

Step-by-Step Guide for Principals to the 2009 Parent Opinion Survey

The information Principals will need to conduct the 2009 Parent Opinion Survey is contained in this Step-by-Step Guide.

Step 1 -By Friday 7 August, multi-campus schools not wanting campus level data

Multi-campus schools not wanting results reported by campus (only wanting them for the whole school) should inform us of this via the Parent Opinion Survey HelpLine (9637 3257) or via email to parentopinion.survey@edumail.vic.gov.au by Friday 7 August, 2009.

If your school is multi-campus and you do not advise us that you only want results reported for the whole school, we will assume that you want your school's data reported for each campus separately *and* for the school as a whole.

Step 2 - Important information to know before you continue

- a) There is no need for you to tell us the number of questionnaires you think you'll need. We'll estimate the maximum number of questionnaires your school will need using a formula (15% of your FTE student enrolment or up to 40, whichever is the greater number). We'll also send some extra questionnaires to cover any losses.
- b) Generally, it will be more worthwhile to maximise the response rate than to try to get a higher number of respondents. However in some circumstances, your school may wish to distribute questionnaires to more families than required. Additional questionnaires can be requested from the contractor *after* 18 August – details of how to do this will be supplied on your school's Tally Sheet.
- c) Multi-campus schools wanting results by campus should obtain a sample for each campus by following the instructions at Step 3 **for each campus**.

Step 3 - Obtain the sample from CASES 21

On CASES 21, under the menu path *School/School/School*, run the *Random Sample Report* task.

You will be asked to enter the *Number of Records required*. Enter either 15% of the total number of students in your school (or campus if applicable) or 40, whichever is the larger number. For schools with less than 40 students, enter the number of students you have enrolled.

Select *Retrieve Random Sample*.

Select *Print* to print the generated list of students and parents. If you plan to mail the questionnaires out to parents, rather than sending them home with students, you may also like to print labels by selecting *Labels*.

Important time savers

- a) If you want to print address labels, you **must** produce them at the time you create the sample list. If you try to produce them later on, you'll have to run a new sample list.
- b) Labels need to be printed on Avery DL30 labels.
- c) Make sure you obtain the sample from CASES21, not the outdated Opinion Survey System.
- d) Sampling either 15% of enrolments or 40 means many small schools will be generating a list of all parents.

Step 4 - By Friday 14 August, clean the sample list

Clean up the hard-copy sample list by deleting duplicates or parents for whom it is not possible to complete the survey. For example,

- if more than one student in the sample is from the same family/household, cross out the younger student/s so that the questionnaire is given to the eldest child. Mark the crossed out students with “duplicate family”
- if a student has left the school, cross them out and mark “left school”
- if the family is unable to complete the questionnaire in one of the available translations, cross them out and mark “language not available” (refer to the [list of available Translated Guides](#)).

Any other changes to the sample list should be accompanied by a similar explanatory note on the hard-copy list.

The total number of families left on the *clean sample list* is the final sample size. Write the final sample size on the top of the clean sample list as you’ll need it later on.

Keep your *clean sample list* for later use in distributing the questionnaires to the sampled parents.

Step 5 - By Tuesday 18 August, you will receive the survey materials

By Tuesday 18 August, all schools should have received a package containing;

- An instruction letter addressed to the Principal
- Sufficient English language questionnaires to cover the final sample size
- Copies of each of the Translated Guides for photocopying.
- Sufficient envelopes to cover the final sample size
- One Tally Sheet.

Important time savers

- a) In multi-campus schools, there will be a separate package delivered for each campus and these will be mailed to the appropriate campus postal address.
- b) As explained in Step 2 above, you will probably get about 10% more questionnaires than you need. There is no need to survey additional parents - just recycle whatever questionnaires you don’t end up using.

Step 6 - By Friday 21 August, prepare the survey packages to send to parents

By Friday 21 August 2009, prepare a survey package for all parents on the clean sample list. Each survey package will consist of:

- An English language questionnaire
- An envelope
- A Translated Guide (where appropriate)

Translated Guides to completing the questionnaire in languages other than English are also available for downloading from:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/performance/surveys/parentsurvey.htm>.

Write the school name and number at the top of any Translated Guides you are sending out. This is important. If the parent writes their responses on the guide, the handwritten school name and number are necessary to link the responses to the school.

The school will need to either photocopy sufficient copies of a Translated Guide, or download and print sufficient copies.

Step 7 - On Monday 24 August, distribute the questionnaires to parents for completion by the end of the week

Distribute the survey packages to parents, either by getting the students to take them home, or posting the package home (the folded questionnaire and envelope fit easily into a DLX envelope).

Schools should request that parents complete the questionnaire, put it in the envelope provided, seal the envelope, write the name and year level of their child on the back of the envelope and return it to the school by the end of that week, Friday 28 August 2009. Parents are more likely to respond if the turnaround time is short: in this case, a week.

Step 8 - Maximise the response rate

Aim to maximise the response rate, as the higher the response rate, the better the quality of data. Suggestions from other schools (including schools in unusual circumstances) on how response rates can be maximised are on the Frequently Asked Questions site at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/performance/surveys/parentsurveyfaq.htm>.

Step 9 - Collect the completed questionnaires

As students return the completed questionnaires in the sealed envelopes, tear off the back flap with the student's name on it and mark the student's name off against the *clean sample list*.

Step 10 - Extra week for late returns and maximising response rate

Use the subsequent week (up to Friday 4 September) to collect late returns and further maximise the response rate.

Step 11 - By Monday 7 September, send completed questionnaires and Tally Sheet to the contractor

All completed questionnaires should be sent, in their sealed envelopes with the back flaps torn off, to the contractor using the reply-paid satchels/boxes supplied.

Also, include the completed Tally Sheet (completed by recording the number of questionnaires sent out). The number of questionnaires sent out will be used to calculate your school's response rate.

Completed questionnaires received by the contractor after 18 September 2009 will not be processed in time for the reporting date of 26 October.

Step 12 - Keep the clean sample list and torn off back flaps for possible audit

A small number of schools may be audited to evaluate whether the appropriate processes have been followed. The auditor will need to see the clean sample list and torn off back flaps.

Further information

All documentation about the survey, including answers to frequently asked questions (which will be updated regularly), is available at:

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schoolimprovement/performance/surveys/parentsurvey.htm>.

Should you require further information, please email parentopinion.survey@edumail.vic.gov.au or call the Parent Opinion Survey HelpLine on 9637 3257.