



Guidelines for NJ SCI Survey Administration

Step 1

Communicate with school community members about the purpose of the NJ SCI Survey and importance of their participation. When school community members participate in data collection they can anonymously share their perceptions regarding the school environment. Think carefully about how to encourage survey participation. Let students, staff, and parents/caregivers know that their opinions matter and that the data collected will be used to inform strategic planning to address needs. Customizable pre-survey announcement letters to encourage survey participation of staff and parents/caregivers are available in the Data Collection and Reports workspace on the NJ SCI Platform, under the *Survey Deployment* tab. The “Download Sample Letters” button will appear once a survey deployment has been created, meaning survey dates for all groups are scheduled in the system, before users can access the letters. These letters inform school community members of upcoming survey administration and should be sent prior to sending sample letters with embedded survey links and passwords. **Embedded survey links and passwords in sample letters are unique to each school and should not be shared** with anyone other than the respondent groups taking the survey to ensure that respondents receive the correct survey link/password for their survey type and school. School and respondent group (e.g., Students Grades 3-5, Students Grades 6-12) appear at the top of each survey page to help further ensure respondents are using the correct link to complete the survey.

Sample language in the parent/caregiver letters provides information about the survey and links to preview student items in order to support the passive consent process. After communicating about the NJ SCI survey, the Data Coordinator and/or School Principal/Team Champion or Team Chair(s) should be available to answer any questions or concerns from school community members before, during, and after survey administration. If you are unsure of the answer to a question about the survey or the online platform, reach out to SCTP staff at njscisupport@rutgers.edu.

Step 2

Designate and prepare staff members who will help administer the NJ SCI Survey to students. When selecting staff members to support student administration, consider their schedules and availability, as well as their familiarity and comfort with using technology. Once designated, send staff the *Sample Letter for Staff Administering to Students* (via “Download Sample Letters” button once a survey has been deployed in “Survey Deployments” tab) which thanks them for their time and details important information for preparing for student administration.

These staff, along with the Data Coordinator and/or Team Champion or Team Chair(s), should carefully review the information in the *NJ SCI Survey Administration for Staff Administering to Students* handout, which includes procedures for administration, technical and timing issues, and ways to address student questions. If students have questions about the gender item in the survey, staff are advised to respond in a way that affirms that a student’s answer should reflect their own internal sense of gender, or who they feel they are on the inside. Staff are referred to the definition of gender identity in the *NJDOE Transgender Guidance for School Districts*, to help explain different gender terms to students (see the handout referenced above for more information on addressing student questions). Providing accurate definitions in response to student questions (and otherwise) is reflective of a supportive and inclusive educational environment. If needed, refer students to a designated staff member(s) they can reach out to if they have additional questions about concepts related to gender identity.

The *NJ SCI Survey Administration for Staff Administering to Students* handout also includes sample scripts for introducing and explaining the purpose of the survey to students. The student sample scripts students contain

important information that should be read to students to ensure that they understand that completing the survey is voluntary and that their decision to participate in the survey or not participate, will not affect their grades. The script supports staff in reminding students that the survey is anonymous and questions about their background are asked only to describe how groups of students who complete the survey feel about their school. Additionally, it reminds students that they can skip any question they are not comfortable answering or do not want to answer. There are two versions of the student script as well as two student survey links for students in grades 3-5 and for students in grades 6-12. Although the *Sample Letter for Staff Administering to Students* noted above has auto-embedded survey links and passwords based on student grade levels at the school, data coordinators should confirm that all information and links are correct before sending to staff. As a reminder, survey links and passwords are unique to each school and should not be shared with anyone outside of the school community.

Notify staff of any students who have been opted out of survey administration by their parents/guardians, and/or students who may require special accommodations. Students that are opted out or would prefer not to participate should not be identified to classmates or singled out and should be given an alternate task to complete during the class period. Be available to provide additional support and assistance to staff prior to and during student survey administration, as needed. For instance, offer to meet with staff to address questions or concerns, ensure availability of technology and space for the day(s) of student administration, create and communicate a clear schedule for administering, and check in to ensure staff feel prepared. Staff are encouraged to report technical difficulties as well as any feedback on the items or content (e.g., if a student reported that the wording of an item was confusing) to the Data Coordinator. Data Coordinators should report this information back to SCTP staff by clicking on the “Share Feedback” button on the NJ SCI Platform. The information will be used to make improvements to the survey and platform.

Step 3

Plan for survey logistics to allow *all* school community members an opportunity to take the survey during a similar time period.

A. Create a schedule

- In a multi-school district, consult with district leaders first to find out whether the district will coordinate administration of the survey across all schools or allow individual schools to select their own timeframes. It is recommended that districts coordinate survey administration to allow for more meaningful data comparisons that are less impacted by timing-related factors or major events in the community. Aligning survey administration across schools in the same district also allows for more efficient communication with members of the school community and sends a unified message about the importance of the survey.
- In the “Data Collection and Reports” workspace on the NJ SCI Platform, under the “Survey Deployment” tab, click on the option to deploy the NJ SCI Survey and designate a “Start Date” and “End Date” for each respondent group (e.g., Students Grades 3-5; Students Grades 6-12) based on scheduling considerations below. You may assign different start and end dates for different groups. Links for all relevant groups are created within a single survey deployment. Keeping groups within the same deployment will ensure that survey results can be easily compared as part of the same data report. Once a deployment is created, you will be able to revise survey start and end dates as needed.

- If feasible, staff should take the survey within 7-10 days of release of the survey link. Consider giving staff time to take the survey during a faculty meeting or as part of an extended or additional preparation or professional development period. As a reminder, participation in the survey is voluntary. No respondent should feel pressured to participate if they do not want to.
- Survey parents/caregivers within 14 days of release of the survey link. Additional time can be given to promote participation, as needed. Consider providing opportunities for parents/caregivers to take the survey when they are in the building for other purposes.
- Plan to administer surveys to all students within 5 school days, if feasible. If your school has students in grades 3-5 as well as grades 6-12, schedule administration of both versions of the survey to students within the same time frame. Student surveys are only accessible on weekdays between the hours of 6 a.m. and 6 p.m.; anyone trying to access the surveys outside of those hours will be redirected to a page stating that they should return to the survey during typical school hours. The student surveys will time out after 24 hours of being open for security purposes.
- The NJ SCI Survey takes about 15-20 minutes to complete for students in grades 3-5 and about 10-15 minutes for students in grades 6-12. For students, we recommend setting aside a single-block class period (about 40-45 minutes) to ensure that staff have enough time to introduce the survey, give instructions on how to access the link, and answer questions. On average, the Staff survey takes about 10-15 minutes to complete and the Parent/Caregiver survey takes about 7-10 minutes.
- Avoid surveying too early in the school year or immediately following long breaks to allow routines to solidify; avoid time around holidays, standardized testing periods, or periods immediately following significant events.
- Survey links will close at 11:59 pm on specified "End Dates." The platform will send an automated reminder email to the Data Coordinator(s), School Principal/Team Champion, and Team Chair(s) a few days prior to the closing of a survey link with a prompt to revise "End Dates" if additional time is needed.

B. Coordinate space and technology

- **Students should complete the survey while in the school building under the supervision of staff** who are prepared to administer the survey and respond to questions.
- Identify survey locations (i.e., computer lab, classrooms) and times to ensure minimal distractions. Determine which devices students will use to take the survey while in the building.
- The NJ SCI Survey can be completed on computers/laptops, tablets, and mobile devices. Test Wi-Fi bandwidth to accommodate the number of students taking the survey. Surveys should only be completed electronically.

