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THE PRINCIPALSHIP

A Reflective Practice Perspective

SEVENTH EDITION

Thomas J. Sergiovanni
Reginald L. Green

The Principalship

A REFLECTIVE PRACTICE PERSPECTIVE

Seventh Edition

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About the Authors

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Reginald Leon Green is Professor of Educational Leadership at the University of Memphis. Prior to joining the faculty at the University of Memphis, he was on the faculty of educational administration at Wright State University, Dayton, Ohio. Earlier, Dr. Green served at the teacher, principal, deputy superintendent, and superintendent levels of elementary and secondary education. In 1977, Dr. Green was one of five educators chosen nationally to participate in the Rockefeller Foundation's Superintendency Preparation Program; and in 1996, he was selected as an Associate to the Institute for Educational Renewal, under the leadership of Dr. John Goodlad.

Most recently, Dr. Green published the fourth edition of his book *Practicing the Art of Leadership: A Problem-Based Approach to Implementing the ISLLC Standards,* and the first edition of *The Four Dimensions of Principal Leadership: A Foundation for Leading 21st Century Schools.* He has also authored a book on inner-city education, as well as various articles concerning such topics as educational restructuring, primary grade restructuring, gang violence, and other contemporary educational issues. He has completed national inquiries into

nurturing characteristics that exist in schools and standards and assessment measures being established as part of school renewal. This work led to the development of the Center for Urban School Leadership where Dr. Green administered programs for five years to prepare principals for urban schools using a nontraditional approach. Currently, Dr. Green teaches courses in educational leadership with a focus on instructional leadership, school renewal, and models for turning around low-performing schools.

NEW TO THIS EDITION

- New content has been added that addresses current issues in today's schools. This content affords students an opportunity to acquire information on new requirements in school leadership as well as new approaches to the principalship. Examples of the new contents are discussions of:
  - Common Core
  - Race to the Top
  - Research on Effective Teaching
  - Research on Effective Leadership
  - Research on Transforming Underperforming Schools
  - New Research on Building Professional Learning Communities
  - Focused Professional Development (Learning Forward)
  - New Emphases on Instructional Leadership
  - Supervising the Instructional Program
  - Developing Nurturing Schools
- The results from recent research studies addressing school leadership have been used to update the roles and functions of the principal.
- Video clips have been added throughout the text. The video clips illustrate issues discussed in selected sections of chapters.
- Scenarios with reflective questions have been added to the end of each chapter. The scenarios transform into practical situations the concepts discussed in the chapters.
- A section entitled *Understanding Self* has been added to the end of each chapter. This section contains reflective questions and exercises that allow the reader to assess his or her understanding of the concepts and issues discussed in the chapter.
- The New Theory for the principalship in Chapter 4 has been expanded, clarified, and given focus with the addition of four dimensions of principal leadership: understanding self and others, understanding the complexity of organizational life, building bridges through relationships, and engaging in leadership best practices.
- A Self-Check Quiz on the contents of each chapter has been developed and added to end of chapter materials. The Self-Check Quiz consists of multiple-choice questions that allow the reader to check the extent to which chapter content materials are understood.

- A Glossary of Terms has been added.
- Models for use in leading educational change have been added to Chapter 15.
- The 8 competencies in Chapter 1 have been expanded to 13.

Basic Ideas

There are four dimensions to principal leadership.
There are forces and stages to effective principal leadership.
Teacher effectiveness models are emerging.
Effective schools are learning communities.
Professional development is an essential tool for use in school improvement.
Effective principals provide instructional leadership.
Supervision is crucial in the development and implementation of an effective instructional program.
In school leadership, there are moral imperatives.

Basic Questions Answered

1. What do principals need to know and be able to do?
2. Where and how do principals spend their time?
3. What are the most challenging issues faced by principals of today's schools?
4. How are effective principals turning around underperforming schools?
5. How are effective principals balancing management and leadership functions?
6. How are districts measuring teacher effectiveness?
7. What are the benefits of developing professional learning communities in schools?
8. What are the competencies and disposition of effective school leaders?
9. What are the moral imperatives of school leadership?

Preface

Everywhere you look there is someone with an easy solution for improving schools. "Research says" if you put these principles in place—if you teach, manage, or supervise using this list of behaviors—all will be well. Careers are built, journals are filled, and, for some with entrepreneurial bents, fortunes are amassed as the "solutions" are proposed.

