

# Things to Consider When Developing and Implementing Your Survey

## *1. Begin by determining your survey needs:*

### **What is the purpose of the survey?**

- Ex: To measure the effectiveness of curriculum
- Ex: To measure student/staff satisfaction

### **Who do you need to survey?**

- When surveying different populations such as staff, students, and teachers you may need to develop separate surveys for each of these populations.

### **Does the survey population have special needs?**

- Ex: Young children and appropriate vocabulary
- Ex: Parents evaluation of math homework; may need to narrow vocabulary of curriculum and concepts
- Ex: Parents whose first language is not English

### **What results are you looking for?**

- Descriptive Analysis: Results of individual survey questions are provided
- Detailed Analysis: Connections between survey questions are explored; breaking down survey responses by demographics such as race or gender.

## 2. Survey Design:

### Types of survey questions you can use:

- Closed-Ended

Examples:

➤ **Satisfaction: Likert Scale**

I am happy with my child's mathematics education at his/her school.

- "Strongly Agree"
- "Agree"
- "Agree Some, Disagree Some"
- "Disagree"
- "Strongly Disagree"

➤ **Scaled responses:**

I have witnessed students smoking cigarettes near the school \_\_\_\_\_.

- "Once a Month"
- "Once a week"
- "Less than once a month"
- "Never"

➤ **Multiple Response:**

Which of the following classes are you taking? (Mark all that apply)

- Math     English     History     Science     Foreign Language
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **Single Response:**

Which of the following classes are you taking? (Choose One)

- Math 8     Algebra     Pre-Algebra     Other \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **Yes/No Questions:**

Have you ever been suspended?                       Yes                       No

## Types of survey questions you can use continued:

- Open Ended  
Examples:

➤ **Fill in the Blank:**

What high school do you attend? \_\_\_\_\_

➤ **Comment Box:**

Additional comments? (please write in the box below)

➤ **Open Question with space for response:**

What are the major issues facing students in our district today?  
(Explain in the space below)

- If the survey is an electronic survey this answer can be placed in a text box that expands based on the number of words typed.
- If the survey is a paper survey then you may choose to note in the question that they may write in the space below and add any additional points on the back of the page or on an attached sheet of paper.

### Questionnaire Instructions:

- Clear instructions to what the purpose of the survey is and who is being surveyed (**At the beginning of the survey**)
- Clear instruction of how to complete the types of survey questions (**When the type of question changes within the survey**)

### 3. Testing your questions for validity and reliability:

- **Watch for clarity of question items** (unambiguous)
- **Avoid double barreled questions**
  - DO: “Does the curriculum meet your needs in the classroom?”
  - DO NOT: “Does the curriculum meet your needs, your student’s needs, and your parent’s needs?”
- **Vocabulary** that is understood by the population you are surveying
- **Respondents must be willing to answer** the questions so that your sample is not diminished by a lack of responses to particular questions
- **Questions need to be relevant** to the study and the respondent
- **The shorter the better** because short surveys and questions get more responses
- **Question sequence issues:** Keep questions that are too closely related separate
  - DO NOT place these questions next to each other:  
Respond to the statements below by circling the yes or no response:  
“I have been injured on the playground in the past year” yes no  
“Recess is fun” yes no
- **Avoid negative items when possible:** This includes questions that respondents may be unwilling to answer and questions with negative terms in them that may sway the response such as never or always.
- **Avoid biased questions:** Be certain not to word questions that lean one direction or another; these are called leading questions
- **Watch ordering of questions:** Connections between one question and another that may skew the answers in one direction or another.
- **Demographic question inclusion:** Any necessary addition of variables such as Race (the district uses specific race categories that can be referenced by looking at the Profile of Performance), Gender, Grade, School, Student ID, etc.
- **Avoid accidentally narrowing your responses to open ended questions**
  - DO NOT ask an answer that can be a yes, no, or maybe response if you desire a paragraph or sentence response

#### **4. Survey Implementation and Distribution:**

Types of surveys that can be used:

- **Paper Survey:** Can use teleform computer program to create paper surveys capable of being scanned
- **Internet Survey:** For immediate access to the data or easy export into Excel
- **Face-to-Face Interview Survey:** For more detailed responses rather than increasing the numbers of responses. This tends to be more open-ended questions and looking at small groups. More time is necessary for analysis and implementation of these surveys.
- **Telephone Survey:** Can have interviewer read prompts and fill out a paper form, face-to-face interview form, or internet form.
- **Multiple Method Approach:** Using any of the above to reach more people

Distribution of the survey:

- Mailed distribution
- E-mailed distribution of survey link online
- E-mailed distribution of survey in PDF format
- Online website survey link for those entering the site
- Telephone survey
- Face-to-Face interview
- Multiple methods of distribution can be used