

2011-12 SCHOOLS AND STAFFING SURVEY (SASS)
PRELIMINARY FIELD ACTIVITIES

OMB SUPPORTING STATEMENT

PART B

OMB# 1850-0598 v.6

December 2010

National Center For Education Statistics (NCES)

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. RESPONDENT UNIVERSE

1.1. SCHOOLS

The respondent universe for the 2011-12 full-scale data collection consists of 95,750 public and 23,838 private schools in the 50 U.S. states and the District of Columbia (DC) that offer instruction in any of grades K-12. To be eligible for inclusion in the sample, schools must provide classroom instruction to students, have one or more teachers to provide instruction, serve students in at least one of grades 1-12 or the ungraded equivalent, must be located in one or more buildings, and must be located in the U.S. and not in the outlying areas or U.S. territories. No Bureau of Indian Affairs-funded schools will be included in the sampling frame for the 2011-12 SASS.

NCES' 2008-09 Common Core of Data (CCD) and 2007-08 Private School Survey (PSS) will be used to construct the public and private school sampling frames, respectively, unless a more recent CCD file becomes available. The respondent universe for charter schools will be identified as those public charter schools that meet the SASS definition of an eligible school found on the CCD. Tables 4 and 5 below present the number of public schools on the 2008-09 CCD and the number of private schools on the 2009-10 PSS by region and school level. The universe has been adjusted to remove K-terminal schools, which are not eligible for SASS.

Table 4. Respondent universe by school level and region for the proposed public school sample, based on the 2008-09 CCD

Region	School level				Total
	Primary	Middle	High	Combined	
Northeast	8,590	2,689	2,924	796	14,999
Midwest	13,497	4,404	6,205	1,565	25,671
South	17,368	6,207	6,381	2,582	32,538
West	12,526	3,492	4,871	1,653	22,542
Total	51,981	16,792	20,381	6,596	95,750

SOURCE: 2008-09 CCD.

Table 5. Respondent universe by school level and region for the proposed private school sample, based on the 2007-08 PSS

Region	School level			Total
	Elementary	Secondary	Combined	
Northeast	3,381	797	1,438	5,616
Midwest	4,298	575	1,125	5,998
South	3,612	544	3,176	7,332
West	2,955	551	1,386	4,892
Total	14,246	2,467	7,125	23,838

SOURCE: 2007-08 PSS.

Details of the first-stage sample design of schools are provided in section 2.

1.2. TEACHERS

Teachers will be randomly sampled within the second design stage from roster information provided by each participating sampled school. Teachers within the sampled school are classified as ineligible for SASS if they are a short-term substitute teacher, student teacher, a teacher's aide, or do not teach any of grades K-12 or comparable ungraded levels. This information is obtained from the Teacher Questionnaire. Details of the second-stage sample design of teachers are provided in section 2.

2. STATISTICAL PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTING INFORMATION

2.1. SAMPLING

The final 2011-12 SASS samples will include no more than:

- 5,800 LEAs;
- 16,350 schools and school principals (12,000 traditional public, 750 charter, and 3,600 private schools); and
- 74,900 teachers (58,700 traditional public, 3,800 charter, and 12,400 private school teachers).

Sampling – Public Schools

The level of precision achieved by the 2007-08 SASS was evaluated to inform the sample design decisions for the 2011-12 SASS. The precision analysis was based upon important analysis variables as well as generic proportions to address other important SASS characteristics. These variables and values were evaluated:

- by state (public schools) and affiliation (private schools);
- by school type (public charter, traditional public, overall public, private);
- by region within school type;
- by grade level (elementary, secondary, and combined for private schools; primary, middle, high, and combined for public schools);
- by grade level and region within school type; and
- by teachers' years of experience.

The desired level of precision for SASS estimates was defined in terms of the estimated coefficient of variation (CV; also referred to as a relative standard error). Three levels of precision were evaluated: 15, 20, and 30 percent CV.

