

**School Pulse Panel 2025-26 and 2026-27**  
**(SPP 2025-26, SPP 2026-27)**  
**Preliminary Field Activities**

OMB# 1850-0975 v.11

**Appendix A**  
**Communication Materials**

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

**August 2024**  
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## District Research Application Cover Letter

*Note: These materials are provided as examples, all communication materials will be customized to the district. Text in brackets will be updated based on allowability of two-year applications by districts.*



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

[Name]  
[Position, Department]  
[School District]  
[Street Address]  
[City, State, Zip]

[Date]

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** in [XX] of your district's schools during the 2025-26 [and 2026-27] school year[s].

The **School Pulse Panel** is a survey of U.S. public K-12 schools and collects data on high-priority, education-related topics that are timely and crucial in helping legislators and education leaders make informed decisions. The School Pulse Panel is entering its fifth school year of data collection and was originally developed to collect data on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on schools, students, and staff.

This year, NCES plans to collect data from a representative sample of schools on learning recovery, staffing, student mental health, absenteeism, and student behavior, among other topics. The survey is an opportunity to share your school district's voice in Washington, D.C.

Schools were selected for the School Pulse Panel from your district. **No teacher, student, or classroom time is involved in this survey.** A link to the School Pulse Panel will be sent for a school staff member to complete. It will be administered monthly to these same schools and will take about 30 minutes to complete. If permitted by the district, the 2025-26 school(s) will be offered a reimbursement of \$200 per month for participation in the study throughout the 2025-26 school year, beginning in August 2025 and ending in June 2026. [Similarly, the 2026-27 school(s) will be offered a reimbursement of \$200 per month for participation in the study throughout the 2026-27 school year, beginning in August 2026 and ending in June 2027.] The reimbursement will be paid out monthly.

Previous years of the School Pulse Panel 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 2025-26 [and 2026-27] school year[s].

The **School Pulse Panel** is administered by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of NCES. About 4,000 public K-12 schools were selected to participate in the 2025-26 panel. An additional reserve sample of up to 4,000 schools may be recruited for 2025-26. [K-12 schools will be selected to participate in the 2026-27 panel in early 2026.] The responses from your sampled schools represents the concerns of similar schools that were not sampled, both within and outside of your district. NCES will present results by characteristics, such as student body composition, school neighborhood poverty levels, and other appropriate indicators. Survey results will be released via an online dashboard within weeks of collection. NCES will not identify participating schools.

Thank you for your consideration of the research application for the **School Pulse Panel**. We believe all students in our public education system deserve the best education possible, and we appreciate the important role school districts play in this work. The enclosed application and materials describe the purposes, survey topics, sample sizes, and respondent burden for the School Pulse Panel. In addition, a district Approval Form is enclosed for you to indicate whether your district has approved the selected schools' participation in the School Pulse Panel.

If you have any questions about the **School Pulse Panel** or the research application, please contact the study's district research application team by email at [adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov) or by telephone at 1-844-868-3661.

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

## School Pulse Panel Special District Brochure Text

*Note: These materials are provided as examples, all communication materials will be customized to the district. Text in brackets will be updated based on allowability of two-year applications by districts.*

### **Why are you contacting me?**

Schools in your district were [or will be] sampled for the School Pulse Panel (SPP) 2025-26 [and 2026-27]. Only a small number of public schools around the nation are contacted each year.

### **What is the School Pulse Panel?**

The School Pulse Panel (SPP) provides a monthly sample survey of vital information in public K-12 education in the United States. The SPP surveys K-12 public schools on high-priority, education-related topics. SPP collects timely information that has relevance for federal policymakers, stakeholders within the U.S. Department of Education, public school leaders across the country, and the general public.

### **Why should schools in my district participate in the School Pulse Panel?**

Participation ensures that schools in your district as well as school districts similar to your own are included in important decisions including resource allocation. Responses from schools in your district will provide national, state, and local education leaders with the information needed to make evidence-based decisions about education policy. Each school in the School Pulse Panel (SPP) was selected to represent schools with similar characteristics, making participation by each sampled school critical. Without responses from schools in your district, we will have an incomplete picture of the condition of education during the school year. Data that are representative of *all* districts and schools inform better policies.

As a token of appreciation, beginning in August 2025, sampled schools will be offered \$200 each month for completing a survey (if allowed by your district), and continuing monthly through June 2026 [with a similar process and timeline anticipated for 2026-27 sampled schools].

### **What schools were sampled?**

About 4,000 public K-12 schools were selected to participate in the 2025-26 panel [and a similar number of schools will be selected in the 2026-27 panel.] The number of schools sampled in your school district may vary from year to year. School Pulse Panel can supply a list of schools sampled prior to contacting those schools.

### **One or more of the schools listed in the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) research application is closed; how should I proceed?**

Please respond with a list of the schools that have closed and whether the closure is permanent or temporary.

### **One or more of the schools listed in the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) research application merged with another school in our district; how should I proceed?**

Please respond with a list of the schools that have merged. Schools that merged with another school may still be eligible to complete the School Pulse Panel (SPP) surveys.

### **There are one or more schools selected for the School Pulse Panel that do not seem appropriate for this survey and/or are not representative of schools within our school district, can I change the schools you will contact?**

Schools sampled by the School Pulse Panel (SPP) cannot be interchanged. We ask that all schools we selected receive an opportunity to complete the survey to help ensure that the findings remain **representative of all U.S. public K-12 schools**. Although you may believe the sampled schools do not represent the diversity within your school district, by approving our application to contact all sampled schools, you can help us reach our goal. The schools selected by SPP are not intended to be representative of your district but representative of all public schools across the United States.

