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Superintendent leadership: Comparing superintendent and school board president perceptions of essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment according to MCREL's superintendent responsibilities and the Iowa standards for school leaders

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SUPERINTENDENT LEADERSHIP: COMPARING SUPERINTENDENT AND
SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT PERCEPTIONS OF ESSENTIAL LEADERSHIP
CHARACTERISTICS AND CAPABILITIES OF THE SUPERINTENDENT IN
TODAY'S COMPLEX AND EVER-CHANGING EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT
ACCORDING TO MCREL'S SUPERINTENDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND THE
IOWA STANDARDS FOR SCHOOL LEADERS

An Abstract of a Dissertation

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

Approved:

Dr. Dewitt Jones, Committee Chair

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August 2014

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to identify and compare perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. Iowa superintendents and school board presidents were invited to participate in an online survey where they were asked to indicate the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Respondents to the survey included 54.6% of superintendents and 40.5% of school board presidents in Iowa.

The survey in this study used a Likert scale for respondents to list the six Iowa Standards for School Leaders in ranked order of importance. The next section asked respondents to indicate the level of importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Superintendent respondents were asked to indicate their level of performance according to the McRel Superintendents Responsibilities. School board presidents were asked to indicate the level of performance of their local superintendent according to each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Lastly, the respondents used a Likert scale to rank order a list of issues facing superintendents, according to the American Association of School Administrators, the School Superintendent's Association, in order of importance in the respondents' local school district. Demographics data were also collected including the respondents' age, gender, ethnicity, district enrollment, and the number of years the respondent had served in their role as superintendent or school board member.

The study concluded that there were differences in the perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendents. Throughout the analysis of the surveys completed by Iowa superintendents and school board presidents, there were many similarities in the responses of the two groups. Although there were similarities, there were also statistically significant differences in the responses of the two groups on the rank ordering of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders, the level of importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, the performance of the superintendents according to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, and the rank ordering of the issues school districts were facing.

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Approved:

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August 2014

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate my dissertation work to my wife, Nicole, and my children, Maddie, Landon, Claire and Keegan. You have always supported me in my career and my pursuit of my doctorate degree. I have spent a considerable amount of time away from our family as well as on the computer at home, seemingly unengaged from family activities during my dissertation work. Thank you for your support and patience in this process. I also dedicate this to my family as an effort to prove that anything is possible when you're dedicated to the time and hard work it may take.

Philippians 4:13

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I would like to thank my colleagues that serve alongside me in our school district. I have an incredible school board and administrative team that have been very understanding and supportive of the time it took to complete this work. Thank you for allowing me to pursue this work.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

The role of the public school superintendent is nearly 200 years old, and the general responsibilities of the superintendent have not dramatically changed in that time (Knezevich, 1984). Additionally, while there are commonalities of the role of the superintendent in every school district, there are also unique expectations of the superintendent of each local school district. In Iowa, the public school superintendent is responsible for leading and managing a school district ranging in size from less than 100 students to over 32,000 students (Iowa Department of Education, 2013). The superintendent is hired by a local school board to manage the day-to-day operations of the school district, including personnel, budget and finance, curriculum, transportation, buildings and grounds, construction and remodeling of facilities, technology integration, and other topics and issues that arise on a regular basis. These areas of need are balanced within these school districts all while striving to keep the vision of school district clear and articulated for the students, staff, parents, community, and school board members (Iowa Association of School Boards [IASB], 2013).

Under the direction of school boards and superintendents, school districts are changing, innovating, and striving to improve the education children are receiving at a rapid pace (Wagner, Kegan, Lahey & Lemons, 2006). This rapid attempt to change is occurring for numerous reasons, some of which include federal and state legislative mandates, curricular improvements, advancements in technology available to schools,

societal and social changes, changes in community, adjustments in family and parent dynamics and interests, and pressure to measure up to goals that are developed for the school district. School districts are striving to be effectively proactive in these changes and innovations while at the same time being forced to be reactive (Wagner et al., 2006).

The local school board, which oversees the superintendent and each school district in Iowa, operates as the governing body of the school district. The school board and superintendent typically meet in a public setting once or twice per month in an effort to work through the decisions the school board is required to make for its school district. According to the Iowa Association of School Boards, there are six areas that serve as the foundation for an effective school board. They are: complying with state and federal law and board policy, acting with fiscal responsibility, establishing a human resource system that enables all people to contribute meaningfully, ensuring safe and equitable access to learning, building effective legislative and community relationships, and operating effectively as a board team (Iowa Association of School Boards, n.d.).

One of the important roles of the school board is to employ a superintendent, and whenever there is a vacancy in the position, to act as the school board's chief executive officer (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2011). This employment of a superintendent is a critical step for a school district, and there needs to be careful consideration given to who is chosen and that person's ability to lead an individual school district effectively, especially in this changing landscape of education. While superintendents are educated in the general oversight of a school district, there are unique needs of each school district that require the match of a superintendent to a school district to be a good fit.

Statement of the Problem

While the leadership demands for superintendents are tremendous, and there are incessant changes and innovations taking place in schools, the superintendent in each Iowa school district is charged with effectively leading in numerous areas. Given the constant pressure to improve the educational practices of school districts among all of these demands, superintendents need the leadership capacity to maneuver in their leadership role successfully. This pressure on the superintendent is typically felt from many directions, such as expectations of school staff members, school board members, parents, and community members. Knowing that reality, current and future superintendents need to be prepared for this pressure that comes with the superintendent profession.

In order to effectively lead school districts, superintendents need a great deal of support in their work. Included in the needed supports, a working and supportive relationship between the superintendent and the school board needs to be established since it is the school board to which the superintendent answers (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2011). An effective relationship must exist between the school board and the superintendent in order for the district leadership to be successful. School boards are the evaluators of superintendents, and the relationship between the school board and the superintendent determines the success and length of tenure of the superintendent (Byrd, Drews & Johnson, 2006).

Even more essential than this relationship with the school board is the one between the superintendent and the school board president, who is elected by the

members of the school board on an annual basis, acts as the spokesperson for the school board, and draws the school board together to act as a whole, among other things (IASB, 2011). The school board president is the leader of the school board and serves as the key communication link between the board and the superintendent. School board presidents are an essential part of the hiring and firing of a superintendent in a school district (Glass, 2002).

In 2012, District Administration Leadership Institute (DALI) conducted a study on superintendent compensation and career considerations. In the DALI report, it was found that 28.5% of superintendents found their school boards to be moderately supportive or not very supportive. When asked about the support from other interest groups, superintendents indicated that 45.4% of teaching staff, 49% of local elected officials, and 49.5% of parents were either moderately supportive or not very supportive. For those respondents that indicated an expectation of seeking a new job within the next two to three years, 30.7% of the superintendents cited the lack of support from the school board and community as the primary reason for the career change (District Administration Leadership Institute, 2012). Conflict with the school board is cited as a common reason for superintendents to leave a school district (Rausch, 2001).

When superintendents were asked about their compensation, in the DALI study, 57.8% of the superintendents indicated they more often or much more often find it necessary to defend the compensation they receive from the school district. Nearly half of superintendents are sometimes, frequently, or very frequently questioned about

receiving higher compensation than they should while 41.3% of superintendents viewed their compensation as less than equitable (DALI, 2012).

A final component of the DALI study indicated that a quarter of the superintendents surveyed viewed their positions as somewhat secure or not very secure. Of those surveyed, 49% of the superintendents indicated that they planned to leave their current position within the next 2-3 years (DALI, 2012).

In order to ensure the success of superintendents, and considering the changing and complex educational environment, school superintendents and school board presidents must identify the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of superintendents. The purpose of this study was to identify and compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment.

The research questions were as follows:

1. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
2. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

Limitations and Delimitations

This study has limitations. This study, through quantitative survey research, will encompass perceptions from Iowa school board presidents and superintendents. The survey used in this research will not collect the qualitative component of this topic. Follow-up to this dissertation could include the qualitative component that could research additional feelings and thoughts supporting the quantitative results this dissertation reports. This study would also need to be replicated in other states to effectively generalize the results beyond this demographic setting in Iowa.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The literature review of this study focuses on three areas as they relate to superintendent leadership. The focus areas were: (1) characteristics, traits, and capabilities of effective superintendents, (2) the role of school boards in school district leadership, and (3) common conflicts of the superintendent – which includes the superintendent and school board and/or school board president relationship.

Characteristics, Traits, and Capabilities of Effective Superintendents

Leadership is important for the success of the public education system as a complex organization (Glass, 2001). In effective schools, instructional leadership has been proven to be critically important. When leadership responsibilities are carried out effectively by district leaders, student achievement is positively impacted (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Effective leadership also has significant effects on learning, making instructional leadership of superintendents imperative to the successful accomplishments of a school district (Forsyth, 2004). Historically, the superintendent has been viewed as the person that ensures that the school district is running efficiently (Houston & Eadie, 2002).

According to Doug Reeves, the expectations for superintendents are “extraordinary and almost comically unreasonable” (Reeves, 2004, p. 57). The research and literature that exist add little rationality to this thought (Reeves, 2004). Reeves stated that the expectation of superintendents is that they become a mythical combination of “Attila the Hun, Catherine the Great, Churchill, Elizabeth I, Jefferson, Jesus, Machiavelli,

Moses, Napoleon, Nixon, Rasputin, Roosevelt (Teddy and Franklin), Washington, and untold numbers of yet to be reconstructed historical leaders whose biographers have found some link between personal traits and organizational effectiveness” (Reeves, 2004, p. 57).

The Institute for Educational Leadership (2001) published a report written by a task force focused on school district leadership. The following was stated in the report:

The challenge for district leaders is to unite the community around a common vision for the schools and then structure district leadership and the school system around that vision. To do this, leaders will have to focus on involving the community in planning for leadership succession, developing and maintaining an informed leadership base, structuring a learning organization, and holding leadership accountable for gains in student achievement. District leaders will need expertise in organizational, public, and instructional leadership to succeed (Usdan, McCloud, Podmostko, & Cuban, 2001, p. 32).

Historically, the superintendent has been observed as the person who keeps the school district running efficiently (Houston & Eadie, 2002). Today, superintendents need vision, skill, and knowledge to effectively operate a school district (Hoyle, Bjork, Collier, & Glass, 2005). Superintendents must be bold, creative, and energetic leaders who can respond quickly to issues (Hoyle, 2002).

Financial matters and accountability have been of high concern to superintendents (Houston & Eadie, 2002). Student achievement has also been a high priority due to increased questioning by governmental bodies, special interest groups, and the media (Hoyle, 2002). The superintendency is a stressful position due to school finance shortfalls, federal and state mandates, negative media attention, relationships with individual school board members, and conflicting community expectations (Pascopella, 2008).

Several organizations have strived to define the qualities that superintendents need to exhibit in order to be deemed successful. In 1993, the American Association of School Administrators (AASA) published work that was completed by the Commission on Standards for the Superintendency. Under the direction of John Hoyle, the Commission on Standards for the Superintendency, including 100 leaders in education, business, and government, collaborated in the development of the Professional Standards for the Superintendency. The purpose of these standards was to impact the work of practicing superintendents, university courses, superintendent certification, and the selection and evaluation of superintendents (Hoyle, 1993). The following are the eight standards as developed by the Commission on Standards for the Superintendency (Hoyle, 1993):

- Standard 1: Leadership and District Culture – Demonstrate executive leadership by developing a collective district vision; shape school culture and climate; provide purpose and direction for individuals and groups; demonstrate an understanding of international issues affecting education; formulate strategic plans, goals, and change efforts with staff and community; set priorities in the context of community, student and staff needs; serve as an articulate spokesperson for the welfare of all students in a multicultural context;
- Standard 2: Policy and Governance – Develop procedures for working with the board of education that define mutual expectations, working relationships and strategies for formulating district policy for external and internal

programs; adjust local policy to state and federal requirements and constitutional provisions, standards and regulatory applications; recognize and apply standards involving civil and criminal liabilities;

- Standard 3: Communication and Community Relations – Articulate district purpose and priorities to the community and mass media; request and respond to community feedback; and demonstrate consensus building and conflict mediation. Identify, track, and deal with issues. Formulate and carry out plans for internal and external communications. Exhibit an understanding of school districts as political systems by applying communication skills to strengthen community support; align constituencies in support of district priorities; build coalitions to gain financial and programmatic support; formulate democratic strategies for referenda; relate political initiative to the welfare of children;
- Standard 4: Organizational Management – Exhibit an understanding of the school district as a system by defining processes for gathering, analyzing, and using data for decision making; manage the data flow; frame and solve problems; frame, develop priorities, and formulate solutions; assist others to form reasoned opinions; reach logical conclusions and make quality decisions to meet internal and external customer expectations; plan and schedule personal and organization work; establish procedures to regulate activities and projects; delegate and empower at appropriate organizational levels; secure

and allocate human and material resources; develop and manage the district budget; maintain accurate fiscal records;

- Standard 5: Curriculum Planning and Development – Design curriculum and a strategic plan that enhance teaching and learning in multiple contexts; provide planning and future methods to anticipate occupational trends and their educational implications; identify taxonomies of instructional objectives and validation procedures for curricular units, using theories of cognitive development; align and sequence curriculum; use valid and reliable performance indicators and testing procedures to measure performance outcomes; and describe the proper use of computers and other learning and information technologies;
- Standard 6: Instructional Management – Exhibit knowledge of instructional management by implementing a system that includes research findings on learning and instructional strategies, instructional time, advanced electronic technologies, and resources to maximize student outcomes; describe and apply research and best practice on integrating curriculum and resources for multicultural sensitivity and assessment strategies to help all students achieve at high levels;
- Standard 7: Human Resources Management – Develop a staff evaluation and development system to improve the performance of all staff members; select appropriate models for supervision based on adult motivation research; identify alternative employee benefit packages; and describe and apply the

legal requirements for personnel selection, development, retention, and dismissal;

- Standard 8: Values and Ethics of Leadership – Understand and model appropriate value systems, ethics and moral leadership; know the role of education in a democratic society; exhibit multicultural and ethnic understanding and related behavior, adapt educational programming to the needs of diverse constituencies; balance complex community demands in the best interest of the student; scan and monitor the environment for opportunities for staff and students; respond in an ethical and skillful way to the electronic and printed news media; and coordinate social agencies and human services to help each student grow and develop as a caring, informed citizen (Hoyle, 1993).

Each of the individual Professional Standards for the Superintendency included between 5-17 indicators listing the responsibilities of the superintendent. (Hoyle, 1993).

In 1994 the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), a program of the Council of Chief State School Officers, set out to establish common standards for school district leaders, entitled the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards. The Council of Chief State School Officers was comprised of the Directors of each of the State Departments of Education. The ISLLC was supported by 24 member states (Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Texas, Virginia,

Washington, and Wisconsin), American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, American Association of School Administrators, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Association of Teacher Educators, National Association of Elementary School Principals, National Association of Secondary School Principals, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Council of Professors of Educational Administration, National School Boards Association, and University Council for Educational Administration (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 1996).

