

School Pulse Panel (SPP) 2024-25

Preliminary Field Activities

OMB# 1850-0969 v.12

Appendix A

Communication Materials

**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
U.S. Department of Education**

October 2023

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District Research Application Cover Letter

Note that these materials are provided as examples, all communication materials will be customized to the district



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

[Name]

[Date]

[Position, Department]

[School District]

[Street Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Dear [District Contact Name]

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education is requesting approval to conduct the **School Pulse Panel (SPP)** in (X) of your district's schools during the 2024-25 school year.

The **School Pulse Panel** was originally developed in response to Executive Order 14000: Supporting the Reopening and Continuing Operation of Schools and Early Childhood Education Providers. It collects extensive data on issues concerning the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and staff in U.S. public K-12 schools. The SPP has been one of the nation's few sources of reliable data on a wealth of information focused on schools' learning mode offerings, virus spread mitigation strategies, services offered for students and staff, and technology use, as reported by school principals in U.S. public schools. Due to the success of the SPP, NCES is preparing for a new round of monthly collections with a new panel for the 2024-25 school year.

The **School Pulse Panel** is administered by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of NCES. Its data are crucial in helping legislators and education leaders make informed decisions to improve education and pandemic recovery. About 4,000 public K-12 schools will be selected to participate in the panel where school staff will be asked to provide requested data monthly throughout the 2024-25 school year. An additional reserve sample of 4,000 schools may be recruited. The responses from your sampled schools represent the concerns of similar schools that were not sampled, both within and outside of your LEA. The 2022 and 23-24 SPP yielded growing interest through the duration of monthly collections. It was found that once a school decided to participate, they continued. NCES hopes to receive the same interest and participation throughout the 2023-2024 school year.

From your district, [XX] schools were selected for the SPP. **No student or classroom time is involved in this survey.**

If permitted by the district, the school will be offered a reimbursement of \$200 per month for participation in the study throughout the 2024-25 school year, beginning in August 2024 and ending in June 2025. The reimbursement will be paid out monthly.

Thank you for your consideration of the research application for the **School Pulse Panel**. The enclosed application and materials describe the purposes, survey topics, sample sizes, and respondent burden for SPP. In addition, an LEA Approval Form is enclosed for you to indicate whether your district has approved the selected schools' continued participation in the SPP.

If you have any questions about the **School Pulse Panel** or the research application, please contact the study's LEA research application team by e-mail at addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov by telephone at 1-844-868-3661.

Sincerely,

Chris Chapman
Associate Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics
PCP, 550 12th St., SW, 4th floor, Room 4054
Washington, DC 20202

SPP Brochure Text

(This is the brochure for the 2022 SPP. If resources allow, we will update this brochure for 2024-25 and provide to special contact districts as part of our research application.)

What is the School Pulse Panel?

Every student in America deserves a high-quality education in a safe environment. This promise, which was already out of reach for too many, has been further threatened by the COVID-19 pandemic. We are asking you and your school to participate in a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The study is the **School Pulse Panel**, and the information you provide is essential to understanding the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on K-12 education – especially as new variants and challenges emerge.

Why should my school participate?

Your participation ensures that your school is included in important decisions regarding resource allocation as the country recovers from the pandemic. Your school's responses provide national, state, and local education leaders with the information needed to make evidence-based decisions about policy and supporting recovery efforts. Each school in the School Pulse Panel sample was selected to represent schools with similar characteristics, making your participation critical. Beginning in July 2024, your school will be asked to complete a brief 30-minute survey every month for up to 12 months.

For each month of participation, the school will be offered \$200. For most schools, these reimbursements will be paid out quarterly to you in the form of a debit card.

How is the School Pulse Panel different from other education surveys?

The School Pulse Panel is a unique survey. While surveys like the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the National Teacher and Principal Survey produce benchmark statistics critical to monitoring progress over time, they are not designed to capture the rapid pace at which schools must adapt in this pandemic environment. Your contribution is key to producing a new source of “near time” statistics that shed light on these challenges and inform the response of education officials at the federal level.