Table 6 presents a portion of the analysis for traditional public schools by state and public charter schools, highlighting the minimum respondent sample size needed for the 2011-12 SASS to achieve either a 15, 20, or 30 percent CV for two key estimates—the number of schools and the number of students.

Table 6. Minimum respondent sample size needed for 2011-12 SASS by percent CV for public schools by state and public charter schools

School type	SASS 07-08 Frame Count	SASS 07-08 Responding Schools	Minimum Respondent Sample Size						Max % CV
			Max %CV for Number of Schools Estimate			Max %CV for Number of Students Estimate			
			15	20	30	15	20	30	
Traditional Public by State									
Alabama	1,578	167	11	6	3	31	18	8	31
Alaska	488	131	38	22	10	180	109	51	180
Arizona	1,555	156	30	17	7	34	19	8	34
Arkansas	963	154	11	6	3	18	10	4	18
California	9,249	292	9	5	2	51	28	13	51
Colorado	1,463	127	9	5	2	13	7	3	13
Connecticut	1,059	115	6	3	2	25	14	6	25
Delaware	210	90	149	97	49	79	48	22	149
District of Columbia	174	75	18	10	5	34	20	9	34
Florida	3,278	186	10	6	3	29	16	7	29
Georgia	2,357	137	6	3	2	12	7	3	12
Hawaii	257	77	117	72	34	44	25	12	117
Idaho	672	154	33	18	8	48	27	12	48
Illinois	4,112	147	4	2	1	19	11	5	19
Indiana	1,908	140	15	9	4	15	9	4	15
Iowa	1,313	130	3	2	1	29	16	7	29
Kansas	1,334	137	61	35	16	33	19	8	61
Kentucky	1,444	134	12	7	3	24	14	6	24
Louisiana	1,469	127	19	11	5	34	19	9	34
Maine	668	141	3	2	1	22	12	5	22
Maryland	1,398	100	3	2	1	14	8	3	14
Massachusetts	1,744	129	1	0	0	11	6	3	11

Table 6. Minimum respondent sample size needed for 2011-12 SASS by percent CV for public schools by state and public charter schools—Continued

School type	SASS 07-08 Frame Count	SASS 07-08 Responding Schools	Minimum Respondent Sample Size						Max % CV
			Max %CV for Number of Schools Estimate			Max %CV for Number of Students Estimate			
			15	20	30	15	20	30	
Michigan	3,614	136	11	6	3	34	19	8	34
Minnesota	2,133	204	22	12	5	86	49	22	86
Mississippi	1,044	153	1	1	0	12	7	3	12
Missouri	2,002	186	12	7	3	19	10	5	19
Montana	568	163	12	7	3	25	14	6	25
Nebraska	1,041	137	31	18	8	28	16	7	31
Nevada	528	124	21	12	5	14	8	3	21
New Hampshire	451	118	71	41	19	11	6	3	71
New Jersey	2,439	113	3	1	1	29	16	7	29
New Mexico	710	158	128	75	34	66	38	17	128
New York	4,595	121	4	2	1	38	21	9	38
North Carolina	2,260	139	7	4	2	20	11	5	20
North Dakota	407	158	66	38	17	224	141	68	224

Ohio	3,542	125	13	8	3	43	24	11	43
Oklahoma	1,497	305	17	10	4	35	20	9	35
Oregon	1,194	131	37	21	9	18	10	4	37
Pennsylvania	3,224	136	4	2	1	25	14	6	25
Rhode Island	318	87	19	11	5	15	8	4	19
South Carolina	1,137	145	4	2	1	6	4	2	6
South Dakota	479	142	19	11	5	28	16	7	28
Tennessee	1,658	126	4	2	1	15	9	4	15
Texas	8,322	179	5	3	1	45	25	11	45
Utah	923	135	142	82	37	105	61	27	142
Vermont	350	114	10	6	3	60	35	16	60
Virginia	2,044	157	2	1	1	14	8	3	14
Washington	2,175	142	3	1	1	41	23	10	41
West Virginia	786	159	6	3	2	11	6	3	11
Wisconsin	1,870	155	15	9	4	20	11	5	20
Wyoming	344	123	25	14	6	34	20	9	34
Public Charter									
All	3,911	255	13	7	3	13	7	3	13

