



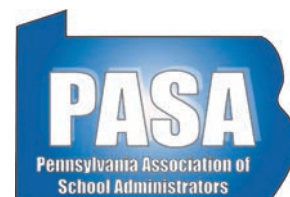
CONTINUED CUTS:

The
PASA-PASBO Report
on School District Budgets



Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators &
Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials

June 2015



Acknowledgments

The Pennsylvania Association of School Administrators (PASA) and Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials (PASBO) want to thank the William Penn Foundation for its generous support of this research project. We also wish to acknowledge the contributions of Michael Mahon and James Mirabelli (Abington Heights School District); Richard Fry and Rick Kerr (Big Spring School District); Brian Toth and Ginger Williams (St. Mary's Area School District); and Tim Shrom (Solanco School District)—all of whom provided careful reviews of draft versions of the survey instrument.

Thanks also to our fellow education associations—and especially the Pennsylvania Association of Rural and Small Schools and the Pennsylvania League of Urban Schools—for outreach efforts aimed at securing a strong, statewide sample.

We wish to acknowledge our non-profit research partner, Research for Action, for contributions to survey design and administration, and for managing the quantitative analysis of the survey results. Jeff Ammerman, Director of Technical Assistance, and Hannah Barrick, Director of Advocacy for PASBO, also contributed to the survey design and final production of this report.

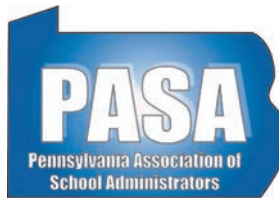
And, as always, this report would not have been possible without the cooperation and support of superintendents, school business officials, and other school district administrators from every corner of Pennsylvania. To our members: thank you for helping us reach the largest response rate in the history of this five-year initiative.

JIM BUCKHEIT & JAY HIMES
Harrisburg, June 2015

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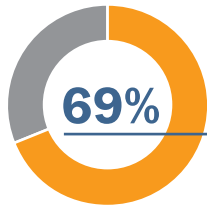
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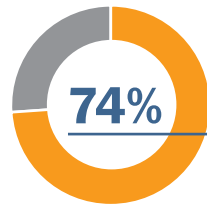
Summary of Response Rate

With a response rate of...



346 school districts participated in the survey,

these districts educate approximately **1,170,000 students**,



of Pennsylvania's traditional K-12 public school enrollment.

Participating districts range from Philadelphia, **134,241 students**...



to 28 districts with fewer than **750 students**... and every type of district in between:



4% City



18% Town



38% Rural



40% Suburb



The survey sample includes representation from all four corners of the state, including **66 of 67 counties**.

I | INTRODUCTION

Not the Places They Used to Be

Over the past five years, PASA and PASBO have issued a series of reports to document how Pennsylvania school districts have responded to an economic downturn; state and federal education cuts; and other major, externally-driven pressures. These reports have itemized the number of education jobs lost throughout the Commonwealth (at least 20,000), the frequency with which districts reduced or cut valuable programs (75 percent of districts since 2010-11) and the percentage of districts that raised taxes on an annual basis to keep up with soaring pension (100 percent), health care (93 percent), and charter school costs (85 percent). Dozens of tables, charts, and figures have told one unmistakable story: **Pennsylvania's public schools are not the places they used to be.** While the appearance of schools from outside may look the same, what is taking place inside is much different. Increasingly, our public schools are unable to offer the programs and opportunities that we know contribute to student success.

This year's report includes current budget data and program details, conveying further evidence that the state's education crisis is reaching every corner of the Commonwealth and districts of every type. Our survey sample consisted of 346 of the state's 500 districts; together these districts educate approximately 74 percent of Pennsylvania's public K-12 enrollment. Districts were asked to detail budget plans based on adopted preliminary budgets for fiscal year 2015-2016; for a smaller subset of questions, districts were asked to consider the impact of the Governor's proposed budget for 2015-2016.

This edition of *Continued Cuts* also brings individual district stories to the forefront: Outstanding public education leaders from seven Pennsylvania school districts share their experiences and perspectives through case studies that highlight specific elements of the education funding crisis.

The common thread in these stories is that local superintendents, business managers, school boards, and taxpayers have worked creatively and collaboratively to serve their students, and are now looking to Harrisburg to deliver desperately-needed resources to balance five years of historic reductions in educational programs. We cannot continue the failed strategy of cutting our way to success. To be clear, this report is not alone in documenting the significant financial challenges of school districts across the state: **A report released just last month by Temple University's Center on Regional Politics** suggests that by 2018, "60 percent of the districts in the state will face severe and prolonged program and staff reductions to balance their budgets."¹

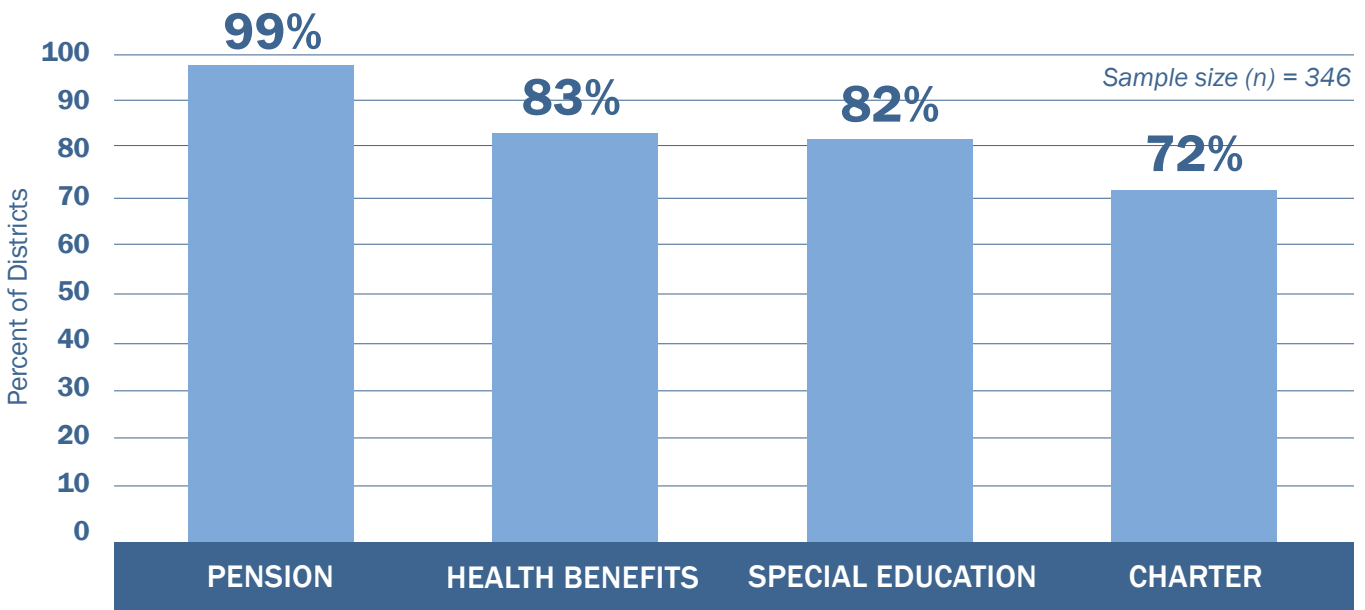
We recognize the enormity of the task confronting state policymakers, and the depth of the state's structural challenges. But there is a real cost to further delay as the data points and case studies in this year's report show. It is time to act.

