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Perceptions of State Education Agencies

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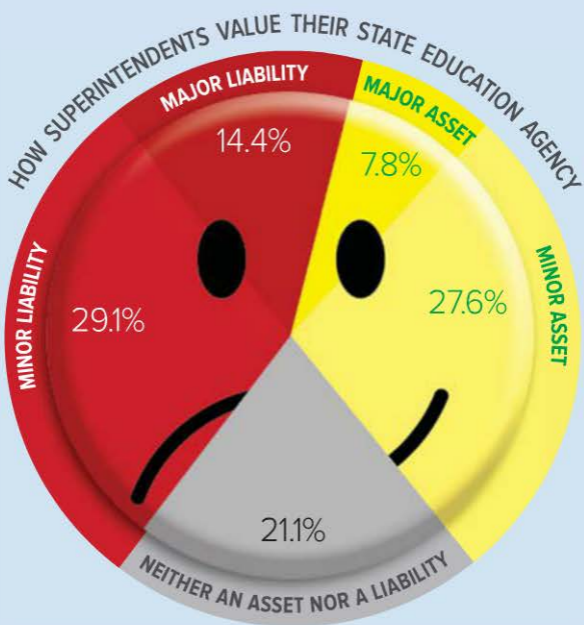
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STATE OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY



Perceptions of State Education Agencies

Relationships between state government and school districts reflect long-standing tensions involving liberty and equity. In states where the former is emphasized, the authority and scope of responsibilities relegated to state agencies are limited, so local boards and superintendents have considerable leeway to make decisions. In states that exercise centralized controls to provide reasonably equal educational opportunities, localities have less flexibility. Consequently, superintendent survey ratings should be considered in light of such dissimilarities across state education departments.

An AASA superintendency study indicated superintendents held widely differing views of their state education agencies. In general, district enrollment, with one exception, was not associated with ratings. While only 31 percent of superintendents in the smallest districts (fewer than 300 students) said state departments were a liability (either minor or major), 45 percent of other superintendents rated them as such.

SOURCE OF DATA: "THE AMERICAN SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT: 2010 DECENNIAL STUDY" (2011) PUBLISHED BY ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD EDUCATION AND CO-SPONSORED BY AASA AND PEARSON. ANALYSIS BY THEODORE J. KOWALSKI, LEAD STUDY AUTHOR AND PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON.