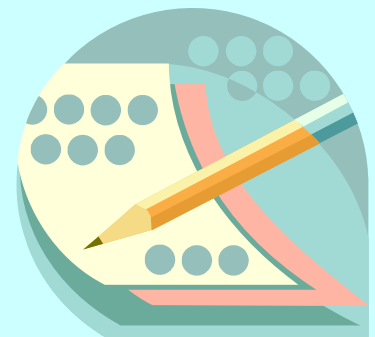


## Questions about Surveys?

# A Guide to Administering AdvancED Surveys

2007 Edition



*Note:* Because of their unique qualities, the following survey series each have their own guides which can be downloaded from our website [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org): Technology, Transition, Preschool, and Custom Surveys

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## Why Survey?

One of the most important tasks in administering a survey is developing a clear statement of purpose for the use of the results of the survey. Before a survey is administered to any group, the school/district needs to develop succinct answers to the following questions:

**Why** are we conducting this survey?

**How** will the results of the survey be used?

There are many reasons why schools would utilize a survey to collect information. Among them are the following:

- to include as a part of the data collected for accreditation purposes
- to take into account the perspectives of the school stakeholders in decision making and school improvement planning efforts
- to monitor shifts or trends in opinion
- to employ a pre/post design in examining opinions before and after the implementation of a specific school improvement intervention or the introduction of new programs or services
- to conduct a longitudinal study of the perspectives of the school stakeholders
- to improve parent and/or community relations by gaining a better understanding of their perspectives
- to include as a part of a program evaluation
- to respond to state and/or federal program guidelines with respect to accountability

Based on the reasons for conducting a survey, the school/district should be able to estimate the number of respondents needed, and identify any subgroups of respondents that may be of interest to the school.

## What Types of Surveys Does AdvancED Offer?

There are six series of survey instruments that can be helpful in the work of the school/district in improving student learning. They are: *Opinion Inventories*, *Breakthrough School Improvement Series*, *Technology Surveys*, *Indicators of Schools of Quality Series*, *Transition Survey Series*, and *Custom Surveys*.

### *Opinion Inventory Series*

The *Opinion Inventory Series* consists of eight inventories that measure general perceptions about the school from elementary students (grades 3–5) middle/high students (grades 5–12), parents, preschool parents, preschool teachers (web only), teachers, support staff, and community members. All of the Opinion Inventories, except preschool teacher, are available in paper *and* web-based formats and can be used with AdvancED *Breakthrough* school improvement products.

With the exception of the Preschool Surveys and Elementary Student Surveys (*a separate guide for Preschool Surveys is available to download from our website*), the opinion inventories contain seven identical items and a number of additional common items that can be found on more than one survey. There are also three common topic/subscales that are measured in each inventory. *Elementary Student Opinion Inventory* items are written at a third grade reading level. The results from a school or district can be compared to the *AdvancED Annual National Pattern of User Responses*.

### *Breakthrough School Improvement Series*

The *Breakthrough School Improvement Series* was designed in 2005 in conjunction with the publication, *Breakthrough School Improvement*, to assist the school improvement team. It consists of the *Data Readiness Inventory* (web), *Survey of Beliefs* (web), *Inventory of School Effectiveness* (web and paper-based formats), and the *Survey of Implementation* (web). All of these surveys appear in the “Resources and Tools Book,” © 2006 NSSE. The intended audience for these surveys is administrators, teachers, and support staff.

### *Technology Survey Series*

Both the student and teacher web-based technology surveys can be used with *Breakthrough School Improvement* products. The *Teacher Technology Survey* is based on *Resources for Assessment* © 2003 International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE).

There are three web-based technology surveys designed for students—grade levels 5<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, and 12<sup>th</sup>. These surveys can be used to assess competency at each grade level. They can also be used to measure progress of students across grade levels. The *Student Technology Surveys* are based on *Resources for Student Assessment* © 2006 International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE). A separate guide for Technology Surveys is available to download from our website.

## *Indicators of Schools of Quality Series*

The *Indicators of Schools of Quality Series* (web and paper-based formats) include two surveys. The *Survey of Goals for Student Learning* measures the extent to which students are achieving schoolwide goals for learning. The *Survey of Instructional and Organizational Effectiveness* measures the extent to which schools have implemented the seven categories of instructional and organizational effectiveness for high-performing schools. Rubric booklets for both of these surveys are available to download from the AdvancED website as well as two-page abbreviated versions of rubrics. Intended audience for both surveys is all professional staff and school improvement team members.

## *Custom Web-based Surveys*

A web-based custom survey consists of items created or chosen by a school/district based on specific objectives/goals. The survey may be developed and administered to any respondent group (e.g., student, teacher, parent, or community). A standard custom survey consists of 50 items that can include demographic, categorical, forced-choice or open-ended. These items may be chosen from the AdvancED item bank or provided by your school/district. AdvancED will provide support in helping customers create a valid and reliable survey. A guide entitled *Designing Custom Surveys* is available for download on the AdvancED website.

## Can I See a Sample Survey?

All of AdvancED surveys are now available as web-based surveys. To request an access code to preview any of our surveys, please e-mail us your request to [surveys@advanc-ed.org](mailto:surveys@advanc-ed.org).

The items on the web surveys are identical to those on a paper-based survey. Seven of the common items which comprise the *AdvancED National Pattern of User Response* are listed in the *Validity and Reliability Guide*. This guide also lists the major topics contained in each survey series along with procedures to establish validity and alpha reliability coefficients. All of the survey guides are available to download from our website [www.advanc-ed.org](http://www.advanc-ed.org). From the AdvancED home page, click on the button “Free Downloads.”