The following are the seven principles the ISLLC operated under in their work of developing the ISLLC Standards (ISLLC, 1996):

- Standards should reflect the centrality of student learning.
- Standards should acknowledge the changing role of the school leader.
- Standards should recognize the collaborative nature of school leadership.
- Standards should be high, upgrading the quality of the profession.
- Standards should inform performance-based systems of assessment and evaluation for school leaders.
- Standards should be integrated and coherent.
- Standards should be predicated on the concepts of access, opportunity, and empowerment for all members of the school community (p. 7).

The ISLLC stated that district leadership is a complex task. They also indicated that successful leaders have different beliefs and maneuver differently in their respective roles. They found commonalities that bridge all effective leaders however in that they are all strong educators, focus on the improvement of student learning, view themselves

as advocates for the children they serve, and show compassion for the educational community (ISLLC, 1996). The original ISLLC standards were released in 1996 in the form of six standards, as follows (ISLLC, 1996):

- Standard 1: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community (p. 10).
- Standard 2: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth (p. 12).
- Standard 3: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment (p. 14).
- Standard 4: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to the diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources (p. 16).
- Standard 5: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner (p. 18).

- Standard 6: A school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (p. 20).

Within each of these standards exists a list of 19 to 39 specific areas of knowledge, beliefs, and dispositions superintendents need to possess in order to be successful (ISLLC, 1996).

After the ISLLC standards were released, several states started using the standards to construct their own leadership standards. Iowa was among the states that started using the ISLLC standards in the development of leadership standards and criteria (Wallace Foundation, 2009). According to Dr. Troyce Fisher of School Administrators of Iowa (SAI), a group of 40 superintendents and representatives from the Iowa Association of School Boards and Institutions of Higher Education were gathered as a task force charged with the development of identifying leadership standards for Iowa (Fisher, 2013). The task force used the ISLLC standards as the primary research for this work as well as other authors that helped the process. The task force distinguished the responsibilities of superintendents from principals and other administrators. The Iowa Standards for School Leaders (ISSL) were released in 2004, and the Iowa Board of Education officially adopted them in 2007. The following, which are nearly identical to the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium standards, are the Iowa Standards for School Leaders (Iowa Department of Education, 2008):

- Standard 1 (Shared Vision): An educational leader promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and

stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

- Standard 2 (Culture of Learning): An educational leader promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development.
- Standard 3 (Management): An educational leader promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment.
- Standard 4 (Family and Community): An educational leader promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources.
- Standard 5 (Ethics): An educational leader promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.
- Standard 6 (Societal Context): An educational leader promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community, and responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context (Iowa Department of Education, 2008).

In addition to these standards, the Iowa Standards for School Leaders Task Force also developed numerous resources school districts could use with superintendents, including guiding principles, standards, criteria, descriptors, potential artifacts, sample school board

questions, a model evaluation guide, and a sample job description that were all based on the newly developed Iowa Standards and Criteria for School Leaders (Fisher, 2013).

In 2007, with the continued goal of clearly defining standards for executive leadership in schools, the National Policy Board for Educational Administration, Council of Chief State School Officers, and The Wallace Foundation gathered in an effort to redefine the Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium Standards that were established in 1996. In their work together, the consortium recognized that educational leadership was extremely important in improving the teaching and learning for all children (Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium, 2008). In 2008, the consortium released the ISLLC Educational Leadership Policy Standards: 2008 (Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium, 2008).

The 2008 ISLLC Standards continued to focus on the primary role of the superintendent being the improvement of teaching and learning for all children. They also included a wider body of knowledge than had been collected over the prior decade (ISLLC, 2008). In the release of the 2008 Standards, the consortium continued to describe the role of the school administrator as increasingly complex stating, “Educational leaders must not only manage finances, keep buses running on time, and make hiring decisions, but they must also be instructional leaders, data analysts, community relations officers, and change agents. They have to be able to mobilize staff and employ all the tools in an expanded toolbox” (ISLLC, 2008, p. 3). The intent of the updated ISLLC standards was to encompass all of these new realizations and help educational leaders meet these complex demands (ISLLC, 2008). In comparison to the

1996 Standards, the 2008 ISLLC Standards included similar overall language. In the 2008 standards, functions of educational leaders were added to replace the knowledge, skills, and dispositions included in the 1996 Standards. The new functions were included with each revised standard describing the role of the educational leader. These new standards also focused on the term “educational leader” rather than the “school administrator.” The following are the 2008 Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium standards (ISLLC, 2008):

- Standard 1: An educational leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by all stakeholders.
- Standard 2: An educational leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
- Standard 3: An educational leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
- Standard 4: An educational leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to the diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.
- Standard 5: An educational leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

- Standard 6: An educational leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (pp. 14-15).

At the same time the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium Standards and the Iowa Standards for School Leaders were being developed, the Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McRel) organization began a meta-analysis series of work on a similar topic in 1998. Their work focused on taking the current body of knowledge from research and translating it into actions and behaviors for educators. The efforts of McRel's work first work focused on classroom leadership, which was published in the book, titled *Classroom Instruction That Works*, in 2001, and *Classroom Management That Works*, in 2003. When the findings on classroom leadership were released, McRel then focused on school leadership. Their research on school leadership was published in the book, titled *School Leadership That Works*, in 2005 (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Lastly, in their work with McRel, Dr. Timothy Waters and Dr. Robert Marzano turned their attention to district or superintendent leadership, published in a working paper, *School District Leadership That Works: The Effect of Superintendent Leadership on Student Achievement*, in 2006. In their research on district leadership, the following four questions were asked in McRel's meta-analysis research (Waters & Marzano, 2006):

- What is the strength of relationship between leadership at the district level and average student academic achievement in the district?

- What specific district-level leadership responsibilities are related to student academic achievement?
- What specific leadership practices are used to fulfill these responsibilities?
- What is the variation in the relationship between district leadership and student achievement? Stated differently, do behaviors associated with strong leadership always have a positive effect on student achievement (p. 6)?

The meta-analysis of research studies that were used to answer these questions included research and data from 2,714 school districts, 4,434 superintendent ratings, and over 3 million student achievement scores. Waters and Marzano (2006) identify four major findings in their meta-analysis of district leadership in effective school districts:

- District level leadership matters.
- Effective superintendents focus on creating goal-oriented districts.
- Superintendent tenure is positively correlated with student achievement.
- Effective superintendents may provide principals with “defined autonomy”.

That is, they may set clear, non-negotiable goals for learning and instruction, yet provide school leadership teams with the responsibility and authority for determining how to meet those goals (pp. 3-4).

Through their work, reported in 2006, Waters and Marzano found a statistically significant relationship between district leadership and student achievement. Waters and Marzano (2006) also found six superintendent responsibilities that have a significantly significant correlation with average student academic achievement. The six

superintendent responsibilities, referred to as McRel's Superintendent Responsibilities, are as follows (Waters & Marzano, 2006):

- Collaborative goal-setting: The superintendent involved board members and principals in the process of setting goals.
- Non-negotiable goals for student achievement and instruction: Goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research
- Board alignment with and support of district goals: Board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.
- Monitoring achievement and instruction goal: The superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.
- Use of resources to support goals for instruction and achievement: Resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.
- Defined autonomy: The superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development (pp. 15-16)

Prior to any of the referenced superintendent standards and responsibilities being released, in a 2001 leadership issue paper, Thomas Glass (2001) spoke to the absence of research on the superintendent role in education.

After years of highly publicized reform efforts, school reformers are beginning to take notice that superintendents and school boards are important participants in

improving school performance. Unfortunately, there is little data-based research on the role of the superintendency and nearly 14,000 men and women who provide day-to-day executive leadership for nearly 90,000 schools (Glass, 2001, p. 3).

In the last two decades, there has been extensive work on the development of standards and criteria for educational leaders both on a national level as well as in Iowa. As this body of research continues to grow and become more detailed, educational leaders continue to gain a clearer understanding of the exemplar descriptors of the characteristics, traits, and capabilities of a school superintendent (Bjork & Kowalski, 2005).

School Boards and Their Role in School District Leadership

In the United States, the responsibility for management of the traditional public school system is held at the local level (Allen & Mintrom, 2009). School boards, typically comprised of five to seven individuals, are established to oversee local school districts. The school board members, who are typically elected by the voters of a local school district, are responsible for collectively establishing school policies, setting school budgets, and the employment of district superintendents (Allen & Mintrom, 2009; Norton, 2005). As elected officials, individual school board members are not able to act on their own. This system provides local control of a school district through the election of school board members who are able to perform specific duties as determined by law (Norton, 2005).

The purpose of the system of decentralization is to keep the school close to the people. The notion is that education is such a personal and private affair and yet so vital to the preservation and improvement of the culture that it must at once be kept close to the will of the people and be as safe from alien seizure as possible (Miller, Madden & Kincheloe, 1972, p. 25).

School boards are an extension of the state and federal government acting to meet the educational needs of the local school district (Norton, 2005).

While the work of a school board is ultimately determined at the local level, several state and national organizations have worked to provide direction for school boards. According to The Center for Public Education, there are clear characteristics of school boards in high-achieving school districts. The Center for Public Education has established the following as characteristics of effective school boards, stating effective school boards:

- commit to a vision of high expectations for student achievement and quality instruction and define clear goals toward that vision.
- have strong shared beliefs and values about what is possible for students and their ability to learn, and of the system and its ability to teach all children at high levels.
- are accountability driven, spending less time on operational issues and more time focused on policies to improve student achievement.
- have a collaborative relationship with staff and the community and establish a strong communications structure to inform and engage both internal and external stakeholders in setting and achieving district goals.

- are data savvy: they embrace and monitor data, even when the information is negative, and use it to drive continuous improvement.
- align and sustain resources, such as professional development, to meet district goals.
- lead as a united team with the superintendent, each from their respective roles, with strong collaboration and trust.
- take part in team development and training, sometimes with their superintendents, to build shared knowledge, values and commitments for their improvement efforts (Center for Public Education, 2011).

There is a great deal of work that must be done by the governing body in a school district. Keeping the district vision updated, prioritizing decisions, coming to agreement on district objectives, and overseeing financial and educational indicators are imperative to the work of the school board (Eadie, 2003). Eadie states the following tasks must be completed to ensure school district success:

- Updating the school district's vision and mission statements as needed in response to school district changes.
- Identifying issues that are impacting the school district in order to address them in a timely manner.
- Prioritizing issues of the school district and when to address them.
- Reaching consensus on operational goals.
- Incessantly monitoring school district financial and educational achievement (Eadie, 2003, p. 43).

In the Iowa Association of School Boards Lighthouse Study (2000), it was found that school districts with higher academic achievement on standardized assessments typically have school boards that have higher expectations for their school district. Board members in these districts tend not to make excuses for student achievement, such as the income level or home life of the students. Board members in the higher-achieving school districts typically also have a viewpoint that students have untapped potential, while in the lower-achieving school districts, board members accept that they are doing the best they can for students. The higher-achieving school districts also tend to have a better understanding of their school district's curriculum, instruction, professional development, and have clearly defined student achievement goals that are communicated and shared with school personnel and the community. These goals also help teachers and administrators in setting their own student achievement goals. In lower-achieving school districts, board members have less knowledge of goal setting, curriculum, instruction, and assessment, and goals of staff members were rarely connected to the work of the school board (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2000).

Selecting a superintendent for the school district is the most important decision made by a school board. It is through school boards that superintendents receive their power (Glass, Bjork & Brunner, 2000). The superintendent is the closest partner of the school board in providing leadership to the school district. The priorities of the superintendent and school board require collaboration to establish specific performance goals (Houston & Eadie, 2002).

Evaluations, Politics, Relationships, and Common Conflicts of the Superintendent

The superintendent and the school board are the two key parts of a school district's leadership team (Houston & Eadie, 2002). A good relationship between the school board and superintendent is important to the success of a school district (Byrd et al., 2006). The relationship between the superintendent and school board has a significant impact a school district's educational program (Fusarelli & Peterson, 2002). For school districts to succeed, there needs to be a close-knit relationship between the superintendent and school board. This relationship is notoriously difficult to continue over time, and it will deteriorate if the relationship is not continuously worked on and developed (Eadie, 2003).

One of the most important functions of a school board is the evaluation of their superintendent (Houston & Eadie, 2002). Evaluating a superintendent has at least two purposes. One is to determine the superintendent's contract and compensation package (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). The other is to improve the executive leadership skills of the superintendent (Hoyle et al., 2005). The superintendent evaluation process needs to have clear targets, objectives, or goals as the basis; otherwise the evaluation process can become subjective (Eadie, 2003). Superintendent evaluation will only be effective if board members and superintendents understand the practical, political, and legal base of the superintendent evaluation process (Eadie, 2003). The following procedures are recommended in completing an annual superintendent evaluation (Hoyle et al., 2005):

1. Establish procedures for setting goals or targets that define expectations and set priorities for the superintendent being appraised.

2. Develop evaluation processes in collaboration with the superintendent being appraised.
3. Conduct formative conferences to provide ongoing monitoring of performance.
4. Conduct a final summative conference (p. 211).

These procedures are also supported by Houston and Eadie (2002) who recommend the following steps (Houston & Eadie, 2002):

1. Utilizing of the board's executive committee to ensure the evaluation process is well designed and carried out.
2. Basing the evaluation on agreeable and negotiated performance targets.
3. Including active face-to-face dialogue in meetings between the superintendent and the executive committee.
4. Keeping the focus on education and growth.
5. Reaching formal consensus and maintaining formal documentation thereof.
6. Keeping the entire governing board fully informed and inviting them to comment (pp. 86-88).

The Iowa Association of School Boards, School Administrators of Iowa, and the Wallace Foundation published an approach to superintendent evaluation, stating a superintendent evaluation system is very important because it “defines expectations, enhances communication, prioritizes district goals and supports the board of education to focus its attention on holding the superintendent accountable for improving the

achievement of students” (Iowa Association of School Boards, School Administrators of Iowa, & The Wallace Foundation, 2010, p. 2).

In 2012, District Administration Leadership Institute (DALI) conducted a study on superintendent compensation and career considerations. In the DALI report, it was found that 28.5% of superintendents found their school boards to be moderately supportive or not very supportive. When asked about the support from other interest groups, superintendents indicated that 45.4% of teaching staff, 49% of local elected officials, and 49.5% of parents were either moderately supportive or not very supportive. For those respondents that indicated an expectation of seeking a new job within the next 2-3 years, 30.7% of the superintendents cited the lack of support from the school board and community as the primary reason for the career change (District Administration Leadership Institute, 2012). Conflict with the school board is cited as a common reason for superintendents to leave a school district (Rausch, 2001).

When superintendents were asked about their compensation, in the DALI study, 57.8% of the superintendents indicated they more often or much more often found it necessary to defend the compensation they receive from the school district. Nearly half of superintendents were sometimes, frequently, or very frequently questioned about receiving higher compensation than they should while 41.3% of superintendents viewed their compensation as less than equitable (DALI, 2012).

A final component of the DALI study indicated that a quarter of the superintendents surveyed viewed their positions as somewhat secure or not very secure.

Of those surveyed, 49% of the superintendents indicated that they planned to leave their current position within the next two to three years (DALI, 2012).