¹ Hartman, W. & Shrom, T. (2015). *Forecasting fiscal futures of Pennsylvania school districts: Where law and current policy are taking our public schools.* Retrieved from <http://www.cla.temple.edu/ipa/2015/05/14/corp-policy-brief-the-fiscal-future-of-pas-school-districts/>.

II | MANDATED EXPENSES

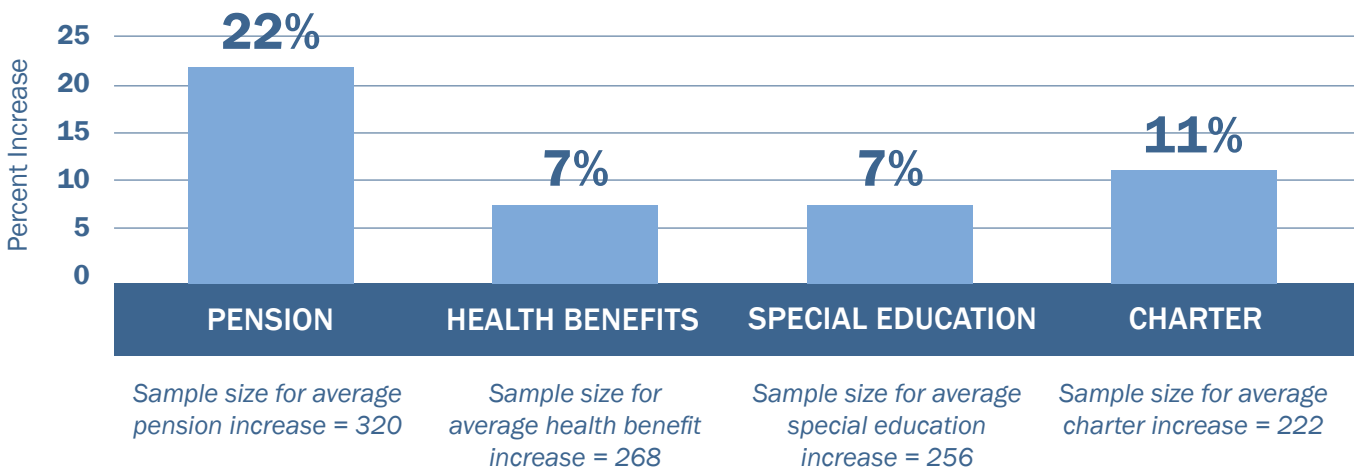
Survey results indicate that mandated costs will continue to be a sizable burden in fiscal year 2015-2016. A significant majority of districts project increased costs in every area surveyed: pension contributions, health care costs, special education services, and charter school payments.

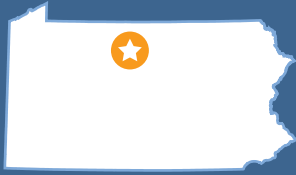
Figure 2. Percentage of school districts reporting increased mandated costs: FY 2015-2016 (planned)



Below, we provide the average increase for each mandated expense; for each category, the average is derived from the expected fiscal year 2015-2016 expenses among responding districts.

Figure 3. Average percent increase in mandated expenses among districts reporting an increase in expenses: FY 2015-2016 (planned)





NORTHERN POTTER

Educators across Pennsylvania are accustomed to juggling multiple responsibilities to meet state mandates, but rural Northern Potter School District is a special case. There, Superintendent Scott Graham also serves as the special education director, the human resources director, and the district's homeless student coordinator. "Our central office is down to just two full-time administrators, we don't have assistant principals—we've cut our operations to the bone," said Graham. "It hasn't been enough."

Pennsylvania's small, rural districts face particular challenges in the current school funding crisis. Northern Potter is expected to offer its roughly 550 students the same high-quality education as larger districts that enjoy more favorable economies of scale. Meanwhile, they have fewer opportunities to further consolidate services owing to the district's sparsity: Northern Potter has just two school buildings serving a geographic area roughly four times the size of Pittsburgh. The district's transportation costs account for 10 percent of its entire budget, as many students face a 40-mile daily ride; some career and technical education students travel 75 miles. With state education funding essentially flat the past five years, these fixed costs are "straining every segment of our community: our educators, our students, and our taxpayers," said Ronda Updyke, the Northern Potter's business manager

The district has been forced to make difficult decisions as a result. Since 2008, Northern Potter has reduced its teacher workforce by nearly 20 percent, boosted class size, and eliminated valuable programs—all while asking local taxpayers to shoulder annual tax increases up to the Act 1 limit. "The reason is plain," said Graham: "Year after year, state mandates consume more of our limited local resources." As an example, Graham noted that the district's PSERS contributions climbed three-fold between 2010 and 2015 and health care costs rose more than 40 percent in the past three years.

As the State's Basic Education Funding Commission prepares to issue its recommendations, Graham and Updyke are hopeful that a new school funding formula will deliver adequate, equitable, and predictable funding to rural school districts. "In so many ways, our school district serves as the heart of our community," said Graham. "We need a school funding formula—and state share of education funding—that recognizes that fact."



**"Year after year, state mandates consume more
of our limited local resources."**

– Scott Graham, Superintendent



MANDATED EXPENSES: FOCUS ON CYBER CHARTERS

Journalists, state agency reports, and PASA-PASBO surveys have documented the rise and spread of charter school costs—especially the tuition paid to Pennsylvania’s 14 cyber charter schools. In 2013-2014, the last year for which full, statewide results are available, Pennsylvania school districts paid more than \$334 million to cyber charter schools.² Looking ahead to 2015-2016, survey respondents report that cyber charter expenses will continue to mount. Notably, the average percent increase for cyber charters (12 percent) is second only to pension contributions (22 percent) among mandated costs.

