

Superintendent Longevity in Oregon

by

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DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

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Title: Superintendent Longevity in Oregon

Following the COVID-19 pandemic, K-12 public school district superintendent turnover rates reached concerning levels in Oregon. This study explored relationships between superintendent longevity and superintendents' experiences with the school board, experiences in the school district, experiences related to their own health and safety, and experiences related to superintendent professional preparation and support. The study also examined themes between the superintendent performance evaluation and superintendent longevity. Data was collected from superintendents (n = 121) who served in Oregon's K-12 public schools at any time between the 2019-2020 and 2022-2023 school years. There was a statistically significant relationship between superintendents' positive experiences with the school board and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year in 2022-2023. Post hoc explorations of survey responses revealed challenges related to (a) mental health and maintaining a healthy work-life balance, (b) the role of politics in school districts and influencing board members' actions, and (c) superintendent preparation programs. Nonetheless, superintendents were supported by state and local organizations and superintendent colleagues, reported positive professional relationships with school board members and employee associations, and felt that decisions made by the school board reflected the school district's vision and mission. These findings are discussed in terms of implications for superintendent training and recommendations for future research.

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To my husband, Toby, who always supports and encourages me, and to my children, Matthew, Peter, William, and Joseph, who continuously amaze and inspire me.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

School district superintendents in K-12 public schools serve diverse students, staff, families, and communities. District leaders are tasked with the challenges of understanding and responding to the educational, social, and emotional needs of the students in their schools while simultaneously navigating the political and cultural influences in their communities. If unable to successfully navigate these variables, a superintendent may experience involuntary or voluntary turnover.

In 2021, 26 of the 100 largest school districts in the United States (26%) experienced a change in the superintendent role, a notable increase from a turnover rate of 14% in the prior year (Rosenberg, 2022). The School Superintendents Association (AASA) revealed that nearly half of the superintendents who participated in the 2021-2022 *Superintendents Salary & Benefits Study* reported having five or fewer years of experience as a superintendent (Thomas et al., 2022). Superintendent experience reported for the same survey in 2022-2023 was similar, with 48% of participants having five or fewer years of experience as a superintendent (Thomas et al., 2023). When asked about how long respondents had served in their current superintendent role, 61% shared that it had been five or fewer years.

Nationwide, the position of K-12 public school superintendent has become more volatile and unpredictable since the COVID-19 pandemic began in 2020. According to Cohn (2023), “the pandemic put an extraordinary spotlight on public education in local communities in ways that were unprecedented” (p. 18). Roegman and colleagues (2022) noted that school boards have been presented with unique challenges in recent years as they have sought to respond to health and safety concerns surrounding a global pandemic, dedicate time and resources to meet the

social and emotional needs of students, and work diligently to develop plans to address inequities in K-12 public schools. A nationwide study conducted by White et al. (2023) highlighted how political stressors have prompted mental health concerns among 63% of superintendents.

Experiences of Oregon superintendents have mirrored those of school district leaders throughout the nation. Since the onset of the pandemic, there have been a number of situations in Oregon in which political influences have contributed to superintendent turnover. Within a matter of four months in 2021, three Oregon superintendents were removed abruptly from their positions by their governing boards. In July of 2021, newly-elected board members in Greater Albany Public Schools voted to remove Superintendent Melissa Goff from her position, without cause. Although the school board members would not provide a reason for the decision, media sources speculated that the decision was related to COVID-19 mandates and concerns regarding critical race theory in schools (VanderHart, 2021). The next month, Adrian School District Superintendent Kevin Purnell was terminated because he refused to follow the school board's directive to defy the state's mask mandate (Frankel, 2021). Not long after, in November of 2021, the Newberg, Oregon school board fired Superintendent Joe Morelock, without cause, after the school board issued a controversial directive that prohibited staff from displaying political symbols on campus (Selsky, 2021). Concerning trends in superintendent turnover in Oregon prompted the Oregon Legislative Assembly (2022) to pass Senate Bill 1521 which prohibited school boards from requiring a superintendent to ignore certain laws or terminating a superintendent due to the superintendent's decision to adhere to laws.

In addition to evidence of politically motivated superintendent terminations in Oregon, recent studies have revealed that superintendents of color and female superintendents in the state experienced inequities due to their race and gender. For instance, women superintendents in

Oregon reported experiencing gender biases during the hiring process and in the workplace (Fricano et al., 2021). The same study also shared that over half of women superintendents in Oregon transitioned out of their positions in 2021. Superintendents of color in Oregon communicated that they experienced challenges related to promoting equity in their districts. Additionally, superintendents of color described incidents of discrimination both within the workplace and within the communities they served. Notably, superintendents of color emphasized that the relationships with their school boards influenced their decisions to remain in or leave a district (Woodson et al., 2021).

A review of documentation obtained from the Oregon Department of Education through a public records request illustrates the revolving door of K-12 public school superintendents in the state of Oregon since the COVID-19 pandemic. For example, at the beginning of the 2019-2020 school year, at a time when the COVID-19 pandemic had not yet impacted schools, 18% of school districts began the academic year with a new superintendent. Shortly after the onset of the pandemic, at the beginning of the 2020-2021 school year, superintendent turnover slightly decreased, with only 16% of school districts experiencing turnover in the superintendent role. However, as the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic lingered, turnover rates increased, with 20% of school district welcoming a new district leader in the fall of 2021 (Miller, 2022). Concerningly, Oregon Department of Education records reveal that 33% of school districts began the 2022-2023 school year with a new superintendent. In all, between the 2018-2019 and 2022-2023 school years, 63% of school districts in Oregon experienced turnover in the superintendency. Thus, fewer than 40% of Oregon school districts maintained consistent district leadership between 2018 and 2023.

This high rate of turnover is especially concerning given the potential negative impacts

changes in the superintendency can have on students, staff, and district operations. Oregon superintendents are tasked with achieving a variety of long-term objectives, including developing and overseeing a vision for the district, ensuring students have access to high-quality instruction, managing district operations, promoting inclusive and equitable learning environments, serving in an ethical manner, and understanding and navigating external factors that impact school districts (Oregon Department of Education, n.d.). Because school district leaders serve a critical role in ensuring success for all K-12 students, superintendent longevity can positively impact students, staff, and procedures (Yates & De Jong, 2018). In fact, Simpson (2013) revealed that when superintendents remained in the district leadership role for five or more years, there was a statistically significant positive impact on student growth. Although there is evidence that highlights the benefits of retaining the same individual in the superintendent role, the rates of superintendent turnover in Oregon have increased dramatically since 2020. Frequent turnover in the superintendent role leads to uncertainty in the school district and warrants further investigation.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how characteristics of the school district, characteristics of the school board, superintendent performance, superintendent health and safety, and professional preparation and support of the superintendent impacted superintendent longevity in K-12 public schools in Oregon between 2019 and 2023. Identifying factors that have contributed to superintendent turnover may provide superintendents, superintendent preparation programs, mentor programs, school boards, and legislators with valuable information for improving systems and developing programs to reduce superintendent turnover. Similarly, highlighting factors that have promoted superintendent longevity may also inform stakeholder

efforts to cultivate conditions that support superintendent stability in a school district. Failure to identify and address these factors will likely result in continued superintendent turnover, instability in district leadership in public K-12 schools in Oregon, and uncertainty for Oregon students, staff, families, and communities.

Because the COVID-19 pandemic is relatively recent, research evaluating whether the impacts of COVID-19 on school districts prompted an increase in superintendent turnover is scarce. As such, it is unknown whether the residual impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic are contributing to the high rates of superintendent turnover in the state of Oregon. However, superintendent turnover rates in the state have been increasing, and pressures experienced by superintendents in Oregon have grown exponentially since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. To that end, exploring the topic of recent superintendent turnover in Oregon K-12 public schools is of critical importance.

Theoretical Framework

An examination of the literature analyzing superintendent turnover revealed that the topic has been explored utilizing a number of theoretical frameworks. For example, Lutz and Iannaccone (1986) introduced the dissatisfaction theory, which examined the impact that changes in the membership of school boards can have on superintendent turnover. Essentially, when community members become frustrated with their schools, they seek to enact change through school board elections. As the configuration of the school board changes, the new board seeks a change in district leadership (Lutz & Iannaccone, 1986). Although it is anticipated that school board relations have contributed to recent superintendent turnover rates in Oregon, it is possible that other factors have also influenced the high rate of turnover in district leadership.

Grissom and Anderson (2012) noted that the dissatisfaction theory may not be broad

enough for the complex phenomenon of superintendent longevity. Their framework for understanding superintendent turnover explained that superintendent longevity is influenced by factors that prompt either an involuntary or voluntary departure. The authors noted that both the superintendent and the school board evaluate the employment relationship to determine if the benefits of having the individual in the role of superintendent outweigh any negative impacts of having the superintendent in the position. If the superintendent determines that the costs outweigh the benefits and resigns from the position, it is considered *voluntary turnover*.

Voluntary turnover can be observed through retirement, transitioning to a different district or role in education, or making a choice to pursue a career outside of education. Alternatively, if the school board makes the determination that the costs of retaining the individual in the role as district leader outweigh the benefits and makes the decision to end the employment relationship, it is classified as *involuntary turnover*. In most cases, involuntary turnover results when a school board chooses to terminate a superintendent or does not extend a superintendent's contract.

The superintendent turnover framework developed by Grissom and Andersen (2012) outlined four factors that influence involuntary or voluntary turnover in the superintendency. The factors can be classified as those related to the superintendent's performance, characteristics of the school district, characteristics of the school board, and characteristics of the superintendent. Grissom and Andersen (2012) explained that characteristics of the school district that may influence superintendent longevity include factors such as the school district size, superintendent salary, location of the school district, and workload expectations. The age of the superintendent, race, gender, years of experience as superintendent, level of education, and pathway to the superintendency have been identified as characteristics of the superintendent that may influence longevity. Grissom and Andersen (2012) also noted that characteristics of the school board,

including relations with the superintendent, can impact superintendent turnover. Finally, the framework outlined that superintendent performance factors such as student achievement and superintendent evaluation outcomes can contribute to superintendent turnover.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE SYNTHESIS

School district superintendents serve as educational leaders for K-12 public school systems. As district leaders, superintendents are tasked with overseeing budgets, curriculum, staff, buildings, and programs within the district. However, superintendents are also required to navigate complex social and political influences at the state and federal levels while simultaneously considering local context and cultural norms present in their communities. When the expectations from all influences align, the outcomes can be incredible. Then again, differences in opinion among local, state, and federal stakeholders often create conflict, which can cause superintendent turnover.

As school district leaders have sought to successfully navigate the unique challenges presented from the 2019-2020 through 2022-2023 school years, superintendent turnover rates have also increased. The purpose of this literature review is to explore research related to superintendent longevity in an effort to gain an understanding of the factors that have historically contributed to turnover in the superintendent role while also becoming familiar with the influences that promote superintendent longevity.

Grissom and Andersen's (2012) framework for understanding superintendent turnover conveyed that turnover in the superintendent role can be attributed to at least one of four influences: characteristics of the superintendent, characteristics of the school board, characteristics of the school district, and the superintendent's performance. Thus, this literature review is being conducted with a specific focus on examining existing research related to how characteristics of the superintendent, school board, school district, and superintendent performance impact K-12 superintendent longevity. In addition, given the onset of the COVID-

19 pandemic in 2020, this literature review will also include an examination of the extent to which recent research has examined challenges faced by school boards and superintendents related to COVID-19.

Characteristics of the School Board

Given the close working relationship between a superintendent and the school board, school board characteristics can impact a superintendent's decision to remain in the position or leave. The school board ultimately makes superintendent employment decisions. Perhaps, not surprisingly, the relationship between members of the board and the superintendent can impact superintendent longevity in a district.

Positive Board Relations

Because school board members decide whether a school district should retain or terminate a superintendent, the relationship between a superintendent and the school board members can have a direct impact on superintendent longevity. When a superintendent is able to cultivate a strong relationship with the school board, the school board and superintendent are more likely to engage in collaborative work that promotes both success of the district and superintendent longevity. In fact, during a qualitative study conducted in Texas, 100% of the 33 superintendents interviewed reported that having a positive relationship with their school board would have a positive effect on their decision to maintain employment as superintendent in the school district (Radford et al., 2016).

Kamrath (2022) and Williams et al. (2019) shared that working with positive board members influenced a superintendent's decision to remain in a school district. Kamrath's (2022) case study focused on six superintendents employed by four districts in rural midwestern states. The districts were selected for re-interviews as a follow-up to a case study completed by

Kamrath in 2007. The follow-up study revealed that three out of the four districts were no longer experiencing the frequent turnover in the superintendency that was observed during the 2007 study. Superintendents representing the three districts communicated that positive changes in board representation had the greatest influence on decreasing superintendent turnover (Kamrath, 2022). Similarly, Williams et al.'s (2019) study involving rural superintendents in Idaho revealed that superintendents' decisions to remain in a district were directly related to the relationship they had with the members of the school board.

Board members are described as being positive when they exhibit good judgement, make decisions that are focused on students, support the superintendent, have a positive outlook, and are willing to listen to and consider ideas that may differ from their own (Kamrath, 2022). Positive board relations do not typically evolve on their own. Instead, positive school board members seek to gain a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities through professional development (Kamrath, 2022; Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019). Tekniepe (2015) examined factors that contribute to rural superintendent turnover by surveying 844 rural superintendents throughout the United States. The results demonstrated that when school board members participated in trainings and were knowledgeable about their roles, the rates of involuntary superintendent turnover decreased.

