

2018 Member Needs Assessment Survey Analysis

Prepared for the Ohio School Board Association (OSBA)

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Introduction

In this report, Hanover Research analyzes and summarizes the results from a Member Needs Assessment Survey conducted by the Ohio School Board Association. In total, 1,738 respondents completed the survey and provided quality survey responses.

Role	Responses (n)	Responses (%)
Board member	510	29%
Superintendent	211	12%
Treasurer	164	9%
Other (principal, director, supervisor, administrator)	853	49%

THE REPORT CONTAINS THE FOLLOWING SECTIONS:

Recommendations and Key Findings. We summarize the methodology of the study, provide recommendations, and present high-level key findings.

- **Section I: Training Needs and Preferences**
- **Section II: Services**
- **Section III: Communication**
- **Section IV: Respondent Characteristics**

Goals:

- 1) Identify top training needs and preferences
- 2) Identify relevant services in addressing key district challenges
- 3) Identify top challenges faced in the next five years

Approach:

Online survey of members in October 2018.

Recommendations

- **Offer trainings on the legal, legislative, and policy aspects of safety/security, mental health, and school funding.** Board members are most interested in OSBA trainings on these three areas and indicate that OSBA's legal and legislative trainings generally benefit them the most.
- **Bring training to members rather than having members travel to training.** Location is a primary barrier to attending training, significantly so for those outside the Central region. OSBA should consider more regional in-person training events, given the overwhelming preference for in-person training.
- **Help districts identify services for working with outside support organizations and grant writing consultants.** Financial support is especially valued, given districts' needs for external funding and financial challenges they expect to face in the next five years.

Key Findings: Training Needs

- **Respondents would like OSBA to offer a variety of different trainings.** The most frequently mentioned topics are: safety and security (48%), mental health (46%), and school funding (41%).
 - Trainings should include coverage of legal issues on these topics. When asked which trainings have benefitted them the most, respondents typically cite legal trainings (55%) followed by legislative (33%) and policy-related (32%) trainings.
- **Trainings should be conducted in-person when possible.** Over three-quarters (79%) of respondents prefer an in-person workshop or training, followed by a regional event (38%) or on-demand/video training (34%).

Board members are most interested in training related to safety/security (**53%**), school funding (**51%**), and mental health (**43%**). Additionally, they benefitted the most from board governance-related training (**63%**).

Those who preferred on-demand or video training prefer to access these opportunities either by paying as they go (**57%**) or through an unlimited license purchased by their district (**51%**).

Key Findings: Challenges

- **Either the location or the time of training pose major barriers for respondents attending trainings.**
 - Around half of respondents cited either the location (51%) or the day/time of the training (49%) as their primary barriers.
- **Poverty is seen as the most important student achievement barrier to address in training.**
 - On a scale of one to four (with one being most important and four least important), respondents typically ranked poverty (1.60 average rank) as the most important topic, followed by equity (2.54).

Region does have an effect on what respondents consider major barriers. For example, just **26%** of Central respondents consider location a barrier, compared to **60%** of Northeast, **57%** of Northwest, **54%** of Southeast, and **53%** of Southwest respondents

Some of the most pressing issues facing districts within the next five years are finances and enrollment - particularly as they relate to taxes and legislation. One respondent asks OSBA to *“Be aware and available for potential legislative help.”*

Key Findings: Relevant Services

- **Interest in finance-related services typically revolve around helping districts access outside money.**
 - Around 40 percent of respondents say they would utilize services like training on working with outside organizations (43%) or consulting services in grant writing (42%).
- **To improve community outreach, respondents would like their districts to use surveys.**
 - Half of respondents (50%) say their districts could use surveys to improve engagement, followed by enhanced social media engagement (40%) or a customized community engagement workshop (31%).

Some examples of outside organizations respondents say OSBA should partner with include: the Association for Career and Technical Education, the Buckeye Association of School Administrators, businesses/chambers of commerce, and mental health providers.

One respondent's characterization of challenges with enhanced community engagement efforts:

"...everyone these days creates their own truth and when presented with the facts they dig in deeper to their own thoughts and beliefs. It makes it difficult to have people understand what is really required to teach a child."