The table below details expected, fiscal year 2015-2016 costs for cyber charters compared with their brick and mortar counterparts. A higher percentage of respondent districts reported increased cyber costs; and among these districts, the median (midpoint) and average fiscal impact for cybers also exceeded the brick and mortar figures.

Table 1. Summary of charter costs, by type: FY 2015-2016 (planned)

BRICK AND MORTAR CHARTERS <i>(n=133)</i>	CYBER CHARTERS <i>(n=239)</i>
38% of districts anticipate increased costs <i>(FY 2015-2016)</i>	69% of districts anticipate increased costs <i>(FY 2015-2016)</i>
Median percentage increase 5%	Median percentage increase 8%
Average percentage increase 11%	Average percentage increase 12%

² PASBO used the October 1, 2014 PDE enrollment file, and multiplied cyber enrollments times tuition rates for each school.



MAHANOY AREA & WILLIAM PENN

The 5,100-student William Penn School District, which hugs the southwestern border of Philadelphia, and the 1,000-student Mahanoy Area School District, in the valleys and ridgetops of Schuylkill County, are two very different districts; however, they both experience very similar strains from cyber charter school costs.

In 2014-2015, William Penn spent more than \$2.5 million on cyber charter tuition for 210 students enrolled in nine cyber charters. While this expenditure is down 3 percent from the district's 2013-2014 cyber charter costs, William Penn's cyber enrollment dropped by 30 percent during the same one year period. "William Penn's public schools are succeeding, as the shift in enrollment back to our programs shows," said Joe Bruni, William Penn's longtime superintendent. "However, the costs associated with cybers means that we are paying essentially the same figure in 2014-2015 as in 2013-2014. As a district, we are being asked to do more with less—while cybers get to do less with more."

The story is much the same in Mahanoy Area. Between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015, the district's charter school costs rose 14 percent—a figure dwarfed by the projected 44 percent increase for fiscal year 2015-2016. "Our cyber charter costs have increased by 80 percent over the past two years," said Jack Hurst, Mahanoy's business manager. Joie Green, the district's superintendent, noted that the average SPP score for Mahanoy's public schools is more than 20 points higher than the average SPP for the state's cyber charters. Said Green: "We have created our own, high-quality, district-run cyber program, so it is especially regrettable to see taxpayer dollars leave our community in this way."

Leaders in both districts share another commonality: a belief that this year's education budget and related legislation will include reforms to cyber charter funding. "In this era of extremely scarce resources, public schools should be funded based on reliable data and actual instructional costs," said Hurst. William Penn's Bruni agreed: "I recognize that there is significant diversity of opinion when it comes to how we fund schools in Pennsylvania, but addressing the ever-escalating costs for cybers is a no-brainer."



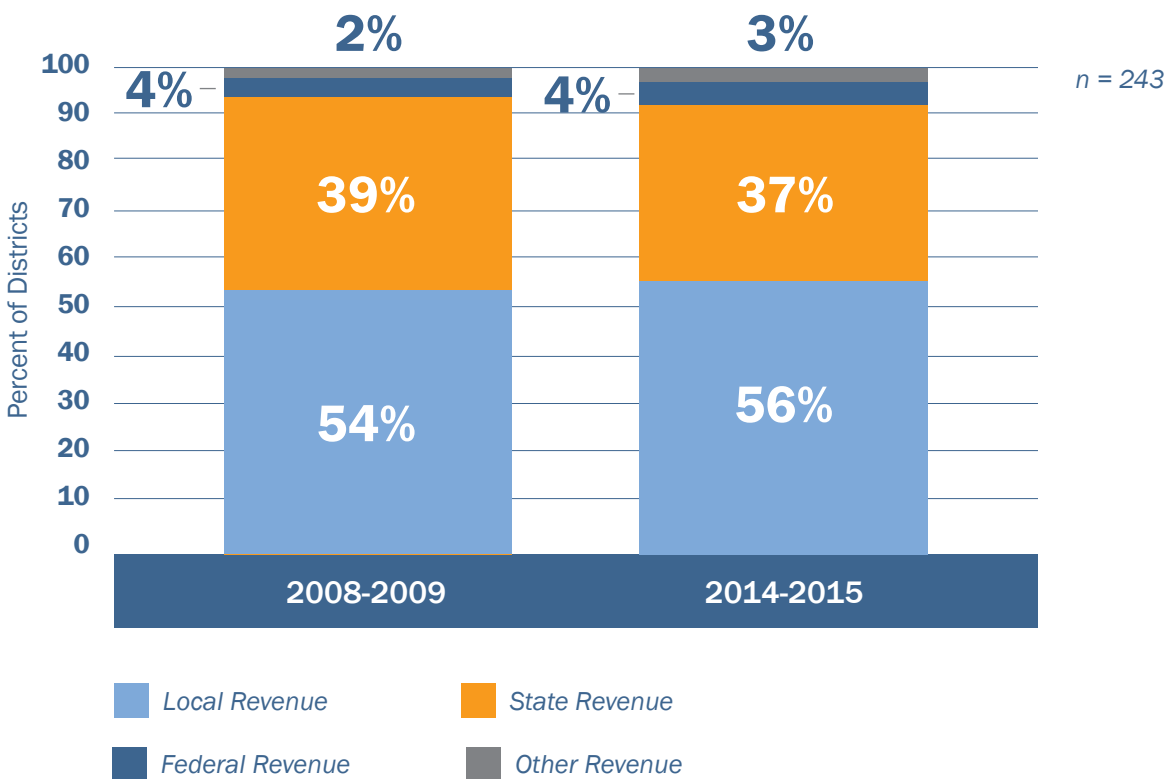
"As a district, we are being asked to do more with less—while cybers get to do less with more."

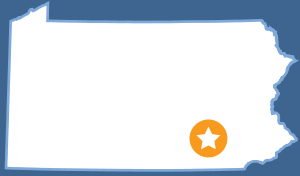
– Joe Bruni, Superintendent

IV | SHIFTING BURDENS: STAGNANT STATE REVENUE

Schools' further reliance on local taxpayers is best illustrated in terms of the overall share of education revenue, by source. While state- and other externally-driven costs have increased, state revenue is down as a percent of overall public K-12 funding since 2008-2009; see Figure 4, below.