How do I participate?

Your participation begins in July 2024 – and then every month for up to 12 months. Each school will designate a point of contact that will be responsible for completing the survey. Your school's designated point of contact will receive an invitation to complete the School Pulse Panel survey via email. The email will include a link to the survey, which should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the Census Bureau is collecting the information. A new survey invitation will be issued each month from the email address adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov. All participation is voluntary.

Does the person completing the School Pulse Panel have to be the principal?

No. We initially identified the principal at each school as the School Pulse Panel point of contact, but you are welcome to delegate completion of the survey to another staff member who is knowledgeable about student enrollment and other programs at the school.

Will you ask the same questions every month?

Some questions may remain on the survey from month to month to detect how schools are experiencing and adapting to change. Other questions may rotate in and out. Topics may include instructional mode, enrollment counts of subgroups of students, pandemic-related learning needs, virus spread mitigation strategies, services offered for students and staff, technology use or information on staffing.

Other important information

Please be assured that, by federal mandate, we are required to protect the responses of all schools included in our survey. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports. No teacher or student time is required to complete the survey.

SPP Generic Research Application

CONTACT

Applicant:

Title: Project Director

Affiliation: National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Institute of
Education Sciences (IES)

United States Department of Education Address:
PCP, 550 12th Street, SW, 4th floor, Room 40
Washington, DC 20202

School Pulse Panel Research Application Contact:

U.S. Department of Commerce

Economics and Statistics Administration

U.S. Census Bureau

4600 Silver Hill Road, Stop 8400

Washington, DC 20233

1-844-868-3661

ADDP.School.Pulse.Panel@Census.gov

TITLE OF STUDY School Pulse Panel

Anticipated Start Date: July 2024

Anticipated End Date: June 2025

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This is a study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), within the United States Department of Education, to collect extensive data on issues concerning the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students and staff in U.S. public primary, middle, high, and combined-grade schools. The survey asks sampled schools about topics such as instructional mode offered; learning recovery strategies; safe and healthy school mitigation strategies; mental health services; use of technology; and information on staffing, among other topic areas. NCES is authorized to conduct the SPP by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002; 20 U.S.C. §9543).

For the 2022 SPP, the administration of the study was in direct response to President Biden's Executive Order 14000: Supporting the Reopening and Continuing Operation of Schools and Early Childhood Education Providers. It has been one of the nation's few sources of reliable data on a wealth of information focused on schools' learning mode offerings, virus spread mitigation strategies, services offered for students and staff, issues with staffing, and technology use, as reported by principals in U.S. public schools. Due to the success of the 2022 SPP, it has been requested for NCES to start a new panel to collect data throughout the 2024-25 school year. About 4,000 public elementary, middle, high, and combined-grade schools will be selected to participate in the panel, where school staff will be asked to provide requested data monthly. The 2024-25 SPP collections will begin in August 2023 will continue throughout the 2024-25 school year through June 2024. Collecting monthly provides the ability to capture detailed information on various topics while also assessing changes in learning mode offerings over time while the pandemic continues. By participating, information from school(s) in your LEA allows for

comparisons among different types of schools and LEAs across the nation that are valuable to governing agencies, policy makers, educators, and the general public.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY AND BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATION:

The SPP collects detailed information that is critical for data-driven decision making on program and policy implementation and federal funding distributions by program offices in the Department of Education, the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress. The ability of NCES to provide this important information is contingent upon the voluntary participation of sampled schools and their LEAs. Because your school(s) represent themselves and many others like them, participation is vital for producing high-quality information. By participating in this survey, you will ensure that information about your LEA's students and schools are included in those important decisions.

CONTENT DOMAINS AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS:

The School Pulse Panel is a dynamic monthly survey and content changes based on what we learn over time from your sampled school(s). The monthly survey encompasses broad content domains, each with a series of measurement items addressing a specific research question. Each content domain is briefly stated below in terms of the issues in need of measurement, as well as examples of research questions we are seeking to answer.