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

The School Pulse Panel (SPP) 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 adapt to new or emerging challenges. Your school district's contribution is key to producing a source of "near real-time" statistics that shed light on these challenges.

### **How do schools participate in the School Pulse Panel?**

For the 2025-26 school year, schools will be contacted after approval by your school district. Typically for SPP 2025-26, screening sampled schools occurs in July 2025 to confirm contact information with data collection starting in August 2025 and continuing every month for 11 months. [A similar timeline is anticipated for schools sampled in the 2026-27 school year.] Once contacted, each school principal designates a point of contact that will be asked to complete the survey. Each school's designated point of contact will receive a monthly invitation to complete the School Pulse Panel (SPP) 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 emailed each month from the email address [adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). All participation is voluntary.

We understand that schools are very busy and are grateful for their participation. To show our appreciation for schools' time and effort for completing the survey, **schools will receive \$200 for each completed survey your school submits if permitted by your school district**. These reimbursements will be sent after the end of each monthly data collection.

### **Does the person completing the School Pulse Panel have to be the principal of each school?**

No. We initially identified school principals as the School Pulse Panel (SPP) point of contact, but schools are welcome to delegate completion of the survey to another staff member who is knowledgeable about topics such as student enrollment, staffing, programs, and policies at the school.

### **Will the School Pulse Panel ask the same questions every month?**

Some questions may remain on the School Pulse Panel (SPP) survey from month to month to reveal how schools are experiencing and adapting to the school year. Other questions may rotate in and out.

### **What questions will be on the School Pulse Panel? Can I see a copy of upcoming surveys?**

The School Pulse Panel (SPP) is a fast-paced survey with year-round questionnaire development and testing prior to surveying schools. SPP topics and questions are currently being developed for 2025-26 [and 2026-27] but will have a similar length to the 2024-25 questionnaires. Although not all topics will be the same, review of 2024-25 questionnaires can give a sense of the types of questions asked in the SPP. All questionnaires are available on our website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/spp/methodology.asp>.

### **Where can I find the School Pulse Panel results?**

Aggregated results from past School Pulse Panel (SPP) data collections are available in on our website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/spp/results.asp>. Results are typically released within a couple of months after data collection completes.

### **Can I have a copy of the responses from schools sampled for the School Pulse Panel?**

By federal law, School Pulse Panel (SPP) is required to protect the responses of all schools included in our survey. Currently, the SPP does not publish public school-level microdata files – also known as public use files or PUFs. In addition, SPP cannot share school-level microdata with school districts.

### **Other important information**

Please be assured that, by federal law, 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.

# School Pulse Panel Generic Research Application<sup>1</sup>

*Note: These materials are provided as examples, all communication materials will be customized to the district. Text in brackets will be updated based on allowability of two-year applications by districts.*

## Contact

Applicant: Erin Tanenbaum

Title: Study 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. Census Bureau

4600 Silver Hill Road, Stop 8400

Washington, DC 20233

1-844-868-3661

[ADDP.School.Pulse.Panel@Census.gov](mailto:ADDP.School.Pulse.Panel@Census.gov)

## Title of the Study

School Pulse Panel

Anticipated Start Date: July 2025

Anticipated End Date: June [2026/2027]

## Purpose of the Study

Federal policy makers need timely information on the condition of public K-12 education in the U.S. to make evidence-based decisions about programs and resource allocations that support your district's mission of educating our nation's youth. The School Pulse Panel (SPP) addresses this need by collecting data regularly from a small sample of public K-12 schools (probability-based survey). The SPP is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), within the United States Department of Education. The SPP collects extensive data on a rotating collection of high-priority, education-related topics, and U.S. public K-12 schools are surveyed each month via a 30-minute, web-based survey. We hope your district will allow us the opportunity to contact sampled schools in your district to inform the Department and the public on the "pulse" of education in America.

The School Pulse Panel (SPP) is a unique survey among federal, school-based data collections. The SPP surveys a small sample of schools every month and releases those estimates to the public a couple of months after the end of each data collection whereas other federal surveys are conducted every couple of years and

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<sup>1</sup> The following text appears at the end of each page: 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.

can take a year or more to release results. SPP’s near real-time data are regularly used by senior staff within the Department of Education, the White House Domestic Policy Council, and Congress to inform policies, budgeting decisions, and grant opportunities. These estimates are available to the public via an interactive dashboard, which is updated each month with the latest collection’s estimates. NCES collaborates with other program offices within the Department and across the federal government to assess their school-based data needs. SPP’s collaboration reduces the number of federal surveys that your district is asked to participate in. Participating schools or districts cannot be identified in the aggregate estimates that are released from School Pulse, but the SPP data will provide a national benchmark to which results from your own district- or state-level data collections can be measured against.

## **Significance of the Study and Benefits of Participation**

The School Pulse Panel (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 U.S. 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 districts. Because your sampled school(s) represent many other similar schools, participation is vital for producing high-quality information.

By approving our application and allowing NCES’ SPP to contact the sampled schools in your district, you will ensure that information about [DISTRICT’S] students and schools are included in those important decisions. In addition, sampled schools in your district will receive \$200 for each completed survey they submit. By participating in the SPP 2025-26, each sampled school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the 2025-26 school year for participation in all planned collections. [Similarly, schools can receive up to \$2,200 by participating in all planned collections for the SPP 2026-27.]

