

Memorandum**United States Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences
National Center for Education Statistics**

DATE: March 31, 2020

TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB

THROUGH: Carrie Clarady, Avar Consulting, in contract with NCES

FROM: Stephen P. Broughman, Project Officer, Private School Universe Survey (PSS), Cross-sectional and Sample Surveys Division, NCES

SUBJECT: Private School Universe Survey (PSS) 2019-20 and 2021-22 Spring 2020 Data Collection Change Request (OMB# 1850-0641 v.11)

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, conducts the Private School Universe Survey (PSS), a national survey of private elementary and secondary schools. The PSS is designed to collect biennial data on the total number of private schools, teachers, and students; and to create an NCES universe frame of private schools that serve as a sampling frame for NCES surveys. This survey is an ongoing project to improve NCES universe and sample data on private schools.

CATI non-response follow-up for the 2019-20 PSS collection ended on March 13th. Field follow-up of the CATI nonresponding cases was scheduled to begin on April 6th and last until May 29th. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, the Census Bureau's National Processing Center is closed, and all Census Bureau employees are practicing social distancing. For now, NCES has delayed the beginning of field follow-up until May 4th.

This request updates the data collection procedures by adding an email contact for the remaining schools. There are approximately 2,900 unresolved cases after CATI follow-up. Census staff is currently researching email addresses for these schools. We would begin by sending an initial email (Appendix C9) to group one on April 15th encouraging the school to respond and containing the 2019-20 PSS online questionnaire link and login information. On May 6, we would send group two an initial email and group one a first reminder email (Appendix C10). On May 20, we would send group three an initial email, group two a first reminder email, and group one a second reminder email (Appendix C11).

This request does not introduce significant changes to the estimated respondent burden or the costs to the federal government. This request updates A16 (Publication Plan/Time Schedule) and B2 (Procedures for Data Collection). Appendices C9 (Initial Email), C10 (First Reminder Email), and C11 (Second Reminder Email) were added to Appendix C (School Contacting Materials).

The revisions made to the last approved PSS 2019-20 clearance documents (OMB# 1850-0641 v.9) are reflected below. Blue text indicates the document and green text the section of the document in which a change was made, followed by notes regarding the edits. Black font demarks the text that remains unchanged from the last approved, while text in red font shows the revisions that were made.

Part A

A16. Publication Plans/Time Schedule

2019-20 PSS

The first mailing of questionnaires (web invitation or paper questionnaire) is scheduled for October 1, 2019 (see Appendix C-2). A second mailout (paper questionnaire only) for schools that did not respond to the first mailout is scheduled for October 15, 2019. A third mailout (paper questionnaire) for schools that did not respond to the first or second mailouts is scheduled for October 28, 2019. Telephone follow-up for nonresponse will begin in January 2020. **Emails (web invitation) to CATI noninterviews are scheduled to be sent out on April 15th, May 6th, and May 20th.** Personal visit follow-up for mail/internet noninterviews and CATI noninterviews is scheduled for January 2020 through May 2020.

The 2019-20 PSS survey is being conducted according to the following time schedule:

Request Private School Lists	7/5/2018
Conduct Screener Calls for List-Frame Schools	8/13/2018-3/4/2019
Conduct Screener Calls for Area-Frame Schools	9/5/2019-9/30/2019
1 st Survey Mailout (Web invitation or paper questionnaire)	10/1/2019
2 nd Survey Mailout (Paper questionnaire only)	10/15/2019
3 rd Survey Mailout (Paper questionnaire only)	10/28/2019
CATI/Field Followup	1/13/2020-5/29/2020
Emails to CATI Nonrespondents	4/15/2020, 5/6//2020, and 5/20/2020
Check-in, Clerical Edit	10/1/2019-6/2020
Process Data	7/2020-10/2020
Final File	11/2020
NCES Reports Results	5/2021

