

Stakeholder Perception Survey Resource Guide

The information below is provided to assist districts and schools as they gather stakeholder perception data to inform the development of Redesign Plans, set measurable annual goals, and monitor the success of implementation of their intervention model.

General Survey Guidelines

- 1) Data gathered using pre-existing and/or developed surveys should be collected from multiple stakeholder groups to gain varied perspectives and triangulate evidence. If possible, groups should include school/district administration, teachers, parents, and students in grades 3 or above.
- 2) To the extent possible, all members of each stakeholder group should be given the opportunity to participate, and the actual response rates for surveys from each stakeholder group should be as high as possible, with a suggested minimum of at least 50% of the population. Surveys should include questions that identify characteristics of the respondent group, including demographic information (e.g., age, gender, race/ethnic origin, etc.), role in the school/district/community (e.g., teacher, student, parent), and other pertinent information (e.g., teacher's subject area, student's grade level, parent's child's subgroup, etc.).
- 3) To keep to a reasonable number of discrete measures for which annual targets are set, survey items should be able to be aggregated into higher-level/bigger-picture indices, if possible. To do this:
 - a) First decide on a few themes or 'buckets' per area, and then design or select questions that fall into those categories. Another option would be to select a pre-existing survey that specifically assesses the targeted themes. Some examples of optional themes for each of the three areas are listed below.
 - b) Use the "General Rules for Selecting or Creating Survey Questions/Tools" when crafting or selecting specific items, or for evaluating a pre-existing survey for its utility.
 - c) Attempt to select or create surveys that align thematically with one another. This may be done by selecting/creating questions that are adapted for each respondent group and/or selecting a set of pre-existing surveys that were originally designed to be administered in parallel.
- 4) In advance, consider the logistics of data collection, including how (e.g., paper & pencil/online; individually/group) and when (e.g., quarterly, bi-annually, yearly, etc.) to administer the survey.
 - a) If possible, pilot the survey first to help refine its content and construction.
 - b) Plan a method of "getting the word out" to stakeholder groups.
 - c) Consider budgeting for the method of survey collection that will get the best return, including in-person paper surveys or web-hosted/online survey administration and analysis tool.
 - d) Consider strategies to increase participation, such as designating meeting and/or class time for stakeholders to complete it, or providing fairly-dispersed incentives for participation like a raffle ticket for a completed survey, if possible. Often, the most meaningful incentive is to see evidence that the collective feedback from the surveys has been heard and acted on; consider how the district will share what it learns and decides based on survey data.
 - e) See Guidelines for Survey Anonymity and Confidentiality below for things to consider before the administration of surveys.

Guidelines for Selecting or Creating Survey Questions/Tools¹

While districts may find it useful to create surveys of their own, several models already exist (see *Stakeholder Perception Surveys – Samples* below). Whether selecting an existing tool or building your own survey instrument, the following guidelines may be helpful.

Effective surveys as a *whole* should:

- include a short introductory statement to orient respondents to the purpose of the survey and how the information will be used.
- include questions assessing characteristics, behavior, attitudes, and knowledge.
- incorporate varied question formats (e.g., multiple choice, true/false, rating scales, rankings, open-ended).
- order questions logically.
- display overall formatting that is simple and makes reading questions, following instructions, and selecting answers as easy as possible.
- be evaluated using the “Crafting Meaningful Measures Checklist.”
- be translated for parents/families whose first language is not English.

Effective survey *questions* should:

- include language that is concise, clear, and easily understood by every respondent.
- avoid “leading” language (i.e., wording that likely will result in respondents answering the way you “want” them to answer).
- assess content that is directly relevant to the targeted themes.
- ask about respondents’ personal experiences (not second-hand or hypothetical information).
- avoid asking two (or more) questions at once; but instead they break up complex or compound questions.
- ask about when the respondent felt a certain way (e.g., right now, for the last two weeks, over the last year, etc.), not just what they felt.

¹ Fowler, F. J. (1995). *Improving survey questions: Design and evaluation*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Stakeholder Perception Surveys - Samples

The following are survey tools that capture stakeholder perceptions of teaching, learning, and organizational culture and climate, which can be triangulated with other data and provide valuable insight on key levers for change in districts. Many of these surveys contain items that can be used for Measurable Annual Goals in areas such as “building a culture of academic success among students”, “building a culture of student support and success among school, faculty, and staff”, and “parent and family engagement”.

The surveys on this list are either pre-approved vendors or offered free of charge. It is not meant to be a comprehensive list, but rather a starting point for districts to refer to. If you would like further guidance, please contact your district liaison or districtassist@doe.mass.edu.

