Department of Education
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NYC 2014 School Survey

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SCHOOL SURVEY

GENERAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO ALL SURVEYS

Are there any changes to this year's surveys?

We revised the survey to make it more streamlined and to provide more actionable data to schools. We also updated the survey to reflect current initiatives and priorities.

What is the deadline for completing the surveys?
The deadline by which all surveys must be completed is Friday, April 11, 2014.

THE TEACHER AND PARAPROFESSIONAL/PARENT COORDINATOR SURVEYS

Is the teacher survey anonymous?
The teacher survey continues to be absolutely anonymous. There is no link between the login information that a teacher receives and the identity of a teacher. Survey Coordinators are directed to randomly distribute login postcards to teachers and guidance counselors. The survey can be taken on any computer, so teachers do not need to log in to their account on the DOE network in order to take the survey.

In addition, in order to protect the anonymity of paraprofessionals and parent coordinators, the DOE will only report survey results from paraprofessionals and parent coordinators at the citywide level. No individual responses from any school staff members will be shared with schools.

How should we distribute postcards to teachers?
The teacher survey process is absolutely anonymous so please plan to randomly distribute sealed postcards to each teacher and guidance counselor listed on the roster provided for your school. The number on each survey postcard serves only to identify the school. No one at the school should record these numbers or keep track of who received which number.

You may want to consider distributing the login information to groups of teachers gathered together, rather than one by one, so that it is clear that there is no way for anyone to know who has received a

particular number. There is no link between the login information that a teacher receives and the identity of a teacher; it is important for this policy to be absolutely clear to the teachers taking the survey.

In addition, you may want to consider discussing the process with your colleagues and UFT chapter chair to ensure that the plans are clear and transparent. Please be thoughtful about the sensitivity of the process in your school and help make sure that your colleagues have an opportunity to provide open and honest feedback.

What if a teacher loses their postcard or survey access code?
If a teacher loses a postcard, direct them to the Survey Hotline at 1-800-690-8603. The Hotline will issue a new survey access code to the teacher. The Hotline will ask for the staff member's name to ensure that they are included on the list of staff eligible to take the survey. The Hotline will not record the name given and will not make any note of which code was provided to the staff member.

What should I do if a teacher on my roster is no longer employed at the school?
If a school receives a survey for a teacher who is no longer in that school, then the Survey Coordinator should discard that survey postcard. Do not give the postcard to another teacher or staff member who is not listed on the roster; simply notify the school's administration of the need to update that teacher's file in Galaxy. At the end of the survey period (April 11), response rates will be automatically adjusted in accordance with any changes in teacher records in Galaxy.

What should I do if a teacher is not included on my roster?
Survey materials were provided for all full-time pedagogues (teachers and guidance counselors) employed at your school as of the beginning of December 2013. This date is used to ensure that the staff taking the survey have been at a school long enough to provide meaningful feedback about its learning environment.

Teachers and guidance counselors who arrived at your school after December, or who are not full-time pedagogical employees, are not eligible to take this year's survey. If you believe a teacher was excluded in error, please send an email to surveys@schools.nyc.gov.

There are teachers on my roster that are on leave. Should they take the survey? Can I remove them from our roster in case they don't take the survey?
Surveys were provided to all full time DOE pedagogues (teachers and guidance counselors) employed at your school as of early December 2013. Teachers on leave status are sometimes counted in this population. We encourage you to focus on your current teacher population to work toward high response rates and consider making the survey materials available to any staff on leave by directing them to call the Survey Hotline at 1-800-690-8603 for a survey access code to take the survey online at www.nycschoolsurvey.org.

Will paraprofessionals and parent coordinators take the survey?
Paraprofessionals and parent coordinators will take the survey online. Login information for paraprofessionals and parent coordinators will be provided to the school's Survey Coordinator via email

during the week of March 18. Results from paraprofessional and parent coordinator responses will only be reported citywide in order to preserve the anonymity of the survey for all school staff.

My school did not receive a roster of eligible teachers. Who should receive these postcards?
A small number of schools do not store teacher data in DOE systems and did not manually submit a teacher roster for the survey. These schools have received postcards for teachers based on the size of the school and should distribute these postcards to the full-time teachers and guidance counselors at the school.

When is the deadline for the teacher, paraprofessional and parent coordinator surveys?
All surveys must be submitted by April 11, 2014.

