




THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234

Deputy Commissioner  
Office of Instructional Support  
89 Washington Avenue – Room 875 EBA  
Albany, New York 12234

Tel: (518)474-5915  
Fax: (518)486-2233

TO: District Superintendents  
Superintendents of Public Schools  
Principals of Public Schools  
Leaders of Charter Schools  
Administrators of Nonpublic Schools with Approved Special Education Programs  
Administrators of the State-Supported Schools  
Superintendents of the New York State-Operated Schools  
Administrators of Approved Private Preschool Special Class Programs and Special Class in an Integrated Setting Programs

FROM: Dr. Kimberly Young Wilkins, Deputy Commissioner 

DATE: October 21, 2020

SUBJECT: Fall 2020 Digital Equity Survey

In June 2020, NYSED released a Digital Equity Survey that asked schools to provide data on computing devices and broadband access in students' and teachers' locations of residence. While responses were not received from all schools, the data show that the digital divide is a very real and significant concern in our state.

As many districts and schools are operating in either a fully remote or hybrid instructional model for at least a portion of their students in the 2020-21 school year, access to dedicated computing devices and sufficient, reliable high-speed internet in students' and teachers' places of residence continues to be a significant need.

To better serve students, families, and educators, it is imperative that NYSED has, and maintains, an updated, accurate, complete picture of the state of digital equity for New York students and teachers.

As such, NYSED is re-issuing the Digital Equity survey.

**All public P-12 schools, including charter schools, and BOCES, as well as nonpublic schools with an approved special education program (853 Schools), State-Supported Schools (4201 Schools), State-Operated Schools, approved private preschool special class and special class in an integrated setting programs are required to complete the Fall 2020 Digital Equity Survey** to provide information on student and teacher access to devices and the internet in their places of residence.

**Initial completion of this survey is due no later than 5:00 PM on December 1, 2020.**

The survey will remain open through the end of the 2020-21 school year to enable schools to provide updated data as it becomes available .

For all schools outside of the NYCDOE, the Digital Equity Survey may be accessed in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System. Detailed information about how to access the survey and how to make updates to information after the initial submission are provided at the end of this memo.

**NYCDOE schools** will receive guidance from the NYCDOE on how to provide Digital Equity data.

**BOCES** should only report digital equity data for Out-of-District Placed students to whom they provide full-time special education instruction. Students participating in Career and Technical Education programs or those who receive other services and attend their home district for part of the day will be included in public school counts.

**Nonpublic schools with an approved special education program (853 Schools), State-Supported Schools (4201 Schools), State-Operated Schools, and approved private preschool special class and special class in an integrated setting programs** should report data for the students enrolled in their schools.

If districts, BOCES, and schools have not already done so, we encourage you to engage with teachers, families, and guardians to ensure information is as accurate as possible. Schools will be asked to provide the number of students and teachers who have or do not have a device and internet access in their places of residence, as well as related information including top barriers preventing internet access.

Districts, BOCES, and Schools may be interested in the [Digital Bridge K-12 Home Access Needs Assessment Playbook](#), a step-by-step guide created by national nonprofit Education SuperHighway to help school districts identify students who lack a home Internet connection or a dedicated learning device. This free resource was the focus of the September 24, 2020 webinar, the second in a [series of webinars on Digital Equity](#) organized by the New York State Library and the New York State Education Department.

In alignment with the Board of Regents' vision for teaching and learning, as articulated in the [USNY Statewide Learning Technology Plan](#) (2010) and the [National Educational Technology Plan \(2017\)](#), NYSED is committed to working with schools and partners to help ensure students have “all the time, everywhere” access to devices and high-speed internet, both at school and at their places of residence.

If you have any questions regarding the required survey, please reach out via email to the Office of Educational Design and Technology at [EdTech@nysed.gov](mailto:EdTech@nysed.gov).

## Submitting the Fall 2020 Digital Equity Survey

The survey is located in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System, located in the NYSED Business Portal. To access the survey:

1. Go to the [NYSED Business Portal](#).
2. Click on the Log In button.
3. Enter your username and password.
4. Click on "SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System" under My Applications.
5. You may need to click "Ed Tech." (Dependent on what other surveys, if applicable, to which you have already been assigned.)
6. Select "Fall 2020 Digital Equity Survey."
7. Click on "View" to begin/continue to input information.
8. Schools may access any section or page of the application by clicking on one of the links in the *Survey Navigation* panel. Schools are not required to complete sections in the order they appear in the survey navigation menu.
9. Schools are required to answer all questions marked with a red asterisk. If a required question has not been completed, the business portal will highlight it in red and the section of the application will be flagged. The applicant will be unable to submit the plan section to NYSED for final review if a required question remains *unresolved*.
10. The survey must be submitted/certified by the school Principal or Superintendent/CEO.

The **Fall 2020 Digital Equity Survey** may be updated in the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System by completing the following steps:

1. Follow the instructions above to access the SED Monitoring and Vendor Performance System
2. Select "View Surveys for Ed Tech" (which brings the user to his/her *Inbox*);
3. Click the link for the *Outbox* (located directly to the right of the link for the *Inbox*);
4. Click the report titled "Fall 2020 Digital Equity Survey;"
5. Click on 'view' to access the previous version of the report;
6. Within the report, click on the blue button at the top of the page – "Update Survey Data"; and
7. Update information, as applicable, and resubmit.

Please contact the SEDDAS Help Desk at [SEDDAS@nysed.gov](mailto:SEDDAS@nysed.gov) to resolve any questions related to user accounts, password resets, the SEDDAS application, and assistance with the Business Portal itself.