Each of AdvancED surveys provides information from different viewpoints with regard to the current state of education in a school, district, or other educational context. Choose the survey(s) that is/are best related to the purposes and needs that have been defined by your school/district. It is often helpful to use a model such as an accreditation, a school improvement, or a knowledge management model, to provide a framework for choosing the most useful instrument(s). If none of the surveys meets your need, consider a custom survey.

## What are Survey Items?

Surveys and inventories are made up of a series of items. An item can be a question, a statement, or even a partial statement; however, its purpose is to elicit a response. Sometimes a set of responses is already provided to choose from (a **forced-choice** response) and other times respondents will generate their own responses (an **open-ended** response).

One type of forced-choice item is the **ordered response** item. The most common use of an ordered response item is to measure an individual's perceptions about something. Measuring perceptions generally requires an equally divided set of values where one response is "higher" or "better" than the next. In the book, *How to Ask Survey Questions* by Arlene Fink (Sage Publications, 1995), five types of response options are described:

*Endorsement:* definitely true, true, don't know, false, definitely false

*Frequency:* always, very often, fairly often, sometimes, almost never, never

*Intensity:* strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree (Likert scale)

*Influence:* big problem, moderate problem, small problem, very small problem, no problem

*Comparison:* much more than others, somewhat more than others, about the same as others, somewhat less than others, much less than others

Each ordered response is given a response weight. One could say that "definitely true" has a high value and "definitely false" has a low value. The "Likert" scale, or a five-point agreement scale, utilizes five response weights beginning with "Strongly Disagree" valued at 1, "Disagree" valued at 2, "Neutral" valued at 3, "Agree" valued at 4, and "Strongly Agree" valued at 5. One advantage of using ordered response items on a survey is to allow for the use of the most common methods of summarizing data: frequency counts, the mean (average), and standard deviation.

A forced-choice item that has responses that are not ordered is known as a **categorical response or demographic** item. These items use categories for the choices. For example, "Male" and "Female" are the categories of "Gender." "Male" is not greater or higher than "Female," they are just different from each other. There are no numeric weights attached to a categorical response. Other examples of common categories are *experience, job role, or grade level*. Categorical or demographic items are often used to disaggregate survey responses. The common method for summarizing this data is a frequency count.

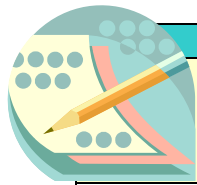
A final type of item is one where the respondent composes a response. This is called an **open-ended** item. This type of item is used to gather information and generate insight. Written responses are not easy to systematically analyze but provide a diversity of perspectives to help further your understanding of a particular topic. An example of an open-ended item is "How could Lighthouse Elementary staff improve the quality of their instructional programs?"

## How Can We Add Items to a Survey?

When adding additional items to a survey, it is important that they are quality items, whether forced-choice, open-ended, or demographic. The following are some tips for the construction of quality forced-choice survey items. Further information on this topic is contained in the guide “Writing a Custom Survey,” which is available to download from our website.

1. Items should be relatively short, direct statements
2. Vocabulary used in an item should be free of jargon, vague or ambiguous terms, and abbreviations
3. Each item should address a specific issue or characteristic of the school/district
4. Avoid compound statements addressing more than one aspect of the school/district
5. Do not use double negatives
6. Try not to bias the statement so that the respondent has to answer in a way that does not reflect his/her view
7. Examine the order of the statements—sometimes the response to one item will affect the response to another one
8. Consider writing multiple statements on important topics. Sometimes there is bias in a particular item. Additional questions related to the same topic can help you determine bias in a question.
9. Provide respondents with adequate background information in order to respond to a question
10. Phrase statements so that participants can indicate their extent of agreement with the item when using an “agreement” scale

Paper surveys require an extra sheet of paper on which to list additional items. A web-based survey administration allows for easier addition of items, but creates other administrative concerns related to the availability of the Internet to collect information. Also, any open-ended questions that require a written response to specific issues or concerns facing a school/district need to be analyzed by the school.



## Adding Items to Your Survey



| Paper-based   | Web-based  |
|---|--|
| 20 bubbles in the "A and B" lines for demographic items such as designating a school within a large district. More items can be provided on a separate sheet of paper. (See Appendix B)                   | Unlimited number of demographic items can be included on the survey.   |
| 20 additional ordered forced-choice items with up to six choices per item on the scan sheet. Additional items provided on a separate sheet of paper.  | Unlimited number of ordered forced-choice items could be included on the survey with up to 10 response choices per item.   |
| Three open-ended items included on the survey, other items can be provided on a separate sheet of paper. The customer will need to compile the responses.   | Unlimited number of open-ended items can be included on the survey. Responses are compiled by item.  |
| Additional instructions can be provided on a separate paper.  | Instructions can be changed or added to the survey.  |
| Additional items are reported automatically in the analysis report. Reports for additional subgroups of respondents can be purchased.   | Additional items are reported automatically in the analysis report. The survey administrator has the ability to generate and create sub-group reports with the purchase of Level 2 Reporting.  |
| Additional items that are added to the Parent or Support Staff Opinion Inventory in Spanish can be furnished to survey takers on a separate sheet of paper in Spanish (include response heading options). | Additional items for the Parent or Support Staff Spanish Opinion Inventories will appear in English on the computer screen. You may insert a Spanish translation next to each of your additional items (including response heading options) on the web, or provide a separate sheet of paper listing these items in Spanish. |

Chart 1

## How Many Participants Will I Need?

### Determining the Number of Participants

The number of participants for a survey will depend upon the survey you plan to administer and the purpose of the results of the survey. In most cases, schools invite all teachers, paraprofessionals, and support staff to participate. To assure anonymity, it is recommended that you administer a survey to at least 15 people. If a school has a small number of support staff, they should use the *Teacher Opinion Inventory* for support staff. Many schools administer surveys to all students. The ideal case for each of the surveys is to administer the survey to the entire population of the participant group. However, in some cases, depending upon the size of the school and/or a particular reason, a sampling of students, parents, and/or community members may be used.

