

Administrative Procedures for Student Surveys
(Attachment for Policy No. 235.1)

Purpose

The purpose of these Administrative Procedures is to inform parents/guardians and students of their rights with regard to student surveys and the information contained therein and to provide an overview of how the Office of Evaluation, Research & Accountability effectuates Policy 235.1- Student Surveys.

Definitions

Protected Information Survey: A survey concerning one or more of the following protected areas:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian;
- Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
- Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

Personal information: Individually identifiable information, including a student's or parent's/guardian's first and last name; home or physical address, including street name and the name of the city or town; telephone number; student identification number; or Social Security Number.[1]

For purposes of this policy, protected information, as addressed by the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), includes:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian.
2. Mental or psychological conditions of the student or student's family.
3. Sexual behavior or attitudes.
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating or demeaning behavior.
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships.
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those with lawyers, physicians, and ministers.

7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent/guardian.
8. Income, other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program.

Procedures

These Administrative Procedures provide guidance about three types of surveys: 1) District-administered surveys, 2) school-based administered surveys, and 3) surveys for research purposes.

District-Administered Surveys

District-Administered Surveys are administered District-wide or through a program office or department and do not contain protected information. Examples of these types of surveys include the Student Well Being Survey, the Listening and Learning survey, the academic calendar survey, the bell schedule survey, and the budget priorities survey. Because these surveys are not protected information surveys, no notice or parent/guardian consent is required. All surveys are voluntary, and a student participating in the survey indicates their consent to participate in the survey.

All surveys should include information about how the results will be shared, how individual student responses will be kept confidential, how the responses will be used, and where/when to find a summary of the results of the survey. Student surveys and related information should be translated into student and parent/guardian preferred language in accordance with Board Policy.[2]

School-Based Administered Surveys

School-based Administered Surveys are administered to students by school leaders or school staff to get feedback from students (not for research purposes) and should not include questions that would solicit protected information from students. If you are a school leader or school staff seeking to administer a school-based survey that does solicit protected information from students, please contact the Office of Evaluation, Research & Accountability. Examples of these types of surveys include principal-developed surveys about the topic of the spring school musical, teacher surveys about students interests, and student-developed surveys (with approval/sponsorship from school staff) about the location of the senior class trip. Because these surveys are not protected information surveys, no notice or parent/guardian consent is required. All surveys are voluntary, and a student participating in the survey indicates their consent to participate in the survey.

Surveys for Research

Surveys may be administered for research purposes by District research staff or by researchers external to the District (with a signed approval letter from the [Research Review Committee \[RRC\]](#)).

- **Internal surveys:** Surveys conducted by District research staff are conducted by the Office of Research and Evaluation or with the knowledge/coordination with the Office of Research and Evaluation. Examples of these types of surveys include the Philly School Experience Survey (formerly known as the [Philly School Experience Survey \(formerly known as the District-Wide Survey\)](#)), the summer school feedback survey, and *ad hoc* surveys of students for educational program evaluations.
- **External surveys:** Surveys conducted by external researchers (this includes District staff who are completing research projects for masters or dissertation projects) must be approved by the RRC. Examples of these types of surveys include Federally-funded surveys like the [Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System \(YRBSS\)](#), the [School Survey on Crime and Safety](#), and the [High School & Beyond Survey](#); program evaluation surveys conducted by research organizations; and surveys of students related to dissertation studies. The RRC has [detailed requirements and procedures](#) including information about parent consent and student assent to participate in surveys. When surveys contain protected information, parents/guardians have the right to review the content of the surveys and opt-out of student participation in the survey. Parent/guardians may contact the research team (via the contact information sent home specific to the research project) or may contact the RRC at researchreview@philasd.org to review the content of an approved external survey. Both the parent/guardian and student must agree for the student to participate, otherwise, the student does not participate in the survey. All surveys are voluntary.

Privacy

Responses to survey questions are always kept private and protected. Surveys may be administered anonymously (meaning that there is no way to identify the respondent) or confidentially (meaning that the identity of the survey respondent is known, but the information is kept secure). To further protect confidentiality, responses to survey data are combined, aggregated, and/or de-identified, so that individuals can never be identified from their responses.

The District will only share de-identified student level survey responses with researchers who have a bonafide research purpose and express agreement with the District. The District will not share individual student-level data of any kind with the public.

Notice about this Policy and Administrative Procedures will be provided to parents with other materials at the beginning of each school year.

Maintenance Schedule

These Administrative Procedures shall be reviewed upon review of the Policy, or upon the occurrence of a triggering event.

Legal References:

1. 20 U.S.C. 1232h
2. Policy 139 - Supporting Language Accessibility for Parents and Guardians Whose Primary Language is Not English

Related Information:**[SDP Internal Survey Best Practices Checklist](#)**

The purpose of this checklist is to provide guidance to internal SDP staff who are creating surveys to collect feedback for non-research purposes. For staff who are considering surveys for purposes of your master's thesis or doctoral dissertation work, please see [here](#) for additional information.

[Survey Best Practices Checklist](#)

The purpose of this checklist is to provide guidance to District partners who are creating surveys to collect feedback for progress monitoring purposes. All surveys conducted by external parties must be reviewed and approved by the RRC before administration. Please see [here](#) for additional information.