The SPP releases survey data to stakeholders and the public eleven times per year. The SPP data release schedule enables SPP to be incredibly timely and relevant and provide information for potential grant applicants within your school district.

## **Content Domains and Research Questions**

*Note: Text in brackets may be updated based on the 2025-26 questionnaire content areas.*

The School Pulse Panel is a dynamic monthly survey. [Content areas for the 2024-25 SPP were developed by meeting with past participants, program offices in the U.S. Department of Education and with other federal agencies and stakeholders, including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, the Centers for Disease Control, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Endowment for the Arts, and the White House Domestic Policy Council, and asking them to provide NCES with more information on what education-related topics they lacked timely data on. NCES then used this feedback to develop the monthly questionnaire content. This collaboration both within and between federal agencies is designed to reduce the number of research requests your district receives from the federal government to participate in various school-based data collections.]

Unlike other NCES surveys, the School Pulse Panel content consistently changes based on current high-priority needs and what we learn over time from survey results. The monthly surveys encompass broad content domains, each with a series of measurement items addressing a specific research question.

Although the topic areas are not yet finalized for 2025-26 [or 2026-27], below are examples of select content domains from the 2024-25 School Pulse Panel that will likely be covered in the 2025-26 [and 2026-27] School Pulse Panel:

- [
- I. Instructional mode offered

- a. For the school year, which instructional mode (in-person, hybrid, virtual) is being offered by public K-12 schools?
- II. Instructional program(s) offerings
- a. What programs did schools offer during the summer to public K-12 students?
  - b. What will schools offer for after-school programs to public K-12 students?
- III. Staffing Shortages
- a. How many teaching and staff vacancies were there before the start of the school year in public K-12 schools?
  - b. How difficult was it to fill teaching and staffing vacancies in public K-12 schools?
  - c. How many teaching vacancies were filled with fully certified teachers before the start of the school year in public K-12 schools?
- IV. Use of technology, computer devices, and internet access
- a. What percent of public K-12 schools have a written policy on students' use of AI in schools?
  - b. What percent of public K-12 schools offer training on digital literacy for their students?
  - c. What percent of public K-12 schools have a restrictive cell phone policy for students at their school?
- V. Mental health services provided
- a. What school-based mental health services did public K-12 schools offer to students? Teachers and staff?
  - b. Have there been changes in the amount of school-based mental health services available to students, teachers, and staff in public K-12 schools?
  - c. Have there been changes in the number of students, teachers, or staff seeking school-based mental health services in public K-12 schools?
- VI. Absenteeism
- a. What is the current daily student attendance rate in public K-12 schools?
  - b. What is the current rate of chronic student absenteeism in public K-12 schools?
  - c. What strategies do school leaders report as effective at reducing student absenteeism in public K-12 schools?
- VII. School Crime and Safety
- a. What percent of public K-12 schools have a sworn law enforcement officer (SLEOs), including School Resource Officers (SROs), present at their school at least once a week?
  - b. What percent of public K-12 schools have provided trainings for classroom teachers or aides to recognize early warning signs of students likely to exhibit violent behavior?
- VIII. Community Partnerships
- a. What percent of public K-12 schools use a “community school” or “wraparound services” model?
  - b. What services are available to the community through K-12 public schools’ existing partnerships?

## Questionnaire

The School Pulse Panel will consist of one survey per month. For the 2025-26 school year, schools will be contacted in July 2025 to confirm contact information. Data collection starts in August 2025 and continues every month through June 2026. [A similar timeline is anticipated for schools selected for the 2026-27 school year.] The monthly instruments are currently under development due to the high-priority, time

sensitive nature of the School Pulse Panel in helping legislators and education leaders make informed decisions. If required by your school district, NCES will provide copies of the final questionnaires as they are completed. Although questionnaires do change each month, a complete list of previous questionnaires is available on our website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/spp/methodology.asp>. The length of all monthly surveys is approximately 30 minutes.

[A copy of the August 2024 SPP survey is attached to serve as an example of the types of questions that NCES asks on the SPP and the length of a typical SPP survey. Many of the same questions that were fielded on the August 2024 SPP survey will be fielded again on the August 2025 SPP survey.]

## **Methodology and Sampling<sup>2</sup>**

The U.S. Census Bureau will collect the School Pulse Panel data on behalf of NCES. Data collection will be a self-administered, online survey. It is estimated for the survey to require approximately 30 minutes of a school staff member's time. Surveys are scheduled to be administered monthly. The sampled school is welcome to share the invitation link with another school staff member to help respond to the survey. Principals or another staff member most knowledgeable of the school environment and instructional offerings, can complete the survey.

If allowed by the school district, the 2025-26 sampled school will be offered a reimbursement of \$200 each month that they complete a survey throughout the 2025-26 school year from August 2025 to June 2026 [and 2026-27 sampled schools will be offered a reimbursement of \$200 each month throughout the 2026-27 school year from August 2026 to June 2027]. 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.

### **No classroom time is involved in the completion of this survey.**

The monthly survey data will provide aggregate estimates for public K-12 schools and districts across the nation. Each school year, a stratified sample design is used to select approximately 4,000 U.S. public schools. An additional reserve sample of replacement schools (4,000) are also selected. If the School Pulse Panel does not get the necessary number of schools to participate out of the initial sample, we plan to contact the reserve sample schools. The sample was designed to provide cross-sectional national estimates of primary, middle/combined, and high schools, taking into account the type of locale (urbanicity), percent students of color enrollment, school size (student enrollment), and geographic region (Census region).