In order to effectively lead school districts, superintendents need a great deal of support in their work. Included in the needed supports, a working and supportive relationship between the superintendent and the school board needs to be established since it is the school board to which the superintendent answers (Iowa Association of School Boards, 2011). Traditionally, school boards have been responsible for policy creation, and superintendents have been responsible for policy implementation. These roles get entangled when a superintendent focuses on policy creation, and school board members begin focusing on day-to-day superintendent responsibilities (Kowalski, 2006).

The school board and superintendent are two critical pieces of the leadership of a school district. A good relationship between the superintendent and school board is paramount to the success of a school district (Houston & Eadie, 2002). An effective relationship must exist between the school board and the superintendent in order for the district leadership to be successful. School boards are the evaluators of superintendents, and the relationship between the school board and the superintendent determines the success and length of tenure of the superintendent (Byrd et al., 2006). This relationship between the superintendent and school board is historically difficult to establish, and it will deteriorate if the relationship is not continuously developed (Eadie, 2003). This requires the superintendent to effectively monitor this relationship with the school board at all times. It is the superintendent's responsibility to effectively communicate with the

school board in order to build the school board's trust in the superintendent's leadership (Houston & Eadie, 2002).

Even more essential than this relationship with the school board is the one between the superintendent and the school board president, who is elected by the members of the school board on an annual basis, acts as the spokesperson for the school board, and draws the school board together to act as a whole, among other things (IASB, 2011). The school board president is the leader of the school board and serves as the key communication link between the school board and the superintendent. School board presidents are also an essential part of the hiring and firing of a superintendent in a school district (Glass, 2002). According to Eadie (2008), the strongest board president and superintendent relationships are supported by superintendents who:

- Bring a positive attitude to their working relationship with the board president.
- Take the trouble to get to know the board president.
- Reach agreement on the basic division of labor with the board president.
- Make sure the president succeeds as chair of the board.
- Help the board president achieve his or her professional objectives (p. 1).

With the importance of the superintendent and board president relationship, it is imperative that this study was completed. In order to ensure the success of superintendents, and considering the changing and complex educational environment, school superintendents and school board presidents must identify the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of superintendents. The purpose of this study was to identify and compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents

in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment.

Summary

This literature review has described the essential characteristics, traits, and capabilities of superintendent leadership through an historical lens, focusing on the research that has been done to create standard and performance targets for superintendents. The literature also focused on the role of school boards in school district leadership, including research that has been completed to identify effective practices of the school board. Lastly, this literature review identified common conflicts of the superintendent including evaluation, politics, and relationships. The relationship with the school board, and especially the school board president, was identified as being critical in the success of the superintendent. The focus of the research completed in this study was based on the relationship between the superintendent and school board president, including the expectations superintendents and school board presidents have for the role of the superintendent.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to compare the perceptions of Iowa school board presidents and superintendents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities in relation to the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of a superintendent. In addition, this study compared the perceptions between Iowa superintendents and school board presidents on the performance of their local superintendent in accordance with the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The research needed to be completed in order for school board members, superintendents, and their professional organizations to examine the potential differences in perceptions between board presidents and superintendents. This comparison was also researched in order for current and future superintendents to be successful in their chosen profession.

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted in the state of Iowa. The target populations of interest in this study were the school board presidents and superintendents in Iowa in the 2013-2014 school year. Following the proposal of this study, the researcher contacted the Executive Director of School Administrators of Iowa, Dr. Dan Smith, and Executive Director of Iowa Association of School Boards, Dr. Tom Downs, regarding this proposed research. Both were provided with the rationale for the need of the research and a copy of the questionnaire to be used. On behalf of the organizations, the Executive Directors provided letters of support. Both letters are attached in the appendices of this study. The

Iowa Association of School Boards agreed to provide a current list of email addresses for all Iowa school board presidents. School Administrators of Iowa agreed to provide direction for the principal investigator to secure the email addresses for all Iowa superintendents.

In December 2013, the Principal Investigator sent an email to all potential respondents of the questionnaire, Iowa Superintendents and Iowa School Board Presidents. This email provided an introduction to the survey research being done in order to establish a need and rationale for the research being conducted. This email indicated to the potential respondents that they would be receiving another email in January 2014 with an invitation to participate in the questionnaire and directions for completing the questionnaire. This introductory email is attached in the appendices of this study.

In January 2014, the Principal Investigator sent an email to all potential respondents of the questionnaire, Iowa School Superintendents and Iowa School Board Presidents. This email provided an additional introduction to the questionnaire. The email also provided an internet link to the two questionnaires, separate for superintendents and board presidents, which was administered using Survey Monkey Gold Edition. The invitation to participate in the questionnaires, and the questionnaires, are attached in the appendices of this study.

At the time of the study, there were 346 school districts in the State of Iowa (Iowa School Directory, 2013). School board presidents and superintendents from every school district in Iowa were invited to respond to an anonymous, electronic survey designed to

generate responses from board presidents and superintendents on their perceived importance they held for each of Iowa Standards for School Leaders and McRel's Superintendent Responsibilities.

One week after the invitation to participate in the questionnaire, the Principal Investigator sent an email to all potential respondents of the questionnaire in an effort to remind the respondents to participate in the questionnaire, if they had not already done so. The internet link to the questionnaire was again provided. The reminder to participate in the questionnaire is attached in the appendices of this study.

The Principal Investigator protected the privacy of the respondents of the questionnaire by making the questionnaire results anonymous. Direct personal identifiers such as name, address, telephone number, social security number, identification number, medical record, number, license number, photographs, and biometric information were not collected. Indirect personal identifiers were collected. These indirect personal identifiers include how long the respondents had served in their role, school district student enrollment, and the respondents' age, ethnicity, and gender. Given the number of respondents, the indirect personal identifiers did not allow the principal investigator to identify who had or had not responded to the questionnaire. This indirect personal identifier information was important to the survey data to better analyze the responses that were received and fully understand the results of the survey information from school superintendents and school board presidents from these sub-populations. Although risk was minimal, no individual IP addresses were identified, and all participant data was aggregated in a secure digital location with no school or individual participant identifiers

to protect privacy and confidentiality to the greatest extent possible. Given the nature of the internet, the principal investigator could not guarantee the security of any information transmitted over the internet. All data was reported in aggregate form.

Respondents were provided with the rationale for the survey research and an explanation of its importance. Respondents made a personal decision as to whether they responded to the questionnaire. The principal investigator was a superintendent in Iowa at the time of this study. The respondents were superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa. As an Iowa superintendent, the principal investigator completed the survey. There was not a direct relationship or aspect of undue influence or coercion between the principal investigator and the remainder of the respondents.

The survey caused the respondents, Iowa superintendents and school board presidents, to reflect on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities in the role of the Iowa superintendent. The Iowa school board president respondents were also asked to indicate the level of performance of their local superintendent, according to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The Iowa superintendent respondents were asked to indicate their personal level of performance as a superintendent, according to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The risk in completing this survey was minimal. There were not any direct personal identifiers included in this questionnaire. Respondents to the questionnaire were anonymous, and responses to the questionnaire were kept confidential.

Instrumentation

This dissertation is categorized as a quantitative study of the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of Iowa superintendents. The principal investigator developed the instrument used in this study. The first section of the survey was a ranking scale in which board presidents and superintendents ranked the six Iowa Standards for School Leaders in order of perceived importance by the responders (1 being the most important – 6 being the least important). The six Iowa Standards for School Leaders choices are as follows:

- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. (Shared Vision)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development. (Culture of Learning)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment. (Management)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources. (Family and Community)

- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner. (Ethics)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community and, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (Societal Context)

The second section of the questionnaire was a forced Likert instrument consisting of the six McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Each of the six questions required the superintendent and school board president responders to choose one of the following choices regarding their perceived importance of the McRel Superintendent

Responsibilities:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

The third section of the questionnaire was a forced Likert instrument consisting of the six McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Each of the six questions required the superintendent and school board president responders to choose one of the following choices regarding the performance of the superintendent in their local school district in relation to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities:

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree

- Agree
- Strongly Agree

The fourth section of the survey was a ranking scale in which board presidents and superintendents ranked the top issues facing school superintendents, according to the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), The School Superintendent's Association (Kowalski, McCord, Petersen, Young & Ellerson, 2011). Respondents were asked to rank the issues according to their current level of importance for their school district. (1 being the most important – 11 being the least important). The top issues facing school superintendents were as follows:

- Law/Legal Issues
- Finance
- Personnel Management
- School Reform/Improvement
- Superintendent-Board Relations
- School-Community Relations
- Facility Planning/Management
- School Safety/Crisis Management
- Conflict Management
- Policy Development/Management
- Student Discipline

The final section of the questionnaire included the gathering of demographic information including the number of years the respondent had served as a superintendent

or school board president, school district enrollment, age of the respondent, ethnicity of the respondent, and gender of the respondent. Different questionnaires were given to superintendents and school board presidents, based on their role. The questionnaires asked the same questions, but they were developed differently to fit the role of the respondents. The purpose of the questionnaire was to compare the perceptions of the role of the superintendent using similar questions for the two respondent groups.

Responses were collected using Survey Monkey Gold, which contains SPSS integration (Survey Monkey, 2013). At the completion of the data collection, responses of school board presidents and superintendents were exported from Survey Monkey Gold into SPSS format. The principal investigator emailed the results of the school board president and superintendent surveys in SPSS format to Mr. Mark Jacobson. Mr. Jacobson was a mathematics professor at the University of Northern Iowa. Mr. Jacobson also served as the Coordinator of the University of Northern Iowa Statistical Consulting Center. Mr. Jacobson imported the results of the school board president and superintendent surveys into the PASW Statistics (Rel. 18.0.2) SPSS software (Predictive Analytics SoftWare, 2010). The responses of the two surveys were also combined into a single SPSS file in order to compare the responses of the school board presidents and superintendents. The SPSS software produced a descriptive statistical analysis comparing the responses of the board presidents and superintendents including means, frequencies, significance levels, and standard deviations. Mr. Jacobson provided the principal investigator with the statistical results provided by the SPSS program, including group statistics, independent sample tests, paired sample statistics, paired sample

correlations, paired sample test, and frequency tables in order to determine the level of significance in the results of superintendent and school board president surveys.

Analysis of data included specific procedures for each research question in this study. The questions were as follows:

1. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
2. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents in the performance of their local superintendent in accordance with the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to identify and compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. School board presidents and superintendents from every school district in Iowa were invited to respond to an anonymous, electronic survey designed to generate responses from board presidents and superintendents on their perceived importance of each of Iowa Standards for School Leaders and McRel's Superintendent Responsibilities. The results of the questionnaire were analyzed to examine the relationship between superintendent and school board president perceptions of essential characteristics and capabilities of Iowa superintendents.

The purpose of this chapter is to report and discuss the findings as they relate to each research question. The results commence with the reporting of the population and demographics of the respondents of the superintendent and school board president questionnaires. The results and discussion were then organized by research question.

Population

At the time of the study, there were 346 school districts in the State of Iowa (Iowa School Directory, 2013). The number of superintendent respondents in this study consisted of 189 superintendents, which equated to 54.6% of the superintendent population sample. There were superintendents in Iowa that were shared between school districts, which could have made the sample population smaller. However,

superintendents were able to respond to the survey for each of the school districts they served. The number of school board president respondents in this study consisted of 140 school board presidents, which equated to 40.5% of the school board president population sample.

Demographics

The respondents were asked to identify the amount of time they had served as a superintendent or a school board member. Respondents were able to select from the following choices:

- 0-5 years
- 6-10 years
- 11-15 years
- 16-20 years
- 21-25 years
- 26-30 years

As shown in Table 1, the responses of the superintendents and school board presidents evidenced a representation of each of the number of year categories they had served as a superintendent or school board member. The majority of superintendents who responded to the survey indicated they have served as a superintendent between 0 and 5 years. Superintendents reporting they had served in this role between 0 and 10 years were 62.81% of the respondents. The majority of board presidents that responded to the survey, 40.32%, had served on a school board between 6 and 10 years. Those superintendents who had served in their roles for 15 or fewer years were 77.05% of the

respondents, and 87.1% of board presidents that responded to the survey had served in these roles for 15 or fewer years.

Table 1

Years of Service of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents

	Superintendents		Board Presidents	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
0-5 years	55	33.54%	32	25.81%
6-10 years	48	29.27%	50	40.32%
11-15 years	25	14.24%	26	20.97%
16-20 years	11	6.71%	8	6.45%
21-25 years	12	7.32%	6	4.84%
26-30 years	13	7.93%	2	1.61%

The respondents were asked to identify the certified enrollment of their school district. Respondents were able to select from the following choices:

- Less than 500 students
- 500 – 1,000 students
- 1,001 – 2,000 students
- 2,001 – 5,000 students
- Greater than 5,000 students

As shown in Table 2, the responses of the superintendents and school board presidents evidenced a representation of each of the enrollment categories. The majority of superintendent and school board president respondents were from school districts with 500-1,000 students.

Table 2

District Enrollment of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents

	Superintendents		Board Presidents	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
Less than 500	33	20.00%	28	22.58%
500 – 1,000	65	39.39%	46	37.10%
1,001 – 2,000	42	25.45%	30	24.19%
2,001 – 5,000	15	9.09%	13	10.48%
Greater than 5,000	10	6.06%	7	5.65%

Although there were fewer respondents in the largest two enrollment categories, this was also representative of Iowa school districts. As shown in Table 3, the number of respondents to the superintendent and board president surveys was similar to the number of school districts in each of the enrollment categories in Iowa. The enrollment information for each Iowa school district was found on the Iowa Department of Education website (Iowa Department of Education, 2013).

Table 3

*Superintendent and School Board President Respondent Enrollment Categories**Compared to Iowa Population*

	Number of Iowa School Districts	Percentage of Iowa School Districts	Superintendent Respondents	Board President Respondents
Less than 500	115	33.2%	20.00%	22.58%
500 – 1,000	124	35.8%	39.39%	37.10%
1,001 – 2,000	66	19.1%	25.45%	24.19%
2,001 – 5,000	25	7.2%	9.09%	10.48%
Greater than 5,000	16	4.6%	6.06%	5.65%

Respondents were asked to identify their age at the time of completing the questionnaire. Respondents were able to select from the following choices:

- 18 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 to 74
- 75 or older

As shown in Table 4, the responses of the superintendents and school board presidents evidenced ages ranging from the 25 to 34 years category through the 65 to 74 years category. There were not any respondents among the superintendents or school board presidents in the 18 to 24 year category or 75 or older category.

Table 4

Age of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents

	Superintendents		Board Presidents	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
18 to 24	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
24 to 34	1	0.61%	2	1.61%
35 to 44	32	19.51%	23	18.55%
45 to 54	58	35.37%	59	47.58%
55 to 64	68	41.46%	30	24.19%
65 to 74	5	3.05%	10	8.06%
75 or older	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

Respondents were asked to identify their ethnicity when completing the questionnaire. Respondents were able to select from the following choices:

- White
- Black or African American
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Other

Table 5

Ethnicity of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents

	Superintendents		Board Presidents	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
White	163	98.79%	123	99.19%
Black or African American	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Asian	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Other	3	1.82%	1	0.81%

Respondents were asked to identify their gender when completing the questionnaire. Respondents were able to select either female or male. Table 6 shows the responses selected by the superintendents and school board presidents.

