

Candidates' Night — Sample questions for candidates

Note: *These questions are meant to be general in nature. For current policy issues, please consult the OSBA Division of Legislative Services.*

General issues

1. How would you, as a citizen, rate the quality of Ohio's schools?
2. Do you believe that every child in Ohio has an equal opportunity to have a first-rate education?
3. What are the major problems you believe are facing Ohio's school districts and what steps do you believe the General Assembly should take to alleviate these problems?
4. Should the school day or school year be expanded or restructured? If so, by how much and why?
5. What changes should be instituted to Ohio's Collective Bargaining Law?
6. Should local districts be able to terminate or nonrenew teachers who fail to correct deficiencies noted in evaluations?
7. Should local boards of education have the ability to exempt themselves from laws and rules that do not apply to chartered, nonpublic schools or community schools? Why or why not?
8. Would you support legislation restoring the State Board of Education to an all-elected body, or are you supportive of the current elected-appointed hybrid board?

Finance

9. Do you believe Ohio has adequately dealt with the state's school facilities problems?
10. Do you believe the General Assembly has adequately responded to the Supreme Court's mandate for "a complete systematic overhaul" of the state's school-funding formula?
11. What do you think the state needs to do to significantly reduce a school district's overreliance on property taxes?
12. Do you agree or disagree with the statement, "An Ohio child's educational opportunities rely too heavily on where they live and the ability of their community to tax itself?"
13. Should the state be required to provide low-wealth school districts with the funds necessary to provide the programs that high-wealth districts have (such as technology, Advanced Placement courses, etc.) or is the state simply required to provide a minimal education?
14. Should Ohio pay for education programs in low-wealth school districts by redistributing local funds from higher-wealth districts?
15. Because of the lack of growth in local property taxes, commonly known as the "House Bill (HB) 920 reduction," school districts are required to go to the voters for new tax levies every three to five years. Should the General Assembly address this issue and, if so, how?



16. The Supreme Court stated in May 2000 that Ohio school districts are “plagued” by phantom revenue. Under current law, when property tax assessments go up, they are not matched with corresponding revenue increases and can reduce a local district’s state aid. What would you do to solve all forms of phantom revenue?

17. Is Ohio committing too many resources to our nonpublic schools at the expense of public school students?

18. When the General Assembly passes laws that affect the local property tax base, such as the phase out of the tangible personal property tax, does the state have an obligation to “hold those districts harmless” in light of potential revenue losses?

19. Should the General Assembly earmark certain portions of the budget or certain sources of tax revenue for funding education?

20. Will you support a tax increase for schools that is not submitted to the voters?

Governance

21. Should the state, through the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), have the ability to assume control of school districts that are not meeting performance standards?

22. What should be the role of local boards of education in regard to charter schools in education reform?

23. Do you support the privatization of school services, such as transportation, food service or maintenance?

24. In light of the Ohio General Assembly’s expansion of vouchers through the Ohio Education Choice Scholarship Program and Jon Peterson Special Needs Scholarship, what would you do to ensure accountability for public tax dollars going to these programs?

25. Would you support legislation requiring private schools participating in the voucher program to accept all students, including students with disabilities, low levels of achievement and limited English skills?

26. Would you support legislation requiring private schools accepting vouchers to administer all the Ohio state assessments to those students and to report the results?

Charter schools

27. Do you believe that sponsorship of charter schools should be limited to regularly elected or appointed school boards, or do you agree with the expansion of sponsorship that included non-profit 501(c)(3) entities?

28. To date, charter school performance data shows most of these schools lagging far behind even the lowest-performing public school districts. In light of the academic and financial problems still occurring in charter schools, do you believe there should be a cap on the number of charter schools allowed to operate?



29. How do you believe charter schools should be held accountable for the public tax dollars they receive?

