



**2011–12 School Survey on Crime and Safety
(SSOCS:2012)**

Change Request 83C

August 2011

**National Center for Education Statistics
(NCES)**

Introduction

This memo provides an update and requests changes to the 2011–12 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS:2012), approved on October 6, 2009 (OMB# 1850-0761, exp. 10/31/2012).

Table 1. SSOCS:2012 data collection schedule

Date	Operation	Description
upon clearance	LEA contacts	Census begins contacting school districts of sampled schools that require prior district approval to participate in surveys.
12/5/2011 - 12/30/2011	E-mail look-up operation	The data collection contractor gathers principal e-mail addresses of sampled schools in order to make direct contact with sample schools via e-mail.
2/13/2012	Principal Advance Letter Mail-out	Advance letters are mailed to principals of sampled schools describing the survey.
2/14/2012	Superintendent and CSSO Advance Letter Mail-out	Advance letters are sent to superintendents and chief state school officers to inform them that schools within their districts or states were selected for SSOCS:2012.
2/21/2012	Principal Advance E-mail	Principals will be sent an e-mail to alert them that the SSOCS questionnaire will arrive within the next week.
2/21/2012	Questionnaire Mail-out	SSOCS:2012 questionnaire is sent to the school principal/administrator of sampled schools.
3/6/2012	Follow up e-mail to principals and other appropriate staff	Principals or other staff of sampled schools are contacted by e-mail to encourage them to complete the questionnaire.
3/14/2012 - 3/30/2012	Reminder Operation, Phase 1	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed SSOCS questionnaire are contacted to verify that the questionnaire has been received and to remind them to complete it as soon as possible.
3/19/2012 - 6/1/2012	Remail	A replacement questionnaire is mailed to schools that have requested one and to schools with outstanding questionnaires that were not reached during the reminder operation.
3/21/2012	E-mail Reminder	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed questionnaire contacted by e-mail to encourage them to do so.
4/4/2012	E-mail reminder	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed questionnaire contacted by e-mail to encourage them to complete the questionnaire.
4/4/2012	Thank you e-mail to responding schools	Sampled schools that have returned a completed questionnaire are sent a thank you e-mail.
4/16/2012 - 4/18/2012	Second mailout	Questionnaires are re-mailed to sampled schools that were reached during phase 1 of the reminder operation but have not returned a completed questionnaire.
4/16/2012 - 4/20/2012	Reminder Operation, Phase 2	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed SSOCS questionnaire are contacted to remind them to do so as soon as possible. Data are collected over the phone if requested.
4/25/2012	E-mail Reminder	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed questionnaire contacted by e-mail to encourage them to do so.
5/7/2012 - 6/8/2012	Nonresponse Follow-up	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed SSOCS questionnaire are contacted by telephone to attempt to complete the questionnaire over the phone or by fax submission. Fallback for reluctant respondents is key-items data collection.
5/16/2012	E-mail Reminder	Sampled schools that have not returned a completed questionnaire contacted by e-mail to encourage them to do so.
6/4/2012	E-mail Reminder	Sample schools that have not returned a completed questionnaire contacted by e-mail to encourage them to do so.
5/1/2012 - 6/15/2012	Data Retrieval Operation	For cases in which critical subitems were left blank or responses were illogical, respondents are contacted to resolve issues related to the missing data.

Changes to the Questionnaire and Rationale

New Items

Two items have been added to the questionnaire for the 2011–12 administration (see item 12 in the attached Appendix C). The new items are:

During the 2011–12 school year, did your school or school district provide any of the following for classroom teachers or aides?

1. Training in school-wide discipline policies and practices related to bullying
2. Training in recognizing physical, social, and verbal bullying behaviors

Each of these new items was subjected to cognitive testing and items were modified, where necessary, based on the results of the cognitive testing. The summary of cognitive testing of the new items can be found in Appendix A.

With the exception of the two new items above, the 2011–12 SSOCS questionnaire will remain the same as the 2009–10 questionnaire.