Table 6

Gender of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents

	Superintendents		Board Presidents	
	n	Percentage	n	Percentage
Female	23	14.11%	32	25.81%
Male	140	85.89%	92	74.19%

Research Questions

In order to ensure the success of superintendents, and considering the changing and complex educational environment, school superintendents and school board presidents must identify the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of superintendents. The purpose of this study was to identify and compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment.

Research Question 1

The first research question addressed the differences between Iowa school superintendent and school board president perceptions on the importance of each of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The question was as follows:

What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

The first question in the superintendent and school board president surveys asked the respondents to rank the six Iowa Standards for School Leaders in order of importance. The respondents chose a number, 1-6, for each of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders, which indicated the order of importance of each of the standards in comparison to the others. The question asked the respondents to do the following:

Fully understanding that all of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders are integral to the work of a superintendent, please rank the following standards in order of importance for a superintendent (1 being most important – 6 being least important).

This question was identical on the superintendent and school board president surveys. There were 163 superintendents and 126 school board presidents that answered this question. Of the respondents, 26 superintendents and 14 school board presidents skipped this question. The six Iowa Standards for School Leaders are as follows (Iowa Department of Education, 2008):

- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. (Shared Vision)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development. (Culture of Learning)

- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment. (Management)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources. (Family and Community)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner. (Ethics)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community and, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (Societal Context)

In the following tables, the words in parentheses are referenced rather than the entire standard in an effort to make the chart easier to read. Table 7 shows how the superintendents ranked each of the standards. If they selected 1 for the standard, it was the most important standard to them. If they selected a 6 for the standard, it was the least important standard for them.

Table 7

Superintendent Ranking of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders

	Ranking Levels						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Shared Vision	54	55	20	20	11	3	163
Culture of Learning	39	47	38	25	10	4	163
Management	19	21	52	38	21	12	163
Family and Community	2	8	17	46	69	22	163
Ethics	46	23	23	22	37	12	163
Societal Context	3	9	13	13	15	110	163

At a first glance at Table 7, it would seem that the standards that received the highest number of 1 and 2 rankings were the most important standards to the superintendents. The Shared Vision, Culture of Learning, and Ethics standards have proportionately more 1 and 2 rankings than the other standards.

Table 8 shows how the school board presidents ranked each of the standards. If they selected 1 for the standard, it was the most important standard to them. If they selected a 6 for the standard, it was the least important standard for them.

Table 8

School Board President Ranking of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders

	Ranking Levels						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Shared Vision	35	39	23	21	7	1	126
Culture of Learning	46	35	24	13	2	6	126
Management	18	30	39	20	14	5	126
Family and Community	0	3	15	40	52	16	126
Ethics	24	14	23	22	33	10	126
Societal Context	3	5	2	10	18	88	126

Like the superintendent ranking of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders, the school board presidents gave the Shared Vision and Culture of Learning standards the most 1 and 2 rankings. The standards on Management and Ethics also received more 1 and 2 rankings than the other two standards did. The Family and Community standard didn't receive any 1 rankings, which would have indicated that the standard was the most important, and it received very few 2 rankings.

The Survey Monkey Gold tools provided the overall rankings on each of these standards, provided in tables 7 and 8. In order to get a better description of the results from superintendents and board presidents, these results were imported into SPSS software. The first SPSS analysis of the results of this question was completed through frequency tables.

Beginning to compare the responses of the superintendents and school board presidents on the first question, Table 9 shows a frequency table that indicates the responses of the superintendents and school board presidents on the Shared Vision standard. In Table 9, it becomes more apparent that the Shared Vision standard was

highly important to superintendents and school board presidents. Among the survey respondents, 79.1% of the superintendents and 77% of school board presidents ranked this standard in their top three selections.

Table 9

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Ranking of the Shared Vision Standard

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. (Shared Vision)				
	Ranking	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	1	54	33.1	33.1
	2	55	33.7	66.9
	3	20	12.3	79.1
	4	20	12.3	91.4
	5	11	6.7	98.2
	6	3	1.8	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	
Board President	1	35	27.8	27.8
	2	39	31.0	58.7
	3	23	18.3	77.0
	4	21	16.7	93.7
	5	7	5.6	99.2
	6	1	.8	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	

Table 10 shows the frequency results for the Culture of Learning standard. The results begin to show that this was an important standard to both the superintendents and board presidents. Looking at the cumulative percent, 52.8% of superintendents listed this

standard in their top two selections. Among the school board president respondents, 64.3% chose this standard as one of their top two selections. Furthermore, 76.1% of superintendents listed this standard in their top three selections, and 83.3% of school board presidents indicated that this standard was in their top three choices.

Table 10

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Ranking of the Culture of Learning Standard

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development. (Culture of Learning)				
	Ranking	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	1	39	23.9	23.9
	2	47	28.8	52.8
	3	38	23.3	76.1
	4	25	15.3	91.4
	5	10	6.1	97.5
	6	4	2.5	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	
Board President	1	46	36.5	36.5
	2	35	27.8	64.3
	3	24	19.0	83.3
	4	13	10.3	93.7
	5	2	1.6	95.2
	6	6	4.8	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	

Table 11 shows the frequency results from superintendents and school board presidents on the Management standard. This standard on Management gave mixed

results as shown on the frequency table. The highest percentages on this standard for superintendents were in the 3 and 4 ranking. Of the respondents, 55.2% of superintendents ranked this standard as their third or fourth choice in ranking the standards. However, a higher number of board presidents selected this standard as their second or third choice. Among the board presidents, 54.8% gave this standard a 2 or 3 ranking, which indicated that this standard was more important to school board presidents than it was to superintendents, when ranking the Iowa Standards for School Leaders.

Table 11

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Ranking of the Management Standard

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment. (Management)				
	Ranking	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	1	19	11.7	11.7
	2	21	12.9	24.5
	3	52	31.9	56.4
	4	38	23.3	79.8
	5	21	12.9	92.6
	6	12	7.4	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	
Board President	1	18	14.3	14.3
	2	30	23.8	38.1
	3	39	31.0	69.0
	4	20	15.9	84.9
	5	14	11.1	96.0
	6	5	4.0	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	

Table 12 shows the frequency and percentage of responses on the Family and Community standard. This table indicates that this standard was less important than others, according to both the superintendent and school board responses. A total of 69.9% of superintendents indicated that this Family and Community standard was 4th or 5th in order of importance, compared to the other Iowa Standards for School Leaders. Likewise, 74% of board presidents ranked this standard as a 4 or 5 in order of importance. Only 6.1% of superintendents and 2.4% of board presidents listed this standard in their top two selections when ranking the standards.

Table 12

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Ranking of the Family and Community Standard

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources. (Family and Community)				
	Ranking	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	1	2	1.2	1.2
	2	8	4.9	6.1
	3	17	10.4	16.6
	4	45	27.6	44.2
	5	69	42.3	86.5
	6	22	13.5	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	
Board President	1	0	0	0
	2	3	2.4	2.4
	3	15	11.9	14.3
	4	40	31.7	46.0
	5	52	41.3	87.3
	6	16	12.7	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	

When analyzing the frequency table on the Ethics standard in Table 13, it became apparent that there were a wide variety of thoughts among the superintendents and school board presidents on the overall importance of this standard when compared to the other Iowa Standards for School Leaders. When compared to the other frequency tables on these six standards, this standard had the most even split among the six rankings, for both superintendents and school board presidents. Among the superintendents, 56.4% listed this standard in their top three standards, and 43.6% of superintendents listed it in their bottom three choices. The highest listings for superintendents were those that ranked it most important (28.2%) and those that ranked it fifth most important (22.7%). Likewise, 48.4% of the board presidents listed the Ethics standard in their top three selections, and 51.6% indicated that this standard was in their bottom three standards when ranking all six Iowa Standards for School Leaders. Like the superintendents, the rankings that received the most indications on this standard were the top choice (19.0%) and the fifth choice (26.2%). In comparison to the other standards, this standard has the most evenly distributed rankings for both superintendents and school board presidents.

Table 13

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Ranking of the Ethics Standard

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner. (Ethics)				
	Ranking	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	1	46	28.2	28.2
	2	23	14.1	42.3
	3	23	14.1	56.4
	4	22	13.5	69.9
	5	37	22.7	92.6
	6	12	7.4	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	
Board President	1	24	19.0	19.0
	2	14	11.1	30.2
	3	23	18.3	48.4
	4	22	17.5	65.9
	5	33	26.2	92.1
	6	10	7.9	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	

On Table 14, the frequency and percentage of responses for the Societal Context standard are listed. Overall, this table shows that for both groups, superintendents and school board presidents, this standard was the least important when compared to the other Iowa Standards for School Leaders. Among the superintendent respondents, 84.7% listed this standard in their bottom three choices, giving it a 4, 5, or 6 ranking. Additionally, 67.5% of superintendents, a super-majority, indicated that this standard was the least important of the six standards. Likewise, 92.1% of school board presidents indicated at this Societal Context standard was in their bottom three when ranking the standards in

order of importance. Similar to the superintendents, 69.8% of school board presidents indicated that this standard was less important than all of the other Iowa Standards for School Leaders, giving it a ranking of 6.

Table 14

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Ranking of the Societal Context Standard

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community and, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (Societal Context)				
	Ranking	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	1	3	1.8	1.8
	2	9	5.5	7.4
	3	13	8.0	15.3
	4	13	8.00	23.3
	5	15	9.2	32.5
	6	110	67.5	100.0
	Total	163	100.0	
Board President	1	3	2.4	2.4
	2	5	4.0	6.3
	3	2	1.6	7.9
	4	10	7.9	15.9
	5	18	14.3	30.2
	6	88	69.8	100.0
	Total	126	100.0	

In order to determine the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders, the results of this question were analyzed through an Independent

Samples Test generated by SPSS. In Table 15, the mean of the rankings for superintendents and school board presidents are listed along with the standard deviation, level of significance, and mean difference. The null hypothesis in this test stated that the rankings would not be different whether looking at the superintendent or school board president groups. Using an alpha level of .05, the Independent Samples Test indicated a significant difference between the superintendent and school board president responses on the Culture of Learning standard and the Management standard. The mean difference on both of these standards was a positive number, which indicated that the superintendent group ranked these two standards higher than school board presidents. With a significance number lower than .05, there was a level of significance in these results. On all four of the other standards, there wasn't a significant difference in the responses between school board presidents and superintendents while ranking all of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders.

Table 15

Means, Standard Deviations, and Significance of the Superintendent and School Board

President Ranking of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Shared Vision	Superintendent	2.3129	1.32647	.422	-.12362
	Board President	2.4365	1.25536	.419	-.12362
Culture of Learning	Superintendent	2.5828	1.30439	.047	.31298
	Board President	2.2698	1.34707	.048	.31298
Management	Superintendent	3.3497	1.37676	.021	.37350
	Board President	2.9762	1.33545	.021	.37350
Family and Community	Superintendent	4.4540	1.08413	.706	-.04601
	Board President	4.5000	.94446	.701	-.04601
Ethics	Superintendent	3.1043	1.72710	.089	-.34015
	Board President	3.4444	1.62262	.087	-.34015
Societal Context	Superintendent	5.1963	1.35564	.250	-.17670
	Board President	5.3730	1.20488	.243	-.17670

Table 16 shows the overall ranking of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders by the superintendents and school board presidents. Although they look significantly different at a first glance, they were actually very similar. The top two responses for both superintendents and school board presidents were the same. However, they were in different order between the two groups. These were the Shared Vision and Culture of Learning standards. Likewise, the middle two responses, indicated with a 3 or 4, were the same for both groups, and the two groups indicated them in different order. These standards were the Management and Ethics standards. Lastly, the superintendents and school board presidents agreed on the least important two standards. Both groups indicated that the Family and Community standard was the 5th most important, and the Societal Context standard was the 6th most important.

Table 16

Superintendent and School Board President Means and Ranking of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders

Standard	Superintendent Mean	Board President Mean	Superintendent Ranking	Board President Ranking
Shared Vision	2.3129	2.4365	1	2
Culture of Learning	2.5828	2.2698	2	1
Management	3.3497	2.9762	4	3
Family and Community	4.4540	4.5000	5	5
Ethics	3.1043	3.4444	3	4
Societal Context	5.1963	5.3730	6	6

Overall, the rankings were very similar with only two of the standards having a statistically significant difference, showing that the superintendents thought the Culture of Learning and Management standards were more important than did the school board presidents. The superintendents and the board presidents valued the Shared Vision and Culture of Learning standards more than the other Iowa Standards for School Leaders. The overall indications of the superintendents and school board presidents indicated a close alignment between how they value the Iowa Standards for School Leaders.

In order to further answer the research question regarding the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, the next questions on the superintendent and school board president surveys asked the respondents to indicate the level of importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The McRel

Superintendent Responsibilities are as follows (Waters & Marzano, 2006):

- Collaborative goal-setting: The superintendent involved board members and principals in the process of setting goals.
- Non-negotiable goals for student achievement and instruction: Goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research
- Board alignment with and support of district goals: Board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.
- Monitoring achievement and instruction goal: The superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.
- Use of resources to support goals for instruction and achievement: Resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.
- Defined autonomy: The superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development (pp. 15-16)

Questions 3-8 on the superintendent and school board president surveys asked the respondents to strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree to the following statements, which correspond to the six McRel Superintendent Responsibilities:

- It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.

- It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.
- It is important that school board support for district goals for student achievement and instruction is maintained.
- It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.
- It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.
- It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Table 17 shows the number of responses that were received on each of these questions. 189 superintendents and 140 school board presidents completed this survey, but some of the respondents from each group chose to skip questions throughout the survey. The number of missing responses indicates the number of respondents that skipped the question on the survey. As the data was further analyzed, the missing responses, or those that chose to skip the questions, were not figured into the individual results of each question since a non-response was not a valid response for these questions.

Table 17

Number of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents on the McRel

Superintendent Responsibility Questions 3-8

	Superintendent		Board President	
	Valid	Missing	Valid	Missing
It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.	164	25	124	16
It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.	165	24	124	16
It is important that school board support for district goals for student achievement and instruction is maintained.	165	24	124	16
It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.	165	24	122	18
It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.	164	25	123	17
It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.	165	24	123	17

The analysis of each of these questions on the importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities begins with Table 18. Table 18 shows the responses that were received from superintendents and school board presidents on the first question regarding the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. As the table indicates, 96.9% of superintendents and 97.6% of school board presidents either agreed or strongly agreed that it was important that the superintendent involve board members and principals in the process of goal setting. Of those responses, 69.5% of superintendents and 82.3% of

school board presidents strongly agreed that this Superintendent Responsibility was important.

