



604 North Third Street, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
 Harrisburg, PA 17101  
 Phone: (717) 233-8850  
 Fax: (717) 233-8842  
 Cell Phone: (717) 215-1122  
 Email: james@susquehannapolling.com  
 www.susquehannapolling.com  
 James Lee, President

**Final: Top Line Survey Results**  
**PA Statewide Poll – The Education Policy and Leadership Center**  
**Conducted October 24 – 31, 2011**  
**Sample Size: 800 Likely General Election Voters**

**INTRODUCTION:** We are conducting a survey of attitudes and opinions concerning some important issues facing Pennsylvania today. May we have a few minutes of your time to complete the survey?

Great, thank you...

Q1. What is the single most important problem facing Pennsylvania today? That is, the one that you would like to see resolved by your state elected officials. (DO NOT READ CHOICES – ONE ANSWER ONLY)

<b>Property/School Taxes.....56</b>	<b>07%</b>	Other	5	01%	
<b>Other Taxes (general).....9</b>	<b>01%</b>	<b>Environment/Pollution.....1</b>	<b>00%</b>		
<b>Crime/Violence/Drugs.....9</b>	<b>01%</b>	<b>Health &amp; Welfare.....37</b>	<b>05%</b>		
<b>Economy/Jobs.....383</b>	<b>48%</b>	Healthcare (general)	21	03%	
Economy (general)	86	11%	Healthcare reform	1	00%
Jobs (general)	266	33%	Social Security	1	00%
Currently unemployed	28	03%	Medicare	5	01%
Business Slowdown	3	00%	Medicaid	2	00%
			Other	6	01%
<b>Transportation/Growth.....12</b>	<b>02%</b>	<b>Education/Schools.....83</b>	<b>10%</b>		
Street/highway conditions	12	01%	<b>Morality/Family Values.....2</b>	<b>00%</b>	
<b>Gov't Spending/Budget.....65</b>	<b>08%</b>	Abortion	1	00%	
Gov't spending (general)	22	03%	Religion	1	00%
Spending (federal)	2	00%	<b>Quality of Life.....3</b>	<b>00%</b>	
Spending (state)	21	03%	Litter/trash/noise	1	00%
Spending (county/local)	1	00%	Section 8 housing	1	00%
Budget	16	02%	Other	1	00%
Other	3	00%	<b>Marcellus Shale/Drilling....36</b>	<b>05%</b>	
<b>Politicians/Government.....34</b>	<b>04%</b>	Corruption (general)	8	01%	
Federal (Obama/congress)	4	00%	<b>Undecided.....46</b>	<b>06%</b>	
State (Corbett/Harrisburg)	13	02%	<b>Other.....24</b>	<b>03%</b>	
County/local	2	00%			
General anti-incumbent	2	00%			

## Thinking more about state issues in Harrisburg...

Q2. Which TWO of the following seven issues should be the top priorities for both the governor and state legislature in Harrisburg to concentrate on – reducing property taxes, increasing state funding for and improving education, fixing highways, roads and bridges, reforming the way state government operates, creating jobs and improving the economy, improving public safety and reducing crime, or protecting the environment? (ROTATE ITEMS – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

1. Reducing property taxes	198	25%
<b>2. Increasing state funding for and improving education</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>38%</b>
3. Fixing highways, roads and bridges	178	22%
4. Reforming how state government operates	204	26%
<b>5. Creating jobs and improving the economy</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>62%</b>
6. Improving public safety and reducing crime	96	12%
7. Protecting the environment	82	10%
8. Undecided (DO NOT READ)	5	01%
9. None/other (DO NOT READ)	11	01%

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## Thinking more about public education and schools for a few minutes...

(ROTATE Q3-Q4)

Q3. How would you rate the job public schools in Pennsylvania are doing preparing students for COLLEGE? Would you say they are doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?

1. Excellent	56	07%
2. Good	279	35%
3. Fair	280	35%
4. Poor	128	16%
5. Undecided	57	07%

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Q4. How would you rate the job public schools in Pennsylvania are doing preparing students for jobs after high school graduation? Would you say they are doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?