New Item Rationale

Training in school-wide discipline policies and practices related to bullying:

A study commissioned by the National Education Association (Bradshaw et al., 2011) reported that 93% of school employees reported the existence of school-wide bullying policies, but only 54% of school faculty and staff reported receiving training related to that policy. The New York Department of Education’s anti-bullying efforts, including the state’s “Respect for All” campaign, mandated that schools provide discipline plans and training for all teachers, yet only 19.3% have actually been trained (AALDEF, 2010). While anti-bullying policies have become more prevalent, teachers not trained in the procedures associated with such policies remain unsure how to deal with incidents of bullying (Bauman et al., 2008; Terry, 2010). Collecting data on teacher training in school-wide discipline policies and practices related to bullying will inform efforts to effectively combat bullying in schools.

Training in recognizing physical, social, and verbal bullying:

According to a study commissioned by the National Education Association (Bradshaw et al., 2011), over half of teachers surveyed indicated that they needed more training in order to intervene in bullying situations (51% physical, 49% verbal, 57% relational/social). Staff training is essential as teachers’ attitudes and actions toward bullying significantly impact rates of bullying in classrooms (Chang, 2003; Henry et al., 2000; Hirschstein et al., 2007). It is further important to disaggregate types of bullying behaviors as teachers are significantly less likely to recognize socially aggressive behaviors (e.g. rumor spreading, exclusion) as bullying (Craig, Henderson & Murphy, 2000).

Changes to Other Materials

SSOCS:2010 advance and cover letters to principals, CSSOs, and superintendents will be updated to become SSOCS:2012 communications. Only basic updates (i.e., updating dates and contact information) are proposed. The SSOCS:2012 brochure will contain the same basic information as the SSOCS:2010 brochure, however, information will be updated with data from the 2010 collection. A copy of the SSOCS:2012 brochure can be found in Appendix B.

Estimates of Hour Burden for Information Collection

The sample size, projected number of responses, estimated average response time, and the total estimated respondent burden for the 2011–12 SSOCS are as follows:

Table 2. Estimates of the burden to special districts prior to the 2011–12 SSOCS data collection activities and to the 2011–12 SSOCS data collection respondents

Type of district	Sample Size	Projected Number of Responses	Estimated Average Response Time per Respondent (Hours)	Total Hours
Generic Application	152	152	1	152
Special Application	38	38	3	114
School Principal	3,500	2,648	0.75	1,986
Total		2,838		2,252

The first phase of respondent contact for the 2011–12 SSOCS begins with seeking the approval of “special districts,” or the subset of school districts, among those pulled into sample, that have set up a process to authorize any research conducted in the district’s schools. This operation, which primarily relies on previously-collected contact information (shared among programs within NCES), starts off with adding new information that can be gleaned from online sources first. Internet research and/or calls are conducted to verify the information about where to send the completed required research application forms, and, if necessary, to collect contact information for this process.

Based on information collected during the Schools and Staffing Surveys (SASS) data collection efforts, districts with particularly detailed application forms and lengthy processes for approval required approximately 4 hours to complete the application decision process for the SASS. Based on the considerable difference in the scope of the surveys, types of respondents, and number of questionnaires to be reviewed, the decision time burden to these special districts is estimated to be 3 hours for the SSOCS survey. Based on prior information compiled within NCES, districts known to have detailed application forms and lengthy processes for approval comprise approximately 20 percent of all special districts, with the other 80 percent requiring only a “generic” research application package and little to no direct contact. Estimated decision time burden for districts in this category is approximately 1 hour. The previous number of special districts sampled for the 2009–10 SSOCS was 181, and for 2011–12 allowance is being made for 5 percent growth in the number of such districts with application procedure requirements. The contacting of these districts will begin as soon as OMB clearance is received.

