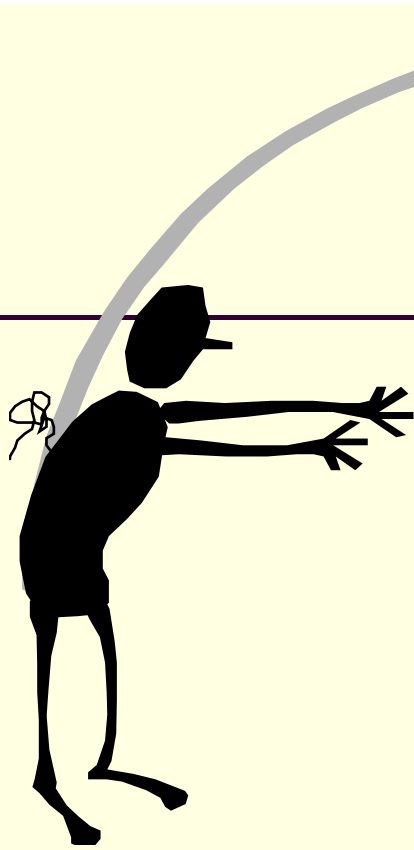
	<b>Highly Successful Schools</b>		<b>National Sample Schools</b>	
<u>(2.63)</u>	<b>Do Spend</b>	<b>Should Spend</b>	<b>Do Spend</b>	<b>Should Spend</b>
<b>School Management</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Personnel</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Student Activities</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Student Behavior</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Program Development</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Planning</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>District Office</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Community</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Professional Development</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>5</b>

**Largest discrepancies** in perceptions of principals about **roadblocks** that prevent them from doing the kind of job they would like to do (see also slide #3)

<b>3=Serious Factor</b> <b>2=Moderate Factor</b> <b>1=Not a Factor</b>	<b>Highly Successful Schools</b>	<b>National Sample Schools</b>
<b>Inability to provide teacher time for planning and professional development</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>2.1</b>
<b>Parents apathetic or irresponsible about their children</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Problem Students (apathetic, hostile, etc.)</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>2.0</b>
<b>Resistance to change</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>Variations in the ability and dedication of staff</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.9</b>
<b>Lack of knowledge among staff regarding programs for middle level students (slide 14)</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.7</b>

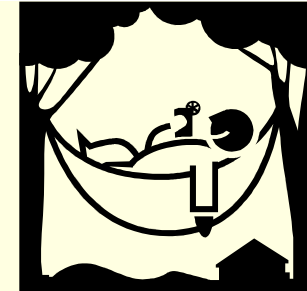
## Parent/Citizen Involvement in a Specific Capacity

<u>(2.42, 2.43)</u>	Highly Successful Schools	National Sample
Objectives and priorities for the school	81	73
Program changes and new programs being considered	79	70
Student activities	75	77
Finance and fund raising	76	65
Volunteer tutor	75	70
Volunteer aide	71	80
Resource persons to programs and activities, including instruction	69	61
Student behavior, rights, and responsibilities	62	51
Evaluation of programs	58	45
Operates concessions, etc., for benefit of the school	57	70



**Recruit Recruit  
Recruit**

## Middle Level Principals' Career Plans for the Next Three to Five Years



<u>(2.61)</u>	<b>HSS</b>	<b>NSS</b>
<b>Remain in Current Position</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Retirement</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Retire - Continue in Educational Leadership in another Retirement System</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>4</b>
<b><u>Retire - Seek Position in Higher Education</u></b>	<b><u>8</u></b>	<b><u>2</u></b>
<b>Retire (total)</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Seek a Principalship at the High School Level</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Seek a Position as a Superintendent</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Seek a Central Office Position other than Superintendent</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>WE WILL HAVE TO REPLACE.....</b>		

**60+%**



## Would You Choose Educational Administration Again?

	Highly Successful Schools	Highly Successful Schools		National Sample Schools	National Sample Schools	
		Male	Female		Male	Female
<b>Definitely Yes</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Probably Yes</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>38</b>
<b>Uncertain</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Probably Not</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Definitely Not</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

# Questions or Comments?

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  - Jerry Valentine at [valentinej@missouri.edu](mailto:valentinej@missouri.edu)