The engine that drives this grand solutions machine is our search for simple answers. This searching, we fear, drives us to think in the rationalistic tradition about our work, to make unwarranted assumptions about the linearity and predictability that exist in the world, and to overestimate the tightness of links between research and practice. The result is the adoption of management theories and leadership practices that look great on paper, sound compelling when heard, and maybe even make us feel good, but that don't fit the actual world of schooling very well.

The term *rationalistic* is chosen over *rational* or *irrational* deliberately, for what is often thought to be irrational is actually rational, and vice versa. Winograd and Flores (1986) sort the differences as follows:

> In calling it [traditional theory] "rationalistic" we are not equating it with "rational." We are not interested in a defense of irrationality or a mystic appeal to nonrational intuition. The rationalistic tradition is distinguished by its narrow focus on certain aspects of rationality which often lead to attitudes and activities that are not rational when viewed in a broader perspective. Our commitment is to develop a new ground for rationality—one that is as rigorous as the rationalistic tradition in its aspirations but that does not share the presuppositions behind it. (p. 8)

In a similar vein, Kozlov (1988) uses the categories "Neats" and "Scruffies" to sort researchers in the field of artificial intelligence as follows: "For a Neat, if an idea about thinking can't be represented in terms of mathematical logic, it isn't worth thinking about. For a Scruffy, on the other hand, ideas that can't be proved are the most interesting ones" (pp. 77–78).

It isn't easy for anyone to be a Scruffy. After all, it's very comfortable to be a Neat. You have all the answers, and you fit nicely into our bureaucratic, technical, and rational culture. Fitting nicely reaps many career rewards. But still, many of us feel uncomfortable with the position of the Neats. A frequent first response to this discomfort is to try to change the world to fit our theories and to damn those aspects of the world that will not cooperate. A better alternative, we propose, is for us to change our theories to fit the world. A scruffy world needs scruffy theories. Reflective practice, as we

will argue in Chapter 3, is key to making scruffy theories work. If we want better schools, we are going to have to learn how to manage and lead differently. This text doesn't provide the answers, but it can help you find them.

The key to accepting the challenges of leadership in a scruffy world is for principals to understand leadership differently. When writing articles and books for principals, it is common to point out how important a principal is to the successful functioning of the school. Part of this ritual is to portray the principal as some sort of superhero who combines the best qualities of strong "instructional leadership" with a messianic ability to inspire people to great heights. It turns out that principals are indeed important, and their leadership is indeed indispensable, but in different ways than commonly thought.

From the perspective of the Neats, principals practice leadership directly by calculating what levers to pull to get the school structured differently and what buttons to push to get people motivated to do what is needed. Neat principals are highly visible players in the drama of leadership. Everything revolves around them. Should neat principals fail to provide the needed leadership, things go awry.

Scruffy principals view the problem of leadership differently. Their leadership is much more subtle and aimed at building substitutes for leadership into the school. Substitutes, they argue, are the keys needed to encourage teachers and students to become self-managing. The sources of authority for leadership, as scruffy principals see it, need to be idea based and anchored to moral commitments. Their job is to create new connections among people and to connect them to an idea structure. They do this by practicing leadership through binding and bonding. Their aim is to build a followership in the school. For the secret to leadership, they argue, is to have something worth following—something to which followers become morally committed.

A key theme in this text is that what we believe to be true about management and leadership depends on the metaphor we use to understand the school. Schools, for example, have traditionally been understood as formal *organizations* of one kind or another, and this metaphor encourages us to think in certain ways about school organizational structure, teacher motivation, power and authority, curriculum development, and supervision and evaluation. If the metaphor were changed to *community,* these ways of viewing the world of school management and leadership would no longer make sense. Instead, a new management and leadership would need to be invented to be more congruent with what communities are and how they function. Key would be the development of communities of practice throughout the school. Communities of practice are known as professional learning communities in some places and as critical friends groups in other places.

Members of communities of practice are committed to learning, sharing, and caring for one another. They come together voluntarily because they feel an obligation to do so. Without this voluntary commitment and practice, little of consequence happens in schools for very long. Trusting relationships are key. Why do we need communities of practice? Because today's learning requirements can only be met when collegiality leads to a shared practice of teaching. Communities of practice, we will

soon see, are not cozy collections of people who are committed to group harmony and little else. They are committed to doing what is right for students.

