

Appendix A. Key Terms for SASS

The following terms are defined as they apply to the 2007–08 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS).

Affiliation stratum. SASS uses 11 categories into which all private schools are divided based on religious orientation and association membership. These categories are Catholic—parochial, Catholic—diocesan, Catholic—private, Baptist, Jewish, Lutheran, Seventh-day Adventist, other religious, nonsectarian—regular, nonsectarian—special emphasis, and nonsectarian—special education. Schools with multiple affiliations are classified by their first affiliation in the above list. These categories represent the private school sampling strata for SASS; therefore, the SASS private school sample is designed to support estimates for each of these affiliation categories.

Base weight. This is the inverse of the initial probability of selection (termed the initial basic weight) including adjustments to the probability of selection due to schools determined to be splits or mergers during data collection operations. These adjustments to the initial probability of selection are called the sampling adjustment factor. The base weight is defined as the product of the initial basic weight and the sampling adjustment factor.

Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) school (See “School”). Meets all school criteria; operated by or under contract with the Bureau of Indian Education; reported as a BIE school by the state education agency and/or by the Bureau of Indian Education; offers services to American Indian students. BIE schools may include day schools, boarding schools, cooperative schools, and contract schools. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was recently renamed Bureau of Indian Education.

Career Technical Center (CTC). An alternative school that offers organized educational activities with a sequence of courses that provides students with the academic and technical knowledge and skills they need to prepare for further education and for careers (other than careers requiring a baccalaureate, master’s, or doctoral degree) in current or emerging employment sectors. The courses include competency-based applied learning that contributes to the academic knowledge, higher-order reasoning and problem solving skills, work attitudes, general employability skills, technical skills, and occupation-specific skills of the students.

Charter (or public charter) school. A charter school is a public school that, in accordance with an enabling state statute, has been granted a charter exempting it from selected state or local rules and regulations. A charter school may be a newly created school or it may previously have been a public or private school. Meets all school criteria; receives public funding as primary support; provides free public elementary and/or secondary school to eligible students.

Combined school. A school is classified as combined if it has one or more of grades K–6 and one or more of grades 9–12; for example, schools with grades K–12, 6–12, 6–9, or 1–12 were classified as having combined grades. Schools in which all students are ungraded (i.e., not classified by standard grade levels) are also classified as combined.

Common Core of Data (CCD). CCD is the Department of Education’s primary database on public elementary and secondary education in the United States. CCD is a comprehensive, annual, national statistical database of all public elementary and secondary schools and school districts and contains data that are designed to be comparable across all states. The objectives of CCD are twofold: first, to provide an official listing of public elementary and secondary schools and school districts in the nation, which can be used to select samples for other National Center for Education Statistics surveys; and second, to

provide basic information and descriptive statistics on public elementary and secondary schools and schooling in general.

District. A Local Education Agency (LEA), or public school district, is defined as a government agency that employs elementary or secondary level teachers and is administratively responsible for providing public elementary and/or secondary instruction and educational support services. Districts that do not operate schools but do employ teachers are included; for example, some states have special education cooperatives that employ special education teachers who teach in schools in more than one school district. Supervisory unions are also included.

Elementary school. A school is classified as elementary if it has one or more of grades K–6 and does not have any grades higher than grade 8. For example, schools with grades K–6, 1–3, or 6–8 are classified as elementary.

Final weight. This is the product of the initial basic weight, sampling adjustment factor, separate adjustments for nonresponse at each stage of selection, and one or more stages of ratio adjustment to the frame or to independent sources. The final weight is used to produce weighted estimates from the survey data. See chapter 9 for details on the weighting procedure.

FIPS. FIPS stands for Federal Information Processing Standards and refers to a variety of codes for standardized reference. FIPS county and state codes were developed by the National Institute for Standards and Technology (NIST) as numeric identifiers for each county and state in the United States. They are currently in the process of being issued by the American National Standards Institute (ANSI). FIPS 5-2 that identifies state codes is being renamed as INCITS 38. FIPS 6-4 that identifies counties is being renamed as INCITS 31. More information on the state and county codes can be found at: <http://www.census.gov/geo/www/ansi/ansi.html>.

Full-time equivalent. A method of counting teachers that limits the number only to those teachers whose working hours meet or exceed the number of hours prescribed by the school district for full-time employees.

High American Indian enrollment school. High American Indian enrollment schools are public schools where 19.5 percent or more of the students are American Indian or Alaska Native, as reported in the 2005–06 Common Core of Data. This classification was used in stratifying the SASS public school sample in order to improve estimates of the American Indian and Alaska Native student population.

Initial basic weight. This is the inverse of the probability of selection from the initial sampling procedure. In contrast, the **base weight** is the inverse of the probability of selection covering all sampling, including any adjustments to the probability of selection due to schools determined to be splits or mergers during field operations.

Itinerant teacher. A teacher with an assignment that requires the teacher to provide instruction at more than one school.

Library media center. An organized collection of printed and/or audiovisual and/or computer resources which is administered as a unit, is located in a designated place or places, and makes resources and services available to students, teachers, and administrators. A Library Media Center may be called a library, media center, resource center, information center, instructional materials center, learning resource center, or some other name.

Missing data. SASS is a fully imputed dataset. Consequently, the only survey items that lack responses are either those that are part of a skip pattern and should not have been answered by a particular respondent or write-in responses, which include data too specific to reasonably impute from another respondent's data. Data pulled from the frame (i.e., the Common Core of Data or the Private School Universe Survey) are not necessarily imputed for missing data. In these instances, a value of -9, indicating missing data, is provided for that variable.

Principal. A principal is the administrator who has primary responsibility of the overall day-to-day functioning of the school.

Private school (See "School"). Meets all school criteria; does not receive public funding as primary support; does not operate within the public school system.

Private School Universe Survey (PSS). PSS is a biennial survey designed to collect data from all K–12 private schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. It is the universe from which the sample for the private school component of SASS is selected.

Public school (See "School"). A public school is defined as an institution that provides educational services for at least one of grades 1–12 (or comparable ungraded levels), has one or more teachers to give instruction, is located in one or more buildings, receives public funds as primary support, and is operated by an education agency. Public charter schools, schools in juvenile detention centers, and schools located on domestic military bases and operated by the Department of Defense are included.

Sampling adjustment factor. In the weighting process for each SASS respondent, the sampling adjustment factor is applied to the initial basic weight to account for any additional circumstances affecting the probability of selection. The product of the initial basic weight and the sampling adjustment factor is the base weight. See the definitions for initial basic weight and base weight.

School. An institution or part of an institution that has one or more teachers who provide instruction to students, has students in one or more of grades 1–12 (or the ungraded equivalent), has its own principal/administrator if it shares a building with another school or institution, is in operation during the 2007–08 school year, and is NOT primarily a postsecondary or adult basic education institution. The following are NOT considered a school: schools located exclusively in a private home, Department of Defense (DoD) schools located outside of the US, offices of special education in an LEA, tutoring services, homeschool clearing houses, and adult learning facilities.

School head. A school head is defined as the person holding presiding rank at the school, who assumes final responsibility for the overall operation of the institution.

Secondary school. A school is classified as secondary if it has one or more of grades 7–12 and does not have any grade lower than grade 7. For example, schools with grades 9–12, 10–12, or 7–8 are classified as secondary.

State school. State schools are typically run by a State Department of Education and are not overseen by a district (e.g., schools in juvenile detention centers, schools for the blind, etc.).

Teachers. A teacher is defined as a full-time or part-time teacher who teaches any regularly scheduled classes in any of grades K–12. This includes administrators, librarians, and other professional or support staff that teach regularly scheduled classes on a part-time basis. Itinerant teachers are included, as well as long-term substitutes who are filling the role of a regular teacher on a long-term basis. An itinerant teacher is defined as a teacher who teaches at more than one school (e.g., a music teacher who teaches 3

days per week at one school and 2 days per week at another). Short-term substitute teachers and student teachers are not included.

Traditional public school. Traditional public schools are publicly-funded schools other than public charter schools. They include regular, special education, vocational/technical, and alternative schools. They also include schools in juvenile detention centers and domestic schools located on military bases and operated by the Department of Defense. See also the definitions for public and public charter schools.

Typology, private school. Private schools were assigned to one of three major categories (i.e., Catholic, other religious, and nonsectarian). Within each of these major categories, three additional subcategories were assigned. As a result, two typology-based variables exist on the private sector data files; a “3-level typology” (RELIG) and a “9-level typology” (TYPOLOGY). The categories and subcategories are

1. Catholic—parochial, diocesan, and private;
2. Other religious—conservative Christian, affiliated with a religious school association, and not affiliated with a religious school association; and
3. Nonsectarian—regular, special program emphasis, and special education.

Ungraded. Refers to schools that have an alternative means of classifying students, other than by grade level.

Ungraded students. Ungraded students are those who are not assigned to a particular grade level (kindergarten, 1st grade, 2nd grade, etc.); for example, special education centers and alternative schools often classify their students as ungraded. Students in Montessori schools are also considered ungraded if the school assigns them to “primary” and “intermediate” levels instead of specific grades.

Valid skip. An item that was not applicable due to a response to a previous item on the same questionnaire and was provided with a value of -8, indicating a valid skip. Certain survey items direct respondents to skip subsequent items based on their answers to the original item, or stem. For instance, if a respondent answered “No” to item 12a on the School Questionnaire (“Does this school have a kindergarten?”), he or she was directed to skip items 12b and 12c (respectively, “How long is the school day for a kindergarten student?” and “How many days per week does a kindergarten student attend?”) and to “GO TO item 13 below.” Because the respondent answered that the school in question does not have a kindergarten, subsequent questions about kindergarten students at that school were not applicable. In instances when an item should not have been answered by the respondent, a value of -8, which designates a valid skip, is applied to that variable(s).

Appendix B. Questionnaire Availability

Online, Downloadable PDF Files

Questionnaires for every data collection component in every survey cycle since the first 1987–88 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and the first 1988–89 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) are available online as downloadable PDF files at

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/questionnaire.asp>.

Select the survey year of interest and then proceed to select the specific questionnaire to browse or download. The Teacher Listing Form is the form that gathers the data used to select the teacher sample. While no data from this form are reported publicly, the questionnaire form is available on the SASS website for those interested in survey methodology.

In general, as the 4-year survey cycle advances toward the next data collection, the questionnaires will be posted online as they are finalized and sent to the printer. That is generally about 2 months prior to the data collection phase of the survey cycle. The next survey cycle is planned for the 2011–12 school year.

The portable document format (PDF) files of the questionnaires are also available on the 2007–08 Schools and Staffing Survey Electronic Codebook. Public-use data will be available through an online tool called QuickStats. QuickStats is accessible for no charge on the NCES website at

<http://nces.ed.gov/datalab/quickstats/>.

All of the SASS and TFS questionnaires are in the public domain. All survey items may be copied by anyone who wishes to use them in another survey, without any restrictions.

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Appendix C. Summary of the 2005–06 SASS Methodological Pretest Findings and Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS

This appendix contains a report prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. The contents are listed below.

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Background Information

Introduction

In preparation for the next full-scale Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) in 2007–08, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted a pretest with 1,100 public and private schools during the 2005–06 school year. The SASS pretest was designed to explore a number of methodological issues that could potentially improve the general efficiency of the planned full-scale collection. This report evaluates the various components of this pretest and presents recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS.

Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Overview

SASS is a large, interrelated set of surveys sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Public, private, and Bureau of Indian Education (BIE)-funded schools are sampled, and data are collected from the school, the school principal or school head, teachers, and library media centers. Districts of the sampled public schools are also asked to complete questionnaires. SASS includes a Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), conducted with a subsample of the SASS teacher respondents, in the year following the SASS.

Altogether, SASS has been conducted five times: in 1987–88, 1990–91, 1993–94, 1999–2000, and 2003–04. It is designed to provide state-level estimates for public schools, national-level estimates for BIE-funded schools, and affiliation-level estimates for private schools. TFS has been conducted following each SASS year.

The general data collection procedures proposed for the 2007–08 SASS were similar to the procedures used during the first four collections. The survey starts with an initial screener operation that is used to determine the school's eligibility and a Teacher Listing Form (TLF) used to obtain a listing of teachers with some limited information about each teacher for sampling purposes. Next, the school is sent the School, Principal, and Library Media Center (if public or BIE-funded) questionnaires. Once the TLF is received, the teachers are sampled and questionnaires are mailed to the sampled teachers at their school address. If questionnaires are outstanding, the school receives additional questionnaire mailings, telephone reminder calls, and telephone calls attempting to obtain the information over the phone. If these procedures do not result in interviews, field representatives pursue the cases in person.

In the year following SASS, schools sampled for SASS with at least one responding teacher are sent a Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS-1) questionnaire requesting information regarding the status of each interviewed teacher. Teachers are categorized as “stayers” (still teaching at the same school), “movers” (still teaching, but at a different school), or “leavers” (no longer teaching). Samples of each type of teacher are selected and teachers are mailed either a “Stayer/Mover” questionnaire or a “Leaver” questionnaire. The teachers are typically contacted through the home addresses obtained on the original SASS questionnaire.

Overview of the 2005–06 Pretest

Since field efforts are very expensive and time consuming, the 2005–06 pretest was designed to determine if there were ways to increase response rates prior to the point where cases are sent to Field Follow-up. In this pretest, the public and private schools were divided into three groups to determine the impact of establishing a “school coordinator” to facilitate the completion of data collection at each school. The groups were as follows:

- group 1 (366 schools)—attempt to establish school coordinators with a \$20 incentive;
- group 2 (367 schools)—attempt to establish school coordinators without a monetary incentive; and
- group 3 (367 schools)—no attempt to establish school coordinators.

The first contact with the school was a mailout of an advance letter and TLF. One of three versions of the advance letter was sent to each school. Attachment C-1 contains a copy of all three versions of the advance letter.

SASS letter 14(L-GI)X was mailed to Group 1 (coordinator with incentive), letter 14(L-GN)X was mailed to Group 2 (coordinator without incentive), and letter 14(L)X was mailed to Group 3 (no coordinator). The advance letter for Groups 1 and 2 requested that the school assign a coordinator and have this person call the U.S. Census Bureau’s toll-free number at the beginning of the screener operation to help facilitate a working relationship and to encourage prompt completion and return of the questionnaires. The advance letter for Group 3 requested that the school assign a “TLF contact” and have this person complete and return the TLF. The letter also requested this person call the U.S. Census Bureau’s toll-free number to answer screening questions.

The school was then “screened” in order to (1) determine whether the school was in-scope or out-of-scope and (2) establish a school coordinator when appropriate. Those in Group 1 who agreed to participate as school coordinators were immediately sent a \$20 gift card along with the school’s questionnaires.

Half of the schools in each of the groups were sent materials through FedEx (in the first two mailings) and half were sent materials by way of first class mail.

The intention of the pretest was to answer the following questions through an experimental design:

- Did establishing a school coordinator at the school improve response rates prior to field follow-up?
- Did paying a small incentive (\$20) to a school coordinator at the school improve response rates prior to field follow-up?
- Did sending the advance letter and Teacher Listing Form by FedEx improve response rates prior to field follow-up?

At the same time, through general observation of the pretest, the following questions were answered:

- What was the best way to recruit school coordinators?
- What percentage of schools called in to verify eligibility and to provide the name of a school coordinator?
- Did collecting additional information on the Teacher Listing Form help to identify a higher proportion of teachers who were movers and leavers in the year following SASS?
- What percentage of teachers provided an e-mail address in the SASS questionnaire?
- During the field follow-up of Teacher Listing Forms in the fall, should field be assigned just the TLFs or the TLFs and the other school-level forms?
- How effective was the data collection follow-up?

For the most part, the pretest utilized the same questionnaires that were used in the 2003–04 SASS with 2005–06 dates. The only content differences were the addition of an e-mail address request (placed near the other contact information items) on the Teacher Questionnaires and the use of a modified Teacher

Listing Form (TLF) (attachment C-2). The modified TLF collected the following information about each teacher in the school:

- subject matter taught (special education, general elementary, math, science, English/language arts, social studies, vocational/technical, and all other subjects);
- part-time or full-time teaching status;
- race/ethnicity;
- teaching experience (3 years or less, 4 to 19 years, or 20 years or more); and
- expected teaching status for the next school year.

Expected teaching status for the next school year was a newly defined item added to the TLF for this pretest in order to identify teachers believed to be more likely to change schools (“movers”) or leave teaching (“leavers”) in the year following SASS. By increasing the number of movers and leavers sampled in SASS, more of these teachers would be included in the Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) pretest planned for the fall of 2006. Since movers and leavers are of great analytical interest, it is important to pull as many into SASS as possible. The modifications to the TLF and the TFS pretest are discussed in detail in “Appendix D. Analysis of Changes to the 2005–06 SASS Pretest Teacher Listing Form and TFS-1(X) and Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS and 2008–09 TFS.”

Pretest Design Features

The pretest used a stratified sample from states in the Detroit and Charlotte Census Bureau Regional Offices (ROs). It was more efficient to train and supervise a limited number of regional offices for the pretest. These regions were selected because they have the capacity to handle large workloads and offer a wide range of schools in various kinds of urban, suburban, and rural settings.

In this pretest, the Charlotte RO was assigned the task of following up on TLFs as well as all School, Principal, and School Library Media Center Questionnaires for schools where the TLF had not been received in the National Processing Center (NPC) as of late November 2005. The Detroit RO was instructed to follow up on outstanding TLFs only. The Jeffersonville Telephone Center (JTC) followed up on the School, Principal, and School Library Media Center Questionnaires from schools within the Detroit RO’s physical boundaries. The JTC followed up on those same forms from schools within the Charlotte RO’s physical boundaries if the TLF was received in the NPC before late November 2005. The JTC also followed up on all Teacher Questionnaires. The purpose of these distinctions in work assignments was to test for a more timely and cost-efficient methodology for increasing response rates.

The public school sample was drawn from a public school frame that included only schools in districts that were known not to have protracted survey approval processes. Given the timing of the project, there was no time to get advanced permission from districts that required such permission. Only a few such districts were eliminated from the frame. However, many of these districts were located in major cities, so conclusions drawn from this pretest may not be as applicable to schools in central cities.

The sampled schools were asked to complete a TLF. The TLFs were then used as the teacher sampling frame. Because of an interest in data from new teachers for SASS, teachers with less than 3 years of experience were oversampled. Most teachers identified as possible future movers or leavers were selected for the SASS sample so as to increase the sample size for testing the new question on the TLF in TFS.

Pretest Time Schedule

The schedule for the SASS pretest is presented in table C-1.

Table C-1. Data collection time schedule for the SASS pretest: 2005–06

Activity	Date
Sent sample to FirstData ¹ for address and telephone updates	7/20/2005
Received Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval for the pretest	9/26/2005
Mailed advance letter packages to schools	10/14/2005
Received calls from schools regarding eligibility and school coordinator	10/17/05–10/23/05
Called remaining schools regarding eligibility and school coordinator	10/24/05–11/09/05
School, Principal, and Library questionnaires mailed as soon as eligibility was established	11/04/05–11/18/05
Sampled teachers and mailed Teacher Questionnaires	10/24/05–01/30/06
Called schools that had not returned the TLF	11/14/05–11/23/05
Field follow-up to schools	11/28/05–01/13/06
Telephone follow-up to remind nonrespondents that they need to return their questionnaires	11/28/05–01/27/06
Telephone follow-up to collect data from nonrespondents	01/24/06–02/28/06
Preliminary Report: Analysis and recommendations of findings through completion of nonresponse follow-up	3/24/2006
Mailed TFS-1(X) forms to schools with at least one responding SASS teacher	9/1/2006
Received completed TFS-1(X) forms and keyed the data	09/10/06–10/13/06
Analysis of the TFS-1(X) findings	10/16/06–10/30/06
Final report	11/8/2006

¹ FirstData, also known as FastData, is an integrated information service that provides companies access to data records to authenticate, verify, locate and identify individuals or businesses.

SOURCE: *Documentation for the 2007–08 Schools and Staffing Survey*, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2007–08, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics.

Summary of Findings

The final reports reflecting the response rates for the various components of the pretest follow with a summary of the findings of the 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) pretest. Each response rate report shows the comparisons between the three “school coordinator” analytical groups, and the comparison between the FedEx and postal groups. The following tables are included:

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School Coordinators

Did establishing a school coordinator at the school improve response rates prior to field follow-up?

The screener operation began on October 17, 2005, when the U.S. Census Bureau’s Jeffersonville Telephone Center (JTC) began receiving calls from the schools. On October 24, 2005, the JTC began making calls to remaining schools. The screener operation closed out on November 9, 2005. The Teacher Listing Form (TLF) telephone follow-up operation was conducted from November 14–23, 2005. Field follow-up and telephone reminder follow-up began on November 28, 2005, and closed out on January 13, 2006. The telephone follow-up to collect data from nonrespondents was conducted from January 24 through February 28, 2006. School coordinators were established during the screening operation and, if present, were the main point of contact through all operations up to the data collection telephone follow-up.

The response rates for the TLF and the Principal, School, Library Media Center, and Teacher Questionnaires are in table C-2. The establishment of a school coordinator did not significantly improve the final response rates of the TLF and the Principal, School, or School Library Media Center Questionnaires. However, establishment of a school coordinator did improve response rates for receipt of the Teacher Questionnaires, particularly toward the end of the SASS pretest, during nonresponse follow-up.

In addition, the establishment of a school coordinator significantly increased the proportion of schools that returned all of their questionnaires, including the Teacher Questionnaires. Table C-3 shows the percentage of schools that returned all of their questionnaires, excluding and including Teacher Questionnaires, by test group.