The sampling frame for the School Pulse Panel is derived from the National Teacher and Principal Survey (NTPS) 2023-24 frame, which itself was largely derived from the 2021-22 Common Core of Data (CCD), the file of public schools supplied annually by state educational agencies to NCES. The sample frame used for the 2025-26 SPP was updated with the 2022-23 and 2023-24 CCDs to account for school openings and closures between survey administrations. The sample frame planned for the 2026-27 SPP will be derived from the NTPS 2026-27 frame. Public K-12 schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia are included in the School Pulse Panel sampling frame. A universe collection from the Outlying Areas (Guam, Northern Marianas, U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa) will be administered as well. Certain types of schools are excluded, including closed schools, target services, adult correctional facilities, private schools, and schools with a highest grade of kindergarten or lower. Regular public schools, charter schools, alternative schools, special education schools, vocational schools, ungraded schools, virtual 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, and the sample is sorted to achieve a unique sort by geographic

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<sup>2</sup> NCES is authorized to conduct the 2024-25 SPP by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002; 20 U.S.C. §9543), and the U.S. Census Bureau will conduct the data collection on behalf of the Department of Education.

region (Census region), percent students of color enrollment, type of locale (urbanicity), school district, size of school (student enrollment), charter status, and unique school identifier.

## Data Collection

NCES aims to field the SPP survey monthly. The 2025-26 School Pulse Panel data collection begins with a screening in July 2025 with data collection starting in August of 2025 and continuing monthly through June 2026. [A similar timeline is anticipated for schools sampled in the 2026-27 school year.] The U.S. Census Bureau, acting on behalf of NCES, manages the data collection. If your district approves our application by the date requested, the 2025-26 sampled schools in your district will receive letters and emails notifying them of the survey in July 2025 to collect contact information for the SPP. This “screener” survey takes approximately five minutes to complete. Starting in August 2025, each school receives a letter and an email notifying them of the survey, which will include log-on information to complete an online questionnaire. [A similar timeline is anticipated for schools sampled in the 2026-27 school year.] Surveys take about 30 minutes each month, and respondents have two-weeks to respond to each survey. The survey is typically completed by the school’s principal, but the principal may delegate this task. Reminder emails are sent during the data collection window. Respondents do not have to participate every month to remain eligible for the panel; schools can participate in some months and skip others if their workload does not allow participation in a particular month. **Absolutely NO student, teacher, or classroom time is involved in the completion of this survey.** Nationally representative estimates are released a couple of months after each data collection ends, and participants can explore estimates on an interactive dashboard on NCES’s website.

For every completed survey a school in your district completes, they will be offered \$200. This process will be repeated monthly beginning in August 2025 through June 2026 [as well as August 2026 through June 2027]. If your district does not permit its schools to receive any form of payment, the reimbursement is sent to a point of contact in your district or the reimbursement can be withheld.

If your district approves the application after our requested date, sampled schools and districts will receive letters and emails notifying them of the survey as soon as agreements are in place and the next data collection cycle begins. Schools will only be asked to complete one survey per month and SPP will skip invitations for any surveys where data collection began before approval was in place.

## Response Burden

The School Pulse Panel relies on the voluntary participation of public K-12 schools. The quality of national estimates is dependent on the level of respondent participation. Every effort is made to create a survey that collects in-depth data without putting an undue burden on the respondent. Each survey takes about 30 minutes to complete each month. Respondents have two weeks each month to answer the survey, which they can come back to if they cannot finish it in one sitting. All participation is voluntary, and schools can choose to participate in some months but not in others if they do not have time to participate in a particular month. In our recruitment materials, we notify respondents that the SPP is a voluntary survey.

Prior participants said that participation was easy and came with many benefits. [Ninety-seven percent of participating schools in the 2023-24 SPP said they felt the length of the surveys and the time needed to complete each one was reasonable. Seventy-eight percent reported that the impact on policy was an important reason they participated.]

## Analysis and Release of Information

Eleven times per year, NCES refreshes the School Pulse Panel’s (SPP) website (<https://ies.ed.gov/schoolsurvey/>) and interactive dashboard with new aggregated estimates from the latest collection of SPP.

The SPP estimates are nationally representative, and steps have been taken to ensure individual schools and districts cannot be identified from the estimates. SPP results are weighted, summary estimates and their associated standard errors are available for download in an Excel file on the SPP website. Microdata files that contain individual school responses that can be analyzed in a statistical software package are currently NOT released to the public for the SPP. Due to the sampling design, state-level estimates cannot be produced from the SPP, but the nationally representative estimates can be used as a benchmark to which results from your own district- or state-level data collections can be measured against. SPP estimates may be included in short infographic reports published by NCES, as well as in press releases for the media.

The sampling weight used in estimates and standard errors is the product of the base weight, the nonresponse adjustment factor, and raking adjustment factors. The school-level sampling base weight is the inverse of the probability of selection within each sampling stratum. A nonresponse adjustment allocates the weights for nonresponding schools to respondents within each sampling stratum. A coverage adjustment is done by iteratively raking the responding school weights to control counts of schools from the SPP sampling frame. The raking procedure accounts for school characteristics including Census region, percentage of students of color enrollment, locale, and grade level.

