

May 2020

OSBA

2020 Member Survey

ONLINE SURVEY



Prepared by DHM Research

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Introduction & Methodology

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From March 11-May 1, 2020, DHM Research conducted an online survey of Oregon school board members and superintendents. The purpose of the survey was to assess respondents' views on a variety of issues, as well as their perceptions of the Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA).

Research Methodology: The online survey consisted of 247 school board members and superintendents and took approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Respondents were invited to take the survey via email. OSBA sent invitation emails and reminder follow-ups directly to their members and to superintendents. In gathering responses, a variety of quality control measures were employed, including questionnaire pre-testing and monitoring of responses to identify potential browser issues.

This survey was developed before Oregon had its first confirmed case of COVID-19 and was fielded shortly before Oregon's school closures. As such, the survey does not ask questions about COVID-19 specific challenges facing schools, districts, boards, and superintendents. Nonetheless, some respondents reference the challenges of COVID-19 in their open-ended responses.

Statement of Limitations: Research of this type is not designed to measure, with statistical reliability, the attitudes of a particular group. Instead, surveys of this type are helpful for engaging a specific population and for giving a sense of the attitudes and opinions of the population from which the sample was drawn.

DHM Research Background: DHM Research has been providing opinion research and consultation throughout the Pacific Northwest and other regions of the United States for over three decades. The firm is nonpartisan and independent and specializes in research projects to support public policy making.

Summary & Observations

2

When respondents think of OSBA, they primarily think of support, advice, and training.

- In coded open-ended responses 44% mentioned support for school boards, districts, and superintendents; 36% mentioned advice, information and guidance, including legal advice; and 31% mentioned trainings, including conferences and conventions.
- Fewer mentioned OSBA's advocacy (17%) and policy (14%) efforts.

OSBA received the highest grade from its members dating to at least 2008, with a majority giving the organization an A.

- 53% of respondents gave OSBA an A grade and an additional 31% gave OSBA a B.
- The proportion of A grades is up from 45% in 2017 and double that of levels seen in 2012 and 2008.
- Grades are high across the board, with no notable differences between groups.

Members overwhelmingly recommend OSBA as a resource and say the organization is an effective leader in communicating education issues.

- 70% strongly agree that they'd *recommend OSBA as a resource* and 59% strongly agree OSBA is an effective communicator—up 7 points from 2017. Nearly nine in ten agree with each claim overall.
- Agreement levels are slightly lower but still high when it comes to *OSBA's legislative program* (49% strongly agree, 77% overall) and preparing *board members to be effective* (39%, 79%).
- Respondents ages 45 and older (79-90%) say OSBA's legislative program supports the interests of public schools at a higher rate than those ages 18-44 (61%).

Respondents are largely in alignment with and supportive of OSBA's vision and goals.

- Unprompted, respondents most often say that OSBA's primary mission should be providing support (50%), advocacy (33%), and training (32%)—largely in line with earlier responses about what comes to mind when they think of the organization.
- Nine in ten rate OSBA's vision as at least a high priority, including 66% who rate it as a very high priority.
- While respondents place high priority on each goal, ratings are highest for OSBA advocating for comprehensive, stable funding reform. In a follow-up question, 55% indicated funding reform as the goal they think should be OSBA's highest priority.
- Younger respondents and those with shorter tenures are more likely to prioritize closing the opportunity gap than older and longer-term board members do (they prioritize funding more so).

School budgets remain the top issue for respondents, though all issues were rated as important.

- *School budgets* are viewed as very important by 70% of respondents. Other top issues include *board-superintendent relations* (62% very important), *social emotional needs* (60%), *career and technical education* (58%), and the *high school graduation rate* (58%).
- In all, importance ratings range from 96% for *school budgets* to 58% for *local option levy campaigns*.
- The largest drops in very importance ratings were observed for local option levy campaigns (-31 points), bond campaigns (-30 points), class sizes (-21 points), and school budgets (-14 points).

While equity is among the top tier of priorities for respondents, opinions about it are not universal.

- 88% say *equity and the academic achievement gap* is important when making planning decisions, including 50% who say it is very important.
- Responses throughout the survey suggest a lack of consensus around equity, as members voiced differing and sometimes muddled understandings of the concept.
- Specific equity recommendations include increased mental health and social service resources, trainings from experts who are people of color, and electing people of color and members of other impacted communities to school board positions.

Respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with OSBA's offerings, citing the quality of services and professionalism of staff.

- Nine in ten are satisfied with OSBA's services and programs, including 57% who are very satisfied.
- Those who are satisfied cite the quality of offerings, such as policy development, keeping board members up to date, offering conferences and trainings, and generally supporting board members. They also laud the staff's professionalism.

Respondents place the most importance on advocacy, legal services, policy development, and trainings.

- Respondents say that advocacy (78% very important), legal services (74%), policy development (69%), and training (68%) are the most important programs and services that OSBA offers.
- Overall importance ratings range from 96% for *advocating for schools and students in the Legislature* to 60% for *consulting on charter schools*.
- The biggest decrease in very important ratings was for public awareness campaigns (-10 points) and the largest increase was for providing legal services (+17 points).

Respondents are most interested in trainings on board governance, improving student achievement, and addressing equity issues, poverty, and diversity. They favor regional, statewide, and in-district workshops.

- Nearly half are interested in trainings about board governance (49%), improving student achievement (48%), and addressing equity issues (48%).
- Past participation and interest are highest for regional workshops (66%, 51%), statewide workshops (63%, 48%), and customized in-district workshops (51%, 53%).

Respondents find OSBA's communications to be helpful and generally prefer to access information from desktop computers. Few get information from OSBA via social media.

- 90% rate Legislative Highlights as helpful and 85% do so for OREdNews, up from 78% in 2017.
- 59% favor getting information from their desktops, a clear majority despite a drop of 8 points from 2017. That said, board members and younger respondents are split between or favor their smartphone, suggesting that age cohort shifts may lead to increased mobile demand in the future.
- 72% have not accessed information from OSBA on social media. Facebook is the most popular source (20%), followed by Twitter (8%).

Key Findings

DHM Research conducted an online survey of Oregon School Boards Association (OSBA) members and Oregon superintendents to test their perceptions of OSBA and assess their views on a variety of issues.

3.1 General perceptions

Respondents most often see OSBA as providing support, advice, and training.

Members were asked what comes to mind when they think of OSBA in an open-ended question and responses were coded into like categories for analysis (Q1). Responses most commonly touched on the themes of support, advice, and training, though members also think of advocacy and policy efforts.

Table 1
What comes to mind when you think of OSBA?

Response category	n=187
Support	44%
Support for school boards	30%
Support—generally	10%
Support for school districts	7%
Support for superintendents	4%
Advice	36%
Information/updates	16%
Advice, guidance—generally	13%
Legal advice	11%
Training	31%
Training/education for members	22%
Conferences/conventions/workshops	9%
Professional development	6%
Advocacy	17%
Advocacy—generally	7%
Legislation advocacy/Lobbyists	6%
Advocacy for schools/education	4%
Policy	14%
Policy—generally	7%
Policy development/updates	4%
Policy guidance/support	3%
Competence	12%
Knowledge/expertise	6%
Professionalism	4%
Leadership	4%
Other	17%
Don't know	1%

Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Superintendents (27%) said policy related topics came to mind more often than board members (7%). Members from larger districts mentioned training more often.

Some respondents also made note of the good work that OSBA does across the state, lauding the quality and professionalism of the staff and the work they produce.

“Good group. Helpful in balancing the views from different parts of the state.”

–Board member, 10,001 or more

“Experienced staff that provides accurate information.”

–Board member, 1,000-2,999 students

While less common, some respondents voiced concerns about what they perceived to be OSBA’s political stances. These critiques came from multiple perspectives and continued throughout the survey.

“Pretty conservative. Says the right words like ‘equity’—but hard to see in practice. Great and passionate staff who are very polite.”

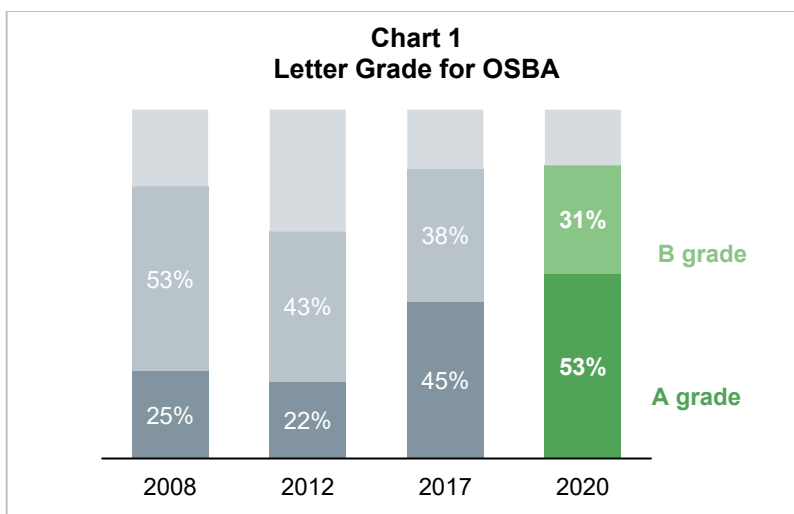
–Board member, 3,000-10,000

“‘Liberal Agenda.’ No voice for conservatives in the organization.”

–Board member, 3,000-10,000

Respondents give OSBA a slightly higher grade than in past years.

OSBA earned an A grade from a slight majority of respondents, up 8 points from 2017 (Q4). Most of the remaining respondents gave the organization a B and very few provided lower grades. These grades signal a trend of increase since 2008, particularly when it comes to the proportion of members giving OSBA an A grade.