Table C-2. Percentage of questionnaires, by interview status and response rates for test groups: 2005–06 SASS pretest

Interview status and response rate	Percent of Teacher Listing Forms (N = 1,100)	Percent of Principal Questionnaires (N = 1,100)	Percent of School Questionnaires (N = 1,100)	Percent of School Library Media Center Questionnaires (N = 850)	Percent of Teacher Questionnaires (N = 5,205)
Final interview status of workload					
Interviews	78.1	68.2	68.8	68.6	66.3
Non-interviews	10.7	18.8	18.6	13.2	27.1
Out-of-scope (OS)	11.2	13.0	12.5	18.2	6.6
Response rate for test groups ¹					
All cases	87.9	78.4	78.7	83.9	71.0
Analytic group					
Group 1: Coordinator with incentive	86.7	79.0	80.2	84.4	78.3
Group 2: Coordinator without incentive	86.3	75.8	75.7	81.6	78.5
Group 3: No coordinator	90.6	80.1	79.9	85.7	57.2
Mail treatment					
United States Postal Service	88.6	78.3	79.0	83.0	70.7
FedEx	87.2	78.4	78.4	84.7	71.3

¹ Response rates are calculated as follows: (Interviews / (Workload – OS)).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Table C-3. Number and percentage of schools that completed all questionnaires excluding and including the Teacher Questionnaire, by test group: 2005–06 SASS pretest

School test group	Excluding Teacher Questionnaires		Including Teacher Questionnaires ¹	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total workload	1,100	100.0	1,100	100.0
Schools with all forms completed	833	75.7	351	31.9
Test groups				
Analytical group				
Group 1: Coordinator with incentive	276	75.4	147	40.2
Group 2: Coordinator without incentive	272	74.1	144	39.2
Group 3: No coordinator	285	77.7	60	16.3
Mail treatment				
United States Postal Service	418	76.0	165	30.0
FedEx	415	75.5	186	33.8

¹ Schools that are included in this column are also included in the “Excluding Teacher Questionnaires” column.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

In order to better evaluate the effectiveness of establishing a school coordinator to help facilitate data collection, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted two teleconference debriefings: one with the JTC and another with the Detroit and Charlotte Regional Offices. Feedback from both debriefings was unanimous and emphatic: the establishment of a school coordinator absolutely improved facilitation of data collection. On this point, there was no dissent. Attachment C-3 provides summary findings from the Field teleconference debriefing.

Did paying a small incentive (\$20) to a school coordinator at the school improve response rates prior to field follow-up?

After the schools were screened, the Principal, School, and School Library Media Center (for public schools only) Questionnaires were sent to the school coordinator, if one had been established. Half of the school coordinators were sent a \$20 gift card along with the school's questionnaires.

Tables C-2 and C-3 above indicate that the payment of a \$20 incentive did not significantly improve the response either before or after field follow-up began. This result was consistent throughout the data collection.

During the JTC debriefing, comments from interviewers and supervisors indicated that the incentive payments did little to encourage timely cooperation and participation by school coordinators. The JTC staff did indicate that respondents were interested in and would be motivated by resources that would benefit their school.

What percentage of schools called in to verify eligibility and to provide the name of a school coordinator?

As part of the SASS pretest, the coordinator was asked to call the U.S. Census Bureau's 1-800 telephone number at the beginning of the screener operation so that an interviewer could facilitate a working relationship with this person and encourage prompt completion and return of the questionnaires. During the first week of the screener operation, the telephone center only received calls; no outgoing calls were made. Approximately 11 percent of schools called in during the first week. The percentage of schools that called in and provided a school coordinator's name is shown in table C-4. Approximately 24 percent of the schools called the 1-800 number altogether. As mentioned, the FedEx group called the 1-800 number more frequently (table C-4), but the final results of the screener operation did not differ (table C-5).

Table C-4. Number and percentage of schools calling during the screener operation, by test group: 2005–06 SASS pretest

Test group	Number of cases	Schools calling in response to the letter		Schools claiming they received the letter and TLF	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Mail treatment					
United States Postal Service (USPS)	550	117	21	191	42
FedEx	550	146	27	281	61
Analytical group					
School coordinator with incentive	366	95	26	156	51
School coordinator without incentive	367	69	19	138	47
No coordinator	367	99	27	178	57
Mail treatment/group					
School coordinator with incentive, USPS	182	46	25	65	42
School coordinator with incentive, FedEx	184	49	27	91	60
School coordinator without incentive, USPS	184	27	15	54	38
School coordinator without incentive, FedEx	183	42	23	84	56
No coordinator, USPS	184	44	24	72	46
No coordinator, FedEx	183	55	30	106	68

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Table C-5. Number and percentage of schools that were screened and that had an established coordinator, by test group: 2005–06 SASS pretest

Test group	Number of cases	Schools “screened”		Schools with a coordinator ¹	
		Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Mail treatment					
United States Postal Service (USPS)	550	503	91.5	†	†
FedEx	550	508	92.4	†	†
Analytical group					
School coordinator with incentive	366	334	91.3	306	99.7
School coordinator without incentive	367	335	91.3	293	100.0
No coordinator	367	342	93.2	†	†
Mail treatment and analytic group					
School coordinator with incentive, USPS	182	166	91.2	154	99.4
School coordinator with incentive, FedEx	184	168	91.3	152	100.0
School coordinator without incentive, USPS	184	165	89.7	143	100.0
School coordinator without incentive, FedEx	183	170	92.9	150	100.0
No coordinator, USPS	184	172	93.5	†	†
No coordinator, FedEx	183	170	92.9	†	†

† Not applicable.

¹ Only schools that were found to be “in-scope” are included in this column.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

What was the best way to recruit school coordinators?

There were 614 coordinators established during the screener; 312 coordinators that received an incentive; and 302 that did not receive an incentive. Of the 312 coordinators that received an incentive, 178 were the school principals (57 percent). Of the 302 coordinators that did not receive an incentive, 168 were the school principals (56 percent). Of the 312 TLF contacts established, 201 (64 percent) were school principals. Fourteen school coordinators were established during the Telephone Reminder Operation.

The type of school coordinator (principal versus other staff) did not impact final response rates. This result was consistent for all forms (table C-6).

In order to better evaluate how best to recruit an effective coordinator, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted debriefing interviews with school coordinators as soon as the nonresponse telephone follow-up operation was completed. From schools that participated in the pretest, 50 school coordinators that received an incentive and 50 school coordinators that did not receive an incentive were sampled for debriefing. The interviews were, on average, completed within 10 minutes.

The results of this debriefing showed that almost all of the coordinators who were not principals were either secretaries or other school administrators. With very few exceptions, the school principal assigned the role of school coordinator to a particular person.

When asked what position they thought would make the most effective coordinator, the responses were split mostly between principal and secretary. Several indicated that an assistant principal or school counselor would be effective as well.

When asked about the best time frame to receive the SASS questionnaires, responses varied greatly. Generally, late August, early September, late November, and December were unsatisfactory, as these are very busy times for schools. One respondent indicated that any time between the football and basketball season would be ideal.

The responses were divided on whether there was enough time during work hours to perform school coordinator activities. Strong opinions and complaints were voiced about the amount of time it took respondents to complete the lengthy questionnaires.

When asked about the mode of mailing and the use of incentives, the responses again were evenly split.

When asked about obstacles they encountered and suggestions they had, the following feedback was given:

- reduce the questionnaire content;
- make fewer reminder calls and have only one person call;
- use e-mail reminders for the coordinators (instead of telephone calls);
- use bold print when stating when to return the completed questionnaires;
- continue the use of checklists; and
- send a “thank you” letter to the school.

Table C-6. Number and percentage of each questionnaire completed and response rates, by coordinator’s title: 2005–06 SASS pretest

Coordinator’s title	Teacher Listing Form		Principal Questionnaire		School Questionnaire		School Library Media Center Questionnaire		Teacher Questionnaire	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Principal as coordinator										
Workload	346	100.0	346	100.0	346	100.0	262	100.0	1,680	100.0
Interviews	295	85.3	263	76.0	267	77.2	193	73.7	1,249	74.3
Out-of-scope	8	2.3	12	3.5	10	2.9	27	10.3	96	5.7
Response	†	87.3	†	78.7	†	79.5	†	82.1	†	78.9
Other coordinator										
Workload	268	100.0	268	100.0	268	100.0	215	100.0	1,450	100.0
Interviews	236	88.1	205	76.5	207	77.2	169	78.6	1,116	77.0
Out-of-scope	9	3.4	12	4.5	12	4.5	21	9.8	89	6.1
Response rate	†	91.1	†	80.1	†	80.9	†	87.1	†	82.0

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Delivery Method

Did sending the advance letter and Teacher Listing Form by FedEx improve response rates prior to field follow-up?

Half of the initial school packages containing the advance letter and the Teacher Listing Form were sent by FedEx, while the remainder were sent by First Class Mail.

Tables C-2 and C-3 at the beginning of the Summary of Findings section of this report indicate that sending the advance letter and Teacher Listing Form by FedEx did not significantly improve the response rates. The groups that received the information via FedEx did call in more often during the initial week of screening and reported receiving the mailout more often than the groups that received First Class mailings (table C-4). Ultimately, the response rates did not differ.

During the debriefing with the JTC staff, interviewers suggested that using a more “eye-catching” envelope on subsequent mailouts to the schools could prove beneficial. This is discussed in further detail in Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS, Package Contents and Delivery Method.

Modifications to the Teacher Listing Form

Did collecting additional information on the Teacher Listing Form help to identify a higher proportion of teachers who were movers or leavers in the year following SASS?

In order to answer the above question, a Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) Teacher Status Form (TFS-1(X)) was mailed out in September 2006 to all schools with at least one teacher interviewed in the 2005–06 SASS pretest. The additional information collected on the TLF was successful in identifying a higher proportion of teachers who were movers and leavers in the year following SASS. A complete analysis and recommendations from this operation, as well as recommendations for revising other items on the TLF, are included in “Appendix D. Analysis of Changes to the 2005–06 SASS Pretest Teacher Listing Form and TFS-1(X) and Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS and 2008–09 TFS.”

Table C-8. Interview status and response rates for the Principal Questionnaire, School Questionnaire, and School Library Media Center Questionnaire by method of follow-up in the Charlotte and Detroit regional offices, by test group: 2005–06 SASS pretest

Test group	Detroit telephone reminder operation follow-up		Charlotte regional office field follow-up	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total workload	1,759	100.00	958	100.00
Interviews	1,158	65.83	545	56.89
Out-of-scope	26	1.48	32	3.34
Response rate	†	66.82	†	58.86
Response rate of completed cases by test group				
Analytical group				
Group 1: Coordinator with incentive	†	69.30	†	57.83
Group 2: Coordinator without incentive	†	65.57	†	55.59
Group 3: No coordinator	†	65.56	†	63.33
Mail treatment				
United States Postal Service	†	68.95	†	56.26
FedEx	†	64.49	†	61.03

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

How effective was the telephone data collection follow-up?

At this stage of the data collection, staff contacted respondents directly and attempted to collect the data over the phone. Table C-9 shows that approximately 41 percent of the 4,421 questionnaires were completed during this phase. Notably, mail returns exceeded telephone interviews by a factor of nearly 6 to 1.

Table C-9. Telephone data collection follow-up response rates, by questionnaire type: 2005–06 SASS pretest

Questionnaire type	Workload	Total interviews		Response rate
		By phone	By mail	
Principal	338	15	68	24.6
School	360	25	166	53.1
School library media center	227	36	41	33.9
Teacher	3,496	194	1,272	41.9
All forms	4,421	270	1,547	41.1

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS

This section presents recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS as a result of findings from the 2005–06 SASS pretest.

School Coordinators

Attempt to establish a school coordinator at all schools.

It is recommended that school coordinators be established for the 2007–08 SASS. Although the establishment of a school coordinator at the school did not significantly improve response rates for the school-level forms, it significantly improved response rates for teacher-level forms. The establishment of school coordinators also significantly increased the proportion of schools that returned all of their questionnaires.

In addition, feedback from both the Jeffersonville Telephone Center (JTC) and field teleconference debriefings indicated that the establishment of a school coordinator clearly facilitated the collection of data and made their jobs much easier. In group 3, where no formal attempt was made to establish a school coordinator, a “TLF contact” (who often acted like a coordinator) was almost always established (unless the school was not screened). In cases where a school coordinator was not established, interviewers and field representatives almost always contacted a nonofficial contact person because it facilitated keeping track of and collecting questionnaires.

Package Contents and Delivery Method

Use one consistent, professionally-designed, high-quality envelope for all mailout operations rather than FedEx.

One half of the schools in sample were sent materials through FedEx for the first two mailings. The other half in sample were sent materials by way of first class mail using a white envelope printed with a red apple for the first two mailings.

The differences between FedEx and USPS were not significant.

Comments from staff at the JTC debriefing indicated the need for more eye-catching envelopes for respondents to be able to identify subsequent SASS mailings and re-mailings. To provide more consistency and uniqueness to SASS mailings, it is recommended that professionally designed, high-quality envelopes that are commercially printed be used for all mailout operations. The purpose is to distinguish SASS mailings from everything else the school receives, which in turn may prompt a higher and faster response from schools.

Include a well-designed, high-quality pamphlet with previous SASS results in the initial mailout and for difficult follow-up cases instead of monetary incentives. Consider other promotional materials as well.

The results of the pretest showed that payment of a \$20 incentive did not significantly improve the response rates.

Comments received during telephone center debriefings reflected an interest in summary SASS data results and/or other resources that could benefit the particular school in sample. Because of this, it is

recommended that a high quality, eye-catching, easy-to-read pamphlet presenting previous SASS results be included in the initial packet mailed to the schools in the 2007–08 SASS. This pamphlet should also be used for difficult follow-up cases. Participants in the SASS Focus Groups conducted in April 2005 by ORC MACRO were also interested in summary SASS data results and/or other resources that could benefit the school. For a complete report on the SASS Focus Groups that were conducted in April 2005, please see “Appendix I. Focus Group Findings and Recommendations: Principals’ Attitudes Toward Teacher Evaluation and Dismissal.”

Mail school-level questionnaires with the initial mailout, rather than just the advance letter and Teacher Listing Form (TLF).

During the pretest, questionnaires were mailed to the school after the school was screened. Schools that were not contacted during the screener phase were still sent questionnaires after the close-out of the screener operation, in the hopes that the screening question on the TLF would suffice to determine if a school was out-of-scope and a coordinator could be designated during the telephone reminder operation.

The 2007–08 SASS would still conduct a telephone screener operation to determine if a school is in-scope and to establish a school coordinator. However, by including the School, Principal, and School Library Media Center Questionnaires in with initial package, up to 4 weeks could be cut from the schedule of sending forms to the school. The advance letter and screener call would still emphasize completion of the TLF prior to completion of the other questionnaires. Out-of-scope schools that still send in completed forms would be defined as out-of-scope at check-in.

Data Collection

Timing Issues: Start SASS in September and avoid data collection deadlines around holiday seasons.

During the pretest, the advance letter was mailed to all schools on October 14, 2005. This initial contact was about 1 month later than originally scheduled because of delayed OMB approval. The delayed start date was unfortunate because it forced the timing of the various data collection components to be compressed and forced major portions of the telephone and field follow-up operations to be conducted around the Thanksgiving and Christmas holidays. This was a very busy time for schools and a very difficult time to collect SASS data. This fact is reflected in the response rate reports previously presented and in comments received from both the JTC and Field Teleconference Debriefings (attachment C-3). It is imperative that the 2007–08 SASS begin earlier for two reasons:

1. to avoid data collection operations during busy holiday seasons; and
2. to allow needed time for data collection given the enormity of the workload.

Based upon feedback from the school coordinator, JTC, and field debriefings, it is recommended that the 2007–08 SASS begin no later than mid-September 2007.

Attachment C-5 provides a chart indicating the suggested timing of the steps of data collection.

Continue to request that schools call the Telephone Center(s) in order to complete the screener and establish a school coordinator.

One hundred twenty-five schools (11.3 percent of the total workload) called in to the JTC during the first week of the screener operation. Twenty-four percent called in altogether. They called at their convenience and initiative and it proved to be an efficient methodology for making positive contact between schools

and the JTC. In fact, the JTC obtained a school coordinator for every school that called in and was in-scope.

Be prepared to receive faxes of the TLF during the first three telephone operations.

During the pretest, JTC received faxes of completed TLFs. Preparations should be made to receive and efficiently process faxes of the completed TLF during the first three telephone operations for the 2007–08 SASS.

Be prepared to conduct interviews toward the end of the telephone reminder operation, as well as during nonresponse follow-up.

During the JTC Teleconference Debriefing, there was a strong plea to allow interviewers the ability to conduct the questionnaire interviews toward the end of the telephone reminder operation. In the pretest, interviewers were only equipped to conduct the questionnaire interviews during the nonresponse follow-up operation. Because nonresponse follow-up began immediately after the close-out of the telephone reminder operation, the procedure of re-mailing questionnaires was stopped toward the end of the telephone reminder operation. During the telephone reminder operation, re-mailings of 245 school-level questionnaires and 193 teacher questionnaires were requested. There were a total of 1,744 school-level questionnaires and 5,118 teacher questionnaires that were re-mailed during the pretest. Occasionally, when school respondents realized that they would not be receiving a re-mail and would be called again to complete the interview, they were eager to answer the questions at that point; however, the JTC interviewers were not equipped to conduct the interviews until the final phase of the pretest, so an ideal opportunity to collect the data was lost.

Do not include schools in both telephone follow-up and field operations simultaneously.

Based on emphatic feedback from both Field Division and the JTC, a school should not be in both the computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI) follow-up and field follow-up at the same time. For example, while a field representative from the Detroit Regional Office was following-up on the TLF, the JTC was following-up on School, Principal, and School Library Media Center Questionnaires at the same time in the same school. Despite efforts to train interviewers and field representatives on their particular aspect of data collection follow-up, there remained confusion and miscommunication between the school, telephone center, and field representative. This was a major source of frustration for all three.

Consider assigning only Teacher Listing Forms to field follow-up in the fall.

The Charlotte RO had lower response rates for the TLFs (compared to Detroit, who only had TLFs to complete) and for the school-level forms (compared to the reminder follow-up of these forms); therefore, it is recommended that only TLFs be assigned to field follow-up in the fall of 2007.

The National Processing Center (NPC) should label all materials for the field follow-up operations.

Based on observations of materials preparation in the Charlotte RO (see attachment C-4) and comments received during the Field Teleconference Debriefing, it is recommended that the preparation of all materials for the 2007–08 SASS field follow-up be completed in the NPC. The NPC should preprint the addresses onto the questionnaires and sort the workloads by RO and field representative code so that RO staff can easily handle the assignments. This will also ensure that the correct questionnaires are used and labeled properly.

Send postcard and e-mail reminder to the school coordinator before conducting telephone reminders. Limit the number of telephone calls and allow more time between telephone calls in various telephone operations.

During the JTC and school coordinator debriefings, interviewers and school coordinators strongly recommended that there be more time between calls in all of the various operations. Because the time was compressed for the data collection components in the pretest, the screener calls, TLF follow-up calls, reminder calls, field calls, and nonresponse follow-up calls ran back-to-back. This seemed to harass the school respondents, making them less inclined to participate.

This should not be an issue during the 2007–08 SASS, as the collection will begin earlier and therefore allow more time between telephone operations. Even so, sending postcard reminders and e-mail reminders to the school coordinators obtained during the screener before telephone reminder operations would reduce the number of reminders necessary and allow more time between telephone calls. Sending postcard and e-mail reminders would likely reduce the irritation respondents felt as a result of receiving so many telephone calls.

Consider automating the Teacher Questionnaire for nonresponse follow-up and provide blank school-level paper questionnaires designed for telephone follow-up to the telephone center(s).

Of the 4,421 cases sent to the JTC for nonresponse follow-up, only 270 interviews were conducted and completed by telephone. Primarily because of the very low telephone response rates during data collection follow-up, it is not recommended to convert paper questionnaires for the School, Principal, and School Library Media Center Questionnaires to automated instruments due to the resources the task would require. It may be beneficial to consider automating the Teacher Questionnaires, time and funding permitting.

Blank questionnaires designed for telephone follow-up should be provided to the telephone center(s). This will relieve some of the difficulty interviewers face when trying to conduct lengthy interviews over the telephone.

Use different, brightly-colored paper stock to help school coordinators distinguish various questionnaires.

To help school coordinators facilitate the work that the U.S. Census Bureau requests of them, the covers of the various questionnaires should be printed on different, brightly-colored paper stock and this information should be communicated to JTC interviewers and field representatives during their training.

For example, during a telephone follow-up operation, an interviewer could remind the coordinator that the bright-green Principal Questionnaire and bright-pink School Library Media Center Questionnaire still have not yet been received, while the orange School Questionnaire was already completed and mailed in. This color-coded technique on the questionnaire covers may be helpful for some school coordinators.

The 2007–08 questionnaires were printed on different colored paper stock so that the coordinators could tell the difference between the various questionnaires; however, the colors were muted rather than bright due to the requirements of the data capture system.

Automated Instruments

Make enhancements to the automated instruments used to screen schools, establish school coordinators, and follow-up on the status of all questionnaires to allow for more flexibility in operations.

The main enhancement recommended for the automated instruments used to screen schools, establish school coordinators, and follow-up on the status of all questionnaires is to allow different kinds of contacts to be made during each phase of telephone calls to schools, depending on the status of the school's questionnaires. In addition, the telephone follow-up of the Teacher Listing Forms should be automated (paper operation during the pretest).

Four telephone operations are recommended. The first telephone operation should screen schools, attempt to establish a school coordinator, explain all of the SASS forms, and ask the school staff to complete the TLF as soon as possible, with the option to complete it over the phone with the interviewer, fax the completed form, or return it by mail.

The second telephone operation should focus on collecting the TLF by phone or having it faxed in. During this operation, the interviewers should also screen remaining schools and continue to establish coordinators. For cases where the TLF was received, the interviewers would alert the respondent that the Teacher Questionnaires would be sent out and remind them to mail in the Principal, School, and School Library Media Center (for public and BIE-funded schools only) Questionnaires.

During the third telephone operation, interviewers should encourage the school coordinator or designated respondents to complete questionnaires and mail them in. An attempt should be made to receive any remaining TLFs that are in progress, or held up due to needing their school district's approval, by December 15, 2007. Schools should be included in the third operation (reminder phase) for a limited amount of time to avoid alienating the coordinator by making too many contacts. Schools should move from the third operation to the fourth after the teachers for the school have been in the third phase for approximately 2 weeks.

During the fourth telephone operation, interviewers should contact the individual respondents (for all forms) to complete the interviews by phone. The 2005–06 SASS pretest did not include the field follow-up phase that follows telephone follow-up. The 2007–08 SASS will include field follow-up of remaining nonrespondents. It is recommended that schools (including all remaining nonrespondent questionnaires) move from the fourth telephone operation (data collection) to field follow-up in two phases.

In the first phase, schools with outstanding school-level forms (Principal, School, and/or School Library Media Center Questionnaires) should be assigned to field follow-up so that these forms can be closed out by the end of February. The associated Teacher Questionnaires should be assigned along with the school-level forms for these schools.

Schools with only Teacher Questionnaires as remaining nonrespondents should continue in the fourth telephone operation through the end of February. In March, remaining Teacher Questionnaires should be assigned to a second phase of field follow-up.

Attachment C-5 provides a chart indicating the suggested timing of the steps of data collection, and a second chart summarizing changes that would need to be made to each automated instrument.

Incorporate the TLF into the Blaise instrument.

The TLF should be incorporated into the Blaise instrument.² The TLF from the 2003–04 SASS was automated and could be used as a starting point for modification. However, the Teacher Follow-up Survey pretest was conducted in the fall of 2006 and recommended changes to the TLF were made. Adequate time to incorporate these changes into the Blaise instrument prior to the start of the 2007–08 SASS needs to be ensured. In addition, it needs to be ensured that the format and timing of the TLF data to DSMD are conducive to a quick turnaround for the sampling of teachers.