Part B

B2. Procedures for Data Collection—Statistical Methods, Estimation Procedures, Accuracy, and Anticipated Problems

The first mailout (web invitation or paper questionnaire; see Appendix C-2) will be followed by a second mailout (paper questionnaire) to nonrespondents two weeks later. The second mailout will be followed by a third mailout (paper questionnaire) again two weeks later. A reminder postcard will be sent one week after the third mailout. Five weeks after the third mailout, noninterview cases will be turned over to the CATI facility for telephone follow-up and, when necessary, to field staff for personal visit follow-up. **In the 2019-20 PSS, emails (web invitation) to CATI noninterviews will be sent on April 15th, May 6th, and May 20th.**

Appendix C

C9. Initial Email

Subject line: U.S. Department of Education Survey!

Dear <ADMINISTRATOR>:

We at the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education request your participation in the 2019-20 Private School Survey (PSS), a national data collection effort that is invaluable to private schools across the country. The purpose of this survey is to obtain current information about private schools in recognition of the importance of private education in the United States.

We are collecting this data from all private elementary and secondary schools. Your participation is critical to the success of this survey as higher response rates give us confidence that the findings are accurate. We understand the many difficulties surrounding schools, their staff, and students, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Our convenient online instrument allows schools to respond on a secure website, without the need for survey enumerators to travel to schools in person.

The Internet link to the website and your personalized User ID are listed below. Please complete the survey online within two weeks.

Respond now at <https://respond.census.gov/pss>

Log in using this User ID: <USERID>

Data from this survey will be instrumental in assisting government agencies with policy decisions, and to construct reports that describe the status of private schools in the United States. Researchers in private organizations use the data to conduct analyses for projects and studies. Reports and tabulations generated from PSS data are also used by news and media organizations to inform the public about the status of private education in the United States.

If you have any general questions about the survey, contact the U.S. Census Bureau, the survey collection agency, via email at pss@census.gov. To learn more about PSS, visit <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss>.

Thank you in advance for your cooperation in this important data collection effort!

Sincerely,

James L. Woodworth
Commissioner for Education Statistics
National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0641. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this collection, or comments or concerns about the contents or the status of your individual submission of this questionnaire, please e-mail: pss@census.gov, or write directly to: Private School Universe Survey (PSS), National Center for Education Statistics, Potomac Center Plaza, 550 12th Street SW, Room #4012, Washington, DC 20202.

C10. First Reminder Email

Subject line: U.S. Department of Education Survey Reminder

Dear <ADMINISTRATOR>:

We recently contacted you in reference to the 2019-20 Private School Survey (PSS). We are hoping you might have the time to participate in this important national data collection effort online. The purpose of this survey is to obtain current information about private schools across the country in recognition of the importance of private education in the United States.

Your participation is critical to the success of this survey as higher response rates give us confidence that the findings are accurate. We understand the many difficulties surrounding schools, their staff, and students, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Our convenient online instrument allows schools to respond on a secure website, without the need for survey enumerators to travel to schools in person.

The Internet link to the website and your personalized User ID are listed below. Please complete the survey online within two weeks.

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C11. Second Reminder Email

Subject line: U.S. Department of Education Survey Reminder

Dear <ADMINISTRATOR>:

There is still time for your school to participate in the 2019-20 Private School Survey (PSS), a biennial national data collection effort recognizing the importance of private education in the United States. If you have already completed and returned your questionnaire, thank you!

If not, in order for your school to be included in this survey, which is used by policy makers, private researchers, and the media, to understand the status of private education in the United States, it is critical that you respond now by clicking on the link below and logging in with your personalized User ID.

Respond now at <https://respond.census.gov/pss>

Log in using this User ID: <USERID>

Your participation is vital to the success of this survey as higher response rates give us confidence that the findings are accurate. We understand the many difficulties surrounding schools, their staff, and students, due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Our convenient online instrument allows schools to respond on a secure website, without the need for survey enumerators to travel to schools in person.

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