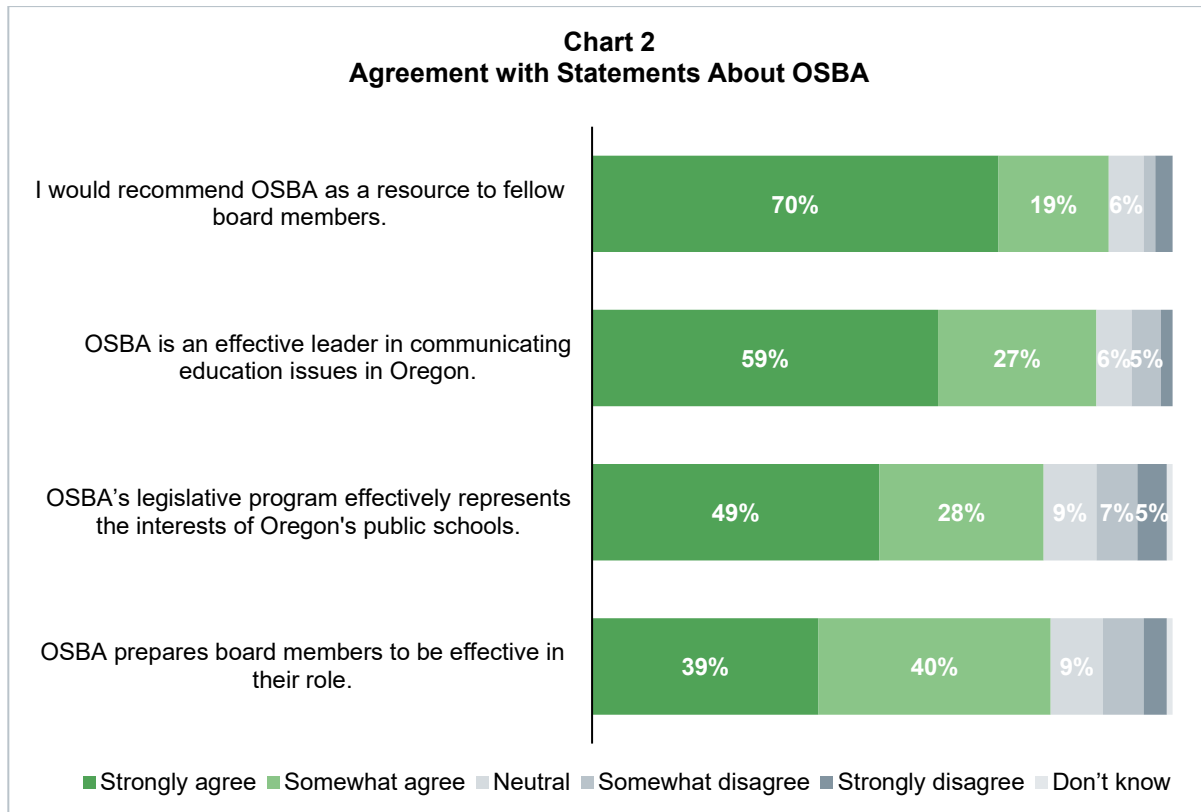


Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Grades are high across the board, with no notable differences between groups.

Members continue to recommend OSBA as a resource and say that OSBA is an effective leader in communicating education issues.

From a series of four statements, members were most likely to agree with the statement *I would recommend OSBA as a resource to fellow board members* (Q5). Respondents also strongly agreed that *OSBA is an effective leader in communicating education issues* (Q8), with strong agreement ratings up 7 points from 2017.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Agreement was also high for the remaining two statements, though in each case fewer than half of respondents strongly agreed. Compared to 2017 (49%), fewer members strongly agreed that *OSBA prepares board members to be effective in their role* in the 2020 survey (39%).

Women agree more than men that OSBA prepares board members (87% vs. 76%) and is an effective leader in communicating (94% vs. 83%).

Older OSBA members, including 90% of those 65 and older and 79% of those ages 45-64, say OSBA's legislative program supports the interests of public schools at a higher rate than those ages 18-44 (61%).

Superintendents are more likely (60%) than board members (44%) to strongly agree that OSBA's legislative program represents the interests of Oregon's public schools.

3.2 Mission and goals

Respondents believe OSBA’s mission should focus on support, advocacy, and training.

Members were asked what they believe should be OSBA’s primary mission in an open-ended question and responses were coded into like categories for analysis (Q9). Their responses most commonly focused on the themes of support, advocacy, and training, though some said OSBA should focus on providing information and advice. These themes are very similar to those from an earlier question asking members what comes to mind when they think of OSBA, with more emphasis placed here on advocacy.

Table 2
What do you believe should be OSBA’s primary mission?

Response category	n=231
Support	50%
Support for school boards	35%
Supporting all schools and boards/statewide support	9%
Supporting school districts	5%
Supporting superintendents/district leaders	3%
Providing support/guidance—generally	1%
Advocacy	33%
Advocating for public education/students	12%
Legislative advocacy/lobbying	10%
Advocating for equity in education	7%
Helping to secure funding	4%
Advocacy—generally	3%
Training	32%
Training/educating board members	26%
Providing professional development	5%
Teaching collaboration/relationship building	3%
Information/Advice	16%
Providing legal advice	7%
Providing information/advice—generally	6%
Providing policy guidance	5%
Providing information on legislative changes/compliances	3%
Other	6%
Don’t know	<1%

Source: DHM Research, May 2020

While many respondents focused on the impact OSBA has on school board members, superintendents, and educational institutions, some said OSBA should center the needs of Oregon’s students.

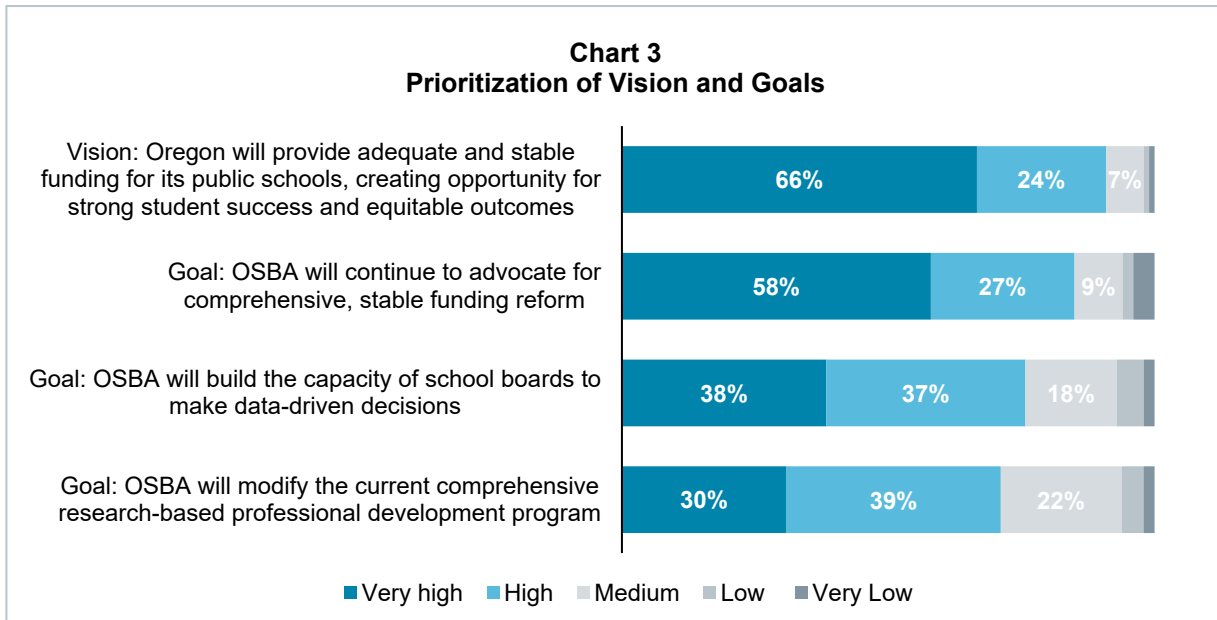
“Shifting power and access in decision making and policy implementation that create the conditions for equitable learning for students experiencing the most barriers due to systemic oppression and racism.”

–Board member, ESD

Board members (39%) list advocacy more often than superintendents (23%).

Respondents rate OSBA’s mission highly and are positive about other organizational priorities, especially funding reform.

Nine in ten members rate OSBA’s vision as a very high or high priority, indicating strong agreement with the Board of Directors (Q10). Of three listed goals, advocating for *comprehensive, stable funding reform* received the highest prioritization from members, with a majority saying such reform was a very high priority (Q12). Ratings for the remaining goals are also high.

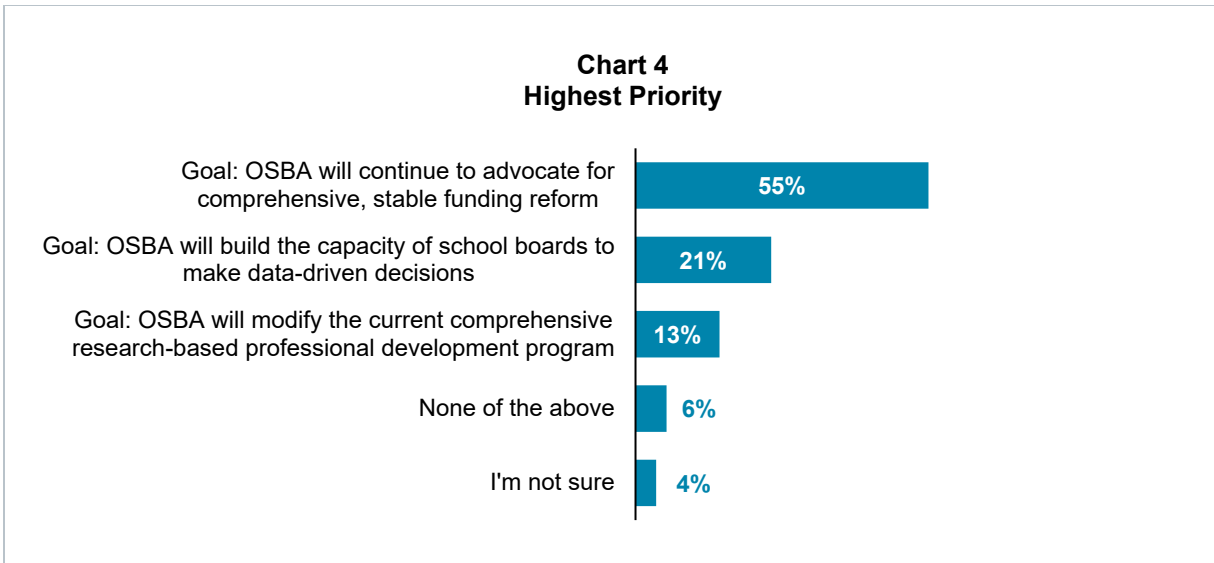


Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Women rate the vision as a very high or high priority (96%) more often than men (87%). Similar differences are seen when it comes to advocating for stable funding (91% vs. 82% overall).