The TLF was not incorporated into the Blaise instrument for the 2007–08 SASS. The potential benefits of having the TLF incorporated into the Blaise instrument (i.e., the elimination of paper forms in the telephone center and the separate step of keying the form) did not justify the resources necessary to modify the automated version of the TLF. In addition, there were problems using the Teacher Listing Form instrument in the 2003–04 SASS in regards to tracking cases and resolving whether a case was an interview, non-interview, or out-of-scope.

Incorporate the reminder scripts into the Blaise instrument.

For the SASS pretest, there was not enough time to incorporate the reminder scripts into the automated instrument. Therefore, the JTC staff used scripts from paper forms when calling and reminding schools to participate. It is strongly recommend that these scripts be incorporated into the Blaise instrument for the 2007–08 SASS. These will not only streamline pre-enumeration processing operations, but will help facilitate telephone interviews.

² The Blaise instrument is an automated software system that provides a script for the interviewer that corresponds to the school's circumstances (i.e., it provides different interview paths based on the respondent's answers to previous items).

Attachment C-1: Advance Letters



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

(Letter 1: Request for school coordinator /incentive)

October 15, 2005

Dear Principal:

Your school has been selected to participate in the 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). The SASS is the nation's largest survey of the characteristics and conditions of American schools and the teachers and principals who work in them.

The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this survey for the U.S. Department of Education. Answers to questions that you may have about the history and purpose of the SASS, your school's time commitment in this survey, results from prior Schools and Staffing Surveys, and how this impacts you are located on the reverse side of this letter, as well as in the enclosed brochure. Additional information can be found on the web at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Most immediately, we need your cooperation in two ways:

1. We would like to establish a coordinator at your school to help us facilitate the completion and prompt return of several questionnaires. **Please have this coordinator call us by October 24 at 1-800-523-3205, so we can establish a working relationship with this person.** As an expression of our appreciation for his or her timely help, we will send this person a \$20 American Express gift card. Our staff of interviewers is anticipating his or her call.
2. **Please complete the enclosed Teacher Listing Form and mail it back in the postage-paid return envelope by October 24.**

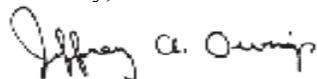
The information you provide on this form will give us a list of all teachers who teach at this school. From this list, the Census Bureau will randomly sample about 15 percent of the teachers at your school for interviews.

We will mail the following forms to your school for completion:

- Teacher Questionnaires (for a sample of teachers)
- School Questionnaire
- Principal Questionnaire
- Library Media Center Questionnaire (public schools only)

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey A. Owings
Associate Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics
Elementary/Secondary and Library Studies Division



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

(Letter 2: Request for school coordinator/no incentive)

October 14, 2005

Dear Principal:

Your school has been selected to participate in the 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). The SASS is the nation's largest survey of the characteristics and conditions of American schools and the teachers and principals who work in them.

The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this survey for the U.S. Department of Education. Answers to questions that you may have about the history and purpose of the SASS, your school's time commitment in this survey, results from prior Schools and Staffing Surveys, and how this impacts you are located on the reverse side of this letter, as well as in the enclosed brochure. Additional information can be found on the web at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Most immediately, we need your cooperation in two ways:

1. We would like to establish a coordinator at your school to help us facilitate the completion and prompt return of several questionnaires. **Please have this coordinator call us by October 24 at 1-800-523-3205, so we can establish a working relationship with this person.** Our staff of interviewers is anticipating his or her call.
2. **Please complete the enclosed Teacher Listing Form and mail it back in the postage-paid return envelope by October 24.**

The information you provide on this form will give us a list of all teachers who teach at this school. From this list, the Census Bureau will randomly sample about 15 percent of the teachers at your school for interviews.

We will mail the following forms to your school for completion:

- Teacher Questionnaires (for a sample of teachers)
- School Questionnaire
- Principal Questionnaire
- Library Media Center Questionnaire (public schools only)

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey A. Owings".

Jeffrey A. Owings
Associate Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics
Elementary/Secondary and Library Studies Division



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

(Letter 3: No school coordinator)

October 14, 2005

Dear Principal:

Your school has been selected to participate in the 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). The SASS is the nation's largest survey of the characteristics and conditions of American schools and the teachers and principals who work in them.

The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this survey for the U.S. Department of Education. Answers to questions that you may have about the history and purpose of the SASS, your school's time commitment in this survey, results from prior Schools and Staffing Surveys, and how this impacts you are located on the reverse side of this letter, as well as in the enclosed brochure. Additional information can be found on the web at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Most immediately, we need your help in establishing a contact person at your school.

1. **Please have this person call us by October 24 at 1-800-523-3205 to answer a few general questions about your school.** Our staff of interviewers is anticipating his or her call.
2. **Please have this person complete the enclosed Teacher Listing Form and mail it back in the postage-paid return envelope by October 24.**

The information provided on this form will give us a list of all teachers who teach at this school. From this list, the Census Bureau will randomly sample about 15 percent of the teachers at your school for interviews.

We will mail the following forms to your school for completion:

- Teacher Questionnaires (for a sample of teachers)
- School Questionnaire
- Principal Questionnaire
- Library Media Center Questionnaire (public schools only)

Thank you in advance for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeffrey A. Owings".

Jeffrey A. Owings
Associate Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics
Elementary/Secondary and Library Studies Division

Attachment C-2: Teacher Listing Form

PLEASE READ THE REFERENCE CARD BEFORE CONTINUING (A removable reference card is printed on the last page of this booklet.)															
Line number	(a) Teacher's Name		(b) Subject Matter Taught								(c) Teaching Status at This School	(d) Teacher's Race/Ethnicity	(e) Teaching Experience at This or Any Other School	(f) Teacher Status for Next Year	
	First	Last	Special education (1)	General elementary (2)	Math (3)	Science (4)	English/Language Arts (5)	Social Studies (6)	Vocational/Technical (7)	Other (8)	1 - Full time 2 - Part time	1 - White (non-Hispanic) 2 - Black (non-Hispanic) 3 - Hispanic (can be of any race) 4 - Asian or Pacific Islander 5 - American Indian or Alaska Native	1 - 3 years or less 2 - 4-19 years 3 - 20 or more years	Yes	No
Ex.*	<i>Andrew</i>	<i>Shaffer</i>								<i>X</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>X</i>	
1															
2															
3															
4															
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15															

Attachment C-3: Field Teleconference Debriefing Summary

Detroit Regional Office

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

1. Was there any indication from either the school coordinators or respondents that the principal supported participation in SASS?

Field representatives had mixed experiences in their interactions with school coordinators and respondents. Some schools were supportive and cooperative, completing the SASS questionnaires while the FR waited to eliminate the need for multiple visits. Some charter schools were reluctant because they thought they were being targeted by the Department of Education, they felt like they were competing with the public schools for students, and they felt like they were being unnecessarily harassed; however, other charter school principal's were supportive.

Some schools felt directly targeted. In addition, some schools felt that the Teacher Listing Form Telephone Follow-up misled them to believe that they did not have to fill out the other SASS questionnaires. The amount of phone calls placed to schools caused reluctance to participate in some cases because the respondents felt like they were being harassed.

One field representative reported that a staff member in a sampled school wanted to respond because he/she used the NCES website often, but the principal still refused to allow the school to participate.

2. What school staff position(s) did you find was most effective in acting as the school coordinator?

Field representatives found some, but not all, secretaries helpful as school coordinators or as contact persons that could help them reach the school coordinator. Secretaries were sometimes able to convince the principal to participate. Secretaries seemed to be more helpful in smaller schools. Working with secretaries in larger schools was more difficult as they usually decided whether or not the field representative could schedule an appointment with the principal or the school coordinator, if the secretary was not the school coordinator. Secretaries in larger schools seemed to have less time and were more protective of the principal's time than secretaries in smaller schools. Field representatives found that business managers were helpful in larger schools. Field representatives found that principals were effective as coordinators; however, they were sometimes hard to reach by phone.

3. What school staff position(s) did you find was least effective in acting as the school coordinator?

Some field representatives found secretaries to be least effective as school coordinators for a variety of reasons. In some schools, staff turnover was a problem, with secretaries who were acting as school coordinator leaving the school prior to field follow-up. In addition, secretaries were, at times, protective of their school's teachers, records, and administration, specifically the principal. In small schools, assistant principals were ineffective because they were very busy.

4. How effective do you think the school coordinators were?

Field representatives reported that about half of the schools had coordinators. Some field representatives were confused because not all cases had designated coordinators. Due to the timing of delivering the necessary files for field follow-up, some field representatives did not have the most up-to-date information on the case available on their laptop computer. Some field representatives felt that

the effectiveness of coordinators was moot because, in a lot of cases, the designated school coordinator no longer worked at the school.

5. Was it easier to contact and work with schools that had designated school coordinators?

For the most part, it was easier to work with a school coordinator because the field representative knew whom to contact and this person already knew about the survey. However, in some cases the coordinator was too busy and the field representative had to establish a new contact person. As well, coordinators sometimes delegated their duties, making it difficult for the field representative to speak to the appropriate person.

6. Were there any difficulties in working with schools without coordinators?

Field representatives struggled when speaking to noncoordinator office staff members because they could not figure out whom to speak with. Field representatives felt that charter schools without coordinators were more difficult to work with than regular public or private schools without coordinators because in many cases the charter schools had more than one site. Field representatives felt that the refusal rate was higher for cases without coordinators.

7. What obstacles, if any, did you encounter in trying to reach the school coordinator/respondent?

Field representatives reported that some secretaries were not helpful. In addition, secretaries and other administrative staff did not always have the authority to release the names of the teachers for the Teacher Listing Form. In large schools, principals were hard to reach because they were often in meetings. In small schools, the field representatives felt that they could only reach the principal or secretary even in cases where a coordinator had been established. School staff frequently did not return field representatives' phone calls, making personal visits necessary. School staff were busy during the month of December.

8. On average, how many contacts did it take to get the forms or a promise to have them mailed in?

Field representatives reported that it took 2-4 contacts with the coordinator or respondent to either pick-up the forms or have them mailed to the National Processing Center. The majority of these contacts were completed via phone or fax. In cases where the field representative established a working relationship with the coordinator or respondent and was able to make an appointment for the time that the appropriate person was available, the Teacher Listing Form could be collected in 1 visit. Private schools required fewer contacts than public and public charter schools.

9. Were the telephone contacts productive, that is, were you able to reach the respondents, get them to mail the questionnaires, or get a promise to mail the questionnaire?

Some field representatives felt that telephone contacts to reach respondents, get them to mail questionnaires, or to get them to promise to mail the questionnaire were productive once the field representative reached the correct person at the school. In some cases, schools faxed the forms immediately after the phone conversation. Other field representatives felt that too many phone calls (even 2 calls from the telephone center) dissuaded respondents from participating in the survey. As well, in many cases, the school didn't know where the materials were, so the field representative had to re-establish contact with someone that he/she felt could be helpful in completing the Teacher Listing Form. These cases often required personal visits.

10. Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve the effectiveness of the school coordinator?

It was stated the effectiveness of the SASS pretest would have improved if it had not been conducted during the holidays. January might be a good time, as well as one or two weeks after school let out for the summer. This would give the schools more time to cooperate. Right after school starts is the toughest time of the year for schools in terms of spare time. The advance letters should thoroughly explain the responsibilities of the coordinator, the time serving as coordinator will take, what's expected of the coordinator, and that the coordinator needs to have the authority to release the data. Field representatives thought that the survey process should be as unobtrusive as possible and that personal visits should be used rather than phone calls.

11. What recommendations can you make to remedy the following situation, which we frequently encountered? The field representative or school staff said they mailed the forms and the NPC had not received them after a reasonable time period?

Field representatives cited many examples of this problem. Many times, schools said that they returned the forms 2–3 weeks before the field representative's contact with them, leading the field representatives to believe that either the forms were getting lost in the mail or the school had not really returned them. They also said that they and their regional office had sent forms via FedEx, and when they were tracked, they were showing up as received in the National Processing Center (NPC), but were not being removed from the laptops as late mail returns (LMRs). In some cases, the school claimed to have mailed the completed forms, but the field representatives attempted to collect the forms again because they didn't want to wait 2–3 weeks for the case to be removed as an LMR from their laptop.

Field representatives offered several suggestions to improve the process. Overall, they thought that LMRs need to be turned around more quickly. They suggested that the field representatives pick up the school's forms, or have the school mail the forms to the field representative, and then have the field representative FedEx the forms to NPC. Finally, they suggested that the respondents be provided a self-addressed FedEx envelope to overnight the forms to NPC.

12. What, if any, difficulties did you encounter as a result of only following up on the Teacher Listing Form (TLF)?

Field representatives reported that since schools eventually got all of the SASS forms, they were confused about which one was the TLF. They also stated that the volume of calls made to the respondent by both the telephone interviewers and the field representatives was problematic and emphatically suggested that the school should not be in both the telephone center's and field's workload simultaneously. Field representatives requested that calls from the telephone center to the respondents be limited, and that interviewers should not tell the schools that a field representative would be contacting them. Field representatives also felt that they needed more information regarding what happened with the cases they were assigned prior to the field follow-up operation.

13. What, if any, difficulties did you encounter while printing labels, affixing labels, and preparing assignments?

Neither field representatives nor regional office staff had any major issues with completing these tasks.

14. Do you think that the time period for the Field Follow-up operation was long enough (not long enough/too long)?

Field representatives reported that the time allocated for following-up on the TLF was sufficient because they were not assigned too many cases. However, the timing during the school year was poor because it was too close to the holiday season. It takes most schools time to get settled during and after the holidays, and some schools have semester breaks around that time.

15. Do you think that the training adequately prepared you for what was expected? If not, what was unclear and/or omitted?

Field representatives felt that the training was adequate; however, they would like more leeway in the method of collecting the TLF and would like an automated TLF so that they can collect the data on the spot. In addition, field representatives disliked waiting for a school's forms to be checked into NPC after the school says that they were mailed.

16. In the event that Field Follow-up and the Telephone Reminder operation occur simultaneously in the future, do you have any suggestions for how confusion and misinformation between the schools, regional offices, and the telephone centers can be minimized?

Field representatives felt that it was counterproductive to have schools in the Telephone Reminder operation and Field Follow-up concurrently. They also thought that having separate staffs call and show up to the school raised a credibility issue. Field representatives suggested that there be a limit to the number of times that the telephone center could attempt to contact a school (e.g., 4 calls) before the case was sent to field, and that the field representative should have access to the notes entered by the telephone center interviewer. Field representatives also thought that a short time between operations was necessary for mail returns to be checked in and to process all of the information so that it was up-to-date on the field representatives' laptops.

17. Do you think having a special National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) badge would have been helpful when contacting schools?

Field representatives felt that teachers were more receptive to the U.S. Census Bureau badge. They also stated that depending on what's going on politically, the NCES badge could be confrontational, and that charter schools probably would not cooperate with a Department of Education/NCES badge due to political budget conflicts.

Charlotte Regional Office

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

18. Was there any indication from either the school coordinators or respondents that the principal supported participation in SASS?

Field representatives had mixed experiences with principals' support of participation in SASS. Field representatives reported that if they personally reached the principal, they were helpful and cooperative over the phone, and would often push to get the survey done. Field representatives felt that a lot of the coordinators were not helpful or cooperative.

19. What school staff position(s) did you find was most effective in acting as the school coordinator?

Field representatives thought that the principal or the principal's secretary, and in some cases, the assistant principal were helpful as coordinators.

20. What school staff position(s) did you find was least effective in acting as the school coordinator?

Field representatives found secretaries ineffective as school coordinators for several reasons. In some cases, secretaries were very protective of the principal/teachers, and in general did not want to burden other staff members with extra work. In addition, the secretaries were always busy, so they usually did not have the time to be helpful.

21. How effective do you think the school coordinators were?

Some field representatives did not have experience with working with school coordinators. Some incorrect coordinator information was passed to field, and the telephone center's notes were not passed to field, so there was no knowing whether or not a contact/coordinator had been established for cases with no coordinator designated during the Screener operation. Some field representatives found coordinators, when they were designated and available, very effective in their role. Other field representatives felt that about half of the coordinators were helpful. One field representative reported that the coordinators leaned on the principals to complete the questionnaires.

22. Was it easier to contact and work with schools that had designated school coordinators?

Field representatives preferred having established coordinators, and felt that they needed to be established up front. In many cases, field representatives had to designate a coordinator because one was not designated. Field representatives reported that having a school coordinator was helpful more than half of the time. The coordinator often had more knowledge than the principal of what survey materials had been received.

23. Were there any difficulties in working with schools without designated coordinators?

In schools without coordinators, it was more difficult for the field representatives to find out who in the school could help them. Speaking to a noncoordinator in the office staff brought about confusion because the school official was not always knowledgeable about the survey or whom the field representative needed to speak with. This showed poor and/or lack of communication in some schools, which hindered telephone interviewing and Field Follow-up.

24. What obstacles, if any, did you encounter in trying to reach the school coordinator/respondent?

Field representatives preferred personal visits because school staff often did not return their phone calls, making it hard to follow-up on the status of the SASS questionnaires or make an appointment to visit the school. This issue also brought up the difficult situation of the number of telephone interviewer follow-ups, the timing of the calls, and the fact that too many personal visits and phone calls made the respondent feel "harassed." The follow-ups being conducted during the holidays was problematic because there were not a lot of faculty members to assist the field representative or even respond to the telephone follow-up.

25. On average, how many contacts did it take to get the forms or a promise to have them mailed in?

The number of contacts to get the forms or a promise to have them mailed in varied. One field representative reported 2-3 contacts, whereas another reported 4-5 contacts. Contacts included both telephone calls and personal visits.

26. Were the telephone contacts productive, that is, were you able to reach the respondents, get them to mail the questionnaires, or get a promise to mail the questionnaire?

Field representatives felt that telephone contacts were helpful; however, too many calls could discourage participation. They found that telephone contact were helpful in about half of their cases.

27. Do you have any suggestions for how we can improve the effectiveness of the school coordinator?

Field representatives had several suggestions for improving the effectiveness of the school coordinator. They suggested having all coordinators established prior to loading cases onto their laptops, and suggested establishing coordinators in person prior to follow-up activities. The coordinator needs to be chosen well—they need to have the authority to release the necessary information and have the time to do it. Field representatives also suggested including the secretary in completing the School Questionnaire so that the principal only needs to complete the Principal Questionnaire.

28. What recommendations can you make to remedy the following situation, which was frequently encountered: the field representative/school said they mailed the forms and the NPC had not received them after a reasonable time period.

Field representatives suggested that they pick-up the forms and send them to NPC, rather than having respondents mail them to NPC. Some field representatives gave the schools in their workload a whole new set of forms and waited while they filled them out, rather than having the school mail them. Field representatives suggested sending respondents a self-addressed FedEx envelope so they could overnight the forms to NPC.

29. What, if any, difficulties did you encounter as a result of following up on all of the questionnaires, including the Teacher Listing Form?

Field representatives reported had difficulties following-up on all of the questionnaires because the schools had difficulty in figuring out what they received initially. Many times the school said they “sent back whatever you sent us.” Field representatives suggested making each questionnaire cover in a different color so that the school could remember which ones they’ve completed and which ones they haven’t. In addition, field representatives would have liked to know the schedule of activities that preceded field follow-up. They also felt limited on how they could follow-up on the TLF and would have liked more freedom on how they could follow-up.

30. What, if any, difficulties did you encounter while printing labels, affixing labels, assembling school packets, and preparing assignments?

The regional office staff reported several difficulties in completing these activities. The labels that were ordered were too small, causing some of the text on the label to be cut-off. The staff suggested that the labels be of a standard size normally used in the office. The process of crossing off labels for schools whose questionnaires had been received was too time consuming. As well, the desired sort options for the labels were not available, which made making assignments difficult. In some cases,

the labels were difficult to affix to the forms due to such issues like the “curling” of the label making it difficult to place on the forms. The regional office staff suggested having the labels printed in the NPC, including the state and county (PSU) in the control number, and having more clerks for the assembling process.

31. Do you think that the time period for the Field Follow-up operation was long enough (not long enough/too long)?

The field representatives did not think that the Field Follow-up operation was long enough, especially considering the time of the year that it was conducted. They suggested either having 3 weeks after the holidays prior to the end of the operation, or having the operation start 3 weeks after the holidays.

32. Do you think that our training adequately prepared you for what was expected? If not, what was unclear and/or omitted?

Field representatives felt that the training was inadequate because it did not have instructions on refusal follow-up. The field representatives would have liked to have a copy of each of the forms to look at when completing the training, and would like better instructional letters/memos about what materials are used and when they were sent to the schools, when to mail things, how to feel the respondent out, etc. They would also like a master schedule of when major phases took place (e.g., mailout/mailback, Screener, Reminder, etc.) It also may be helpful to let FRs tell schools how we sample so they don't feel targeted and singled-out. They would like to have a flexible letter, explaining the materials, to accompany materials if they need to send more questionnaires to the school. They also would like procedures regarding how to handle abnormal cases, such as being referred by the principal to contact the district.

33. In the event that Field Follow-up and the Telephone Reminder operation occur simultaneously in the future, do you have any suggestions for how confusion and misinformation between the schools, regional offices, and the telephone centers can be minimized?

Field representatives felt that it was counterproductive to have schools in the Telephone Reminder operation and Field Follow-up concurrently. They didn't think that the telephone interviewers should tell schools that a field representative would be “visiting” them, and suggested that they say “contacting” them instead. They also thought that the field representative should have access to the notes entered by the telephone center interviewer. Field representatives also thought that a short time between operations was necessary for mail returns to be checked in and to process all of the information so that it was up-to-date on the field representatives' laptops.

34. Do you think having a special National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) badge would have been helpful when contacting schools?

Some of the field representatives who worked on the 2003–04 SASS said that they liked having the NCES badge and found it helpful in gaining cooperation; however, others reported that it did not/would not have made a difference.

Recommendations and Limitations for 2007–08 SASS

Recommendations

Several of the field representatives' and regional office staff members' suggestions should be implemented in the planning for the 2007–08 SASS. Coordinators should be established early on in data collection and their names should be provided to the field representatives prior to field follow-up. As the most effective coordinators had varied positions in the school, care should be taken to establish appropriate coordinators at the school level by thoroughly explaining the responsibilities of the school coordinator and the time commitment required.

The number of phone calls should be limited in telephone operations. The timing between the follow-up operations should be increased. In addition, follow-up activities should not occur around the holiday season. Schools should be in only one follow-up operation at a time. They should not be contacted by both the telephone center and Field concurrently.