Estimated percentages of certain population characteristics are another important feature of SASS. For example, the percentage of traditional public schools is estimated to be 92.6 and the percentage of female principals in traditional public schools is estimated to be approximately 50.5. To accommodate varying levels of estimated percentages in SASS, sample sizes for estimates ranging from 2.5 (rare occurrence) to 95 percentage points were evaluated against the three CV criteria.

Table 7 provides an example of the level of precision attained for estimated percentages in the 2007-08 SASS if the most stringent level of precision is applied (i.e., 15 percent CV). The table indicates that SASS estimated percentages for both primary and high school-level public schools (traditional public and public charter combined) will have a CV no larger than 15 percent as long as the characteristic being estimated includes at least 25 percent of the target population.

Table 7. Estimated school-level percentages supported for the 2011-12 SASS sample allocation under the 15 percent CV criterion by public and public charter and grade level

School Type	Grade Levels	Percents Supported
Public Schools (All)	Primary/High	25 to 99
	Middle / Combined	35 to 99
	All	5 to 99
Public Charter Schools	All	40 to 99

Based on this analysis, the sampling frame will be partitioned into approximately 291 sampling strata for public schools. The final number of strata will be determined after evaluating the sampling frame of eligible schools and combining strata that cannot support sampling. The goals of the sample design are to ensure sufficient numbers for precise estimates

- at the *state level* for elementary and secondary schools;
- at the *national level* for public charter schools; and

- at the *national level* for middle and combined¹ public schools.

Public schools are divided into two categories to create the sampling strata: charter schools (87 strata) and traditional public schools (204 strata).

Charter schools are identified from the CCD. The 87 charter school sampling strata are constructed by crossing the three-category school level variable (elementary, secondary, and combined) with Census region and state in the following groups:

Census Region (# Groups)	State	Census Region (# Groups)	State
Northeast (5)	Massachusetts New Jersey New York Pennsylvania All other Northeastern states	Midwest (6)	Indiana Michigan Minnesota Ohio Wisconsin All other Midwestern states
South (8)	Delaware District of Columbia Florida Georgia Louisiana North Carolina Texas All other Southern states	West (10)	Alaska Arizona California Colorado Hawaii Nevada New Mexico Oregon Utah All other Western states

The 204 sampling strata for the *traditional public schools*, excluding charters schools, are defined by crossing the four-category school level variable (elementary, middle, secondary, and combined) with each of the 50 U.S. states and DC.

Sampling – Private Schools

The same precision analysis was conducted on private schools. Table 8 presents a portion of the analysis for private schools by affiliation strata, highlighting the minimum respondent sample size needed for the 2011-12 SASS to achieve either a 15, 20, or 30 percent CV for two key estimates—the number of schools and the number of students.

¹ Combined schools are those with both elementary and secondary grade levels.

Table 8. Minimum respondent sample size needed for 2011-12 SASS by percent CV for private schools by affiliation

Private Schools by Affiliation	SASS 07-08 Frame Count	SASS 07-08 Responding Schools	Minimum Respondent Sample Size						Max % CV
			Max %CV for Number of Schools Estimate			Max %CV for Number of Students Estimate			
			15	20	30	15	20	30	
Catholic- Parochial	3,501	295	1	0	0	12	7	3	12
Catholic- Diocesan	2,810	255	0	0	0	8	4	2	8
Catholic- Private	871	97	3	1	1	34	19	9	34
Baptist	1,835	115	7	4	2	63	36	16	63
Jewish	718	64	1	1	0	52	29	13	52
Lutheran	1,561	112	9	5	2	33	18	8	33
Seventh-Day Adventist	853	81	0	0	0	53	30	14	53
Other Religious	7,092	513	20	11	5	81	46	20	81
Nonsectarian- Regular	3,251	222	9	5	2	53	30	13	53
Nonsectarian- Special Emphasis	2,189	125	4	2	1	56	32	14	56
Nonsectarian- Special Education	1,348	89	3	2	1	30	17	8	30