Learning is often scary and is always hard work. As Wilson and Berne (1999) remind us, "You read, you think, you talk. You get something wrong, you don't understand something, you try it again. Sometimes you hit a wall in your thinking, sometimes it is just too frustrating. Yes, learning can be fun and inspiring, but along the way, it usually makes us miserable. And to move forward we often have to acknowledge that which we do not know" (p. 200). Important learnings emerge when teachers' extant assumptions are challenged—when they experience disequilibrium. "Productive disequilibrium offers useful territory for teachers' learning" (Ball & Cohen, 2000, cited in Wilson & Berne, 1999, p. 200).

But why learn together? Because the greatest asset a school has is its collective intelligence. Leaders have to figure out how to harness this intelligence, to grow it, and to use it to help the school achieve its purposes. This intelligence, however, is too often divided among individuals, and this division dilutes its effectiveness. Thus, as we shall see in this text, school leadership should not just be about making individuals smarter for their own sake. It should also be about making schools smarter. Schools get smarter when individual intelligences are aggregated. And smart schools lead to smart students.

The concept of *lifeworld* is introduced in Chapter 1. We might think of the lifeworld as a school's local values, traditions, meanings, and purposes as embodied in traditions, rituals, and norms that define a school's culture. The lifeworld is important because it is at the core of a school's organizational character. Character is what gives a school a special focus, an idea structure, and an orientation toward purpose that has consistently been linked to more effective schooling as measured by levels of civility and student achievement. Chapter 1 also examines how standards can either help or hinder the development of a school's character depending on whether they are driven by that school's lifeworld or imported from afar.

Throughout the text, readers will find a number of inventories and questionnaires. Their purpose is to help raise and clarify issues, stimulate thought, encourage reflection, and provide a basis for discussion of concepts and ideas. They are not presented as fine-tuned measurement devices suitable for "research purposes"; however, faculties and groups may benefit from collecting school data and using results as a basis for discussion and reflection.

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Part One

THE MORAL DIMENSION

Understanding Self and Others

Part One of the text serves a twofold purpose. First, it lays a foundation for understanding the contents of the text. Then, speaking to the moral dimension of the principalship, it establishes a framework for leadership in schools of today and tomorrow. It is designed to provide the reader an opportunity to understand self, and what she or he believes and values. Options are also provided for how effective leaders might behave in the principalship. Qualities and characteristics of effective leaders, competencies they need to master, and skills they need to acquire in order to lead effectively while serving in the role of principal are also addressed. The discussions are based on the premise that the qualities identified are moral imperatives for principal leadership.

Leadership is defined in terms of dimensions, and some of the challenges that principals face while serving as instructional leaders are outlined. Having explored an understanding of self and some of the challenges of the principalship, the reader is invited to develop an understanding of other individuals working in the schoolhouse, as well as those receiving services from the school.

Comprehensively, Part One lays the foundation for the remainder of the text, which describes the moral imperatives of the principalship and illustrates how principals might address those imperatives through reflective practice. The reader can position her- or himself to develop a deep understanding of (1) what it means to be a principal; (2) how one develops craft-knowledge sufficient to serve in the role; (3) the different aspects of schooling; (4) conditions that exist in the schoolhouse; (5) sources of authority; and (6) the importance of relationship building.

SETTING THE STAGE

Administering as a Moral Craft

This chapter focuses on setting the stage for leadership in the principalship, providing a framework for bringing leadership together as a coherent strategy for change and as a moral spearhead for practice. Leadership practice in the principalship is an incredible challenge. However, successful principals are everywhere. They know that for every challenge, there is a reward for them, their school, and the children they serve. Few professions offer as much in return for the required dedication and commitment.

Granted, principal leadership is the key ingredient in school effectiveness, and it takes a special person to lead a 21st-century school. That person has to understand self and others, understand the complexity of organizational life, build bridges through relationships, and develop the capability necessary to engage in leadership best practices (Green, 2010). With these four dimensions operating simultaneously, a foundation for effective principal leadership is in place.