A number of strategies can be employed to promote a positive relationship between the school board and the superintendent and increase the likelihood of retaining the superintendent in the district. O'Connor and Vaughn (2018) examined the relationship between the organizational commitment of superintendents and superintendent turnover intent through a quantitative research study involving 306 Texas superintendents. The study revealed that when superintendents had greater organizational commitment, their turnover intent was lower. Based

on the findings, the researchers suggested that school boards can positively impact superintendent longevity by publicly recognizing the superintendent for accomplishments. The authors emphasized “that basic recognition and mutual respect shown by a school board may be one of the keys to improving superintendent retention” (O'Connor, Jr. & Vaughn, 2018, p. 74).

Because superintendents are required to interact and collaborate with multiple stakeholder groups, Yates and De Jong (2018) encouraged superintendent preparation programs to incorporate training for superintendent candidates to learn how to successfully cultivate positive relationships. Jones (2012) employed a mixed methods study approach to examine factors that influenced the transition of new superintendents in Texas into the position. Data obtained through 289 surveys and a focus group involving eight participants documented that relationships with board members influenced the effectiveness of the transition. As such, Jones (2012) emphasized that new superintendents must intentionally devote time to building positive relationships with school board members.

Negative Board Relations

Research has consistently shown that a negative relationship between the school board and superintendent has the greatest impact on superintendent turnover (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Jones, 2012; Kamrath, 2015; Sampson, 2018; Williams et al., 2019; Yates & De Jong, 2018). Sampson (2018) studied the experiences of five female superintendents in Texas utilizing a qualitative study research design. One of the themes that emerged during the interviews was the influence that board relations had on superintendent longevity, with three participants citing negative relationships with board members as the catalyst for superintendent turnover. Yates and De Jong (2018) examined superintendent longevity in rural South Dakota by surveying 103 practicing superintendents. The researchers found that when the school board and superintendent

experience conflict, it prompts superintendents “of all gender, ages, salary levels, degrees obtained, levels of experience, professional level, or job satisfaction to terminate employment” (Yates & De Jong, 2018, p. 28).

Superintendent and school board relationships can be influenced by many different factors. For example, because school board members are selected through the election process, the community has a tremendous impact on the makeup of the board. If community members are not happy with the direction of the school district, it can result in conflict between the school board and superintendent (Radford et al, 2016; Sampson, 2018; Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019). As school board members allow constituents to excessively influence their actions, the possibility of superintendent turnover increases (Tekniepe, 2015). However, Sampson (2018) also noted that, if superintendents are experiencing conflict with their school board, they may be able to utilize positive relationships within their communities to help cultivate and maintain positive relationships with the school board.

When school board members operate with personal agendas instead of functioning as a cohesive unit, the relationship between the school board and superintendent can become strained (Jones, 2012; Kamrath, 2015). Jones’ (2012) mixed methods study divulged “that dealing with board members who are elected with a single political objective was between a moderate and a major issue” (p. 12). Kamrath (2015) utilized a case study format to explore causes of frequent superintendent turnover in four districts located in midwestern states. Participants comprised 26 staff members and 16 superintendents from the four districts. During interviews, participants highlighted conflicts with the school board as the factor that had the greatest impact on superintendent turnover, with 25% of the superintendents who participated in the study referencing challenges associated with board members who were motivated to join the board in

an attempt to prioritize personal agendas (Kamrath, 2012).

Failure to seek clarification about a topic can lead school board members to draw conclusions based on inaccurate or incomplete information, which can lead to confusion and frustration by all parties. Further, if board members do not engage in training to learn their roles and responsibilities as board members, it can lead to misunderstandings and result in micromanagement of the superintendent (Kamrath, 2015; Robinson & Shakeshaft, 2015; Tekniepe, 2015). Kamrath (2015) noted that board micromanagement was mentioned by almost 40% of participants during study interviews. Board micromanagement was also noted as a stressor for participants in Robinson and Shakeshaft's (2015) study which sought to identify circumstances that prompted 20 women superintendents in Virginia to vacate their roles. As superintendents attempt to navigate micromanagement by school board members, superintendents are subjected to increased stress, which can lead to superintendent turnover (Robinson & Shakeshaft, 2015). Additionally, as micromanaging behaviors by board members increase, the likelihood of superintendent turnover simultaneously increases (Tekniepe, 2015).

Characteristics of the School District

Superintendent tenure in a district can also be influenced by features of the district, including the compensation package provided to the superintendent, the financial stability of the district, and district culture.

Compensation

Research revealed inconsistent results regarding the role that a superintendent's level of compensation plays in the superintendent's decision to remain in or leave a district. Some studies have found that the level of compensation a superintendent received was one of the contributing factors that prompted a superintendent to resign from a school district (Grissom & Andersen,

2012). Grissom and Andersen (2012) explored superintendent turnover in California by surveying 703 school board members and 106 superintendents and by examining district performance data. The researchers found evidence that superintendents will make the transition to a new school district if they are able to achieve a higher salary. Yates and De Jong's (2018) study of rural superintendents in South Dakota revealed that, although compensation was not documented as the most rewarding aspect of serving in a superintendent role, an increase in compensation would be the most influential factor to prompt a superintendent to remain in a district. Notably, increased compensation was rated more influential than improved relationships with the school board (Yates & De Jong, 2018).

Although superintendent compensation may play a role in superintendent longevity, it is not the only factor that influences the length of time a superintendent remains in a district (Kamrath, 2022). Kamrath (2022) noted that, while the district that continued to experience high superintendent turnover offered the lowest compensation when compared to the median family income in the region, the case study interview showed that other conditions also contributed to the superintendent's level of job satisfaction. Feedback from superintendents representing rural Idaho districts was mixed regarding the impact that compensation had on employment decisions, with participants ranking board relations, family influence, superintendent impact, and job satisfaction as having a greater influence than compensation (Williams et al., 2019). These inconsistent outcomes in the research make it difficult to draw conclusions regarding the role compensation plays in decisions related to continued employment in the superintendency.

District Financial Status

When a school district is faced with inconsistent funding and lacks adequate resources to meet the needs of students and staff, it can cause a superintendent to leave the district (Tekniepe,

2015; Williams et al., 2019). Tekniepe's (2015) research examining rural superintendent turnover reported that superintendents serving in districts with declining balances in reserve funds were 15% more likely to experience involuntary turnover than superintendents serving in districts with stable reserve funds. Research conducted by Williams et al. (2019) showed that superintendent turnover occurred in rural Idaho districts when superintendents faced "increased stress around the decreased funding and the increased accountability expected by both state and federal mandates" (p. 12).

Limited resources make it challenging for superintendents to adequately address district needs, which can result in large class sizes, outdated curriculum, underfunded programs, inadequate compensation for staff, and deteriorating facilities. When school districts lack sufficient funding, superintendents are forced to make difficult decisions regarding how to prioritize funds, which can require reductions to programs and staff. When superintendents lack necessary resources to meet rigorous accountability expectations, they may seek employment opportunities in districts with more resources and stable funding.

District Culture

Research has demonstrated that district and community culture have an impact on a superintendent's longevity in the school district (Roegman et al., 2022; Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019). Although school districts focus on meeting the social, emotional, and academic needs of students, they are not immune to external influences and conflicts that arise from factors outside of the organization. The influence that external factors can have on school districts has become increasingly evident since the onset of the pandemic. Roegman et al. (2022) examined the experiences of 63 school board members in Illinois related to the COVID-19 pandemic through an online survey consisting of open- and close-ended questions. Participants

shared that, during the 2021-2022 school year, their greatest challenges were related to the COVID-19 pandemic, academic performance, student mental health, and inequities within the educational system (Roegman et al., 2022).

District culture can also be impacted by factors within the school district organization. Tekniepe (2015) highlighted conflicts with bargaining associations, dysfunctional staff member relationships, and ineffective school and district leadership teams as conditions that could prompt rural superintendents to leave a school district. Williams et al. (2019) also highlighted “that work culture and the culture of the district are very important and superintendents will be drawn to districts that have a compatible culture to their own ideals” (p. 11). To that end, when a superintendent is able to obtain employment in a school district and community that align with their personal goals and leadership philosophy, there is an increased likelihood the superintendent will remain in the school district.

Characteristics of the Superintendent

Superintendent characteristics can vary greatly, which contributes to the uniqueness of each district leader. As such, the role that these characteristics can have on superintendent longevity must be explored.

Family Influence

Studies have shown that the superintendent’s family plays a large role in whether a superintendent decides to remain in a school district (Allred et al., 2017; Radford et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2019). The job of superintendent is complex and time-consuming, and it can be challenging for superintendents to find a successful balance between devoting adequate time to meeting the needs of their family while also attending to the requirements of the superintendent role (Allred et al., 2017; Williams et al., 2019). Interviews involving seven women

superintendents located in South Texas, highlighted that finding a balance between personal and professional demands was the most common challenge identified by participants (Allred et al., 2017). Participants in Yates and De Jong's (2018) research documented limited time with family as the most challenging aspect of the job.

That said, a superintendent is more likely to remain in a school district if the superintendent's family perceives that the school system and community align with their personal goals and expectations (Radford et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2019). Williams et al.'s (2019) research focused on interviewing 10 superintendents working in rural Idaho districts. Family influence was ranked, on average, as 8.67, with 10 being the greatest factor influencing employment decisions. Superintendents who take the time to consult with their families to determine if the community norms and values align with their own family values and expectations prior to accepting a superintendent position may be more likely to experience success and longevity in the superintendent role.

Gender

Literature was examined to determine if the gender of the superintendent has been found to impact superintendent longevity. Yates and De Jong's (2018) research involving over 100 superintendents from rural South Dakota districts found that gender did not play a role in superintendent longevity. Female superintendents in South Texas cited effectively managing the demands of work and family as the most challenging aspect of the superintendency (Allred et al., 2017). Allred et al. (2017) contended that gender disparities exist by location of district. The researchers shared that "[r]ural school leadership is a gendered issue because women serve in rural districts in higher proportions relative to their representation in the superintendency" (p. 8). As such, the work-life balance dilemma may be more prevalent for female superintendents

because superintendents in rural school districts are often required to have a broader skillset and manage many different roles in the district.

Although participants in Kamrath's (2015) qualitative study conveyed that gender did not play a role in whether a superintendent experienced success in the role, the researcher noted that "41 of 42 participants referred to the superintendent as a male at one point in the interview process" (p. 116). This unintentional gender reference by participants during the interview process could suggest that gender biases exist which may influence stereotypes related to superintendent longevity. Notably, an analysis of over 12,000 first names of superintendents serving public schools in the United States revealed that only 26% of superintendents are female (White, 2023). The low number of women superintendents serving public schools in the nation may contribute to fewer documented instances of gender-related turnover.

Education, Experience, and Additional Characteristics

Additional characteristics of the superintendent that may influence superintendent turnover include: the leadership style of the superintendent (Kamrath, 2015), the level of education that has been completed by the superintendent, the number of years of experience as superintendent (Yates & De Jong, 2018), the superintendent's journey to the superintendent role (Grissom & Andersen, 2012), and the superintendent's age (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Yates & De Jong, 2018).

When the leadership style of a superintendent does not align with the expectations of those the superintendent supervises, conflict within the organization can arise. Kamrath (2015) shared that this misalignment between the leader and subordinates can result in increased rates of superintendent turnover and asserted that "collaboration is often viewed by staff members as the inability of superintendents to make a decision, and therefore, as a weakness in leadership" (p.

113). Participants in Yates and De Jong's (2018) study ranked leadership, being approachable, and being personable as important characteristics of successful superintendents.

Prior research findings also suggest that, as the level of education completed by a superintendent increases, turnover rates decrease. Superintendents who possessed doctoral degrees experienced greater longevity than superintendents who did not possess doctoral degrees (Yates & De Jong, 2018). The pathway to the superintendency has also been shown to have an impact on superintendent retention rates. Grissom and Andersen (2012) shared that superintendents who were promoted from within the educational organization experienced lower rates of turnover than superintendents who had not worked in the school district prior to assuming the superintendent role.

A superintendent's age and number of years of experience in the role can also impact longevity within a school district. Yates and De Jong (2018) found that superintendents who were young and early in their career as a superintendent had a greater likelihood of transitioning to a superintendent role in a larger school district, while superintendents who were older and had more years of experience were less likely to seek employment outside of their current school district. However, as a superintendent's age increases, Grissom and Andersen (2012) emphasized that the possibility of a superintendent leaving a school district through retirement becomes more likely. Kamrath (2022) also concluded that superintendents in his study did not vacate their positions due to age, but rather resigned from their positions out of a desire to retire. As a result, older superintendents with more experience can bring stability to a school district through their longevity; however, turnover may be inevitable as the superintendent's age makes the individual eligible for retirement.

Superintendent Performance

The complexities of the tasks that superintendents are required to perform provide a variety of methods to evaluate the performance of a superintendent. Two factors identified in the literature as informing a superintendent's performance rating included student achievement and the superintendent's evaluation.