Below are examples of the types of content domains that were covered in the 2022 SPP and will likely be covered in the 2024-25 SPP:

- I.** Instructional mode offered and enrollment counts for subgroups receiving each type of instructional mode
 - a. For the school year, which instructional mode (in-person, hybrid, virtual) is being offered to students?
 - b. How many students in various subgroups are participating in various types of activities?
 - c. How many days a week does the school offer in-person instruction for hybrid students?
 - d. What is the average daily attendance rate for students receiving in-person instruction? Virtual instruction?

- II.** Instructional program offerings to address learning recovery
 - a. What types of school offerings did your school offer during the summer to help with learning recovery?
 - b. During the school year, will the school day be extended? Number of school days increased? Additional before-school or after-school programs?
 - c. What are the types of strategies that will be used to help accelerate learning?

- III.** Mitigation strategies used to reduce risk of spread of pandemic disease
 - a. Does your school require daily symptom screening for students or staff?
 - b. Are personal protective equipment for students, teachers, and staff required?
 - c. Is your school requiring the social distancing of students?
 - d. Has your school reduced the number of students in classrooms?
 - e. Has your school taken steps to increase ventilation or filter/clean air in the school? What steps?

- IV.** Use of technology, computer devices, and internet access
 - a. Are laptops or tablets offered and available to all students in the school to assist with virtual learning?
 - b. Was internet access provided to students?
 - c. Has your school provided IT or technical support?
 - d. Was professional development on digital learning provided to educators? Or trainings on digital learning provided to students?

- V.** Mental health and services provided
 - a. What are the types of mental health services offered at your school?
 - b. Has your school hired new staff to focus on social/emotional/mental wellbeing?
 - c. Has your school offered professional development to train teachers on helping students with their

social/emotional/mental wellbeing?

- d. Have there been changes in the number of school psychologists, counselors, and nurses at your school since the beginning of the school year?

VI. Staff and Student Vaccinations

- a. Does your school or district require staff to be vaccinated unless they have a medical waiver?
- b. What percentage of school staff has received a vaccination?
- c. What percentage of students has received a vaccination?

VII. Staffing Shortages

- a. As of the start of the school year, do you have any administrative staff, teacher, or support staff vacancies?
- b. How difficult was it to fill staff vacancies?
- c. Has teacher and staff burnout become a more pressing issue at your school during the 2023-2024 school year?
- d. How have federal funds been used to fill vacancies or create new positions?

VIII. Staff perceptions of established mandates

- a. Vaccines?
- b. Masks?

IX. Decisions behind instructional mode offerings for students

- a. What are the types of criteria that factor into the decision-making when considering a learning mode change?

X. Supply chain issues and school meals

- a. What are the types of challenges your school is experiencing with obtaining food, beverages, or meal supplies for students participating in school meal programs?

XI. Concerns expressed by parents, staff, and students

- a. What are the types of concerns being expressed regarding how education is being provided at your school?

XII. Absenteeism

- a. Has chronic student absenteeism changed since the start of the pandemic?
- b. How easy or difficult is it get substitute teachers to fill teacher absences?

XIII. School Climate and Safety

- a. How has the pandemic affected classroom management in your school?
- b. Have you experienced more behavioral or social emotional issues in the classroom?
- c. How have new, remote, or hybrid students been welcomed back into the school setting?
- d. Does your school have a written plan that describes procedures to be performed in the following scenarios?

XIV. Community Partnerships

- a. Does your school use a “community school” or “wraparound services” model?
- b. Were services that are available through community partnerships added to address challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic?

XV. Facilities Management

- a. Has your school taken any steps to increase ventilation or filter/clean air in school?

XVI. Federal Fund Usage

- a. How are federal funds being used for learning recovery?

QUESTIONNAIRE

The first quarterly monthly instruments are in development. A final version can be provided once content is finalized.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING

The U.S. Census Bureau will collect the SPP data on behalf of NCES. Data collection will be a self-administered, online survey. It is estimated for the survey to require roughly 30 minutes of school staff time. Surveys may be administered monthly or less frequently. The sampled school is welcome to share the invitation link with other school staff to help respond to the survey. The sampled school will be offered a reimbursement of \$200 each month that they complete a survey throughout the 2024-25 school year from August 2024 to June 2025.

