

# School principals directly impact student test scores

June 2 2016, by Laura Soderlind

---

School principals who set clear strategic objectives, encourage professional interaction among staff and promote professional development for teachers significantly raise student achievement levels according to a University of Melbourne report on principal effectiveness.

Using unique Victorian public school data from the Department of Education and Training, the report, led by Dr Mick Coelli from the Faculty of Business and Economics at the University of Melbourne, analyses the role of [school principals](#) in determining [student achievement](#) as measured by standardised test scores. The data extends beyond that of other related studies in Australia and overseas.

"We see principals in schools for more years than other related studies so can get closer to estimating their 'full' effect on student achievement," said Dr Coelli.

The research found that principals who involved staff in delivering clear objectives and provided growth opportunities saw a rise in test scores and overall performance.

"More effective principals can raise student performance by as much as 0.22 of a year of learning," said Dr Coelli.

Having a principal that staff members can communicate with and understand their concerns has no direct relation to raising student [test](#)

[scores](#).

"School morale improved in schools with highly effective principals, but this is possibly a result of improved student achievement rather than the cause," said Dr Coelli.

"These findings can assist policy-makers in identifying effective principals or those in need of further support, with particular focus on developing capacity in advancing the learning environment," said Dr Coelli.

Minister for Education James Merlino welcomed the research, and said research partnerships such as that with the Melbourne Institute provided invaluable evidence to guide the Victorian Government's [education](#) policies.

"The Victorian Government is empowering principals as part of its ambitious Education State agenda, including investing in leadership development and coaching programs and more locally based support, and this research shows why we must continue to do this," Mr Merlino said.

"Supporting principals, particularly new and aspiring principals, with professional and leadership development and better support will help ensure our kids can get the best possible education, and the best shot in life."

Provided by University of Melbourne

Citation: School principals directly impact student test scores (2016, June 2) retrieved 3 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2016-06-school-principals-impact-student-scores.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.