Student Achievement

One of the overarching goals of every educational institution is to meet the educational needs of all of the students it serves. As the top educational leader in the organization, superintendents are responsible for ensuring that student and staff needs are met. Yet, the impact that a superintendent has on student achievement is unclear. Simpson's (2013) correlational research study involving 45 school districts in rural Appalachian Kentucky found that there was a significant relationship between student growth and the number of years a superintendent served in the top leadership role in the district. Particularly, greater student growth was observed when the superintendent remained in the role for at least five years. Simpson (2013) argued that school boards should consider the relationship between longevity and student achievement when making employment decisions.

Hart et al. (2019) conducted sequential regression analyses to study the relationship between student outcomes on standardized assessments during the 2016-2017 school year and superintendent experience in 115 school districts in North Carolina. Although the impact that superintendents have on student achievement cannot be ignored, the researchers claimed that "the notion that superintendents can dramatically affect achievement through heroic measures is overstated" (p. 10). Williams et al. (2019) utilized a qualitative research approach to examine the factors that influenced employment decisions for 10 superintendents serving in rural Idaho

districts. Through the interviews, the researchers concluded that a superintendent's self-efficacy, or belief that their actions had the ability to make a difference for students, had a positive impact on superintendent longevity.

Waters and Marzano's (2006) meta-analysis of over 4,500 studies conducted from 1970 through 2005 revealed that effective district leaders had a positive impact on student achievement. They discovered statistically significant impacts on student achievement when superintendents engaged others in goal-setting processes and established "non-negotiable" priorities focused on student achievement and instruction (p. 13). Additionally, the researchers highlighted the positive impact that board members' commitment to the non-negotiable goals established by the superintendent can have on student achievement. Finally, the meta-analysis shared that when a superintendent frequently monitors progress toward the established student achievement and instructional goals and commits resources toward achieving the goals, student achievement increases. Based on the findings of the meta-analysis, Waters and Marzano (2006) asserted that "the positive correlations that appear between the length of superintendent service and student achievement confirms the value of leadership stability" (p. 20).

Superintendent Evaluation

School board members are tasked with evaluating the performance of the superintendent. Research has established that evaluation processes do not always align with measurable performance outcomes, and instead, can be based on the subjective opinions of individual school board members (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Kamrath, 2015). In fact, Grissom and Andersen's (2012) research revealed that "subjective evaluations of the superintendent's performance predicted turnover, but district performance did not" (p. 1175). Using the responses from 703 school board members to a subjective survey question regarding the superintendent's

performance, Grissom and Anderson (2012) concluded that there was a statistically significant relationship between the school board members' opinions and superintendent turnover, when turnover due to retirement was removed from the analysis. Kamrath (2015) emphasized that superintendent evaluation criteria should be developed collaboratively by the school board and superintendent using measurable performance outcomes to ensure that evaluations are not based on subjective criteria.

Patterns in the Literature

The above review of literature revealed themes across the research with regard to the influence that relationships between the school board and superintendent have on superintendent longevity in a school district (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Jones, 2012; Kamrath, 2015; Kamrath, 2022; Radford et al., 2016; Robinson & Shakeshaft, 2015; Sampson, 2018; Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019; Yates & De Jong, 2018). Financial instability in a school district was also shown to impact a superintendent's longevity (Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019). In addition, negative district culture was consistently shown to contribute to superintendent turnover (Roegman et al., 2022; Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019). Multiple studies also demonstrated that the superintendent's family is an important factor that influences a superintendent's decision to remain in or leave a district (Allred et al., 2017; Radford et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2019). Research findings were also consistent with regard to the influence that the superintendent's leadership style (Kamrath, 2015), level of education, experience (Yates & De Jong, 2018), journey to the superintendency (Grissom & Andersen, 2012), and age (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Yates & De Jong, 2018) have on superintendent longevity.

Although there were commonalities in the research, it is important to note that there were also limitations to the studies, especially related to sample sizes, participants, and settings. To

that end, caution is warranted with regard to generalizing the findings to participants and settings outside of the scope of the studies. For example, three studies examined the experiences of female superintendents, so the research findings are limited by gender (Allred et al., 2017; Robinson & Shakeshaft, 2015; Sampson, 2018). In addition, many studies focused solely on superintendent turnover in one state (i.e., TX: Allred, 2017, Jones, 2012, O'Connor & Vaughn, 2018, Radford et al., 2016, Sampson, 2018; CA: Grissom & Andersen, 2012; NC: Hart et al., 2019; VA: Robinson & Shakeshaft, 2015; KY: Simpson, 2013; ID: Williams et al., 2019; and SD: Yates & De Jong, 2018). Further, because many of the studies were conducted in rural settings, the findings may not necessarily apply to school districts located in more populated areas (Kamrath, 2015; Kamrath, 2022; Simpson, 2013; Tekniepe, 2015; Williams et al., 2019; Yates & De Jong, 2018). Also notable is the fact that the findings from some of the studies were limited by small sample sizes (Allred et al., 2017; Kamrath, 2022; Sampson, 2018; Williams et al., 2019). Additionally, only one study sought to evaluate the impact that COVID-19 had on school districts; however, that research focused on the experiences of school board members and did not examine experiences of superintendents (Roegman et al., 2022).

Areas for Future Research

The literature review revealed inconsistencies in the role that compensation plays in relation to superintendent retention (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Kamrath, 2022; Radford et al., 2016; Williams et al., 2019; Yates & De Jong, 2018). In addition, although research revealed that there is not a consistent relationship between the gender of the superintendent and superintendent turnover, gender references made by research participants suggested that gender may play a larger role than the research findings show (Kamrath, 2015; Yates & De Jong, 2018). Although Water and Marzano's (2006) meta-analysis produced compelling relationships between

superintendent longevity and student achievement, recent studies reveal inconsistencies in the research exploring the relationship between student achievement and superintendent longevity (Hart et al., 2019; Simpson, 2013; Williams et al., 2019). Research is also unclear regarding the relationship between a superintendent's evaluation and the longevity of the superintendent (Grissom & Andersen, 2012; Kamrath, 2015).

Although significant research has been conducted related to factors that have influenced superintendent turnover, the structure of the studies in regard to participants, sample size, and location prevent generalizations from being made on factors that may be contributing to increased rates of superintendent turnover. In addition, studies examining the causes of superintendent turnover from 2019-2020 to the present were not located during the literature review. Due to the dramatic shift in superintendent responsibilities since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is unclear whether findings from studies examining superintendent turnover prior to the pandemic are relevant to post-pandemic conditions. Finally, the absence of recent research examining superintendent turnover in Oregon presents challenges in determining whether the findings from other states would align with the experiences of superintendents in Oregon.

Since the 2019-2020 school year, the rates of superintendent turnover have increased and pressures placed on school boards and district leaders have multiplied. However, due to limited recent research on the topic, it is unclear whether there is a relationship between the impacts of events since 2020 and superintendent turnover in Oregon. In an effort to design solutions to address the concerning trend of increasing superintendent turnover, it is first necessary to identify the causes for the increase in turnover rates. To that end, it is imperative that updated research be conducted to further explore superintendent turnover in Oregon.

Contributions to the Body of Knowledge

During the synthesis of the literature, commonalities among multiple recent, peer-reviewed research studies related to K-12 public school district superintendent turnover were identified. Conflicting findings were also highlighted through the literature review. Importantly, the literature review also exposed limitations to the previous studies and gaps in research, both of which were useful when making decisions regarding the need for future research. The literature review demonstrated a lack of recent research examining the factors that have contributed to high rates of superintendent turnover in the state of Oregon. Without such research, superintendents, school districts, school boards, superintendent preparation programs, and legislators lack information to reverse this concerning trend. In the absence of research, it is likely that the superintendent turnover trend will continue, and with it, disruptions to school district operations.

This comprehensive literature review highlighted the need for additional research to be designed and conducted to identify factors that may help to explain high superintendent turnover rates in Oregon, particularly since the 2019-2020 school year. A study of this nature will contribute to the field of educational research as it will address identified gaps in the literature and provide stakeholders and lawmakers in Oregon with valuable insight about superintendent turnover. Such information can equip decision-makers with evidence needed to develop and implement systems and procedures to address these factors in an effort to encourage superintendent longevity throughout the state. This need for additional Oregon-focused research was the impetus for this dissertation study. To that end, this research sought to address the following research questions:

Research Question 1: To what extent is there a relationship between superintendents' experiences with the school board and superintendents' employment status at the end of the

school year?

Research Question 2: To what extent is there a relationship between superintendents' experiences in a school district and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year?

Research Question 3: To what extent is there a relationship between superintendents' experiences related to their own health and safety and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year?

Research Question 4: To what extent is there a relationship between superintendents' professional preparation and support provided by organizations and colleagues and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year?

Research Question 5: To what extent is there a relationship between superintendents' ratings on a performance evaluation completed by the school board and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year?

CHAPTER III

METHOD

School districts in Oregon are experiencing alarming rates of superintendent turnover. The absence of current research evaluating the causes of superintendent turnover in Oregon makes it challenging to cultivate solutions to promote superintendent longevity. This research study aimed to address gaps in the research related to superintendent turnover in Oregon from the 2019-2020 school year through the 2022-2023 school year.

Research Design

A quantitative research design was employed in this study, which is appropriate when the goal is to seek “an explanation of the relationships among variables” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015, p. 59). The research explored factors that may influence K-12 public school superintendent longevity in the state of Oregon. Specifically, feedback was sought from current and former Oregon superintendents who served in the district leadership role during the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, or 2022-2023 school years. Participants were asked to respond anonymously to survey questions related to the characteristics of the school district, characteristics of the school board, characteristics of the superintendent, superintendent health, safety, professional preparation, and support, and superintendent performance ratings for each school year that the individual served in the superintendent role.

Creswell and Guetterman (2019) emphasized that, when soliciting feedback through surveys, researchers should strive for a large sample to ensure that the findings are representative of the larger population. The authors also noted that there are instances in which a researcher is able to conduct research on the entire population using a “consensus study” format which provides the researcher with data to “report descriptive statistics about the entire population” (p.

391). For the purpose of this study, it was possible to obtain a list of the entire population because the information was publicly available. The goal was to obtain input from each superintendent, as doing so would help provide insight regarding which factors have contributed to the large numbers of involuntary and voluntary superintendent turnovers in the state. The higher percentage of individuals from the population who participated in the study, the more likely the findings would be representative of the superintendent experiences that contributed to superintendent longevity in Oregon during the four-year research timeframe.

Multiple steps were taken to ensure that the survey was administered in a standardized manner that aligned with ethical expectations. Participants were provided with an explanation of the study and were asked to voluntarily consent to participate in the study. To protect the identities of the participants and encourage honest feedback, participants responded anonymously, and personally identifiable information was not collected during the research process. Standardization was achieved by ensuring that all participants were provided with the same survey questions and by making certain that all participants received the same written directions prior to engaging with the survey (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015).

Measure

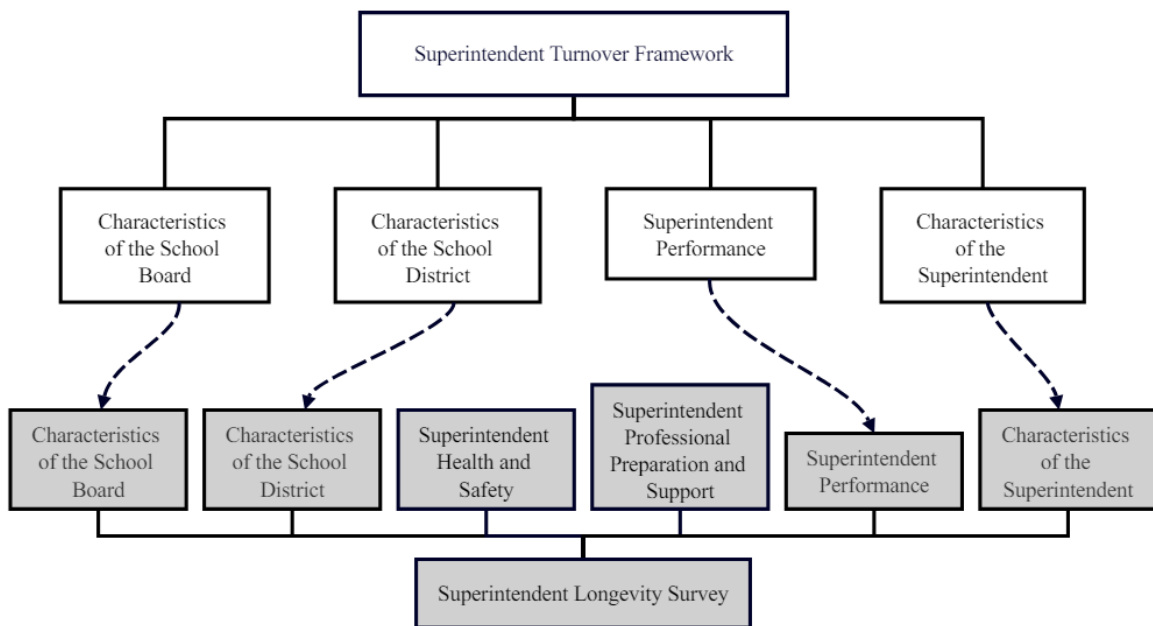
Data was collected using the *Superintendent Longevity Survey* (Appendix) which was an anonymous web-based survey that was administered through the Qualtrics platform. The web-based survey could be accessed by participants through multiple devices, including mobile phones and tablets, to promote accessibility. Personally identifiable information such as participant name and school district were not collected. The identities of respondents were further protected by utilizing the “Anonymize responses” feature in Qualtrics to ensure that IP addresses, location data, and contact information were not collected from participants.