Table 9 provides an example of the level of precision attained for estimated percentages for private schools in the 2007-08 SASS if the most stringent level of precision is applied (i.e., 15 percent CV). The table indicates that SASS estimated percentages for elementary-level private schools will have a CV no larger than 15 percent as long as the characteristic being estimated includes at least 25 percent of the target population.

Table 9. Estimated school-level percentages supported for the 2011-12 SASS sample allocation under the 15 percent CV criterion by public and public charter and grade level

School Type	Grade Levels	Percents Supported
Private Schools	All	10 to 99
	Elementary	25 to 99
	Secondary	45 to 99
	Combined	30 to 99

Based on this analysis, the private school list sampling frame will be partitioned into 132 sampling strata defined by the interaction of the following three variables:

Stratification Variable (# of Categories)	Variable Levels
Affiliation strata (11)	Catholic - Parochial Catholic - Diocesan Catholic - Private Religious - Baptist Religious - Jewish Religious - Lutheran Religious - Seventh-Day Adventist Religious - Other Nonsectarian - Regular Nonsectarian - Special Emphasis Nonsectarian - Special Education
School Type (3)	Elementary Secondary Combined
Census Region (4)	Northeast Midwest South West

For private schools, the sample will include schools from both the cleaned PSS list frame and area frame used to identify list omissions. All schools uniquely identified through the area frame will be included in the sample (i.e., selected with certainty). As in previous rounds of the SASS, a relatively small number of schools have been identified through the area frame and were included with certainty. The same procedures are expected for the 2011-12 SASS.

Sampling – Teachers Within All Schools

As with the school-level analysis, percentages of populations by important variables ranging from 2.5 (rare occurrence) to 95 percent were evaluated using the sample allocation of teachers by level of teaching experience within school type. Table 10 summarizes the results if the most stringent level of precision is applied (i.e., 15 percent CV) to teachers within all school types—traditional public schools, public charter schools, and private schools. This indicates that many key estimated percents will be supported by the 2011-12 SASS. The exception is associated with rare characteristics in the population such as, for example, the percentage of teachers by non-white race/ethnicity categories by school type and grade level.

Table 10. Estimated teacher-level percentages supported for the 2011-12 SASS sample allocation under the 15 percent CV criterion by years of experience and school type

School Type	Years of Experience	Percents Supported
Traditional Public Schools	1 year	12.5 to 99
	2-3 years	10.0 to 99
	4-19 years	2.5 to 99
	20 or more years	2.5 to 99

School Type	Years of Experience	Percents Supported
Public Charter Schools	1 year	55 to 99
	2-3 years	40 to 99
	4-19 years	18 to 99
	20 or more years	50 to 99
Private Schools	1 year	12.5 to 99
	2-3 years	12.5 to 99
	4-19 years	10 to 99
	20 or more years	10 to 99

Teachers will be randomly sampled from roster information provided by each participating sampled school. Once rostered, teachers will be randomly selected from within four sampling strata defined by level of experience:

1. Beginning Teachers (first year of service);
2. New Teachers (2-3 years of service);
3. Experienced Teachers (4-19 years of service); and
4. Highly Experienced Teacher (20 or more years of service).

The teacher sampling rates will be constructed to meet precision requirements for estimates by level of experience and school sector (Public, Private). This goal is met by achieving approximately 1,200 responding teachers within each of the 8 cells.

To accommodate this goal, Beginning and New Teachers in the private sector will be oversampled. Conversely, Experienced Teachers in the public sector will be undersampled to accommodate the study budget. The average number of teachers sampled per school will remain between three and eight with a maximum number of 20 teachers to avoid overburdening the schools.

