

DATE: February 3, 2012
TO: Shelly Martinez, OMB
FROM: Freddie Cross, NCES
THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela, NCES
SUBJECT: Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS:13) Cognitive Testing (OMB# 1850-0803 v.65)

The following material is being submitted under the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) clearance agreement (OMB #1850-0803) that provides for NCES to improve methodologies, question types, and/or delivery methods of its survey and assessment instruments by conducting field tests, focus groups, or cognitive interviews.

The request for approval described in this memorandum is to conduct, in February 2012, cognitive testing of the teacher questionnaire items to be used in the 2012-13 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS:13). This package provides the materials and procedures for conducting the cognitive testing.

Background

The TFS is a follow-up survey of selected elementary and secondary school teachers who participated in the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) in 2012. The SASS is the largest, most extensive survey of K-12 school districts, schools, teachers, and administrators in the United States today. It provides extensive data on the characteristics and qualifications of teachers and principals, teacher hiring practices, professional development, class size, and other conditions in schools across the nation. The TFS focuses on a sample of teachers who participated in SASS, including both teachers who left and remained in the K-12 teaching profession.

The TFS includes teacher data from public (including public charter) and private school sectors, similar to SASS. However, due to insufficient sample sizes, TFS does not include teachers who taught in a Bureau of Indian Education-funded (BIE) school during the SASS school year. Together, SASS and TFS data provide a multitude of opportunities for analysis and reporting on elementary and secondary educational issues.

The TFS is a follow-up of selected teachers from the SASS teacher surveys and is conducted during the school year following the SASS. It was conducted in the 1988–89, 1991–92, 1994–95, 2000–01, 2004-05, and 2008-09 school years (after the 1987–88, 1990–91, 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2003-04, and 2007-08 administrations of SASS, respectively). NCES will

conduct the next TFS in the 2012-13 school year; it will collect data from a subsample of teachers who participate in the 2011-12 SASS.

Over time, the philosophy behind the TFS has changed. Beginning with the 2004-05 survey, the TFS more closely resembled the SASS teacher questionnaires than in any of the previous TFS administrations. There was a greater overlap of TFS and SASS teacher items, and there were fewer items unique to the TFS, other than items pertaining to leaving last year's teaching position. When examined together, the results of TFS and SASS can give researchers insight on many different educational issues, including the retention of teachers in public and private schools and teachers' job satisfaction.

Congress, state education departments, federal agencies, private school associations, teacher associations, and educational organizations have used data from the TFS surveys. In particular, results of these prior administrations have been used to analyze changes in the teacher labor force over time, to develop incentive programs to encourage teacher retention, and to understand the effects of school practices and policies on a teacher's decision to continue teaching or leave the K-12 teaching profession. This submission is to cognitively test new and revised TFS survey items.

Design and Context

Cognitive Testing. Survey Methodologists from Macro International, Inc. will conduct cognitive interviews with recruited participants. There are two different sets of new or revised questions: one for current teachers, and one for teachers who have left the profession. Both questionnaires will be administered in 2012-13 to respondents who were teachers in 2011-12.

In February 2012, staff from ICF Macro will conduct a maximum of 20 cognitive interviews (10 for each questionnaire type) with teacher participants. They will recruit public and private teachers nationally, with a mix from different geographic areas and urbanicity, differing school sizes, and covering different subjects taught. Interviews will be conducted by telephone.

The cognitive interviews will be conducted for NCES through a contract between the Census Bureau and ICF Macro. This contract is under the direction of Steven Tourkin (Demographic Surveys Division, Room 6H033, U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. 20233, 301-763-3791, Steven.C.Tourkin@census.gov).

Assurance of Confidentiality

Cognitive lab participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that the information they give us will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify anyone as an individual, and that their answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except

as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S.C., § 9573] (see attachment V). Participants will be assigned a unique identifier (ID), which will be created solely for data file management. The respondent ID will not be linked to the respondent name in any way or form.

Estimate of Hour Burden and Costs for Recruiting and Paying Respondents

Ten individual cognitive interviews, are planned per questionnaire. Each interview session is expected to last approximately 45 minutes, to allow cognitive interview participants to review the entire survey, while providing responding to probes and think aloud responses. Thus, the total estimated burden time for this research is a maximum of 20 hours.

Estimated respondent burden

Respondent type	Estimated Number of Respondents	Estimated Number of Responses	Hours per Respondent	Total Burden Hours
Current teacher recruitment	15	15	0.25	3.75
Former teacher recruitment	15	15	0.25	3.75
Current teacher interview	10	10	0.75	7.50
Former teacher interview	10	10	0.75	7.50
Total	30	50	-	23

Given the importance of recruiting a representative range of respondents, we will offer prospective respondents \$30 for completing the 45 minute cognitive interview.

Cost to Federal Government

The cost of conducting the cognitive interviews will be \$12,700. The following table provides the overall project cost estimates:

<i>1 Staff Costs</i>	\$9,565
<i>2 Other Project Materials</i>	
Newspaper Advertisements for Recruiting	\$380
Incentives for Participation	\$1,200
Photocopy/Shipping	\$630
<i>3 Indirect Costs</i>	\$160
Total Cost of Task Without Fee	\$11,935
Fixed Fee	\$765
Total Cost of Task	\$12,700