RECOGNIZING WARNING SIGNS OF K-12 CHRISTIAN SCHOOL DISTRESS THAT
LEAD TO SCHOOL CLOSURE

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to identify statistically significant warning signs of K-12 Christian school distress that can lead to school closure in the areas of leadership, homogeneity of vision and culture, finances, and competition, as described by Fitzpatrick (2002) and Nichols (2006). Twenty-four strong, declining, and closed K-12 Christian schools, which are or were members of the Association of Christian Schools International South Central region, were surveyed and the results statistically analyzed. This study explains that, along with leadership, that homogeneity of vision and culture, finances, and competition are equally important as leadership, and that all contain warning signs that may be identifiable in time for corrective action to turn around a stressed school. Conclusions are to use mission to drive decisions, avoid excessive tuition discounting and continual debt financing, and to market student experiences to student and family needs.