Figure 4. Education funding by source, FY 2008-2009 - FY 2015-2016





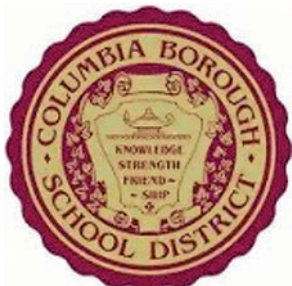
COLUMBIA BOROUGH

Few school districts struggle as mightily as 1,350-student Columbia Borough when it comes to summoning sufficient local resources for its public schools. But it's not for lack of trying.

With two-thirds of its students eligible for free and reduced price lunch, Columbia has some of Lancaster County's most entrenched poverty. It also has the area's highest school taxes. From fiscal year 2008-2009 through the 2014-2015 fiscal year, Columbia's approximately 10,400 residents contributed an additional \$2 million to the borough's public schools.

Tax increases are a hardship for the entire community. Decisions like this create tremendous worry for Amy Light, Columbia Borough's business manager. "Columbia's residents make enormous sacrifices for our schools... we feel like we're sprinting just to stay in place," she said. District superintendent Carol L. Powell agreed: "We have a limited tax base and the current system forces us to tax more frequently, and at higher amounts, than our neighbors. Why should our zip code determine the opportunities that are available for our students? The data connecting educational opportunities and success in life is clear. Education is foundational and represents a gateway for students to access their dreams."

Columbia's 2015-2016 budget development repeated the difficult motions of the past few years: Eliminating programs, trimming staff, and raising taxes. But the district's leaders and supporters will also look up the Susquehanna to Harrisburg, said Powell: "Columbia is a proud community but when it comes to our kids, we are not afraid to ask for help. We will keep telling our story and we hope Harrisburg listens."



"We have a limited tax base and the current system forces us to tax more frequently, and at higher amounts, than our neighbors."

– Carol L. Powell, Superintendent

V | SHIFTING BURDENS: GROWING RELIANCE ON PROPERTY TAXES

With two weeks to finalize 2015-2016 budgets, the overwhelming majority of districts are poised to again raise local property taxes. If these plans are realized, 2015-2016 will mark the sixth consecutive year in which at least 60 percent of districts statewide have been forced to raise additional local revenue to meet education needs.

Figure 5. Percentage of school districts raising property taxes: FY 2015-2016 (planned)

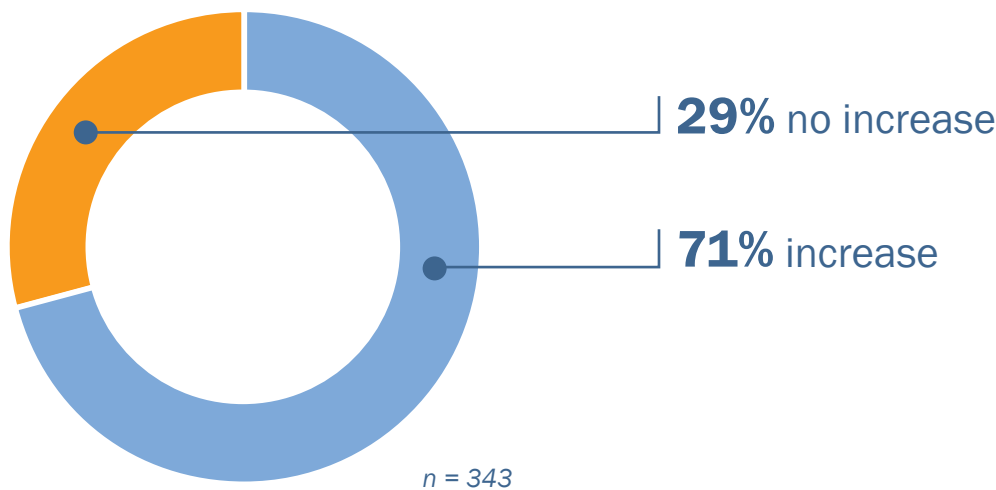
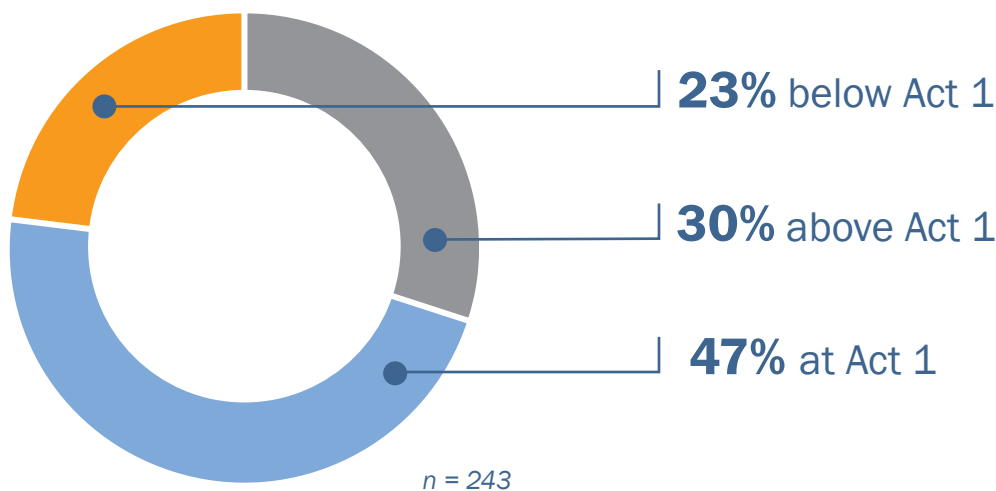


Figure 5 shows that among districts planning tax increases, **nearly 80 percent plan to tax at or above the Act 1 index.**

Figure 6. Level of tax increases: FY 2015-2016 (planned)





EAST STROUDSBURG AREA

Property taxes are a significant pressure point in Pennsylvania’s school funding debate. More than 90 percent of school districts that participated in the September 2014 PASA-PASBO survey reported raising taxes since 2010, and among surveyed districts, the rate of increase in local spending more than doubled the state percent increase from 2008-2009 to 2014-2015.

While Harrisburg is passing burdens along to the local level, intra-district shifts are also occurring. With many Pennsylvania counties deferring comprehensive property tax reassessments, individual assessment appeals are eroding local tax bases—and shifting even greater responsibility for school funding onto homeowners. In the East Stroudsburg Area School District in Monroe and Pike counties, more than 2,500 separate assessment appeals have reduced local school funding by more than \$12 million since 2010. Both the volume and impact of the appeals are intensifying: the number of appeals in 2014 and 2015 was nearly triple that of the total from 2009 and 2010.