The National Processing Center (NPC) should label all of the materials for the Regional Offices (ROs). The field representatives suggested including the state and county (PSU) in the control number so that the forms could be sorted by location. Since SASS does not incorporate PSUs, it was decided that labels on the questionnaires should include the assigned field representative's code. The questionnaires should be sorted by field representative code so that it is relatively easy for the RO staff to prepare packages for the field representatives. The field representative's training should include all survey materials, a schedule of prior operations, and instructions regarding refusals.

Limitations

While many of the comments and suggestions from the field teleconference were helpful and were able to be implemented in the planning for the 2007–08 SASS, other suggestions could not be applied. In response to the length of time it took to receive and check in completed questionnaires, the field representatives suggested that they pick up the school's forms, or have the school mail them the forms, so that they could FedEx them to NPC. As an alternate solution, they suggested providing respondents with a self-addressed FedEx envelope in which they could overnight the completed forms to the NPC. While field representatives can pick up completed questionnaires from schools that are assigned to them during field follow-up, it is more cost efficient to have the respondents mail their completed questionnaires using the business reply mail envelope. In addition, having the school mail the materials to the field representative and having the field representative FedEx the forms to the NPC creates an extra step and adds additional costs to receiving the form. It was considered both unfeasible and unnecessary to provide respondents with a FedEx envelope.

Field representatives suggested establishing school coordinators in person prior to follow-up activities. This would create an additional field operation; therefore, the suggestion was not implemented.

Attachment C-4: Report on the Preparation of Field Materials for the Pretest

Staff in the Charlotte Regional Office (RO) were observed preparing Field Representative (FR) materials for the 2005–06 SASS pretest on November 17 and 18, 2005. This included printing the questionnaire labels, removing the appropriate labels that were received as late mail returns (LMRs), affixing the labels to the questionnaires, and enclosing the appropriate materials into a Ziploc bag. Each school had its own Ziploc bag.

Printing the Labels

The labels should be sorted and printed by state rather than FR code. It was very time consuming to locate the appropriate label when the labels were sorted by FR code.

Pulling the Late Mail Returns (LMR)

There was a problem with the “sort” of the LMR file that the RO received. Not all of the control numbers were listed together. There were also many control numbers on the LMR file that were not included in the Regional Office Systems COntrol (ROSCO) database. A lot of time was wasted ensuring that these extra control numbers were not part of the workload.

The school name should have been included on the LMR file. This would have been helpful in verifying that the correct school had been pulled. The list of control numbers was a bit overwhelming to work from and mistakes could have easily been made.

Affixing the Labels

The Charlotte RO was in the process of getting new furniture so workspace was at a premium. It was difficult to tell if the staff was affixing the correct label to the corresponding questionnaire. When starting the second school package, it became apparent that the correct labels were not being placed on the questionnaires.

However, affixing the labels and assembling the school packages went smoothly overall.

Pre-Assembly of the School Packages

The field procedures instructed the RO to pre-assemble the school packages. Not all of the school packages had been pre-assembled when the observation began. While labeling the questionnaires and assembling the packages, it was cumbersome to pull the questionnaires and envelopes from the already pre-assembled Ziploc bag and then stuff them back into the Ziploc bag. It worked out very well that all the school packages were not pre-assembled.

The RO staff thought it would be beneficial to include pre-printed Federal Express labels and envelopes in the school packages. Not all FRs are located near a Federal Express location.

Recommendations

Field materials should not be prepared in the same way as was tested during the pretest. Pulling the LMRs from the preprinted labels was an extremely time-consuming process. NPC should docuprint the address onto the questionnaires, sorted by RO and FR code, so that the assignments can be prepared easily and

quickly by the RO staff. This will also ensure that the questionnaires are labeled properly. The school packages should only be pre-assembled with the generic materials so the questionnaires and return envelopes can be added later.

Attachment C-5: Timing and Instrument Recommendations for SASS 2007–08

Timing Recommendations

September	Mail letter, Teacher Listing Form (TLF), Principal form, School form, Library Media Center (LMC) form.	
	First Telephone Operation: (1) Screen schools. (2) Establish school coordinator. (3) Explain all forms. (4) Attempt to have them fax in TLF or mail in ASAP, or collect it by phone right away.	
October	Check-in and key TLFs daily. Sample teachers weekly. Mail teachers questionnaires weekly	Second telephone operation: (1) Screen remaining schools. (2) Continue to establish coordinator. (3) Major focus: Repeated calls to collect TLF by phone or have it faxed in. (4) If TLF received, alert them on Teacher forms. (5) Reminder to mail in other forms. Note that paths for (1), (2), and (3) will be for a subset of schools.
November		
December		TLF nonresponse field follow-up (possibly including associated school forms for those schools).
		Third telephone operation. Encourage school coordinator or respondents (Principal, School, LMC, Teachers) to complete questionnaires and mail in. Final effort by Dec. 15 to get any remaining TLFs that were in progress, or held up due to LEAs.
January		Fourth telephone operation: Contact individual respondents (all forms) to complete interviews by phone. (Schools move from “third” to “fourth” in waves based on date of teacher mailout.)
		These TLFs collected by phone or fax if possible.
February		Continuation of 4 th telephone operation for schools with ONLY TEACHERS as nonrespondents.
		Field follow-up of ALL paper questionnaires for schools with nonresponse school-level forms. Closes out end of Feb.
March		Field follow-up for schools with nonresponding teachers.
		Consider a continuation of telephone follow-up if only one questionnaire for a school remains.
April		Closes out early April.

Instrument Recommendations

Telephone Operation	Universe	Instrument
First Telephone Operation: (1) Screen schools. (2) Establish school coordinator. (3) Explain all forms. (4) Attempt to have them fax in TLF or mail in ASAP, or collect it by phone right away.	All schools (14,000). Within schools, all TLFs.	†
Second telephone operation: (1) Screen remaining schools. (2) Continue to establish coordinator. (3) Major focus: Repeated calls to collect TLF by phone or have it faxed in. (4) If TLF received, alert them on Teacher forms. (5) Reminder to mail in other forms. Note that paths for (1), (2), and (3) will be for a subset of schools.	All schools (14,000). Within schools, all “non-LMR” questionnaires.	Same instrument as first operation for paths 1 and 2. Add screens for paths 3-5. Path 3 is similar to existing ‘reminder’ but only with the TLF as the case, and also allows for collection by phone. Paths 4 and 5 do not collect data.
Third telephone operation. Encourage school coordinator or respondents (Principal, School, LMC, Teachers to complete questionnaires and mail in. Final effort by Dec 15 to get any remaining TLFs that were in progress, or held up due to LEAs.	Begin with all schools (14,000). Within schools, all “non-LMR” questionnaires	Similar to current reminder. Add Blaise code for collecting TLF by phone through Dec 15.
Fourth telephone operation: Contact individual respondents (all forms) to complete interviews by phone. Cases: School Principal LMC Teacher	Schools move from 3 rd to 4 th based on date of teacher mailouts. 4,500 4,500 4,500 30,000	Similar to current NRFU. Consider adding Blaise instrument for teachers.

† Not applicable.

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Appendix D. Analysis of Changes to the 2005–06 SASS Pretest Teacher Listing Form and TFS-1(X) and Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS and 2008–09 TFS

This appendix contains a report prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. Its contents are listed below.

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Introduction

As part of the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), school staff complete the Teacher Listing Form (TLF) by listing all of the teachers at their school and indicating the subject they teach, their teaching status (i.e., full- or part-time), their level of experience, and their expected status for the following year. Approximately 15 percent of the teachers are selected to receive either a Teacher Questionnaire or a Private School Teacher Questionnaire. The following school year, schools are contacted again to provide the current occupational status of all teachers who participated in SASS. A sample of the participating SASS teachers is then selected for the Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS).

In the 2005–06 SASS pretest, the TLF was modified in an attempt to increase the number of teachers in SASS who would leave the teaching profession prior to the following school year (“leavers”) or move to another school (“movers”). The initial phase of the TFS was conducted in the fall of 2006 to evaluate the modifications to the TLF. This report summarizes the modifications that were made to both the TLF and the TFS-1(X), and their effectiveness at increasing the number of leavers and movers in the TFS.

Background

As part of the 2005–06 SASS pretest, one question was added to the Teacher Listing Form (TLF) and the response options for another question were modified. The new question that was introduced asked whether it was likely that the teacher would be teaching in the school the following school year. A modification was made to the question concerning each teacher’s years of experience. Two response options were offered in the TLF for the 2003–04 SASS: (1) 3 or fewer years, and (2) more than 3 years of experience. For the pretest, the question was modified to split the more experienced category into 4–19 years and 20 or more years.

Nearly all teachers who were believed to be planning to leave the school and who had 20 or more years of experience were selected for sample in the 2005–06 SASS pretest. Less experienced teachers who were believed to be planning to leave the school, as well as teachers who were not believed to be planning to leave, were sampled at the customary rate of about 1-in-6 on average.

To determine the status of all the SASS pretest sampled teachers in the year following the 2005–06 school year, the TFS-1(X) was mailed on August 29, 2006, to schools with at least one responding SASS pretest teacher. Data collection continued through October 16, 2006. The TFS-1(X) was modified slightly as part of the pretest. The occupational status codes were modified to reduce the number of “Don’t Know” responses. Modifications included clarifying responses by moving key words or phrases (e.g., “Teaching,” “Not Teaching,” “On leave,” etc.) to the beginning of the occupational status code description. In addition, occupational status code 6 from the 2004–05 TFS was split into two separate codes for the TFS Pretest (“On leave, not returning this school year” and “Left this school, not currently teaching”). Two codes were deleted: “Has left this school for a nonteaching occupation in the field of education” and “Living outside of the United States.” The occupational status codes for the 2004–05 TFS-1 and the 2006–07 TFS-1(X) are listed below.

2004–05 TFS-1

- 1 Teaching in this school
- 2 On leave (e.g., maternity/paternity, disability, sabbatical), but returning to teaching in this school by the end of this school year (2004–05)
- 3 Still teaching at the elementary or secondary level, but not in this school
- 4 Working in this school, but not as a teacher
- 5 Has left this school for a nonteaching occupation in the field of education

- 6 Has left this school for an occupation or activity not in the field of education or is on leave and will not be returning until after the 2004–05 school year (include retired, homemaking and/or childrearing, and extended maternity/paternity, disability, or sabbatical leave)
- 7 Teacher has left this school; no other information available
- 8 Living outside of the United States
- 9 Deceased

2006–07 TFS-1(X)

- 1 Teaching in this school
- 2 Teaching, but not in this school
- 3 Not teaching, but working in this school
- 4 On leave, returning this school year to this school
- 5 On leave, not returning this school year (e.g., extended maternity/paternity leave, disability, sabbatical, or military leave)
- 6 Left this school, not currently teaching (e.g., retired, working in another occupation, homemaking, or child rearing)
- 7 Left this school, occupational status unknown
- 8 Deceased

Analysis

New Question on the Teacher Listing Form

The TFS-1(X) results were tabulated and analyzed by original Teacher Listing Form experience and leaver expectation to determine whether the new question on the SASS-16(X), “Do you think it is likely that this teacher will be teaching in THIS school next school year?” assisted in identifying teachers who would be leavers or movers the following year. Results are listed in table D-1. As reported in the table, about 63 percent of the highly experienced teachers who were expected to leave really did leave. An additional 9 percent of highly experienced teachers moved to another school. Consequently, it does appear that this group of teachers behaved in a way consistent with the school’s expectations the previous year.

Of the less experienced teachers who were expected to leave, approximately 17 percent were leavers and 34 percent were movers. Therefore, while the expectation question was somewhat less effective for this group, it still did identify a substantial number of movers and leavers.

An additional issue with regard to the effectiveness of this question relates to the actual proportion of leavers that could be identified using this question. Pretest teachers were not weighted, so the actual proportion cannot be measured from table D-1. However, taking into account that highly experienced teachers not expected to leave were sampled at about 1-in-6 and that nearly all teachers expected to leave were sampled, it appears the question successfully identified about 25–30 percent of highly experienced leavers and about 30–35 percent of the less experienced leavers.

While this is not a high proportion and will not improve the reliability of leaver estimates in TFS dramatically, it will allow for a substantial increase in the size of the retiree sample in TFS, enabling the publication of data.

Table D-1. Current teaching status by previous year’s expectation of whether the teacher would leave and level of experience: 2005–06 SASS pretest and 2006–07 TFS pretest

Expected to leave and years of experience	Stayers		Movers		Leavers		Don’t know	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Expected to leave								
0–3 years	46	29.3	39	24.8	20	12.7	52	33.1
4–19 years	41	23.8	58	33.7	30	17.4	43	25.0
20 or more years	65	20.4	30	9.4	199	62.6	24	7.5
Not expected to leave or don’t know								
0–3 years	640	76.6	73	8.7	47	5.6	75	9.0
4–19 years	2,177	87.7	158	6.4	71	2.9	75	3.0
20 or more years	1,032	88.4	41	3.5	82	7.0	12	1.0

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation) and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) Pretest, 2006–07 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Recommendation

It is recommended that this item be retained on the 2007–08 SASS Teacher Listing Form. In addition, highly experienced teachers expected to leave should be oversampled at a very high rate for SASS and less experienced teachers expected to leave should be oversampled at a somewhat lower rate in accordance with the design goals of TFS.

Definition of Experience Categories

Teacher attrition rates from the 2003–04 SASS and the 2004–05 TFS data were analyzed to determine whether the highly experienced category (currently 20 or more years of experience) needed to be redefined. Tables D-2 and D-3 provide the number of public and private school teachers, respectively, who left the teaching profession (leavers), whose occupational status was unknown (don’t know), and who remained in the teaching field, at either the same school or a different school (stayers or movers). Figure D-1 charts the attrition rates for both public and private school teachers and addresses the question of how best to distinguish between teachers with a middle level of experience and a high level of experience. As the figure shows, attrition rates of public school teachers are lowest at around 20 years of experience and climb slowly until about 29 years of experience, when they increase sharply. Attrition rates reach 25 percent around 40 years of experience, at which point hardly any teachers are left in the teaching profession. The trend for private school teachers is less straightforward; attrition rates are generally higher until about 27 years of experience and then consistently lower.

The 2003–04 SASS and 2004–05 TFS data suggest that the optimum place to draw the line would appear to be at about 30 years of experience; at this point, however, a strong majority of teachers do not leave in any given year—no more than 15 percent. Experience alone does not appear to be an effective means for oversampling SASS teachers to obtain more retirees for TFS.

Given that experience alone is not effective, the question then becomes how best to use years of experience in combination with the expectation to leave question.

Although the SASS pretest teacher questionnaires collected data on the year when each teacher began teaching, which indicates the teacher’s years of experience, these data were not captured as part of the pretest. Consequently, data are not readily available to analyze the relationship between expectation to

leave and years of experience without an additional data capture operation. At this point, the available evidence does not indicate a need to modify the high level of experience category from 20 or more years of experience.

Table D-2. Public school teachers’ attrition rates by years of experience: 2003–04 SASS and 2004–05 TFS

Years of experience	Number of leavers	Number of “don’t know” ¹	Number of stayers or movers	Attrition rate ² (percent)
0	118	194	2,658	9.2
1	53	292	2,066	11.9
2	39	208	1,855	9.8
3	39	159	1,970	7.7
4	50	141	1,855	8.0
5	44	132	1,898	7.2
6	46	88	1,695	6.4
7	37	73	1,592	5.6
8	38	60	1,471	5.5
9	30	60	1,283	5.7
10	24	52	1,444	4.3
11	23	38	1,179	4.3
12	16	39	1,023	4.4
13	24	43	1,101	5.0
14	21	28	1,057	3.9
15	15	38	973	4.4
16	26	36	889	5.8
17	25	41	873	6.2
18	17	19	884	3.5
19	12	19	802	3.3
20	19	26	960	4.0
21	13	19	807	3.4
22	18	17	702	4.3
23	16	26	824	4.2
24	27	27	770	5.9
25	18	23	894	3.9
26	24	26	811	5.2
27	30	38	773	7.2
28	29	37	777	7.0
29	26	36	689	7.3
30	52	54	805	10.5
31	42	39	622	10.4
32	46	49	544	13.3
33	53	50	455	16.7
34	44	42	344	18.0

See notes at end of table.

Table D-2. Public school teachers' attrition rates by years of experience: 2003–04 SASS and 2004–05 TFS—Continued

Years of experience	Number of leavers	Number of “don't know” ¹	Number of stayers or movers	Attrition rate ² (percent)
35	43	34	252	21.3
36	26	24	172	20.4
37	12	17	115	17.8
38	8	11	83	16.5
39	7	7	60	17.0
40	7	8	32	28.5
41	7	4	28	26.2
42–43	4	3	26	19.4
44 or more	6	6	30	25.7

¹ It was assumed that 80 percent of the teachers whose status was not known by the school were leavers.

² Attrition refers to teachers who left the teaching profession.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2003–04 (previously unpublished tabulation) and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), 2004–05 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Table D-3. Private school teachers' attrition rates by years of experience: 2003–04 SASS and 2004–05 TFS

Years of experience	Number of leavers	Number of “don't know” ¹	Number of stayers or movers	Attrition rate ² (percent)
0	27	62	387	16.1
1	45	110	530	19.4
2	44	116	521	20.1
3	35	77	525	15.2
4	22	62	363	16.0
5	20	37	353	12.1
6	15	29	276	11.9
7	12	28	268	11.2
8	14	24	219	12.9
9	9	17	210	9.6
10	14	22	233	11.7
11	9	15	169	10.9
12	7	11	157	9.0
13	7	13	170	9.2
14	3	4	180	3.3
15	4	9	159	6.5
16	5	7	140	7.0
17	4	8	150	6.4
18	4	7	137	6.5
19	2	9	133	6.4

See notes at end of table.

Table D-4. Private school teachers' attrition rates by years of experience: 2003–04 SASS and 2004–05 TFS

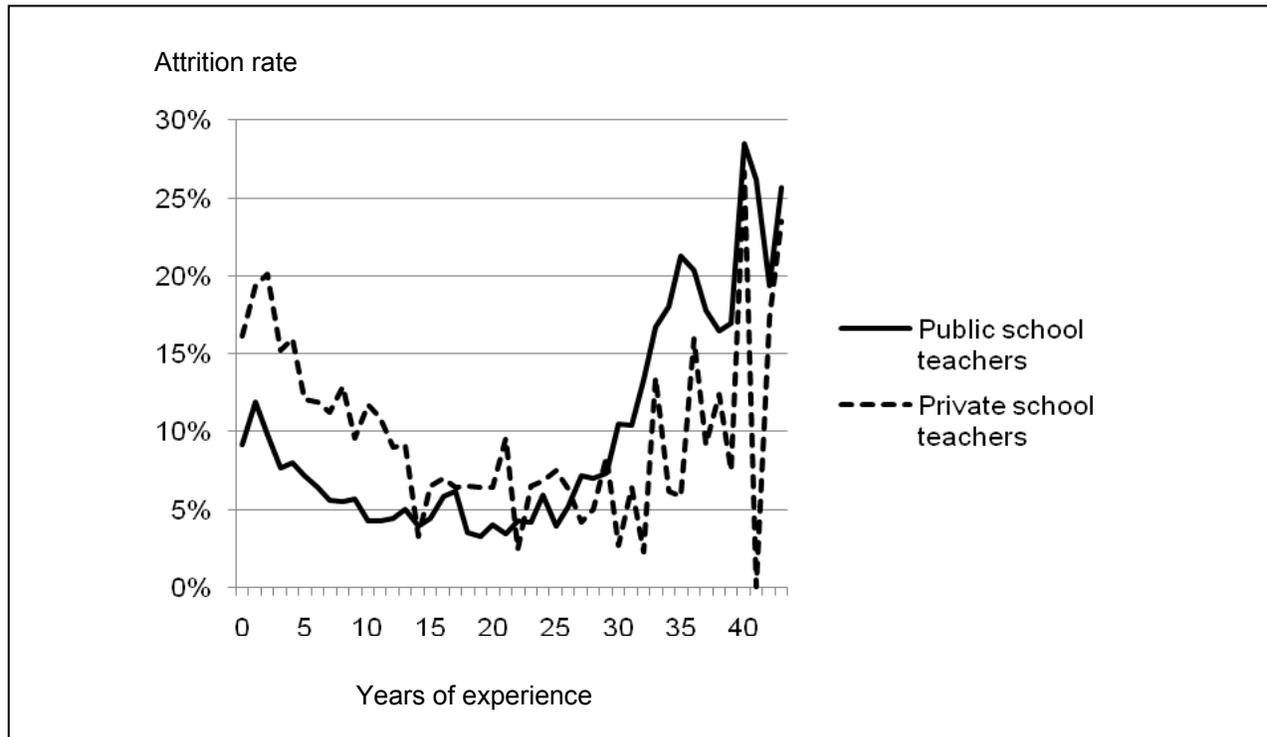
Years of experience	Number of leavers	Number of "don't know" ¹	Number of stayers or movers	Attrition rate ² (percent)
20	6	3	123	6.4
21	5	7	98	9.6
22	1	2	105	2.4
23	5	3	105	6.5
24	5	4	112	6.8
25	2	7	92	7.5
26	4	4	106	6.3
27	1	4	94	4.2
28	4	1	91	5.0
29	2	6	73	8.4
30	1	2	93	2.7
31	1	4	61	6.4
32	0	2	69	2.3
33	5	3	47	13.5
34	0	4	48	6.2
35	0	4	51	5.8
36	4	3	33	16.0
37	1	3	33	9.2
38	1	4	29	12.4
39	1	1	22	7.5
40	4	3	17	26.7
41	0	0	15	0.0
42–43	1	2	12	17.3
44 or more	7	3	30	23.5

¹ It was assumed that 80 percent of the teachers whose status was not known by the school were leavers.

² Attrition refers to teachers who left the teaching profession.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2003–04 (previously unpublished tabulation) and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), 2004–05 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Exhibit D-1. Teacher attrition rates, by years of experience and school type: 2003–04 SASS and 2004–05 TFS



SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2003–04 (previously unpublished tabulation) and U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), 2004–05 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Recommendation

From this analysis, it is recommended that the experience categories from the 2005–06 SASS Pretest Teacher Listing Form remain the same for the 2007–08 SASS Teacher Listing Form. That is, use the following categories: 3 years or less, 4 to 19 years, and 20 or more years.

Revised Occupational Status Codes

The pretest data was analyzed to determine whether revising the occupational status codes on the TFS-1(X) reduced the number of teachers classified as “status unknown” or “don’t know.” From the pretest, had there been no oversampling, it appears that about 283 teachers would have been classified as stayers and 261 would have been classified as unknown. While this seems to be a rather high number of unknowns, in the 2004–05 TFS there were 1,637 leavers and 3,129 unknowns. This is a much higher proportion, so it does appear that changing the categories and rewording the unknown category from “Left the school—no other information given” to “Left the school—occupational status unknown” was very effective in reducing the size of the “unknown” category.