If a school district does not permit its schools to receive any form of payment, the reimbursement will be sent to a point of contact in the district or the reimbursement will be withheld. Principals, and other staff most knowledgeable the school environment and instructional offerings, can complete the survey. **No classroom time is involved in the completion of this survey.**

The resulting data will provide aggregate estimates for public schools and districts across the nation. A stratified sample design was used to select approximately 4,000 U.S. public schools. An additional reserve sample of replacement schools (4,000) was selected to boost response rates if any schools from the initial sample do not respond. The sample is designed to provide national estimates of public primary, middle, and high schools, taking into account the type of locale (urbanicity) and racial/ethnic student enrollment.

The sampling frame for the School Pulse Panel is derived from the Common Core of Data (CCD), the universe of public schools supplied annually by state educational agencies to NCES. Only public schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia will be included in the sampling frame. A universe collection from the Outlying Areas (Guam, Northern Marianas, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa) may be administered as well. Certain types of schools are excluded, including newly closed schools, home schools, ungraded schools, and schools with high grades of kindergarten or lower. Regular public schools, charter schools, alternative schools, special education schools, vocational schools, and schools that have partial or total magnet programs are included in the frame. For sample allocation purposes, strata are defined by instructional level, type of locale (urbanicity), and percent minority enrollment.

DATA COLLECTION

The School Pulse Panel data collection will begin in August of 2024 and will continue throughout June 2025. The U.S. Census Bureau, acting as a contractor for NCES, manages the data collection. Sampled schools and districts will receive letters and emails notifying them of the survey as soon as agreements are in place. Each school and district will receive a letter and an email notifying them of the full survey, which will include the log-on information to complete the online questionnaire. Respondents will have a two-week window to respond to the survey. Reminder emails will be sent during the data collection window. National-level estimates will be released about 5 weeks after data collection ends for that month. This process will be repeated up to monthly beginning in August 2024 through June 2025. NCES aims to field a school-level survey monthly.

RESPONSE BURDEN

The School Pulse Panel will rely on the voluntary participation of schools. The quality of national estimates is dependent on the level of respondent participation. This data collection will be an important source of information for the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress in order to understand the current state of the educational system and how to proceed with the

repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic. Regular data collection is important to understand school instructional changes and other challenges experienced throughout the entirety of the school year.

Every effort is made to create a survey that collects in-depth data without putting an undue burden on the respondent. It is intended for this collection to provide flexibility in reporting based on the type of data. The total response burden for the survey is estimated to be not more than 30 minutes per respondent each month.

The recruitment materials and questionnaire clearly state that the SPP is a voluntary survey. The materials also state that the data will only be reported in statistical summaries that preclude the identification of any individual school participating in the survey.

ANALYSIS AND RELEASE OF INFORMATION

The information collected in the School Pulse Panel is released on a dashboard located on the IES website (<https://ies.ed.gov/schoolsurvey/>). Additionally, many of the estimates will be included in short data point reports published by NCES.

BENEFIT TO YOUR SCHOOL LEA

The School Pulse Panel is an opportunity for your LEA to provide real-time input to key policy makers in the White House, Congress, the Department of Education, and other Federal agencies as critical decisions are being made that will impact the future of Federal education policies. Resources cannot be effectively disbursed to support safe and healthy school operations if there is a lack of data to inform these decisions. If you choose not to continue to participate, the voice of your students and staff will not be heard when key decisions are being made. Because your LEA and its school(s) represent themselves and many others like them, their participation is vital for producing high-quality information. By continuing to participate in this panel, you will ensure that information about your LEA's school(s) is included in those important decisions. It will also help avoid similar data collection requirements for all schools in your LEA to help reduce overall response burden for your LEA.