The SPP currently uses jackknife replication to estimate the standard errors of survey estimates. Fifty replicate weights are planned for each monthly SPP analysis. Using these replicate weights, the variance of an estimate (the standard error is the square root of the variance) will be calculated as follows:

$$\text{Var}(\hat{\theta}) = \frac{49}{50} \sum_{i=1}^{50} (\theta_i - \hat{\theta})^2 (1)$$

where  $\hat{\theta}$  is the estimate of the statistic of interest, such as a point estimate, ratio of domain means, regression coefficient, or log-odds ratio, using the weight for the full sample and  $\theta_i$  are the replicate estimates of the same statistic using the replicate weights.

The NCES may suppress estimates to limit data disclosure to individual school’s responses. Specifically, School Pulse Panel suppresses estimates and associated standard errors if the coefficient of variation is greater than 50, or the estimate represents fewer than three out of 30 possible cases. The Coefficient of variation (CV) is the ratio of the standard deviation of an estimate to the value of the estimate.

Where applicable, both dependent and independent Student’s t-tests are used to compare 1) monthly and/or annual trend items, and 2) differences between estimates across reporting categories, including region, locale, school size, school neighborhood poverty, school racial composition, and school level.

## **Benefit to Your School District or LEA**

The timely, nationally representative estimates that will be made available on the SPP website within a couple months of data collection measure concepts that are closely aligned with [NAME OF DISTRICT]’s Strategic Plan. The SPP has and will continue to measure many concepts related to [X, X, and X], and [NAME OF DISTRICT] can use the SPP data as a national benchmark to assess how well the district is meeting its goals. For example, [NAME OF DISTRICT]’s goal of [GOAL] can be benchmarked against the SPP. [Example of statistic shared with district: In September 2023, 51 percent of public schools reported offering an after-school academic assistance program for their students during the 2023-24 school year].

The School Pulse Panel is an opportunity for [NAME OF DISTRICT] 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. Specifically, the 2021-22 SPP results were used by the White House Domestic Policy Council and senior policy advisors within the Department of Education's Office of the Secretary to inform guidance, technical assistance, and support on using American Rescue Plan funds geared toward effective learning recovery strategies. Data from the 2023-24 SPP on the National School Meals Program helped inform the USDA's Food and Nutrition Service to better understand the impacts of the removal of the free lunch waiver, as well as supply chain disruptions.

Resources cannot be effectively and efficiently disbursed to support schools if there is a lack of data to inform these decisions. If your district denies this application, the voices of your students and staff will not be used to inform key decisions that are being made. Because [NAME OF DISTRICT] and its sampled schools represent themselves and many others like them, providing schools the opportunity to be invited to participate in the School Pulse Panel is vital step toward collecting and disseminating high-quality information. By allowing NCES to contact the sampled schools in your district to invite them to participate in the SPP, you will help ensure that information about [NAME OF DISTRICT] is included in those important decisions.

Finally, the 2025-26 [and 2026-27] SPP provides an excellent opportunity for each sampled school in your district to receive up to \$2,200 per school year for completing the monthly surveys. These funds can be used by the school however they see fit.

## **Confidentiality**

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

- The Inter-agency agreement with NCES for this study and the statement of work of the contract;
- 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 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9573);
- Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015 (6 U.S.C. §151);
- Foundations of Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018, Title III, Part B, Confidential Information Protection;
- 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 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 the following:

- Provisions for data collection in the field;
- Provisions to protect the data-coding phase required before machine processing;

- Provisions to safeguard completed survey documents;
- Authorization procedures to access or obtain files containing identifying information; and
- 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 School Pulse Panel will comply with the U.S. 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 online at <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.

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. §151)*

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 1850-0975. 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](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov).*

## **Institutional Review Board (IRB) or Human Subjects Review**

The School Pulse Panel has been reviewed by an NCES contractor's IRB (Westat) and determined to be exempt [October 11, 2024].

Under the federal policy for the protection of human subjects, the SPP is exempt from IRB review because it utilizes survey procedures and is conducted in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices. There is no potential for harm to human subjects.

The Department of Education has adopted a common set of regulations known as the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects or "Common Rule." The design of these regulations is based on established, internationally recognized ethical principles. The specific regulation is Title 34, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 97, Protection of Human Subjects, which includes Subpart A, Basic Policy, and Subpart D, Additional Protections for Children. These regulations classify as exempt certain categories of research. Research that is nonexempt is covered by the regulations. Research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt [34 CFR 97.101(b)(2)]: Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless the information identifies the subjects and disclosure could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation. Subpart D amends this exemption, in part: If the subjects are children, research involving interview or survey procedures and research involving observations of public behavior in which the researcher(s) participate in the activities being observed are not exempt. However, research involving the use of educational tests and research involving observations of public behavior in which the researcher(s) do not participate in the activities being observed are exempt. For more information, please see <http://www2.ed.gov/policy/fund/guid/humansub/overview.html>.

## **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 sections in brackets will only be included in consent forms if the school district allows for reimbursement. 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)**

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences (IES), is asking you to participate in the [2025-26/2026-27] School Pulse Panel (SPP) survey. Your district has approved your school’s participation in this important survey; and each principal may authorize (or decline) participation for their own school. Assuming you participate, beginning in August [2025/2026] and continuing through June [2026/2027], your school will receive an invitation to complete an online survey that will take about 30 minutes to complete each month. [To thank you for your time and effort in completing the survey, your school will receive \$200 for each completed survey you submit.]