Recommendation

Based on this information, it is recommended that the revised occupational code status be utilized for the Teacher Follow-up Survey that will be conducted after the 2007–08 SASS.

Appendix E. Quality of Address Corrections From FirstData for Schools in the 2005–06 SASS Pretest

This appendix contains a report prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. Its contents are listed below.

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Evaluating Quality of Address Corrections for Sampled Schools.....	E-2
Evaluating Quality of Address Corrections for Dummy Schools	E-3
Summary	E-4
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Introduction

This report discusses the evaluation of the quality of the address corrections provided by FirstData.¹ Names and addresses for the SASS 2005–06 pretest sample along with 50 dummy cases were sent to FirstData by the Demographic Surveys Division (DSD) of the U.S. Census Bureau. FirstData then provided address corrections to DSD. DSD passed these corrections along to the Demographic Statistical Methods Division (DSMD) of the U.S. Census Bureau for a quality evaluation.

DSMD added 50 dummy schools to the file sent to FirstData. The dummy cases were real schools with altered addresses, but the names of the schools were not changed. Altered addresses usually consisted of changing the address number or street name. Occasionally the city or ZIP Code was altered slightly.

A vast majority of the altered addresses were very similar to the correct address for the school and reflected simple keying mistakes. For example, the school's real address might have been 4202 Main Street, while the altered address for the dummy case was 422 Main Street.

Address Corrections Received From FirstData

For one of the dummy cases, DSD provided FirstData with the name of the school for both the name field and the address number/street name field. For example, instead of providing County Private, 112 Main Blvd, Any Town, ID 99997, the information was County Private, County Private, Any Town, ID 99997. FirstData returned the school to DSD without an address correction for this case. This case was treated as missing and is not included in the summary descriptive statistics presented in this report.

For the 1,100 sampled schools, FirstData returned 197 address corrections (excluding the missing case). In many of the cases, FirstData returned multiple addresses. The file from FirstData contained a range of two to ten possible address corrections for each school that required an address correction.

Evaluating Quality of Address Corrections for Sampled Schools

Methods

Two different evaluations were made for each sampled school case. First, it was determined whether FirstData returned an address correction that was different from the address DSD originally submitted.

There were several cases in which it was determined that FirstData reported an address correction that did not qualitatively differ from the address originally submitted to them. For example, DSD originally submitted "101 S HWY" for an address and FirstData returned "101 South Highway" as an address correction. Another situation in which it was determined that the address correction did not qualitatively differ from the address originally submitted was when FirstData returned exactly the same address information (address number, street, city, state, and ZIP Code) but had added the name of a department or office within the sampled school.

Second, the number of address corrections FirstData provided for each case was also determined in order to evaluate the quality of the address corrections FirstData provided. More information regarding the number of corrections is discussed in the Results section below.

¹ FirstData, also known as FastData, is an integrated information service that provides companies access to data records to authenticate, verify, locate, and identify individuals or businesses.

Results

In 65 of 197 address corrections (33 percent), FirstData did not return the same address that was originally submitted to them. However, for 132 of 197 address corrections (67 percent), FirstData returned the same address originally submitted for at least one of the address corrections provided for that case.

The number of address corrections FirstData provided for each case is included in the table below. Among the 197 address corrections provided by FirstData, no cases had only one possible address correction.

Table E-1. Number and percentage of sampled schools, by the number of address corrections provided by FirstData: 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey Pretest

Number of address corrections provided by FirstData	Number of sampled schools (<i>N</i> = 197)	Percent of sampled schools
1	0	†
2	77	39
3	36	18
4	21	11
5	15	8
6	9	5
7	4	2
8	6	3
9	6	3
10	23	12

† Not applicable.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) Pretest, Quality of Address Corrections From FirstData, 2005–06 (previously unpublished tabulation).

Evaluating Quality of Address Corrections for Dummy Schools

Methods

The Demographic Statistical Methods Division (DSMD) evaluated the dummy cases to determine if FirstData had accurately corrected an incorrect address. In cases where FirstData provided multiple address corrections, if at least one of the possible address corrections was indeed correct, then that case was counted as being accurately corrected.

Results

In 17 of the 50 dummy cases (34 percent), FirstData returned the correct address in at least one of the possible address correction fields. However, in 33 of the 50 dummy cases (66 percent), FirstData either provided no address or an incorrect address.

The Demographic Statistical Methods Division (DSMD) also examined what types of things were returned as possible address corrections. Listed below are examples of returned corrections for the dummy cases when multiple possible address corrections were listed:

- hotels;
- auto parts stores;

- community swimming pools;
- car stores;
- electric businesses;
- hardware stores;
- Pentecostal church (not affiliated with the school);
- town post office;
- town visitor center;
- family practices;
- individual doctor’s names (e.g., Dr. John Doe when asked for Doe Elementary);
- individual people’s names;
- similarly named Head Start programs with the incorrect address for the school;
- multiple other schools listed (but not the school sought); and
- multiple times the school name appeared but no address was ever provided—each entry stated “Address Not Available.”

Summary

The quality of FirstData’s address corrections for the sampled schools in the SASS pretest was substandard for DSD and DSMD requirements. In all 197 cases FirstData provided two to ten possible address corrections. If these address corrections were to be utilized, it would require additional time to investigate the file case by case to determine which address correction, if any, should be applied.

In only 33 percent of the cases did FirstData return information that differed from what was originally submitted to them. Subsequently, for the majority (67 percent) of the cases, a careful review of the data revealed that FirstData submitted the same address for at least one of the address corrections.

The quality of FirstData’s address corrections for the dummy schools (i.e., real school name submitted with an incorrect address) in the SASS pretest was also poor. FirstData was only able to provide correct address information for 34 percent of the dummy schools; often the correct address was listed among other possible corrected addresses for the dummy school. Carefully examining the possible address corrections that were provided for the dummy schools revealed that frequently things other than schools were listed.

In the opinion of DSMD, getting the initial mailout to schools with the addresses on the sample file was never a large issue that caused concern. It is believed that in many cases if the city and state were accurate, then the post office delivered the package to the school even if the street address portion was inaccurate or incomplete. Unfortunately, there are no quantitative data to determine how many initial SASS mailouts come back as undeliverable as addressed. In the 2003–04 SASS the methodology was different from the 2005–06 pretest in that a field representative visited sampled schools. The 1999–2000 SASS was a mail-based survey similar to the 2005–06 SASS pretest; however, separate check-in codes to indicate packages that were undeliverable as addressed were not used.

Recommendations

Due to the poor performance of FirstData in the quality of the address corrections provided, the large amount of time it would take to determine which address correction from FirstData should be utilized, and the likelihood that in most cases the postal service will locate the school using its name and city, it is not recommended that FirstData be used to assist with address corrections for SASS or other education surveys where similar methodology is used to create the sampling frame.

Appendix F. Focus Group Findings and Recommendations: Collection of Teacher Compensation Data Through SASS

This appendix contains a report prepared by ORC Macro. Its contents are listed below.

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Attachment F-3: Moderator’s Guide for Focus Group with District Personnel (Session 1)	F-14
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Background

In January 2006, the U.S. Census Bureau contracted with ORC Macro to conduct two telephone focus groups with school district administrative personnel, as well as one with teachers. The purpose of these focus groups was to examine potential ways that information about teacher salaries and benefits could be collected through the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). In past administrations of SASS, teacher respondents were asked to provide their annual salary. However, the U.S. Census Bureau has become interested in getting more specific information about teachers' salaries and benefits through their school districts. In particular, some of the topics that the U.S. Census Bureau was interested in learning more about were whether districts had policies regarding the release of this information, what types of information they would be able to provide, and what information teachers would be willing to have released through the survey.

The specific tasks performed by ORC Macro included the following:

- working in collaboration with the U.S. Census Bureau in the development of participant screeners for all three groups;
- working in collaboration with the U.S. Census Bureau in the development of focus group moderators' guides for all three groups;
- conducting three 60-minute focus groups by telephone, including
 - two groups with administrative personnel from school districts across the country; and
 - one group with elementary, middle, and high school teachers from districts across the country;
- recruiting participants for all groups;
- moderating all groups;
- paying incentives to all participants—\$100 for district personnel and \$50 for teachers; and
- providing findings and recommendations both in this top-line report and in an oral presentation.

Recruitment of Participants

The decision was made to hold these groups over the telephone in order to allow for inclusion of participants from across the country. Because district policies range widely, it was agreed that it would be important to recruit participants from a wider geographic area than would have been possible in a traditional focus group.

Participants for the two groups with district personnel were recruited by telephone. The U.S. Census Bureau provided ORC Macro with a list of phone numbers for 500 districts, taking care to include districts from a range of states, sizes, and locales. This information was taken directly from the National Center for Education Statistics' Common Core of Data.

Following discussions between the U.S. Census Bureau and the ORC Macro project manager, a telephone screening instrument was developed. Because two different sets of questions were developed for district personnel, this instrument (provided as attachment F-1) allowed for the recruitment of two slightly different groups. The primary screening question for Session 1 was, "If the U.S. Census Bureau were to request information from your district about the salaries and benefits of specific teachers, are you the person in your district who would decide what salary and benefit information could be provided?" District staff members who answered "Yes" to this question were considered eligible for inclusion in focus group Session 1. The screening question for Session 2 was, "If specific information about the salary and benefits of an individual teacher were needed, are you the person in your district who has the best knowledge of what information would be available and how that information could be found?" This distinction ensured

that participants in both sessions would be appropriate for the questions being asked; questions in Session 1 addressed whether districts would be willing to provide teacher compensation information, while Session 2 focused instead on the availability of information.

Participants for the teacher focus groups were recruited by e-mail rather than telephone; the message that was sent out is provided as attachment 2. Through an outside vendor, ORC Macro obtained e-mail addresses for a sample of teachers from different school levels and different states. An e-mail message was then sent to these teachers, describing the group and asking those who were interested in participating to call a 1-800 number.

Thirteen participants were recruited for each of the three groups. School district personnel were provided with a \$100 stipend for participation, while teachers received \$50.

Composition of Focus Groups

District Personnel Session 1 was held on Wednesday, January 11, from 6:30 to 7:30 P.M. EST. Eight people participated in the call, including one superintendent, one assistant superintendent, an administrative assistant in a superintendent's office, an operations director, and several people who worked in payroll offices. Session 2 was held on the same day, from 8:00 to 9:00 P.M. EST. The ten participants included a superintendent, two directors of human resources, a director of a payroll department, and several others who worked in the business or payroll offices of their districts.

In all, participants in the two district personnel groups represented 15 different states. The enrollment of their districts ranged from 152 students to 160,223 students.

Eleven teachers participated in a focus group held on Thursday, January 12, from 7:00 to 8:00 P.M. EST. These participants worked in elementary, middle, and high schools from nine different states. Their years of teaching experience ranged from 2 to 30 years.

There did not appear to be recognizable patterns in participant responses from any of the groups based on participant position, state, or district size.

Moderator Guides for Focus Groups

Once general research questions for the project had been established, the ORC Macro Project Manager worked with staff from the U.S. Census Bureau and National Center for Education Statistics to develop detailed moderator's guides for each session. The guides are provided as attachments 3, 4, and 5 to this report.

Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative Research

Focus groups are a qualitative method useful for gaining individual perceptions and ideas that are difficult to obtain through quantitative research. Focus groups generate discussion that can lead to the expression of ideas and opinions that might not be expressed using other research methods. The selection of focus group participants is not based upon randomization or other population-representative methods. Focus groups are not intended to provide quantifiable data, nor can data from focus groups be statistically generalized to the entire population. The findings only reflect the ideas and beliefs of the focus group participants.

Summary of Findings

General Comments From District Personnel and Teacher Groups

District Personnel: Willingness to Release Information

- Over half of the participants in the district personnel groups indicated that because teachers are public employees, their salaries and benefits are public information in their state. A few participants said that while salary steps are public information, the salaries of individual teachers are not. Other participants seemed unsure as to whether this was public information or not.
- Among those district personnel indicating that individual teacher salaries were public information, most said that they would be willing to provide this information if asked to as part of SASS. However, two said that although they were required to release the information, they would not do it easily—they would “make people work” for it. One, for example, said that he did not respond to most mail requests and usually required a face-to-face visit before he provided information about specific teachers.
- One superintendent in California indicated that before he provided any of this information he would first bring the request to his county council.
- Some district personnel questioned why the U.S. Census Bureau needed to collect teacher compensation data since it was already reported annually to other state or federal agencies. A few suggested that the U.S. Census Bureau would be better served to collect information from those agencies, rather than going back to individual districts.
- Some respondents said that if they received this request they would want to know why the information is needed, and what is going to be done with it. If this were made clear, they said, they would be more likely to complete the survey.
- When asked whether they would be more likely to respond to a request from the U.S. Census Bureau or from the Department of Education, most participants indicated that they would respond more quickly if the request came from the Department of Education.
- One participant in the district groups seemed to assume that because the Department of Education was involved in the survey, participation in the survey (and, possibly, the responses that were provided) would impact federal funding.

Need for Teacher Consent

- Three of the eight participants in district personnel Session 1 said that because teacher compensation information was public, there was no need for teacher consent. One said that she would first want to know that teachers had been told that this information would be requested from the district. The remaining four participants said that if they received this request they would contact the teacher themselves to verify that they had provided permission.
- Most teachers said that they would want to be notified in advance as a matter of courtesy, but some others felt that even this was not necessary because teacher compensation information is public. None indicated that active consent (e.g., a teacher signature) would be necessary.

Mechanics of Completing the Form

- Several district personnel indicated that while they would not have an ethical problem releasing teacher compensation information, they might not complete the survey simply because of the time it would take.
- Most participants agreed that they would be most likely to complete the form if it came to them in October, for two reasons. First, they are usually asked to submit this information to the state at the beginning of the year, so the data would be readily available. Second, they said that October tends to be a time in the year when they are less busy with other things.
- When asked whether there were times in the spring that might also work well, participants were split. Half preferred January or February, because by March district business personnel are busy preparing for the following year. The other half indicated that they would have more time to complete the survey later in the year, in March or April. One district representative from California pointed out that the U.S. Census Bureau might receive a more accurate representation of teacher salaries later in the year, because current year teacher contracts are not negotiated until the early spring.
- About half of the district representatives indicated that if given the choice between printing out information for the U.S. Census Bureau and completing a separate form by hand, they would prefer to print the information. The others said that because salary and benefit information were contained in different databases, it would be easier for them to complete the form by hand.
- Participants in the second session discussed the specific types of salary and benefit information that the U.S. Census Bureau is considering collecting. After going through this list, these participants agreed that a single person would have ready access to all of the information needed to complete this form. They also indicated that the survey would be best completed by someone in their payroll department.

Calculating Indirect Costs for Teachers

- Two of 10 participants in the second session with district personnel indicated that their districts have standard percentages that they use to estimate the total cost of teacher benefits to the district. One indicated that his district calls this percentage the “benefits added percentage.” The remaining eight participants said that they do not have a need for a simplified percentage like this, because it is simple for them to calculate actual benefit costs for teachers.

General Comments by Teachers

- When initially asked how they would feel if the U.S. Census Bureau asked their district for information about salary or benefits, almost all participants saw no problem with such a request. Several mentioned that this information was public in their state. Only one participant indicated that she would be uncomfortable if her district was giving out information about her. She did not have specific concerns about what would be done with that data, but worried in general about the pervasiveness of sharing of personal information “these days.”
- Teachers were very interested in how the information that is collected through SASS would be used. Several were eager to provide compensation information because they believed that public awareness of these data would lead to increased teacher salaries.

- In addition to indicating that they would not object if their districts shared various types of salary and benefit information (see next section for full list of types of information), all teachers said that they could provide this information themselves if asked to on a form. However, it was unclear whether these participants fully understood what information would be requested, and that some of these data (e.g., district contributions to disability insurance) might not appear on their pay stubs.

Processes for Dismissal of Underperforming Teachers

- District personnel in the first session were asked to describe the processes in their district through which underperforming teachers could be dismissed. The process was similar in all districts. Teachers who receive less-than-satisfactory evaluations are put into a mentoring or peer assistance program, which lasts either 1 or 2 years. At the end of that program, if the teacher's evaluations have not improved, then districts can make a recommendation to their Board of Education that the teacher be dismissed. This process is somewhat shorter for non-tenured teachers, who are not given as long a period of time to improve.
- Several representatives noted in most cases teachers who are going to be dismissed choose instead to resign or retire early. They pointed out that if the U.S. Census Bureau intends to measure the number of teachers who leave a district due to poor performance, these possibilities must be considered in the survey item wording.

Comments Regarding Specific Types of Salary and Benefit Information

NOTE: Other than the one teacher who was resistant to the release of any personal information, participants in the teacher group were generally willing to have their districts share all types of salary and benefit information. Any concerns from teachers are noted below; if comments from the teacher group are not mentioned in a particular section, then teachers were comfortable with the release of this information.

Teacher Salary and Additional Categories of Pay

- School district personnel indicated that they would have no difficulty accessing or providing information on teachers' salaries.
- There was disagreement among district personnel in how they would interpret a request for a teacher's salary. Some interpreted the phrase "base salary" not to include additional stipends for advanced degrees, or for teacher experience. These participants suggested that the phrase "contractual salary" might be clearer to respondents. However, others noted that in their districts payments for activities like coaching are included in teacher contracts. Therefore, if they were asked to provide a teacher's "contractual salary" they would include these additional stipends.
- Teachers felt that "base salary" is fairly clear, although one was unsure about whether a stipend for classroom materials would be included in that figure. The group agreed that the phrases "salary as per salary schedule" or "base salary on the salary schedule" would be clearer.
- Some district personnel indicated that information about stipends that teachers earned for other responsibilities throughout the school year was not in the same database as other salary and benefit information. However, all said that it would be easy to access and provide these data on a survey form.

- When asked for examples of responsibilities for which teachers might receive extra pay, teachers brainstormed the following:
 - acting as a department chair;
 - coaching;
 - tutoring;
 - acting as a faculty advisor for clubs;
 - teaching after-school programs;
 - participating in intervention programs (working with students who have not met standards);
 - teaching writing workshops;
 - mentoring new teachers;
 - teaching Saturday school;
 - teaching summer school or “intersession school” (at 12-month schools); and
 - directing musicals or other performances.They also suggested that teachers might receive stipends for classroom materials, travel vouchers (e.g., train passes), or reimbursement for unused sick days.

- Most district personnel said that, if asked, they could provide data on payments that teachers received from the district for summer activities. Some, however, brought up potential problems. A superintendent from Idaho, for example, said that for some activities teachers receive additional payments from organizations other than the district. Another said that in other cases teachers are sometimes paid by the state rather than the district. In both cases, district personnel warned that they would not be able to provide accurate information on how much pay teachers received from these other sources.

- Teachers did not have a problem with their districts releasing information about pay that they received for additional responsibilities throughout the year. However, they felt that it was important for this pay to be connected to an accurate measure of how much time teachers spent on these activities. Some went so far as to comment that they did not believe that the district could accurately provide this information, because they did not know how much time teachers spent outside of school. The concern from teachers seemed to be that these data would be misinterpreted to show that teachers actually make more money (i.e., per hour) than they really do.

Worker’s Compensation Insurance

- About two-thirds of district personnel said that their records already break down the cost of worker’s compensation insurance by individual teacher, and that it would be easy to provide these data on a survey form. The remainder indicated that their district pays this insurance as an aggregated amount for all teachers and does not break the information down by teacher. They said that it would be possible to derive an individual figure if asked, but that it would require some calculations and would take more time than the other items on this list.

Vacation, Sick, and Personal Leave

- All district personnel said that this information would be easy to provide. Districts had different categorization systems for these leave days. For example, in some cases “family medical leave” was broken out, while in others it was encompassed under “personal days.” Two districts provided something called “annual leave,” which was based on teachers’ levels of experience. One participant said that he would have difficulty breaking teacher leave days into different categories because his district provides teachers with a lump sum of days each year.

Paid Holidays

- The category of “paid holidays” as a benefit was interpreted in various ways by district personnel, and did not seem to have a clear meaning in the context of teachers. For example, one district representative said that teachers are not paid for holidays, another said that teachers were paid for all holidays, and a third indicated that teachers are paid for three holidays a year—yet it was unclear what those differences meant in reality. In general, most said that teachers are paid for a certain number of days worked, and those days worked do not include holidays.

Life Insurance

- In cases where the district and teacher contributions to life insurance costs were constant among all teachers, district personnel indicated that they would be able to easily provide both the district and teacher components of the costs of life insurance.
- In some districts teachers had the option to purchase additional life insurance. In several of these cases school district personnel expressed reluctance to provide information concerning additional teacher contributions, because doing so would reveal teachers’ decisions regarding life insurance. One participant said that his district would not have access to information about whether or not teachers purchased supplemental insurance.
- One participant also said that while her district did not contribute to life insurance policies for teachers, it provided an “avenue” through which teachers could purchase insurance. Because this was a personal choice by the teachers she did not feel that it was appropriate to share this information through a survey (although, she said, she did have access to that data).
- Several teachers had the same concern as district personnel and indicated that they would be uncomfortable sharing the amount that they personally contributed to life insurance policies, since in their districts this decision indicated the amount of insurance that they were purchasing.

Health Insurance

- Most district personnel indicated that their district pays for 100 percent of teachers’ health insurance, but that teachers have the option to add family members for additional money. Several participants indicated that because providing information about teacher contributions would therefore indicate their health insurance decisions, they would be reluctant to share these data.
- In one district where there was a required contribution by teachers, the representative said that she would not have a problem providing that data.
- All participants said that aside from issues of privacy, they could easily provide information on both district and teacher contributions to health insurance.

Long- and Short-Term Disability Insurance

- Some districts indicated that they did not provide one or both of these types of insurance for teachers; those that did said that providing information on district contributions would not be a problem.

- As with other types of insurance, in districts where teachers were given a choice as to what level of insurance to buy, some district personnel said that for reasons of privacy they would be reluctant to provide data on teacher contributions.

Social Security and Medicare

- School district personnel said that providing this information would be easy, and that annual data could be provided.

State and Federal Unemployment Insurance

- All district personnel agreed that it would be easy to provide the cost to the district of these types of insurance. However, some noted that in their districts these costs are paid by the state. One participant expressed concern that for this reason focusing solely on district costs could lead to “skewed information.”