Table 18

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Responses on the Importance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility I

It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	5	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	0	0.0	3.0
	Agree	45	27.4	30.5
	Strongly Agree	114	69.5	100.00
	Total	164	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	3	2.4	2.4
	Disagree	0	0.0	2.4
	Agree	19	15.3	17.7
	Strongly Agree	102	82.3	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	

Table 19 shows the responses of superintendents and school board presidents to the question regarding the importance of the second McRel Superintendent Responsibility. As Table 19 indicates, an overwhelming percentage of superintendents and school board presidents either agreed or strongly agreed it was important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research. Of the respondents, 96.4% of superintendents and 95.9% of school board presidents agreed or strongly agreed with the importance of this Superintendent

Responsibility. Additionally, 3.6% of superintendents and 4% of school board presidents disagreed or strongly disagreed with the importance of this responsibility, indicating overall that the respondents to the survey valued this superintendent responsibility.

Table 19

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Responses on the Importance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 2

It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	5	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	1	0.6	3.6
	Agree	75	45.5	49.1
	Strongly Agree	84	50.9	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	4	3.2	4.0
	Agree	54	43.5	47.6
	Strongly Agree	65	52.4	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	

Table 20 indicates the importance of the third McRel Superintendent Responsibility stating it was important that school board support for district goals for student achievement and instruction was maintained. Much like the prior Superintendent Responsibilities, both superintendents and school board presidents indicated that this Responsibility was important. Among the respondents, 97% of superintendents and 99.2% of school board presidents either agreed or strongly agreed that it is important that school board support for district goals for student achievement and instruction is

maintained. Five superintendents and one school board president strongly disagreed with this statement. This table shows that this Superintendent Responsibility was very important to the work of a superintendent.

Table 20

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Responses on the Importance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 3

It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	5	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	0	0.0	3.0
	Agree	59	35.8	38.8
	Strongly Agree	101	61.2	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	0	0.0	0.8
	Agree	35	28.2	29.0
	Strongly Agree	88	71.0	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	

The fourth question on the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities also shows strong agreement that it was important to both superintendents and school board presidents that the superintendent monitor and evaluate implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers. While there were three superintendents and three school board presidents that either disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement, a

large majority agreed or strongly agreed. As shown in Table 21, 98.2% of superintendents and 97.5% of school board presidents either agreed or strongly agreed that this McRel Superintendent Responsibility was important. Nearly half of these superintendents (49.1%) agreed, and the other half (49.1%) strongly agreed with the statement while 34.4% of the board presidents agreed with the statement, and 63.1% strongly agreed that this McRel Superintendent Responsibility was important.

Table 21

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Responses on the Importance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 4

It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	1	0.6	1.8
	Agree	81	49.1	50.9
	Strongly Agree	81	49.1	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	2	1.6	2.5
	Agree	42	34.4	36.9
	Strongly Agree	77	63.1	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	

Similar to the prior McRel Superintendents Responsibilities, there was strong agreement that it was important that resources are dedicated and used for professional

development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals. As shown in Table 22, 36.6% of superintendents agreed with this statement, and 61.6% strongly agreed. In addition, 98.2% of superintendents agreed or strongly agreed that this Superintendent Responsibility was important. Likewise, 39% of school board presidents agreed, and 58.5% strongly agreed that it was important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development. In total, 97.5% of school board presidents either agreed or strongly agreed with that this McRel Superintendent Responsibility was important.

Table 22

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Responses on the Importance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 5

It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	3	1.8	1.8
	Disagree	0	00	1.8
	Agree	60	36.6	38.4
	Strongly Agree	101	61.6	100.0
	Total	164	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	2	1.6	2.4
	Agree	48	39.0	41.5
	Strongly Agree	72	58.5	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	

The sixth McRel Superintendent Responsibility showed more superintendents and school board presidents that disagreed with the statement, but there was still a strong

percentage of both groups that agreed or strongly agreed that it is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development. As shown in Table 23, 4.2% of superintendents and 4.9% of school board presidents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this Superintendent Responsibility. Additionally, 95.8% of superintendents and 95.1% of school board presidents agreed or strongly agreed with the importance of this McRel Superintendent Responsibility.

Table 23

Frequency Table on the Superintendent and School Board President Responses on the Importance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 6

It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	5	3.0	3.0
	Disagree	2	1.2	4.2
	Agree	62	37.6	41.8
	Strongly Agree	96	58.2	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	5	4.1	4.9
	Agree	60	48.8	53.7
	Strongly Agree	57	46.3	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	

In order to get a more in depth analysis of questions 3-8 regarding the importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, the results of the survey were processed with an Independent Samples Test using SPSS software. Each of the possible responses were given a value as follows:

- Strongly Disagree 1
- Disagree 2
- Agree 3
- Strongly Agree 4

The mean, standard deviation, significance, and mean difference of the superintendent and school board president responses to this portion of the surveys are shown on Table 24. The null hypothesis in this test stated that the rankings would not be different whether looking at the superintendent or school board president groups. Using an alpha level of .05, the Independent Samples Test indicated a significant difference between the superintendent and school board president responses on the following McRel Superintendent Responsibilities:

- It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.
- It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.

Although the difference in the responses of superintendents and school board presidents on these Superintendent Responsibilities was statistically significant, when

looking at the mean of all of the responses in Table 24, the means were all between 3.4065 and 3.7742, which were all between superintendents and school board presidents agreeing or strongly agreeing with the importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. When there was a negative mean difference listed, it indicated that the board presidents agreed more with the statement. When there was a positive mean difference, superintendents agreed more with the statement. Overall, superintendents and school board presidents agreed that all of the Superintendent Responsibilities were important. The first four indicated that the school board presidents believed they were more important than superintendents did. On the last two Responsibilities, superintendents indicated that the Responsibilities were more important than the indications of school board presidents.

Table 24

Means, Standard Deviations, and Significance of the Superintendent and School Board

President Responses on the Importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.	Superintendent	3.6341	.64612	.056	-.14005
	Board President	3.7742	.56796	.661	-.03338
It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.	Superintendent	3.4424	.66582	.661	-.03338
	Board President	3.4758	.60437	.657	-.03338
It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.	Superintendent	3.5515	.65710	.047	-.14203
	Board President	3.6935	.51288	.040	-.14203

(table continues)

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.	Superintendent	3.4606	.57908	.046	-.13775
	Board President	3.5984	.57005	.045	-.13775
It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.	Superintendent	3.5793	.59636	.706	.02642
	Board President	3.5528	.57550	.705	.02642
It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.	Superintendent	3.5091	.67732	.186	.10259
	Board President	3.4065	.61187	.180	.10259

The research question for this portion of the study asked about the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. There was little statistical significance between the perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents on the Iowa Standards for School Leaders or the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Where there was statistical significance, the interpretation of the significance showed that the viewpoints of the school board members and superintendents were in alignment overall. In summary, both the superintendent and school board president groups had similar views in the rank ordering of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the overall importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities.

Research Question 2

The second research question addressed the differences between Iowa school superintendent and school board president perceptions regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The question was as follows:

What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

In order to determine if there were differences in perceptions between superintendents and school board presidents regarding the performance of the local superintendent, the study asked a new set of questions regarding the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The wording of the questions was different on the superintendent and school board president surveys, but they were asking similar information that was analyzed. The following questions were asked of the two groups:

- McRel Superintendent Responsibility 1:
 - Superintendent Question: As the superintendent, in my local school district, I effectively involve board members and principals in the process of goal setting.
 - Board President Question: The superintendent in my local school district effectively involves board members and principals in the process of goal setting.
- McRel Superintendent Responsibility 2:
 - Superintendent Question: As the superintendent, in my local school district, I establish goals for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and are based on relevant research.
 - Board President Question: The superintendent in my local school district establishes goals for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and are based on relevant research.

- McRel Superintendent Responsibility 3:
 - Superintendent Question: In my local school district, school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.
 - Board President Question: In my local school district, school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.
- McRel Superintendent Responsibility 4:
 - Superintendent Question: As the superintendent, in my local school district, I evaluate implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.
 - Board President Question: The superintendent in my local school district effectively monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.
- McRel Superintendent Responsibility 5:
 - Superintendent Question: As the superintendent, in my local school district, I dedicate resources used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.
 - Board President Question: The superintendent in my local school district dedicates resources that are used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.

- McRel Superintendent Responsibility 6:
 - Superintendent Question: As the superintendent, in my local school district, I provide autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expect alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.
 - Board President Question: The superintendent in my local school district provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Since the questions were worded differently, in the tables that analyze these results, it refers to the question as McRel Superintendent Responsibility 1-6. Table 25 shows the number of responses that were received on each of these questions. In total, 189 superintendents and 140 school board presidents completed this survey, but some of the respondents from each group chose to skip questions throughout the survey. The number of missing responses indicates the number of respondents that skipped the question on the survey. As the data was further analyzed, the missing responses, or those that chose to skip the questions, were not figured into the individual results of each question since a non-response was not a valid response for these questions.

Table 25

Number of Superintendent and School Board President Respondents on the McRel

Superintendent Responsibility Questions 9-14

	Superintendent		Board President	
	Valid	Missing	Valid	Missing
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 1	165	24	123	17
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 2	164	25	123	17
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 3	165	24	124	16
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 4	165	24	122	18
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 5	165	24	123	17
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 6	165	24	122	18

To start comparing the self-perceptions of the superintendents' performance on the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities to that of the perceptions of the school board presidents, Table 26 begins the interpretation of the results of these questions. Table 26 indicates that 95.1% of superintendents and 91.9% of board presidents agreed or strongly agreed that the superintendent in their local school district involved board members and principals in the process of goal setting. In contrast, 4.8% of superintendents and 8.2% of school board presidents disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement.

Table 26

*Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of**McRel Superintendent Responsibility 1*

McRel Superintendent Responsibility 1 – The local superintendent in the school district effectively involves board members and principals in the process of goal setting.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	6	3.6	4.8
	Agree	85	51.5	56.4
	Strongly Agree	72	43.6	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	4	3.3	3.3
	Disagree	6	4.9	8.1
	Agree	37	30.1	38.2
	Strongly Agree	76	61.8	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	

The second McRel Superintendent Responsibility refers to the superintendent establishing goals for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and based on relevant research. Table 27 indicates that 7.3% of superintendents disagreed or strongly disagreed that they were completing this Responsibility in their school district. Of the respondents, 92.7% of superintendents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed that they were performing this responsibility. Of the school board presidents, 6.6% disagreed or strongly disagreed that their local superintendent was performing this responsibility. On the other hand, 93.5% of school board presidents agreed or strongly agreed that the superintendent was establishing goals for student

achievement and instructional programs that were adopted and were based on relevant research.

Table 27

Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 2

McRel Superintendent Responsibility 2 – The local superintendent in the school district establishes goals for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and are based on relevant research.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	10	6.1	7.3
	Agree	110	67.1	74.4
	Strongly Agree	42	25.6	100.0
	Total	164	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	4	3.3	3.3
	Disagree	4	3.3	6.5
	Agree	67	54.5	61.0
	Strongly Agree	48	39.0	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	

Table 28 indicates that 5.4% of superintendents disagreed or strongly disagreed that their local school board's support for district goals for achievement and instruction was maintained. Among the superintendents, 94.5% agreed or strongly agreed that their school board's support was maintained. Similarly, 4.8% of school board presidents disagreed or strongly disagreed that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction was maintained in their local school district while 95.1% of

school board presidents agreed or strongly agreed that school board support was maintained.

Table 28

Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 3

McRel Superintendent Responsibility 3 – The local school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	7	4.2	5.5
	Agree	86	52.1	57.6
	Strongly Agree	70	42.4	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	2	1.6	1.6
	Disagree	4	3.2	4.8
	Agree	51	41.1	46.0
	Strongly Agree	67	54.0	100.0
	Total	124	100.0	

The fourth McRel Superintendent Responsibility refers to whether the superintendent effectively monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers. As shown in Table 29, there were no superintendents that strongly disagreed that they complete this Responsibility. However, 11.5% of superintendent respondents disagreed that they perform this Responsibility. An equal percent of school board presidents, 11.5%, either strongly disagreed or disagreed that

their local superintendent performs this Responsibility. Among the respondents, 88.5% of superintendents and 88.5% of school board presidents agreed or strongly agreed that the superintendent in their local school district superintendent effectively monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.

Table 29

Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 4

McRel Superintendent Responsibility 4 – The local superintendent in the school district effectively monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	0	0.0	0.0
	Disagree	19	11.5	11.5
	Agree	110	66.7	78.2
	Strongly Agree	36	21.8	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	2	1.6	1.6
	Disagree	12	9.8	11.5
	Agree	55	45.1	56.6
	Strongly Agree	53	43.4	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	

Table 30 indicates the extent to which superintendents and school board presidents agreed or disagreed with the notion that the superintendent in their local school district dedicates resources used for professional development of teachers and principals

to achieve district goals. Among the superintendent respondents, 1.2% strongly disagreed with that statement, and 98.7% of superintendents agreed or strongly agreed that they perform this Superintendent Responsibility. More school board presidents, 4.9%, disagreed or strongly disagreed that their local superintendent performs this Responsibility while 95.2% of school board presidents either agreed or strongly agreed that their superintendent dedicates resources used for professional development of teacher and principals to achieve district goals. These high percentages may be due to the fact that in Iowa there were funds allocated to school districts for the specific purpose of professional development.

Table 30

Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 5

McRel Superintendent Responsibility 5 – The local superintendent in the school district dedicates resources used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	0	0.0	1.2
	Agree	73	44.2	45.5
	Strongly Agree	90	54.5	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	1	0.8	0.8
	Disagree	5	4.1	4.9
	Agree	43	35.0	39.8
	Strongly Agree	74	60.2	100.0
	Total	123	100.0	

The responses to the final McRel Superintendent Responsibility are analyzed in Table 31. Among the superintendents, 1.8% disagreed or strongly disagreed that they provide autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expect alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development. Likewise, 98.2% of superintendents agreed or strongly agreed that they perform this Superintendent Responsibility. More school board presidents, 11.5%, disagreed or strongly disagreed that their superintendent performs this Responsibility, and 88.5% either agreed or strongly agreed that their local superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expect alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Table 31

Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of McRel Superintendent Responsibility 6

McRel Superintendent Responsibility 6 – The local superintendent in the school district provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expect alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.				
	Response	Frequency	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Superintendent	Strongly Disagree	2	1.2	1.2
	Disagree	1	0.6	1.8
	Agree	63	38.2	40.0
	Strongly Agree	99	60.0	100.0
	Total	165	100.0	
Board President	Strongly Disagree	2	1.6	1.6
	Disagree	12	9.8	11.5
	Agree	52	42.6	54.1
	Strongly Agree	56	45.9	100.0
	Total	122	100.0	

While some conclusions can be drawn from these tables on the responses to these six questions on the superintendent's performance on the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, analyzing the data from the questions through an Independent Samples Test, generated by SPSS, provided additional clarification and significance of the results. Each of the possible responses were given a value as follows:

- Strongly Disagree 1
- Disagree 2
- Agree 3
- Strongly Agree 4

The mean, standard deviation, significance, and mean difference of the superintendent and school board president responses to this portion of the surveys are shown on Table 32. The null hypothesis in this test stated that the rankings would not be different whether looking at the superintendent or school board president groups. Using an alpha level of .05, giving a 95% confidence interval, the Independent Samples Test indicated a significant difference between the superintendent and school board president responses on McRel Superintendent Responsibilities 4 and 6. Responsibility 4 indicated the level to which the superintendent monitors and evaluates the implementation of district instructional programs, impact of instruction on student achievement, and impact of implementation on the implementers. Responsibility 6 indicated the level to which the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development. The means that are listed ranged from 3.1030 to 3.5697, which all indicated an average

between agreement and strong agreement to each of the statements in the survey. However, with the level of significance on Responsibilities 4 and 6, there was a statistically significant difference in how the superintendents and school board presidents responded. On Responsibility 4, the school board presidents gave their superintendents statistically significant higher reviews than the superintendents did. On Responsibility 6, the superintendents gave themselves statistically significant higher reviews than the school board presidents gave their superintendents. Overall, the school board presidents gave their superintendents higher reviews than the superintendents gave themselves on Responsibilities 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5. Responsibility 6 was the only area where superintendents gave themselves higher reviews than the school board presidents gave the superintendents in their local school districts.

