

New Survey of School District and Post-Secondary Leaders Shows Gap between Importance and Effectiveness of K-12 and Higher Ed Collaboration

Findings highlight what is needed most for effective, sustained collaboration to increase student achievement

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New York – Only one in three school district administrators and college leaders say they are collaborating effectively, according to a report released today based on a survey among public school superintendents, public and private college and university chancellors, presidents and deans. Yet, the majority of this nation’s school superintendents and college leaders, who participated in the telephone interviews, believe their ability to collaborate is critical in the effort to increase student achievement.

The Collaboration Imperative, a report based on these interviews represents a partnership between edBridge Partners and Hart Research, working in collaboration with AASA, The School Superintendents Association and AASCU, the American Association of State College and Universities.

“Partnerships and collaboration throughout all levels of education need to become an institutional priority in order to maintain success in both the K-12 and higher education communities,” said Daniel A. Domenech, executive director, AASA. “This survey suggests much work is needed to improve working relationships in America’s education space. If we’re going to compete successfully in a global economy, we cannot afford to sit back and allow this lapse to continue.”

Key survey findings from *The Collaboration Imperative* include:

- 90% of school district superintendents and 80% of college presidents, chancellors, and deans agree that collaboration is extremely or very important.
- However, few think that they are collaborating effectively: only 33% of school district and 34% of college leaders say they are collaborating extremely or very effectively.
- Priorities for collaboration differ, with district leaders seeking improvements in teacher training, development and delivery of curricula, and alignment of curricula between K-12 and colleges. College leaders also value alignment of curricula but also are seeking help to ease students’ transition and reducing the need for remediation.
- In addition to more time and money, the key support for effective collaboration is having someone dedicated to sustaining momentum.
- Both groups doubt whether their counterparts value collaboration but the survey shows these are false doubts by revealing the importance both groups place on effective collaboration.

“To achieve our goals to increase the number of students who graduate from college and who are prepared to succeed in the 21st century, we must view the educational pipeline as a single continuum and identify solutions to raise student achievement,” said Muriel Howard, President, AASCU.

According to Christen Pollock, edBridge Partners President and CEO, next steps include creating Action Learning Networks that specifically address issues that require collaboration between K-12 and higher education and that are very focused on problem solving and action.

“Today the most intractable issues and the greatest opportunities for progress will require sustained, intentional collaboration between K-12 and higher education, working in strategic partnerships

with policymakers, community and business leaders,” said Pollock. “We hope the survey findings help support effective collaborations across education sectors.”

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About edBridge Partners

edBridge Partners is a collaborative consultancy that serves K-12 and higher education institutions and systems and membership organizations. edBridge Partners understands the issues that impede collaboration and employs proven methodologies, innovative thinking, strategic communications, and comprehensive planning and implementation strategies to transform goals into collective action.

www.edBridgePartners.com

About AASA

AASA, The School Superintendents Association, advocates for the highest quality public education for all students, and develops and supports school system leaders.

www.aasa.org

About AASCU

AASCU is a Washington-based higher education association of more than 400 public colleges, universities and systems whose members share a learning- and teaching-centered culture, a historic commitment to underserved student populations and a dedication to research and creativity that advances their regions’ economic progress and cultural development.

www.aascu.org

About Hart Research

Founded in 1971, Hart Research Associates is one of the leading survey research firms in the United States and has been at the cutting edge of change in the field of public opinion for more than three decades.

www.hartresearch.com

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