Pension and Retirement Plans

- Most school district personnel indicated that they would be able to provide both the district and teacher portions of this cost. However, in districts where teachers can choose how much to contribute, participants worried that providing information about the teacher contribution would be a breach of privacy.
- Some participants recommended that the item wording should be plural, since some districts offer several different types of plans. One also noted that in his case both the state and district offer plans to teachers and that teachers can participate in both.
- Teachers echoed the sentiments of district personnel; those who can choose how much to contribute to retirement plans were unwilling to share this information with the U.S. Census Bureau and did not feel that it was relevant data to collect.

Recommendations

- Include a statement with the SASS teacher form to notify participating teachers that the U.S. Department of Education will be collecting information from their school district about the salaries and benefits that they receive. Emphasize that this information will be important for future research on how teachers are compensated in America and that the data will be held strictly anonymous.
- In the letter that is sent to school districts requesting compensation data from teachers, be sure to include
 - a description of how the data will be used and why it is important;
 - why the data that they are being asked to provide is different from what they send to other state and federal organizations each year; and
 - that participating teachers have already been notified that these data are being collected and have been given an opportunity to withdraw if they object.
- In the letter to districts, also include a sentence that prompts them to send the survey to their payroll department. Since focus group participants indicated that these staff would be most able to provide the information being requested, this might increase response rates for the survey.

- When asking districts to provide teachers' base salaries, be sure to explain exactly what is meant by that phrase. Note that you are asking for the salary listed on the teacher salary schedule, and that this figure should include stipends for teacher experience and advanced degrees, but not stipends for additional responsibilities or for National Board Certification. Before this survey item is used in the field, be sure to test the wording to make sure that it is clear.
- Do not ask district personnel for information about "paid holidays," because any such item is unlikely to provide meaningful data. An alternative would be to ask how many days teachers are contractually required to work during the school year, which is a piece of information that could be easily provided.
- Do not ask teachers for detailed information about their benefits, particularly regarding the annual costs of these benefits to their districts. Although teacher participants said during the session that they could accurately provide this information, it is likely that some did not fully understand what was being asked.
- Use caution in asking districts to provide information about teacher contributions to benefits, especially when teachers have a choice about how much to spend (e.g., contributing to retirement plans or purchasing supplemental insurance). Some respondents might be reluctant to provide this information because they might feel that to do so would violate teacher privacy.
- Keep in mind that some of the costs of teacher employment (e.g., pension plans, unemployment insurance) may be borne in part at the state level, and therefore would not be captured through a district SASS form.
- Before items regarding teacher compensation are added to the SASS, the specific wording of these items should be tested through individual cognitive interviews to ensure that the items are being interpreted consistently by respondents.

Attachment F-1: Recruitment Screener for District Personnel

Participant Screener for U.S. Census Bureau Telephone Focus Groups with District Personnel

January 2006

Recruiting Specifications

- Two telephone focus groups will take place on January 11th: 6:30 to 7:30 and 8:00 to 9:00 (all times EST).
- Participant eligibility for the two groups is determined by Questions 1 and 2 in the screener below.
- There should be 13 recruits per group, with expectation of 9 to 11 participants.
- Each group should have participants from at least 8 different states.
- Each group should have participants from at least 4 different locale codes (in recruit spreadsheet).
- Participants will receive \$100 for participating.

Participant Screener for Telephone Focus Groups

Opening Script:

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of the United States Census Bureau. I was trying to get in touch with someone in your school district who could provide me with information about teacher salaries and benefits. Could you tell me who the appropriate person to talk to would be?

If respondent indicates that they are not part of a public school district, then thank them politely and end call.

If they indicate that they do not know who would have that information: Could you please direct me to your Director of Personnel or your Director of Human Resources?

Screening Questions

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of the United States Census Bureau. The U.S. Census Bureau will be holding a series of telephone focus groups next week, and we are currently recruiting participants from school districts across the country.

Q1. If the U.S. Census Bureau were to request information from your district about the salaries and benefits of specific teachers, are you the person in your district who would decide what salary and benefit information could be provided?

No → Say, "Who in your district would make that decision?" Get that information for future calls, and then proceed to Q2.

Yes → *Invite to Focus Group Session #1*

Q2. If specific information about the salary and benefits of an individual teacher were needed, are you the person in your district who has the best knowledge of what information would be available and how that information could be found?

No → Say, "Who in your district would have the best knowledge of that information?" Get that information for future calls, then thank respondent and end call.

Yes → *Invite to Focus Group Session #2*

Invitation Script (if answer to Q1 or Q2 is “Yes”):

In that case, you qualify to participate in our telephone focus groups. The session will be an hour long, and participants will receive a \$100 stipend. The session will be held on January 11th; from [Session 1: 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. EST/Session 2: 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. EST].

The U.S. Census Bureau is holding these calls in order to learn more about how data about teacher compensation can best be collected from school districts across the country. The feedback that you provide will be directly used in the development of future U.S. Census Bureau educational surveys, such as the Schools and Staffing Survey.

The focus groups will take place just like a normal conference call; you will be on the line with 8 to 10 other people in your position from across the country, along with a moderator. You can call into the session from any phone at home or at work, although we ask that you do not use a cell phone to call in.

Q3. Would you be interested in participating in our telephone focus group?

No → *Record reason (not interested, not available on that date, etc.) and thank them for their time.*

Yes → *Continue*

Information to be collected from all participants:

Name: _____

Session #: _____

School district: _____

Locale code (from recruit list): _____

State: _____

Position title: _____

Department or division: _____

Mailing address (for stipend): _____

Daytime telephone number: _____

Telephone number from which they will be calling in (if known): _____

I would like to e-mail you a confirmation letter that contains some more details about the focus groups and what you should expect. Could you please give me an e-mail address where I could send this confirmation? _____

Tell participants: If for some reason you will not be able to participate, please call Anthony Rodell at 301-572-0557 as soon as you know.

Attachment F-2: Recruitment E-mail for Teachers

U.S. Census Bureau Project: Recruitment Message for Teachers January 2006

Subject Line: U.S. Census Bureau Needs Teachers' Help

Text of Message: The United States Census Bureau will be holding a telephone focus group on Thursday, January 12th, from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Eastern Standard Time. All participants will receive \$50 from the U.S. Census Bureau in appreciation for their help. Our goal in holding this group is to learn more about teacher compensation across the country. We will use what we learn in the development of instruments such as the Schools and Staffing Survey, a national survey that we administer in schools every 4 years.

If you are currently an elementary, middle, or high school teacher in a public school, then you are eligible to participate in this focus group. Participants will call into a central line at 7:00 p.m. (EST) on January 12th and take part in a moderated discussion involving 10 to 12 teachers from across the country. You can call in to the session from any phone at home or at work, although we ask that you do not use a cell phone.

If you are interested in participating, or have any questions about this opportunity, please call 1-866-481-2980.

Thank you in advance for your help!

Focus Group Coordinator

Attachment F-3: Moderator’s Guide for Focus Group with District Personnel (Session 1)

U.S. Census Bureau

Focus Group Moderator’s Guide: District Personnel (Session 1)

January 11, 2006

I. Welcome/Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome and thank you all very much for agreeing to participate in this focus group. I’ll start out by introducing myself: my name is Michael Long and I work for a research company called ORC Macro, which is located near Washington, D.C.

Our discussion is going to focus on a survey carried out by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education: the Schools and Staffing Survey, or SASS. The SASS is a set of surveys that the U.S. Census Bureau administers to schools, districts, library media centers, principals, and teachers every four years. The last administration was during the 2003–04 school year, and the next will be in 2007–08. The SASS is given to both public and private schools across the country, and its purpose is to measure critical aspects of schools and teaching, the composition of the principal and teacher work force, and conditions in schools.

In the past, the SASS instrument that teachers complete has asked them to provide their annual salaries. However, for the 2007–08 version of the survey there is interest at the national level at getting more detailed information from these teachers’ school districts about their specific salaries and benefits. This focus group is part of an effort to learn more about under what circumstances this information could be collected and what types of data could be provided on a written form.

Our discussion today will focus on ways in which the U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Education could collect salary and benefit information from districts regarding individual teachers, and factors that would make districts more likely to respond to their requests.

Before we begin, does anyone have any questions about the topics that we’re going to discuss?

Ground Rules

- A. You have been asked here to offer your views and opinions; participation from everyone is important.
- B. Audio taping the session.
- C. Speak loudly, and one at a time.
- D. Please identify yourself by name when you speak.
- E. Staff members from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education are listening to this conversation, but they will not be participating.
- F. All answers are confidential, so feel free to speak your mind.
- G. We’ll be talking about the Schools and Staffing Survey, which will be administered next during the 2007–08 school year. However, by participating in this phone call you are not committing yourself or your district to participate in that survey—or to provide any of the data we are discussing.

I’d like to begin by letting everyone know who else is participating in this call. *[Read list of names, with positions and states.]*

II. Request for Information (15 minutes)

I believe that all of you were sent a sample letter by e-mail; I hope that you have had a chance to look over it. I'll give you a minute to look over it now, in case you haven't yet been able to. [Wait one minute.] Imagine that your district received this letter from the U.S. Census Bureau, and that it was accompanied by a questionnaire that asked for detailed information on the salaries and benefits of several teachers in your district who were identified by name.

1. If this letter arrived at your district would it eventually come to you, or would someone else in your district be likely to respond to the letter before you saw it?
 - If someone else from your district would respond, who would that be?
2. If you did receive this letter, how would you respond?
 - Would your district provide the information that is being requested?
 - Would you ignore it?
 - Would you ask for more information regarding the survey? If so, what information would you be looking for?
3. If you received this letter at your school, what questions would you have about what the U.S. Census Bureau is asking you to do?
4. Is there anything that could be changed about this letter that would make you more willing to provide the salary information that is being requested?

III. Policies Regarding Sharing of Teacher Compensation Data (20 minutes)

5. Have you received any requests similar to this from outside organizations or government agencies in the past?
6. Are there any established policies in your district that apply to the release of individual compensation data?
7. In order to provide teacher salary and benefits information, would you require the consent of the teachers involved?
 - If so, what form would this permission have to take?
 - One possibility is that the U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Education could inform teachers that their information is being requested by the district and provide them with a phone number that they could call if they did not want this to happen. Would this constitute satisfactory consent?

IV. Completion of the Form (5 minutes)

8. If you did decide that this information could be provided, would you actually complete the form, or would you have someone else do it?
 - If someone else would complete it, who?
9. *For large districts:* If you were asked for salary and benefit information for 15 teachers, would you be willing to provide the info on our actual questionnaire form, or would you want to produce a printout and send it to us?

V. Teacher Dismissals (5 minutes)

At this point I'd like to move away from discussing the SASS, and ask instead about another topic that the U.S. Census Bureau is interested in learning more about.

10. Please describe the general process that is in place in your district to dismiss teachers that are not meeting expectations. Note: We are not interested as much in the specific details of your district's procedures, as much as the general steps that are involved.
 - How does this process differ between tenured and non-tenured teachers?

VI. False Close (10 minutes)

At this point, the moderator will switch over and talk with the "observers" from the U.S. Census Bureau and ED, who can suggest additional follow-up questions for the participants. The participants will not be able to hear what is said at this point in the session. The moderator will then return to the participants and ask these follow-up questions.

Attachment F-4: Moderator's Guide for Focus Group with District Personnel (Session 2)

U.S. Census Bureau

Focus Group Moderator's Guide: District Personnel (Session 2)

January 11, 2006

I. Welcome/Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome and thank you all very much for agreeing to participate in this focus group. I'll start out by introducing myself: my name is Michael Long and I work for a research company called ORC Macro, which is located near Washington, D.C.

Our discussion is going to focus on a survey carried out by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education: the Schools and Staffing Survey, or SASS. The SASS is a set of surveys that the U.S. Census Bureau administers to schools, districts, library media centers, principals, and teachers every four years. The last administration was during the 2003–04 school year, and the next will be in 2007–08. The SASS is given to both public and private schools across the country, and its purpose is to measure critical aspects of schools and teaching, the composition of the principal and teacher work force, and conditions in schools.

In the past, the SASS instrument that teachers complete has asked them to provide their annual salaries. However, for the 2007–08 version of the survey there is interest at the national level at getting more detailed information from these teachers' school districts about their specific salaries and benefits. This focus group is part of an effort to learn more about under what circumstances this information could be collected and what types of data could be provided on a written form.

Our discussion today will focus on what types of information districts would be able to provide about teacher salaries and benefits, and from what sources these data would come.

Before we begin, I want to make one additional point. The U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Education are aware that teacher compensation data is private, and districts might be reluctant to share some of this information because of confidentiality issues. However, for the purpose of this discussion, we will be assuming that districts have already made the decision to share data through this survey. We will be discussing the next step—what data is actually available to be provided.

Before we begin, does anyone have any questions about the topics that we're going to discuss?

Ground Rules

- A. You have been asked here to offer your views and opinions; participation from everyone is important.
- B. Audio taping the session.
- C. Speak loudly, and one at a time.
- D. Please identify yourself by name when you speak.
- E. Staff members from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education are listening to this conversation, but they will not be participating.
- F. All answers are confidential, so feel free to speak your mind.
- G. We'll be talking about the Schools and Staffing Survey, which will be administered next during the 2007–08 school year. However, by participating in this phone call you are not committing yourself or your district to participate in that survey—or to provide any of the data we are discussing.

I'd like to begin by letting everyone know who else is participating in this call. *[Read list of names, with positions and states.]*

II. Questions for Discussion (45 minutes)

1. One goal for the compensation questions that would be asked is to try to estimate the total cost to a district to employ the teacher in question, including both salary and all benefits. Some districts have a single estimate, expressed in the form of a percentage, to represent the “indirect costs” of a teacher. This percentage is sometimes used and added to teacher salaries when budgeting for grants. Does your district have a percentage figure that it uses to estimate these costs?
 - If so, what is this figure called (e.g., indirect costs, benefits, loaded costs)?
 - What does this figure include? (refer to list below)
2. In addition to the total compensation provided to a teacher, the U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Education are also interested in breaking this figure down into its components. I believe that each of you received a list of salary and benefit items through e-mail. I am going to go through a list of different potential items, and for each I would like to know a) how easy or difficult it would be for your district to provide this information, and b) from what sources the information would come (individual teacher contracts, union agreements, district databases, etc.)

Keep in mind that in all cases, the U.S. Census Bureau and Department of Education would be seeking this information for a specific teacher that they would identify by name.

Moderator's Note: For each of the following items, if participants indicate that information is not available for specific teachers, probe as to what types of aggregate information could be provided.

- a. Teacher base salary
- b. Additional compensation received during the past school year for coaching or other activities
- c. Additional compensation received for summer activities or responsibilities
- d. Workers compensation disability pay received during the past school year
- e. Number of paid vacation days/sick days/personal leave days available to the teacher
- f. Number of paid holidays
- g. Life insurance
 - Does this specific teacher have a life insurance policy through the district?
 - If so, what is the district's contribution to the cost of this policy?
 - What is the teacher's contribution to the cost of this policy?
- h. Health insurance
 - Does this specific teacher have a health insurance policy through the district?
 - What is the district's contribution to the cost of this policy?
 - What is the teacher's contribution to the cost of this policy?
- i. Short-term disability insurance
 - Does the district contribute to a short-term disability insurance policy for this specific teacher?
 - How much does it cost the district to provide this policy for that one teacher?
 - If there is a teacher contribution to the cost, what is it?

- j. Long-term disability insurance
 - Does the district contribute to a long-term disability insurance policy for this specific teacher?
 - How much does it cost the district to provide this policy for that one teacher?
 - If there is a teacher contribution to the cost, what is it?
 - k. Social Security
 - What is the district's contribution to Social Security for this teacher annually?
 - l. Medicare
 - What is the district's contribution to Medicare for this teacher annually?
 - m. State unemployment insurance
 - What is the district's state employment contribution for this teacher annually?
 - n. Federal unemployment insurance
 - What is the district's federal unemployment contribution for this teacher annually?
 - o. Pension/Other retirement plan
 - Does the district contribute to a pension or other retirement plan for this specific teacher?
 - How much does the district contribute to this plan for this teacher annually?
3. Would one person in your district be able to answer all of items in Question 2, or would several people have to contribute to the questionnaire?
- Who would this person/these people be?
4. If your district were asked to complete a form that asked for all of the above information for a specific teacher, how long would you estimate it would take to complete?
- Which items would take the longest time to complete?
 - Which items would take the shortest time to complete?

III. False Close (10 minutes)

At this point, the moderator will switch over and talk with the "observers" from the U.S. Census Bureau and ED, who can suggest additional follow-up questions for the participants. The participants will not be able to hear what is said at this point in the session. The moderator will then return to the participants and ask these follow-up questions.

Attachment F-5: Moderator’s Guide for Focus Group with Teachers

U.S. Census Bureau Focus Group Moderator’s Guide: Teacher’s Session January 12, 2006

I. Welcome/Introduction (5 minutes)

Welcome and thank you all very much for agreeing to participate in this focus group. I’ll start out by introducing myself: my name is Michael Long and I work for a research company called ORC Macro, which is located near Washington, D.C.

Our discussion is going to focus on a survey carried out by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education: the Schools and Staffing Survey, or SASS. The SASS is a set of surveys that the U.S. Census Bureau administers to schools, districts, library media centers, principals, and teachers every four years. The last administration was during the 2003–04 school year, and the next will be in 2007–08. The SASS is given to both public and private schools across the country, and its purpose is to measure critical aspects of schools and teaching, the composition of the principal and teacher work force, and conditions in schools.

In the past, the SASS instrument that teachers complete has asked them to provide their annual salaries. However, for the 2007–08 version of the survey there is interest at the national level at getting more detailed information about their salaries and benefits. This focus group is part of an effort to learn more about under what circumstances this information could be collected and what types of data could be provided on a written form.

We will not be collecting any personal information on this phone call.

Before we begin, does anyone have any questions about the topics that we’re going to discuss?

Ground Rules

- A. You have been asked here to offer your views and opinions; participation from everyone is important.
- B. Audio taping the session.
- C. Speak loudly, and one at a time.
- D. Please identify yourself by name when you speak.
- E. Staff members from the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education are listening to this conversation, but they will not be participating.
- F. All answers are confidential, so feel free to speak your mind.
- G. We’ll be talking about the Schools and Staffing Survey, which will be administered next during the 2007–08 school year. However, by participating in this phone call you are not committing to participate in that survey—or to provide any of the data we are discussing.

I’d like to begin by letting everyone know who else is participating in this call. *[Read list of names, with positions and states.]*

II. Requesting Salary Information from District (20 minutes)

In the past, the only information that the SASS has collected about teacher compensation has been the annual salaries of specific randomly selected teachers. This information has been provided by the teachers

themselves, on questionnaire forms that they filled out. However, because the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Department of Education are now collecting much more specific information, they were concerned that doing so would add too many questions to the teacher surveys. As a result, they have been considering the possibility of soliciting some of this compensation information from the district offices, rather than from individual teachers.

1. If, as a part of the SASS survey, these organizations asked your district office to provide your annual salary, how would you feel about it?
 - Would that be O.K. with you, or would you object?
 - What would be your specific concerns?
2. In your opinion, would it be necessary for the U.S. Census Bureau to inform teachers in advance that this information was being sought, or would it be acceptable if districts released the information without advance notice?
 - If advance notice is necessary, what form do you think it should take? Is it necessary that teachers provide active consent (i.e., that they actively provide permission before information can be requested from the district), or can they provide passive consent (i.e., they can be given a chance to opt out by contacting the U.S. Census Bureau)?
 - If you were notified in advance that these organizations were going to ask your district for your salary, what would you do? Would you provide active consent? Would you provide passive consent?
3. If the U.S. Census Bureau sent a request to you for permission to ask your district for this information, what could they do to make it more likely that you would consent?
4. Are you aware of any official policies in your district regarding the sharing of this type of information with other government agencies?

III. Benefit Information (25 minutes)

In addition to getting information about teachers' salaries, the U.S. Census Bureau and U.S. Department of Education are also interested in learning more about the benefits that teachers receive.

5. Would you find it acceptable for your district to release each of the following pieces of information about your salary or benefits through the SASS survey?
 - a. Number of paid vacation days/sick days/personal leave days available to the teacher
 - b. Number of paid holidays
 - c. Life insurance
 - Whether or not teacher receives policy through the district
 - District contribution to cost
 - Teacher contribution to cost
 - d. Health insurance
 - Whether or not teacher receives policy through the district
 - District contribution to cost
 - Teacher contribution to cost

- e. Short- and long-term disability insurance
 - Whether or not teacher receives policies through the district
 - District contribution to cost
 - Teacher contribution to cost
 - f. Social Security
 - Amount taken out of pay for Social Security on an annual basis
 - g. Medicare
 - Amount taken out of pay for Medicare on an annual basis
 - h. District’s contribution to state and federal unemployment insurance
 - Amount taken out of pay for unemployment insurance on an annual basis
 - i. Pension/Other retirement plan
 - Whether or not teacher receives pension/retirement plan through the district
 - District contribution to pension/retirement plan
 - Teacher contribution to pension/retirement plan
6. On this same list of benefits, which of these pieces of information could you provide about yourself if you were asked to on a survey?
- How easy would each piece of information be to provide? Where would you get the information?
 - Would you be willing to provide this information on a survey?
7. Are there any additional benefits that you receive from your district that we have not discussed? (e.g., student loan forgiveness, housing assistance, bonus, tuition assistance)
8. Are you paid on a contract-year or 12 month basis?
- Would you be willing and able to provide this information on a written survey?
9. What does the phrase “base salary” mean to you?
- What does the phrase “contracted annual salary” mean to you?
10. What other types of compensation could teachers receive in your district, aside from their “regular” salary (e.g., stipends for coaching, etc.)?

IV. False Close (10 minutes)

At this point, the moderator will switch over and talk with the “observers” from the U.S. Census Bureau and ED, who can suggest additional follow-up questions for the participants. The participants will not be able to hear what is said at this point in the session. The moderator will then return to the participants and ask these follow-up questions.

Appendix G. Results of School District Data Collection Study: Potential for Collecting Teacher Salary and Benefit Data

This appendix contains a report prepared by ORC Macro. Its contents are listed below.

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Background

In May 2006, the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Education Statistics contracted with ORC Macro to conduct a data collection project with school district personnel across the country. This project had two primary goals:

- to learn more about what information school districts would be willing to provide on teacher salaries and benefits, and what concerns they would have about providing this information; and
- to get a better understanding of the formats in which these data could most easily be produced by districts.

The findings of this research will be used to inform the potential development and revision of items related to teacher compensation on the various forms of the Schools and Staffing Survey.

The project sample of school districts was divided into three groups, and each group was asked to provide a different set of teacher data. Group A was given a detailed list of salary and benefit categories and asked to provide data for all full-time teachers in their district. Group B was given the same list but was only asked to provide data for a subset of randomly selected teachers. Group C was asked to provide the average and median salaries of teachers, both at one or more randomly selected schools and in the district as a whole. They were also asked to disaggregate these figures by years of experience, gender, and school level.