Superintendents rate the vision as a very high priority (75%) more often than board members (62%). Likewise, they rate the goal of advocating for stable funding more highly (69% vs. 52% very high).

In a follow-up question, 55% indicated funding reform as the goal they think should be OSBA’s highest priority, reinforcing the above findings. While the other two goals were rated similarly elsewhere, here closing the opportunity gap was listed as most important by 21% of respondents as compared to the 13% who listed improvements to the professional development program.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Those with 8 or more years of service are more likely to prioritize stable funding (63%) than those in their first two years (31%). Those earlier in their tenure prioritize closing the opportunity gap more than longer-term members do. Perhaps relatedly, members ages 65 and older (68%) are more likely to prioritize stable funding than those ages 18-44 (39%). Younger members' top priority is closing the opportunity gap (42% compared to 16% of those 65 and older).

Respondents were also given the chance to raise questions or concerns they have about the vision and goals identified by the OSBA Board of Directors (Q15).

Some respondents noted concerns about OSBA helping all school board, districts, and students. Some of their comments suggested that smaller and more rural school districts have different needs, while others commented more broadly on the need for local and regional approaches.

“In Oregon, the power of local school boards has been greatly reduced. These are elected officials that should have more power in decisions for their district or school. With so many different districts in Oregon the one size fits all for all districts is detrimental. The ripple effect also takes responsibility and power from parents.”

–Superintendent/President

Respondents also expressed concerns about equity, with some saying OSBA needed to do more to address equity issues and others taking issues with equity as a concept.

“I feel all school boards and OSBA need to truly internalize equity. Our job is to look at all aspects of education and ask who is served and who is excluded. I have been disappointed in OSBA's lack of equity stance and follow through. Equity is not a buzz word, it needs to be a large part of our focus, along with adequate and stable funding.”

–Board member, 10,001 or more students

“‘Equitable outcomes’ and ‘close the opportunity gap’ should not mean forgetting to push our top students even further. A goal of everyone being average is a recipe for disaster and would be absolutely inappropriate for our educators to follow.”

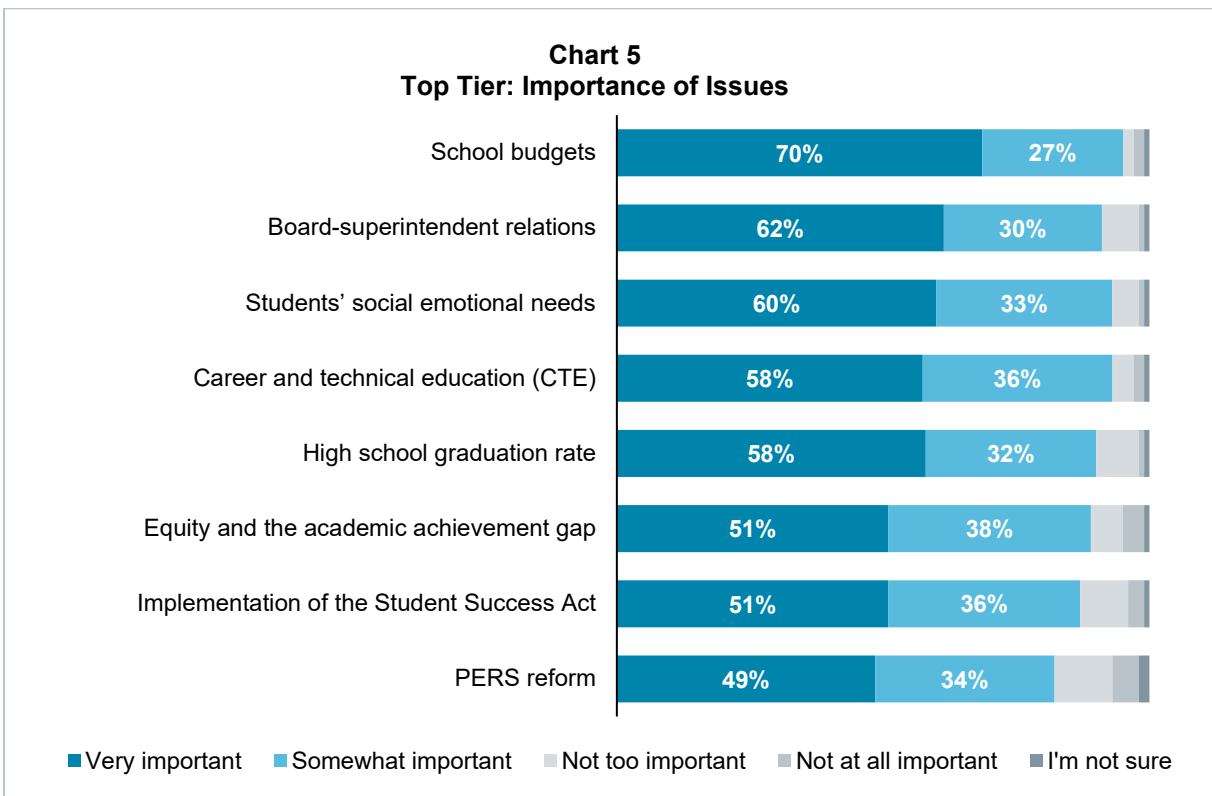
–Board member, 500-999 students

A few respondents mentioned the need for OSBA to pivot to meet the needs of the COVID-19 crisis, such as direct support to students and families, reduced funding, and other emerging issues.

3.3 Issues facing schools

While school budgets remain the top issue, respondents rate all issues tested as important.

In rating the importance of a variety of issues facing Oregon schools, school budgets were assigned the highest level of importance (Q27), despite very important ratings dropping 14 points from 2017. While all place high importance on school budgets, board members say they are very important (74%) at a higher rate than superintendents (61%). Women also give higher very important ratings (75%) than men (61%).



Other issues also received high ratings—with about at least half of respondents identifying each as a very important issue. Demographic differences were observed, though of degree rather than kind.

Superintendents (98%) place more importance than board members (91%) on social emotional needs (Q23). Women (99%) also place more importance than men (90%) on these needs.

Board members say CTE is very important (72%) at a significantly higher rate than superintendents (31%), though overall ratings are similar (Q31).

Women place more importance on high school graduation rates (98%) than men (84%) (Q28). Board members give higher very important (63%) ratings than superintendents (49%).

Women (97%) say equity and the academic achievement gap are more important than men do (83%) (Q24). Speaking broadly, board members from larger districts say equity is very important more often than members from smaller districts.

In a separate open-ended question, respondents were asked what they think school boards should be doing to address equity and close the opportunity gap in Oregon (Q16). Their responses again highlighted the lack of consensus around equity, as members voiced differing and sometimes muddled understandings of what equity means. Some called for clear definitions and education for board members, especially given the complex and systemic nature of these issues.

“Make sure that all board members understand equity (be it racial, economic, sexual orientation, etc.) without any pushback from fragile board members to understand the value of the life-saving work that equity training provides us as board members. There are struggling students, staff, and faculty all over the state and it's our job as board members to understand and represent these folks.”

–Board member, 10,001 or more students

“They need training in what equity is and what it looks like in all schools.”

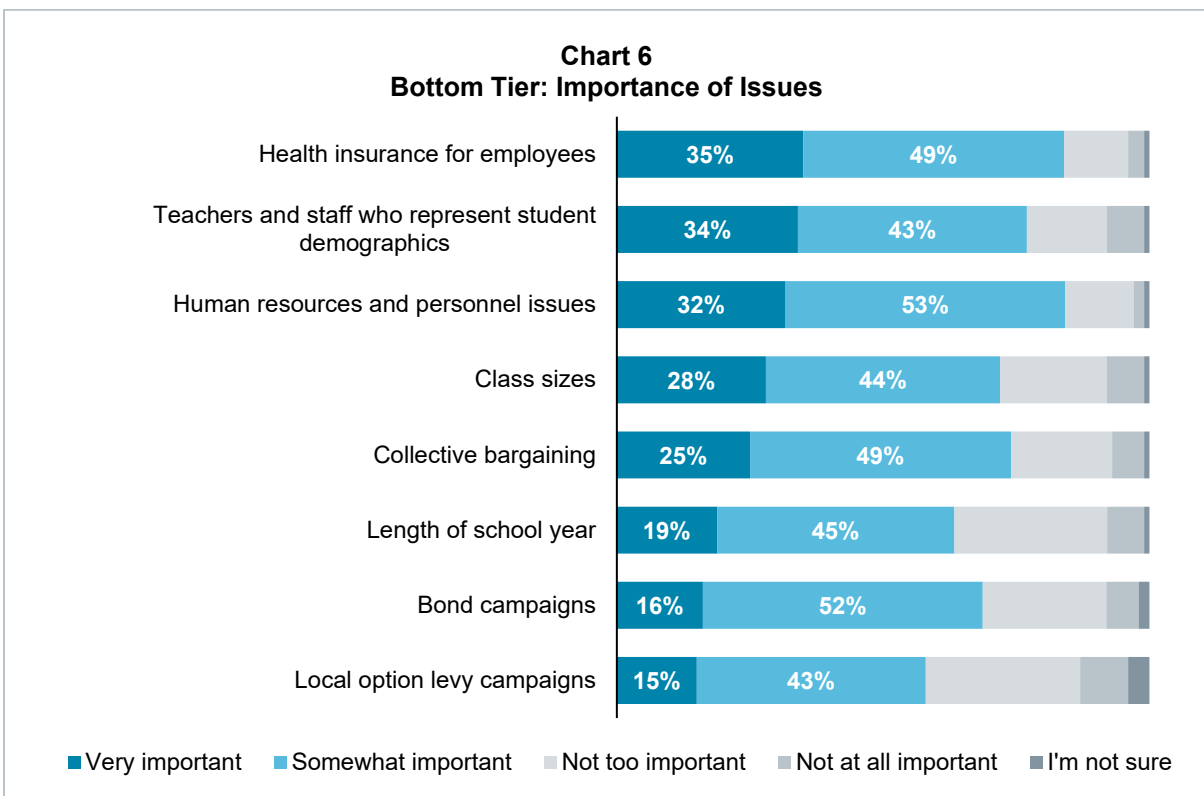
–Superintendent/President

Others noted that initiatives to address equity need to be context specific—such as recognizing the differences between urban and rural communities—and data driven. Some specific suggestions made by members include increased mental health resources, trainings from experts who are people of color, and electing people of color and members of other impacted communities to school board positions.