Survey Design

The *Superintendent Longevity Survey* was developed by the researcher. The survey instrument was comprised of questions that aligned with themes related to superintendent longevity explored in the literature review. As shown in Figure 3.1, Grissom and Anderson's (2012) superintendent turnover framework suggested that superintendent turnover can be attributed to characteristics of the school board, characteristics of the superintendent, characteristics of the school district, and superintendent performance. This framework, plus additional themes identified through the literature review, also depicted in Figure 3.1, were utilized to develop the *Superintendent Longevity Survey*. The *Superintendent Longevity Survey* sought to collect input from individuals who met the sample population criteria to gain insight regarding their experiences as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the study timeframe.

Figure 3.1

Superintendent Longevity Survey



The survey instrument contained nominal, ordinal, and interval questions. All participants were presented with demographic questions at the beginning of the survey. Participants were then asked to respond to the same set of questions for each school year in the study window during which they served as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon. A screening question presented at the beginning of each section of the survey for each school year helped ensure that individuals only responded to survey questions pertaining to the school year(s) in which they were employed as a K-12 public school district superintendent. This survey structure was intended to help prevent survey fatigue by participants, while also ensuring that participants were only responding to survey questions for the school years in which they met research participant criteria.

Survey Validation

The validity of the *Superintendent Longevity Survey* was assessed by field testing the instrument with three current or former superintendents who had familiarity with the roles and responsibilities required by K-12 public school district superintendents in Oregon, were familiar with the dynamics of the role during the study timeframe, and did not meet the criteria necessary to participate in the study. Collectively, the three individuals who participated in the field test had 50 years of K-12 superintendent or assistant superintendent experience, 12 years of experience serving in leadership roles that supported K-12 superintendents, and 104 years serving in the field of K-12 education.

Field testing sessions were conducted individually using a virtual meeting format. Creswell and Guetterman (2019) shared that validity can be evaluated by having “a panel of judges or experts ... identify whether the questions are valid” (p. 162). During each session, the individual interacted with the full survey instrument and was asked to verbalize their thoughts

and provide feedback regarding the survey experience and survey questions. This feedback was used to revise and finalize the instrument. Formatting revisions included a stipulation to require a response to all questions, adding “prefer not to say” as a response option to all demographic questions, incorporating dropdown response options when possible, and presenting the question sets in reverse chronological order. Additionally, questions were added to collect information related to superintendent ethnicity, contract type, residency, and ability to manage reporting and accountability requirements. Finally, the response options relating to employment status at the end of the school year were revised, based on feedback provided during field testing.

Participants

From the 2019-2020 school year through the 2022-2023 school year, there were 293 public K-12 school district superintendents employed in the state of Oregon across 197 school districts. The participant population for this study included all superintendents who served in the leadership role in a K-12 public school district in Oregon at any time during the 2019-2020, 2020-2021, 2021-2022, or 2022-2023 school years. Notably, private school district superintendents and education service district superintendents who served in Oregon during the study timeframe were not included as participants in this study due to the fact that their stakeholder groups, governance structures, roles, and regulations may differ from those of K-12 superintendents leading public schools. That said, if an ESD superintendent was also identified as the superintendent for a public-school district, which is sometimes the case in very small districts, the ESD superintendent was included in the study.

Nonprobability sampling was utilized for this study. Nonprobability sampling is suitable when individuals are “available, convenient, and meet some criteria or characteristics that the investigator wants to study” (Plano Clark & Creswell, 2015, p. 236). This study was designed to

analyze the factors associated with superintendent longevity in Oregon from the 2019-2020 school year through the 2022-2023 school year. To that end, all superintendents who led K-12 public school districts during the sample timeframe were considered part of the sample population. Individuals who met the sample population criteria were the most appropriate individuals to provide insight regarding factors associated with superintendent longevity during the research timeframe. Because individuals who met the sample population criteria could be identified by a records request through the Oregon Department of Education, it was possible to identify all members of the sample population who qualified to participate in the research.

Of the 293 individuals who met the sample population criteria during the years of interest, valid email addresses were able to be obtained for 249 participants via public records, websites, and personal contacts. An initial recruitment email, with a link to the web-based survey, was distributed to participants in November of 2023, and a reminder email was sent two weeks later. In addition to recruiting participants through email, information about the online survey was shared with current and past superintendents during Coalition of Oregon School Administrators (COSA) meetings, conferences, and networking events, as the researcher served as President-Elect of the Oregon Association of School Executives (OASE). Potential concerns related to eligible participants possibly feeling pressured to participate in the research due to the researcher's role in COSA were eliminated due to the anonymous survey format. The web-based survey was open for a five-week period and was closed in December of 2023. In all, 331 valid responses were submitted by 121 participants.

Participant Demographic Information

Survey participants were asked to provide personal demographic information at the beginning of the survey. Plano Clark and Creswell (2015) emphasized that descriptive statistics

“help researchers summarize the overall tendencies in the data, provide an assessment of how varied the scores are in the data, and provide insight into where one score stands in comparison with the rest of the data” (p. 259).

Descriptive statistics portraying the years of superintendent experience of respondents, by school year, are depicted in Table 3.1. From 2019-2020 through 2022-2023, there was a steady decline in the mean number of years of superintendent experience.

Table 3.1

Superintendent Years of Experience from Superintendent Longevity Survey

	2019-2020 (n = 68)	2020-2021 (n = 75)	2021-2022 (n = 89)	2022-2023 (n = 99)
Mean (SD)	10.72 (6.00)	10.01 (6.24)	9.49 (6.51)	8.20 (5.98)
Minimum	4	1	2	1
Maximum	33	33	33	27

Of the valid responses received, most were from White, Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino, males. Additionally, the majority of respondents reported being between the ages of 45 and 64 years old. Over half of the responses were from superintendents who held Master’s Degrees. Table 3.2 provides comprehensive demographic information for the 121 respondents.

Table 3.2*Superintendent Demographics from Superintendent Longevity Survey*

Demographics		(<i>n</i> = 121)	
		<i>n</i>	%
Race ^a	Asian	1	0.8
	American Indian/Alaska Native	1	0.8
	White	110	90.9
	Other	1	0.8
	More Than One	5	4.1
Ethnicity	Hispanic	3	2.5
	Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino	112	92.6
Age ^b	35-44 Years Old	14	11.6
	45-54 Years Old	48	39.7
	55-64 Years Old	48	39.7
	65+ Years Old	9	7.4
Gender ^c	Male	80	66.1
	Female	37	30.6
Education ^d	Master's Degree	72	59.5
	Specialist Degree	17	14
	Doctoral Degree	32	26.4

Note. Total responses may not equal 121 and percent may not equal 100 when participants chose not to provide a response.

^aNo respondents identified as Black/African American or Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander.

^bNo respondents identified as 25-34 years old.

^cNo respondents identified as Non-Binary/Third Gender.

^dNo respondents selected Bachelor's Degree.

Analytic Sample by School Year

During the five-week survey window, 135 individuals interacted with the *Superintendent Longevity Survey* and two potential respondents declined to participate resulting in 133 consenting participants. After the survey was closed, the analytic dataset was edited to remove

responses from individuals who were ineligible to participate in the survey each year.

Incomplete responses were also removed. The results of the cleaning process and analytic sample size for each school year are depicted in Figure 3.2. Individual responses were analyzed to determine the number of participants who responded to survey questions for one, two, three, or all four school years, and the final analytic sample for each year is illustrated in Figure 3.2.

Setting

The research study sought feedback from K-12 public school district superintendents who led Oregon's 197 school districts at any time during the 2019-2020 through 2022-2023 school years. The web-based survey was accessible through multiple devices, including mobile phones and tablets, to promote accessibility. Participants were able to complete the web-based survey at a time and location that was convenient to them, during the five-week period. Table 3.3 depicts the student enrollment and district locations that were represented based on the responses to the *Superintendent Longevity Survey*. Rural school districts were represented at a much higher rate than suburban and urban districts in the survey responses. Superintendents of school districts with student enrollments of less than 1,000 and more than 5,000 represented over 60% of the respondents each year.

Figure 3.2

Consort Flowchart of Participants Across 197 Oregon School Districts

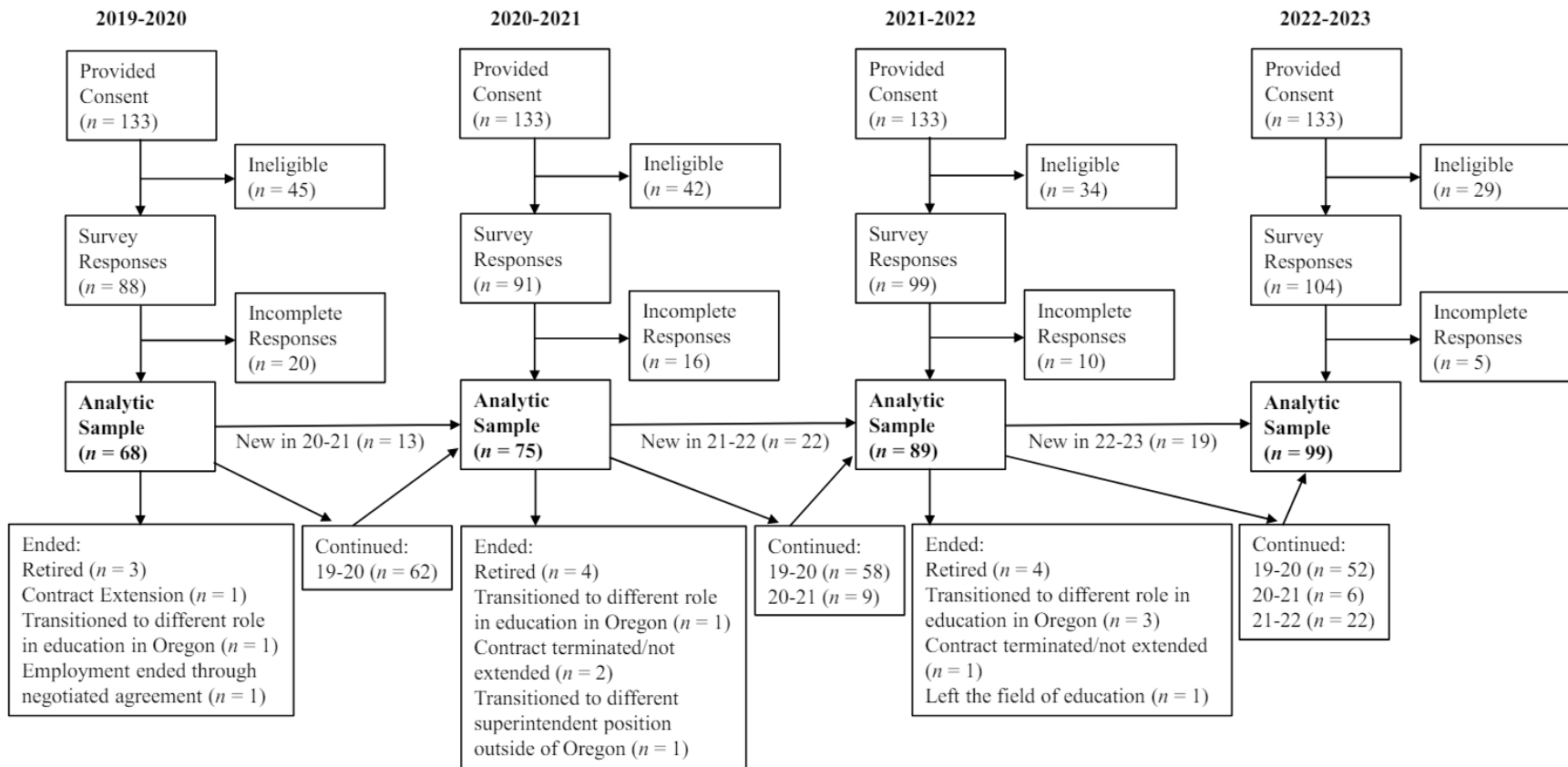


Table 3.3*School District Characteristics from Superintendent Longevity Survey*

Characteristics		2019-2020 (n = 68)		2020-2021 (n = 75)		2021-2022 (n = 89)		2022-2023 (n = 99)	
		N	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Student Enrollment	Fewer than 300	15	22.1	18	24.0	13	14.6	18	18.2
	300-999	18	26.5	21	28.0	22	24.7	23	23.2
	1,000-1,999	9	13.2	9	12.0	13	14.6	14	14.1
	2,000-2,999	8	11.8	8	10.7	9	10.1	8	8.1
	3,000-3,999	3	4.4	4	5.3	3	3.4	7	7.1
	4,000-4,999	1	1.5	0	0.0	3	3.4	3	3.0
	More than 5,000	14	20.6	15	20.0	26	29.2	26	26.3
District Location	Rural	55	80.9	63	84.0	65	73.0	73	73.7
	Suburban	11	16.2	10	13.3	20	22.5	22	22.2
	Urban	2	2.9	2	2.7	4	4.5	4	4.0

Subscales & Analytic Constructs

Survey data were cleaned, recoded, and combined to generate variables for planned analyses. The processes used for creating these variables and relevant survey questions are described below.