### **[Your school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the [2025-26/2026-27] school year by participating.]**

The [2025-26/2026-27] SPP is a unique opportunity to provide your school’s perspective on a range of high-priority, education-related topics to the Department of Education and the public on a monthly basis. We hope you will consider this opportunity to be a part of the small group of schools that represent the “pulse” of education in America. This form provides information about the survey. The Project Director, [Erin Tanenbaum], is also available to answer your questions and can be reached at 1-844-868-3661 or [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov).

Originally designed to monitor public K-12 schools’ response to the COVID-19 pandemic, today, the SPP keeps with its original mission as it is designed to collect data on critical matters in public schools including staffing, student behavior, and many other topics.

The U.S. Census Bureau collects the School Pulse Panel data on behalf of NCES using a self-administered, online survey. Principals, or another school staff member most knowledgeable about the school environment, staffing 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 survey; 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 survey.

The information collected in the School Pulse Panel are released as summary statistics. Results are shared in press releases and presented in interactive graphics as well as available for aggregated data downloads. In compliance with NCES confidentiality standards, the dataset does not contain any information that can be used to identify an individual school.

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 school year without any adverse consequences from the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Census Bureau, your school or district.

Please check one of the following:

\_\_\_\_\_ I am willing to participate in one or more School Pulse Panel survey.

\_\_\_\_\_ I am not willing to participate in one or more School Pulse Panel survey.

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 School Pulse Panel. I understand that, while School Pulse Panel has been reviewed by my district, my district is not conducting the survey.

You are making a decision whether or not to participate in the School Pulse Panel's survey(s). 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 School Pulse Panel. If you later decide to withdraw your consent for participation in School Pulse Panel, you should contact the Project Director, [Erin Tanenbaum], at [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). You may discontinue participation at any time. Please keep a copy of this form for your records.

---

Signature

---

Participant Printed Name

Date

---

School Name

Please return this form to [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov)

# Special Contact District Approval Form

## School Pulse Panel 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.

[The U.S. Department of Education has permission to administer the School Pulse Panel to one or more schools in the [District Name] for the 2025-26 school year.

The U.S. Department of Education has permission to administer the School Pulse Panel to one or more schools in the [District Name] for the 2025-26 and the 2026-27 school years.]

The U.S. Department of Education does not have permission to administer the School Pulse Panel 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]

# School Pulse Panel Public School Precontact Notification

## July 2025 Screener Initial Letter

*Note: Text in brackets is either a placeholder for custom text or are only sent to schools in districts that permit reimbursement.*

[DATE]

Dear [POSITION] of [SCHOOL\_NAME]

The National Center for Education Statistics, part of the U.S. Department of Education’s Institute of Education Sciences, is asking you to participate in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel (SPP) survey. The 2025-26 SPP is a unique opportunity to provide your school’s perspective directly to the Department on high-priority, education-related topics. We hope you will consider this opportunity to be a part of a small group of schools that are the “pulse” of public education in America.

Beginning in August 2025 and continuing monthly through June 2026, your school will receive an invitation to complete a short online survey. [To thank you for your time and effort in completing the survey, your school will receive \$200 for each completed survey you submit.]

**[Your school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the 2025-26 school year by participating.]**

Monthly online surveys take approximately 30 minutes and may be completed by the principal or someone designated by the principal. To prepare for the 2025-26 SPP, **please confirm your school’s contact information by [Friday, July 25, 2025], by visiting the following link and entering the User ID listed below.** Confirmation takes approximately 5 minutes. You may also call 1-800-841-2432 or email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov) to provide this information.

[URL and/or QR Code]

User ID: [\[EXTERNALREFERENCE\]](#)

The SPP collects information on K-12 topics that directly inform federal policy and funding decisions by program offices in the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress. Hearing from you ensures that the SPP estimates are unbiased and representative of all schools on education in the United States. Highlights from past collections include:

- [Entering the 2024-25 school year, 74 percent of U.S. public K-12 schools reported they had difficulty filling one or more vacant teaching positions.
- [XX] percent of public school leaders [in February 2025] reported some level of concern about issues related to staffing shortages such as increased class sizes or staff doing work outside of their intended duties.
- Public school leaders estimated that [XX] percent of their students *began the [2024-25 school year] behind grade level* in at least one academic subject.
- [XX] percent of U.S. public schools offered an academically focused after-school programming during the 2024-25 school year.
- For the 2024-2025 school year, [XX] percent of public schools offered some type of tutoring program, including [XX] percent of schools offering high-dosage tutoring.
- Compared to last year, [XX] percent of public schools reported that the percentage of students who sought school-based mental health services increased, including [XX] percent that reported it “increased a lot.”]

Prior participants said that participation was easy and came with many benefits. Ninety-seven percent of participating schools in the 2023-24 SPP said they felt the length of the surveys and the time needed to complete each one was reasonable. Seventy-eight percent reported that the impact on policy was an important reason they participated.

The Census Bureau is collecting the data on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics. To learn more about the 2025-26 SPP, visit [www.census.gov/schoolpulse](http://www.census.gov/schoolpulse). If you have questions or need assistance, you may also email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). We look forward to your participation in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel!

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)  
U.S. Department of Education

[Insert School Pulse Panel Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Schools]

## July 2025 Screener Initial Email

Note: Text in brackets is either a placeholder for custom text or are only sent to schools in districts that permit reimbursement.

### Subject line: 2025-26 School Pulse Panel: Screener Survey Invitation

Dear [POSITION] of [SCHOOL\_NAME]:

The National Center for Education Statistics, part of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences, is asking you to participate in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel (SPP) survey. The 2025-26 SPP is a unique opportunity to provide your school's perspective directly to the Department on a range of high-priority, education-related topics.