1. Excellent	34	04%
2. Good	237	30%
3. Fair	292	37%
4. Poor	180	22%
5. Undecided	57	07%

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Q5. How would you rate the job public schools in your school district are doing preparing students for both college and jobs after graduation? Would you say they are doing an excellent job, a good job, a fair job or a poor job?

1. Excellent	110	14%
2. Good	308	39%
3. Fair	228	28%
4. Poor	124	16%
5. Undecided	30	04%

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Q6. Which TWO of the following seven issues represent the biggest challenges confronting teachers in the public school system today? That is, the one or two that can have the biggest impact on the quality of education being provided to students. (ROTATE ITEMS – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

<b>1. Lack of involvement and support from parents and caregivers of students</b>	<b>386</b>	<b>48%</b>
2. Safety concerns including students' social and behavioral problems	190	24%
<b>3. Lack of funding for educational programs, curriculums and academic activities</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>25%</b>
4. Improving teachers' training and competencies	181	23%
5. Class sizes too large and a poor teacher-to-student ratio	167	21%
6. The effects of poverty on students' ability to learn in the classroom	141	18%
<b>7. Too much emphasis on testing</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>25%</b>
8. Undecided (DO NOT READ)	27	03%
9. None/other (DO NOT READ)	35	04%

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Q7. Do you think teacher salaries in the district where you live are too high, too low or just about right?

1. Too high	192	24%
2. Too low	135	17%
3. About right	405	51%
4. Undecided	68	09%

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Q8. Following are several factors many people believe can have an influence on the ability of students to learn and meet academic proficiency standards. After I read the entire list, please tell me which two or three can have the BIGGEST influence on students - the family's support for the student, the quality of the teacher, the size of school classes, the level of school funding, the availability of up-to-date computers and technology, the availability of up-to-date textbooks and school libraries, or school counseling and support services? (ROTATE CHOICES – PROBE FOR THREE ANSWERS)

<b>1. Family's support for the student</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>65%</b>
<b>2. Quality of the teacher</b>	<b>475</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>3. Size of school classes</b>	<b>274</b>	<b>34%</b>
4. Level of school funding	166	21%
5. Availability of up-to-date computers/technology	226	28%
6. Availability of up-to-date textbooks/libraries	173	22%
7. School counseling and support services	100	12%
8. Undecided (DO NOT READ)	28	03%
9. Other (DO NOT READ)	4	00%

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**Please tell me if you agree or disagree with the following statements.**

(ROTATE Q9 – Q17)

Q9. The well-being of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and our local communities is dependent upon having an "educated citizenry". (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	644	81%	<b>Total Agree: 97%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	130	16%	
3. Strongly disagree	2	00%	
4. Somewhat disagree	14	02%	
5. Undecided	10	01%	

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Q10. All students in Pennsylvania should be legally entitled to the opportunity to receive a quality education. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	663	83%	<b>Total Agree: 95%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	98	12%	
3. Strongly disagree	16	02%	
4. Somewhat disagree	16	02%	
5. Undecided	7	01%	

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Q11. High quality public schools are vital for the success of Pennsylvania's economy. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	591	74%	<b>Total Agree: 93%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	152	19%	<b>Total Disagree: 06%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	17	02%	
4. Somewhat disagree	33	04%	
5. Undecided	7	01%	

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Q12. High quality public schools are vital for the success of my local community. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	587	73%	<b>Total Agree: 93%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	158	20%	<b>Total Disagree: 06%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	8	01%	
4. Somewhat disagree	36	04%	
5. Undecided	11	01%	

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Q13. High quality public schools are vital for creating successful citizens. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	606	76%	<b>Total Agree: 92%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	133	17%	<b>Total Disagree: 07%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	22	03%	
4. Somewhat disagree	35	04%	
5. Undecided	2	00%	
6. Refuse	1	00%	

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Q14. Everyone benefits from high quality public schools. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	578	72%	<b>Total Agree: 90%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	139	17%	<b>Total Disagree: 10%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	30	04%	
4. Somewhat disagree	47	06%	
5. Undecided	5	01%	
6. Refuse	1	00%	

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Q15. State government has a responsibility to ensure adequate funding for all school districts so that students in all areas of the state regardless of the wealth of their local school district have an opportunity to learn and succeed. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	555	69%	<b>Total Agree: 88%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	152	19%	<b>Total Disagree: 08%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	30	04%	
4. Somewhat disagree	38	05%	
5. Undecided	24	03%	