Employment Status at the End of the School Year

Responses to the question from the *Superintendent Longevity Survey* related to superintendent employment status at the end of the school year were used to calculate a dichotomous variable. Responses were grouped, as outlined in Table 3.4, to differentiate between continued employment in the same school district and employment that ended at the conclusion of the school year.

Table 3.4*Employment Status at the End of the School Year Variable*

Construct	Survey Response	Response Code
Employment Status at the End of the School Year	Contract extension to continue serving as superintendent in the same district	Continued = 1
	Transitioned to a different... superintendent position, within OR superintendent position, outside OR	Ended = 2
	role in education (non-superintendent), within the state of Oregon	
	role in education (non-superintendent), outside of the state of Oregon	
	Employment ended through a negotiated agreement with the Board of Directors	
	Employment was terminated/not extended by the Board of Directors	
Retired from the field of education		
	Left the field of education	

Superintendent Experiences

Responses to Likert scale questions from the *Superintendent Longevity Survey* were recoded as follows: *Strongly disagree* responses were coded as 1, *Somewhat disagree* responses were coded as 2, *Neither agree nor disagree* responses were coded as 3, *Somewhat agree* responses were coded as 4, and *Strongly agree* responses were coded as 5. When indicated, responses were reverse coded. While there is some concern that generating mean scores for sets of Likert items can introduce bias, Norman (2010) and Sullivan and Artino (2013) highlighted the appropriateness of using Likert scale responses to perform parametric statistical analyses. As such, to calculate dependent variable scale scores for constructs with multiple items, individual survey response Likert values were averaged to generate the mean for each participant. See Table 3.5 for a list of constructs assessed and corresponding survey questions.

Table 3.5

Superintendents' Experiences Variables

Construct	Survey Questions
Superintendents' Experiences with the School Board	Board members engaged in formal training to become knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities.
	Board members attempted to utilize their roles on the board to promote their personal agendas.*
	Board members allowed external political or community pressures to influence their decisions.*
	I had positive professional relationships with members of the board.
	The board publicly recognized my accomplishments as superintendent.
	Board members attempted to micromanage my actions as superintendent.*
	Decisions made by the board aligned with the vision and mission of the district.
Superintendents' Experiences in a School District	The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received as superintendent was competitive and appropriate for the work I performed as superintendent.
	I had a positive working relationship with the employee association(s) in the district.
	Politics played a large role in my district. *
Superintendents' Experiences Related to Health and Safety	The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on school districts in Oregon influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district. *
	I experienced negative mental health symptoms. *
	I experienced negative physical health symptoms. *
	I was concerned for my safety and/or the safety of my family members. *
	I was able to maintain a healthy work-life balance.
	I was able to effectively manage work-related stress.

Superintendents' Experiences Variables Continued

Superintendents' Experiences Related to Professional Preparation and Support	My superintendent preparation program adequately prepared me for my responsibilities as superintendent.
	I was able to obtain support from professional organizations (ESD, COSA, ODE, AASA) to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent.
	I was able to obtain support from fellow superintendents to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent.

Note. *Indicates item was reverse coded when constructing the composite variable.

Superintendent Evaluation

Responses to a question pertaining to superintendents' performance evaluation from the *Superintendent Longevity Survey* were utilized to calculate the superintendents' performance evaluation variable. Responses were recoded as depicted in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6

Superintendents' Performance Evaluation Variable

Construct	Survey Question	Survey Response/Code
Superintendents' Performance Evaluation	How would you describe your performance evaluation?	Very Positive = 5 Mostly Positive = 4 Positive and Negative = 3 Mostly Negative = 2 Very Negative = 1 The board did not formally evaluate my performance = 0

Statistical Analyses

After calculating analytic variables for each school year, data files were imported into SPSS (Version 29) to calculate descriptive statistics and perform statistical analyses. For research questions 1-4, it was hypothesized that there would be statistically significant mean differences in superintendents' positive experiences with the school board, experiences in a

school district, experiences related to health and safety, and experiences related to professional preparation and support for superintendents who continued employment compared to those who ended employment with the district at the end of the school year. Independent samples *t*-test analyses were performed to test these hypotheses. Superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year was the independent dichotomous variable and superintendents' experiences were the dependent variables in each analysis. Separate analyses were conducted for each school year to allow for descriptive comparisons across school years.

The hypothesis for research question five was that there would be an association between superintendents' performance evaluations and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year. Because the dependent variable was a categorical variable, a chi-square test of independence was planned, but the distribution of data across response categories did not meet the assumptions necessary to perform a chi-square test of independence. Instead, descriptive analyses were used to examine trends in survey responses related to superintendents' performance evaluations and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and statistical calculations were conducted, by construct and school year, to examine the research questions. Statistical results are described below.

Experiences with the School Board

The first research question sought to explore the relationship between superintendents' experiences with the school board and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year. Table 4.1 presents descriptive statistics for the superintendents' experiences with the school board for the two independent variable groups. Figure 4.1 depicts the variable means for each group, by school year. The descriptive statistics reveal that superintendents who continued employment consistently reported more positive experiences with the school board than superintendents who ended employment.

Results from the independent samples *t*-tests pertaining to superintendents' experiences with the school board are also reflected in Table 4.1. Although the descriptive statistics indicate a difference in means between the two groups, *t*-test results indicate that the 2022-2023 school year is the only year in which there was a statistically significant difference in positive school board relationships for superintendents who continued employment ($M = 3.68, SD = 0.96$) compared to superintendents who ended employment ($M = 3.05, SD, = 0.95; t(97) = 2.07, p = .041$).

Table 4.1

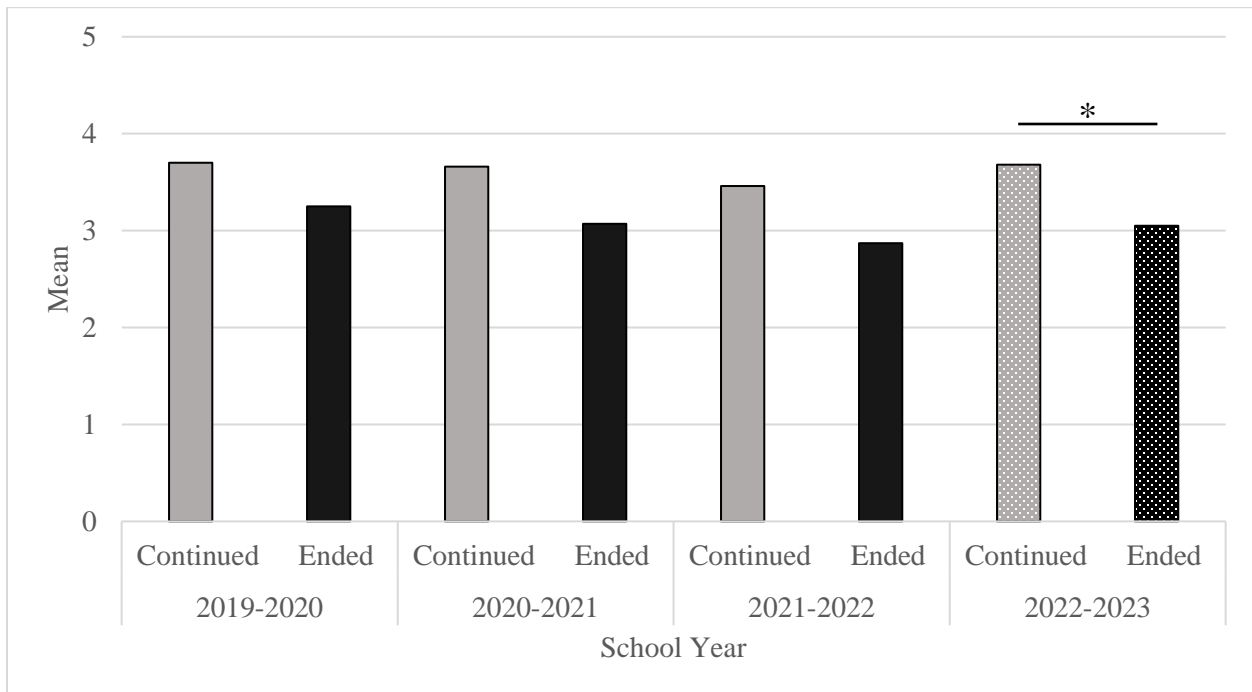
Superintendents' Experiences with the School Board Variable Descriptive Statistics and t-test Results

School Year	<i>t</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
2019-2020	1.14	66		
Continued			61	3.70 (0.96)
Ended			7	3.25 (1.20)
2020-2021	1.84	73		
Continued			64	3.66 (0.97)
Ended			11	3.07 (1.14)
2021-2022	1.89	87		
Continued			77	3.46 (0.94)
Ended			12	2.87 (1.40)
2022-2023	2.07*	97		
Continued			88	3.68 (0.96)
Ended			11	3.05 (0.95)

Note. * $p < .05$

Figure 4.1

Superintendents' Experiences with the School Board Variable Means



Note. * $p < .05$

Experiences in the School District

The relationship between superintendents' experiences in the school district and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year was examined consistent with Research Question 2. Descriptive statistics for each school year are provided in Table 4.2 and variable means are depicted in Figure 4.2. With the exception of the 2019-2020 school year, superintendents who continued employment reported more positive experiences in a school district, on average, than those who ended employment.

Independent sample *t*-tests were performed to compare superintendent experiences in a district for those who continued employment compared to superintendents who ended employment. Analyses revealed no statistically significant differences in the means between

groups (see Table 4.2 and Figure 4.2).

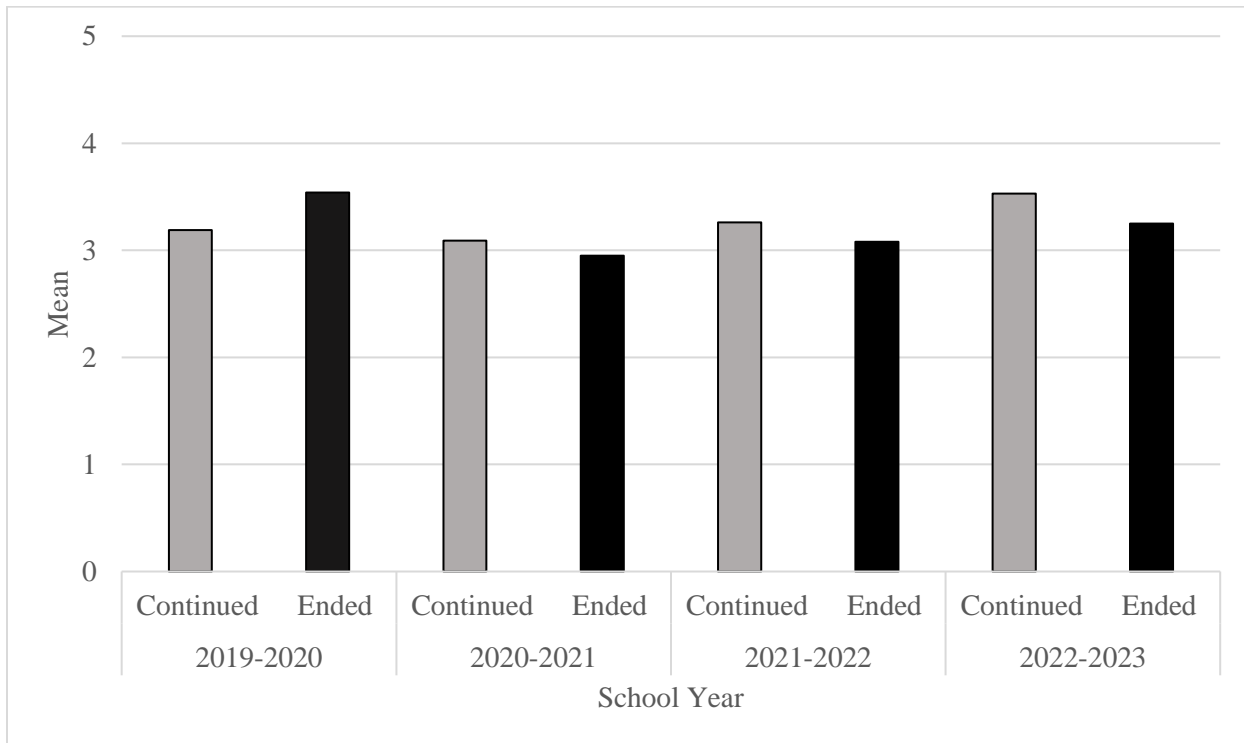
Table 4.2

Superintendents' Experiences in a School District Variable Descriptive Statistics and t-test Results

School Year	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
2019-2020	-1.40	66		
Continued			61	3.19 (0.57)
Ended			7	3.54 (0.93)
2020-2021	.68	73		
Continued			64	3.09 (0.58)
Ended			11	2.95 (0.89)
2021-2022	1.15	87		
Continued			77	3.26 (0.48)
Ended			12	3.08 (0.50)
2022-2023	1.55	97		
Continued			88	3.53 (0.54)
Ended			11	3.25 (0.67)

Figure 4.2

Superintendents' Experiences in a School District Variable Means



Experiences Related to Health and Safety

Research Question 3 sought to examine the relationship between superintendents' experiences related to health and safety and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year. Descriptive statistics are outlined in Table 4.3 and a year-by-year comparison of group means can be found in Figure 4.3. Of note, average experiences of health and safety for superintendents who reported continuing employment at the end of the 2022-2023 school year was lower than superintendents who reported ending employment, which is not consistent with the group means for the prior three school years.