“Taxpayers are suffering from two layers of inaction,” explained East Stroudsburg’s Business Manager, Jeffrey Bader. “With respect to Harrisburg, we lack a predictable school funding formula. At the county levels, we lack a predictable approach to property assessment. The net result is intensifying pressures on those who can least afford it—our homeowners, especially seniors.”

East Stroudsburg has employed a variety of strategies to manage the school funding crisis. “From the moment the recession hit, we’ve been tailoring our programs and asking our employees to help us find savings,” said longtime community member and current Superintendent Sharon Laverdure. “The continued reliance on school property taxes is one challenge we can’t manage on our own. People want to support good schools, but they won’t do it at the expense of losing their homes.”

Approaching the 2015-2016 fiscal year, East Stroudsburg is continuing with strategic and thoughtful planning to balance educational quality and the interests of their taxpayers. With state funding levels in doubt and the certainty of further assessment appeals, Laverdure, who will retire on July 1, 2016 is concerned: “I have spent the last 42 years of my life teaching, coaching and being an administrator in the East Stroudsburg Area School District and care so very much for this community. If our current situation does not change, everything the district has achieved and our community has grown to expect and love is in jeopardy. I truly want to leave my position as Superintendent with our district in a better place. The reality is that may not be possible if actions aren’t taken now.”



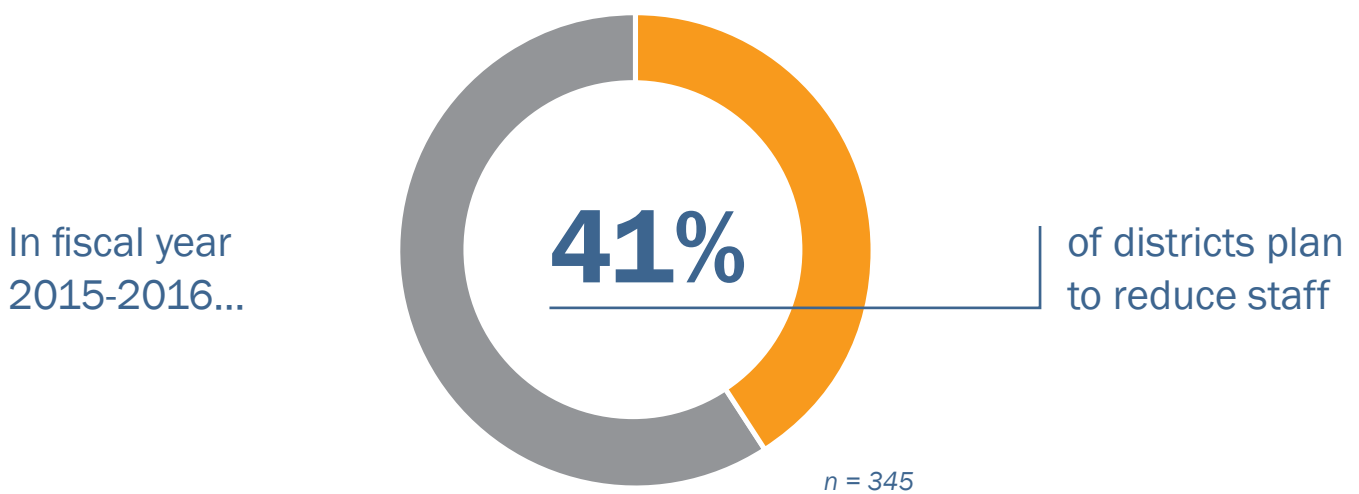
“The continued reliance on school property taxes is one challenge we can’t manage on our own.”

– Sharon Laverdure, Superintendent

VI | STAFF REDUCTIONS

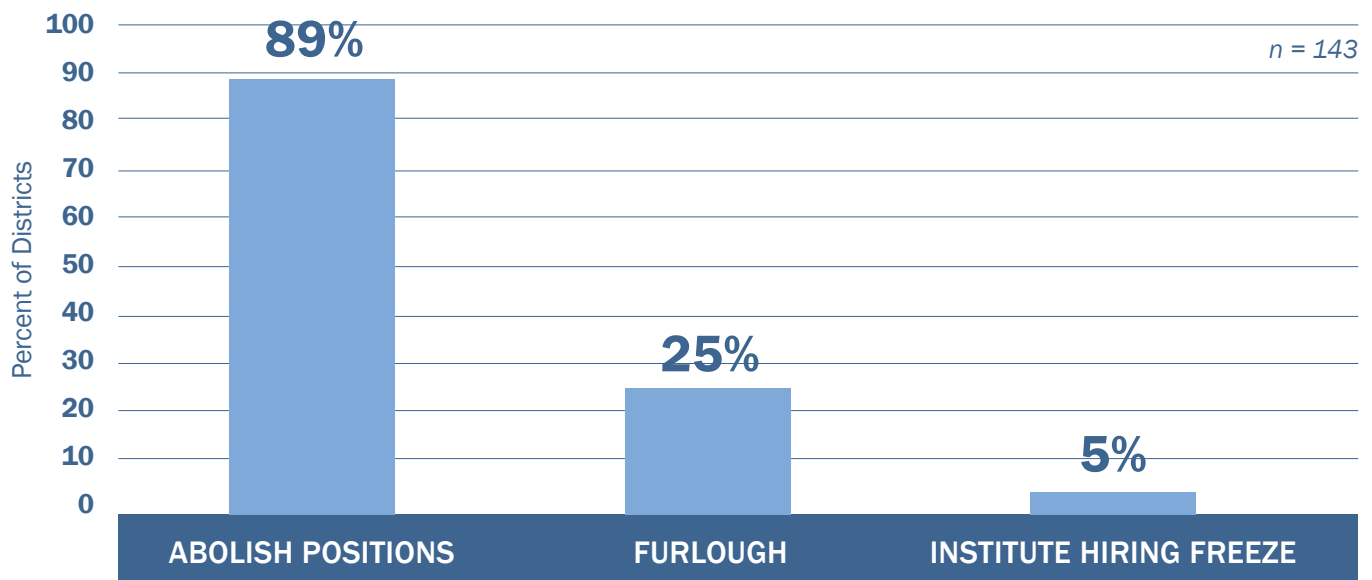
More than 90 percent of school districts that participated in PASA-PASBO's Fall 2014 survey reported reducing staff in response to the state's education funding crisis. Our latest survey reveals that further cuts are on the way: 41 percent of respondents report plans to reduce staff through one or more actions in fiscal year 2015-2016.