C. Plan for additional accommodations for students, as necessary

- **Consider special accommodations for students as needed**, such as make-up days, quiet spaces/rooms, and extra time to complete the survey. While planning for accommodations and extended time, please keep in mind that after 24 hours of being open, the student survey link will time out for security purposes. Any accommodations provided should be paired with efforts to protect the confidentiality of students' responses.
- **Examples of potential accommodations** and modifications for students with disabilities may include:
 - Reading the survey aloud

- Allowing for frequent breaks (the survey link will not time out within 24 hours of being open if it is left open on the webpage and the device being used is not shut down)
- Providing extra time to participate in the survey process (but no more than 24 hours beyond when the survey is first opened)
- Providing alternative settings for survey administration
- Assisting in actual survey participation/keyboard use
- Consulting with special services staff for assistance, if needed
- Considering other differentiation supports for students. (e.g., Text-To-Speech Reader)

Step 4

Distribute survey links to school community members using customizable sample letters and scripts. Designated staff who will help administer the student survey should download *NJ SCI Survey Administration for Staff Administering to Students* and use the sample scripts in the document to provide an introduction and instructions to students before they begin the survey. After reading the instructions and answering any potential questions, staff may share the link and password to the survey. The link and password may be posted on a collaborative drive like Google or learning management systems, like Canvas or Blackboard, and then removed to prevent student re-entry. Staff may also set up computers in advance with the survey link bookmarked but should not share the password with students until instructions are read and questions are answered.

Sample letters are available with embedded survey links and passwords for staff and parents/caregivers in the *Data Collection & Reports* workspace on the NJ SCI Platform, under the “Survey Deployment” tab (see “Download Sample Letters” button). Ensure that staff and parents/caregivers are sent the correct sample letter with the corresponding survey link and password for their respective respondent group (i.e., Students Grades 3-5; Students Grades 6-12; Staff; Parents/Caregivers). In their sample letter, parents/caregivers are informed that they may submit a separate survey response per child in the school building if they feel their children’s experiences vary. Please note that “they/them” pronouns are used in the Parents/Caregivers Survey when referring to individual students in order to be inclusive of different ways students may identify.

Additionally, please note that a pre-selected password is assigned for each respondent group to help ensure that respondents are given access to the appropriate link for their respondent type. Passwords may be changed to help enhance security or to prevent student re-entry (i.e., if student administration is finished but some students will participate in a make-up session, the password can be changed to ensure that only these students can access the link). Avoid long or highly complex passwords as respondents will have to manually type in the password to initiate the survey. Corresponding links and passwords (whether pre-selected or customized) are automatically embedded into the downloadable sample letters and scripts for all corresponding respondent groups. Sample letters can be further customized once downloaded and should be emailed directly to adults taking the staff and parent/caregiver surveys or posted to the school’s password-protected website or portal. As a reminder, passwords and survey links should not be accessible to students whose parents/caregivers have indicated they do not give permission for their child to take the survey.

Current response rates for respective surveys can be found in the *Data Collection & Reports* workspace, under the Survey Deployments tab (this summary is also available in the “Dashboard”). Use this information to inform and track progress on survey administration and to determine when to close survey links.

After the Survey

Once administration to all respondent groups is complete, click the “Generate Reports” button in the *Data Collection and Reports* workspace to officially close survey links and begin generating data results. Schools may modify survey “End Dates” for all respondent groups if more time is needed. NJ SCI Survey links **CANNOT** be re-opened after school reports are generated. In order to access the school’s data reports and begin exploring strengths and emergent needs, the Data Coordinator(s), Team Champion, and/or Team Chair(s) **must** click the “Generate Reports” button. School teams should plan for follow-up communications with students, staff, and parents/caregivers thanking them for their participation and summarizing the results once data are discussed as a team. Resources and guidance on next steps, including how to prioritize needs based on the data, are available on the NJ SCI Platform.

**New Jersey School Climate Survey
Students Grades 3-5**

We want to know what you think about your school to help make it better.

This is not a test. There are no wrong answers.

This survey is voluntary. This means if you do not want to take the survey, you do not have to. This survey will not affect your grades in school. It is okay if you skip any questions. Your answers are private. No one will know how you answered. There are questions about how you describe yourself. They are only used to understand how groups of students feel about their school.

Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question.