Table 32

Means, Standard Deviations, and Significance of the Superintendent and School Board President Responses to Superintendent Performance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 1	Superintendent	3.3758	.61833	.110	-.12831
	Board President	3.5041	.73967	.120	-.12831
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 2	Superintendent	3.1707	.58204	.105	-.12195
	Board President	3.2927	.68630	.114	-.12195
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 3	Superintendent	3.3576	.62422	.117	-.11823
	Board President	3.4758	.64346	.119	-.11823
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 4	Superintendent	3.1030	.56981	.009	-.20025
	Board President	3.3033	.71454	.011	-.20025
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 5	Superintendent	3.5212	.56942	.738	-.02350
	Board President	3.5447	.61740	.741	-.02350
McRel Superintendent Responsibility 6	Superintendent	3.5697	.57620	.002	.24183
	Board President	3.3279	.72091	.003	.24183

The results of the questions on this survey can also be interpreted a different way than has been so far. The next section of the survey results compare questions 3-8 on the survey, where superintendents and school board presidents indicated the level of importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, with questions 9-14 on the survey, where superintendents and school board presidents indicated the level of the local superintendent's performance according to these Responsibilities.

Table 33 is a summary of Paired Samples Correlations and Statistics generated by SPSS. The table lists how the superintendents responded to the level of importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. It then paired those questions up with the indications from superintendents on how much they evaluated themselves as effectively performing these Responsibilities.

Table 33

Paired Samples of Superintendent Responses on the Importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities Compared to the Superintendent's Performance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pair 1	It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.	3.6341	.64612	.000	.25610
	As the superintendent, in my local school district, I effectively involve board members and principals in the process of goal setting.	3.3780	.61952		
Pair 2	It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.	3.4451	.66695	.000	.27439
	As the superintendent, in my local school district, I establish goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.	3.1707	.58204		

(table continues)

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pair 3	It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.	3.5515	.65710	.000	.19394
	In my local school district, school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.	3.3576	.62422		
Pair 4	It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.	3.4606	.57908	.000	.35758
	As the superintendent, in my local school district, I effectively monitor and evaluate implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.	3.1030	.56981		
Pair 5	It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.	3.5793	.59636	.266	.05488
	As the superintendent, in my local school district, I dedicate resources used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.	3.5244	.56970		

(table continues)

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pair 6	It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.	3.5091	.67732	.174	-.06061
	As the superintendent, in my local school district, I provide autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expect alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.	3.5697	.57620		

When the superintendents answered these questions, they chose Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, or Strongly Agree. Each of the possible responses were given a value as follows:

- Strongly Disagree 1
- Disagree 2
- Agree 3
- Strongly Agree 4

The results of the responses of the responses were then averaged to produce the mean listed in Table 33. The null hypothesis in this test stated that the means would not be different between the value the superintendent put on the Superintendent Responsibility as compared to their performance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibility. Using an

alpha level of .05, giving a 95% confidence interval, the Paired Samples Test indicated a statistically significant difference in four of the mean differences. The results with a statistically significant difference have a significance level less than .05. The pairs with a statistically significant difference were pairs 1, 2, 3, and 4. It was important to note that all of the means have a value between 3.1030 and 3.6341. These means were all between the Agree and Strongly Agree point values, indicating that the averages of superintendent responses agreed that the McRel Superintendent Responsibility was important and that they evaluated themselves as effectively performing the Responsibility to some degree. Yet there was a statistically significant difference in four of the pairs.

On pair 1 of Table 33, superintendents gave a mean of 3.6341 when determining the importance of involving board members and principals in the process of setting goals. They gave a mean of 3.3780 when determining whether they effectively involved board members and principals in the process of goal setting in their local school district. There was a mean difference of .25610 and a significance of 0.000, indicating that there were significantly more superintendents that agreed on the importance of this McRel Superintendent Responsibility than those that evaluate themselves as effectively performing the Responsibility in their local school district.

On pair 2 of Table 33, superintendents gave a mean of 3.4451 when determining the importance of goals for student achievement and the instructional program being adopted and based on relevant research. Superintendents had a mean of 3.1707 when they indicated whether they establish goals in their local school districts for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and are based on relevant

research. This produced a mean difference of .27439 and a significance of 0.000, indicating that there are significantly more superintendents that believed it is important to set these goals in comparison to those superintendents that evaluate themselves as effectively setting goals for student achievement and instructional programs in their local school districts that are adopted and based on relevant research.

Likewise on pair 3 on Table 33, there are more superintendents that agreed that it is important for school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction to be maintained. There were fewer superintendents that evaluated themselves as effectively maintaining school board support for district goals and instruction in their local school districts. There was a mean of 3.5515 for superintendents that agreed on the importance of this McRel Superintendent Responsibility. There was a mean of 3.3576 for those superintendents that maintain school board support for achievement and instruction goals in their local school district. This was a mean difference of .19394 with a significance value of 0.000, which indicated a statistical significance between this pair.

When analyzing pair 4 on Table 33, there was a statistical significance between those superintendents that indicated the importance of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation of implementers, and those that evaluated themselves as effectively performing the Responsibility. The agreement on the importance of this Responsibility gave a mean of 3.4606. When superintendents indicated the extent to which they perform this McRel Superintendent Responsibility in their local school district, they gave a mean of 3.1030. This produced a mean difference

of .35758 with a significance value of 0.000, which indicated that there was a statistical significance between the superintendents that believed this Responsibility is important as compared to those that see themselves effectively performing this Responsibility in their local school district.

There was not a statistically significant difference on pairs 5 and 6 on Table 33. It is important to point out however, that on pair 5, more superintendents indicated it was important to dedicate resources for the professional development of teachers and principals as compared to those that dedicated these resources. On pair 6 on Table 33, the opposite was true. The level of agreement superintendents indicated on the importance of providing autonomy to their principals to lead their schools, while expecting alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development was less than those superintendents that agreed that they perform this McRel Superintendent Responsibility.

Table 34 is a summary of Paired Samples Correlations and Statistics generated by SPSS. The table lists how the school board presidents responded to the level of importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. It then pairs those questions up with the indications from school board presidents on how much they agreed that the superintendents in their local school districts were performing these Responsibilities.

Table 34

Paired Samples of School Board President Responses on the Importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities Compared to the Superintendent's Performance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pair 1	It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.	3.7724	.56992	.000	.26829
	The superintendent in my local school district effectively involves board members and principals in the process of goal setting.	3.5041	.73967		
Pair 2	It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.	3.4797	.60530	.000	.18699
	The superintendent in my local school district establishes goals for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and are based on relevant research.	3.2927	.68630		
Pair 3	It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.	3.6935	.51288	.000	.21774
	In my local school district, school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.	3.4758	.64346		

(table continues)

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Pair 4	It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.	3.6083	.56947	.000	.30833
	The superintendent in my local school district effectively monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.	3.3000	.71714		
Pair 5	It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.	3.5492	.57643	.877	.00820
	The superintendent in my local school district dedicates resources that are used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.	3.5410	.61855		
Pair 6	It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.	3.4215	.57376	.152	.09917
	The superintendent in my local school district provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.	3.3223	.72128		

When the school board presidents answered these questions, they chose Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, or Strongly Agree. Each of the possible responses were given a value as follows:

- Strongly Disagree 1
- Disagree 2
- Agree 3
- Strongly Agree 4

The results of the responses were then averaged to produce the mean listed in Table 34.

The null hypothesis in this test stated that the means would not be different between the value the school board president put on the Superintendent Responsibility as compared to their indication of the performance of the superintendent in their local school district on McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Using an alpha level of .05, giving a 95% confidence interval, the Paired Samples Test indicated a statistically significant difference in four of the mean differences. The results with a statistically significant difference have a significance level less than .05. The pairs with a statistically significant difference were pairs 1, 2, 3, and 4. It is important to note that all of the means have a value between 3.2927 and 3.7724. These means are all between the Agree and Strongly Agree values, indicating that the averages of school board president responses agreed that the McRel Superintendent Responsibility was important and that their local superintendent was performing the Responsibility to some degree. Yet there was a statistically significant difference in four of the pairs.

On pair 1 of Table 34, school board presidents gave a mean of 3.7724 when determining the importance of involving board members and principals in the process of setting goals. There was a mean of 3.5041 when determining whether their local superintendent effectively involved board members and principals in the process of goal setting. There was a mean difference of .26829 and a significance of 0.000, which indicated that there were significantly more school board presidents that agreed on the importance of this McRel Superintendent Responsibility than those who indicated their local superintendent performs the Responsibility in their local school district.

On pair 2 of Table 34, school board presidents gave a mean of 3.4797 when determining the importance of goals for student achievement and the instructional program being adopted and based on relevant research. School board presidents produced a mean of 3.2927 when they indicated whether their superintendent established goals for student achievement and instructional program that were adopted and were based on relevant research. This produced a mean difference of .18699 and a significance of 0.005, indicating that there were significantly more school board presidents that believed it was important to set these goals in comparison to those board presidents whose local superintendent sets goals for student achievement and instructional programs in their local school districts that are adopted and based on relevant research.

Likewise on pair 3 on Table 34, there were more school board presidents that agreed that it was important for school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction to be maintained. There were fewer school board presidents that

indicated their superintendent maintains school board support for district goals and instruction in their local school districts. There was a mean of 3.6935 for school board presidents that agreed on the importance of this McRel Superintendent Responsibility. There was a mean of 3.4758 for those board presidents that indicated their superintendent maintains school board support for achievement and instruction goals in their local school district. This was a mean difference of .21774 with a significance value of 0.000, indicating a statistical significance between this pair.

When analyzing pair 4 on Table 34, there were more school board presidents that indicated the importance of monitoring and evaluating the implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation of implementers. The agreement to this statement gave a mean of 3.6083. When school board presidents indicated the extent to which their superintendent performs this McRel Superintendent Responsibility in their local school district, they gave a mean of 3.3000. This produced a mean difference of .30833 with a significance value of 0.000, which indicated that there was a statistical significance between the school board presidents that believed this Responsibility was important as compared to those that had a superintendent that performs this Responsibility in their local school district.

There was not a statistically significant difference on pairs 5 and 6 on Table 34. It is important to point out that on pair 5, more school board presidents indicated it was important to dedicate resources for the professional development of teachers and principals as compared to those that have superintendents in their local school district that

dedicate these resources to teachers and principals. On pair 6 on Table 34, the same was true. The level of agreement school board presidents indicated on the importance of providing autonomy to principals to lead their schools, while expecting alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development was more than those school board presidents that agreed that their local superintendent performs this McRel Superintendent Responsibility.

Important Issues for Superintendents

The fourth section of the survey sought to identify the key issues that superintendents in Iowa are facing. The American Association of School Administrators (AASA), The School Superintendent's Association published a list of 11 issues that were identified, through a nationwide superintendent survey, as the top issues facing superintendents (Kowalski et al., 2011). The principal investigator used this list of superintendent issues as a basis for a survey question that asked superintendents and school board presidents to rank order the top issues identified by AASA, according to what these local superintendents and school board presidents are currently experiencing in their local school districts. Respondents were asked to rank the issues according to their current level of importance for their school district. (1 being the most important – 11 being the least important). The top issues facing school superintendents were as follows:

- Law/Legal Issues
- Finance
- Personnel Management
- School Reform/Improvement

- Superintendent-Board Relations
- School-Community Relations
- Facility Planning/Management
- School Safety/Crisis Management
- Conflict Management
- Policy Development/Management
- Student Discipline

When the surveys had been completed by superintendents and school board presidents, and the survey data was entered into SPSS by Mr. Mark Jacobson at the University of Northern Iowa Statistical Consulting Center, it was found that two of the AASA issues were inadvertently not entered into the superintendent survey. When the principal investigator researched the cause of this mistake, it was determined that the two AASA issues that were missing were never entered into the survey. The principal investigator made this inadvertent mistake before any approval to complete the dissertation had been given. In an effort to rectify the situation and use the survey data that was received, Mr. Mark Jacobson, of the University of Northern Iowa Statistical Consulting Center, agreed to remove the two AASA issues from the school board president survey that were missing from the superintendent survey so the responses from the two groups could be compared. The two AASA issues that were left out of the superintendent survey and removed from the school board president survey were the following:

- School-Community Relations
- School Safety/Crisis Management

As the data for this survey question was analyzed in this study, only the remaining nine AASA issues were used. They are as follows:

- Law/Legal Issues
- Finance
- Personnel Management
- School Reform/Improvement
- Superintendent-Board Relations
- Facility Planning/Management
- Conflict Management
- Policy Development/Management
- Student Discipline

The superintendent and school board president responses to this question were combined in an effort to determine the most important issues that superintendents and school board presidents were collectively experiencing in their local school districts. As shown in Table 35, there were superintendents and school board presidents that indicated each of the issues ranged from the most important to the least important in their local school district. By reviewing the means of the responses, the overall ranking of the issues was determined. Finance had an average rating of 2.1638 on the 1-9 rating scale, identifying Finance as the top issue superintendents and school board presidents were facing in their local school districts at the time the surveys were completed.

Table 35

Superintendents and School Board President Ranking of AASA Issues

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Law/Legal Issues	287	1.00	9.00	5.2997	2.17923	6
Finance	287	1.00	9.00	2.1638	1.45960	1
Personnel Management	287	1.00	9.00	3.6446	1.63629	3
School Reform/Improvement	287	1.00	9.00	3.0488	2.18010	2
Superintendent-Board Relations	287	1.00	9.00	4.4878	2.07357	4
Facility Planning/Management	287	1.00	9.00	5.1986	1.89375	5
Conflict Management	287	1.00	9.00	6.8432	1.63008	8
Policy Development/Management	286	1.00	9.00	6.4825	2.07526	7
Student Discipline	287	1.00	9.00	7.8467	1.77911	9

The superintendent and school board president responses to this question were then split apart to identify the most important issues to the separate groups. Table 36 lists the summary of superintendent responses to this question. There were some differences in the means and rankings as compared to the combined responses of superintendents and school board presidents in Table 35. The range of responses by the superintendents, as shown on Table 36, was between 1-9 on all of the issues except Finance. Finance responses ranged from 1-7. Finance also had the lowest mean number, indicating that it was the most important issue superintendents were facing in their local school districts. The top four issues indicated by superintendents, Finance, School Reform/Improvement,

Personnel Management, and Superintendent-Board Relations, were the same as the combined analysis of superintendent and school board president responses.