Figure 7. Percentage of school districts reducing staff: FY 2015-2016 (planned)



Among districts envisioning reductions, 89 percent plan to abolish positions, and fully one-quarter may furlough staff; five percent plan broad-based hiring freezes.

Figure 8. Actions among districts reducing staff: FY 2015-2016 (planned)





TITUSVILLE AREA

Staff reductions go hand-in-hand with class size increases. Among the districts that participated in the **Fall 2014 PASA-PASBO** survey, a solid majority—57 percent—reported implementing at least one round of class size increases since 2010, and roughly one third of respondent districts reported class size increases in 2014-2015 alone. Survey results also indicate that class size increases are most common at the elementary level—a concerning statistic in light of the research base on the value of smaller student to teacher ratios in the early grades.³

This unfortunate trend is all too familiar in the 2,200-student Titusville Area School District which spans three counties in the northwestern corner of the state. Over the past decade, Titusville has reduced its staff complement by more than 16 percent: these reductions have impacted more than 50 employees, including nearly two-dozen classroom teachers from kindergarten to the high school.

“The staff reductions we have been forced to implement have had serious consequences for our students, especially with respect to class size,” said Superintendent Karen Jez. “At the elementary level, we’ve gone from class sizes of 18 to 28 students in any given year; and at the secondary level, class sizes approach 30 or more in some content areas.” Noting that more than 50 percent of Titusville students are low income, Jez continued: “We know that with the needs many of our students bring, individualized support can make all the difference... we see that slipping away.”

Titusville’s business manager, Shawn Sampson, agreed: “The present state of school funding has forced some very hard decisions with respect to non-mandated programming.” In addition to staff reductions and class size increases, Sampson noted that the district has sharply reduced early childhood education through the elimination of the district-run daycare and associated personnel. Beginning next school year, the district will outsource substitute teacher services and explore additional staff cuts to balance the budget.

In planning for the 2015-2016 school year, Jez said her district is nearing “a tipping point.” While acknowledging growing public awareness of the school funding crisis and the work of the Basic Education Funding Commission, Jez does not feel a sense of urgency from Harrisburg that is commensurate with her community’s challenges. Ms. Jez and Mr. Sampson believe that any funding formula must be fair and predictable while recognizing the needs of their students and community. The formula must also recognize the level of poverty in Titusville, and the difficulty in generating revenue at the local level.



**“The staff reductions we have been forced to implement
have had serious consequences...”**

– Karen Jez, Superintendent

³ Krueger, A.B. & Whitmore, D.M. (2001). *The effect of attending a small class in the early grades on college-test taking and middle school test results: Evidence from Project STAR*. *The Economic Journal*, 111(468), 1-28.

Sparks, S.D. (2015, May 23). *Class sizes show signs of growing*. Education Week. Retrieved from http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/11/24/13size_ep.h30.html

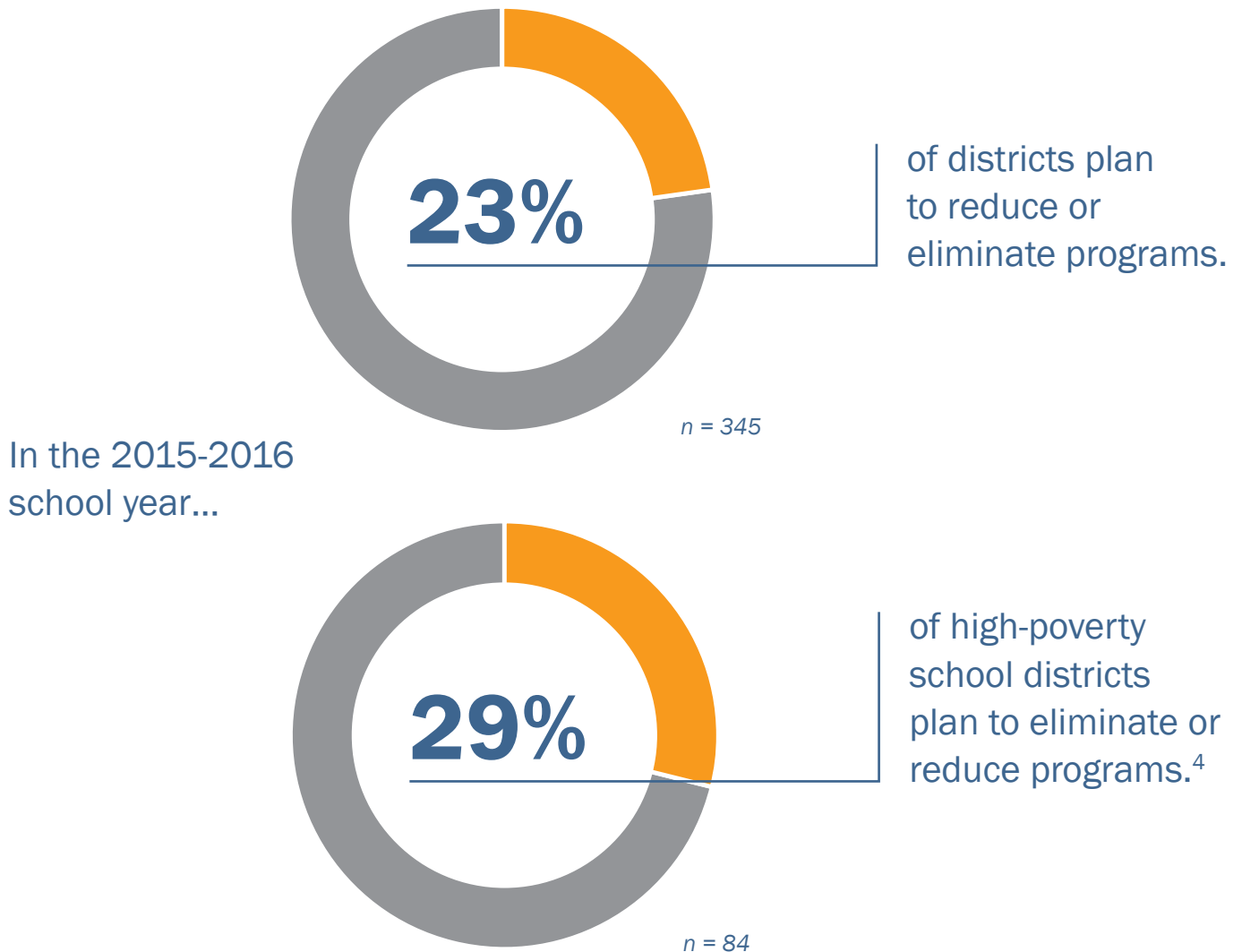
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Editorial Projects in Education Research Center. (2011, July 1). *Issues A-Z: Class size*. Education Week. Retrieved from <http://www.edweek.org/ew/issues/class-size/>

VII | PROGRAM AND OTHER REDUCTIONS

Earlier PASA-PASBO reports have documented that a large majority of districts statewide have reduced or eliminated hundreds of academic and extra-curricular programs. Results from this year's survey indicate that 23 percent of districts, and 29 percent of high-poverty school districts, anticipate program reductions or eliminations in fiscal year 2015-2016 spending plans.