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Q16. I have trust and confidence in the men and women who are teaching children in the public schools in the district where I live. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	294	37%	<b>Total Agree: 76%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	313	39%	<b>Total Disagree: 20%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	83	10%	
4. Somewhat disagree	74	09%	
5. Undecided	36	05%	

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Q17. The responsibility of state government to adequately fund school districts should be maintained in both good and poor economic times, even if it means lawmakers must make politically difficult decisions concerning additional state revenues and/or cuts to other state programs. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	459	57%	<b>Total Agree: 82%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	200	25%	<b>Total Disagree: 14%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	50	06%	
4. Somewhat disagree	66	08%	
5. Undecided	26	03%	

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Q18. Which two of the following six issues are the primary reasons why some parents choose to send their child to another school other than one in their home district? Is it...concerns about safety issues in the school, concerns about safety issues going to and from school, the need for better academic quality, the need for more academic choices, the need for more extracurricular opportunities, better convenience for parents or guardians, or something else? (ROTATE ITEMS – PROBE FOR TWO ANSWERS)

<b>1. Safety issues in school</b>	<b>441</b>	<b>55%</b>
2. Safety issues going to/from school	150	19%
<b>3. Need for better academic quality</b>	<b>451</b>	<b>56%</b>
4. Need for more academic choices	238	30%
5. Need for more extracurricular opportunities	88	11%
6. Better convenience for parents/guardians	88	11%
7. Other	27	03%
8. Undecided (DO NOT READ)	38	05%
9. Refuse (DO NOT READ)	1	00%

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Q19. Would you encourage a child of yours, or a young person to whom you are close to take up teaching in the public schools as a career?

1. Yes	547	68%
2. No	220	28%
3. Undecided	33	04%

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**Thinking more specifically for a few minutes about how public schools and school districts are funded...**

Q20. National studies show that states on average pay nearly fifty percent of the total cost of local school districts' expenses for educating students, while Pennsylvania state government pays about thirty five percent of the total cost of the state's 500 school districts. Should Pennsylvania increase its share of state funding to local school districts even if it means the state has to cut funding for other state programs and services or raise some taxes or fees to raise the additional revenue?

1. Yes	404	50%
2. No	287	36%
3. Undecided	109	14%

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Q21. Studies show that some school districts in Pennsylvania currently spend more than \$21,000 per student, while other districts spend less than \$9,000 per student. Should state government take steps to increase state funding to poorer school districts as a way to reduce this funding disparity, even if it means less funding will be available for state increases to wealthier districts?

1. Yes	494	62%
2. No	183	23%
3. Undecided	123	15%

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Q22. In 2007, a costing-out study mandated by the State General Assembly concluded that school districts were more than \$4 billion short of needed resources necessary to ensure that students had the opportunity to meet academic proficiency standards. As a result, in 2008, 2009 and 2010 state funding for school districts was increased by more than \$750 million while [the state] faced shrinking tax revenues due to the slowdown in the economy. Do you support or oppose these past increases in state funding for local schools? (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly support	231	29%	<b>Total Support: 64%</b>
2. Somewhat support	279	35%	
3. Strongly oppose	111	14%	
4. Somewhat oppose	114	14%	
5. Undecided	64	08%	
6. Refuse	2	00%	

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Q23. In the most recent state budget for the 2011-2012 Fiscal Year, state funding for local school districts is being reduced by \$900 million as a way to reduce state spending, help balance the state budget and avoid the need to raise any state taxes. Do you support or oppose this recent reduction in state funding for local school districts? (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly support	132	16%	<b>Total Support: 35%</b>
2. Somewhat support	152	19%	
3. Strongly oppose	313	39%	
4. Somewhat oppose	164	20%	
5. Undecided	39	05%	

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Q24. When thinking about how this issue would influence your vote for a candidate for the state legislature, would you be more likely to vote for... (ROTATE STATEMENTS – TEST INTENSITY)

- A) A candidate who supports increases in state funding for public education and school districts even if it means cuts in other state programs and services and/or raising some state taxes, or...
- B) A candidate who supports reducing state funding for public education and school districts in order to hold the line on state spending and/or avoid any increase in any state tax, or...

