

TITLE: Leadership Styles of School Superintendents and Collaborative Activity With External Publics

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OBJECTIVE: To determine the relationship between leadership styles of school leaders (i.e., superintendents of school districts) and the extent of collaboration with external publics in their school districts.

METHODOLOGY: Superintendents of Michigan's mid-sized public school districts (N = 367) were the subjects. A pilot test of the survey instruments was conducted involving 40 respondents who were subsequently excluded from the population. The effective response rate was 75% (N=274). Respondents were surveyed about the extent of collaboration with external publics and implementation of community education components, and asked to rank the impact of this collaboration, provided demographic information and completed the LPI (Self).

KEY FINDINGS: LPI scores were significantly correlated with the overall collaborative activity survey as well as the four identified external publics (i.e., business, social service, community groups, and educational institutions). Likewise, LPI scores were positively related with the extent of community education implementation in the superintendents' school districts. "Superintendents whose leadership styles reflect more innovation, an ability to articulate the mission of the organization, a willingness to share power, and a willingness to become personally involved with others are also more likely to involve their school districts in collaborative activities with organizations and agencies outside of the school structure" (p. 133).