While overall importance ratings are similar, board members say implementation of the Student Success Act is very important (59%) at a higher rate than superintendents (37%) (Q32).

K-12 board members (86%) place more importance on PERS reform than their colleagues at Educational Service Districts (55%) (Q25).

While fewer respondents rated the remaining issues facing schools as pressing, majorities still considered each to be important.



Those ages 45-64 (88%) and 65 and older (86%) say health insurance for employees is important at a higher rate than younger respondents (68%) (Q26).

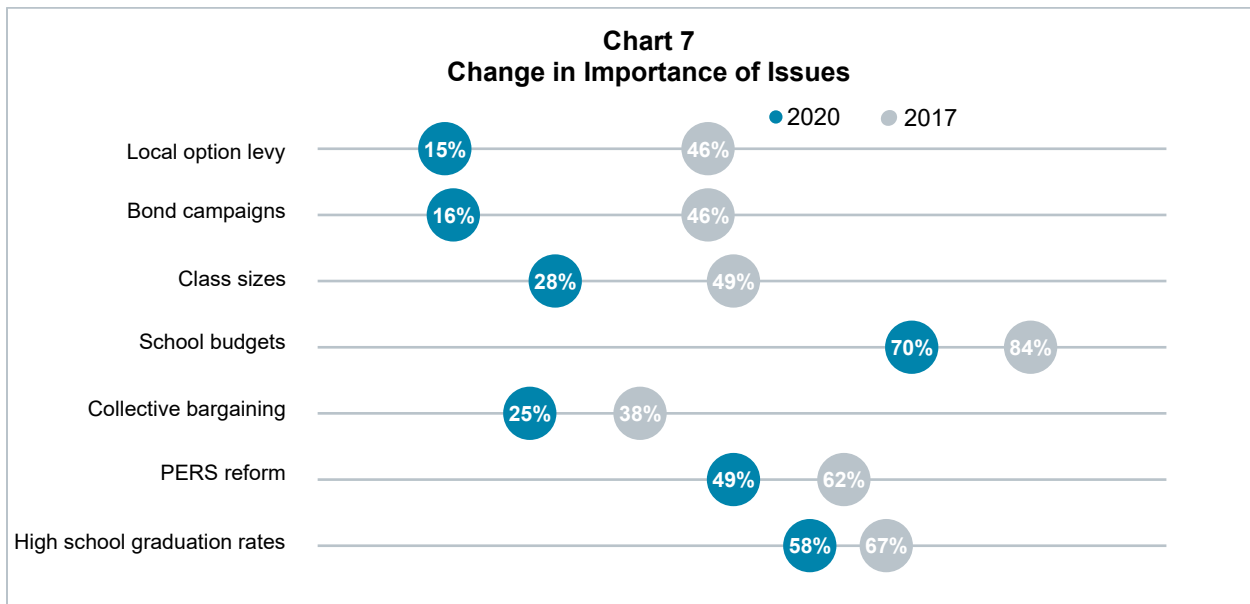
Women (90%) place much higher importance than men (66%) on teachers and staff who represent student demographics (Q17). While trends are less clear, it seems that members with shorter tenures and who are younger also place higher importance on staff representation.

Board members (80%) are notably more concerned with class sizes than superintendents (56%) (Q30). Women (79%) also place more importance than men (65%) on class sizes.

Members from school districts under 1,000 students place lower importance (61-63%) than those from larger districts (79-85%) on collective bargaining (Q19). Members in their first two years of service (96%) are most likely to say collective bargaining is important.

Board members place higher importance than superintendents on local option levy (66% vs. 43%) (Q21) and bond campaigns (72% vs. 61%) (Q22). Board members earlier in their tenure place even more importance on each. Board members from smaller school districts place lower importance on bond campaigns.

A comparison of very important ratings in 2020 and 2017 show that the importance level of some issues fell over the past few years, including several issues related to school funding.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Respondents were also given the chance to share any other important issues that they'd like OSBA to know about (Q33). Many noted the importance of funding for ongoing operations and investments into physical and digital infrastructure. Others focused instead on providing comprehensive support for all students by creating more inclusive schools, offering robust special education, and prioritizing holistic notions of physical and mental health.

“School-based health centers are looming on the horizon. We will need assistance getting additional funding for structures, infrastructure, etc. This will require lots of coordination between county health departments, state and federal health agencies.”

–Board member, 1,000-2,999 students

Many members also noted the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis through their comments on funding, distance learning, nutritional services, and making sure that districts have flexibility to implement necessary changes in this time of uncertainty.

“This is a new educational world and our teachers, staff, parents and students need support on how to best connect and teach online. Also, there are now additional costs to districts for connectivity, meals and childcare that we are covering and hope that the stimulus will cover. We know that the common school fund will be much lower for the next school year and businesses are asking for the SSA tax to be delayed. What a difference a few months make. We went from very hopeful to trashing our budgets to new budgets with many unknowns.”

–Board member, 10,001 or more students

“Obviously COVID-19 has been a challenge for all School Districts statewide. There will be an impact in State funding; all schools have been tasked with rolling out education in different models. I feel it's important to continue these different models in some manner; it's an opportunity that really benefits some students that traditional

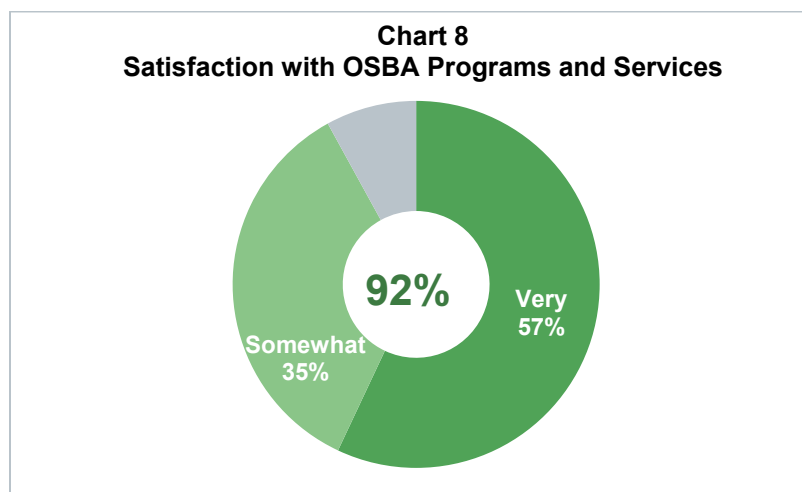
school campus models don't fit. Also, I believe it is important that school districts maintain the "newfound" delivery methods at some level so if needed in the future districts aren't having to recreate the wheel."

–Board member, Less than 500 students

3.4 OSBA programs and services

Respondents are overwhelmingly satisfied with OSBA's offerings as a whole, citing the quality of services and professionalism of staff.

Overall, nine in ten respondents expressed satisfaction with OSBA's services and programs, including a majority who are very satisfied (Q2). Satisfaction levels are in line with or slightly higher than in 2017.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

While there are few differences in satisfaction, women (97%) are somewhat more satisfied than men (90%) with OSBA's programs and services.

Those who are satisfied with OSBA cite the quality of their offerings, such as policy development, keeping board members up to date, offering conferences and trainings, and generally supporting board members. They also laud the staff's professionalism.

"They have helped us so much. They are patient with my questions and super helpful when I need something, even things outside of their scope."

–Superintendent/President

"I have seen the work they are doing by attending conferences and meetings. I appreciate how they listen to the districts, large and small. They take everyone's needs into consideration when looking at an issue."

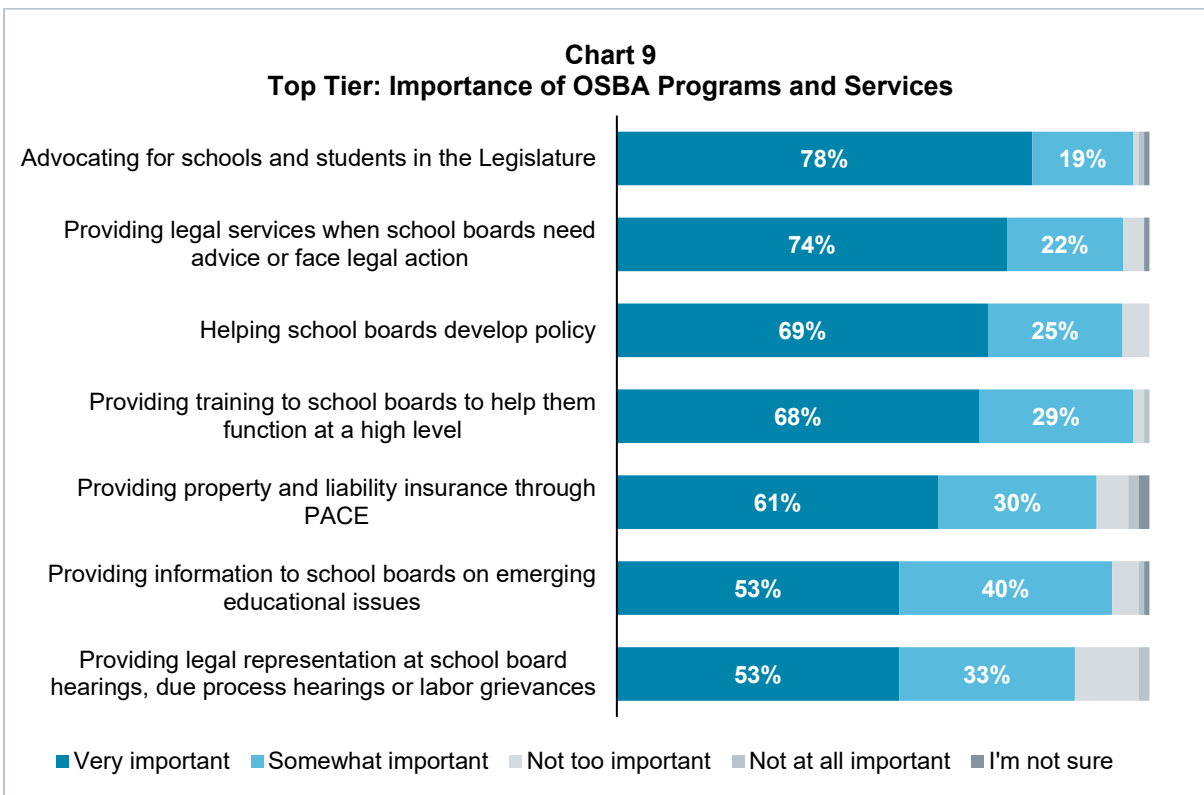
–Board member, 500-999 students

Respondents who are less than satisfied often cited hot-button issues where there is little consensus to be found. For example, some critique OSBA's equity efforts as lackluster, while others say the organization has gone too far in advocating for what they see as "political" efforts. Some members from