THE PARENT SURVEY

What should I do if I find that a parent at my school has not received a survey?
Parents are eligible to complete a survey if their child has been enrolled in the school since early December 2013. Students enrolled after that point will not receive a survey for their parents. Also, we try to provide a single survey to each household in your school by looking for guardian and residence matches between students, so "missing" surveys may actually represent cases where a single survey was provided to the guardian of a family's oldest child in the school.

My school received a survey for someone who is no longer a part of this school's community. Can I discard the survey materials?
If a school receives a survey for a student or parent of a student who is no longer enrolled in that school, simply notify your school's pupil accounting secretary of the need to update the student file in ATS. At the end of the survey period (April 11), response rates will be updated in accordance with ATS records and constituents who are no longer part of your school's community will be removed from your school's final response rate. You may discard/recycle the materials that were provided for that constituent.

There are siblings in my school. How will the survey team account for this?
Your school's survey population will be adjusted before response rates are finalized in April based on enrollment records in ATS. Students with matching address information in ATS will be counted as a single household and your response rate will be adjusted to reflect one survey for the household.

What should parents do if they have more than one child in this school?
Parents should complete one survey per school. If a parent has more than one child in the same school, the parent should fill out one survey based on the experience of the oldest child in that school. If a

parent has children enrolled in multiple schools, the parent should fill out one separate survey for each school.

How can parents take the survey online?
Parents can take the survey online at www.nycschoolsurvey.org using the survey access code printed on their individual surveys.

What if a parent loses the paper survey?
If parents lose their surveys or are having technical difficulties with the online survey, they should call the Survey Hotline at 1-800-690-8603. The Survey Hotline will be able to provide eligible parents with survey access information to take the survey online.

My school would like to reward participants for completing surveys. How will we know which students and parents have returned surveys?
The survey is completely confidential for parents and students, and anonymous for teachers, so there is no way for anyone from the DOE or individual schools to know which people have or have not taken the survey. However, if schools would like to set up a system whereby students drop off completed surveys in sealed envelopes or submit a completion slip signed by parents in a school mailbox in exchange for a reward to be named by the school, then school officials can reward students whose parents fill out the survey. Please remember to uphold the confidential nature of survey responses and be careful not to interfere in any way with surveys that have been completed and sealed.

Can my school assist parents and families who are unable to read or have limited English proficiency?
Your school knows best how to empower families to provide feedback on the survey. If your school is able to provide reading or translation/interpretation assistance, please do so, but it is imperative that your school staff be mindful of the confidential nature of the survey and extremely careful not to a) influence survey responses in any way or b) attempt to review survey responses in any way.

Is the online survey translated?
Yes. The online survey for parents and students is provided in English as well as nine languages offered by the DOE: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Urdu. The online survey is available at www.nycschoolsurvey.org.

Where can parents go to complete the survey online if they don't have computers?
Parents can visit local library branches for free computer access. Schools are also encouraged to consider making school computers and space available to parents to take the survey online.

How will parents know that their online survey has been successfully submitted?

Parents have an opportunity to provide an email address while taking the online survey. This step is completely optional. If parents choose to provide an email address, a confirmation email will be sent to that address indicating that the survey was submitted. In addition, participants will see a confirmation page on the computer screen when they have submitted the survey. This page can be printed for a parent's record.

Can a parent fill out another parent's survey?
No. Parents are assigned a unique survey access code and must complete the individual survey that they receive.

When is the deadline for parents to take the survey?
All surveys must be submitted by April 11, 2014.

THE STUDENT SURVEY

Which students take the survey?
Survey materials have been provided for the students in your school enrolled in grades 6 through 12. A student must have been enrolled at your school in early December 2013 to be eligible to take the survey for your school. Students that enrolled after that point will not participate in the survey at your school this year.

How do students take the survey?
Students take the survey in school, during the school day. It is up to your school to determine the appropriate time and process for completion of the survey in accordance with your school's schedule, resources, and availability of computers.

Your school should plan a full class period for students to complete the survey. Please do not direct students to take the survey on their own time. Schools that plan for student completion of the survey during class time achieve higher response rates by ensuring that students do not lose survey materials.

