

A profile of Pennsylvania school directors

Every four years, PSBA conducts the school director profile survey to compile statewide demographic information regarding the makeup of Pennsylvania’s school boards. This information is used to prepare a snapshot of the “typical” school director and a statewide profile to inform the public about the diverse 4,500 school directors serving our schools.

To provide further school director insight and perspective for this profile (in addition to school director demographics), other survey questions inquired about the primary motivation to run for office or continue to serve as school director, and the most important concern facings schools today.

The “typical” school director is male, well-educated, 45 to 54 years of age, married with two children attending public schools, and devotes six to 10 hours per month to school board business. His motivation to run for office was to perform public service/contribute to public education. He feels the most important concerns facing schools are budget/funding issues and charter/cyber charter schools.

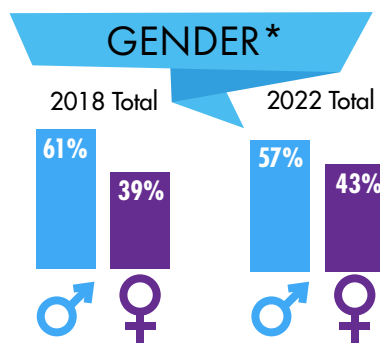
Notable findings when comparing the 2018 survey results to 2022’s is a 4% increase in female school directors, a 2% increase in Black school directors, and a 2% increase in school directors with advanced degrees.

**Note: Tables with gender and years of service are based on PSBA membership files, not the survey.*



The “typical” school director is male, well-educated, 45 to 54 years of age, married with two children attending public schools, and devotes six to 10 hours per month to school board business.

AGE		
	2018 Total	2022 Total
Under 30 years	1%	2%
30-34	2%	2%
35-39	7%	7%
40-44	10%	12%
45-49	16%	15%
50-54	17%	15%
55-59	12%	13%
60-64	12%	10%
65-69	12%	10%
70 years or older	11%	14%



by the numbers

New school directors – 4 or less years of service

What was the primary motivating factor in your decision to run for school director?

• Public service, desire to give back or contribute to public education	45%
• Desire to improve educational outcomes, student achievement	19%
• Dissatisfaction with existing board	14%
• I feel that I had something special to offer	12%
• Child, grandchild currently in the district	6%
• Taxes, cutting district spending	1%
• Other	3%

School directors with 5 or more years of service

What was the primary motivating factor in your decision to continue to serve as school director?

• Public service, desire to give back or contribute to public education	63%
• Desire to improve educational outcomes, student achievement	22%
• I feel that I had something special to offer	7%
• Child, grandchild currently in the district	3%
• Taxes, cutting district spending	2%
• Dissatisfaction with existing board	1%
• Other	2%

What do you think is/are the most important educational concern(s) facing Pennsylvania public schools today?

• Budget/funding issues	62%
• Charter/cyber charter schools	56%
• Teacher/substitute shortages	49%
• Unfunded mandates	42%
• PSERS/pensions	37%
• Equity/ensuring all children can reach their full potential	35%
• Student achievement/student testing	32%
• Perception of public schools	27%
• State imposed curriculum requirements	21%
• Safety/security	20%
• Technology/remote learning	14%
• Teacher contracts/negotiations	13%
• Other	8%

Political Party Registration

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Republican	51%	50%
Democrat	44%	45%
Independent	4%	3%
Other	1%	2%

Race

	2018 Total	2022 Total
White	95.3%	92.7%
Black	1.7%	3.7%
Multiracial	0.5%	1.0%
Asian	0.3%	0.4%
Hispanic	0.6%	0.3%
Other	1.6%	1.9%

Religious Preference

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Protestant	41.1%	38.6%
Catholic	29%	25.0%
No preference	16%	19.3%
Jewish	2.7%	2.3%
Muslim	0.2%	0.3%
Other	11%	14.5%

Marital Status

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Married	87%	85%
Single	5%	7%
Divorced/separated	5%	5%
Widowed	3%	3%

Education

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Less than 12 years	0%	0%
High school	9%	9%
1 year of college	4%	3%
2 years of college	9%	8%
3 years of college	4%	4%
Bachelor's degree	32%	32%
Master's degree	31%	31%
Advanced degree (PhD, EdD, etc.)	11%	13%

Schools Attended By Children

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Public	92%	90%
Combination	6%	7%
Parochial	1%	1%
Private	1%	1%
Home schooling	0%	1%

Directors Attended District Where They Serve

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Yes	42%	41%
No	58%	59%

2022 Fields Of Employment*

Retired	23%
Education	14%
Self-employed/business owner	10.5%
Office/business	9%
Medical/health care and related	9%
Other professions	8.5%
Engineering/technical	5%
Financial	5%
Legal	4%
Manufacturing/production	3%
Homemaker/caregiver	3%
Tradesperson	2%
Other	4%

Children Attend Same District

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Yes	95%	94%
No	5%	6%

Years Of Service*

	2018 Total	2022 Total
4 years or less	47%	58%
5-10 years	31%	25%
11-20 years	17%	13%
21 years or more	5%	4%

Education

More than **3/4** (76%) are POSTSECONDARY GRADUATES

Bachelor's Degree
32%

Master's Degree
31%

Advanced Degree
13%



by the numbers

Family Income Level

	2018 Total	2022 Total
Below \$60,000	11%	11%
\$60,000-69,999	5%	5%
\$70,000-79,999	6%	4%
\$80,000-89,999	8%	6%
\$90,000-99,999	8%	6%
\$100,000-109,999	11%	9%
\$110,000-119,999	5%	5%
\$120,000-129,999	6%	8%
\$130,000-139,999	4%	3%
\$140,000-149,999	5%	5%
\$150,000-159,999	5%	6%
\$160,000-169,999	3%	4%
\$170,000-179,999	2%	3%
\$180,000 and above	21%	25%

Average Hours Per Month On School Board Business

	2018 Total	2022 Total
1-5 hours	7%	6%
6-10 hours	26%	24%
11-15 hours	23%	23%
16-20 hours	21%	20%
21-25 hours	10%	11%
26-30 hours	5%	6%
31-35 hours	2%	3%
36-40 hours	2%	3%
41-50 hours	2%	2%
51 or more	2%	2%

Children In Family

	2018 Total	2022 Total
None	8%	11%
One	12%	10%
Two	41%	40%
Three	25%	24%
Four	9%	9%
Five	3%	3%
Six or more	2%	3%

Most Difficult Area Of School Board Operation To Understand

	2018 Total	2022 Total
School finance/budget	17%	18%
State regulations/controls	15%	14%
Personnel/negotiations	9%	10%
Community/public relations	6%	9%
Legislative/legal	10%	8%
Curriculum	5%	6%
Administration /school leadership	7%	5%
School board policy	3%	5%
Interpersonal/interactions	4%	4%
Personal time required	3%	4%
Construction	4%	3%
Athletics	4%	3%
Parliamentary procedure	3%	2%
Maintenance	2%	2%
Transportation	2%	2%
Technology	2%	2%
Food service	2%	1%
Other	2%	2%