Ongoing School Surveys Guidebook

Overview

All Comprehensive Support and Improvement schools will be required to implement a Participatory Budgeting Process **or provide opportunities for parent and student engagement, annually,** in a manner prescribed by the New York State Commissioner of Education.

One of the approved alternatives to Participatory Budgeting is Ongoing School Surveys.

Purpose

The purpose of this guidebook is to outline expectations and provide guidance for schools implementing the ongoing school survey option.

Ongoing School Surveys Requirements

Student Survey Requirements:

- ☐ Should be computer-based
- ☐ Should be given each quarter throughout the school year
- ☐ Should include between 5 and 10 questions.
- ☐ The questions must be the same on all four surveys.
- ☐ The results should be shared with students at the conclusion of each survey administration.

Parent Survey Requirements:

- ☐ Can be computer-based
- ☐ Should be given at the beginning and end of the school year.
- ☐ The questions must be the same on both surveys.
- ☐ The results should be shared with parents at the conclusion of each survey administration.

Calendar

	☐ Select 5-10 questions ☐ Create survey ☐ Give survey ☐ Share results	☐ Give survey ☐ Share results
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Benefits of Ongoing Surveys
☐ Allows the school to gauge perceptions throughout the year
☐ Provides feedback on very specific items
☐ Allows the school to monitor growth and improvement
☐ Allows the school to understand if efforts are impacting perceptions

Selecting Survey Questions
☐ Schools should select 5 to 10 questions that it is interested in monitoring throughout the year.
• These questions could come from the school's climate survey or they could be new questions generated by the school connected to recent initiatives.
☐ The questions for students and parents do not have to be the same.

Creating and wording survey questions
☐ **Use simple, direct language**
   o Avoid complicated words that can be misunderstood. The questions should be short, simple, and clear.
☐ **Be specific.**

- Concepts mean different things to different people. Be as specific as possible when asking questions in order to prompt for a precise, objective answer.
- **Avoid leading questions.**
    - To avoid the subjective views and opinions of the survey designer in the survey, have the survey reviewed by at least 2 other staff members to ensure none of the questions have a "right" or "wrong" answer.
- **Ask one thing per question.**
    - Each survey question should ask only one thing. Avoid questions with words "and" or "or"— these words are usually indicators of double-barreled questions.

Creating Online Surveys

There are several free online sources for creating surveys. Below are suggested free online survey platforms.

- **Survey Monkey**
    - https://www.surveymonkey.com/mp/online-polls/
- **Google Forms**
    - https://support.google.com/surveys/answer/2372144?hl=en
- **SurveyPlanet**
    - https://surveyplanet.com

Frequently Asked Questions

1. ***How will these ongoing surveys help my school?***

By selecting a few survey questions to be asked at multiple points throughout the year, a school can monitor student and parent perceptions of the school. Additionally, using the results to inform decisions creates/reinforces a culture of inclusion that promotes engagement within the school community.

2. ***Can we administer the surveys by hand, and have participants complete it with a pen or pencil?***

Schools may opt to conduct a paper survey with parents and with younger students, rather than an electronic survey.

3. ***How will survey results be shared with parents and students?***

It is the discretion the school/district to determine how survey results will be shared schoolwide (e.g., via school website, social media, school newsletter).

4. ***Is there a percentage or number of parents and students I should aim to survey?***

All parents and students should be encouraged to complete the survey. It is a tool used to learn about the perceptions of parents and students, and if the school does not have enough survey results, the school will have difficulty concluding that the results represent parent and student perceptions.

5. ***After reviewing our first set of results, we see how one of the survey questions was worded in a manner that was misleading. Can we revise the question?***

Yes. An adjustment can be made to a question if the school has identified problems with its phrasing; however, schools should keep adjustments to a minimum.

New York State Education Department