Survey	Description
Cambridge Education	<p>http://www.tripodproject.org/index.php/services/services_overview/</p> <p>Correlates students perceptions of classroom experience with behaviors correlated with success. Interesting graphics help highlight results. Based on work by Tripod/Ron Ferguson.</p> <p><i>“The Tripod Project administers surveys with students and teachers at the classroom level to document attitudes, perceptions, experiences, and practices. The resulting data are returned to the district and individual schools in forms suitable to inform and influence deliberations about ways to improve schools, raise achievement, and narrow gaps.”</i></p>
Community Training and Assistance Center	<p>http://www.ctacusa.com/oas.html</p> <p>Organizational Assessment: <i>“We use a targeted survey of teachers, administrators, students, parents, and other community members to develop a picture of the conditions of the school in nine areas known to impact school quality: climate; school planning, assessment and accountability; curriculum and instruction, teacher quality and evaluation; principal effectiveness and support; parent involvement; student involvement; and district support.”</i></p>
America’s Promise Gallup Poll	<p>http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com/home.aspx</p> <p><i>“In partnership with America’s Promise Alliance, the Gallup Student Poll is dedicated to measuring the hope, engagement, and wellbeing of America’s students.”</i></p>
NEA – Keys 2.0	<p>http://www.keysonline.org/ -- Climate Survey, no cost</p> <p><i>“KEYS is a comprehensive, school-based assessment and improvement system designed to provide education employees, parents, members of the community—all education stakeholders—with information useful for improving teaching and learning. School communities that embark on this initiative begin with a prescribed survey, a diagnostic instrument that provides objective data on 42 indicators of school quality that define high performing schools. The indicators are clustered into six integrated keys.”</i></p>

Survey	Description
Million Voice Project	<p>http://www.millionvoice.org/</p> <p><i>“This public interest initiative intends to gather and analyze the aspirations of a million students in grades 6 through 12 using the My Voice Student Aspirations Survey, an online assessment that takes students about 15 minutes to complete.”</i></p> <p>Affiliated with Quaglia Institute for Student Aspirations</p> <p>http://www.qisa.org/</p>
Prevention Needs Assessment Survey	<p>Via Berkshires United Way</p> <p>http://www.totallyfreeberkshires.org/index.php/About_PPP/survey/</p>
Youth Risk Behavior Survey	<p>http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm</p> <p><i>“The Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance Systems measures six categories of priority health-risk behaviors among youth: behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence; tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use; sexual behaviors that contribute to unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV infection; unhealthy dietary behaviors; and physical inactivity, plus obesity and asthma.”</i></p>
K-12 Insight	<p>http://www.k12insight.com/</p> <p>Offers a wide range of predesigned surveys (similar to Connect Ed). Web interface. Purchased product.</p> <p><i>“K12 Insight is fundamentally transforming the way in which district leadership incorporates the diverse perspectives of the various members of their constituency – students, teachers, parents and the community – into their decision-making.”</i></p>
Harris Poll	<p>http://www.harrispollonline.com/</p> <p><i>“The Harris Poll is one of the oldest and most prestigious polls in the world. By participating, you'll not only have your say in matters that affect you, you'll also be able to see the results from the surveys you complete. You can then compare your opinions and experiences to many others'—people who are like, and unlike, you”</i></p>
Olweus Anti-Bullying Survey	<p>http://www.clemson.edu/olweus/suggested.html</p> <p><i>“The Olweus Program (pronounced OI-VEY-us; the E sounds like a long A) is a comprehensive, school-wide program designed and evaluated for use in elementary, middle, or junior high schools. The program’s goals are to reduce and prevent bullying problems among school children and to improve peer relations at school. The program has been found to reduce bullying among children, improve the social climate of classrooms, and reduce related antisocial behaviors, such as vandalism and truancy.”</i></p>
SET (School Evaluation Tool)	<p>http://www.pbssurveys.org/resources/SET_v2.1.doc</p> <p><i>“The School-wide Evaluation Tool (SET) is designed to assess and evaluate the critical features of school-wide effective behavior support across each academic school year.”</i></p>

Survey	Description
	Standardized interview and scoring to independently measure PBS implementation in each building. Used annually.
Mass TeLLS (Teaching Leading and Learning Survey)	http://www.masstells.org Educators provide their views about teaching and learning conditions, including leadership, empowerment, facilities and resources, professional development, and time, in their schools. The insights from educators across the Commonwealth provide critical information for making local and state-level decisions to improve Massachusetts schools.

Guidelines for Survey Anonymity and Confidentiality

Adult Participants

All surveys must be formatted for *anonymous* responding, and all information obtained must be kept *confidential*, with results to be reported in the aggregate. Surveys must begin with a statement to potential participants assuring that no identifying information (e.g., stakeholder's name, home address, phone number, SASID, etc.) will be requested, and that they may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. This is particularly important for surveys that will be administered in person and/or with an incentive, as no potential participant (child or adult) should experience any form of unethical persuasion to begin or complete a survey. Below is a sample opening statement for surveys designed for *adult* participants which may be adapted for use by districts/schools.