smaller or more rural districts say that larger or more urban districts set OSBA’s agenda, while respondents from the latter camp claim the inverse.

Respondents place the most importance on advocacy, legal services, policy development, and trainings.

Respondents give the highest importance ratings for OSBA *advocating for schools and students* (Q39), *providing legal services* (Q42), *helping school boards develop policy* (Q34), and *providing training to school boards* (Q36). These top priorities are in line with those identified earlier in the survey.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

As elsewhere, demographic differences were observed despite high importance ratings across the board.

While importance ratings are high across the board for OSBA’s advocacy, members ages 65 and older (86%) and women (84%) give higher very important ratings (Q39).

Members from smaller districts place higher importance on legal services when boards need advice or face legal action (Q42).

K-12 board members (96%) place more importance on helping school boards develop policy than ESD members (80%) (Q34). Those 18-44 (84%), superintendents (79%), and women (75%) give higher very important ratings to policy development.

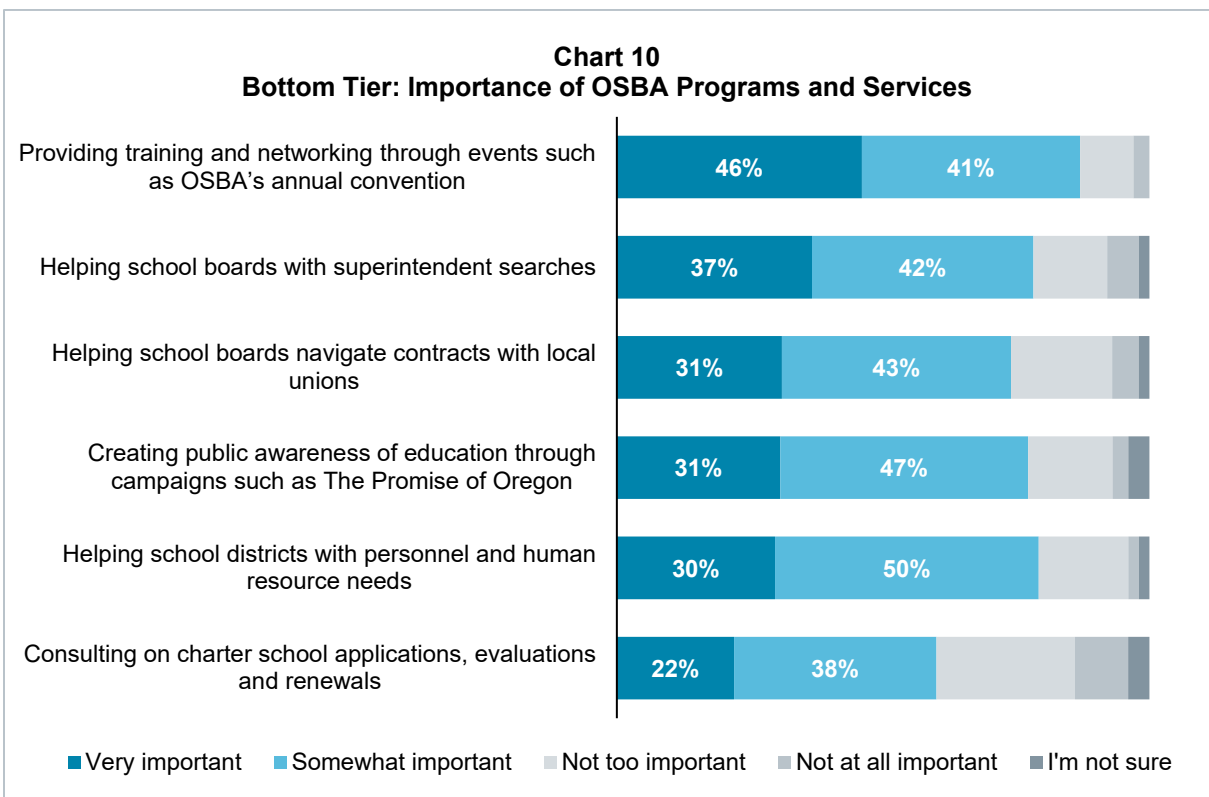
Women place more importance on trainings (99% overall, 77% very important) than men (94%, 58%) (Q36).

Superintendents give higher very important ratings (74%) to the PACE program than board members (54%) (Q44). Board members with at least four years of service give higher very important ratings (61-63%).

Women say information about emerging education issues is very important (63%) at a higher rate than men (44%) (Q40).

Members from smaller districts place higher importance on legal representation (Q43).

Importance ratings are also high for a second tier of programs and services, though these programs and services received lower very important ratings. *Events* were rated most highly (Q45) in this tier, while *consulting on charter school applications, evaluations, and renewals* received the lowest importance rating of all offerings tested (Q41).



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Here too, marginal demographic differences were observed.

Those ages 45-64 place higher importance (91%) on training and networking through events than younger (82%) or older (81%) members (Q45). Board members give slightly higher very important ratings (51%) than superintendents do for larger events (36%).

Speaking generally, younger members and those with fewer years of experience place more importance on helping school boards with superintendent searches (Q37).

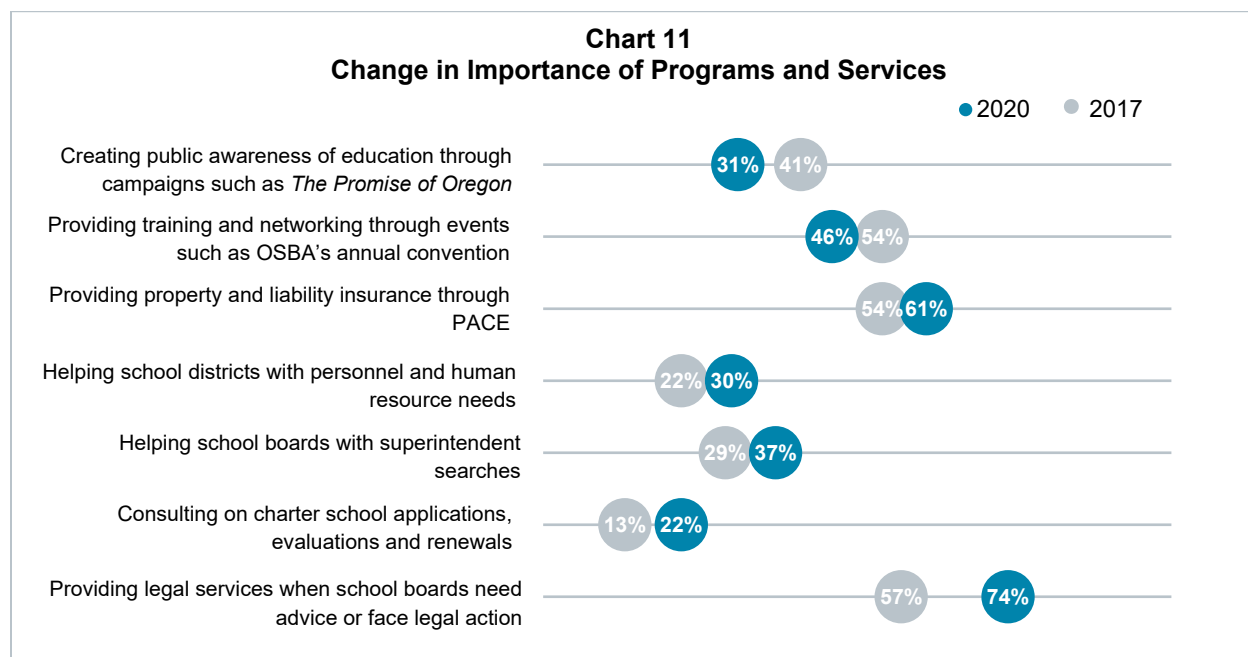
Members from the largest school districts place the lowest importance on helping school boards navigate contracts with local unions (43%) (Q35).

Board members who are 65 and older (87%) place more importance than those ages 18-44 (68%) on public awareness campaigns. Women (86%) also place more importance than men (75%) on such campaigns (Q46).

Members from larger school districts tend to place less importance on personnel and human resource needs (Q38).

Women (70%) place more importance on charter school consulting than men (52%) (Q41).

Ratings of some programs and services have changed since 2017, with the largest decreases in very important ratings for public awareness campaigns (-10 points) and the largest increases for providing legal services (+17 points).