NCES is authorized to conduct this survey by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information schools 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.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Data security and confidentiality protection procedures have been put in place for the School Pulse Panel to ensure that all contractors and agents working on the School Pulse Panel comply with all privacy requirements including, as applicable:

1. The Inter-agency agreement with NCES for this study and the statement of work of the contract;
2. Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. §552a);
3. Privacy Act Regulations (34 CFR Part 5b);
4. Computer Security Act of 1987;
5. U.S.A. Patriot Act of 2001 (P.L. 107-56);
6. Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9573);
7. Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015 (6 U.S.C. §151);
8. Foundations of Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, Title III, Part B, Confidential Information Protection
9. The U.S. Department of Education General Handbook for Information Technology Security General Support Systems and Major Applications Inventory Procedures (March 2005);
10. The U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures (February 2009);
11. The U.S. Department of Education, ACS Directive OM: 5-101, Contractor Employee Personnel Security Screenings;
12. NCES Statistical Standards; and
13. All new legislation that impacts the data collected through the inter-agency agreement and contract for this study.

The U.S. Census Bureau will collect data under an interagency agreement with NCES and maintain the individually identifiable questionnaires per the agreement, including:

1. Provisions for data collection in the field;
2. Provisions to protect the data-coding phase required before machine processing;
3. Provisions to safeguard completed survey documents;
4. Authorization procedures to access or obtain files containing identifying information; and
5. Provisions to remove printouts and other outputs that contain identification information from normal operation (such materials will be maintained in secured storage areas and will be securely destroyed as soon as practical).

U.S. Census Bureau and contractors working on the SPP will comply with the Department of Education's IT security policy requirements as set forth in the Handbook for Information Assurance Security Policy and related procedures and guidance, as well as IT security requirements in the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) publications, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards and guidance. All data products and publications will also adhere to the revised NCES Statistical Standards, as described at the website: <https://nces.ed.gov/statprog/2012/>.

By law (20 U.S.C. §9573), a violation of the confidentiality restrictions is a felony, punishable by imprisonment of up to 5 years and/or a fine of up to \$250,000. All government or contracted staff working on the study and having access to the data, including field staff, are required to sign an NCES Affidavit of Nondisclosure and have received public-trust security clearance. These requirements include the successful certification and accreditation of the system before it can be implemented. Appropriate memoranda of understanding and interconnection security agreements will be documented as part of the certification and accreditation process.

NCES is authorized to conduct this survey by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information schools 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.

From the initial contact with the participants in this survey through all of the follow-up efforts, potential survey respondents will be informed that (a) the U.S. Census Bureau administers the School Pulse Panel on behalf of NCES; (b) NCES is authorized to conduct the School Pulse Panel by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543); (c) all of the information they provide may only be used 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); and (d) that their participation is voluntary.

The following language will be included in respondent contact materials and on data collection instruments:

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, conducts the School Pulse Panel as authorized by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543).

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.)

The following language will be included on data collection instruments:

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-NEW. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 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: addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) OR HUMAN SUBJECTS REVIEW:

The School Pulse Panel has been reviewed by XXXX IRB and determined to be exempt (date of review)/

INFORMED CONSENT

The nature of this self-administered survey is not considered intrusive and has been ruled to be exempt under the protection of human subjects' provisions in federal research.

There are no individual student data (such as test scores or Social Security numbers) associated with any of the data acquired in this data collection. Since no data are collected about individual students, it is not necessary to obtain active, informed consent from students' parents/guardians.

Participation in the School Pulse Panel is completely voluntary, and individual survey items can be left blank, at the discretion of each respondent. A statement on the questionnaire indicates that participation is voluntary. A respondent gives implied consent to participate by completing the questionnaire.

Participant Informed Consent Form

Example Consent Form – will be used only in districts that require a consent form and will be adjusted based on individual district requirements; the following sentence will not be changed:

“I fully understand that all of the information I 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).”

