To: Nonpublic School Leaders

FROM: Christina Coughlin, Assistant Commissioner

DATE: February 16, 2021

SUBJECT: Winter 2021 Digital Equity Survey

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, NYSED needs an updated, accurate, complete picture of the state of digital equity for New York students and teachers.

As such, NYSED is -issuing the Digital Equity survey. **All Religious and Independent should complete the SORIS Winter 2021 Digital Survey** to provide information on student and teacher access to devices and the internet in their places of residence.

We are asking that you complete the survey by 5:00 PM on March 15, 2021.

The survey will remain open through the end of the 2020-21 school year to allow schools to provide updated data as applicable.

The SORIS Winter 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.

If 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.

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 identify students who lack a home Internet connection or a dedicated learning device. This free resource is a focus of the 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 State Office of Religious and Independent Schools at [SORIS@nysed.gov]().

Submitting the SORIS Winter 2021 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 "SORIS Winter 2021 Digital Equity";
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 administrator;

The SORIS Winter 2021 ***Digital Equity Survey*** may be *underlined 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 "SORIS Winter 2021 Digital Equity";
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 to resolve any questions related to user accounts, password resets, the SEDDAS application, and assistance with the Business Portal itself.