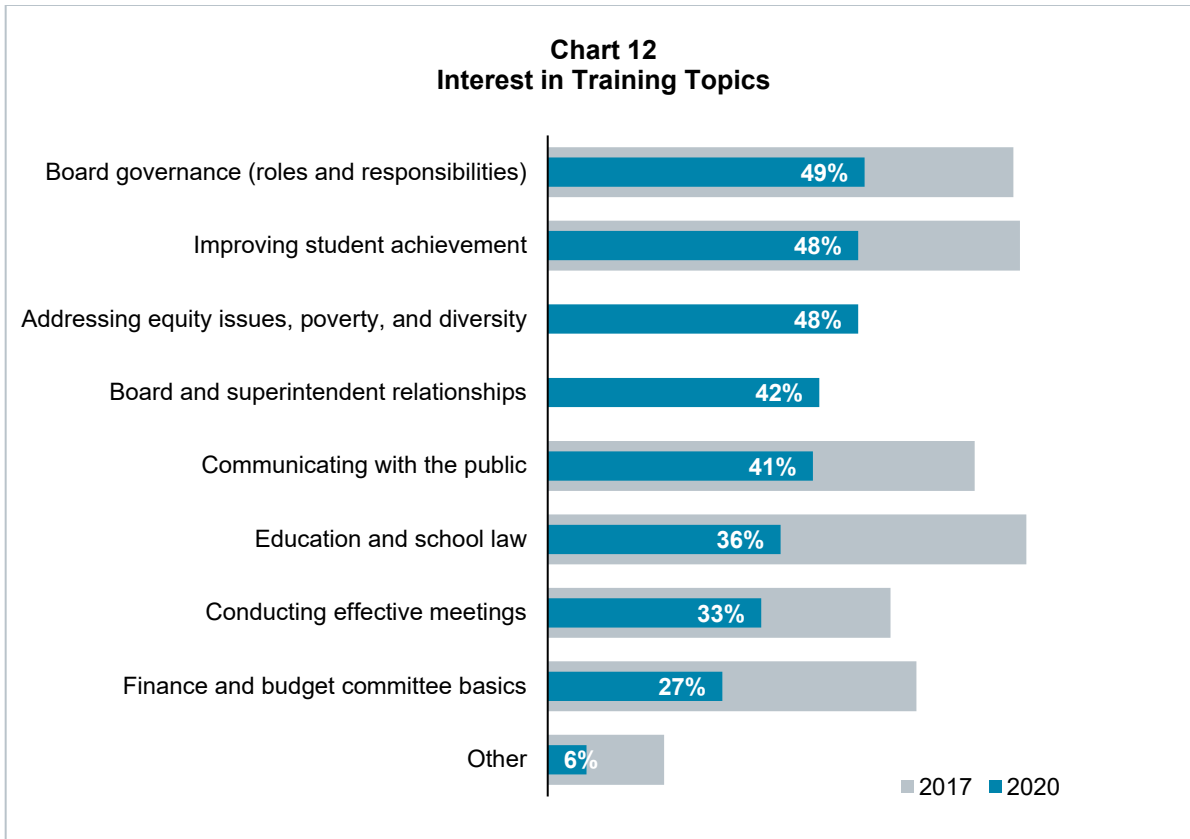


Source: DHM Research, May 2020

3.5 Training

Respondents are most interested in trainings on board governance, improving student achievement, and addressing equity issues, poverty, and diversity.

Nearly half of respondents are interested in training in each of these topics (Q47). With more options in this year's survey, interest was significantly lower for each benchmarked topic.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

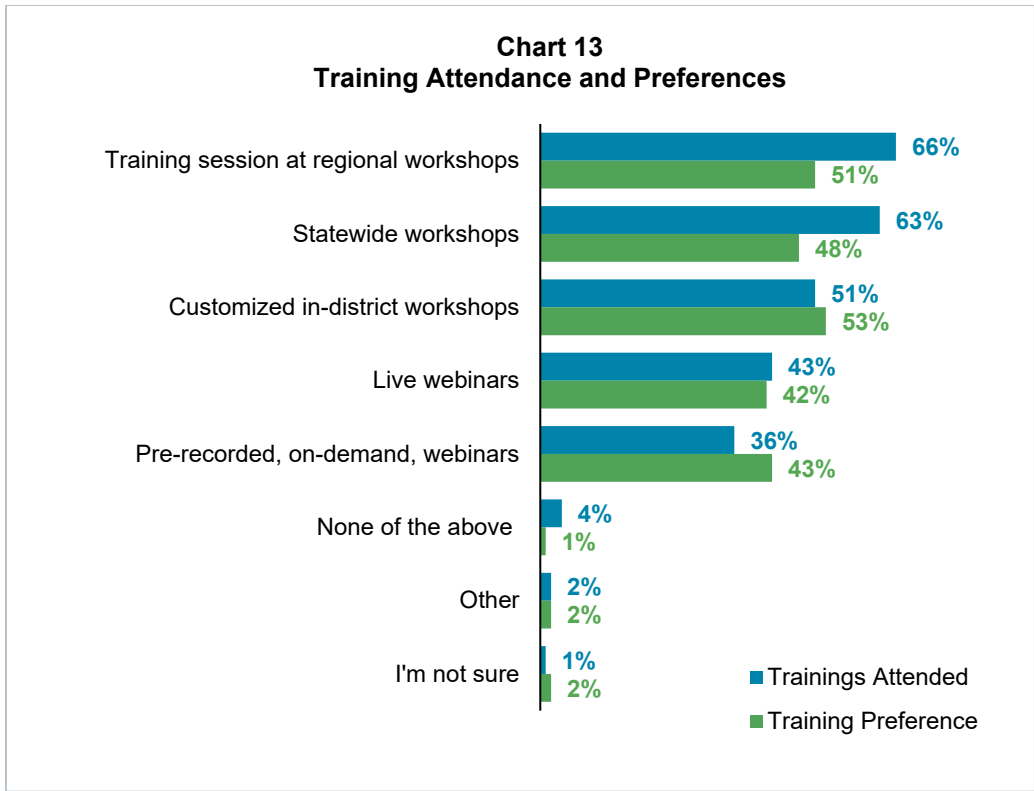
Board members are more interested than superintendents in improving student achievement (53% vs. 38%) and communicating with the public (46% vs. 32%), while superintendents are most interested in training about board governance (58% vs. 44% of board members).

Board members of schools with the most students (79%) are particularly interested in training about equity, poverty, and diversity, especially when compared to those from the smallest districts (29%).

Women are more interested than men in trainings addressing equity, poverty, and diversity (63% vs. 33%), improving student achievement (55% vs. 39%), and communicating with the public (49% vs. 33%).

Respondents have participated in and prefer the same types of trainings: regional workshops, statewide workshops, and in-district workshops.

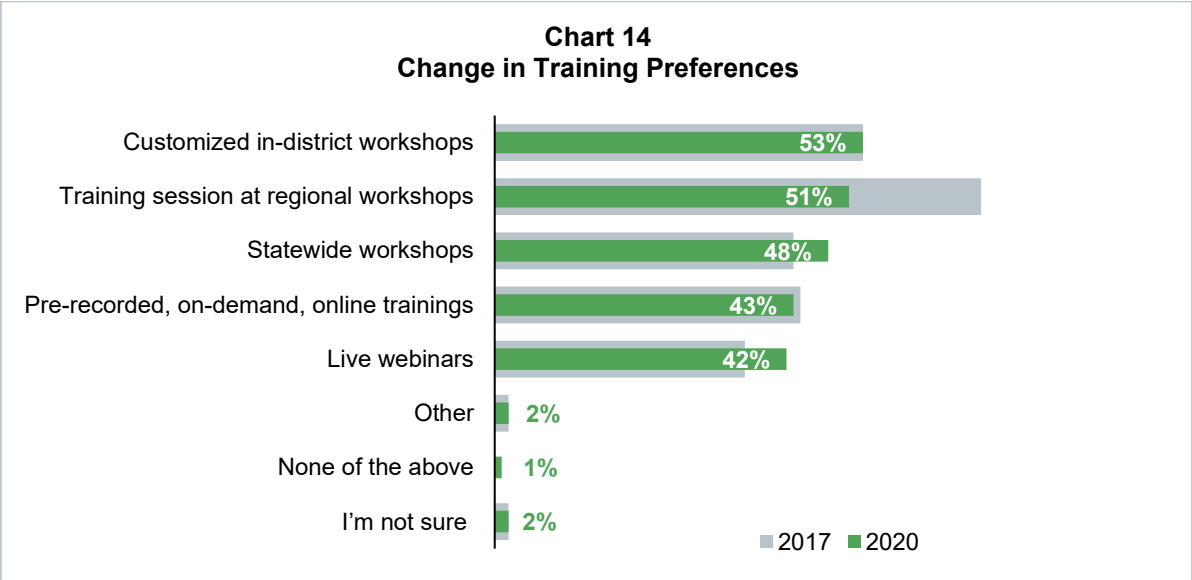
Nearly two-thirds of respondents are interested in regional workshops and statewide workshops. Nearly half are interested in customized in-district workshops, with webinars slightly less popular. Respondents' preferences are very similar to their recent attendance record.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Women have attended training sessions at regional workshops (74% vs. 59%) and statewide workshops (72% vs. 52%) more often than men. Women also have a stronger preference than men for statewide workshops (55% vs. 41%) and online trainings (57% vs. 29%).

Compared to 2017, interest in regional workshops fell 19 points.

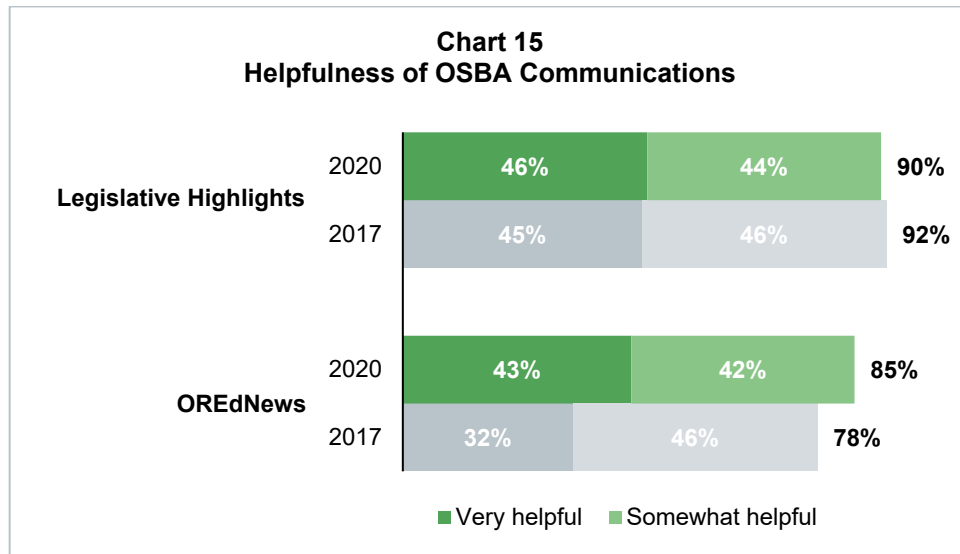


Source: DHM Research, May 2020

3.6 Communications

Most respondents find regular OSBA communications helpful, with ratings for OREdNews higher than in 2017.