Think about how many students in your school do these things. (None, Some, Most, All)

In this school:	_____ of the students care about doing well on work.
In this school:	_____ of the students keep trying when the work is hard.
Think about how many teachers in your school do these things.	
In this school:	_____ of my teachers expect me to work hard.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers teach about people like me.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers teach about topics I like.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers give me chances to pick the type of work I have to do.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers give me chances to work with other students.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers would give me extra help with my work if I needed it.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers help me learn from my mistakes on work.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers tell me how I can do better on my work.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers explain how schoolwork will help me in the future.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
In this school:	the rules for how to behave are clear.
In this school:	adults treat all students the same when they break the rules.
In this school:	adults treat all students the same when they follow the rules.
In this school:	adults help students make things right when they hurt others.

In this school:	adults say or do something nice when I follow the rules.
	I think the rules at our school are fair.
	The rules help make my school a better place.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time during the school day. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
	I feel safe during the school day.
	I feel safe in my classrooms.
	I feel safe outside of the classroom.
	I feel safe on the way to and from school.
	Adults at this school help keep everyone safe.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
Adults in my school:	want to get to know me.
Adults in my school:	would help me if I was being treated badly.
Adults in my school:	treat me with respect.
	I think adults in my school really care about me.
	I can talk to an adult I trust in school.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
Students at this school:	help each other if they need it.
Students at this school:	are kind to one another.
Students at this school:	speak up if someone might hurt others.
Students at this school:	are able to work out their problems with other students.
Students at this school:	get along with students who are different from them.
Students at this school:	play with students who move, learn, or talk in different ways.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
	I am proud to be a student at this school.

	I can be myself at this school.
	People at this school like me for who I am.
	I feel like I belong at this school.
	I have one or more good friends at this school.

Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question.

Think about how much of a problem these things are in your school. (Not a Problem, A Small Problem, A Medium Problem, A Big Problem)

Students at this school:	say mean things to each other in person.
Students at this school:	push, hit, or kick each other on purpose.
Students at this school:	leave kids out of groups on purpose.
Students at this school:	are mean to each other online or through text.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their race or where they are from.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how they learn.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how they move or walk.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how they speak.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how they look.

Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question.

Think about what you and other students learn in your school. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)

In my school we learn:	ways to ask for help when we need it.
In my school we learn:	ways to work out problems with others.
In my school we learn:	ways of showing our feelings.
In my school we learn:	what to do when we feel stress.
In my school we learn:	what to do when we have upset feelings.
In my school we learn:	to stop and think before we do something.
In my school we learn:	what we are good at.

In my school we learn:	how to reach our goals.
In my school we learn:	how to make good choices.
In my school we learn:	how our actions affect others.
In my school we learn:	how to respect how others feel.
In my school we learn:	how to make things right if we hurt others.
In my school we learn:	how to value all people for who they are.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
In this school, I have chances to:	share what I think about things.
In this school, I have chances to:	help lead activities and events.
In this school, I have chances to:	help the community.
In this school, I have chances to:	help pick activities.
In this school, I have chances to:	help make the rules.
In this school, I have chances to:	join clubs or groups that interest me.

Below are questions about how you describe yourself. They are only used to understand how groups of students feel about their school. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. Your answers are private; no one will know how you answered.

What grade are you in?

3rd

4th

5th

How do you describe yourself? *Click all that apply.*

Boy/Male

Girl/Female

I use a different word(s)

Which of the following describe you? *Click all that apply.*

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African-American

Hispanic or Latino/a

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

A group not listed here

Is English the main language spoken at home?

Yes

No

For Viewing Purposes Only

**New Jersey School Climate Survey
Students Grades 6-12**

We want to know what you think about your school to help make it better.

This is not a test. There are no wrong answers.

This survey is voluntary. This means if you do not want to take the survey, you do not have to. This survey will not affect your grades in school. It is okay if you skip any questions. Your answers are private. No one will know how you answered. There are questions about how you describe yourself. They are only used to understand how groups of students feel about their school.

Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question.	
Think about how many students in your school do these things. (None, Some, Most, All)	
In this school:	_____ of the students care about doing well on work.
In this school:	_____ of the students keep trying when the work is hard.
Think about how many teachers in your school do these things.	
In this school:	_____ of my teachers expect me to work hard.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers include topics from many cultures and identities in their lessons.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers teach about topics I like.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers give me chances to pick from different types of assignments.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers give me chances to work with other students.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers would give me extra help with my work if I needed it.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers help me learn from my mistakes on work.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers give me feedback that helps me improve my work.
In this school:	_____ of my teachers explain how schoolwork will help me in the future.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
In this school:	the rules for how to behave are clear.
In this school:	adults are fair to all groups of students when they apply the rules.
In this school:	adults help students make things right when they hurt others.
In this school:	adults recognize when I follow the rules and expectations.

	I think the rules at our school are fair.
	The rules help make my school a better place.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time during the school day. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
	I feel safe during the school day.
	I feel safe in my classrooms.
	I feel safe outside of the classroom.
	I feel safe on the way to and from school.
	I feel safe at school events or activities that happen after school hours.
	Adults at this school help keep everyone safe.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
Adults in my school:	want to get to know me.
Adults in my school:	would help me if I was being treated badly.
Adults in my school:	treat me with respect.
Adults in my school respect students:	of all races, ethnicities, and nationalities.
Adults in my school respect students:	of all sexual orientations.
Adults in my school respect students:	of all gender identities.
Adults in my school respect students:	of all ability levels.
Adults in my school respect students:	from all religions or cultures.
Adults in my school respect students:	whose families have more money or less money.
	I think adults in my school really care about me.
	In this school I can talk to an adult I trust.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
Students at this school:	help each other if they need it.
Students at this school:	are kind to one another.

Students at this school:	Speak up if someone might hurt others.
Students at this school:	are able to resolve their problems with other students.
Students at this school:	discuss different points of view in a respectful way.
Students at this school:	get along with students who are different from them (such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender).
Students at this school:	include students with disabilities in groups and activities.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
	I am proud to be a student at this school.
	I can be myself at this school.
	People at this school appreciate me for who I am.
	I feel like I belong at this school.
	I have one or more good friends at this school.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. Think about how much of a problem these things are in your school. (Not a Problem, A Small Problem, A Medium Problem, A Big Problem)	
Students at this school:	say mean things to each other in person.
Students at this school:	push, hit, or kick each other on purpose.
Students at this school:	leave other students out of groups or activities on purpose.
Students at this school:	are mean to each other online or through text.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their race, ethnicity, or nationality.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their religion or culture.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their gender or gender expression.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their sexual orientation.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their academic or learning ability.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	their physical appearance.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how they move or walk.

Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how they speak.
Students at this school pick on each other because of:	how much money their family has.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. Think about what you and other students learn in your school. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
In my school we learn:	ways to ask for help when we need it.
In my school we learn:	ways to resolve problems with others.
In my school we learn:	ways of showing our feelings.
In my school we learn:	what to do when we feel stress.
In my school we learn:	what to do when we have upset feelings.
In my school we learn:	to stop and think before we do something.
In my school we learn:	to recognize our personal strengths.
In my school we learn:	how to reach our goals.
In my school we learn:	how to make good choices.
In my school we learn:	how our actions affect others.
In my school we learn:	how to respect how others feel.
In my school we learn:	how to make things right if we hurt others.
In my school we learn:	how to value all people for who they are.
Click the button that best matches how you feel most of the time. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. (Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, Strongly Agree)	
In this school, I have chances to:	share my ideas and opinions.
In this school, I have chances to:	help lead activities and events.
In this school, I have chances to:	participate in activities that help the community.
In this school, I have chances to:	help decide activities.
In this school, I have chances to:	help make the rules.
In this school, I have chances to:	join clubs, groups, or other activities that interest me.

Below are questions about how you describe yourself. They are only used to understand how groups of students feel about their school. If you are not sure how to answer, you can skip the question. Your answers are private; no one will know how you answered.

What grade are you in?

6th

7th

8th

9th

10th

11th

12th

How do you describe yourself? *Click all that apply.*

Boy/Male

Girl/Female

Transgender

Non-binary

I use a different word(s)

Which of the following describe you? *Click all that apply.*

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian

Black or African-American

Hispanic or Latino/a

Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

White

A group not listed here

Is English the main language spoken at home?

Yes

No