

NEW ENGLAND ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOLS AND COLLEGES, INC.
COMMISSION ON PUBLIC SCHOOLS

NEASC CPS Opinion Survey Administration Guidelines

Introduction

The NEASC CPS Opinion Surveys have been developed in collaboration with Tripod Education Partners. The survey items have been aligned with the 2020 Standards for Accreditation and are intended to provide schools with meaningful data on their alignment to the Standards with a focus on the experience of students, families, and faculty in the school. The surveys are entirely online. The survey tool is very easy to use and works well on a computer, tablet, or phone.

Over 135 schools, including 78,000 students, have completed the survey. The survey was piloted in 2018 and revised based on a careful analysis of results as well as feedback from schools. Schools can re-administer one or more of the surveys as needed each year to gather comparison data to identify growth over time and identify new opportunities to align with the Standards.

We hope that you will find the data useful and meaningful. We appreciate your support and welcome your feedback as we continue to improve the services we provide to member schools.

Student Survey

We recommend that schools notify families that their students will be completing the NEASC CPS Opinion Survey one to two weeks prior to the administration of the student survey. Below is sample language that you can use to notify families.

Sample Notice Language:

In preparation for the upcoming Self-Reflection that the _____ school will be completing as part of the NEASC Accreditation process, all students, families, and faculty members will complete surveys designed to provide our school with important feedback on our work. We hope to learn more about what is working well for our students and identify areas for growth and improvement. Every student will have an opportunity to complete the survey during the school day.

Parents/guardians will also be surveyed. Watch for an email from the school with the link to the survey. We ask that every family complete one survey. You do not need to complete multiple surveys if you have more than one student in the school. The survey is mobile-ready and can be completed on a computer, tablet, or phone.

Develop a plan to ensure that every student has an opportunity to complete the survey. While most students should be able to complete the survey in 20 minutes, plan for additional time for students who may work more slowly. It may be necessary to provide accommodations for students with disabilities, or EL newcomers, such as providing a reader and/or scribe.

The setting and prompt for students are important to get the best results. A classroom setting with a teacher/educator who the students know is helpful. Write a prompt for proctors to use that encourages students to answer honestly and thoughtfully. The results will influence teachers and school leaders as they consider areas for growth and improvement in the school. This survey is an important opportunity for students to have a voice in those decisions.

Sample Prompt for Students:

We are beginning a process of Self-Reflection as part of the NEASC Accreditation process. All students, families, and faculty members will complete surveys to provide us with feedback. We hope to learn more about what is working well for you and identify areas for growth and improvement as teachers and as a school. The purpose of this survey is to gather your opinions about how well our school is meeting your needs. The survey is confidential, and the faculty will use your responses to help us improve our school. Work on your own, take your time, and answer all questions as accurately and honestly as possible.

Once you begin the survey, you cannot restart. Please complete the entire survey in one session.

Note: the second half of the survey asks students to answer questions about a specific class: “For the questions below, please think about your first class of the day this Monday. If you did not have a class first period this Monday or that class was a study hall, think of your second period class.” If for some reason these instructions will be confusing or if there is a better period to use, include this information in the prompt for students. The goal is to get responses about students’ experiences that are as accurate and meaningful as possible.

Students should be allowed to opt-out, but it is certainly worth having a conversation with a student, or parent of a student, who chooses to opt-out about the importance of his/her input as well as other opportunities to contribute to the Self-Reflection process.

Faculty Survey

All faculty members should complete the survey. Some schools schedule time for teachers to complete the survey during a faculty meeting, or other professional time, to ensure that all faculty members have time to complete the survey in a timely way. Most faculty members should be able to complete the survey in 20 minutes. Very small schools may suggest that faculty skip the two demographic questions at the end (years of service in the school, years of service in education) to avoid the impression that individuals could be identified.

Family Survey

A minimum response rate of 25 percent is needed to have meaningful data. Schools often incentivize parents to complete the survey. For example, have parent/guardians sign a note that they have completed the survey and enter their student in a raffle for prizes. Most parents/guardians should be able to complete the survey in 10 minutes. Use the sample prompt for students to create an email message for families. The family survey has been professionally translated from English into Spanish, Portuguese, Haitian, and Bosnian. Respondents can choose their language preference from a pull-down menu above the title on the welcome screen to complete the survey in these languages. If there is a need for additional translations, you can contact school community.

Important Notes

There is no password protection for the survey. Anyone with the link can complete the survey. Since there is no login for the surveys, once someone begins the survey, they should finish it in one sitting. The software will record answers as they are entered, so if someone completes part of the survey, the responses completed will be recorded, but they cannot return to the survey without starting over. If someone exits the survey before completing it, you will only have the answers for the section completed. In your instructions, you should advise people to complete the survey in one sitting, and they should not restart if they do not complete the survey.

Survey Results

If you need to know the total number of surveys completed while administering the survey, you can email Donna Spencer-Wilson at dspencerwilson@neasc.org. She will send you the number of responses entered to date. This information will also be in the report after you close the survey.

Once you have completed administration of the surveys, email Donna Spencer-Wilson at dspencerwilson@neasc.org, and she will send you the PDF files for each of the reports as well as the Excel files with the raw data.

You can close all three surveys at the same time or one at a time. Please specify which surveys are completed. Once the surveys are closed, no additional responses can be entered, and the reports are final.

- Student Survey
- Faculty Survey
- Family Survey

The report for each survey is organized by the principles in the Standards so that you can easily find the connections to the Standards as you complete the Self-Reflection.

In addition to the PDF reports, schools will receive a spreadsheet with the complete data. This data can be disaggregated based on the demographic questions, which will allow the professional staff to explore a variety of questions; for example, “Do students who earn lower grades feel differently about school than students who earn higher grades?”

For more information, contact your school’s NEASC liaison.