Operationalizing these dimensions, principals can establish professional learning communities wherein **trusting relationships** exist among teachers and principals, and leadership is distributed throughout the organization. Once trusting relationships are established, common values are shared, collaboration exists between and among individuals and groups, there is disciplined behavior in the school, the faculty conducts inquiry into best practices, and actions necessary to maintain professional growth and achieve student success are taken (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2010; Fullan, 2003a). It is a huge challenge to build a professional learning community in a school where one does not exist. However, some school leaders have achieved success in doing so. We need to learn from these school leaders, focus on the right processes and procedures, and create the conditions

under which new leaders can develop and flourish (Fullan, 2003a). Overcoming this challenge is the moral imperative of school leadership, but there are obstacles. Prime among them are the social relationships in schools that too often keep us apart. Yet, it is the quality of these relationships that helps schools develop the relational trust necessary for lasting change. Relational trust is a powerful concept that we discuss in the following section. It is also a necessary ingredient in any attempt to bring about change for the better.

BUILDING RELATIONAL TRUST

Roland Barth (2006) suggests that relationships within schools can be categorized in four ways: as parallel play, as adversarial, as congenial, and as collegial. To illustrate parallel play, imagine two 5-year-olds reading a book in different sections of a kindergarten classroom. One has a book on dogs; the other has a book on cats. They each appear to be enjoying the contents of their books but never share their books with each other, let alone come together to determine that they each are viewing a book on animals that are pets. When relationships become adversarial, teachers get students in their separate classrooms, teach them content material that will be assessed on the state achievement test, and wait for the results, hoping that their students make the highest score. **Congenial relationships**, by contrast, are interactive and positive, personal and friendly, reflecting consideration for others and being helpful when we can. Despite their value, congenial relationships represent promises unfulfilled. There seems to be a line that teachers and others dare not cross. Being involved in the teaching life of others, sharing one's practice with them by working together, and in other ways coming together on behalf of the teaching and learning success for all children may come about, but these characteristics are rarely realized on the congenial side of the line. Thankfully, crossing over the line puts us in a world where together we are able to function as communities of practice. At the heart of any **community of practice** are collegial relationships. In order for meaningful improvement to occur in schools a **collegial culture** must exist, one in which professionals talk about practice, share their craft knowledge, and observe and root for one another's success. In the absence of such a culture, staff or curriculum development, teacher leadership, student appraisal, team teaching, parent involvement, and sustained change are not possible (Barth, 2006).

VIEWS OF THE PRINCIPALSHIP

This text discusses a number of views of the principal: strategic problem solver, cultural leader, barterer, and initiator are examples. Are these the roles and images of leadership that one should follow in order to be an effective principal? Similarly, what about the motivational concepts and ideas that are central to the new principles of management and leadership that will be presented in Chapter 4? Also, what are the