Nearly nine in ten find OSBA’s Legislative Highlights (Q51) and OREdNews (Q50) to be helpful. Helpfulness ratings for OREdNews are up 7 points from 2017.

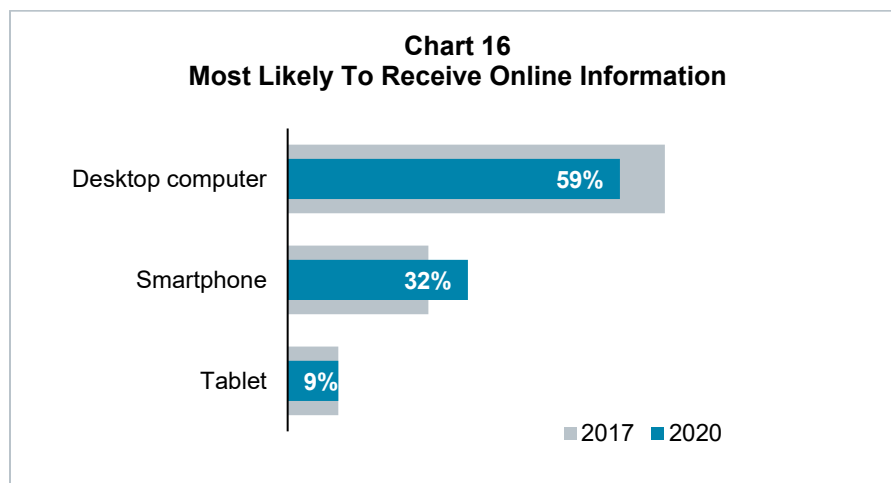


Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Superintendents (95%) find Legislative Highlights more helpful than board members (88%).

Technology preferences are largely unchanged, though there are some differences between board members and superintendents and younger and older respondents.

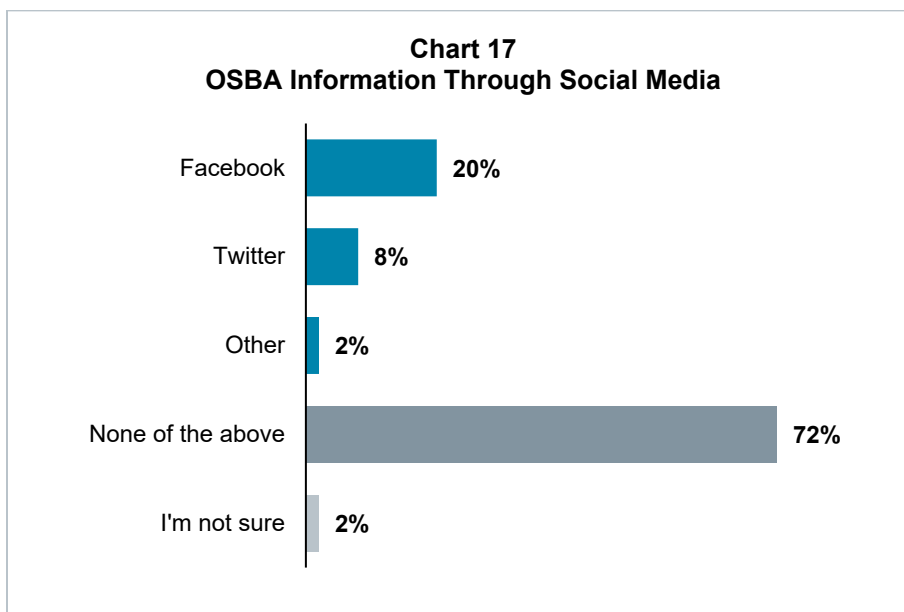
Despite a drop of 8 points from 2017, a clear majority still prefer to receive online information from OSBA. Interest in smartphone communications has risen by the same amount over that timeframe.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

There are key differences in device preference by role and age. While board members are split between preferring a desktop (44%) or smartphone (44%), superintendents have a clear preference for desktop (88%). Respondents under the age of 45 are more likely to prefer a smartphone (50%) than older members (29%), suggesting that age cohort shifts may lead to increased mobile demand in the future.

About one in four respondents use social media to get information from OSBA. The rate at which respondents access information about OSBA through social media is unchanged from 2017, with Facebook remaining the most popular platform.



Source: DHM Research, May 2020

Differences were also observed here by role and age. Board members are somewhat more likely to get information from OSBA on Facebook (25%) than superintendents are (10%). Superintendents are slightly more likely to get information from Twitter (13%) than board members (6%). Younger members are more likely to be reached by social media than older ones.

2020 OSBA Online Membership Survey
N=247 School Board Members and Superintendents
March 11-May 1, 2020
15 minutes

The Oregon School Boards Association is interested in your opinion about its services and programs. Please complete this survey so that OSBA can better understand and meet your needs.

OSBA hired DHM Research to be an objective, neutral third party and to keep all survey responses anonymous and confidential. No personal information about you will be included in the survey report unless you choose to provide it as part of your comments.

INTRODUCTION & GENERAL PERCEPTIONS

1. What comes to mind when you think of OSBA? [Open]

Response category	n=187
Support	44%
Support for school boards	30%
Support—generally	10%
Support for school districts	7%
Support for superintendents	4%
Advice	36%
Information/updates	16%
Advice, guidance—generally	13%
Legal advice	11%
Training	31%
Training/education for members	22%
Conferences/conventions/workshops	9%
Professional development	6%
Advocacy	17%
Advocacy—generally	7%
Legislation advocacy/Lobbyists	6%
Advocacy for schools/education	4%
Policy	14%
Policy—generally	7%
Policy development/updates	4%
Policy guidance/support	3%
Competence	12%
Knowledge/expertise	6%
Professionalism	4%
Leadership	4%
Other	17%
Don't know	1%

2. All things considered, how satisfied are you with the programs and services OSBA provides?

Response category	2020 n=247	2017 n=263
Very satisfied	57%	52%
Somewhat satisfied	35%	38%
Not too satisfied	6%	7%
Not at all satisfied	1%	2%
I'm not sure	<1%	1%

3. **[If Q2'98]** Why do you say you are **[Response to Q2]** with OSBA? **[Open]** See separate verbatim file.

4. What grade would you give OSBA?

Response category	2020 n=247	2017 n=263
A	53%	45%
B	31%	38%
C	10%	13%
D	3%	3%
F	<1%	1%
I'm not sure	2%	--
Mean	4.4	4.2 (B)

Indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about OSBA. **[Randomize]**

Response category	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree	I'm not sure
5. I would recommend OSBA as a resource to fellow board members.						
2020 n=247	70%	19%	6%	2%	3%	<1%
2017 n=263	71%	20%	5%	2%	2%	<1%
6. OSBA prepares board members to be effective in their role.						
2020 n=247	39%	40%	9%	7%	4%	1%
2017 n=263	49%	34%	11%	4%	2%	2%
7. OSBA's legislative program effectively represents the interests of Oregon's public schools.						
2020 n=247	49%	28%	9%	7%	5%	1%
8. OSBA is an effective leader in communicating education issues in Oregon.						
2020 n=247	59%	27%	6%	5%	2%	<1%
2017 n=263	52%	32%	7%	5%	3%	<1%

OSBA'S MISSION, VISION, AND GOALS

9. What do you believe should be OSBA's primary mission? **[Open]**

Response category	n=231
Support	50%
Support for school boards	35%
Supporting all schools and boards/statewide support	9%
Supporting school districts	5%
Supporting superintendents/district leaders	3%
Providing support/guidance—generally	1%
Advocacy	33%
Advocating for public education/students	12%
Legislative advocacy/lobbying	10%
Advocating for equity in education	7%
Helping to secure funding	4%
Advocacy—generally	3%
Training	32%
Training/educating board members	26%
Providing professional development	5%
Teaching collaboration/relationship building	3%
Information/Advice	16%
Providing legal advice	7%
Providing information/advice—generally	6%
Providing policy guidance	5%
Providing information on legislative changes/compliances	3%
Other	6%
Don't know	<1%

Below are the vision and goals identified by the OSBA Board of Directors. Please rate how much of a priority each one should be for OSBA. **[Ask Q10 first, Randomize Q11–13]**

Response category	Very high	High	Medium	Low	Very low	I'm not sure
10. Vision: Oregon will provide adequate and stable funding for its public schools, creating every opportunity for strong student success and equitable outcomes	66%	24%	7%	1%	1%	<1%
11. Goal: OSBA will, based on information from the 2018–19 assessment, modify as needed the current comprehensive research-based professional development program designed to meet the needs of local school boards	30%	39%	22%	4%	2%	2%
12. Goal: OSBA will continue to advocate for comprehensive, stable funding reform to include cost containment and accountability measures that achieve the QEM	58%	27%	9%	2%	4%	<1%
13. Goal: OSBA will build the capacity of school boards to make data-driven decisions designed to measurably close the opportunity gap and improve graduation rates by June 2021	38%	37%	17%	5%	2%	<1%

[New page]

14. Now, pick the goal that you think should be OSBA's highest priority. **[Same order as Q11–13]**

Response category	n=247
Goal: OSBA will, based on information from the 2018–19 assessment, modify as needed the current comprehensive research-based professional development program designed to meet the needs of local school boards	13%
Goal: OSBA will continue to advocate for comprehensive, stable funding reform to include cost containment and accountability measures that achieve the QEM	55%
Goal: OSBA will build the capacity of school boards to make data-driven decisions designed to measurably close the opportunity gap and improve graduation rates by June 2021	21%
None of the above	6%
I'm not sure	4%

15. Please share any questions or concerns you have about the vision and goals identified by the OSBA Board of Directors. **[Open]** See separate verbatim file.