Results from independent *t*-tests performed to evaluate the means between the two groups demonstrated that there was not a statistically significant relationship between superintendents'

experiences related to health and safety and their employment status at the end of the school year. Results from the independent samples *t*-tests, by school year, are depicted in Table 4.3.

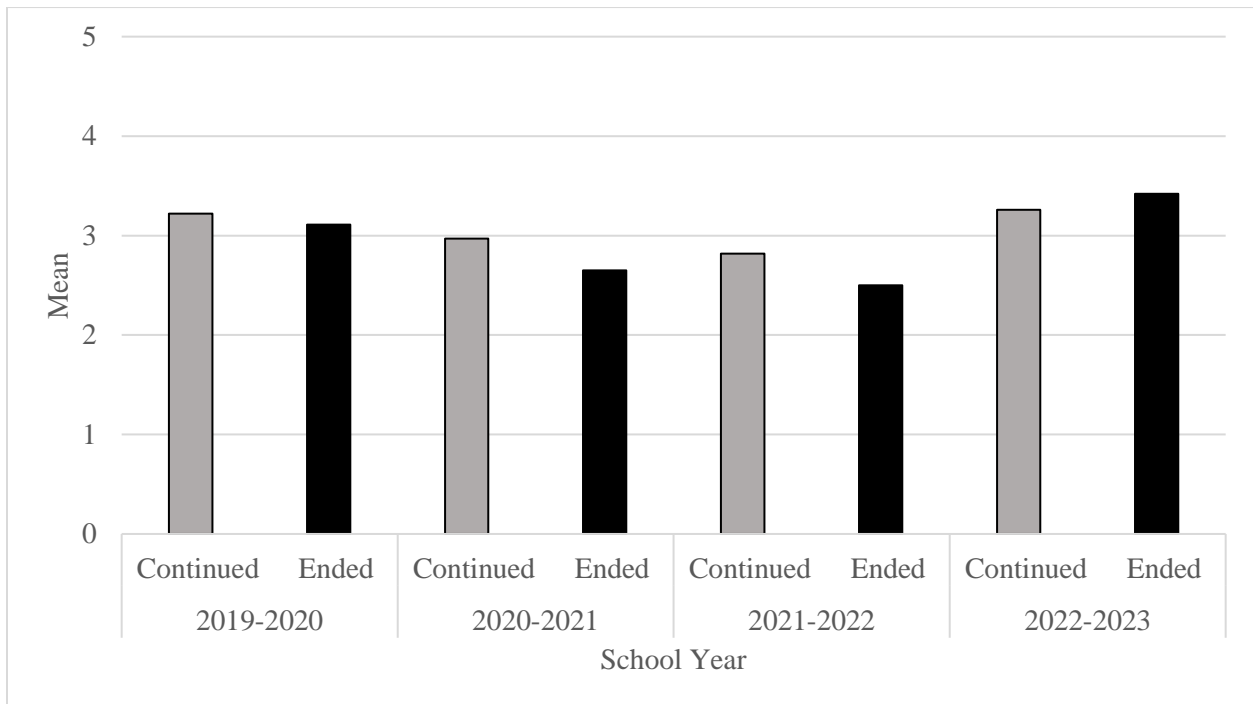
Table 4.3

*Superintendents' Experiences Related to Health and Safety Variable Descriptive Statistics and *t*-test Results*

School Year	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
2019-2020	.25	66		
Continued			61	3.22 (1.08)
Ended			7	3.11 (1.03)
2020-2021	.85	73		
Continued			64	2.97 (1.12)
Ended			11	2.65 (1.07)
2021-2022	1.09	87		
Continued			77	2.82 (0.93)
Ended			12	2.50 (1.07)
2022-2023	-.45	97		
Continued			88	3.26 (1.09)
Ended			11	3.42 (1.09)

Figure 4.3

Superintendents' Experiences Related to Health and Safety Variable Means



Experiences Related to Professional Preparation and Support

Research Question 4 examined the relationship between superintendents' professional preparation and support and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year. In each year, with the exception of the 2021-2022 school year, superintendents who ended employment tended to report greater average levels of professional preparation and support and compared to superintendents who reported continued employment at the end of the school year (See Table 4.4 and Figure 4.4).

Consistent with the prior statistical approaches, an independent samples *t*-test was performed to evaluate whether there was a relationship between superintendents' experiences related to professional preparation and support and their employment status at the end of the school year. The *t*-test results, by school year, are depicted in Table 4.4 and revealed no

statistically significant differences in the experiences reported by superintendents based on employment status.

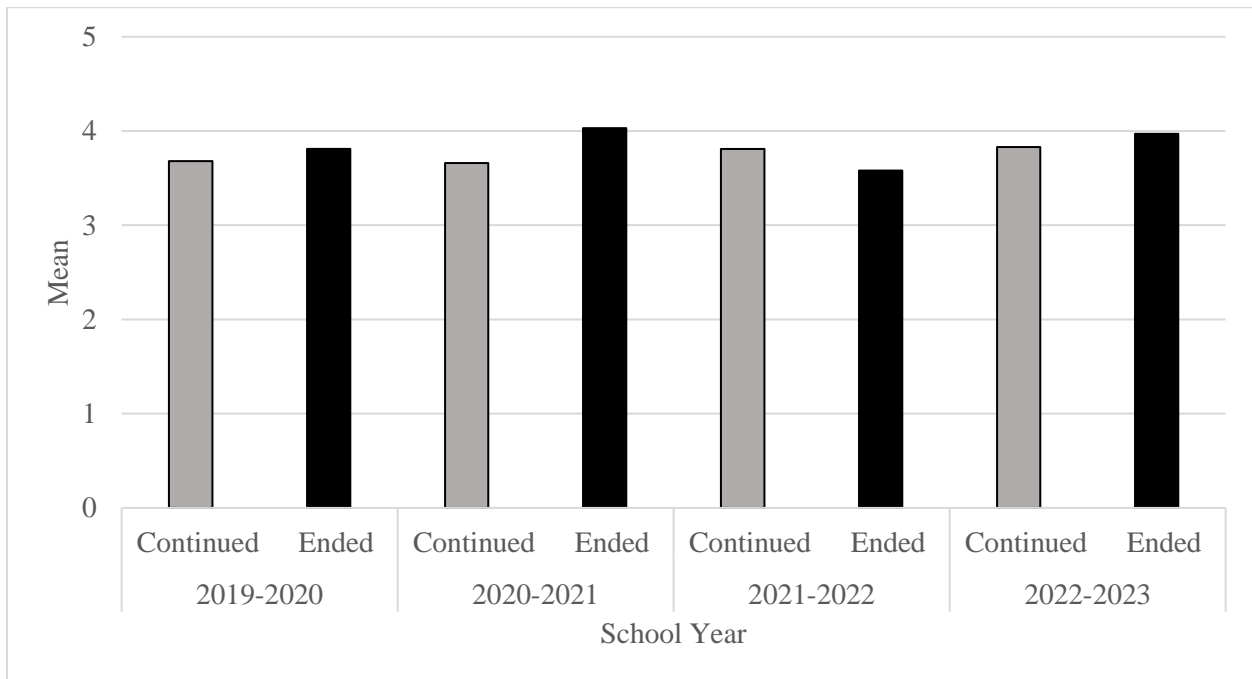
Table 4.4

*Superintendents' Experiences Related to Professional Preparation and Support Variable
Descriptive Statistics and t-test Results*

School Year	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>M (SD)</i>
2019-2020	-.40	66		
Continued			61	3.68 (0.76)
Ended			7	3.81 (1.12)
2020-2021	-1.60	73		
Continued			64	3.66 (0.71)
Ended			11	4.03 (0.69)
2021-2022	1.08	87		
Continued			77	3.81 (0.71)
Ended			12	3.58 (0.38)
2022-2023	-.72	97		
Continued			88	3.83 (0.63)
Ended			11	3.97 (0.62)

Figure 4.4

Superintendents' Experiences Related to Professional Preparation and Support Variable Means



Superintendent Evaluation

The fifth research question sought to analyze the relationship between superintendents' performance evaluation and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year. Table 4.5 provides disaggregated responses related to superintendents' performance evaluations, by employment status at the end of school year. Of the 18 superintendents who reported that their employment ended at the end of the 2019-2020 or 2020-2021 school year, none reported receiving negative ratings on their performance evaluation during the same year. In 2021-2022, eight out of nine superintendents who reported being evaluated and ended employment at the end of the school year reported receiving mostly positive or very positive performance ratings. One superintendent, out of the eight who were evaluated and ended employment during the 2022-2023 school year, reported receiving negative performance ratings. Survey responses from each

of the school years examined in the research do not reveal consistent trends or themes related to superintendents' performance evaluations and superintendents' employment status at the end of the school year.

Table 4.5

Superintendents' Performance Evaluations Variable Descriptive Statistics

School Year	<i>N</i>	No Formal Evaluation	Mostly Negative	Positive and Negative	Mostly Positive	Very Positive
2019-2020						
Continued	61	2	0	3	19	37
Ended	7	1	0	0	3	3
2020-2021						
Continued	64	1	1	4	20	38
Ended	11	3	0	0	3	5
2021-2022						
Continued	77	3	2	5	25	42
Ended	12	3	0	1	3	5
2022-2023						
Continued	88	6	0	6	27	49
Ended	11	3	1	0	1	6

Note. No respondents selected "Very Negative".

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Over the course of five school years (2018-2023), more than 60% of Oregon K-12 public school districts experienced turnover in the superintendent role, with annual turnover rates reaching a concerning 33% in 2022. Prior research related to superintendent longevity highlights a number of factors that have been shown to impact superintendent employment decisions. However, a comprehensive literature review revealed that research focused on examining factors associated with superintendent longevity in Oregon, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, did not exist. Therefore, it was unclear which factors may have contributed to concerning superintendent turnover trends in Oregon. Gaps in the research make it challenging for superintendents, superintendent preparation programs, mentor programs, school boards, or legislators to develop and propose solutions in response to the concerning phenomenon.

The purpose of this research was to seek feedback from Oregon K-12 public school district superintendents who served in the leadership role at any time from 2019 to 2023 to explore influences that may have contributed to high rates of superintendent turnover. Specifically, this quantitative study examined superintendent experiences with the school board, school district, health and safety, and professional preparation and support to determine whether there was a relationship between superintendents' experiences and their employment status at the end of the school year. Additionally, superintendent responses were examined to determine whether there were trends or patterns between ratings on superintendents' performance evaluations and their employment status at the end of each school year during the study timeframe.

Summary of Findings

This research study revealed a statistically significant relationship in one variable, for one school year. Although it was hypothesized that additional relationships would be exposed during the course of the study, the time dedicated to this research was not without gains. The feedback provided by Oregon K-12 public school district superintendents through this research provided incredible insight into participant experiences in the superintendent role from 2019-2020 through 2022-2023. Specific contributions to the field are explained in more detail below.

Experiences with the School Board

Results from the independent samples *t*-test demonstrated that there was a statistically significant difference between positive school board relationships experienced by superintendents who continued employment and superintendents who ended employment during the 2022-2023 school year $t(97) = 2.07, p = .041$. Although there were not statistically significant results observed in the other three school years examined in the study, it is worth highlighting that substantial mean differences were also observed during the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 school years. Also notable is the fact that across all four years, superintendents who continued employment reported higher average levels of positive school board relationships compared to those who ended employment. These consistent outcomes across the four years of the study, combined with the results obtained through the statistical analyses, suggest that positive experiences with the school board is a potentially important factor related to continued employment in the district.

In probing a bit further, individual survey question data was explored post hoc to identify potential areas for further exploration. A review of the disaggregated responses (i.e., all 331 submissions) for each survey question included in the experiences with the school board variable

revealed that over 50% of superintendent responses agreed that board members allowed external political or community pressures to influence their decisions. That being said, most survey responses indicated positive professional relationships between the superintendent and school board members, and, in most cases, respondents reported that the board made decisions that aligned with the mission and vision of the school district. Additional research may provide valuable insight regarding how external political or community pressures may influence superintendent longevity, while also considering how relationships between superintendents and school board members can be strengthened to promote superintendent longevity.

Experiences in the School District

The outcomes of independent samples *t*-tests did not show statistically significant relationships between superintendents who continued employment and superintendents who ended employment in relation to the superintendents' experiences in the school district. In fact, survey results revealed variable relationships across the four years, with superintendents who ended employment reporting more positive experiences in the school district in 2019-2020 compared to superintendents who continued employment in the school district. Alternatively, superintendents who continued employment reported more positive experiences than those who ended employment from 2020-2023. Inconsistent patterns of responding made it difficult to draw conclusions pertaining to superintendent experiences in the school district.

Responses from four survey questions were used to calculate the group mean for the experiences in the school district variable. A post hoc examination of individual data for each of the four questions indicated that superintendents reported having positive working relationships with the employee associations at a higher rate than any other question used to calculate the group variable, in all four years examined through the study. In fact, nearly 90% of

superintendent responses reflected positive working relationships with employee associations. Superintendents also consistently communicated that politics played a large role in their district each year. Due to the fact that feedback was provided through a close-ended survey, it was difficult to make inferences regarding the specific political influences that were observed by superintendents. However, survey data reveals a theme that Oregon K-12 public superintendents reported being impacted by political influences from 2019-2023.