A number of questions need to be considered in determining participants including:

- Q** What is the population of respondents to whom you want to generalize the results?
- Q** Do you want to survey the entire population or do you want to sample the population?
- Q** Do you want to disaggregate or analyze the survey responses by any subgroups of respondents?

In order to answer the first question, you need to define the population. The population is the complete set of individuals or subjects having some common observable characteristic.

Usually the population shares some major demographic characteristics. Some examples of populations are:

- students in eighth grade
- parents who have children in kindergarten
- teachers at a school
- support staff at a school
- community members who do not have children in schools

Once the population is defined and can be described, the next task is to determine if you want to survey the entire population or sample the population. The extent to which you would like to generalize, or attribute, the findings from the survey to a specific population is the extent you survey the entire population or a sample.

Determining if you have a large enough population to enable a sample is based on several considerations. A sample is any subset of a population, and the extent that this subset represents the population is also the extent to which you have confidence that you can generalize to the population. A rule of thumb for determining a sample size which has a desired error range at the 95% confidence level and at + or - .05 is:

| Sample Size Determination |          |
|---------------------------|----------|
| Population N              | Sample N |
| 100                       | 79       |
| 200                       | 132      |
| 300                       | 168      |
| 500                       | 217      |
| 1000                      | 278      |

Chart 2

Consider including at least 100 participants in any group that is being surveyed if you are not administering the survey to the entire population.

A minimum of 15 respondents in any subgroup (such as fifth-grade males) that you would like to analyze separately is needed. This may impact the size of the sample. Sample sizes should be at least 100 respondents for smaller schools. In larger schools, samples should be greater to cover the more diverse populations served by these schools. The most important feature of the sample, regardless of sample size, is that it represents the diversity of the population. If you choose to sample the population, there are two broad sampling methods: random and non-random sampling. There is a description of seven different sampling methods in Appendix A. The best sampling methods are random sampling.

Even if a relatively generalizable sampling methodology is chosen, voluntary responses can create sampling error. If there is an 85%–95% response rate, it will represent the population well. The results from surveys with response rates between 50%–85% should be examined carefully as to the extent to which the sample represents the population. If the response rate is 50% or less, then a description of the sample becomes important to assess the extent to which it represents the population.

## How Can We Increase Our Survey Response Rate?

There are a number of strategies for increasing response rate on both paper and web-based surveys. Response rate poses the greatest threat to a school, which chooses an individual rather than a group administration. A high response rate is particularly important when a school uses one of the sampling methods described in Appendix A.

The following list describes a number of strategies that have been shown to be successful in increasing the response rate. Using multiple strategies will enhance your ability to gather the opinions of increasing numbers of your respondents.

### *Personalization*

- Precede the survey with a personalized letter or e-mail sent by an individual of authority
- Use official school/district letterhead
- Personalize the letters by signing in blue ink

### *Survey Form*

- Focus on a single topic per item when adding your additional questions
- Don't add too many additional items

### *Survey Administration*

- Notify participants that they will be asked to complete a survey
- Include a letter with the survey explaining the purpose of the survey (see Appendix C for a sample cover letter for a paper survey and Appendix D for a sample e-mail for a web-based survey)
- Use bright color paper in a survey mailing to draw attention
- Include a self-addressed stamped envelope for returning paper surveys
- Designate a location that is easy for participants to find for returning surveys. It is important to insure anonymity of responses as they are returned
- After two weeks, follow-up strategies are needed

### *Follow-up*

- Send a follow-up reminder, such as a postcard, letter, or e-mail to all respondents within 5-10 days after survey distribution to thank those who have responded and prompt others to respond
- Telephone follow-ups with respondents can increase response rates. Trained callers can remind respondents how to complete the survey, or offer to administer the survey over the phone
- Mail or e-mail another notice about the survey

## Incentives

- Provide an incentive that is of value to the respondent (e.g., gift certificate, personalized pencils, pizza party for the class that has the most surveys returned, or a drawing for a prize)
- Promised incentives are not as effective as enclosed incentives

## Should We Use a School or District Administration?

Some important decisions need to be made before a school (or district/system) administers a survey or inventory. If a district plans to administer a survey to multiple schools, it can be done in one of two ways:

- **Administration by Individual School**
- **Administration by District/System**

The following chart provides a description of the features of a school and district/system administration.

| School   | District/System   |
|--|---|
| Offers more accurate data per school - less chance of errors in school name designation  | Respondents may accidentally choose wrong school designation or not indicate their school in a district administration<br><div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px;">Paper-based opinion inventory respondents need to use the optional disaggregation bubbles in the "A and B" lines. See Appendix B for further details.</div> |
| May require managing multiple administrations (one per school)   | One administration  |
| May require training/coordinating multiple survey administrators   | Single administrator  |
| <p>➡ If you are a large district planning to administer to multiple schools, the method you choose for administration will affect the reporting capabilities that we offer. Please call AdvancED at 1-800-843-6773 for more information about large district administrations before you begin.</p> |   |

Chart 3

## Should We Use a Group or Individual Administration?

A second decision a school needs to make is the method of administration. It is important to develop a plan to maximize the number of surveys that you receive from the respondents. There are generally two ways a school chooses to administer a survey:

- **Group Administration**
- **Individual Administration**

A group administration is when all the participants gather at a location to take the survey. An individual administration means that the participants complete the survey by themselves, usually on their own time. The following are some examples of different types of administrations.