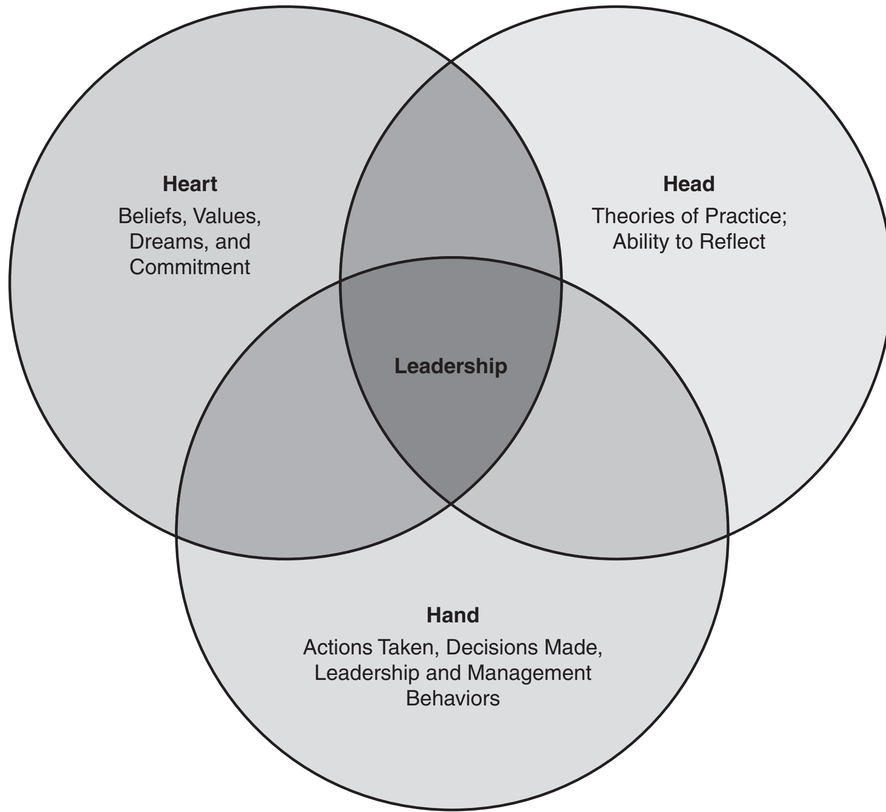

figure **1.1** **The Heart, Head, and Hand of Leadership**

benefits of discussing the characteristics of successful schools, the forces of leadership, strategies for bringing about change, the dimensions of school culture, and concepts discussed in other chapters? Will these ideas, if routinely applied, help one to be an effective principal? The answer is yes—well, no—actually, maybe. Unfortunately, there is no guarantee that the concepts presented in this text will fit all readers or all the contexts and problems they face in the same way. Leadership is a personal thing. It comprises three important dimensions—one's heart, head, and hand. A graphic depiction of these dimensions appears in Figure 1.1. That is why different principals in the same situation so often behave differently. Leader and context defy separation.

THE HEART, HEAD, AND HAND OF LEADERSHIP

Heart—The *heart* of leadership has to do with what a person believes, values, dreams about, and is committed to—that person's *personal vision*, to use a popular term. To be sure, sharing personal conceptions of what a good school

is will reveal many common qualities, but what often makes them personal statements is that they will differ, as well.

Head—The *head* of leadership has to do with the theories of practice each of us has developed over time and our ability to reflect on the situations we face in light of these theories. This process of reflection combined with our personal vision becomes the basis for our strategies and actions.

Hand—The *hand* of leadership has to do with the actions we take, the decisions we make, and the leadership and management behaviors we use as our strategies become institutionalized in the form of school programs, policies, and procedures.

As with heart and head, how we choose to manage and lead are personal reflections, not only of our vision and our practical theories, but also of our personalities and our responses to the unique situations we face. In this idiosyncratic world, one-best-way approaches and cookie-cutter strategies do not work very well. Instead, diversity will likely be the norm as principals practice. Each principal must understand self (Green, 2010), find her or his way, and develop her or his approach, if the heart, head, and hand of leadership are to come together in the form of successful principalship practice.

Does that mean that the concepts presented in this text are not true? If they are not truths to be emulated and imitated, what are they? They comprise a different kind of truth. They represent a concept boutique on one hand and a metaphor repository on another. The idea is to visit the boutique, trying on one idea after another, seeking a fit here or there, and to visit the repository, seeking to create new understandings of situations one faces and new alternatives to one's practice. As boutique and repository, the role of knowledge about schooling changes from being something that principals apply uniformly to being something useful that informs the decisions they make as they practice. This is the nature of **reflective practice**. *Principals reflect* on their actions, and this reflection becomes a part of a continuous learning process.

THE MORAL IMPERATIVE

Although many may prefer the work of administration to be some sort of applied science that is directly connected to a firm knowledge base of theory and research, the reality we face is that it is much more **craftlike**. The message from this reality is equally clear. Successful practice requires the development of **craft know-how**.

Yet, administering schools is no ordinary craft. Bringing together head, heart, and hand in practice; the unique nature of the school's mission; and the typically **loosely structured**, **nonlinear**, and messy context of schooling combine to make administering a ***moral*** **craft**, a fate shared with teaching (Tom, 1984), relationship building (Green, 2010), and supervision (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988). The reasons for this **moral imperative** are (1) the need to transform schools from organizations to

institutions; (2) the need to build character and instill virtue; (3) the need to adopt standards; (4) the need to develop relationships; and (5) the need for discretion.