Figure 9. Percentage of school districts reducing programs: FY 2015-2016 (planned)



⁴ High poverty school districts are defined as the quarter of the school districts with the highest frequency of free and reduced price lunch students.



LEBANON

The loss of proven programs has a particular impact in places like the 5,100-student Lebanon School District. Since 2010, Lebanon’s enrollment has grown by nearly eight percent, but more striking is the potential vulnerability of these students: 84 percent are economically disadvantaged, 18 percent are special needs, and 13 percent are English language learners. The district has one of the state’s highest rates of English language learners.

Lebanon’s longtime superintendent, Marianne Bartley, notes that her district is a perfect case study for the structural and financial challenges facing Pennsylvania’s urban districts. “We have a strong administrative team, a fiscally-disciplined school board, and very supportive state legislative representatives. But these assets have allowed us to minimize, not prevent, adverse impacts on student learning.”

Curtis Richards, the district’s business manager, echoed these sentiments, noting that sound management and additional support from Harrisburg have not been enough to keep Lebanon from ranking as one of the nation’s most financially disadvantaged mid-sized city school districts.⁵ “A key message from our experience,” said Richards, “is that even when you do everything right, the financial pressure from increases in pension, charter schools, health care, and special education costs leave you without the means to move forward.”

In addition to sound financial practices, Bartley noted that Lebanon is “exercising even greater ownership” of programs by establishing its own cyber program and bringing certain special education programs back into the district from outside providers. “We embrace accountability, both in terms of academics and operations,” said Bartley. “We are always looking to improve educational outcomes and show a return on investment for our taxpayers.”

Bartley concluded by pointing to Henry Houck Elementary as an example. There, four-of-five students are economically disadvantaged, and 90 percent of students scored proficient or advanced on the state science exam. Said Bartley: “We celebrate this accomplishment, but overall the district’s progress has been stymied as we have been forced to reduce staff and increase class size. The needs of our students have increased, and because of limited financial resources, we have added a lot of stress on our system.”



“[We have been able to] minimize, not prevent, adverse impacts on student learning.”

– Marianne Bartley, Superintendent

⁵ Baker, B. & Levin, J. (2014). *Educational equity, adequacy, and equal opportunity in the commonwealth: An evaluation of Pennsylvania’s school finance system*. San Mateo, CA: American Institutes of Research. Retrieved from: <http://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/AIR-EEAEO%20in%20the%20Commonwealth%20-%20Full%20Report%2010-09-14.pdf>

IX | CONCLUSION

The Challenges Ahead

After five years of historic reductions in state education funding and unchecked increases in mandated costs, districts are not waiting for a miracle. Once again, districts plan to balance budgets using one or more of the three tools at their disposal:

- More than 70 percent of districts plan to raise local property taxes, and nearly 80 percent indicate that these increases will hit or exceed the Act 1 index;
- Forty-one percent of districts will reduce staffing; and
- Nearly one quarter of all districts, and 29 percent of the poorest districts, will reduce or eliminate valuable programs.

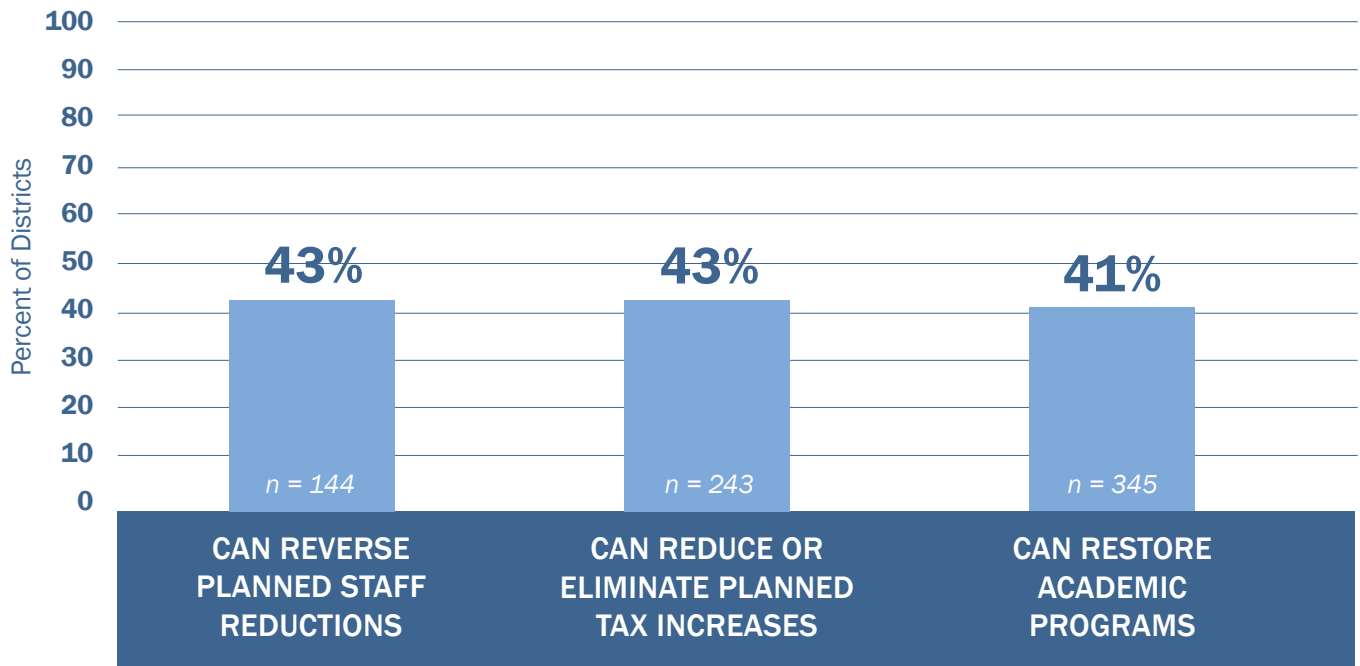
District case studies bring these numbers to life and illustrate in painful detail the long-term effects of what is now widely recognized as one of the nation's most inequitable school funding systems.⁶ Small, sparsely-populated districts like Northern Potter struggle to cover rising state mandates without the ability to achieve economies of scale. The rapid growth of charter school costs—especially those for cyber charters—strain the budgets of urban, suburban, and rural districts alike. Rising property taxes in districts like East Stroudsburg and Columbia Borough force residents to choose between supporting schools or losing their homes. And growing class sizes hamper the ability of districts like Titusville and Lebanon to adequately educate and support their most vulnerable students. It is little wonder that more than 90 percent of districts predict that fiscal year 2015-2016 will bring more of the same—or even worsening financial conditions.