### Scenario 1 - Student Group Administration

On Tuesday morning, teachers at Craburn Middle School were each given an adequate number of paper-based *Student Opinion Inventories* with additional items for the students in their third period classes. Teachers were asked to read the instructions and monitor the inventories to ensure that students were taking the

inventory seriously. Teachers were also asked to return the completed student inventories at the end of the day on Tuesday.

In most cases, schools choose to administer student inventories in a group administration during the school day. Staff is available to monitor the implementation and completion of the inventory.

### ***Scenario 2 - Individual Teacher Administration***

Each staff member at the school received an e-mail announcement from the Lighthouse Elementary School Improvement Team Chair on Monday asking them to log on to the Internet over the next five days to complete a *Teacher Opinion Inventory*. On Wednesday, a reminder letter was e-mailed to staff notifying them that the inventory will close in two days. On Friday, the Team Chair realized that many staff had not yet completed the inventory and extended the administration to the following Friday. Another e-mail was sent to let the staff know the survey stop date had been extended.

| Advantages   | Disadvantages   |
|--|---|
| <b>Group Administration</b>  |   |
| Respondents complete the survey at one time, ensuring that other factors do not influence their responses.                           | Difficult to find time in a busy school to administer a survey.   |
| The seriousness, purpose, and use of the survey can be conveyed to the respondents.  | Respondents may talk or copy from each other.   |
| The survey is ready for analysis in a short amount of time.  | Interruptions could affect the responses of a large group of respondents.                                     |
| Administration problems are known and can often be corrected.  | A disgruntled survey administrator could impact responses.  |
| A time commitment from the organization signals to the respondent that completing the survey is worthy of their time and commitment. | If using a web-based administration, finding enough appropriate computers for a large group may be difficult. |
| Easier to implement when everybody in a particular group is being surveyed.  | Difficult to find a location in a school to administer the survey to a group of people.                       |
| <b>Individual Administration</b>   |   |
| If using a web-based administration, there is more flexibility in gaining access to available computers.                             | Respondents may not complete their surveys, lowering the response rate.                                       |
| Respondents may feel special that they were chosen to give their opinions.   | Anonymity is often a concern to respondents.  |
| Easier to implement when you are sampling a small group of people from different locations.  | The conditions under which a respondent completes the survey may bias responses.                              |
| Respondents who need time to think about issues may provide more thoughtful opinions.  | Respondents may talk about their perceptions related to the survey, influencing others.                       |
| Provides privacy to the respondent.  | Respondents may not provide complete information.   |
| Convenience of fitting into the respondent's schedule.   | Difficult to get clarification if needed.   |

Chart 4

## Group Administration Overview

The tone established by the survey administrator when providing directions to the participants is an important factor in conducting the survey. One of the most important elements of the message provided to the participants at the outset should be the reason(s) the survey is being conducted, why their opinions matter, and how their responses can make a difference.

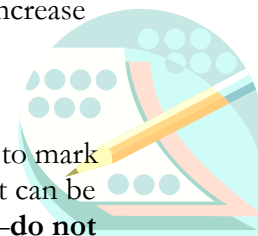
It should be stressed that there are no right or wrong answers and that their responses will be maintained on a confidential basis. Respondents should not sign their names or identify themselves in any way.

Before participants start a survey, they should have the opportunity to ask any questions about how they need to respond. In order to safeguard the validity of the survey, care should be taken to only address issues pertaining to the method of recording responses. Do not discuss or indicate the “desired” selection of responses.

Inform participants of the amount of time it should take to complete a survey. Keep in mind that the 15–20 minutes generally allowed may increase if additional items are added to the survey by the school.

### Group Administration of Paper-based Surveys

Each paper survey must be filled out in **pencil**. Instruct participants to mark only one response for each item on the survey. If a mistake is made, it can be erased and the correct response made. Fill in bubbles ● completely—**do not use ✓ or ⊗**. Survey forms can be folded for mailing, but do not staple or punch holes in them.



If the school has decided to use the optional bubbles or open-ended responses, the survey must be set up appropriately.

- ➔ Additional demographics can be obtained by using the “A and B” line located at the bottom left portion of the opinion inventory. This is the best method to designate individual schools within a large district (see Appendix B for details.) Designating schools in this manner allows the database to sort by school.
- ➔ If additional open-ended statements are added to a paper survey, the respondents should return their written replies to these items with the survey form.

### Group Administration of Web-based Surveys

Please download our *“Quick-Start Guide”* from the login page. When administering a web-based survey to a group, make sure that each computer has Internet Explorer 5.5 or Netscape 7.0 (or above). Other web-browsers



may be acceptable, but they should be **tested prior to the administration**. Each respondent has a unique “access code” that will allow him or her to complete the survey only one time. If a respondent does not complete the survey at one sitting, he or she can use the same access code to re-enter and complete it at a later time, up until the stop date.

Additional items that are added to the web-based Preschool Parent, Parent, or Support Staff Opinion Inventories will appear in English on the computer screen. If you expect a number of parents or support staff to complete their respective inventories in **Spanish**, you may want to insert a Spanish translation next to each of your additional items (including the response heading options) on the web, or provide a separate sheet of paper listing the additional items in Spanish.

The survey administrator assigns a relationship between each access code and one of the following:

- A name of a participant (e.g., Abigail Adams)
- An e-mail address of a participant (e.g., aadams@lighthouse.k12.us)
- A generic designation of a participant (e.g., high school teacher, support staff, third-grade student, parent)

Depending on how the access codes have been assigned (e.g., name, e-mail, generic designation), the survey administrator can distribute the access codes to each participant in one of the following ways:

- E-mail an announcement from the survey administrator that contains a link with the participant’s unique access code included.
- Print an announcement with the name and/or generic designation and unique access code, which can be distributed to participants.
- Export a list of names and/or generic description along with the unique access code to a tab-delimited file that is easily opened in a spreadsheet. Once exported, this information can be used to create labels or generate a roster or merge into a word processing program.