Table 36

Superintendent Ranking of AASA Issues

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Law/Legal Issues	163	1.00	9.00	5.0859	2.12974	5
Finance	163	1.00	7.00	2.0920	1.30908	1
Personnel Management	163	1.00	9.00	3.6380	1.55485	3
School Reform/Improvement	163	1.00	9.00	3.0307	2.25920	2
Superintendent-Board Relations	163	1.00	9.00	4.1043	1.95509	4
Facility Planning/Management	163	1.00	9.00	5.4479	1.68930	6
Conflict Management	163	1.00	9.00	6.6687	1.66316	7
Policy Development/Management	163	1.00	9.00	7.0000	1.80876	8
Student Discipline	163	1.00	9.00	7.9325	1.76429	9

The summary of school board president responses to this question is listed in Table 37. Like the superintendent responses, there are some differences in means and rankings in the school board president responses as compared to the combined group in Table 35. School board president responses on all of the AASA issues ranged from 1-9 except for Law/Legal Issues and Conflict Management. These two issues ranged from 2-9. School board presidents also ranked Finance as the most important issue they are facing in their local school district with a mean of 2.2581. The top four issues for school

board presidents were different than superintendent responses. The top four issues for school board presidents were Finance, School Reform/Improvement, Personnel Management, and Facility Planning/Management. The top three selections were ranked in the same order as the superintendent responses. School board presidents selected Facility Planning/Management their fourth most important issue in their local school district while superintendents chose Superintendent-Board Relations as their fourth most important issue.

Table 37

School Board President Ranking of AASA Issues

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard Deviation	Rank
Law/Legal Issues	124	2.00	9.00	5.5806	2.22000	6
Finance	124	1.00	9.00	2.2581	1.63732	1
Personnel Management	124	1.00	9.00	3.6532	1.74395	3
School Reform/Improvement	124	1.00	9.00	3.0726	2.08039	2
Superintendent-Board Relations	124	1.00	9.00	4.9919	2.12418	5
Facility Planning/Management	124	1.00	9.00	4.8710	2.09517	4
Conflict Management	124	2.00	9.00	7.0726	1.56264	8
Policy Development/Management	123	1.00	9.00	5.7967	2.21011	7
Student Discipline	124	1.00	9.00	7.7339	1.79932	9

The means, standard deviation, and statistical significance of the superintendent and school board president responses rank ordering the importance of AASA issues in

their local school district are listed on Table 38. The null hypothesis in this Independent Samples Test stated that the rankings would not be different in comparing the superintendent and school board president groups. An alpha level of .05 was used on this Independent Samples Test, giving a 95% confidence interval. The Independent Samples Test indicated a statistically significant difference between the superintendent and school board president responses on the Superintendent-Board Relations, Facility Planning/Management, Conflict Management, and Policy Development/Management issues.

Table 38

*Means, Standard Deviations, and Significance of Superintendent and School Board**President Ranking of AASA Issues*

		Mean	Standard Deviation	Significance (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Law/Legal Issues	Superintendent	5.0859	2.12974	.057	-.49476
	Board President	5.5806	2.22000	.058	-.49476
Finance	Superintendent	2.0920	1.30908	.341	-.16604
	Board President	2.2581	1.63732	.355	-.16604
Personnel Management	Superintendent	3.6380	1.55485	.938	-.01519
	Board President	3.6532	1.74395	.939	-.01519
School Reform/Improvement	Superintendent	3.0307	2.25920	.872	-.04191
	Board President	3.0726	2.08039	.871	-.04191
Superintendent-Board Relations	Superintendent	4.1043	1.95509	.000	-.88764
	Board President	4.9919	2.12418	.000	-.88764
Facility Planning/Management	Superintendent	5.4479	1.68930	.010	.57689
	Board President	4.8710	2.09517	.013	.57689
Conflict Management	Superintendent	6.6687	1.66316	.037	-.40387
	Board President	7.0726	1.56264	.036	-.40387
Policy Development/Management	Superintendent	7.0000	1.80876	.000	1.20325
	Board President	5.7967	2.21011	.000	1.20325
Student Discipline	Superintendent	7.9325	1.76429	.350	.19864
	Board President	7.7339	1.79932	.351	.19864

Superintendents rated the Superintendent-Board Relations issue with a mean of 4.1043, and the board president responses gave a mean of 4.9919. This produced a mean

difference of $-.88764$. This negative difference indicates superintendents ranked the Superintendent-Board Relations issue significantly higher than school board presidents, as reported by the SPSS significance level of 0.000 in Table 38.

On the Facility Planning/Management issue, the superintendents ranked this issue with a mean of 5.4479. The mean for school board presidents on this issue was 4.8710. This produced a mean difference of $.57689$. The positive number reinforces that school board presidents ranked the Facility Planning/Management issue as significantly more important than superintendents, as reported by the significance level of less than $.05$ on the Independent Samples test, summarized in Table 38.

Conflict Management was an AASA issue that superintendent indicated was significantly more important than the indications of school board presidents. The superintendents gave this issue a mean of 6.6687 while the results of the board presidents gave a mean of 7.0726. This produced a mean difference of $-.40387$, and with the negative number, this supports the conclusion that superintendents believed the Conflict Management issue was more relevant to the current issues in their local school district.

Lastly, the results of the Policy Development/Management issue were statistically significant as well with a significance level of 0.000. The mean of school board president responses was 5.7967, and the mean of the superintendent responses was 7.000. This produces a mean difference of 1.20325 , and with the positive mean difference and a significance level of 0.000, there was a significant difference in the value superintendents and school board presidents gave this issue. School board presidents indicated that the

Policy Development/Management issue was more important in their local school district than the responses of superintendents indicated, as shown in Table 38.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter consists of four parts: Summary of the Study, Conclusions of the Study, and Recommendations for Future Research. The study's purpose and methodology are discussed in the Summary. Observations made from the analysis of the data are found in the Conclusions. Recommendations for the use of the study and recommendations for future research are discussed in the final section of this chapter.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify and compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. The study sought to answer the two following research questions:

1. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
2. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

This quantitative study was conducted in the state of Iowa. The target populations of interest in this study were the school board presidents and superintendents in Iowa in

the 2013-2014 school year. At the time of the study, there were 346 school districts in the state of Iowa, each having a superintendent and school board president (Iowa School Directory, 2013). In January 2014, all superintendents and school board presidents were invited to respond to an anonymous, electronic survey designed to generate responses on their perceived importance of each of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Potential participants were provided with the rationale of the survey research and why it was important, and they made a personal decision as to whether they responded to the survey. At the completion of the survey, two weeks after the target populations were invited to complete the survey, 189 superintendents completed the survey, giving a 54.6% participate rate. Also among the reponses, 140 school board presidents completed the survey, giving a 40.5% participation rate.

There were separate surveys for superintendents and school board presidents in order to keep the responses separate between the two groups. Respondents were asked to provide demographics information including age, ethnicity, gender, the certified enrollment of their school district, and how long they had served in their role. Respondents were asked to rank order the six Iowa Standards for School Leaders, indicating an order of importance of the Standards. In the next section of the survey, superintendents and school board presidents were asked to indicate the importance of each of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities with four choices indicating the importance: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. Following those indications, superintendents were asked to indicate their level of performance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities (Waters & Marzano, 2006). School board

presidents were asked to indicate the level of performance of the superintendent in their local school district. Both groups were able to choose: Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree. The final section of the survey asked superintendents and school board presidents to rank order the top issues facing superintendents, according to a list of issues provided by AASA, The School Superintendent's Association (Kowalski et al., 2011).

Raw data provided by the survey, conducted with Survey Monkey Gold (Survey Monkey, 2013), were sent electronically to Mr. Mark Jacobson, Coordinator of the University of Northern Iowa Statistical Consulting Center. Mr. Jacobson entered the data into PASW Statistics (Rel. 18.0.2) SPSS software (Predictive Analytics SoftWare, 2010). The responses of the superintendent and school board president surveys were also combined into a single SPSS file in order to compare the responses of the two groups.

Conclusions of the Study

The demographics data that was received from the survey indicated a representation of respondents according to age of the respondents, the number of years in their role, and various sizes of school districts. Among both respondent groups, 98.79% of superintendents and 99.19% of school board presidents indicated White as their ethnicity, which may be a true indication of these groups in Iowa. In addition, 85.89% of superintendent respondents and 74.19% of school board president respondents were male, which also may also be a true representation of these groups in Iowa.

When superintendents and school board presidents were asked to rank order the Iowa Standards for School Leaders, both groups produced similar results. The following three Standards were in the top three selections of both groups:

- Shared Vision: The superintendent promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
 - This standard was ranked as most important to superintendents and second most important to school board presidents.
- Culture of Learning: The superintendent promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development.
 - This standard was ranked as most important to school board presidents and second most important to superintendents.
- Ethics: The superintendent promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner.
 - This standard was ranked third most important to superintendents and school board presidents.

Overall, in rank ordering the Iowa Standards for School Leaders, the responses of the superintendents and school board presidents were similar although superintendents chose Shared Vision as their highest priority, and school board presidents chose Culture of Learning as their highest priority for superintendents.

When superintendents and school board presidents were asked their level of agreement with the importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, both groups overwhelmingly agreed that all of the Responsibilities are important. The average responses, by both groups, on all of the Responsibilities fell between agreeing and strongly agreeing on the importance of each of the Responsibilities. Superintendents and school board presidents both indicated the highest level of agreement on the first McRel Superintendent Responsibility: It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of goal setting.

The first research question of this study asked about the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The questions regarding the Iowa Standards for School Leaders indicated agreement between the superintendents and school board presidents of the Standards. The questions regarding the importance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities also provided proof of agreement between superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Responsibilities.

The next section of the survey asked superintendents to indicate their level of performance of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. School board presidents were asked to indicate their local superintendent's performance of the Responsibilities. Again, all of the averages of the responses by superintendents and school board presidents were between agreeing and strongly agreeing that the superintendents perform the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities in their local school district.

In the last section relating to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, it was found that superintendents and school board presidents indicated the importance of the Responsibilities at a higher level than superintendents are performing the Responsibilities. On the first four of the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities, there was a statistically significant difference in that superintendents and school board presidents valued the importance of the Responsibilities higher than how they indicated superintendents are performing. However, it is also important to again point out that the averages of these responses all fell between agree and strongly agree. This means that more superintendents and school board presidents indicated that they strongly agree on the importance of the Responsibility than they strongly agreed that the superintendents perform the Responsibility.

The second research question of this study sought to find the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. The superintendents and school board presidents that responded to the survey indicated an overall agreement that superintendents in Iowa are performing the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. However, there was stronger agreement in the overall importance of the Superintendents Responsibilities than the actual level of superintendent performance of the Responsibilities. The survey results showed that while superintendents are performing the Responsibilities, both superintendents and school board presidents value the Responsibilities more than how superintendents are performing the Responsibilities.

The study also showed agreement between superintendents and school board presidents in the rank ordering of the American Association of School Administrator (AASA) Issues for Superintendents (Kowalski et al, 2006). Finance was the top issue indicated by both superintendents and school board presidents. School Reform/Improvement was the second most important issue for both groups. The third most important issue for superintendents and school board presidents was Personnel Management. There wasn't a difference in the indications of superintendents and school board presidents until the fourth most important issue. Superintendents chose Superintendent-Board Relations as their fourth most important issue while board presidents chose Facility Planning/Management as their fourth most important issue. Overall however, the top issues were the same for superintendents and school board presidents.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of this study were utilized by the principal investigator for completion of doctoral dissertation requirements, primarily. In addition, the results were shared with the University of Northern Iowa Educational Leadership faculty, Iowa Association of School Boards staff, and School Administrators of Iowa staff. These three groups indicated a need and interest in the results of this questionnaire for use with their professional organizations and students, to better prepare them for the realities that the questionnaire results presented.

This study provided answers to the research questions. However, it would be advisable to continue this type of research between superintendents and school board

presidents into the future, as this study also created additional questions. These questions could be the basis for additional research by the principal investigator of this study or others. Do superintendent perceptions of the quality of work they are doing change as the number of years of experience, for the superintendent or the school board president, change? Do the school board presidents' perceptions of the quality of work their superintendents are doing change as the number of years of experience, for the superintendent or board president, change? Would the results of the study change if all school board members were surveyed instead of just surveying school board presidents? What additional clarification of the results could be gained by talking with superintendents and school board presidents through a qualitative study? Is there a direct correlation between the answers given by a school board president and his or her superintendent? Is there additional insight to be gained on the performance and expectations of superintendents based on any of the demographics information that was gathered? Would the responses change based on school district enrollment, gender, or age? How would the inclusion of all 11 AASA issues for schools change the ranked importance of the issues? Is there a correlation between the issues respondents ranked as important and the level of performance of the superintendent, as indicated by superintendents and school board presidents? With this survey being given in January, would the time of the year change the results of the study? Would the results of this study be similar if it was replicated in other geographical areas? This study could be replicated in other geographic areas in order to generalize the data provided to a wider demographic.

How would the responses change if respondents were only able to choose agree or disagree throughout the study rather than having four selections, adding strongly agree and strongly disagree? This has been a lingering question for the principal researcher since the initial analysis of the survey responses. For the most part, the statistically relevant differences among superintendent and school board president responses are based on the difference between agree and strongly agree responses. Each respondent could interpret these two responses differently. If respondents were limited to only agree or disagree responses, or an altogether different rating scale or type of question, there may have been a different result.

There were significant differences between the superintendents' and school board presidents' perceived importance of the McRel standards and the performance of the superintendents according to this standard. Particular attention should be paid to these areas where both groups are valuing the standard higher than the superintendents are being rated. There is potential for professional development and learning opportunities for superintendents in these areas, such as the district goal-setting process, maintaining school board support of district goals, and evaluation of programs, curriculum, and instruction.

There has historically been turmoil between superintendents and school boards, as recorded in the Review of Literature in this study. However, the Review of Literature was focused on nationwide research and literature. At this point in Iowa, however, this study indicates that there was general agreement among superintendents and school board presidents regarding the work that was being done and the key issues facing the

superintendent position. While this information cannot be fully generalized in Iowa, without a larger responses and additional study, it is also cause for celebration of the work that has been done to improve the role of superintendents in Iowa, superintendent preparation programs, and the relationships between school boards and superintendents. It is also the recommendation of the principal investigator that further quantitative and qualitative studies be completed in this area of study in an effort to gain a deeper understanding of the issues that superintendents and school boards in Iowa are facing.

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APPENDIX A
INTRODUCTORY EMAIL TO SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS
AND SUPERINTENDENTS

December 13, 2013

Iowa School Board Presidents and Superintendents,

I am an Iowa superintendent as well as a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa. This email serves as an introduction to a survey you will be invited to complete in January. Both the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) support this survey.