Experiences Related to Health and Safety

Similar to experiences in the school district, there were no statistically significant mean differences in experiences related to health and safety for superintendents who continued employment and superintendents who ended employment. In addition, there were not consistent trends in the means for each group, across the four school years. In fact, during 2022-2023, superintendents who ended employment reported more positive experiences related to health and safety than superintendents who continued employment.

Interestingly, when compared to the other potentially influential factors, group means pertaining to superintendents' experiences related to health and safety were generally lower than other variables, with averages for superintendents who ended employment and continued employment ranging from 2.50-3.42 over the course of the study timeframe. A post hoc review of each of the four survey questions that were used to calculate the group mean also revealed consistently low ratings for superintendent mental health and superintendent work-life balance. Over half of the survey responses revealed that superintendents experienced negative mental health symptoms and only one-third reported an ability to achieve a healthy work-life balance. Although mean differences related to health and safety were not statistically significant, negative experiences consistently reported by superintendents revealed challenges faced by Oregon K-12

public superintendents, especially in regard to mental health and work-life balance.

Experiences Related to Professional Preparation and Support

With the exception of the 2021-2022 school year, superintendents who ended employment at the conclusion of the school year reported more positive experiences related to professional preparation and support than superintendents who continued employment. These patterns ran contrary to the study hypothesis, which predicted that superintendents who experienced longevity would report higher levels of support. That said, it is plausible that, as superintendents become at risk of ending employment with the school district, they may become more inclined to seek support from professional organizations and colleagues.

In post hoc explorations of the three survey questions used to calculate the superintendent experiences related to preparation and support group variable, superintendents reported very positive experiences related to the support provided by state and national organizations and superintendent colleagues. In contrast, superintendents provided less favorable ratings related to superintendent preparation programs, with fewer than 30% of survey responses indicating that their superintendent preparation program adequately prepared them for the responsibilities of the job. Further exploration could provide preparation programs with valuable information regarding which aspects of superintendent preparation programs were viewed as valuable for practicing Oregon superintendents and contributed to success in the position.

Superintendent Evaluation

An analysis of the responses provided by superintendents in relation to their performance evaluations did not reveal any notable trends or themes among Oregon superintendents who continued employment versus those who ended employment during the study timeframe. As such, conclusions could not be made between the ratings on a superintendent's evaluation and

the superintendent's employment status at the end of the school year. Interestingly, of the 331 survey responses included in the analytic sample for the four-year study, 286 (86%) superintendents reported receiving mostly or very positive evaluations. Of those 286, 10% indicated that their employment with the Oregon school district ended at the conclusion of the school year. Seven percent of survey responses indicated that superintendents were not formally evaluated, and nearly half of those respondents reported that their employment ended at the conclusion of the school year.

When done well, the evaluation process can provide an employee with valuable feedback related to their performance, strengths, and areas in need of improvement. If school board members collectively dedicate time to providing their superintendent with clear, concise guidance in relationship to the school board's goals and vision for the school district, the superintendent will be better equipped to meet the school board's expectations. Alignment between the superintendent's actions and the school board's goals will likely contribute to greater superintendent longevity. To that end, it is concerning that some superintendents in Oregon were not formally evaluated during the four-year research timeframe. Alternatively, the inability to draw conclusions from the data that was reported by superintendents who were evaluated prompts questions about the quality and reliability of the superintendent evaluation process as an indicator of longevity.

Limitations

Although precautions were taken to decrease limitations in the research, some limitations were unavoidable. Study limitations are explored in more detail below.

Participants

According to the 2022-2023 Spring Student Enrollment Report (2023), approximately

29% of students attended school districts with an enrollment less than 300, 24% attended school districts with enrollment between 300-999 students, 15% attended school districts with enrollment between 1,000-1,999, 10% of school districts had enrollment between 2,000-2,999, five percent of school districts reported enrollment between 3,000-3,999, four percent of school districts had between 4,000-4,999 students, and 15% of school districts served over 5,000 students (Oregon Department of Education). A comparison between the enrollment report and survey responses provided by participants related to student enrollment indicated that the survey responses may not proportionally represent Oregon school districts, as superintendents representing districts with fewer than 300 students were underrepresented in the survey data and superintendents who served in school districts with more than 5,000 students were overrepresented in the responses. To that end, study conclusions may not appropriately represent the challenges that were faced by superintendents who served in school districts with fewer than 300 students from 2019-2023.

Although diligent efforts were made to obtain contact information for all eligible study participants, contact information was not located for 44 participants. Due to the anonymous nature of the web-based survey, it is unknown whether any of the 44 participants received the invitation to participate from colleagues or through other distribution channels. It is reasonable to conclude that, once an individual's career in education ended, the individual either did not have an interest in participating in a survey that would not directly impact them, or the individual chose not to maintain connections with colleagues in the educational leadership field, both of which made it challenging to obtain current contact information. Regardless, a limitation should be acknowledged due to the fact that 44 possible participants did not receive a direct invitation to participate in the research study.

A similar challenge existed regarding the size of the analytic sample for each school year in relationship to the size of the population for each school year. Of the 197 Oregon K-12 public school districts, the greatest number that were represented in the research was 99 (50%) for the 2022-2023 school year. However, as the years passed, the size of the analytic sample also decreased, resulting in a sample size of 68 (35%) in 2019-2020. Upon analyzing differences between data received from the Oregon Department of Education and survey responses, it became clear that superintendents who ended employment were underrepresented in the data. For example, only 14% of superintendents who ended employment at the conclusion of the 2021-2022 school year participated in the research and only 22% of superintendents whose employment concluded at the end of the 2019-2020 school year provided responses. These participation rates indicate that conclusions may not fully represent all Oregon superintendent experiences from 2019-2023.

Design

When the study was developed, the decision was made to collect responses anonymously through a web-based survey. Allowing individuals to provide feedback through an anonymous format encouraged respondents to provide honest responses, without the fear of being identified. By removing this fear, the goal was to promote higher engagement by eligible participants. That said, allowing anonymity also posed challenges that could not be addressed. For example, not knowing the identities of the respondents made it impossible to identify which participants had responded and which participants to target with survey reminders. Additionally, the anonymous format prevented attempts to contact the 51 individuals who provided incomplete responses in an attempt to increase response rates. It is also worth mentioning that participant identities cannot be confirmed through an anonymous survey design, so the possibility that an imposter submitted

a response cannot be eliminated.

This research sought to explore factors that contributed to superintendent turnover in K-12 public schools in Oregon from 2019 through 2023. Statistical calculations were performed comparing two groups – superintendents who continued employment in the district and superintendents who ended employment in the district. Importantly, the study did not differentiate between involuntary and voluntary turnover when performing calculations. As such, a superintendent who chose to retire at the end of the school year was included in the same group as a superintendent who may have been terminated. This grouping approach is worth noting, as research conclusions are made solely based on continuing versus ending employment and should not be interpreted to individually represent the various pathways to involuntary or voluntary separation.

Lastly, multiple *t*-tests were conducted to test study hypotheses each year, which may increase the possibility of a Type I error and could contribute to spurious results. Although a limitation in the study, this statistical approach was utilized due the exploratory nature of the study, the small sample population, and a desire to establish foundational research in Oregon related to K-12 public school district superintendent turnover during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.

Suggestions for Future Research

As one of the first research studies to examine factors related to K-12 public school district superintendent longevity in Oregon during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, this study revealed a number of areas for further exploration to better understand troubling superintendent turnover trends.

Roegman et al. (2022) shared that school board members in their study viewed topics

such as masks, vaccines, equity initiatives, and social emotional health programming as challenging issues that contributed to divisiveness. In the current study, participants reported that politics were influential during interactions with the school board and through experiences within the school district. This recurring theme should be explored further to determine the types of political influences that may have impacted Oregon superintendents. Gaining further insight into the specific topics that led to challenges experienced by Oregon K-12 superintendents would provide superintendents, school boards, and local, state, and national organizations with the ability to provide targeted support and interventions as superintendents continue to navigate a challenging political climate in public education.

Recent studies have highlighted the affects that the roles and responsibilities of the superintendency can have on an individual's mental health (White et al., 2023) and the ability to maintain a healthy work-life balance (Allred, 2017; Williams et al., 2019). Responses from superintendents in this study also elevated concerns related to superintendent mental health and work-life balance. Due to the negative impacts that poor mental health and work-life balance can have on an individual's wellbeing, additional research should be conducted to adequately understand how these two factors have impacted superintendent longevity and wellbeing in Oregon. Further investigation on these topics could also lead to strategies that can be implemented to promote superintendent wellbeing and decrease turnover rates.

Disaggregated data from the survey questions that were used to calculate the superintendent preparation and support variable highlighted the value that Oregon superintendents placed on the support they received from state and national organizations and superintendent colleagues. That said, there was a discrepancy between the responses received to those survey questions and the survey question that sought feedback related to superintendent

preparation programs. The low ratings provided by Oregon superintendents are cause for concern and should be examined further. Additional research could bring awareness to the components of superintendent preparation programs that are seen as valuable by practicing superintendents and those that are viewed as less impactful. This knowledge could be utilized to engage in constructive conversations with legislators, licensing agencies, and higher education institutions in an effort to revise preparation programs to adequately prepare aspiring superintendents to experience success in the leadership role.

Based on the results provided by study participants, conclusions could not be made pertaining to the relationship between a superintendent's performance evaluation rating and the superintendent's longevity. The inconsistencies between performance ratings and employment outcomes prompt curiosity about the relevance and value of the superintendent evaluation process. The evaluation process should promote a cycle of continuous improvement and ongoing collaboration between the superintendent and the school board. When done well, this process can promote growth, collegiality, and longevity in the superintendency. As such, further inquiry into the superintendent evaluation process in Oregon could help generate a process that is beneficial for all involved.

Responses provided by participants also shed light on a number of positive superintendent experiences. For example, the majority of superintendents reported having positive professional relationships with board members and employee associations. Additionally, data revealed that participants believed that decisions made by board members generally aligned with the vision and mission of the school district. These positive experiences and the impact they may have on superintendent longevity could be examined further to determine if there are opportunities to expand the positive experiences to other areas that may influence employment

decisions.

Conclusion

Superintendent turnover in K-12 public schools in Oregon has reached concerning rates since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The roles and responsibilities of Oregon superintendents are complex; however, the success of the Oregon public K-12 system depends on longevity in the top educational leadership role. This research study provided valuable insights into the challenges experienced by practicing superintendents from 2019 through 2023.

Findings from this study align with findings from similar research related to superintendent longevity – the relationship with the school board has a significant impact on superintendent employment decisions. To that end, school board members and superintendents must dedicate time to align their vision, goals, and beliefs in an effort to cultivate a positive and productive working relationship that is focused on improving outcomes in K-12 public schools. These efforts can be supported through ongoing professional learning opportunities, a commitment by all parties to work collaboratively and hold one another accountable to common goals, and by taking steps to minimize the impact that political influences have on school board member interactions with the superintendent.

This research also revealed important areas for additional research related to superintendent longevity in Oregon. To continue to explore this complex and concerning trend, additional research should be conducted to examine the impact that mental health and work-life balance have on superintendent longevity. In addition, more research is needed in regard to the current configuration of superintendent preparation programs and how to align the programs to better prepare educational leaders for the complexities of the role. Finally, this study highlighted the need for an examination of the process that is used by Oregon school boards to evaluate

superintendent performance to ensure that it is valuable, informative, and promotes longevity for high-performing superintendents.

This study established foundational research and provided valuable insights into the challenges experienced by practicing Oregon superintendents from 2019 through 2023. The findings from this research study have made important contributions to the field and have highlighted topics that require additional consideration. However, superintendent longevity in Oregon is a problem that needs ongoing attention. Failure to explore these topics further and identify solutions to high rates of superintendent turnover could lead to a crisis in the Oregon K-12 public education system.

APPENDIX

SUPERINTENDENT LONGEVITY SURVEY

Were you employed as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon at any time between the 2019-2020 and 2022-2023 school years?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Survey If Were you employed as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon at any time between t... = No

Choose one or more races you consider yourself to be:

- Asian
- Black/African American
- American Indian/Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander
- White
- Other
- Prefer not to say

What is your ethnicity?

- Hispanic
- Non-Hispanic/Non-Latino
- Prefer not to say

How old are you?

- 25-34 years old
- 35-44 years old
- 45-54 years old
- 55-64 years old
- 65+ years old
- Prefer not to say

How do you describe yourself?

- Male
- Female
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

- Bachelor's Degree
- Master's Degree
- Specialist Degree
- Doctoral Degree
- Prefer not to say

Number of years of experience as a K-12 superintendent:

▼ 1 ... 40

Start of Block: 2022-2023

Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2022-2023 school year?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Block If Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2022-2023 s... = No

Including 2022-2023, how many years had you served as superintendent in that district, as of the 2022-2023 school year?