To be sure, there are some positive signs. When asked about the potential impact of Governor Wolf's proposed budget, about 43 percent of districts reported that staff reductions could be minimized. The same percentage of districts reported that the Governor's plans would allow for the reduction or elimination of tax increases. And among districts that have reduced or cut programs, 41 percent could make restorations under the Governor's plans.

A key lesson of the past few years is that it takes far more resources, and far more effort, to rescue a public school system in deep distress. More and more districts are approaching this crisis point. Without immediate reforms that address both mandated expenses and inadequate and inequitable funding levels, we risk a fundamental breakdown of a public education system that was once the envy of the nation.

⁶ http://www.schoolfundingfairness.org/National_Report_Card_2015.pdf

Figure 10. District responses to Governor’s proposed budget



VIII | METHODOLOGY

The Spring PASA-PASBO survey was released on May 1, 2015, to 1,082 administrators and chief financial officers in 499 school districts based on membership lists provided by both PASA and PASBO. Significant efforts were made to achieve a high, representative, and geographically-balanced response.

When the survey was closed on May 26, 2015, the response rate reflected submissions from 346 school districts, or 69 percent of the statewide total. This includes representation from every corner of the state, including 66 of 67 counties (99 percent). Together, these districts educate approximately 1,170,000 students, or 74 percent of the Commonwealth's traditional K-12 public school enrollment. Participating districts range from the largest district in the state (Philadelphia with 134,241 students) to 28 districts with fewer than 750 students, and every type of district in between.

Survey Description

The survey was composed of 30 questions concerning school district finance, staffing, and programmatic conditions. Districts were asked to outline plans for the coming 2015-2016 fiscal year, and to detail how those plans might change based on the Governor's proposed education budget.

Survey Testing

Prior to dissemination of an online survey to Pennsylvania school district superintendents and business administrators, the instrument was piloted by staff at Research for Action and with current and former school district administrators to ensure clarity.

Survey Administration

The survey went live on May 1, 2015. Regular reminders were sent to those districts that had not completed the survey. The survey was closed on May 26, 2015.

Sample

The survey was sent to superintendents and business managers in 499 Pennsylvania school districts; the superintendent and business manager in each district filled out a single survey.⁷ In the table below, we compare the districts that responded to the survey to the entire state. As seen below, the demographics of the responding districts are very similar to those of the entire state.

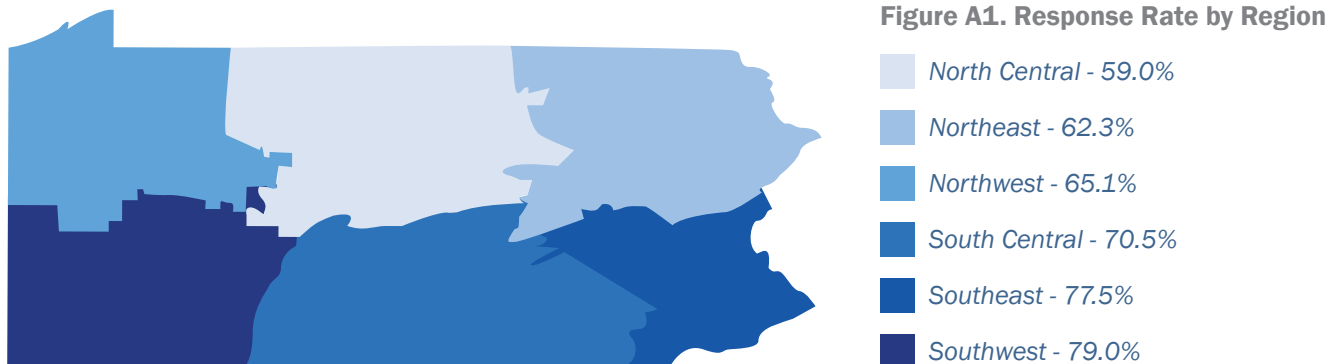
⁷ Specifically, the same survey was sent to 499 superintendents and 583 business managers.

Table A1. Description of demographic data for respondent districts

	SPRING SURVEY RESPONDING DISTRICTS (n=346)	ALL PENNSYLVANIA DISTRICTS (n=499)	DIFFERENCE
Total Enrollment	1,170,454	1,589,440	-418,986
Average Percent White	84.2%	83.8%	0.4%
Average Percent Special Education	14.6%	14.7%	-0.1%
Average Percent ELL	1.3%	1.2%	0.1%
Average Percent Free and Reduced Priced Lunch 2012-2013	40.0%	40.2%	-0.2%
Percent of Districts in Highest Poverty Quartile	24.6%	24.9%	-0.3%
Average Total Revenue	\$55,774,732	\$52,009,940	\$3,764,792
Urbanicity (Percentage of Districts in Sample)			
City	3.8%	3.4%	0.4%
Rural	38.2%	35.1%	3.1%
Suburb	40.2%	41.5%	-1.3%
Town	17.9%	20.0%	-2.1%

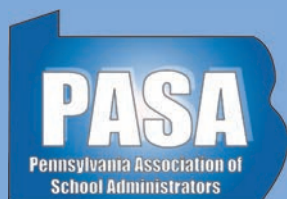
Note: Numbers for enrollment, ethnicity, special education, English Language Learners, free- and reduced priced lunch, poverty level and total revenue are most recent publicly available data from the PDE website.

Bryn Athyn School District contracts-out educational services. Source: <http://www.brynathynschooldistrict.org/>
All data are from 2013-2014 except the percent free and reduced priced lunch data (2012-2013).



Use of Pennsylvania Department of Education Data

The change in revenue between 2008-2009 and 2014-2015 was calculated using 2008-2009 PDE data and 2014-2015 survey data; only those districts that participated in both the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 surveys were included in this analysis.



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