In the fall, schools chose whether their students would take the survey on paper or online. If your school chose paper student surveys, your students may take the survey on paper or can opt to take it online. The materials that you have received contain paper surveys with unique survey access codes. Students can complete these paper surveys or can use the survey access codes to take the survey online at www.nycschoolsurvey.org. Each survey is personalized and should be distributed to the individual student named. If your school opted to have students take the survey online, the package that you have received contains survey postcards for students to take the survey online at www.nycschoolsurvey.org.

Each postcard displays a specific student's name and a unique seven-digit survey access code that allows the student to take the School Survey online.

How should my school send student paper surveys back in once they are completed?

Schools should collect completed paper student surveys and return them in the box in which they were provided via UPS, using the UPS shipping form provided in the box.

1. Record the tracking number from the enclosed UPS shipping form for your records. Otherwise, the package cannot be tracked.
2. Manually fill in your school's address under section one on page one of the UPS shipping form.
3. Peel off the adhesive pre-paid UPS return label on page three of the UPS shipping form and place it on your package.
4. Give page one of the UPS shipping form to the UPS driver. Keep page two for your records. If possible, please utilize any regular UPS pick-ups that occur at your school to return the package at no cost. If you are unable to do so or your school does not have a regular UPS pick up, please take your package to any UPS location where it will be shipped at no cost to your school. Note that calling UPS to schedule a pick up at your school may result in a fee.
5. Be sure that all surveys are completed and shipped by April 11, 2014.

What should I do if I find that a student at my school has not received a survey?

Students are eligible to complete a survey if they have been enrolled in the school since early December 2013. Students that have been admitted since that time are not eligible to take the survey this year at their current schools and are not counted in their schools' survey populations. If you feel that a student has been excluded in error, please send an email with the student's name and OSIS code to surveys@schools.nyc.gov.

What should I do if a survey was sent for a student who is no longer enrolled?

If a school receives a survey for a student or parent of a student who is no longer enrolled in that school, simply notify your school's pupil accounting secretary of the need to update the student file in ATS. At the end of the survey period (April 11), response rates will be updated in accordance with ATS records and constituents who are no longer part of your school's community will be removed from your school's final response rate. You may discard/recycle the materials that were provided for that constituent.

My school would like to reward students who complete surveys. How will we know which students have returned surveys?

The survey is completely confidential for parents and students, as well as anonymous for teachers, so there is no way for anyone from the DOE or individual schools to know which people have or have not taken the survey. However, schools are welcome to monitor and reward participation provided that schools are careful in upholding the confidential nature of survey responses and remain vigilant in

protecting against any interference with the completion process or with surveys that have been completed and sealed.

Should Long-Term Absence Students (LTAs) take the survey?
Long-term absence students (and the parents of these students) are eligible to take the survey. While we understand that schools face challenges in administering the survey to these populations, schools should make a reasonable effort to provide the survey to these constituents.

Are all District 75 students being surveyed? Which are and which are not?
Like last year, survey materials have been provided for all students in District 75 schools. If a principal at an individual school decides that a particular student with a New York State Alternate Assessment ("NYSAA") is not able to take the survey, simply do not provide survey materials to that student. Instead, discard/recycle the materials. At the end of the survey period (April 12), students with an NYSAA who did not take the survey will be removed from their schools' final response rate.

What should I do if a student loses his or her survey materials?
This situation can be largely prevented by distributing student survey materials during class time when a class is ready to take the survey immediately. Lost student survey issues will be handled on a case-by-case basis and should be reported to surveys@schools.nyc.gov.

Is the online survey translated?
Yes. The online survey for parents and students is provided in English as well as nine languages offered by the DOE: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Korean, Russian, Spanish and Urdu. The online survey is available at www.nycschoolsurvey.org.

Can a student use another student's login information or survey materials?
No. Students are assigned a unique survey access code number and must complete the survey using the materials that they receive.

What if a student does not want to take the survey?
The School Survey is voluntary and confidential. It is a student's choice to take or not take the survey. If a student objects to taking the survey in school, that student may take the survey material and complete the survey on his/her own time.

Can my school assist students who are unable to read or have limited English proficiency?
Your school knows best how to empower students to provide feedback on the survey. If your school is able to provide reading or translation/interpretation assistance, please do so, but it is imperative that your school staff be mindful of the confidential nature of the survey and extremely careful not to a) influence survey responses in any way or b) attempt to review survey responses in any way.

When is the deadline for students to take the survey?
All surveys must be submitted by April 11, 2014.

Other questions? Email surveys@schools.nyc.gov.