1. Much more likely/supports increases in funding	257	32%	<b>Total More Likely A: 56%</b>
2. Somewhat more likely/supports increases in funding	187	23%	
3. Much more likely/supports reducing funding	160	20%	
4. Somewhat more likely/supports reducing funding	89	11%	
5. Undecided	74	09%	
6. No Impact	31	04%	
7. Refuse	1	00%	

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**Following are several statements about other areas of public education that we would like your input on. Please tell me if you generally agree or disagree with each statement.**

(Rotate Q25 – Q31)

Q25. It is important that a comprehensive education for all K through 12 students include arts education, including visual art, music, theatre and dance. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	400	50%	<b>Total Agree: 81%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	248	31%	<b>Total Disagree: 17%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	47	06%	
4. Somewhat disagree	88	11%	
5. Undecided	12	01%	
6. Refuse	5	01%	

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Q26. All students in my community have ample arts education opportunities in their schools and community. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	253	32%	<b>Total Agree: 63%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	248	31%	<b>Total Disagree: 25%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	109	14%	
4. Somewhat disagree	89	11%	
5. Undecided	97	12%	
6. Refuse	3	00%	

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Q27. My local community and region have sufficient publicly-supported opportunities for all citizens to experience the arts in cultural organizations—such as museum and performance halls—as well as in public spaces. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	293	37%	<b>Total Agree: 69%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	258	32%	<b>Total Disagree: 26%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	116	15%	
4. Somewhat disagree	90	11%	
5. Undecided	37	05%	
6. Refuse	6	01%	

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Q28. All K-12 students and their families should be able to choose to attend any public school for which the student is academically qualified in the district where they live. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	473	59%	<b>Total Agree: 84%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	197	25%	<b>Total Disagree: 13%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	56	07%	
4. Somewhat disagree	45	06%	
5. Undecided	24	03%	
6. Refuse	4	01%	

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Q29. All K-12 students and their families should be able to choose to attend any public school for which they are academically qualified in any district, regardless of residence, without cost to the student or family for tuition or fees. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	183	23%	<b>Total Agree: 42%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	154	19%	<b>Total Disagree: 53%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	300	37%	
4. Somewhat disagree	127	16%	
5. Undecided	33	04%	
6. Refuse	4	01%	

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Q30. Taxpayer funds should be used to support tuition for students attending non-public schools like religious or private schools. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	127	16%	<b>Total Agree: 30%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	111	14%	<b>Total Disagree: 67%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	435	54%	
4. Somewhat disagree	97	12%	
5. Undecided	26	03%	
6. Refuse	3	00%	

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Q31. Public school choice policies should ensure that all qualified public school students should have the opportunity to enroll in advanced placement courses, career and technical courses, arts courses, foreign language courses and, if they have completed high school graduation requirements before the completion of their senior year, academically appropriate college courses. (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly agree	557	70%	<b>Total Agree: 93%</b>
2. Somewhat agree	189	24%	<b>Total Disagree: 04%</b>
3. Strongly disagree	10	01%	
4. Somewhat disagree	25	03%	
5. Undecided	15	02%	
6. Refuse	4	01%	

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Q32. As you may know, charter schools in Pennsylvania are currently an option for parents and children within the public school system and often have a specific focus such as math, science, technology or the arts. They receive their funding from the school districts where the charter school students live, and operate under a charter that exempts them from some state requirements imposed on traditional public schools. Do you favor or oppose the continued use of public charter schools as an option for parents and children within the public school system? (TEST INTENSITY)

1. Strongly support	211	26%	<b>Total support: 53%</b>
2. Somewhat support	215	27%	<b>Total Oppose: 35%</b>
3. Strongly oppose	172	22%	
4. Somewhat oppose	110	14%	
5. Undecided	85	11%	
6. Refuse	7	01%	

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**Now, I just have a few more questions for demographic purposes and we'll be through...**

Q33. Are you registered to vote as a Republican, Democrat, Independent or something else?

1. Republican	312	39%
2. Democrat	416	52%
3. Independent/other	72	09%

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Q34. What is your age according to the following brackets: 18 - 29, 30 - 39, 40 – 49, 50 to 59 or 60 and over?

