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Age Entering the Field

Theodore J. Kowalski

University of Dayton, tkowalski1@udayton.edu

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STATE OF THE SUPERINTENDENCY

Age Entering the Field

Over time, the typical career span of superintendents (in that position only) has been about 15 to 20 years. In large measure, this relatively short period is explained by the fact most superintendents enter the position in mid-career.

Data collected and analyzed by AASA in 2010 revealed nearly two-thirds of superintendents (62 percent) first entered the position when they were 41 to 55 years old. Outside this age range, novices were twice as likely to be younger than 41 than older than 55. Only 8 percent of superintendents first entered the position after age 55.

The median age of superintendents had been increasing. Between 1950 and 1992, the average age was approximately 49. By 1992, it had increased to approximately 53, and in 2007, it had increased again to approximately 55. The estimated median age in 2010 remained at 55.

Gender comparisons lend another dimension. In 2000, the average female superintendent was older than her male counterpart. In 2010, that pattern remained true. Only 21 percent of female superintendents were below age 51 compared to 31 percent of males.

As the charts show, males were considerably more likely to have become first-time superintendents before age 46 than were their female counterparts, supporting the view that female novices have been older and more experienced than their male peers.



Female



Male



All

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, STUDY LEAD-AUTHOR AND PROFESSOR OF EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION, UNIVERSITY OF DAYTON.