

MEMORANDUM

OMB # 1850-0803 v.67

DATE: May 11, 2011

TO: Shelly Martinez
Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget

FROM: Jared Coopersmith
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THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela
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SUBJECT: Response to OMB passback on FRSS 105: Condition of Public School Facilities Feasibility Calls

1. There is some overlap between the building systems/features listed in question 2 and the factors listed in question 8; it wasn't that clear how those two questions were different from one another. Perhaps NCES could clarify that Question 8, is to learn more about environmental factors?

For Q8, OMB is correct in that we are getting at the environmental quality (vs. the physical or structural quality as in Q2) of these features. We will make the following changes to Q8 in order to emphasize this difference:

The question stem will now read: How satisfactory is each environmental factor in the permanent and portable (temporary) onsite buildings at this school?

We will refer to "environmental factor" in the instructions for part A and part B. The "Building factor" column header will be changed to "Environmental factor".

2. Has NCES used dashes and zeros in previous studies to populate a "not applicable" column?

We are using the dashes in the not applicable column to indicate that not applicable is not a valid response for a particular feature/system (e.g., it's not possible that a school does not have a roof). The zeros indicate that not applicable is a valid response. We will make sure that respondents understand this distinction during the feasibility calls.

3. Combined with lengthy instructions and double-banking, this format seems difficult to understand. If not specifically tested prior, we would like NCES to ask about it during its calls.

We will ensure that respondents can interpret the rating scales/instructions and the grid responses during the calls. We have already incorporated some improvements over the 1999 items based on that data collection effort.

4. I hope that the response means that NCES will see whether respondents understand the formatting of the more complex questions with NA categories, not just that it will be explained to them during the call because in the full study with self-administration, that solution won't be an option. If you mean "whether", I would hope it would be specifically probed as part of those sets of questions.

Yes, we'll make sure respondents understand the grid questions and, based on those responses, make appropriate changes if necessary.