From Organizations to Institutions

The job of the principal is to transform the school from being an ordinary organization concerned with technical functions in pursuit of objective outcomes into an *institution.* Organizations are little more than technical instruments for achieving objectives. As instruments, they celebrate the value of effectiveness and efficiency by being more concerned with "doing things right" than with "doing right things." Institutions, however, are effective, efficient, and more. They are responsive, adaptive enterprises that exist not only to get a particular job done, but also as entities in and of themselves. In Selznick's words:

> Organizations become institutions as they are infused with value, that is, prized not as tools alone but as sources of direct personal gratification and vehicles of group integrity. This infusion produces a distinct identity for the organization. Where institutionalization is well advanced, distinctive outlooks, habits, and other commitments are unified, coloring all aspects of organizational life and lending it a social integration that goes well beyond formal coordination and command. (Selznick, 1957, p. 40)

Selznick's conception of institution is similar to the more familiar conception of school as a learning community. In learning communities, the focus is on learning, and educators are committed to achieving high levels of learning for themselves and for all students (DuFour, DuFour, Eaker, & Many, 2006). To achieve either, the school leader must move beyond concerns for goals and roles to the task of building purposes into the school structure and embodying these purposes in everything that she or he does with the effect of transforming school members from neutral participants to committed followers. The embodiment of purpose and the development of followership are inescapably moral. The rationale for this statement is further expanded in the next section.

Building Character and Instilling Virtue

The job of the school leader is to provide students with knowledge and skills and to build *character* and instill *virtue.* As Cuban (1988) points out, both technical and moral images are present in teaching and administering. "The technical image contains values that prize accumulated knowledge, efficiency, orderliness, productivity, and social usefulness; the moral image, while not disregarding such values, prizes values directed at molding character, shaping attitudes, and producing a virtuous, thoughtful person" (p. xvii). Technical and moral images of administration cannot be separated in practice. Every technical decision has moral implications. Emphasizing orderliness, for example, might serve as a lesson in diligence for students and might be a reminder to teachers that professional goals cannot be pursued to the extent that bureaucratic values are compromised.

Adopting Appropriate Standards

Whether concern is for virtue or efficiency, some *standard* has to be adopted. What is efficient in this circumstance? How will virtue be determined? Green (2013) proffers that appropriate standards for today's schools should address the questions, "What does an individual need to know and be able to do in order to be an effective leader in today's schools? What type of disposition and what knowledge, skills, and attributes are needed to enable a school leader to perform effectively?" (p. 5). Determining criteria for effective leadership and teaching, deciding on what is a good discipline policy, or coming to grips with promotion criteria standards, for example, all require value judgments. Answers to questions of how and what cannot be resolved objectively as if they were factual assertions, but they must be treated as **normative assertions**. Normative assertions are true only because we decide that they are. "We must decide what ought to be the case. We cannot *discover* what ought to be the case by investigating what is the case" (Taylor, 1961, p. 248). Normative assertions are moral statements.

Balancing Relationships Between Principals and Others

Despite commitments to empowerment and shared decision making, relationships between principals and others are inherently unequal. Although it is often downplayed, and whether they want it or not, principals typically have more *power* than teachers, students, parents, and others. This power is in part derived legally from their hierarchical position, but, for the most part, it is obtained by virtue of the greater access to information and people that their position affords them. Principals are not chained to a tight schedule. They do a lot of walking around. They are the ones who get the phone calls, who are out in the streets, who visit the central office, who have access to the files, and so forth. As a result, principals function more frequently in the roles of figurehead and liaison with outside agencies. Their access to more information allows principals to decide what information will be shared with others, what information will be withheld, and frequently what information will be forgotten. Often, teachers and others in the school rely on the principal to serve as the "coordinating mechanism" that links together what they are doing with what others are doing. In teaching, where much of the work is invisible, the coordinating function is a powerful one. Furthermore, much of the information that principals accumulate is confidential. When teachers have problems, they frequently confide in the principal. Information is a source of power, and the accumulation of power has moral consequences.

Whenever there is an unequal distribution of power between two people, the relationship becomes a moral one. Whether intended or not, leadership involves an offer to control. The follower accepts this offer on the assumption that control will not be exploited. In this sense, leadership is not a right but a responsibility. Morally speaking, its purpose is not to enhance the leader's position or make it easier for the leader to get what she or he wants but to benefit the school. The test of **moral leadership** under these conditions is whether the competence, well-being, and independence of the

follower are enhanced as a result of accepting control and whether the school benefits. Tom (1980) makes a similar argument in pointing out that "the teacher-student relationship is inherently moral because of its inequality" (p. 317).

Utilizing Discretion

The context for administration is surprisingly loose, chaotic, and ambiguous. Thus, despite demands and constraints that circumscribe the principal's world, in actuality, *discretion* is built into the job, and this discretion has moral implications.