It is not advisable to send out the access codes for a group administration in advance of the start of the survey. When participants enter a computer lab or resource room, they can pick up their access codes along with the website address to begin the survey. One suggestion for distributing access codes is to create a label and place each label on an index card to distribute to the participant. Also, a list of participants can be created, asking participants to copy their access codes. Another possibility is to print letters with the generic designation (e.g., Dear Student), and give one to each survey participant.

### *Individual Administration Overview*

If a survey is given to participants individually, distribute a letter that explains the purpose, states that their responses will remain confidential, and

encourages the participant to complete the survey. Setting the date for the completion of the survey is important. A two-week period is generally about right for a maximum response.

There are a number of suggestions to increase response rate with an individual administration:

- Precede the survey with a personalized letter or e-mail signed or sent by an individual of authority. This letter should contain the purpose of the survey, the importance of completing the survey, a discussion of confidentiality, a clear deadline for completion, and a survey return strategy for paper surveys. A sample cover letter for the administration of a paper survey is provided in Appendix C. A sample e-mail announcement for a web-based survey is provided in Appendix D.
- A follow-up reminder is extremely important in an individual administration. Provide a reminder postcard, letter, or e-mail to all respondents 5–10 days after the survey is distributed to thank those who have provided their feedback and encourage all others to return the survey promptly.
- Incentives can be helpful in increasing response rate both by expressing appreciation for the time that individuals spent completing the survey and providing an additional reason to complete the survey. The best incentives are something of value to the respondents. Some examples include having a pizza party for the class that has the most surveys returned, providing personalized pencils, or drawing the names of one or more respondents for prizes.

#### Individual Administration of Paper-based Surveys

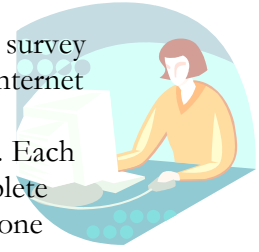
- ➔ Make the return of surveys as easy as possible. Provide an envelope in a faculty lounge, appoint a particular individual in the school to collect them, or give each respondent a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
- ➔ Place the letter or additional questions on brightly-colored paper so that the survey materials will stand out.
- ➔ Tracking non-respondents and ensuring confidentiality requires balance, and is highly dependent on the school. If the survey is administered during a time when trust is low, it is advisable to keep responses private. In cases where response monitoring is important and to assure that response rate is high, use IDs on the surveys or ask respondents to return a card when a survey is completed. Having an external monitor or consultant in charge of the data collection is another way to protect privacy.

Remember, completion of the survey and maintaining confidential responses are concerns of an individual administration of scannable paper surveys. Make sure to use strategies that will maximize your success.



### Individual Administration of Web-based Surveys

Please refer to our “Quick Start Guide” available on the login page for survey administration. It is important to make sure that each participant has Internet Explorer 5.5 or Netscape 7.0 or above. Other web-browsers may be acceptable, but should be **tested prior to starting an administration**. Each participant has a unique access code that will allow him or her to complete the survey only once. If a respondent does not complete the survey at one time, he or she can use the access code to enter and complete it at a later time—up until the stop date the administrator has set. There are several different ways of assigning access codes:



- A name of a participant (e.g., Abigail Adams)
- An e-mail address of a participant (e.g., aadams@lighthouse.k12.us)
- A generic designation of a participant (e.g., teacher, support staff, student, parent).

Depending on how the access codes have been assigned (e.g., name, e-mail, generic designation), the survey administrator can distribute the access codes to each participant in one of the following ways:

- E-mail an announcement from the survey administrator that includes the unique access code.
- Print letters with the name and/or generic designation, which can be distributed to participants.
- Export a list of names and/or generic designation, along with the access code, to a spreadsheet. Once exported, this information can be used to create labels or merge into a word processing program, database, or spreadsheet.
- Generate a reminder e-mail or letter.

Additional items that are added to the web-based Preschool Parent, Parent, or Support Staff Opinion Inventories will appear in English on the computer screen. If you expect a number of parents or support staff to take their respective inventories in **Spanish**, you may want to insert a Spanish translation next to each of your additional items (and the response heading options) on the web, or provide a separate sheet of paper listing these items in Spanish.

Individual administrations may take many forms. The participants might be notified to come to a specific place to complete the survey such as the school, a community center, or a business in the community. In some communities, families may have access to computers in their homes. Whatever the procedure, it is important to provide for equity of response. This will ensure that you hear the opinions of all stakeholders.