The [district name] is interested in gaining stakeholders' perspectives about [topic] Your participation is completely *voluntary* and *anonymous* and responses will be reported in the aggregate. No compensation will be given for participation, and you may stop participation at any time without penalty.

Child Participants

For children under age 18, the above guidelines also apply. In addition, written parental consent must first be obtained before a student may participate. Wording and content of surveys designed for children/adolescents must be developmentally appropriate, and verbal introduction of the survey to student groups must be done fairly such that all students with parent permission have an opportunity to participate and all students without parent permission are provided with a non-punitive alternate activity. Below are sample opening statements for parents and students, respectively, which may be adapted for use by districts/schools.

For parents:

The [district name] is interested in learning about students' perspectives on [topic]. You are being asked to provide consent for *your child* to complete a short survey that asks questions about [detail]. Your child's participation is completely *voluntary* and *anonymous* and students' responses will be reported in the aggregate. Prior to participating, the topic of the survey will be explained to your child, and your child will be told that s/he may stop at any time without any consequence.

For student participants:

Your school wants to know what students think about [topic] so we are asking you to take a short survey. The survey will have some questions about [detail] and will take around [time amount] to finish. Your parent knows about this survey, but you can decide on your own whether you want to fill out *some* of it or *all* of it, and you may choose not to take the survey at all. If you don't want to do the survey, please give it back, and your teacher will provide you with another activity.

Suggestions for Themes in Selected Measurable Annual Goal Areas

Parent and Family Engagement

- Involvement in child-based activities (e.g., frequency of helping with homework; types of and attendance at extracurricular activities and/or other outside learning opportunities such as libraries, museums, etc.; beliefs about the importance of education, etc.)
- Direct communication with the school (e.g., frequency, reasons, and quality of contact; consistency in contact persons; continuity of working relationships with school personnel; accessibility and equity issues related to language/race/culture, etc.)
- Community collaboration and decision-making (e.g., opportunities for, frequency/duration of, and types of involvement in school-based activities such as field trips or special-interest group events; methods of school solicitation of involvement; participation in PTA/councils/committees, etc.)
- Depth of parent/family understanding of school issues/challenges/changes (e.g., up-to-date general knowledge of the school's academic achievement and rate of growth; potential impacts of school policy changes on individual/groups of children; adequacy of school's strategies to inform families, etc.)

Building a Culture of Academic Success among Students

- School culture/climate fostering student learning (e.g., presence of visual displays that highlight student work, school mission/goals, classroom behavior expectations, or other learning-focused themes in the school environment; type, availability and frequency of use of in- and out-of-classroom supports for individual academic, socioemotional, and other needs; opportunities for and participation in supplemental instruction such as tutoring, homework support, summer school, as needed; etc.)
- School culture/climate supporting individual development and social acceptance (e.g., availability, frequency, and quality of group-based learning and/or social activities; sense of school-wide sensitivity toward diverse ethno-cultural backgrounds and differentiated abilities; etc.)
- School-wide focus on ambitious yet achievable goals for each child (e.g., frequency, quality, and method of communicating goals and progress to between teachers and to students; use of formative assessments to provide individualized feedback and tailored instruction; etc.)
- Recognitions of academic success (e.g., frequency and type of award ceremonies or public honor roll, student of the month, or other achievement acknowledgments; quality and use of systems to provide tangible rewards such as ribbons, sticker charts, certificates, trophies/plaques; etc.)

Building a Culture of Student Support and Success among School Faculty and Staff

- School culture/climate fostering teaching and learning (e.g., sense of collegiality and knowledge sharing among teachers; sense of mutual respect and support between administration and staff; opportunities for and typical uses of common planning time; frequency, duration, content, and quality of staff gatherings/meetings/professional development; frequency of public recognition of high-quality teaching practices or other school-based activities; sense of school-wide priority on and encouragement of continuing education; etc.)
- Administrative systems of support (e.g., existence, comprehensiveness, and quality of structures to support school-wide staffing, instructional, and operational needs; adequacy of resources to support teaching and learning; quality of systems to ensure safety of students and staff before, during, and after the school day; etc.)
- School-wide focus on formative and summative assessment (e.g., frequency, duration, and continuity of supports through professional development, leadership guidance, and peer communication in interpreting benchmark and outcome data and using it to inform instructional practices; applicability and use of assessments for special needs populations; etc.)

- Systems of teacher induction and retention (e.g., existence, quality, robustness, and durability of a mentoring program for new teachers; existence and quality of teacher assistance teams to address specific student difficulties prior to special education referrals; etc.)