PARTICIPANT INFORMED CONSENT FORM SCHOOL PULSE PANEL (SPP)

You are being asked to participate in a survey called the School Pulse Panel (SPP), which will be conducted monthly from August 2024 and will continue throughout the 2024-25 school year through June 2025. Your district has approved your school’s participation in this important study; however, each principal may authorize (or decline) participation for their own schools. This form provides you with information about the study and the Project Director, [fill], who can be reached at 1-844-868-3661 or adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov. is also available to answer your questions. Please read the information below and ask any questions you might have before deciding whether to take part.

SPP is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to collect extensive data on topics that impact students and staff in U.S. public primary, middle, high, and combined-grade schools. The survey will ask about topics such as instructional mode offered; learning loss mitigation strategies; safe and healthy school mitigation strategies; mental health services; use of technology; and information on staffing, among other education-related topics.

The U.S. Census Bureau collects the SPP data on behalf of NCES using a self-administered, online survey. There is a school-level component focused on attitudinal questions and questions best asked of staff with more direct knowledge of day-to-day operations at the school. It is estimated for the survey to require a total of about 30 minutes of school staff time each month. Your school will be offered a total reimbursement of \$200 each month that you participate in the survey. A \$200 debit card or other form of reimbursement will be sent monthly to a designated contact after data collection has been completed. Principals, or the school staff most knowledgeable about the school environment and instructional offerings, can complete the survey. No classroom time is involved in the completion of this survey and no students will be surveyed.

Data security and confidentiality protection procedures have been put in place for SPP to ensure that all NCES contractors and agents working on SPP comply with all privacy requirements, including, as applicable: the Inter-agency agreement with NCES for this study; *Privacy Act of 1974* (5 U.S.C. §552a); *Privacy Act Regulations* (34 CFR Part 5b); *Computer Security Act of 1987*; *U.S.A. Patriot Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-56); *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002* (ESRA, 20 U.S.C. §9573); *Confidential Information Protect and Statistical efficiency Act of 2002*; *E-Government Act of 2002*, Title V, Subtitle A; *Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015* (6 U.S.C. §151); the U.S. Department of Education General Handbook for Information Technology Security General Support Systems and Major Applications Inventory Procedures (March 2005); the U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures (February 2009); the U.S. Department of Education, ACS Directive OM: 5-101, Contractor Employee Personnel Security Screenings; NCES Statistical Standards; and all new legislation that impacts the data collected through the inter-agency agreement for this study.

The information collected in the SPP are released in several ways. Many of the estimates are reported, in aggregate, on a dashboard that is continuously updated with new monthly data as they are collected (<https://ies.ed.gov/schoolsurvey/>). Additionally, national estimates are displayed in web tables and included in short reports.

A public-use Excel file with aggregate estimates and standard errors is available as part of the dashboard. In compliance with NCES confidentiality procedures, the public-use dataset does not contain any information that can be used to identify an individual school or the state or district in which the school is located.

There are no risks involved in participating in this important survey. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you can refuse to participate without any penalty to you, your school, or your district. If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw your participation at any time during the study without any adverse consequences from the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Census Bureau, or your school or district.

Please check one of the following:

I am willing to participate in the research project. I am *not* willing to participate in the research project.

I fully understand that all of the information I 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), and that my signature gives my consent to voluntarily participate in this research project. I understand that, while this study has been reviewed by **my district**, **my district** is not conducting the study.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in this study. Your signature below indicates that you have read and understood the information provided above, have had an opportunity to ask questions, and agree to participate in this research study. If you later decide to withdraw your consent for participation in the study, you should contact the Project Director, [fill], at addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov. You may discontinue participation at any time. You should keep a copy of this form for your records.

Signature _____
Participant Printed Name Date

Please return this form to addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov

Special Contact District Approval Form

School Pulse Panel (SPP) District Approval Form

Please mark one of the boxes below to let us know your district's decision to allow sampled school(s) to participate in the School Pulse Panel (SPP).

The U.S. Department of Education has permission to administer the School Pulse Panel (SPP) to one or more schools in the [District Name].

The U.S. Department of Education does not have permission to administer the School Pulse Panel (SPP) to any school in the [District Name].