## How Can We Ensure a Smooth Web Administration?

| Troubleshooting Tips for ADMINISTRATORS   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Please download and read the "Quick Start Guide" from the Login Screen                          |  |  |
| STEPS   | PROBLEM  | SOLUTION   |
| Logging In  | The admin login screen does not display  | Go to your browser's settings (under Tools); delete all cookies and temporary files. Check the URL—it should be:<br><a href="http://web.nsse.org/nsse-surveys/src/nsse_surveys.php">http://web.nsse.org/nsse-surveys/src/nsse_surveys.php</a>  |
|   | An administrator cannot log in   | Check the User Name and Password to make sure they are lower case. Extra spaces can also cause problems.<br><br>If your survey administrator information is wrong, contact AdvancED at 1-800-843-6773.   |
| Previewing Surveys  | Multiple administrations have been started                                       | To see a survey, click on the word " <b>Preview</b> " next to the survey title. DO NOT click on the survey title—this will result in opening multiple administrations. If this happens, delete an unused administration by closing it (providing there is no data entered). Check your survey log to see if you have accidentally started multiple administrations of the same survey. |
| 1. Setup  | Instructions not read carefully (call AdvancED for all District Administrations) | This is where you enter your additional items (if you choose to do this) and edit survey instructions.   |
| 2. Preview the Survey   | "Preview the survey" does not display  | Disable any "pop-up" blocker software. Make sure Adobe Acrobat Reader® software is loaded on computer.   |
| 3. Administer the Survey  | Date does not enter  | Click on "Update." Be sure to use the required format, mm/dd/yyyy.   |
| 4. Distribute Survey Access Codes   | Announcement letter doesn't format correctly                                     | Use the enter/return key to space down appropriately. Click Update.<br><i><b>Caution:</b> Information contained between the &lt; and &gt; is merged from information in your database. Deleting &lt; &gt; will omit this information, including the unique access code and start and stop dates.</i>   |
|   | Names or e-mail addresses imported with strange characters                       | A different type of file format (such as Excel) was imported. Immediately delete the incorrect names/e-mail addresses. Be sure to save your Excel® file as a <b>single column in a text (tab-delimited) file</b> and re-import.  |
|   | Access codes are not exported correctly  | You may not be able to see the browser window. At the Explorer tool bar, click on windows to display other open windows. Be sure to right click on the export link and choose <b>Save Target</b> in a place you will remember on your computer.  |
| 5. Review Survey Administration   | Survey needs to be reopened  | If the survey has been accidentally closed and needs to be reopened, and if there are no retired access codes, call AdvancED.  |
| 6. Print Analysis Reports   | Reports do not generate  | Be sure any pop-up blocking software has been disabled and that you have Adobe Acrobat Reader or Standard® on your computer.   |
| If you need further technical assistance with Steps 1-6, please call AdvancED at 1-800-843-6773 |  |  |

Chart 5

## How Can We Ensure a Smooth Web Administration?

### Troubleshooting Tips for RESPONDENTS

| STEPS                        | PROBLEM  | SOLUTION   |  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
|------------------------------|--|--|--|----------|----------|--|----|-------|----|---------|----|------------------|----|---------|----|---------|----|----------------------|----|--------------------|----|---------------|----|----------------|----|---|----|-----|----|----|----|----|----|--|
| <b>Accessing Survey</b>      | Link in the e-mail doesn't work                            | <p>If the <b>e-mail link is not active</b>, copy the entire link and paste it into the browser's address bar at the top of the screen.</p> <p>If <b>link is active, but doesn't go to the correct login page</b>, the link is wrapping in the e-mail. Copy the entire link and paste it in the browser's address bar at the top of the screen.</p>   |  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
|                              | Access code doesn't work                                   | <p>If the <b>access code is not valid</b>, retype the access code—remember to use the hyphen.</p> <p>If the <b>access code says that survey is stopped or closed</b>, contact the survey administrator at the school/district.</p>   |  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
|                              | Respondent is on the wrong login screen                    | <p>If the screen is asking for a <b>username and password</b>, you are at the <b>Survey Administrator's</b> login screen—not the respondent access screen. Go to <a href="http://www.nsse.org/surveys">http://www.nsse.org/surveys</a>. If you are returned to the admin login screen, <b>delete Cookies</b> from the Tools menu of your browser following the sequence that applies to your computer.</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #ff8c00; color: white;"> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Internet Explorer</th> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Netscape</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="width: 5%;">1.</td><td style="width: 45%;">Tools</td><td style="width: 5%;">1.</td><td style="width: 45%;">Options</td></tr> <tr><td>2.</td><td>Internet Options</td><td>2.</td><td>Privacy</td></tr> <tr><td>3.</td><td>General</td><td>3.</td><td>Cookies</td></tr> <tr><td>4.</td><td>Browser History</td><td>4.</td><td>Clear</td></tr> <tr><td>5.</td><td>Delete Cookies</td><td>5.</td><td>Remove All Cookies (or remove AdvancED cookies)</td></tr> <tr><td>6.</td><td>Yes</td><td>6.</td><td>OK</td></tr> <tr><td>7.</td><td>OK</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table> | Internet Explorer                                    |          | Netscape |  | 1. | Tools | 1. | Options | 2. | Internet Options | 2. | Privacy | 3. | General | 3. | Cookies              | 4. | Browser History    | 4. | Clear         | 5. | Delete Cookies | 5. | Remove All Cookies (or remove AdvancED cookies) | 6. | Yes | 6. | OK | 7. | OK |    |  |
| Internet Explorer            |  | Netscape   |  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 1.                           | Tools  | 1.   | Options  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 2.                           | Internet Options   | 2.   | Privacy  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 3.                           | General  | 3.   | Cookies  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 4.                           | Browser History  | 4.   | Clear  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 5.                           | Delete Cookies   | 5.   | Remove All Cookies (or remove AdvancED cookies)      |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 6.                           | Yes  | 6.   | OK   |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 7.                           | OK   |  |  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| <b>Completing the Survey</b> | Respondent is returned to login when "continue" is clicked | <p>If you are returned to the login screen, <b>enable Cookies</b> in the Internet options of your browser following the sequence that applies to you:</p> <table border="1" style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse; margin-top: 10px;"> <thead> <tr style="background-color: #ff8c00; color: white;"> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Internet Explorer</th> <th colspan="2" style="text-align: center;">Netscape</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="width: 5%;">1.</td><td style="width: 45%;">Tools</td><td style="width: 5%;">1.</td><td style="width: 45%;">Tools</td></tr> <tr><td>2.</td><td>Internet Options</td><td>2.</td><td>Options</td></tr> <tr><td>3.</td><td>Privacy</td><td>3.</td><td>Security and Privacy</td></tr> <tr><td>4.</td><td>Accept all Cookies</td><td>4.</td><td>Site Controls</td></tr> <tr><td>5.</td><td>Apply</td><td>5.</td><td>Allow Cookies</td></tr> <tr><td>6.</td><td>OK</td><td>6.</td><td>OK</td></tr> <tr><td></td><td></td><td>7.</td><td>After taking survey, reset to desired security level</td></tr> </tbody> </table>  | Internet Explorer                                    |          | Netscape |  | 1. | Tools | 1. | Tools   | 2. | Internet Options | 2. | Options | 3. | Privacy | 3. | Security and Privacy | 4. | Accept all Cookies | 4. | Site Controls | 5. | Apply          | 5. | Allow Cookies                                   | 6. | OK  | 6. | OK |    |    | 7. | After taking survey, reset to desired security level |
|                              |  | Internet Explorer  |  | Netscape |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 1.                           | Tools  | 1.   | Tools  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 2.                           | Internet Options   | 2.   | Options  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 3.                           | Privacy  | 3.   | Security and Privacy                                 |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 4.                           | Accept all Cookies   | 4.   | Site Controls  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 5.                           | Apply  | 5.   | Allow Cookies  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| 6.                           | OK   | 6.   | OK   |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
|                              |  | 7.   | After taking survey, reset to desired security level |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |
| Error messages               |  | <p>Do not use back or forward buttons of web browser—you will get the message "Error web page has expired."</p> <p>If you receive "<b>An error has occurred</b>" message, contact AdvancED right away. Please include the access code, survey title, school name, and time when the error screen displayed.</p>  |  |          |          |  |    |       |    |         |    |                  |    |         |    |         |    |                      |    |                    |    |               |    |                |    |   |    |     |    |    |    |    |    |  |