An item was included in the 2007–08 SSOCS questionnaire that asked respondents, “How long did it take you to complete this form, not counting interruptions?” Based on an analysis of this item, it was estimated that the estimated 2,648 respondents will need approximately 45 minutes each, on average, to respond to the SSOCS survey. Assuming that the respondents, mostly principals, would earn \$44.77 per hour,¹ the cost to respondents for the overall burden would be: 1,986 hours @ \$44.77/hour = \$88,913.

[NOTE: The total cost to respondents was estimated to be \$97,056 for the 2011–12 SSOCS upon submission of the SSOCS:2010 and SSOCS:2012 OMB clearance package. The reduction in the total estimated cost for the 2011–12 SSOCS is due to the reduction in average principal salary as well as a

¹ Estimate for principal hourly wage was determined by searching for “Principal” salaries on the Salary.com website at <http://www.salary.com> on July 8, 2011.

slight reduction in expected respondents (from 2,695 to 2,648), based off of the results from the 2009–10 SSOCS collection]. There are no other costs to respondents.

Changes in Annual Government Cost

There are no estimated changes in cost to the federal government for the 2011–12 administration of SSOCS.

References

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Appendix A

2011–12 SSOCS Cognitive Testing of the New Items Summary

**National Center for Education Statistics
Highlights from the School Survey on Crime and Safety
Cognitive Lab Testing
(August 2011)**

ITEM 1

During the 2010-11 school year, did your school or school district provide any of the following for classroom teachers or aides? (Check “Yes” or “No” on each line.)

***Violence** – actual, attempted, or threatened fight or assault.
New items being tested are highlighted in yellow.

	Yes	No
a. Training in classroom management for teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Training in school-wide discipline policies and practices related to violence*	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Training in school-wide discipline policies and practices related to bullying	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d. Training in school-discipline policies and practices related to alcohol and/or drug use	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Training in safety procedures (e.g., how to handle emergencies)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Training in recognizing early warning signs of students likely to exhibit violent behavior	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Training in recognizing and responding to physical, social, and verbal bullying behaviors	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h. Training in recognizing signs of students using/abusing alcohol and/or drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Training in positive behavioral intervention strategies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Training in crisis prevention and intervention	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Findings

- All participants understood they could respond “Yes” to more than one item.
- Most participants said that if a single training covered more than one of the topics listed, they would check “Yes” for all of the topics listed that were covered in that training. However, two participants said they would only check “Yes” for the primary topic of the training.
- One principal, who worked in a large district, indicated that she was not aware of all the trainings offered by their school district, and therefore may have provided some false “No” responses.
- One participant was unsure whether to respond “Yes” if the training was offered to only a subset of teachers; this person consistently checked “Yes” in these cases.
- All participants responded “yes” to both (c) and (g). All but one of the participants felt

that these two items were distinct and measured different things.

- If (c) was not listed, five people thought those topics would be covered under item (g), three people would think the topics would not be covered anywhere else on the list, and one person thought the topics could be included under a different item.
- If (g) was not listed, seven people thought those topics would be covered under item (c), one person thought those topics would not be covered anywhere else on the list, and one person thought the topics could be included under a different item.
- When asked if any of the items listed were irrelevant to their school, two participants said (h), one said (i), and one said (d). Most were elementary school principals who said these items were irrelevant because of the age of their students. Several other principals said that even though those topics were not currently an issue with their students, it was important to be informed and prepared.
- When asked if there were any terms in this item that needed to be defined, four of the participants mentioned “bullying.” Some specifically wanted to know if “harassment” would be considered bullying. Other participants said the item should specify the different types of bullying because some respondents would likely only think of physical bullying.
- When asked if any additional topics should be added to the list in this question, principals mentioned several that they apparently did not realize were already on the list: safety, how to deal with violence, responding to natural disasters, and emergency preparedness. Two principals recommended adding to the list training on recognizing the signs of child abuse.

Recommendations

- Consider adding the following instruction for this question: *“If your school or school district covers more than one of these topics in a single training session, check “Yes” for all of the topics that are covered.”*
- Consider eliminating item (g) because most participants felt that the topics under (g) are would also be included under (c).
- Consider including a definition for “bullying” with this question.