The purpose of this study is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. The study seeks to answer the following two questions:

1. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
2. What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

I encourage your participation in this survey that will be emailed to you in early January 2014. While the immediate results of this study will be utilized for the completion of my doctoral dissertation, the results will also be shared with the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) staff. These three groups have indicated a need for and interest in the results of this survey for use with their professional organizations to strengthen and enhance relationships between school boards and their superintendents.

Thank you for your consideration, and please watch for the survey to be released by email in early January.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Peterson
University of Northern Iowa Student
Email: danpeter@uni.edu
Phone: (563) 559-0323

Dr. Dewitt Jones
Dissertation Committee Chair
Email: dewitt.jones@uni.edu
Phone: (319) 273-4546

APPENDIX B
INVITATION EMAIL FOR SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS
TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY

January 10, 2014

Iowa School Board Presidents,

I am an Iowa superintendent as well as a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa. This email serves as an invitation to a survey you are being asked to complete. Both the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) support this survey.

The purpose of this study is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. The study seeks to answer the following two questions:

- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

I encourage your participation in this survey. While the immediate results of this study will be utilized for the completion of my doctoral dissertation, the results will also be shared with the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) staff. These groups have indicated a need for and interest in the results of this survey for use with their professional organizations to strengthen and enhance relationships between school boards and their superintendents.

Thank you for your consideration. To participate in this study, please visit the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JVRLPLR>

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Peterson
University of Northern Iowa Student
Email: danpeter@uni.edu
Phone: (563) 559-0323

Dr. Dewitt Jones
Dissertation Committee Chair
Email: dewitt.jones@uni.edu
Phone: (319) 273-4546

APPENDIX C
INVITATION EMAIL FOR SUPERINTENDENTS
TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY

January 10, 2014

Iowa School Superintendents,

I am an Iowa superintendent as well as a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa. This email serves as an invitation to a survey you are being asked to complete. Both the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) support this survey.

The purpose of this study is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. The study seeks to answer the following two questions:

- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

I encourage your participation in this survey. While the immediate results of this study will be utilized for the completion of my doctoral dissertation, the results will also be shared with the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) staff. These groups have indicated a need for and interest in the results of this survey for use with their professional organizations to strengthen and enhance relationships between school boards and their superintendents.

Thank you for your consideration. To participate in this study, please visit the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JLHLX6G>

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Peterson
University of Northern Iowa Student
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Phone: (563) 559-0323

Dr. Dewitt Jones
Dissertation Committee Chair
Email: dewitt.jones@uni.edu
Phone: (319) 273-4546

APPENDIX D
INVITATION REMINDER EMAIL FOR SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENTS
TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY

January 17, 2014

Iowa School Board Presidents,

This email serves as a reminder of a survey you are invited to complete. If you are one of those that have already completed the survey, I would like to thank you. There is no need to complete the survey again. Currently, 80 Board Presidents have responded to this survey, and 131 superintendents have responded to their corresponding survey. I certainly appreciate the support in this work! Both the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) support this study as well.

As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. The study seeks to answer the following two questions:

- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

I encourage your participation in this survey. While the immediate results of this study will be utilized for the completion of my doctoral dissertation, the results will also be shared with the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) staff. These groups have indicated a need and interest in the results of this survey for use with their professional organizations to strengthen and enhance relationships between school boards and their superintendents.

Thank you for your consideration. To participate in this study, please visit the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JVRLPLR>

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Peterson
University of Northern Iowa Student
Email: danpeter@uni.edu
Phone: (563) 559-0323

Dr. Dewitt Jones
Dissertation Committee Chair
Email: dewitt.jones@uni.edu
Phone: (319) 273-4546

APPENDIX E
INVITATION REMINDER EMAIL FOR SUPERINTENDENTS
TO PARTICIPATE IN SURVEY

January 17, 2014

Iowa School Superintendents,

This email serves as a reminder of a survey you are invited to complete. If you are one of those that have already completed the survey, I would like to thank you. There is no need to complete the survey again. Currently, 131 superintendents have responded to this survey, and 80 board presidents have responded to their corresponding survey. I certainly appreciate the support in this work! Both the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) support this study as well.

As a reminder, the purpose of this study is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's complex and ever-changing educational environment. The study seeks to answer the following two questions:

- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents and school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?
- What are the differences in perceptions between Iowa school superintendents' perceptions of their performance and the perceptions of school board presidents regarding the performance of their local superintendent, both with regard to the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities?

I encourage your participation in this survey. While the immediate results of this study will be utilized for the completion of my doctoral dissertation, the results will also be shared with the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI) staff. These groups have indicated a need and interest in the results of this survey for use with their professional organizations to strengthen and enhance relationships between school boards and their superintendents.

Thank you for your consideration. To participate in this study, please visit the following link: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JLHLX6G>

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Peterson
University of Northern Iowa Student
Email: danpeter@uni.edu
Phone: (563) 559-0323

Dr. Dewitt Jones
Dissertation Committee Chair
Email: dewitt.jones@uni.edu
Phone: (319) 273-4546

APPENDIX F
SCHOOL BOARD PRESIDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

The purpose of this research project is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's educational environment. This is a research project being conducted by Daniel J. Peterson, a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa. This research is also endorsed by the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI).

You are invited to participate in this research project because you are an Iowa School Board President. While there aren't any direct benefits to you individually for participating in this research (compensation, gifts, drawings, etc.), one of the indirect benefits of participating in this research is that you will be contributing to information that will be provided to IASB and SAI for their use. A high questionnaire completion rate will provide richer data to be utilized by these groups. Your participation will not only help with my doctoral dissertation, but you will be providing current perceptions of the superintendent position. This information may potentially benefit superintendents and school board members for years to come. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate (at any time) up until you hit "done" at the end of the questionnaire. If you decide not to participate in this inquiry, you will not be penalized.

The procedure involves filling out an online questionnaire, titled Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership. Completion of this questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes. Risk in participating in this research is minimal. No individual IP addresses will be identified, and all participant data will be stored in a secure digital location. No individual participant identifiers (name, school district, etc.) will be collected in an effort to protect privacy and confidentiality to the greatest extent possible (given the nature of the internet I can't guarantee the security of any information transmitted over the internet). This questionnaire will be about the perceptions of Iowa school board presidents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities and the perceptions of the performance of their local superintendent in accordance with the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Iowa superintendents are being asked to complete a similar questionnaire titled, Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership, in tandem with this questionnaire for Iowa School Board Presidents.

The information you provide will be kept confidential. The results of this study will be used

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

for scholarly purposes and will also be shared with the University of Northern Iowa, IASB, and SAI representatives.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Daniel J. Peterson, University of Northern Iowa student, at (563) 559-0323 or danpeter@uni.edu or Dewitt Jones, UNI Dissertation Chair, at (319) 273-4546 or dewitt.jones@uni.edu. This research has been reviewed according to University of Northern Iowa IRB procedures for research involving human subjects. If you have any questions about your rights as research participant, you can contact Anita Gordon, UNI IRB Administrator at (319) 273-6148 or anita.gordon@uni.edu.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- you have read the above information
- you are at least 18 years of age
- you are an Iowa school board president
- you voluntarily agree to participate

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

agree

disagree

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

Iowa Standards for School Leaders

Fully understanding that all of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders are integral to the work of a superintendent, please rank the following standards in order of importance for a superintendent (1 being the most important - 6 being the least important).

Note - when you select a rating number for each standard, the standards will reorder themselves accordingly.

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. (Shared Vision)

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development. (Culture of Learning)

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment. (Management)

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources. (Family and Community)

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner. (Ethics)

The superintendent promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community and, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (Societal Context)

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

McRel Leadership Responsibilities for Superintendents

As you consider the responsibilities of a superintendent, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following McRel Leadership Responsibilities.

It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

McRel Leadership Responsibilities for Superintendents

Considering your local school district and your current superintendent's performance, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following McRel Leadership Responsibilities.

The superintendent in my local school district effectively involves board members and principals in the process of goal setting.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

The superintendent in my local school district establishes goals for student achievement and instructional programs that are adopted and are based on relevant research.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Disagree

In my local school district, school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

The superintendent in my local school district effectively monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

The superintendent in my local school district dedicates resources that are used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

The superintendent in my local school district provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

District Needs

The following list contains the top issues facing school superintendents, according to AASA, The School Superintendent's Association. Please rank these issues according to their current level of importance for your school district (1 being most important - 11 being least important).

Note - when you select a rating number for each issue, the issues will reorder themselves accordingly.

<input type="text"/>	Law/Legal Issues
<input type="text"/>	Finance
<input type="text"/>	Personnel Management
<input type="text"/>	School Reform/Improvement
<input type="text"/>	Superintendent-Board Relations
<input type="text"/>	School-Community Relations
<input type="text"/>	Facility Planning/Management
<input type="text"/>	School Safety/Crisis Management
<input type="text"/>	Conflict Management
<input type="text"/>	Policy Development/Management
<input type="text"/>	Student Discipline

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership**Demographic Information****How long have you been a school board member?**

- 0-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years 21-25 years 26-30 years

What is your school district's certified enrollment?

- Less than 500 500 - 1,000 1,001 - 2,000 2,001 - 5,000 Greater than 5,000

What is your age?

- 18 to 24 25 to 34 35 to 44 45 to 54 55 to 64 65 to 74 75 or older

What is your ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

- White Black or African American Asian Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander American Indian or Alaska Native Other

What is your gender?

- Female Male

Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership

Thank you!

Thank you for responding to this research study. The information you provided is appreciated!

APPENDIX G
SUPERINTENDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

The purpose of this research project is to compare current perceptions of superintendents and school board presidents in Iowa public schools regarding the essential leadership characteristics and capabilities of the superintendent in today's educational environment. This is a research project being conducted by Daniel J. Peterson, a doctoral student at the University of Northern Iowa. This research is also endorsed by the Iowa Association of School Boards (IASB) and School Administrators of Iowa (SAI).

You are invited to participate in this research project because you are an Iowa School Superintendent. While there aren't any direct benefits to you individually for participating in this research (compensation, gifts, drawings, etc.), one of the indirect benefits of participating in this research is that you will be contributing to information that will be provided to IASB and SAI for their use. A high questionnaire completion rate will provide richer data to be utilized by these groups. Your participation will not only help with my doctoral dissertation, but you will be providing current perceptions of the superintendent position. This information may potentially benefit superintendents and school board members for years to come. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate (at any time) up until you hit "done" at the end of the questionnaire. If you decide not to participate in this inquiry, you will not be penalized.

The procedure involves filling out an online questionnaire, titled Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership. Completion of this questionnaire will take approximately 5-10 minutes. Risk in participating in this research is minimal. No individual IP addresses will be identified, and all participant data will be stored in a secure digital location. No individual participant identifiers (name, school district, etc.) will be collected in an effort to protect privacy and confidentiality to the greatest extent possible (given the nature of the internet I can't guarantee the security of any information transmitted over the internet). This questionnaire will be about the perceptions of Iowa superintendents on the importance of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders and the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities and the perceptions of their performance as a local superintendent in accordance with the McRel Superintendent Responsibilities. Iowa school board presidents are being asked to complete a similar questionnaire titled, Iowa School Board President Survey on Superintendent Leadership, in tandem with this questionnaire for Iowa superintendents.

The information you provide will be kept confidential. The results of this study will be used

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

for scholarly purposes and will also be shared with University of Northern Iowa, IASB, and SAI representatives.

If you have any questions about the research study, please contact Daniel J. Peterson, University of Northern Iowa student, at (563) 559-0323 or danpeter@uni.edu or Dewitt Jones, UNI Dissertation Chair, at (319) 273-4546 or dewitt.jones@uni.edu. This research has been reviewed according to University of Northern Iowa IRB procedures for research involving human subjects. If you have any questions about your rights as research participant, you can contact Anita Gordon, UNI IRB Administrator at (319) 273-6148 or anita.gordon@uni.edu.

ELECTRONIC CONSENT: Please select your choice below.

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

- you have read the above information
- you are at least 18 years of age
- you are an Iowa superintendent
- you voluntarily agree to participate

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

- agree
- disagree

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

Iowa Standards for School Leaders

Fully understanding that all of the Iowa Standards for School Leaders are integral to the work of a superintendent, please rank the following standards in order of importance for a superintendent (1 being most important - 6 being least important).

Note - when you select a rating number for each standard, the standards will reorder themselves accordingly.

- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community. (Shared Vision)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional development. (Culture of Learning)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations and resources for a safe, efficient and effective learning environment. (Management)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs and mobilizing community resources. (Family and Community)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner. (Ethics)
- The superintendent promotes the success of all students by understanding the profile of the community and, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (Societal Context)

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

McRel Leadership Responsibilities for Superintendents

As you consider the responsibilities of a superintendent, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following McRel Leadership Responsibilities.

It is important that the superintendent involves board members and principals in the process of setting goals.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that the superintendent monitors and evaluates implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that resources are dedicated and used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

It is important that the superintendent provides autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expects alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Strongly Disagree Disagree Agree Strongly Agree

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

McRel Leadership Responsibilities for Superintendents

Considering your current performance as a superintendent, please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement with the following McRel Leadership Responsibilities taking place.

As the superintendent, in my local school district, I effectively involve board members and principals in the process of goal setting.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

As the superintendent, in my local school district, I establish goals for student achievement and instructional program are adopted and are based on relevant research.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Disagree

In my local school district, school board support for district goals for achievement and instruction is maintained.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

As the superintendent, in my local school district, I effectively monitor and evaluate implementation of the district instructional program, impact of instruction on achievement, and impact of implementation on implementers.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

As the superintendent, in my local school district, I dedicate resources used for professional development of teachers and principals to achieve district goals.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

As the superintendent, in my local school district, I provide autonomy to principals to lead their schools, but expect alignment on district goals and use of resources for professional development.

Strongly Disagree
 Disagree
 Agree
 Strongly Agree

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

District Needs

The following list contains the top issues facing school superintendents, according to AASA, The School Superintendent's Association. Please rank these issues according to their current level of importance for your school district (1 being most important - 11 being least important).

Note - when you select a rating number for each issue, the issues will reorder themselves accordingly.

<input type="text"/>	Law/Legal Issues
<input type="text"/>	Finance
<input type="text"/>	Personnel Management
<input type="text"/>	School Reform/Improvement
<input type="text"/>	Superintendent-Board Relations
<input type="text"/>	Facility Planning/Management
<input type="text"/>	Conflict Management
<input type="text"/>	Policy Development/Management
<input type="text"/>	Student Discipline

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership**Demographic Information****How long have you been a superintendent?**

- 0-5 years 6-10 years 11-15 years 16-20 years 21-25 years 26-30 years

What is your school district's certified enrollment?

- Less than 500 500 - 1,000 1,001 - 2,000 2,001 - 5,000 Greater than 5,000

What is your age?

- 18 to 24 25 to 34 35 to 44 45 to 54 55 to 64 65 to 74 75 or older

What is your ethnicity? (Please select all that apply.)

- White Black or African American Asian Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander American Indian or Alaska Native Other

What is your gender?

- Female Male

Iowa Superintendent Survey on Superintendent Leadership

Thank you!

Thank you for responding to this research study. The information you provided is appreciated!