Chart 6

## Appendix A

### Which Sampling Method Should We Use?

#### Random: *Simple Random Sampling*

Every member of the population has an equal and independent chance to be selected for the sample. A random number table or putting numbers in a jar, shaking them up and picking out numbers are two ways to create a random sample.

*Example:* Sample 100 parents from the Parent Directory by numbering each parent's name and using a random number table to select them.

#### Random: *Stratified Random Sampling*

Individuals in certain subgroups, or strata, are selected for the sample in the same proportion, as they exist in the population. Randomly choose a sample that contains the same distribution of respondents as exists in the population.

*Example:* Participants in a technology innovation were 80% males and 20% females. Randomly sample 100 students with 80% of the individuals being males, and 20% females.

#### Random: *Cluster Random Sampling*

Rather than using the population as the basis for sampling, smaller groups or clusters of respondents are sampled.

*Example:* At a specified hour in the school's schedule, classes are randomly selected to receive a survey. Classes may be listed in any order and numbered. A table of random numbers can then be applied to select the classes.

#### Random: *Two-stage Random Sampling*

This approach combines cluster random sampling with individual random sampling.

*Example:* Randomly sample twenty 5<sup>th</sup> grade classrooms in the district. Then use a simple random sampling procedure to select 100 students to participate in the sample.

#### Non-Random: *Systematic Sampling*

In this sampling approach, every "nth" individual in the population list is selected into the sample. To avoid bias, one might put the numbers 1 to 10 into a hat and draw a number out which will be the number that begins the sample.

*Example:* Arrange parents' names alphabetically. Then, beginning with any of the first five names as the first parent in the sample, take every fifth name following the first one selected. This will produce a 20% sample that should include all constituencies proportionally.

#### Non-Random: *Convenience Sampling*

A convenience sample is a group of individuals who are conveniently available for study. This will most likely create a biased sample, which cannot be considered representative of any population.

*Example:* Administer a parent survey during an open house or parent night function held by the school. (Not all parents attend school functions—thereby excluding those parents not in attendance.)

#### Non-Random: *Purposive Sampling*

In this case, the survey administrator chooses the sample by using their knowledge of the population. The administrator believes that they can choose an adequate sample to represent the population.

*Example:* Sample church groups, Rotary, senior citizen organizations, and service clubs that represent a cross-section of the community.

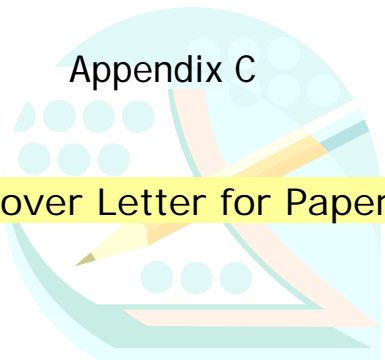
## Appendix B

### What Are Some Sample Demographic Statements Using the “A and B” lines?

(Bottom left section of paper-based surveys only)