▼ 1 ... 40

Student enrollment in your district during the 2022-2023 school year:

- Fewer than 300 students
- 300-999 students
- 1,000-1,999 students
- 2,000-2,999 students
- 3,000-3,999 students
- 4,000-4,999 students
- More than 5,000 students

My district in 2022-2023 could be best described as:

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban

Pathway to superintendency in my 2022-2023 district:

- Promoted from within the district
- Hired from outside of the district, but from within Oregon
- Hired from outside of Oregon

Where did you reside for the majority of the 2022-2023 school year?

- Within the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent
- Outside the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent

Type of superintendent employment contract during the 2022-2023 school year:

- Interim/Temporary Contract
- 1 Year Contract
- 2 Year Contract
- 3 Year Contract

Employment status at the end of 2022-2023 school year:

- Contract extension to continue serving as superintendent in the same district
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, outside of the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), outside of the state of Oregon
- Employment ended through a negotiated agreement with the Board of Directors
- Employment was terminated/not extended by the Board of Directors
- Retired from the field of education
- Left the field of education

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences with the school board in 2022-2023:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Board members engaged in formal training to become knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to utilize their roles on the board to promote their personal agendas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members allowed external political or community pressures to influence their decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had positive professional relationships with members of the board.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The board publicly recognized my accomplishments as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to micromanage my actions as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decisions made by the board aligned with the vision and mission of the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relationships with the board influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district at the end of the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences as a superintendent in 2022-2023:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received as superintendent in 2022-2023 was competitive and appropriate for the work I performed as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received in 2022-2023 influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a positive working relationship with the employee association(s) in the district in 2022-2023.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022-2023 on school districts in Oregon influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Politics played a large role in my district during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district in 2022-2023.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What percentage of students qualified for free or reduced lunch in your district in 2022-2023?

- Less than 20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- More than 60%

Describe student enrollment trends in your district from the beginning to the end of the 2022-2023 school year:

- Decreased significantly - 10% or more
- Decreased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Somewhat stable - within 4%
- Increased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Increased significantly - 10% or more

Describe the trend in district reserve funds from the beginning to the end of the 2022-2023 school year:

- Decreased
- Unchanged
- Increased

How would you describe your performance evaluation from the board during the 2022-2023 school year?

- Very positive
- Mostly positive
- Positive and negative
- Mostly negative
- Very negative
- The board did not formally evaluate my performance in 2022-2023

What was your district's four-year graduation rate at the end of the 2022-2023 school year?

- Less than 50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-89%
- 90%-100%

Were any of the schools in your district identified as receiving Comprehensive Supports for Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Supports for Improvement (TSI) from the Oregon Department of Education during the 2022-2023 school year?

- Yes
- No

Please describe your experiences as superintendent during the 2022-2023 school year:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I experienced negative mental health symptoms during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced negative physical health symptoms during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was concerned for my safety and/or the safety of my family members during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to maintain a healthy work-life balance during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage work-related stress during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage district reporting and accountability requirements during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My superintendent preparation program adequately prepared me for my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from professional organizations (ESD, COSA, ODE, AASA) to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from fellow superintendents to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2022-2023 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Start of Block: 2021-2022

Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2021-2022 school year?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Block If Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2021-2022 s... = No

Including 2021-2022, how many years had you served as superintendent in that district, as of the 2021-2022 school year?

▼ 1 ... 40

Student enrollment in your district during the 2021-2022 school year:

- Fewer than 300 students
- 300-999 students
- 1,000-1,999 students
- 2,000-2,999 students
- 3,000-3,999 students
- 4,000-4,999 students
- More than 5,000 students

My district in 2021-2022 could be best described as:

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban

Pathway to superintendency in my 2021-2022 district:

- Promoted from within the district
- Hired from outside of the district, but from within Oregon
- Hired from outside of Oregon

Where did you reside for the majority of the 2021-2022 school year?

- Within the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent
- Outside the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent

Type of superintendent employment contract during the 2021-2022 school year:

- Interim/Temporary Contract
- 1 Year Contract
- 2 Year Contract
- 3 Year Contract

Employment status at the end of 2021-2022 school year:

- Contract extension to continue serving as superintendent in the same district
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, outside of the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), outside of the state of Oregon
- Employment ended through a negotiated agreement with the Board of Directors
- Employment was terminated/not extended by the Board of Directors
- Retired from the field of education
- Left the field of education

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences with the school board in 2021-2022:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Board members engaged in formal training to become knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to utilize their roles on the board to promote their personal agendas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members allowed external political or community pressures to influence their decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had positive professional relationships with members of the board.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The board publicly recognized my accomplishments as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to micromanage my actions as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decisions made by the board aligned with the vision and mission of the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relationships with the board influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district at the end of the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences as a superintendent in 2021-2022:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received as superintendent in 2021-2022 was competitive and appropriate for the work I performed as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received in 2021-2022 influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a positive working relationship with the employee association(s) in the district in 2021-2022.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2021-2022 on school districts in Oregon influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Politics played a large role in my district during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district in 2021-2022.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What percentage of students qualified for free or reduced lunch in your district in 2021-2022?

- Less than 20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- More than 60%

Describe student enrollment trends in your district from the beginning to the end of the 2021-2022 school year:

- Decreased significantly - 10% or more
- Decreased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Somewhat stable - within 4%
- Increased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Increased significantly - 10% or more

Describe the trend in district reserve funds from the beginning to the end of the 2021-2022 school year:

- Decreased
- Unchanged
- Increased

How would you describe your performance evaluation from the board during the 2021-2022 school year?

- Very positive
- Mostly positive
- Positive and negative
- Mostly negative
- Very negative
- The board did not formally evaluate my performance in 2021-2022

What was your district's four-year graduation rate at the end of the 2021-2022 school year?

- Less than 50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-89%
- 90%-100%

Were any of the schools in your district identified as receiving Comprehensive Supports for Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Supports for Improvement (TSI) from the Oregon Department of Education during the 2021-2022 school year?

Yes

No

Please describe your experiences as superintendent during the 2021-2022 school year:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I experienced negative mental health symptoms during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced negative physical health symptoms during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was concerned for my safety and/or the safety of my family members during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to maintain a healthy work-life balance during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage work-related stress during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage district reporting and accountability requirements during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My superintendent preparation program adequately prepared me for my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from professional organizations (ESD, COSA, ODE, AASA) to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from fellow superintendents to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2021-2022 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Start of Block: 2020-2021

Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2020-2021 school year?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Block If Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2020-2021 s... = No

Including 2020-2021, how many years had you served as superintendent in that district, as of the 2020-2021 school year?

▼ 1 ... 40

Student enrollment in your district during the 2020-2021 school year:

- Fewer than 300 students
- 300-999 students
- 1,000-1,999 students
- 2,000-2,999 students
- 3,000-3,999 students
- 4,000-4,999 students
- More than 5,000 students

My district in 2020-2021 could be best described as:

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban

Pathway to superintendency in my 2020-2021 district:

- Promoted from within the district
- Hired from outside of the district, but from within Oregon
- Hired from outside of Oregon

Where did you reside for the majority of the 2020-2021 school year?

- Within the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent
- Outside the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent

Type of superintendent employment contract during the 2020-2021 school year:

- Interim/Temporary Contract
- 1 Year Contract
- 2 Year Contract
- 3 Year Contract

Employment status at the end of 2020-2021 school year:

- Contract extension to continue serving as superintendent in the same district
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, outside of the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), outside of the state of Oregon
- Employment ended through a negotiated agreement with the Board of Directors
- Employment was terminated/not extended by the Board of Directors
- Retired from the field of education
- Left the field of education

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences with the school board in 2020-2021:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Board members engaged in formal training to become knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to utilize their roles on the board to promote their personal agendas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members allowed external political or community pressures to influence their decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had positive professional relationships with members of the board.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The board publicly recognized my accomplishments as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to micromanage my actions as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decisions made by the board aligned with the vision and mission of the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relationships with the board influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district at the end of the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences as a superintendent in 2020-2021:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received as superintendent in 2020-2021 was competitive and appropriate for the work I performed as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received in 2020-2021 influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a positive working relationship with the employee association(s) in the district in 2020-2021.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-2021 on school districts in Oregon influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Politics played a large role in my district during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district in 2020-2021.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What percentage of students qualified for free or reduced lunch in your district in 2020-2021?

- Less than 20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- More than 60%

Describe student enrollment trends in your district from the beginning to the end of the 2020-2021 school year:

- Decreased significantly - 10% or more
- Decreased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Somewhat stable - within 4%
- Increased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Increased significantly - 10% or more

Describe the trend in district reserve funds from the beginning to the end of the 2020-2021 school year:

- Decreased
- Unchanged
- Increased

How would you describe your performance evaluation from the board during the 2020-2021 school year?

- Very positive
- Mostly positive
- Positive and negative
- Mostly negative
- Very negative
- The board did not formally evaluate my performance in 2020-2021

What was your district's four-year graduation rate at the end of the 2020-2021 school year?

- Less than 50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-89%
- 90%-100%

Were any of the schools in your district identified as receiving Comprehensive Supports for Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Supports for Improvement (TSI) from the Oregon Department of Education during the 2020-2021 school year?

Yes

No

Please describe your experiences as superintendent during the 2020-2021 school year:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I experienced negative mental health symptoms during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced negative physical health symptoms during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was concerned for my safety and/or the safety of my family members during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to maintain a healthy work-life balance during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage work-related stress during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage district reporting and accountability requirements during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My superintendent preparation program adequately prepared me for my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from professional organizations (ESD, COSA, ODE, AASA) to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from fellow superintendents to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2020-2021 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Start of Block: 2019-2020

Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2019-2020 school year?

- Yes
- No

Skip To: End of Block If Were you serving as a K-12 public school district superintendent in Oregon during the 2019-2020 s... = No

Including 2019-2020, how many years had you served as superintendent in that district, as of the 2019-2020 school year?

▼ 1 ... 40

Student enrollment in your district during the 2019-2020 school year:

- Fewer than 300 students
- 300-999 students
- 1,000-1,999 students
- 2,000-2,999 students
- 3,000-3,999 students
- 4,000-4,999 students
- Greater than 5,000 students

My district in 2019-2020 could be best described as:

- Rural
- Suburban
- Urban

Pathway to superintendency in my 2019-2020 district:

- Promoted from within the district
- Hired from outside of the district, but from within Oregon
- Hired from outside of Oregon

Where did you reside for the majority of the 2019-2020 school year?

- Within the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent
- Outside the district boundaries where I was employed as superintendent

Type of superintendent employment contract during the 2019-2020 school year:

- Interim/Temporary Contract
- 1 Year Contract
- 2 Year Contract
- 3 Year Contract

Employment status at the end of 2019-2020 school year:

- Contract extension to continue serving as superintendent in the same district
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different superintendent position, outside of the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), within the state of Oregon
- Transitioned to a different role in education (non-superintendent), outside of the state of Oregon
- Employment ended through a negotiated agreement with the Board of Directors
- Employment was terminated/not extended by the Board of Directors
- Retired from the field of education
- Left the field of education

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences with the school board in 2019-2020:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
Board members engaged in formal training to become knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members attempted to utilize their roles on the board to promote their personal agendas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Board members allowed external political or community pressures to influence their decisions.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had positive professional relationships with members of the board.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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Board members attempted to micromanage my actions as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Decisions made by the board aligned with the vision and mission of the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Relationships with the board influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district at the end of the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please respond to the following questions regarding your experiences as a superintendent in 2019-2020:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received as superintendent in 2019-2020 was competitive and appropriate for the work I performed as superintendent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The compensation package (salary and benefits) I received in 2019-2020 influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I had a positive working relationship with the employee association(s) in the district in 2019-2020.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2019-2020 on school districts in Oregon influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Politics played a large role in my district during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My family influenced my decision to remain in or leave the district in 2019-2020.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

What percentage of students qualified for free or reduced lunch in your district in 2019-2020?

- Less than 20%
- 21-40%
- 41-60%
- More than 60%

Describe student enrollment trends in your district from the beginning to the end of the 2019-2020 school year:

- Decreased significantly - 10% or more
- Decreased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Somewhat stable - within 4%
- Increased slightly - between 5% and 9%
- Increased significantly - 10% or more

Describe the trend in district reserve funds from the beginning to the end of the 2019-2020 school year:

- Decreased
- Unchanged
- Increased

How would you describe your performance evaluation from the board during the 2019-2020 school year?

- Very positive
- Mostly positive
- Positive and negative
- Mostly negative
- Very negative
- The board did not formally evaluate my performance in 2019-2020

What was your district's four-year graduation rate at the end of the 2019-2020 school year?

- Less than 50%
- 51%-75%
- 76%-89%
- 90%-100%

Were any of the schools in your district identified as receiving Comprehensive Supports for Improvement (CSI) or Targeted Supports for Improvement (TSI) from the Oregon Department of Education during the 2019-2020 school year?

Yes

No

Please describe your experiences as superintendent during the 2019-2020 school year:

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I experienced negative mental health symptoms during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experienced negative physical health symptoms during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was concerned for my safety and/or the safety of my family members during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to maintain a healthy work-life balance during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage work-related stress during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to effectively manage district reporting and accountability requirements during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My superintendent preparation program adequately prepared me for my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from professional organizations (ESD, COSA, ODE, AASA) to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I was able to obtain support from fellow superintendents to help manage my responsibilities as superintendent during the 2019-2020 school year.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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