Methodology

ORC Macro was provided with a list of 153 school districts. The data file also included one or more randomly selected schools within each district, as well as randomly selected teachers within each of these schools.

The project sample of school districts was divided into three groups, and each group was asked to provide a different set of teacher data. Group A was given a detailed list of salary and benefit categories and asked to provide data for all full-time teachers in their district. Group B was given the same list but was only asked to provide data for a subset of randomly selected teachers. Group C was asked to provide the average and median salaries of teachers, both at one or more randomly selected schools and in the district as a whole. They were also asked to disaggregate these figures by years of experience, gender, and school level. The data collection instruments that were used for the three groups are included with this report as Attachments G-1, G-2, and G-3, respectively.

A trained data collector from ORC Macro called each of the 153 districts. For each district, the caller first used a structured protocol to find the most appropriate person to provide teacher compensation data. (A copy of this protocol is provided as Attachment G-4.) He/she then provided information about the study, and attempted to recruit the district for participation. In most cases, the appropriate contact person at the district level was a Director of Payroll, Human Resource Director, Treasurer, or someone else at a similar level. In a few cases the contact person was a clerk in the district payroll office.

If the district representative agreed to participate the data collector then sent them the data collection instrument by e-mail. He/she then followed up over a period of days in order to remind them to return the data or to answer any questions that they had about the instrument. Respondents were informed that they could submit data in whatever form they wanted, as long as the information was complete.

If the district refused to participate, the data collector recorded the reason and then removed them from the call list. If the appropriate district representative could not be reached, the caller left a message. If no return call was received, he/she followed up one or more times to try to contact the representative in person.

Once data were received from a district, they were reviewed to see whether the responses were complete and internally consistent and whether the person who aggregated and submitted the data had followed directions. The reviewer developed a list of follow-up questions, which the original telephone data collector used as the basis for a follow-up interview.

All recruitment and follow-up calls were made between April 28 and May 23, 2006.

Outcomes of Recruitment Calls

Table G-1 summarizes the outcomes of the recruitment calls. Approximately one-quarter (25 percent) of those districts that were called agreed to participate, although almost half of those did not send in any data. Once districts agreed to participate, those in Group B were more likely to return data than those in Groups A or C.

Approximately one quarter of districts (23 percent) who were called explicitly declined to participate. The most common reason, given by 19 of 35 districts who declined, was that they did not have time to collect and submit the data that were being requested. About one-third of those who declined (11 of 35) cited concerns about confidentiality; most of these were in situations when data on individual teachers were being requested.

In 10 districts, or 7 percent of the total, the contact person at the district first indicated that they could not submit the data without permission from a supervisor, and no further response was received from the district. In about half of the cases, either telephone messages were never returned (41 percent) or the phone numbers in the sample were disconnected or never answered (4 percent).

Table G-1. Outcomes of recruiting calls: 2006

Outcomes	Total		Group A		Group B		Group C	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total	153	100	51	100	51	100	51	100
Agreed to participate	39	25	14	27	9	18	16	31
Submitted data	21	†	7	†	7	†	7	†
Did not submit data (as of 5/24)	18	†	7	†	2	†	9	†
Declined to participate	35	23	13	25	9	18	13	25
Didn't have time to collect and submit data	19	†	7	†	2	†	10	†
Privacy concerns	11	†	4	†	6	†	1	†
No reason given	5	†	2	†	1	†	2	†
Permission needed from supervisor (no further response)	10	7	4	8	4	8	2	4
No direct contact with district representative	63	41	18	35	26	51	19	37
Disconnected/No answer	6	4	2	4	3	6	1	2

† Not applicable.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: *School District Data Collection Study*, ORC Macro, 2006.

Executive Summary of Results

The following is a brief summary of research findings that are most relevant to the goals of this project. Following this summary is a more detailed description of the data that were submitted by participants in each of the three groups. Both sets of findings sometimes refer to submissions from individual districts.

Process of Collecting and Returning Data

- The format in which respondents returned information depended on the group they were in. Most respondents in Group A submitted printouts of what appeared to be district spreadsheets or databases. Districts in Group B either created their own spreadsheets or printed a copy of the data collection instrument for each of the sampled teachers and filled in information by hand. Respondents in Group C typed salary figures directly into the template that was provided and e-mailed or faxed the form back.
- Approximately half of respondents chose to return their data as an e-mail attachment, while the other half sent it by fax. Respondents' preference in this respect did not depend on their group; the percentage that sent it by e-mail and fax were the same in all three groups.
- When asked how long it took them to collect and submit this data, respondents in Group C reported that it took them longest, while those in Group B said it took the shortest. The average level of effort in Group C was 3.6 hours, compared to 2.4 hours in Group A and 1.2 hours in Group B. This is likely because respondents in Group C were asked to perform several calculations, while those in Group B were only asked about a small number of teachers.

Length of Contract Year and Day

- Participants had no difficulty providing the number of days in a contractual year for teachers, or the number of hours in a day. Some respondents in Group A initially did not answer this question, but did so during follow-up interviews.

Groups A and B: Background Data and Teacher Pay

- In Group A, in which districts were asked to provide data about all of their teachers, two of the seven respondents [A12 and A25] did not provide any data on individuals, and an additional district did not provide benefit data on individuals. Two districts cited the amount of effort that it would take as a reason for not doing so; the third cited privacy concerns.
- Most districts in Groups A and B did not have difficulty providing background data for teachers such as their full-time status, gender, years of experience, and grade level. Some respondents in Group A who submitted printouts from district databases, however, did not include full-time status or gender.
- Almost all districts in Groups A and B did provide data on both base salaries and on additional pay for teachers. However, several (including most of those in Group A) did not break additional pay into the categories provided, but instead used their own district's categories (e.g., "athletic" vs. "non-athletic," or "supplemental" vs. "extended").

Groups A and B: Teacher Benefits

- Most respondents in Group B did provide health, life, and dental insurance costs for individual teachers, while only three of seven in Group A did so. In Group B four districts provided annual costs, while two gave monthly costs instead; the seventh did not provide individual data. In Group A the other four respondents either provided no individual benefit data, or described their health plan options without indicating which teacher had selected which option.
- No districts in Groups A or B indicated that they pay separate costs for mental health insurance for their teachers. It was unclear whether this was because they do not offer this coverage, because no teachers had opted for it, or because it is a part of their general health insurance.
- Most districts in Groups A and B said that they do not pay any unemployment insurance costs. Follow-up interviews showed that many of these districts reimburse claims made, rather than paying insurance up front.
- No districts indicated that they have any costs for disability insurance. One said that this is covered under their health plan, while another offered that they provide it at employees' expense.
- Most respondents provided valid dollar amounts for workers compensation insurance. One district said that they reimburse claims made, rather than purchasing insurance.
- Most districts provided valid dollar amounts for Social Security payments, and several indicated that they do not have any Social Security costs. A few, however, provided a salary percentage rather than dollar amounts for each teacher.

- Most districts listed valid dollar amounts representing district payments into a defined-benefit retirement plan for each teacher. Some, however, provided a salary percentage rather than dollar amounts.
- No districts indicated that they pay into a 403(b) or similar defined-contribution plan.
- When asked about tuition reimbursement, several respondents provided their district policies rather than separate dollar amounts for each teacher. This may be because this information is more difficult to get on an individual basis, since it is maintained in a different database.
- No districts indicated that they provided any teachers with housing assistance. It was not clear whether this was because this benefit was not offered, or because none of the teachers for whom data was provided received the benefit.

Groups A and B: Annual Leave

- When asked about annual leave several participants, particularly in Group B, seemed confused about what was being asked. In their follow-up interviews several indicated that there were additional types of leave that they had not indicated in their original responses. For example, one originally said that teachers received sick leave but later added personal leave to their response—while another participant began with personal leave but later added sick leave. One district provided the total number of hours that each individual teacher had accumulated, rather than what they received in a single year. A respondent in Group A [A28] provided an answer that seemed to represent the total hours of leave taken by all teachers in the district, rather than the amount provided annual to individual teachers.
- Nearly all districts break teacher leave into two categories: personal and sick leave. A few had a third category, such as “emergency” or “professional” leave.
- Very few districts provide teachers with paid holidays, and none offered any paid family leave. Several noted that teachers could use sick or personal hours as family leave if they wished.

Group C

- All Group C districts seemed to include only full-time teachers in their calculations, as the directions asked. When asked in a question on the instrument, all respondents indicated that they had not included any other personnel.
- Most respondents in Group C made calculation errors when preparing their data. Although they submitted complete data collection templates, in four out of seven cases the submissions contained easily identifiable errors. In two cases [C123 and C147] averages or medians for different questions which should have been the same were not; in both cases the problem was that respondents had inconsistently used 2005–06 instead of 2004–05 data. In another case [C136], a number of the answers that were provided were identical, even though it was highly unlikely that this would be true.

Detailed Description of Findings: Group A

Format of Responses

- Five respondents submitted what appeared to be printouts of district spreadsheets or databases. District A24 also included a typed list of answers to those items that were not included in the spreadsheet.
- The remaining two respondents typed answers to each item directly onto the data collection instrument itself. These were the same two respondents that did not submit any information for individual teachers (see below).

Contract Days and Hours per Day (Questions 1a and 1b)

- Five respondents answered this question; a sixth did not originally answer the question but did in the follow-up interview. The seventh indicated that he/she could, but had not returned these data as of May 24.

Availability of Data on Individual Teachers

- Five districts provided salary data on individual teachers in the district and listed the data by teacher name.¹ One of these five did not provide any benefit data for individual teachers because they said that it would take too long to “modify large amounts of data” [A22].
- Two districts did not provide any data for individual teachers. One indicated that she had a concern with privacy issues and would only provide the data if NCES made an official request based on the Freedom of Information Act [A12]. The second provided information on general benefit policies, but said that it would take too long to collect data on individual teachers [A25]. He/she said that his/her district did not keep a centralized database with the information that was being requested.

Background Information (Questions 2a through 2d)

- All five districts that provided data on individual teachers included years of district experience (or a hire date) in their spreadsheets. Two districts submitted printouts from district databases that did not include full-/part-time status; one of the printouts also did not include gender.
- When asked to provide the “grade level” of each teacher, some districts provided specific grades while others gave grade ranges (e.g., “elementary” or “grades 9 to 12”).

Income Data (Questions 2e through 2h)

- Of the five districts that submitted data for individual teachers, three included columns in their spreadsheets that referred to additional pay above base salary. These three teachers did not use the distinctions in the data instrument (which broke additional pay into three categories—one for

¹ One of these districts did not initially include teacher names in their submission, but indicated during the follow-up interview that they would send another data file with the names. This revised submission had not been received as of the writing of this report.

extracurricular activities, one for bonuses and incentives, and one for summer school salary). One district included columns for pay for “athletic” and “non-athletic” extracurricular activities. Another distinguished between pay for “extra duty” and “longevity.” The third had columns for “supplemental pay” and “extended pay.” In the follow-up interview, the representative from this district clarified that extended pay is for those teachers who have to work extra days before or after the school year.

- District A22 had only a single salary figure in their printout, titled “AnnSal.” It was not clear whether this figure included additional pay for extracurricular activities.

Health, Life, and Dental Insurance (Questions 2i through 2k)

- Of the four districts that provided individual teacher benefit data, two listed dollar amounts for health, life, and dental insurance for each teacher.
- One district gave annual costs for two different health plans, but did not indicate which teachers received which plan [A24].
- One district [A28] listed an annual cost for health, life, and dental insurance on a separate page. Their salary spreadsheet indicated which health plan each teacher had chosen, but did not mention life or dental insurance. Therefore, if it is not true that all teachers are covered for life and dental, there would be no way of telling which ones were and which were not.
- One of the three districts who did not provide any individual teacher benefit data [A12] indicated that they paid “100 percent” of health, life, and dental insurance, but didn’t indicate the cost of this insurance.

Mental Health Insurance (Question 2l)

- None of the respondents noted any specific dollar costs associated with mental health insurance. Two districts did not provide any information about mental health insurance in their responses.

Unemployment Insurance (Question 2m)

- Of the four districts that provided individual teacher data, none listed any costs for unemployment insurance in their spreadsheets. One specifically noted in their response that they reimburse actual claims rather than paying insurance; another said the same thing in a follow-up interview.

Disability Insurance (Questions 2n and 2o)

- One of the four districts indicated that long-term disability was included in their health coverage, while two others did not list any costs associated with disability insurance. One respondent said that they were not sure whether their district paid disability insurance for teachers.

Workers Compensation Insurance (Question 2p)

- Three districts listed valid dollar amounts for each teacher. A fourth wrote that workers compensation insurance was “based on annual salary and job class,” but did not list individual amounts.

Social Security (Question 2q)

- Two respondents indicated that they do not pay Social Security for teachers, either by indicating a cost of “\$0” or by not having a column for this cost in their spreadsheet. One district included a cost for “FICA” but not for Social Security. A fourth listed a percentage of annual salary, rather than a dollar amount for each teacher.

Payments into Retirement Plans (Questions 2r and 2s)

- Two respondents provided dollar amounts for each teacher associated with a defined-benefit retirement plan, while a third indicated that his/her district does not offer this benefit. A fourth provided a percentage of annual salary, rather than a dollar amount for each teacher.
- None of the respondents indicated that their districts provide funds for a 403(b) or similar defined-contribution retirement plan.

Tuition Reimbursement (Question 2t)

- Of the four districts that provided individual benefit data, two listed their district policy (e.g., “\$1,000 a year for first 5 years of teaching”) rather than giving a dollar amount for each teacher. A third respondent did not list tuition reimbursement in their spreadsheet, and during the follow-up interview indicated that his/her district does not offer this benefit. A fourth also did not list this benefit in their spreadsheet; it was not clear whether the district offered it or not.

Housing Assistance (Question 2u)

- All four respondents indicated that none of the sampled teachers receive housing assistance, either through a response of either “\$0” or by not including this assistance as a column in their spreadsheet.

Annual Leave (Questions 2v through 2x)

- Three of the seven districts provided valid answers to questions 2v, 2w, and 2x. Three others did not answer these questions; two of these provided answers during the follow-up interview.
- District A28 appeared to misunderstand the question and provided levels of leave hour figures that may correspond to the number of hours taken by teachers in the district as a whole (4,053 sick leave hours, 919 personal leave hours, and 990 professional leave hours).
- Five of the six respondents that answered these questions broke leave up into two categories: sick and personal leave. The sixth also included a third category: professional leave.
- None of the seven districts indicated that teachers receive any paid holidays, or any additional hours of paid family leave.

Estimates of Level of Effort

- Respondents' estimates of how long it took them to gather and submit this information ranged widely, from 30 minutes (2 respondents) to 6 hours. Other respondents provided estimates of 1, 2.5, and 4 hours.²

Detailed Description of Findings: Group B

Format of Responses

- Four of the seven respondents in Group B submitted data in an Excel spreadsheet. In all cases it appeared that they created this spreadsheet themselves for the purpose of this data collection, rather than exporting it from a district database.
- Districts B55 and B71 printed separate copies of the data collection instrument for each teacher. They then handwrote figures next to each item on each teacher's page.
- One respondent [B58] provided a handwritten list of background information for each teacher (name, gender, grade level, etc.). He then submitted a copy of the instrument with data filled in next to each item. However, his responses were not teacher-specific; for example, rather than providing a dollar cost for each teacher's health insurance he described the percentages that the district pays for health coverage.

Contract Days and Hours per Day (Questions 1a and 1b)

- All seven respondents answered these questions. There did not appear to be any confusion about the items, and all responses seem plausible.

Background Information (Questions 2a through 2d)

- All seven respondents provided data on teacher names, full-time status, gender, years of experience teaching in the district, and grade level. There did not seem to be any confusion or concern about these items.
- As in Group A, when asked for "grade level(s) taught" some respondents listed specific grades, while others listed school levels (i.e., "elementary," "high school").

Income Data (Questions 2e through 2h)

- For the most part responses to these items seemed to be clear and there did not seem to be any confusion. Only a small percentage of teachers received pay in category 2f ("Extracurricular or additional activities"), while no teachers in any of the seven districts received pay in categories 2g ("Income from any other school sources") or 2h ("Summer school salary").
- One teacher in District B71 had her academic base salary listed as "\$61,208 + \$1,003.41 (ext. days)." In the follow-up interview, the district representative said that this teacher is an intervention specialist who gets paid for three additional days for additional responsibilities

² One respondent had not answered this question as of the writing of this report.

during the school year. The representative said that she did not include this money in Category 2f because her responsibilities as an intervention specialist didn't seem to fit that category.

- One district [B57] reported a single figure for “supplemental pay” for each teacher rather than using the categories listed on the instrument. In the follow-up interview, the district representative indicated that this pay was for extracurricular activities and would therefore fall under category 2f.

Health, Life, and Dental Insurance (Questions 2i through 2k)

- Three districts provided an annual cost of health, life, and dental insurance, as the directions stated. A fourth respondent indicated that there was no cost to the district for health or life insurance, and provided an annual cost for dental insurance.
- Two districts provided monthly costs for health, life, and dental insurance rather than an annual cost. In a follow-up interview one of the two indicated that the monthly figure could be multiplied by 12 to calculate an annual cost.
- The seventh respondent [B58] did not provide individual data for teachers in his/her original submission. He/she originally listed only the percentages that the district pays for different options of health coverage (i.e., individual vs. family). In a follow-up interview, he/she did indicate which teachers have which coverage. For life insurance he/she wrote “\$10,000,” which likely refers to the amount of coverage, rather than the annual cost to the district. The same district indicated that dental insurance is available “at employee cost.”

Mental Health Insurance (Question 2l)

- Three districts indicated that mental health coverage was included in teachers' general health insurance. Three more indicated that the cost was \$0, and one did not include it as a column on the data spreadsheet. These responses may indicate that it is included in general coverage, that it is not offered at all, or that it is provided at employee cost.

Unemployment Insurance (Question 2m)

- Two districts did provide an annual cost for unemployment insurance; one of these initially wrote that this insurance was provided “at employer cost,” but provided a dollar figure during the follow-up interview.
- The remaining five districts indicated (either with a response of “\$0” or “N/A” or by leaving this item out of their spreadsheets) that there were no district costs associated with this insurance. Three of the five were asked about this during their follow-up interviews; all three said that they instead pay unemployment costs as they are incurred. One of the three explained that his/her district reimburses the state for unemployment claims that have been submitted by its teachers.

Disability Insurance (Questions 2n and 2o)

- All seven districts indicated (through a response of “\$0” or “N/A”, or by not including disability insurance in their spreadsheets) that they do not pay for teacher disability insurance. One district volunteered that they do offer it at employee expense.

Workers Compensation Insurance (Question 2p)

- Six districts provided valid responses to this question. Four provided dollar amounts for each teacher, while another said that her district pays workers compensation costs as claims are made, not through insurance. A sixth respondent indicated that his/her district was “exempt” from paying workers compensation costs. It was unclear whether he/she meant that the district paid claims as they were submitted, or whether they paid no costs at all.
- The seventh respondent provided a percentage in response to this question, rather than a dollar amount.

Social Security (Question 2q)

- Five of the seven districts provided a valid response to this question; three of these five provided dollar amounts for each teacher, while the other two indicated that they do not pay Social Security for their teachers.
- The responses of the other two districts were in the form of a percentage, rather than a dollar amount.

Payments into Retirement Plans (Questions 2r and 2s)

- Five of the seven districts provided a valid dollar amount in response to the question asking about payments into a defined-benefit retirement plan. The remaining two respondents provided a percentage, rather than a dollar amount for each teacher.
- All seven respondents indicated that their districts do not provide funds for a 403(b) or similar defined-contribution retirement plan.

Tuition Reimbursement (Question 2t)

- Five of the seven districts provided valid responses to this question in their initial data submission; in four cases none of the sampled teachers received tuition reimbursement and the fifth case listed annual dollar amounts for each teacher.
- The remaining two districts initially provided their district policy about tuition reimbursement, rather than dollar amounts for each teacher. For example, one district wrote “up to \$400 per/year” in the field for tuition reimbursement for each teacher. When asked about this in their follow-up interview, both districts told the data collector that none of the sampled teachers received any money for tuition.

Housing Assistance (Question 2u)

- All seven respondents indicated that none of the sampled teachers receive housing assistance, either through a response of either “\$0” or “No” or by not including this assistance as a column in their spreadsheet.

Annual Leave (Questions 2v through 2x)

- The question that asked for “hours of annual leave” caused some confusion among respondents. One district listed only sick leave on their original form, but in the follow-up interview indicated that teachers also receive more hours of personal leave. Another respondent made the opposite mistake, listing personal leave on his/her dataset but later adding sick leave during the interview. A third first indicated that teachers receive zero hours of annual leave, but indicated later that they receive both sick and personal leave.
- District B93 misunderstood the question and provided the total number of hours that each teacher had accumulated, rather than the number of hours that teachers receive each year.
- Five of the seven districts use the terms “sick leave” and “personal leave” to describe the hours that teachers receive, while the sixth makes no distinction between the two. One district offers teachers “emergency leave” as well as sick and personal leave.
- Five districts responded that they do not provide their teachers with paid holidays. The other two did provide numeric responses to this question (75 hours and 28 hours).
- All seven districts indicated that they do not offer teachers any additional hour of paid family leave. In follow-up interviews, two said that teachers could use other types of accumulated hours as family leave in some situations.

Accuracy of Teacher Samples

- One district [B57] indicated that two of the teachers who were sampled were not hired until the summer of 2005, so they could not provide 2004–05 data on them.
- District B71 told the data collector that four of the seven personnel that were sampled in their district were not teachers, but were instead aides or occupational therapists. In the same district, one of the aides was listed twice in the sample.

Estimates of Level of Effort

- Five respondents indicated that it took a total of 1 hour to collect and submit their data. One said that it took 3 hours, while the seventh said that it took a half hour.

Detailed Description of Findings: Group C

Format of Responses

- All respondents calculated averages and median salaries separately and typed the figures into the electronic version of the instrument that we provided. Four returned the completed instrument as an e-mail attachment, while three faxed the data.
- All respondents provided complete sets of data; no questions were skipped or incomplete. However, in some cases there were indications that the data that were provided were inaccurate (see below).

- The directions instructed respondents to only include full-time teachers in their calculations. In their responses to Questions 6a and 6b, all respondents indicated that they had done so.