| For School Use Only – Do not mark unless told to do so  |   |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|---------|-------------|---------|-------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨   |   |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| B ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨   |   |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Teacher Opinion Inventory   |   |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Teachers  | <b>A</b>  | <b>My highest level of education attained</b><br>(select only one)<br>0 - Bachelor’s Degree<br>1 - Master’s Degree<br>2 - Doctorate   | <b>B</b>  |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   | <b>Years of teaching experience in the grade level which I am presently teaching:</b> (select only one)<br>0 - 0-1 years<br>1 - 1-2 years<br>2 - 2-3 years<br>3 - 3+years |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Student Opinion Inventory   |   |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Elementary/<br>Middle School<br>Students  | <b>A</b>  | <b>In addition to siblings, I live with:</b><br>(select only one)<br>0 – Mother and father<br>1 - Mother only<br>2 - Father only<br>3 - Parent and step parent<br>4 - Grandparent(s)<br>5 - Other   | <b>B</b>  |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   | <b>I am enrolled in the following special programs:</b> (select only one)<br>0 - Speech<br>1 - ESL<br>2 - Physical Therapy<br>3 - Vision/Hearing                          |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   | <b>Large districts:</b> use the “A and B” lines to designate schools within a district. This enables the computer to sort your data by individual schools. This is helpful if you plan to ask for disaggregated reports by schools. |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| <table border="1" style="margin: auto; border-collapse: collapse;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">A and B</th> <th style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">School Name</th> <th style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">A and B</th> <th style="background-color: #008000; color: white;">School Name</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">9</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">0</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">2</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">3</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">5</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">4</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">6</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">5</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">7</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">6</td></tr> <tr><td style="text-align: center;">0</td><td style="text-align: center;">8</td><td style="text-align: center;">1</td><td style="text-align: center;">7</td></tr> </tbody> </table> |   |   |   | A and B | School Name | A and B | School Name | 0 | 0 | 0 | 9 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 6 | 1 | 5 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 1 | 7 |
| A and B   | School Name   | A and B   | School Name   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 0   | 0   | 9   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 1   | 1   | 0   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 2   | 1   | 1   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 3   | 1   | 2   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 4   | 1   | 3   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 5   | 1   | 4   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 6   | 1   | 5   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 7   | 1   | 6   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| 0   | 8   | 1   | 7   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| High School<br>Students ONLY  | <b>A</b>  | <b>I have a part-time job working the following number of hours per week:</b> (select only one)<br>0 - Only work during the summer break<br>1 - 1-7 hours/week during school semester<br>2 - 8-15 hours/week during school semester<br>3 - 16-20 hours/week during school semester<br>4 - 20+ hours/week during school semester | <b>B</b>  |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   | <b>My post high school plans include:</b> (select only one)<br>5 - Community college<br>6 - Four-year college<br>7 - Military<br>8 - Career training/technical school<br>9 - Full-time employment   | Not used  |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Parent Opinion Inventory  |   |   |   |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
| Parents   | <b>A</b>  | <b>I am:</b> (select only one)<br>0 – Married<br>1 - Single<br>2 - Divorced<br>3 - A Step-Parent<br>4 - Other   | <b>B</b>  |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|   |   |   | Not used  |         |             |         |             |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |

Chart 7



## Appendix C

### Can I See a Sample Cover Letter for Paper-based Surveys?

Dear *(Parents/Community Members)*:

*(Name of your school or district)* would like to request your assistance with an important study of the opinions of *(parents/community members)*. The goal of this study is to improve the quality of our educational program and services. We would like you to complete the enclosed survey.

Your opinions concerning the issues contained in the survey are of vital importance to us. We plan to utilize the results of the survey to help guide our ongoing school improvement planning process. It is important to us to make sure that the decisions we make about school improvement take into account the perspectives and opinions of *(parents/community members)*. The responses we receive from the survey will be maintained on a confidential basis. You do not need to sign your name or identify yourself in any way. A summary of the results of the survey will be provided to you in an upcoming issue of our school newsletter and will be posted on our website.

The survey can be completed in approximately 15 minutes [add more time for additional items]. You will need to use a #1 or #2 pencil. Do not use ink. Please be sure to respond to each item and to blacken in the circle completely.

**Note: for those schools using additional items you may wish to include the following paragraph(s) in your cover letter:**

We have also included a set of additional questions. These items and response categories are on a separate sheet. You may record your responses to these items in the circles on the answer sheet entitled “Additional School-Specific Items.”

In addition, we have included a few open-ended items. Please write your responses to these items on the scan sheet. If you need additional space, attach a separate piece of paper.

Please complete the survey and use the enclosed self-addressed, stamped envelope by *(date)*. Do not staple or punch holes in the surveys because this will interfere with the scanner’s ability to read your survey.

Once again, on behalf of *(name of school)*, I would like to express our appreciation for taking your valuable time to respond to this survey. We look forward to receiving your responses.

Sincerely,

*(name of administrator)*  
*(title)*



## Can I See a Sample e-mail for Web-based Surveys?

The following letter is the default announcement that is included with the web-based surveys. It is included for your convenience and may be modified to fit your specific needs. Some things to keep in mind are the insertion of the < > characters. This means that those fields are automatically pulled from the information attached to your survey administration. For example, <start date> and <stop date> will be filled in from the date you have selected as your survey start and stop date in Step 3.

The <access code> will be a unique random number inserted into each announcement. The fields of name, title, and school are changeable fields, but will default to the information given to AdvancED at purchase of the web-based surveys.

**Important:** Do not delete or change any information contained within < > characters.

Dear Parent,

Our school is interested in learning more about our instructional program. Your opinion and attitudes are of vital importance to this assessment. Please help us! We will start collecting your opinions via the Internet beginning <start date> and ending <stop date>. In order to complete your survey, please go to:

[http://web.nsse.org/nsse-surveys/src/enter.php?code=<access\\_code>](http://web.nsse.org/nsse-surveys/src/enter.php?code=<access_code>)

and begin. (If the above link is not active, copy it and paste it in the address bar of your Internet browser at the top of your screen.)

Please give us honest opinions. The responses that you provide will be totally confidential. The school will only see the information once it has been analyzed.

Thank you for sharing your opinions with us. We appreciate both your time and efforts to make <school> a better place to go to school and learn.

If you need technical assistance to complete this survey, please e-mail AdvancED at [surveys@advanc-ed.org](mailto:surveys@advanc-ed.org) or call (1-800-843-6773) Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. CST.

If you have any questions about this survey, please contact me at <email> or <phone>.

<name>  
<title>  
<school>