Beginning in August 2025 and continuing monthly through June 2026, your school will receive an invitation to complete a short online survey. [To thank you for your time and effort in completing the survey, your school will receive \$200 for each completed survey you submit.]

### **[Your school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the 2025-26 school year by participating.]**

Monthly online surveys take approximately 30 minutes and may be completed by the principal or someone designated by the principal. To prepare for the 2025-26 SPP, **please confirm your school's contact information by [Friday, July 25, 2025], by visiting the following link and entering the User ID listed below.** Confirmation takes approximately 5 minutes. You may also call 1-800-841-2432 or email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov) to provide this information.

[URL]

User ID: [\[EXTERNALREFERENCE\]](#)

The SPP collects information on K-12 topics that directly inform federal policy and funding decisions by program offices in the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress. Through your participation, the 2025-26 SPP will continue to inform key federal policy decisions. Some highlights from past months include:

- [During the [2023-24 school year], [48] percent of public schools agreed they were able to *effectively provide mental health services* to all students in need.
- For the [2023-24 school year], *average daily attendance* across public K-12 schools was [90] percent.]

Prior participants said that participation was easy and came with many benefits. Ninety-seven percent of schools that participated in the 2023-24 SPP said they felt the length of the surveys and the time needed to complete each one was reasonable. Seventy-eight percent reported that the impact on policy was an important reason they participated.

The Census Bureau is collecting the data on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics. To learn more about the 2025-26 SPP, visit [www.census.gov/schoolpulse](http://www.census.gov/schoolpulse). If you have questions or need assistance, you may also email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). We look forward to your participation in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel!

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)  
U.S. Department of Education

[Insert School Pulse Panel Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Schools]

## July 2025 Screener Reminder Email 1

*Note: Text in brackets is either a placeholder for custom text or are only sent to schools in districts that permit reimbursement.*

### Subject line: 2025-26 School Pulse Panel: Screener Survey Reminder

Dear [POSITION] of [SCHOOL\_NAME]:

This is a reminder to complete a short, 5-minute screener survey to confirm that we have the most up-to-date contact information on file for your school for the start of the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel survey next month. The 2025-26 School Pulse Panel is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, and is an opportunity to be sure your staff and students' needs and experiences are represented in data used by the Department and federal policymakers on a range of high-priority, education-related topics.

Beginning in August 2025 and through to June 2026, each month your school will receive an invitation to complete an online survey that will take about 30 minutes to complete. [To thank you for your time and effort in completing the survey, your school will receive \$200 for each completed survey you submit.]

### **[Your school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the 2025-26 school year by participating.]**

To prepare for the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel survey, we are asking you to confirm the contact information we have on file for your school for the 2025-26 school year. Confirmation will take 5 minutes or less to complete. **Please verify this information for your school by [Friday, July 25, 2025], by visiting the following link and entering the User ID listed below.** You may also call 1-800-841-2432 or email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov) to provide this information.

[URL]

User ID: [EXTERNALREFERENCE]

The information you will be asked to provide over the course of the 2025-26 school year will be critical for data-driven decision-making on program and policy implementation and federal funding distributions by program offices in the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress.

The Census Bureau is collecting the data on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics. To learn more about the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel, visit [www.census.gov/schoolpulse](http://www.census.gov/schoolpulse). If you have questions or need assistance, you may also email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov).

Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)  
U.S. Department of Education

[Insert School Pulse Panel Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Schools]

## July 2025 Screener Email Reminder 2

*Note: Text in brackets is either a placeholder for custom text or are only sent to schools in districts that permit reimbursement.*

### **Subject line: 2025-26 School Pulse Panel: Please Confirm Contact Information**

Dear [POSITION] of [SCHOOL\_NAME]:

This is a reminder to complete a short, 5-minute screener questionnaire to verify the information we have on file for your school in advance of the start of the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel survey next month. Your school was selected to participate in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel, a monthly survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education. Your school's responses provide national, state, and local education leaders with the information needed to make evidence-based decisions about education policy and resource allocation. Without responses from your school, we will have an incomplete picture of all the survey topics planned in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel. [To thank you for your time and effort in completing the survey, your school will receive \$200 for each completed survey you submit.]

**[Your school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the 2025-26 school year by participating.]**

**Please verify this information for your school by [Friday, July 25, 2025],** by visiting the following link and entering the User ID listed below. You may also call 1-800-841-2432 to provide this information.

[URL]

User ID: [EXTERNALREFERENCE]

The information you will be asked to provide over the course of the 2025-26 school year will be critical for data-driven decision-making on program and policy implementation and federal funding distributions by program offices in the U.S. Department of Education, the White House, other federal agencies, and Congress. By participating in this survey, you will ensure that information about your school is included in these important decisions.

The Census Bureau is collecting the data on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics. To learn more about the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel, visit [www.census.gov/schoolpulse](http://www.census.gov/schoolpulse). If you have questions or need assistance, you may also email [addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:addp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). We look forward to your participation in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel!

Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)  
U.S. Department of Education

[Insert School Pulse Panel Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Schools]

## July 2025 Screener Email Reminder 3

*Note: Text in brackets is either a placeholder for custom text or are only sent to schools in districts that permit reimbursement.*

### **Subject line: School Pulse Panel: Last Day to Respond to Screener Survey is Today**

Dear [POSITION] of [SCHOOL\_NAME]:

This is a final reminder to complete a short, 5-minute screener survey to confirm the contact information we have on file for your school for the upcoming 2025-26 School Pulse Panel survey by **today, [July 25]**. If you have already confirmed your school's contact information, thank you! Please disregard this notice.