For example, frequently how things look is different from how things work. In their timeless research on the reality of managing schools, Morris and colleagues (1984) discovered numerous instances in which principals and schools were able to develop implicit policies and pursue courses of action that only remotely resembled officially sanctioned policies and actions. They noted that not only maintaining student enrollment levels, but also increasing them was often viewed as a managerial necessity by principals. However, principals were not motivated for official "educational" or "societal" reasons, but to protect or enhance the resource allocation base of their schools. Staffing patterns and budget allocations were often linked to a principal's standing among peers and were related as well to morale and productivity levels among teachers. Furthermore, principals of larger schools had more clout with the central office. Simply put, more staff and bigger budgets were viewed as being better. Schools losing resources, however, "usually suffer a decline in purposefulness, security, and confidence that goes beyond the loss of operating funds" (p. 128).

As a result, principals tended to view monitoring, protecting, and increasing school enrollments and attendance as one of their key, albeit implicit, tasks. This led them to engage in courses of action that were at variance with the officially sanctioned definition of their tasks and roles. There was, for example, a concerted effort to change existing programs and revise the existing curriculum so they were more attractive to students and thus better able to hold their enrollment. One of the principals reported, "We may have to cut physics, for instance, and add environmental science. It's in. . . . I've got to get my faculty to see that they have to reshape the traditional curriculum of the school. Their jobs are at stake" (Morris et al., 1984, pp. 128–129). Another principal in their study worked to change his school's kindergarten program so that it was more structured and "rigorous," not for educational reasons or philosophical commitments, but so that the school would be better able to compete with the neighborhood Catholic school.

Despite clear guidelines governing attendance procedures (e.g., fixed attendance boundaries and age requirements), principals became flexible by bending the rules for student admissions and taking liberties with reporting enrollment information to the central office. In the words of one principal, "In general, I'm not picky about where the students in the school live," noting further that if a child subsequently became a behavioral problem or was suspected of being a behavioral problem, she always checked the home address (Morris et al., 1984, p. 30).

Some principals were inclined to look the other way even when they knew that students came from other school districts if they thought the students were "extremely bright." Some principals used leniency in enforcing attendance boundaries as the lever to extract better behavior and more achievement from students. Principals stressed that they were doing the parents and students a favor and expected good behavior in return. Not all students were treated equally. While bright students were encouraged to attend, "troublemakers" were not. In the words of one principal, "Let him go, that guy's been nothing but trouble for us" (Morris et al., 1984, p. 131).

Although discretion can provide principals with a license for abuse, it is also a necessary prerequisite for leadership. "From choice comes autonomy. Autonomy is the necessary condition for leadership to arise. Without choice, there is no autonomy. Without autonomy, there is no leadership" (Cuban, 1988, p. xxii). Discretion, therefore, is necessary if principals are to function effectively. Yet, how principals handle discretion raises moral issues and has moral consequences for the school.

Engaging in Leadership Best Practices

Effective school leaders identify and utilize best practices to address the assessed needs of students. Using theories of practice, they communicate with various publics, make decisions, manage conflict, and lead change. To a large extent, these happenings determine the practices, processes, programs, and procedures that inform the teaching and learning process. Poorly conceived, they have a disparate effect on teacher attitudes and student learning. This line of reasoning is supported by Houchens and Keedy (2009), who argue that principals' theories of practice have an impact on school culture and climate variables, ultimately impacting the teaching and learning process. Identifying practices that effectively provide all students an opportunity to learn is a moral imperative.

UNDERSTANDING THE MORAL DIMENSION IN LEADERSHIP

Key to understanding the moral dimension in leadership is understanding the difference between *normative rationality* (rationality based on what we believe and what we consider to be good) and ***technical rationality*** (rationality based on what is effective and efficient). Happily, the two are not mutually exclusive. Principals want what is good and what is effective for their schools, but when the two are in conflict, the moral choice is to prize the former over the latter. Starratt makes the point poignantly as follows: "'Organizational effectiveness' employs technical rationality, functional rationality, linear logic. Efficiency is the highest value, not loyalty, harmony, honor, beauty, truth. One can run an efficient extermination camp or an efficient monastery. The principles of efficiency are basically the same in either context" (Sergiovanni & Starratt, 1988, p. 218).