

Memorandum

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

DATE: March 22, 2022
TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB
THROUGH: Carrie Clarady, NCES
FROM: Julia Merlin, NCES
SUBJECT: 2021-22 TFS Additional Recruitment Materials (OMB# 1850-0617 v.11)

The Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS) is a follow-up survey of public and private elementary and secondary school teachers who participated in the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) during the previous school year. The purpose of the survey is to determine how many teachers remained at the same school, moved to another school, or left the profession. Historically, the TFS has also been conducted the school year following the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), the predecessor survey to the NTPS. Redesigned from the SASS with a focus on flexibility, timeliness, and integration with other ED data, the NTPS system allows for school, principal, and teacher characteristics to be analyzed in relation to one another. The major objectives of the TFS are to measure the attrition rate for teachers; examine the characteristics of teachers who stayed in the teaching profession and those who changed professions or retired; obtain activity or occupational data for those who left the position of a K-12 teacher; obtain reasons for moving to a new school or leaving the K-12 teaching profession; and collect data on job satisfaction.

The TFS/PFS main study was approved in July 2021 (OMB# 1850-0617 v.4). Two change requests to update teacher recruitment materials (OMB# 1850-0617 v.5) and add special district contact materials (OMB# 1850-0617 v.6) were approved in August 2021, a change request to add reminder emails to schools for the TFS-1 operation (OMB# 1850-0617 v.7) was approved in October 2021, a change request to correct a typo or error on the questionnaire was approved in November 2021 (OMB# 1850-0617 v.8), a change request to update incentive procedures and recruitment material timing was approved in January 2022 ((OMB# 1850-0617 v.9), and a change request to add a web instrument for the PFS was approved in February 2022 (OMB# 1850-0617 v.10). The 2020-21 NTPS (OMB# 1850-0598 v.28-30) finished data collection in late July 2021, and the TFS/PFS is a follow-up operation to the NTPS conducted the year prior.

Historically, the TFS has a very high response rate; for the 2012-13 collection, the unit response rate was between 81% and 73% depending on the questionnaire. Unfortunately, the response rates for the 2021-22 TFS collection are considerably lower. We anticipated this response rate depression given trends for previous surveys, hence other change requests to alter our recruitment and incentive strategy in the hopes that these strategies would be sufficient. However, as of March 15, 2022, we are in Week 9 of data collection for the 2021-22 TFS, and the unit response rate is 53%. At Week 9 in the 2012-13 collection, the response rate was ten percentage points higher at 63%.

To continue to address this decrease in expected response rates, NCES is proposing the addition of a new TFS recruitment email to be sent directly from an ed.gov email address, based on a strategy employed by the School Pulse Panel, and seeks to send text messages to all eligible teachers outside of the texting experiment. The new email from a specific and not general email address will ideally motivate respondents to take the survey and the added text messages will provide another method of completion for respondents, especially those who may prefer this shorter format.

All changes in the attached materials are shown in full in the pages to follow, where new text is indicated in red. This requested change does not affect the approved total cost to the federal government for conducting this study nor the estimated respondent burden.

Changes to Part B

1. (Pages 7-8)

B.2.1.2 Questionnaires for Former and Current Teachers (TFS-2 and TFS-3)

Outside of this experiment, text messages will also be used to encourage response from non-responding teachers. More specifically, toward the end of data collection and after all text message experiment activities have concluded, non-responding, consenting teachers from the control group will be sent text messages in two stages. The first stage will include sending a link to complete the TFS online, while the second will include sending the interactive questions. Non-responding teachers from treatment groups one and two will be sent the interactive questions, as well, in a final attempt to obtain their teaching status prior to the end of data collection. For additional details about testing the use of text messaging in the 2021-22 TFS, refer to section B.4.1 of this document.

2. (Page 15)

B.4.1 Testing the use of text messages in TFS

Outside of this experiment, text messages will also be used to encourage response from non-responding teachers. More specifically, toward the end of data collection and after all experiment activities have concluded, non-responding, consenting teachers from the control group will be sent text messages in two stages. The first stage will include sending a link to complete the TFS online, while the second will include sending the interactive questions. Non-responding teachers from treatment groups one and two will be sent the interactive questions, as well, in a final attempt to obtain their teaching status.

Changes to Appendix A

3. (Page 26) updated contact materials table to reflect the new email option

Contact Materials for TFS and PFS 2021-22

Teacher and Principal Letters and E-mails Summary Table

Data Collection Activity/Operation	Correspondence Identifier(s)	Description
TFS Reminder E-mails		
Eighth Teacher E-mail	TFS-22E	This e-mail reminds teachers to complete the TFS and provides login information.
Ninth Teacher E-mail	TFS-23E	This e-mail reminds teachers to complete the TFS and provides login information.
Tenth Teacher E-mail	TFS-24E	This e-mail reminds teachers to complete the TFS and provides login information.
Personalized Email for Non-Responders	TFS-25E	This e-mail reminds teachers to complete the TFS and will be sent directly from NCES.

4. (Page 54) New email (TFS-25E)

TFS Personalized Email to Non-Responders

TFS-25E

Subject: We need your help to understand what's changed: Please consider participating in the Teacher Follow-up Survey!

Body:

Dear <Teacher Name>,

We urgently need your help to understand what has happened to current and former teachers in the last year.

Your TFS responses will help us better understand how school policies and practices, as well as personal life and work experiences, influence teachers' decisions to remain in or leave the profession. As you may have seen in the news, decisionmakers are anxiously trying to understand how the coronavirus pandemic has impacted the education workforce – **but they need nationally representative attrition data from the Department of Education to truly capture the experiences of current and former teachers across the country.** You can ensure we have a complete picture by responding to this short survey, even if you have left the teaching workforce.

This survey will only take about 20 minutes to complete. To respond online, please visit the link below and enter your User ID:

Respond now at: <https://respond.census.gov/tfs>
User ID:

To learn more about the NTPS and TFS and to read reports from previous surveys, please visit our website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/ntps>.

If you have any questions or would like to complete the survey with a representative, please contact us at 1-888-595-1338 between 9:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) Monday through Saturday, or 11:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m. (Eastern Time) Sunday. You can also contact me directly at Julia.merlin@ed.gov.

Sincerely,

Julia Merlin

Study Director, Teacher Follow-up Survey and Principal Follow-up Survey
National Center for Education Statistics

All of the information you provide 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). Reports of the findings from the survey will not identify participating districts, schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.