Confirm your school's contact information by visiting the following link and entering the User ID listed below. You may also call 1-800-841-2432 to provide this information.:

[URL]

User ID: [EXTERNALREFERENCE]

Your school is among a small number of schools selected to participate in the School Pulse Panel. Without responses from your school, we will have an incomplete picture of the condition of education during the 2025-26 school year. Data that are representative of *all* public schools inform better policies. By participating in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel, you will **ensure that information about your school and others like it is included in policy and funding decisions**. [To thank you for your time and effort in completing the survey, your school will receive \$200 for each completed survey you submit.]

### **[Your school can receive up to \$2,200 over the course of the 2025-26 school year by participating.]**

The Census Bureau is collecting the SPP data on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics. To learn more about the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel, visit [www.census.gov/schoolpulse](http://www.census.gov/schoolpulse). If you have questions or need assistance, you may also [adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). We look forward to your participation in the 2025-26 School Pulse Panel!

Thank you for your consideration of this important initiative.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)  
U.S. Department of Education

[Insert School Pulse Panel Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Schools]

# School Pulse Panel Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for Schools

## Why are you contacting me?

Your school was selected for this year's 2025-26 School Pulse Panel (SPP). Only a small number of public schools around the nation are contacted each year. We are asking you to confirm your contact information and will then start to send invitations to complete the survey in August 2025 and will continue monthly through June 2026. All participation is voluntary.

## What is the School Pulse Panel?

The School Pulse Panel (SPP) is a monthly sample survey of vital information in public schools in the United States. The SPP surveys public schools on high-priority, education-related topics. SPP collects timely information that has relevance for federal policymakers, stakeholders within the U.S. Department of Education, public school leaders across the country, and the public.

## Why should my school participate in the School Pulse Panel?

Participation ensures that your school as well as schools similar to your own are included in important federal decisions including resource allocation. Your school's responses provide national, state, and local education leaders with the information needed to make evidence-based decisions about education policy. Each school in the School Pulse Panel (SPP) was selected to represent schools with similar characteristics, making participation by each sampled school critical. Without your response, we will have an incomplete picture of the condition of education in 2025-26. Data that are representative of *all* schools inform better policies.

## How does my school participate in the School Pulse Panel?

For the 2025-26 school year, sampled schools will be contacted beginning July 2025 to confirm contact information. Monthly data collection starts in August 2025 and continues for 11 months. Each school principal designates a point of contact that will be emailed an invitation to complete the School Pulse Panel (SPP) each month. The survey should take 30 minutes. A new survey invitation will be emailed each month from the email address [adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov](mailto:adp.school.pulse.panel@census.gov). All participation is voluntary.

## Does the principal of my school have to complete the School Pulse Panel survey?

No. Your principal is welcome to delegate completion of School Pulse Panel (SPP) surveys to another staff member who is knowledgeable about topics such as student enrollment, staffing, programs, and policies at your school.

## My school is closed or merged with another school; how should I proceed?

For closures, please contact us and tell us whether the closure is permanent or temporary. For mergers, please respond with the names of the merged schools. Merged schools may still be eligible to complete the School Pulse Panel (SPP) surveys.

## My school is not representative of schools within our area, can I recommend a different school?

Schools sampled by School Pulse Panel (SPP) cannot be interchanged. This helps ensure that the findings remain **representative of all U.S. public K-12 schools**. Although you may believe your school does not represent your area, your school's response will help us reach our goal. The schools SPP selected are not intended to represent your area but represent all U.S. public schools.

## What questions will be on the School Pulse Panel? Can I see a copy of upcoming surveys?

The School Pulse Panel (SPP) is a fast-paced survey with year-round questionnaire development and testing prior to surveying schools. SPP topics and questions are currently being developed for 2025-26 but will have a similar length to the 2024-25 questionnaires. Although not all topics will be the same, review of 2024-25 questionnaires can give a sense of the types of questions asked in the SPP. All questionnaires are available on our website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/spp/methodology.asp>.

## Will the School Pulse Panel ask the same questions every month?

Some questions may remain on the School Pulse Panel (SPP) survey from month to month to reveal how schools are experiencing and adapting to the school year. Other questions may rotate in and out.

## Where can I find the School Pulse Panel results?

Aggregated results from past School Pulse Panel (SPP) data collections are available in on our website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/spp/results.asp>. Results are typically released within a couple of months after data collection completes.

## How easy is it to complete the School Pulse Panel surveys?

Prior participants said that participation was easy and came with many benefits. Ninety-seven percent of schools that participated in the 2023-24 SPP said they felt the length of the surveys and the time needed to complete each one was reasonable. Seventy-eight percent reported that the impact on policy was an important reason they participated.

**[When will I receive payment for participation in the School Pulse Panel?**

School Pulse Panel (SPP) collects data for two weeks every month. Once data collection is complete, schools that responded to the survey (and are eligible for reimbursement by their school district) will receive a payment within a couple of months of data collection.] [May include further detail on mechanism(s) used for reimbursement]

**Other important information**

By federal law, we are required to protect the responses of all individuals and schools included in our survey (see citations at the end of the FAQs). 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 1850-0975.

*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.*