Sampling –School Districts and Special States

Information will be collected from school districts linked to a school selected for the 2011-12 SASS.

For Florida, Maryland, Nevada, and West Virginia, at least one school in every district in the state will be sampled. This is necessary to reduce the size of the variances in these states.

“District-level” items are included in the School District Questionnaire, which is received by all sampled school districts, and in the Public School Questionnaire (With District Items), which is received by all charter schools and traditional public schools in single-school districts. The Public School Questionnaire (With District Items) includes both district-level and school-level items.

Sampling – Principals Within All Schools

For all traditional public, public charter, and private schools, the principal will be included in the survey as a result of the school being selected.

Sampling –Library Media Centers Within Public Schools

For traditional public and public charter schools, the library media center (if one exists) will be included in the survey as a result of the school being selected.

2.2. SURVEY WEIGHTS

Schools, principals, teachers, library media centers, and school districts will be weighted by the inverse of the probability of selection. The final weight contains adjustments for nonresponse and any other sampling or field considerations that arise after the sample has been drawn.

2.3. RESPONSE RATES

We expect the response rates of the 2011-12 full-scale SASS to approximate those of the 2007-08 SASS or to fall slightly lower, given the long-term trend in declining response rates for federal surveys (table 11).

Table 11. Base-weighted response rates for the 2007-08 SASS by respondent type and school sector

School Sector	Unit of Observation				
	Teacher	Principal	School	Library	District
Public	84.03%	79.36%	80.36%	81.68%	87.78%
Private	77.47%	72.18%	75.91%	†	†

† Not applicable.

3. PROCEDURES FOR COLLECTION OF INFORMATION

The data collection methods for the 2011-12 SASS will be based on those used in the 2007-2008 SASS with modifications to the collection of the Teacher Listing Form and confirmation of the school's eligibility as tested during the 2009-10 SASS Field Test.

Districts and schools will be mailed an advance letter between June and September 2011, depending on the size of the school district. An internet-based Control Center will be open to schools and districts beginning in August 2011. Through the Control Center, districts and/or schools can upload the Teacher Listing Form as well as confirm information about sampled schools, including:

1. Verify the eligibility of the school;
2. Verify the appropriate grade range of school and refer split or merged schools to Census sampling statisticians; and
3. Identify the appropriate grade ranges to report for that school.

Questionnaires will be mailed to school districts and schools in August 2011. Telephone follow-up will begin for districts that have not provided a Teacher Listing Form 2 weeks after the mail-out, and a reminder letter will be sent to districts that have not returned the School District Questionnaire after 3 weeks have passed (September 2011). At the school level, a package with outstanding questionnaires will be sent to schools in late September 2011, 4 weeks after the initial mail-out. . Teacher Listing Forms will be sent to schools with a nonresponding district in October 2011. A second mail-out of questionnaires will be sent to nonresponding school districts in October 2011.

Additional reminder letters to the school, district, and school coordinator will be sent in October and November 2011. Field staff will conduct telephone and personal visit follow-up of remaining nonresponding school districts and schools in January-April 2012.

4. METHODS FOR MAXIMIZING RESPONSE RATES

A variety of procedures will be employed to ensure high response rates at both the level of the responding unit (i.e., sample member) and at the level of the individual survey items in each survey questionnaire.

The entire survey process, starting with securing research cooperation from key public and private school groups and individual sample members and continuing throughout the distribution and collection of individual questionnaires, is designed to increase survey response rates. In addition, we believe that the following elements of the data collection plan, in particular, will contribute to overall success of the survey and will enhance the survey response rates.