MEMBER PRIORITIES

16. What do you think school boards should be doing to address equity issues and close the opportunity gap in Oregon? **[Open]** See separate verbatim file.

Below are some issues facing schools. Please indicate the importance of each issue when making planning decisions. **[Randomize]**

Response category	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	I'm not sure
17. Teachers and staff who represent student demographics					
2020 n=247	34%	43%	15%	7%	1%
18. Human resources and personnel issues					
2020 n=247	32%	53%	13%	2%	1%
19. Collective bargaining					
2020 n=247	25%	49%	19%	6%	1%
2017 n=263	38%	43%	13%	3%	2%
20. Board-superintendent relations					
2020 n=247	62%	30%	7%	1%	1%
21. Local option levy campaigns*					
2020 n=247	15%	43%	29%	9%	4%
2017 n=263	46%	36%	12%	3%	3%
22. Bond campaigns					
2020 n=247	16%	52%	23%	6%	2%
23. Students' social emotional needs					
2020 n=247	60%	33%	5%	1%	1%
24. Equity and the academic achievement gap**					
2020 n=247	51%	38%	6%	4%	1%
2017 n=263	55%	33%	11%	1%	<1%
25. PERS reform					
2020 n=247	49%	34%	11%	5%	2%
2017 n=263	62%	24%	7%	5%	2%
26. Health insurance for employees					
2020 n=247	35%	49%	12%	3%	1%
2017 n=263	38%	44%	12%	4%	1%
27. School budgets					
2020 n=247	70%	27%	2%	2%	1%
2017 n=263	84%	14%	1%	<1%	--
28. High school graduation rate					
2020 n=247	58%	32%	8%	1%	<1%
2017 n=263	67%	27%	5%	1%	<1%
29. Length of school year					
2020 n=247	19%	45%	29%	7%	<1%
2017 n=263	40%	40%	15%	5%	<1%

Response category	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	I'm not sure
30. Class sizes					
2020 n=247	28%	44%	20%	7%	1%
2017 n=263	49%	40%	9%	3%	--
31. Career and technical education (CTE)					
2020 n=247	58%	36%	4%	2%	<1%
32. Implementation of the Student Success Act					
2020 n=247	51%	36%	9%	3%	1%

*2017 wording: Local option levy and bond campaigns

**2017 wording: Addressing equity and the academic achievement gap

33. Please share any other important issues that your school board is facing that you would like OSBA to be aware of. **[Open]** See separate verbatim file.

Please indicate how important it is for OSBA to offer the following programs and services. **[Randomize]**

Response category	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	I'm not sure
34. Helping school boards develop policy					
2020 n=247	69%	25%	5%	<1%	<1%
2017 n=263	71%	24%	4%	<1%	1%
35. Helping school boards navigate contracts with local unions					
2020 n=247	31%	43%	19%	5%	2%
2017 n=263	35%	42%	17%	4%	2%
36. Providing training to school boards to help them function at a high level					
2020 n=247	68%	29%	2%	1%	<1%
37. Helping school boards with superintendent searches					
2020 n=247	37%	42%	14%	6%	2%
2017 n=263	29%	44%	21%	3%	3%
38. Helping school districts with personnel and human resource needs					
2020 n=247	30%	50%	17%	2%	2%
2017 n=263	22%	47%	26%	3%	2%
39. Advocating for schools and students in the Legislature					
2020 n=247	78%	19%	1%	1%	1%
2017 n=263	74%	19%	5%	1%	1%
40. Providing information to school boards on emerging educational issues					
2020 n=247	53%	40%	5%	1%	1%
2017 n=263	55%	36%	7%	1%	1%
41. Consulting on charter school applications, evaluations and renewals					
2020 n=247	22%	38%	26%	10%	4%
2017 n=263	13%	40%	28%	13%	6%
42. Providing legal services when school boards need advice or face legal action*					
2020 n=247	74%	22%	4%	--	1%
2017 n=263	57%	33%	6%	3%	1%
43. Providing legal representation at school board hearings, due process hearings or labor grievances					

Response category	Very important	Somewhat important	Not too important	Not at all important	I'm not sure
2020 n=247	53%	33%	12%	2%	<1%
44. Providing property and liability insurance through PACE					
2020 n=247	61%	30%	6%	2%	2%
2017 n=263	54%	31%	8%	3%	4%
45. Providing training and networking through events such as OSBA's annual convention					
2020 n=247	46%	41%	10%	3%	<1%
2017 n=263	54%	37%	6%	2%	1%
46. Creating public awareness of education through campaigns such as <i>The Promise of Oregon</i>					
2020 n=247	31%	47%	16%	3%	4%
2017 n=263	41%	38%	13%	6%	2%

*2017 wording: Providing legal services

MEMBER TRAINING

47. The following are possible training topics. Please indicate if you would be interested in receiving training for each topic. *Check all that apply.*

Response category	2020 n=247	2017 n=263
Board governance (roles and responsibilities)	49%	72%
Improving student achievement	48%	73%
Addressing equity issues, poverty, and diversity	48%	--
Board and superintendent relationships	42%	--
Communicating with the public	41%	66%
Education and school law	36%	74%
Conducting effective meetings	33%	53%
Finance and budget committee basics	27%	57%
Other [Specify]	6%	18%
None of the above [Exclusive]	4%	--
I'm not sure [Exclusive]	4%	--

48. Which types of OSBA training have you attended in the past two years? *Check all that apply.*

Response category	2020 n=247
Training session at regional workshops	66%
Statewide workshops	63%
Customized in-district workshops	51%
Live webinars	43%
Pre-recorded, on-demand, webinars	36%
Other [Specify]	2%
None of the above [Exclusive]	4%
I'm not sure [Exclusive]	1%

49. How do you prefer to get OSBA training? *Check all that apply.*

Response category	2020 n=247	2017 n=263
Customized in-district workshops	53%	53%
Training session at regional workshops	51%	70%
Statewide workshops	48%	43%
Pre-recorded, on-demand, online trainings	43%	44%
Live webinars	42%	36%
Other [Specify]	2%	2%
None of the above [Exclusive]	1%	--
I'm not sure [Exclusive]	2%	2%

COMMUNICATIONS

How helpful do you find the following OSBA communications? **[Randomize]**

Response category	Very helpful	Somewhat helpful	Not too helpful	Not at all helpful	I'm not sure
50. OREdNews					
2020 n=247	43%	42%	9%	2%	4%
2017 n=263	32%	46%	14%	3%	5%
51. Legislative Highlights					
2020 n=247	46%	44%	7%	1%	2%
2017 n=263	45%	46%	6%	2%	1%

52. How are you most likely to receive online information from OSBA?

Response category	2020 n=247	2017 n=263
Desktop computer	59%	67%
Smartphone	32%	25%
Tablet	9%	9%

53. Do you access OSBA information through social media? *Check all that apply.*

Response category	2020 n=247	2017 n=263
Facebook	20%	21%
Twitter	8%	6%
Other [Specify]	2%	2%
None of the above [Exclusive]	72%	75%
I'm not sure [Exclusive]	2%	1%

BACKGROUND

The following questions are about your role, experiences, and school district.

54. Are you a:

Response category	2020 n=247
Board member	66%
Superintendent/President	34%

55. What county is your district in? **[Dropdown of Oregon counties]**

56. **[If Q54=1]** How long have you served on the board?

Response category	2020 n=163
Less than two years	16%
Two to four years	21%
Four to eight years	33%
Eight to twelve years	17%
More than twelve years	13%

57. **[If Q54=1]** On what type of board do you sit?

Response category	2020 n=163
K-12	87%
Education Service District	12%
Community College	1%

58. **[If Q54=1]** How many students are in your district?

Response category	2020 n=142
Less than 100	3%
100-499	13%
500-999	19%
1,000-2,999	27%
3,000-10,000	27%
10,001 or more	10%

59. **[If Q54=1]** What industry or field do you currently work in? If you have multiple jobs, please choose the one that you consider to be your main or primary occupation.

Response category	2020 n=163
Education	13%
Not currently employed	12%
Banking, finance, accounting, real estate, or insurance	9%
Healthcare	7%
Government, public administration, or military	7%
Manufacturing, mining, or construction	4%
Retail	3%
Information/Technology	3%
Hospitality or service	2%
Transportation	1%
Other [Specify]	32%
I prefer not to answer	6%

60. **[If Q54=1]** Why did you run or apply for a school board seat? **[Open]** See separate verbatim file.

61. **[If Q54=1]** What values are most important to you as a school board member? **[Open]** See separate verbatim file.

DEMOGRAPHICS

These final questions are for demographic purposes only. All reporting will be done in the aggregate and your responses will remain anonymous.

62. In what age group are you?

Response category	2020 n=247
18–24	--
25–34	1%
35–44	15%
45–54	32%
55–64	25%
65 and above	26%
I prefer not to answer	2%

63. Which of the following best describes your gender? *Select all that apply.*

Response category	n=2020 n=247
Male	44%
Female	51%
Non-binary or gender non-conforming	1%
Something else [Specify]	1%
I prefer not to answer [Exclusive]	4%

64. Which of the following best describes your race or ethnicity? *Select all that apply.*

Response category	2020 n=247
Asian/Pacific Islander	2%
Black/African American	2%
Hispanic/Latino/a/x	3%
Middle Eastern/North African	<1%
Native American/American Indian	4%
White/Caucasian	82%
Two or more races	2%
Something else [Specify]	1%
I'm not sure [Exclusive]	1%
I prefer not to answer [Exclusive]	7%

CLOSING PAGE

Thanks for completing this survey! Your input will help OSBA better meet your needs. If you have questions, please email info@osba.org.

You may now close this tab or visit us at www.osba.org.