Printed
Name: _____

Date: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please return this form to [contact info] by email to [email], or by mail to:

[address]

SPP Public School/District Precontact Notification

Final wording may vary.

Every student in America deserves a high-quality education in a safe environment. This promise, which was already out of reach for too many, has been further threatened by pandemic disease and continued fears of an unsafe school environment.

Your <school/district> has been selected to participate in a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The study is the **School Pulse Panel** and the information you provide is essential to understanding the continued impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on K-12 education, efforts put towards learning recovery, and ways to keep students and safe feeling safe in the school setting.

The School Pulse Panel is distinct from other studies in that it will provide information every month during the 2024-2025 school year on the learning recovery efforts, continued struggles with the repercussions of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the general school environment within the United States. Critical information you provide will be aggregated with other responding schools and provided on a data dashboard posted on the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) website.

What is Involved

School staff will be asked to each complete an online survey. Each survey will take no longer than 30 minutes to complete.

You will begin now by completing a brief screener survey and then will receive the first monthly survey in August 2024. <If your district permits, you will receive a \$200 reimbursement for completing each monthly survey.>

Beginning August 2024 and continuing through June 2025, you will be asked to provide information about rotating topics that will focus on various topics, such as learning recovery, virus spread mitigation strategies, numerous services offered for students and staff, technology use, staffing issues, and mental health.

To start, we are asking you to complete a 5-minute screener survey to confirm you are the principal for the sampled school, provide a designated point of contact for us to send the survey, <as well as a mailing address for sending the debit card each month>.

To Get Started, Click the Link Below

Respond now at [INSERT LINK]

Log in using this User ID: <USERID>

For more information about the School Pulse Panel, please check out the SPP website () and also refer to the frequently asked questions on the back of this letter.

Sincerely, XXX

School Pulse Panel: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

How is the School Pulse Panel different from other education surveys?

The School Pulse Panel is a unique survey. While surveys like the National Assessment of Educational Progress and the National Teacher and Principal Survey produce benchmark statistics critical to monitoring progress over time, they are not designed to capture the rapid pace at which schools continue to adapt in this pandemic environment. Your contribution is key to producing a source of “near time” statistics that shed light on these challenges and inform the response of education officials at the federal level.

How frequently do you collect data for the School Pulse Panel?

The School Pulse Panel is designed to collect data from schools every month throughout the 2024-25 school year.

How do I participate?

Your school’s designated point of contact will receive an invitation to complete the School Pulse Panel survey via email. Either the school principal or another staff member who is knowledgeable about student and staff experiences in the school environment can complete the survey. The email will include a link to the survey, which should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. They may also enter the URL enclosed on the front of this letter in a web browser to begin taking the survey. On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the Census Bureau is collecting the information. A new survey invitation will be issued each month from the email address addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov. All participation is voluntary.

Will you ask the same questions every month?

Some questions will remain on the survey from month to month to detect how schools are experiencing and adapting to change. Other questions will rotate in and out. Topics will include, but will not be limited to, learning recovery, virus spread mitigation strategies, services offered for students and staff, technology use, information on staffing, and federal fund usage.

How will my school be reimbursed?

If permitted, for each fully completed monthly survey, the school will be reimbursed \$200. For most schools, these funds will be paid out monthly in the form of a debit card. Some schools may need to make alternate arrangements with the Census Bureau.

Other important information

All participation is voluntary. However, each school in the School Pulse Panel sample was selected to represent schools with similar characteristics, making your participation critical. Please be assured that, by federal mandate, we are required to protect the responses of all schools included in our survey. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports. No teacher or student time is required to complete the survey. Send comments regarding the 30-minute survey burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) Institute of Education Sciences (IES) PCP, 550 12th Street, SW, 4th floor, Room 4036, Washington, D.C. 20202. 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 is 1850-NEW.

Questions?

If you have any questions about the study, contact the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-844-868-3661 or via email at addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov. The Census Bureau is collecting the data for NCES.

NCES is authorized to conduct this survey by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). All of the information schools 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 Local Education Agencies (LEAs), schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.