- (1) *Visible support from top-level Federal, State, and local education officials.* Without the support of high-level officials in the Department of Education, State Education Agency officials, and local school district officials representing the sampled districts, surveys of public school principals, teachers, and the library media center cannot be successfully implemented. Obtaining endorsements from these officials is a critical factor in the success of the data collection procedures. Top-level Education Department officials will need to fully support the data collection by endorsing the survey in writing and sending advance letters and notices to sampled districts' Superintendents, and individual survey participants (principals and teachers) to encourage participation.
- (2) *Endorsements from key public and private school groups.* The level of interest and cooperation demonstrated by key groups can often greatly influence the degree of participation of survey respondents. Endorsements are viewed as a critical factor in soliciting cooperation from state and

local education officials and for obtaining high participation rates in the private sector. The SASS is seeking endorsement by the following organizations or agencies:

Accelerated Christian Education
Alternative School Network
American Association of Christian Schools
American Association of Classical and Christian Schools
American Association of School Administrators
American Association of School Librarians
American Federation of Teachers
American Library Association
American Montessori Society
Association Montessori International
Association of Boarding Schools
Association of Christian Schools International
Association of Christian Teachers and Schools
Association of Military Colleges and Schools
Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development
Association of Waldorf Schools of North America
Christian Schools International
Council for American Private Education
Council of Chief State School Officers
Council of the Great City Schools
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Evangelical Lutheran Education Association
European Council for International Schools
Friends Council on Education
General Conference of the Seventh-Day Adventist Church
Islamic School League of America
Jesuit Secondary Education Association
Jewish Community Day School Network
Jewish Education Services of North America
Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of Episcopal Schools
National Association of Independent Schools
National Association of Laboratory Schools
National Association of Private Special Education Centers
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Catholic Educational Association
National Christian School Association
National Coalition of Alternative Community Schools

National Coalition of Girls Schools
National Council for Private School Accreditation
National Council of Girls' Schools
National Education Association
National Independent Private Schools Association
North American Division of Seventh-Day Adventists
National Science Foundation
National Society for Hebrew Day Schools
Oral Roberts University Educational Fellowship
Solomon Schechter Day School Association
Southern Baptist Association of Christian Schools
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

- (3) *Stressing the importance of the survey and the respondents' participation.* Official letters (advance notification, inside the questionnaire and follow-up) from the NCES Commissioner of Education Statistics will motivate respondents to return surveys. The additional personalization of survey materials (cover letters and survey packets with teachers' names) is expected to have positive effects on the response rates.
- (4) *Minimize the survey burden on local school district and school-level authorities.* The procedures for the surveys are designed to minimize the survey burden on school districts, schools, and sampled individuals (principals, teachers, and the school librarians) and the survey instruments have been designed to be completed as quickly and easily as possible.

Good questionnaire design techniques have been employed to minimize item nonresponse. All completed questionnaires from the 2007-08 SASS have been carefully analyzed to determine which items had the highest levels of item nonresponse. This information guided NCES in reviewing the clarity of item wording, definitions, and instructions. Items that were not considered to be effective or useful were deleted so as to streamline the questionnaires and ease the response burden.

- (5) *Seeking the recruitment of a school coordinator.* An important procedural measure for helping to maximize response rates is the plan to establish a school-based "survey coordinator" to serve as a primary point of contact for the Census Bureau. The use of a school coordinator is expected to help keep response rates high, provide some minimal data quality checks, and simplify the follow-up process by having one point of contact.

5. TESTS OF PROCEDURES AND METHODS

The 2011-12 SASS was built on the experience of the previous rounds of the survey. At the present time, we do not anticipate any testing of alternative procedures or methods in the full-scale SASS.

6. REVIEWING STATISTICIANS

Kerry Gruber and Kathy Chandler of NCES; Aref Dajani and Randall Parmer of the Census Bureau; Greg Strizek, contractor to the Census Bureau; Deanna Lyter, Saida Mamedova, Yan Wang, and Jason Hill of ESSi; and Jill Dever of RTI have all reviewed the SASS design. Aref Dajani of the Census Bureau (301-457-1797) is the contact for further information on sample design, and Kathryn Chandler of the National Center for Education Statistics (202-502-7486) on data collection.