1. 18-29	48	06%
2. 30-39	112	14%
3. 40-49	144	18%
4. 50-59	240	30%
5. 60+	256	32%

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Q35. Do you consider yourself to be conservative or liberal when thinking about your social, economic and political views?

1. Conservative	392	49%
2. Liberal	213	27%
3. Moderate	152	19%
4. Undecided	36	05%
5. Refuse	7	01%

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Q36. What is the last grade you completed in school? (DO NOT READ CHOICES)

1. K-8	1	00%
2. Some high school but did not graduate	19	02%
3. Graduated high school	241	30%
4. Technical or vocational school (2-year degree)	54	07%
5. Some college	108	14%
6. Graduated college (4-year degree)	209	26%
7. Graduate/professional school	160	20%
8. Undecided	2	00%
9. Refuse	6	01%

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Q37. Do you currently have any school age children living in the household?

1. Yes	260	32%
2. No	532	66%
3. Undecided	0	00%
4. Refuse	8	01%

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Q38. Do you live in a community that could be described as urban, suburban or rural?

1. Urban	154	19%
2. Suburban	370	46%
3. Rural	265	33%
4. Undecided	5	01%
5. Refuse	5	01%

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Q39. What was your total household income for 2010 according to the following income brackets – less than \$15,000, \$15 to \$30,000, \$31 to \$50,000, \$51 to \$75,000, \$76,000 - \$99,000, \$100,000 to \$200,000 or over \$200,000?

1. Less than \$15K	44	06%
2. \$15 - \$30K	71	09%
3. \$31 - \$50K	116	14%
4. \$51 - \$75K	156	19%
5. \$76K - \$99K	119	15%
6. \$100K - \$200K	147	18%
7. \$200,000+	31	04%
8. Undecided	11	01%
9. Refuse	105	13%

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**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THE SURVEY. HAVE A GOOD DAY.**

Gender:

1. Male	384	48%
2. Female	416	52%

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Area:

- 49 (06%) 1. **Northwest** [Erie, Crawford, Mercer, Venango, Warren, Forest]
  
  - 94 (12%) 2. **Southwest** [Lawrence, Beaver, Washington, Greene, Fayette, Westmoreland, Indiana, Armstrong, Butler]
  
  - 110 (14%) 3. **The "T"/Central** [Jefferson, Elk, McKean, Cameron, Clarion, Clearfield, Centre, Cambria, Somerset, Bedford, Fulton, Franklin, Huntingdon, Blair, Potter, Tioga, Bradford, Susquehanna, Wyoming, Sullivan, Lycoming, Clinton, Union, Snyder, Northumberland, Montour, Columbia, Mifflin, Juniata]
  
  - 98 (12%) 4. **Northeast/Lehigh Valley** [Luzerne, Carbon, Monroe, Schuylkill, Lackawanna, Lehigh, Northampton, Pike, Wayne]
  
  - 125 (16%) 5. **South Central** [Perry, Cumberland, Adams, York, Lancaster, Lebanon, Dauphin, Berks]
  
  - 169 (21%) 6. **Southeast** [Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, Bucks]
  
  - 69 (09%) 7. **Allegheny County**
  
  - 86 (11%) 8. **Philadelphia**
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Times Voted Last Four General Elections (from record):

0X (new registrants since G10)	10	01%
1X	146	18%
2X	223	28%
3X	204	26%
4X	217	27%

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**Methodology:** This poll was commissioned by The Education Policy and Leadership Center and conducted by Susquehanna Polling and Research. Completed interviews were conducted October 24 -31, 2011 with 800 registered voters. Only voters with prior vote history in G10, G09, G08 and/or G07 were contacted, as well as new registrants since 2010. Interviews are randomly selected and conducted via telephone using the professionally-trained survey research staff from the Harrisburg telephone call center of Susquehanna Polling and Research. Interviews are closely monitored to ensure a representative sample of Pennsylvania's electorate is achieved based on party affiliation, geography, gender, age and other demographics; results are sometimes statistically weighted.

The margin of error for a sample size of 800 interviews is +/-3.46% at the 95% confidence level

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