Evidence of Unreliable Data

- In four of the seven responses that were received, representatives had made miscalculations that could be easily observed:
 - In one district, the data that were provided showed that the median salary of male teachers and the median salary of female teachers in the sampled high school were both lower than the median of the overall teacher population, which is mathematically impossible [C148].
 - Another district's data [C136] seemed suspect in several respects. For example, the average salary for elementary school teachers, middle school teachers, and high school teachers in the district were exactly the same. The median salary of male teachers, female teachers, and teachers at the three school levels was also the same. When asked about this, the district representative did not have an explanation; she indicated that she had worked from the district salary spreadsheet and had followed the directions on the page.
 - Questions 4 and 5 asked for the average and median salaries at the sampled schools, while the last part of question 7 asked for these figures disaggregated by school level. When only a single school was sampled, and therefore data was only available from one school level, the responses to questions 4, 5, and 7 should have been identical. In two out of seven cases they were not, indicating that a calculation error was made.
 - In a follow-up interview, a representative from one of the two districts explained that because 2004–05 data was not available she had to backfigure salaries by subtracting this year's 2 percent raise. The error in the data that he/she provided was due to the fact that he/she had forgotten to subtract this raise from some of the salary figures. She submitted revised data that accurately reflected 2004–05 salaries [C123].
 - A representative from the other district made the same error—he accidentally used 2005–06 salaries when calculating questions 4 and 5. He indicated that his response to question 7 is accurate. However, it appears that this response is not accurate either, because the median salary of male teachers is the same as the median salary for the overall population, which is mathematically impossible³ [C147].

Contract Days and Hours per Day (Questions 9a and 9b)

- All seven respondents answered these questions without any confusion.
- In one district, the number of contract hours per day varied for different schools. In most schools the contractual day was 6.5 hours, but at one school the day was 7 hours long because teachers helped with “bussing issues.”

Estimates of Level of Effort

- Overall, the estimates of how long it took respondents to collect and submit this information was higher in Group C than in the other two groups, perhaps because calculations were necessary. Responses ranged from 1 to 8 hours; the median estimate was 3.25 hours and the average was 3.6 hours.⁴

³ This would be mathematically possible if the median salary of female teachers was also the same, but in this case the listed median is not the same.

⁴ One respondent had not answered this question as of the writing of this report.

Attachment G-1: Data Collection Instrument for Group A



Teacher Compensation Data Collection Project April 2006

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research study on teacher compensation and benefits. Our goal in this project is to begin to develop comparable state representative data on teacher compensation and to obtain a complete picture of the types of benefits that teachers receive. We are conducting this voluntary survey with a sample of districts in order to keep response burden to a minimum. Thus, the value of each survey response is critical to preserving the integrity of the national sample.

Please be assured that all aspects of this collection are strictly confidential. The National Center for Education Statistics will not release any data in connection with district, school, or teacher names. Information will be reported only in statistical summaries that preclude the identification of individual teachers, schools, or districts.

If you have any questions about what is being requested, or about the study itself, please call 1-866-481-2980. For additional information about educational surveys conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, please go to our website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Procedure for Providing Data

In order to help us get a complete picture of teacher compensation throughout the country, we would like you to provide the information described below for **all teachers who were teaching in your school district during the 2004–05 school year**. We are focusing on 2004–05 since the 2005–06 school year is not yet complete.

We will accept data in any manner you have available; it does not need to be formatted precisely as listed below. You can print out data from your district records, create a separate spreadsheet, or put the data in an electronic file. You can send the data to us in whatever form you find easiest, including mail, fax, e-mail, or on a CD-ROM or diskette.

ORC Macro is a contractor which will be assisting NCES with the data collection effort. You can send your district's information to ORC Macro in any of the following ways:

Mail:
ORC Macro
c/o Shauna Clarke
11785 Beltsville Drive
Calverton, MD 21228

E-mail:
nces@orcmacro.com

Fax:
301-572-0999
Attn: Shauna Clarke

The U.S. Department of Education thanks you for your participation in this important research effort!

Description of Data Requested From Your School District

Question 1a: What is the length, in days, of the contract period for full-time teachers in your district?

Question 1b: How many hours are in a single workday, as defined by contracts for full-time teachers?

Question 2: Please provide the following information for each of your district's teachers in 2004–05. If you cannot provide any of this information, please indicate why it is not available.

Background Information

- a. Full-time/part-time status
- b. Gender
- c. Years of experience teaching in your district
- d. Grade level(s) taught

Income Data (for entire 2004–05 school year)

- e. Academic base salary
- f. Other compensation from this school system for extracurricular or additional activities such as coaching, student activity sponsorship, or teaching evening classes
- g. Income from any other school sources, such as incentives for teaching in a shortage field, merit pay bonus, state supplement, etc.
- h. Summer school salary (summer of 2005)

School District Benefit Contributions (please provide a dollar amount, not a percentage; if the district does not make a contribution, answer “0”)

*Notes: - If your district does not offer this benefit to teachers, please answer “Not Offered”
- Do not include contributions made by the state, or by individual teachers themselves.*

- i. Health insurance
- j. Life insurance
- k. Dental insurance
- l. Mental health insurance
- m. Federal or state unemployment insurance
- n. Federal or state short-term disability insurance
- o. Federal or state long-term disability insurance
- p. Workers' compensation insurance
- q. Social Security
- r. Payments into a defined-benefit retirement plan other than Social Security
- s. Matching funds for 403(b) defined-contribution retirement plan
- t. Tuition reimbursement
- u. Housing assistance

Annual Leave (if not provided, answer “0”)

- v. Hours of annual leave (separated into whatever categories your district uses)
- w. Paid holidays (in hours)
- x. Hours of paid family leave

Attachment G-2: Data Collection Instrument for Group B



Teacher Compensation Data Collection Project April 2006

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research study on teacher compensation and benefits. Our goal in this project is to begin to develop comparable state representative data on teacher compensation and to obtain a complete picture of the types of benefits that teachers receive. We are conducting this voluntary survey with a sample of districts in order to keep response burden to a minimum. Thus, the value of each survey response is critical to preserving the integrity of the national sample.

Please be assured that all aspects of this collection are strictly confidential. The National Center for Education Statistics will not release any data in connection with district, school, or teacher names. Information will be reported only in statistical summaries that preclude the identification of individual teachers, schools, or districts.

If you have any questions about what is being requested, or about the study itself, please call 1-866-481-2980. For additional information about educational surveys conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, please go to our website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Procedure for Providing Data

The following page describes the data that we are requesting from your district. Based on information that your school district provided on the 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey, we have randomly selected one or more teachers on whom we would like to collect data. These teachers are listed on the last page of this document. Please provide data from the 2004–05 school year; we are focusing on the prior year because the 2005–06 school year is not yet complete.

We will accept data in any manner you have available; it does not need to be formatted precisely as listed below. You can print out data from your district records, create a separate spreadsheet, or put the data in an electronic file. You can send the data to us in whatever form you find easiest, including mail, fax, e-mail, or on a CD-ROM or diskette.

ORC Macro is a contractor which will be assisting NCES with the data collection effort. You can send your district's information to ORC Macro in any of the following ways:

Mail:
ORC Macro
c/o Shauna Clarke
11785 Beltsville Drive
Calverton, MD 21228

E-mail:
nces@orcmacro.com

Fax:
301-572-0999
Attn: Shauna Clarke

Description of Data Requested From Your School District

Question 1a: What is the length, in days, of the contract period for full-time teachers in your district?

Question 1b: How many hours are in a single workday, as defined by contracts for full-time teachers?

Question 2: Please provide the following information for each of the teachers listed on the next page. If you cannot provide any of this information, please indicate why it is not available.

Background Information

- a. Full-time/part-time status
- b. Gender
- c. Years of experience teaching in your district
- d. Grade level(s) taught

Income Data (for entire 2004–05 school year)

- e. Academic base salary
- f. Other compensation from this school system for extracurricular or additional activities such as coaching, student activity sponsorship, or teaching evening classes
- g. Income from any other school sources, such as incentives for teaching in a shortage field, merit pay bonus, state supplement, etc.
- h. Summer school salary (summer of 2005)

School District Benefit Contributions (please provide a dollar amount, not a percentage; if the district does not make a contribution, answer “0”)

Note: Do not include contributions made by the state, or by individual teachers themselves.

- i. Health insurance
- j. Life insurance
- k. Dental insurance
- l. Mental health insurance
- m. Federal or state unemployment insurance
- n. Federal or state short-term disability insurance
- o. Federal or state long-term disability insurance
- p. Workers’ compensation insurance
- q. Social Security
- r. Payments into a defined-benefit retirement plan other than Social Security
- s. Matching funds for 403(b) defined-contribution retirement plan
- t. Tuition reimbursement
- u. Housing assistance

Annual Leave (if not provided, answer “0”)

- v. Hours of annual leave (separated into whatever categories your district uses)
- w. Paid holidays (in hours)
- x. Hours of paid family leave

List of Teachers

Please provide the data on the page above for each of the following teachers. This list of teachers was randomly selected from a list provided by your district on the 2003 Schools and Staffing Survey.

Teacher Name	School

The U.S. Department of Education thanks you for your participation in this important research effort!

Attachment G-3: Data Collection Instrument for Group C

Teacher Compensation Data Collection Project

April 2006

Introduction

Thank you for agreeing to participate in our research study on teacher compensation and benefits. Our goal in this project is to begin to develop comparable state representative data on teacher compensation and to obtain a complete picture of the types of benefits that teachers receive. We are conducting this voluntary survey with a sample of districts in order to keep response burden to a minimum. Thus, the value of each survey response is critical to preserving the integrity of the national sample.

Please be assured that all aspects of this collection are strictly confidential. The National Center for Education Statistics will not release any data in connection with district, school, or teacher names. Information will be reported only in statistical summaries that preclude the identification of individual teachers, schools, or districts.

If you have any questions about what is being requested, or about the study itself, please call 1-866-481-2980. For additional information about educational surveys conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, please go to our website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Procedure for Providing Data

The following page describes the data that we are requesting from your district. Based on information that your school district provided on the 2005–06 Schools and Staffing Survey, we have randomly selected one or more schools on which we would like you to focus for most of the questions. Please provide data from the 2004–05 school year; we are focusing on the prior year because the 2005–06 school year is not yet complete.

Each of the questions has space to provide an answer. However, we will accept data in any manner you have available; it does not need to be formatted precisely as listed below. You can print out data from your district records, create a separate spreadsheet, or put the data in an electronic file. You can send the data to us in whatever form you find easiest, including mail, fax, e-mail, or on a CD-ROM or diskette.

ORC Macro is a contractor which will be assisting NCES with the data collection effort. You can send your district's information to ORC Macro in any of the following ways:

Mail:
ORC Macro
c/o Shauna Clarke
11785 Beltsville Drive
Calverton, MD 21228

E-mail:
nces@orcmacro.com

Fax:
301-572-0999
Attn: Shauna Clarke

Data Requested From Your School District

List of Sampled School(s):

- School 1

Question 1: In 2004-05, how many full-time teachers worked in the school(s) listed above?

Question 2: What was the lowest academic base salary (i.e., gross salary before deductions for Social Security, retirement, health insurance, etc.) among the full-time teachers working in this/these school(s)?

Question 3: What was the highest academic base salary among the full-time teachers working in this/these school(s)?

Question 4: What was the average academic base salary among the full-time teachers working in this/these school(s)? *(The average can be calculated by dividing the sum of all the salaries by the number of full-time teachers.)*

Question 5: What was the median academic base salary among the full-time teachers working in this/these school(s)? *(To determine the median salary, list all salaries from lowest to highest. If there are an odd number of salaries in the list, the median is the salary in the exact middle of the list. For example, if there were 7 salaries in the list, the median salary would be the salary listed fourth. If there are an even number of salaries in the list, the median is the average of the two salaries in the middle of the list. For example, if there were 8 salaries listed from lowest to highest, the median would be the average of the fourth and fifth.)*

Question 6a: When calculating your answers to Questions 4 and 5, did you include any employees who are not full-time classroom-based teachers?

Yes No

Question 6b: If Yes, what other categories of employees did you include?

Question 7: Please provide the average and median salaries for full-time teachers in the schools listed above, broken down into the following categories. If there are no teachers in a particular category, then write “N/A” or a dash.

	Average Salary	Median Salary
Teachers with 1 to 3 years of experience		
Teachers with 4 to 9 years of experience		
Teachers with 10 to 19 years of experience		
Teachers with 20 years or more of experience		

	Average Salary	Median Salary
Male teachers		
Female teachers		

	Average Salary	Median Salary
Teachers in elementary schools		
Teachers in middle/junior high schools		
Teachers in high schools		

Question 8: Please provide the number of full-time classroom-based teachers in each of the following categories in your district. Include all teachers in your district, not just those in the sampled schools above.

	Average Salary	Median Salary
Teachers with 1 to 3 years of experience		
Teachers with 4 to 9 years of experience		
Teachers with 10 to 19 years of experience		
Teachers with 20 years or more of experience		

	Average Salary	Median Salary
Male teachers		
Female teachers		

	Average Salary	Median Salary
Teachers in elementary schools		
Teachers in middle/junior high schools		
Teachers in high schools		

Question 9a: What is the length, in days, of the contract period for full-time teachers in your district?

Question 9b: How many hours are in a single workday, as defined by contracts for full-time teachers?

The U.S. Department of Education thanks you for your participation in this important research effort!

Attachment G-4: Telephone Recruitment Protocol

Recruiting Protocol for NCES Teacher Compensation Data Study April 2006

Opening Script:

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of the United States Department of Education. I was trying to get in touch with someone in your school district who could provide me with information about teacher salaries and benefits. Could you connect me to the most appropriate person?

If they indicate that they do not know who would have that information: Could you please direct me to your Director of Personnel or your Director of Human Resources?

Secondary Script:

Hello, my name is _____ and I'm calling on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics, a department of the U.S. Department of Education. We are beginning a new research effort, and I was calling to discuss whether your district could participate. I would like to speak to the person in your school district who knows the most about your teachers' salaries and benefits.

If respondent indicates that he/she is that person, then continue below. If not, ask who that person would be and if you could be forwarded, and repeat this step.

Once Correct Person is Reached:

I am calling because the National Center for Education Statistics is currently conducting a new research study, and your school district was randomly selected to receive the opportunity to participate. We are collecting information from school districts across the country about teacher compensation, in order to gather comparison data from different states and obtain a complete picture of the salaries and benefits that teachers in the United States receive.

Participation in this study is voluntary. However, we are hoping to get as many districts to participate as possible, so that researchers will be able to use this national dataset to conduct future research on teacher compensation.

Would you be willing to participate?

[If No] Could I ask you why you don't want to participate in this study? *[Record reason, and then thank respondent politely and end call.]*

[If Yes] I would like to send you a detailed description of the data that we are collecting about teachers. Could you please give me an e-mail address or fax number to which I can send this information?
[Record.]

Once you receive this information from me, please read it over to see if you have any questions about what we are asking. If you do have questions, you can call me at 1-866-481-2980 or e-mail me at nces@orcmacro.com. If you do not have any questions, please feel free to return to us the information we need as soon as possible, by mail, e-mail, or fax. We are hoping to have all data submitted to us by *[4 business days from when this call is made.]*

Do you have any questions for me before I send you this information?

Thanks so much for agreeing to participate!

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Appendix H. Summary of the 2005–06 SASS Teacher Compensation Pilot Study

This appendix contains a report prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau. Its contents are listed below.

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Background

In preparation for the full-scale SASS in 2007–08, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted a pretest of 1,100 public and private schools during the 2005–06 school year. The pretest was designed to explore a number of methodological issues that could potentially improve the overall efficiency of the 2007–08 SASS. As part of the pretest, Principal, School, Teacher, and School Library Media Center Questionnaires were mailed to and completed by respondents. For further information about the 2005–06 SASS pretest, refer to “Appendix C. Summary of the 2005–06 SASS Methodological Pretest Findings and Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS.”

The SASS Teacher Questionnaire includes a small section of “general employment” questions that ask the respondent some brief questions regarding salary and earnings. Because only a limited number of teacher compensation questions are asked and benefits are not addressed, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, the sponsor of all SASS surveys under the authority of the U.S. Department of Education) decided to create a supplemental SASS survey that would fully address teacher compensation and benefits. Therefore, the Teacher Compensation Pilot Study (TCPS) was conducted in order to test various ways to obtain a complete picture of the types of compensation and benefits that teachers receive.

Purpose and Content of the Survey

The 2005–06 Teacher Compensation Pilot Study (TCPS) had three main objectives. The first objective was to check the validity of teacher-reported salary data against district-reported salary data. During the 2005–06 SASS pretest, Teacher Questionnaires were mailed to and completed by teachers. The teacher salary data collected from teachers during the pretest were then compared to the teacher salary data collected from the school districts during the TCPS¹ in order to analyze the reliability of self-reported teacher salary information. In addition, there are cases where teachers chose not to provide their salary information on the SASS Teacher Questionnaire and left these items blank. Another goal of administering the TCPS was to see if it was possible to get district-reported salaries for those teachers that did not report their salaries on the Teacher Questionnaires.

The third and final objective was to test the ability to collect detailed teacher salary and benefit information from school district offices. For this study, three different levels of data were collected from school district offices. Each successive level requested more detailed information than the previous:

- teacher salary information only;
- teacher salary and some limited benefits information; and
- teacher salary and extensive benefits information.

Once data collection was completed, U.S. Census Bureau analysts evaluated the results of this portion of the study by looking at the overall survey response rates, the response rates on the individual questionnaire items, and the overall quality of the data.

NCES used the results of the TCPS to determine whether to incorporate the questionnaire items and/or topics that were included on the 2005–06 TCPS forms in the 2007–08 administration of SASS. To make this determination, analysts looked at the following factors:

- the school districts’ response rates;

¹ It is assumed that the salary amounts reported by the school districts are accurate because the school district offices possess the payroll records of all staff members employed by that school district.

- the quality, completeness, and reliability of teacher compensation and benefits data provided by the school district’s administrative office;
- the size and complexity of a teacher compensation and benefits survey component on a full-scale level; and
- the importance of fitting the survey component within the context of SASS.

If the items and/or topics from the TCPS were to be included as part of the 2007–08 SASS, they would be done in one of two ways: either on the SASS School District Questionnaire or on a follow-up survey to the 2007–08 SASS School District Questionnaire which would use forms similar to those used in the TCPS.

The TCPS used printed questionnaires that were mailed out to sampled districts for completion. Three distinct district questionnaires were designed for this survey. Each questionnaire contains a subset of questions asked on the subsequent questionnaire. The SASS-101 teacher compensation form collects teacher salary information. The SASS-102 teacher compensation and benefits form collects teacher salary and some limited benefits information. The SASS-103 teacher compensation and benefits form collects teacher salary information along with extensive benefits information.

The TCPS forms were designed for completion by an established contact person at the school district’s administrative office. This contact person was established during a district call operation and was said to be the person that could best provide information about teacher’s salaries and benefits. Each form’s salary (and benefit) questions repeated for each teacher selected from that district. The number of teachers included on a TCPS form ranged from one teacher to 43 teachers, depending on the size of the school district.

SASS-101: Teacher Compensation Form

The purpose of the SASS-101 teacher compensation form was to obtain general information and detailed salary information about each of the selected teachers employed by each sampled school district. The specific topics on the SASS-101 questionnaire included

- current teaching status (full- or part-time);
- base teaching salary;
- additional compensation for extracurricular or additional activities;
- income from other school sources;
- summer school salary;
- weekly contract hours; and
- contract days.

SASS-102: Teacher Compensation and Benefits Form

The purpose of the SASS-102 teacher compensation and benefits form was to obtain general information, detailed salary information, and limited benefits information about each of the selected teachers employed by each sampled school district. The specific topics on the SASS-102 questionnaire included

- current teaching status (full- or part-time);
- base teaching salary;
- additional compensation for extracurricular or additional activities;
- income from other school sources;
- summer school salary;

- weekly contract hours;
- contract days;
- health insurance;
- Social Security payments;
- retirement plans;
- general leave;
- annual leave;
- sick leave;
- paid holidays; and
- paid family leave.

SASS-103: Teacher Compensation and Benefits Form

The purpose of the SASS-103 teacher compensation and benefits form was to obtain general information, detailed salary information, and detailed benefits information about each of the selected teachers employed by each sampled school district. The specific topics on the SASS-103 questionnaire included

- current teaching status (full- or part-time);
- base teaching salary;
- additional compensation for extracurricular or additional activities;
- income from other school sources;
- summer school salary;
- weekly contract hours;
- contract days;
- health insurance;
- life insurance;
- dental insurance;
- mental health insurance;
- unemployment insurance;
- disability insurance;
- worker's compensation;
- Social Security payments;
- retirement plans;
- general leave;
- annual leave;
- sick leave;
- paid holidays;
- paid family leave;
- tuition reimbursement; and
- housing assistance.

Detailed Methodology

Sampling Teachers and Districts

The sample of teachers for the 2005–06 Teacher Compensation Pilot Study (TCPS) was based on the 2005–06 SASS pretest sample. Teachers were selected for the TCPS based upon a three-stage design using both random and deliberative sampling. Random samples are selected from the sampling frame in a

way that assigns each sample unit a known probability of selection; whereas, deliberative sampling involves choosing sample units based on some characteristic. The deliberative sampling was deployed to test collection methodologies on a broad variety of school types, sizes, grade levels, and sectors. However, since not all sample units have a chance of selection and the probability of the units chosen is unknown, deliberative sampling is subject to selection bias, negating the possibility of drawing quantitative inference from the Teacher Compensation sample.

In the first stage of sampling, schools were selected from the 2003–04 SASS sampling frames (the 2001–02 Common Core of Data for public and the 2001–02 Private School Universe Survey for private). A random sample was drawn from the areas covered by the U.S. Census Bureau’s Detroit and Charlotte regional offices (essentially the states of Kentucky, Michigan, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia). This sample was drawn using the SASS school sampling procedure—stratifying on state and grade level for public schools and on affiliation, grade level, and region for private schools. This sample was pared down to 1,100 schools by throwing out all public schools in school districts with known special procedures for obtaining district approval and by deliberately selecting schools across a broad range of enrollment sizes, school types, and locales.

Each sampled school was sent a Teacher Listing Form (TLF). A sample of teachers was selected from each of the 802 schools that returned completed TLFs. These teachers were selected using stratified random sampling similar to what is used for SASS (stratification on new and experienced). A supplement of teachers that were expected to leave their school at the end of the school year was also selected to test the new Teacher Listing Form item (see “Appendix D. Analysis of Changes to the 2005–06 SASS Pretest Teacher Listing Form and TFS-1(X) and Recommendations for the 2007–08 SASS and 2008–09 TFS”). This operation comprised the second stage of sampling.

The TCPS study sample was drawn from the 2005–06 SASS pretest sample of teachers. Districts with responding teachers were randomly assigned to one of the six treatment panels. Regular districts (excluding charter school districts) with at least one sampled school that returned a TLF for the 2005–06 SASS pretest were eligible for the TCPS treatment panels 1 and 2. Districts were sorted by (1) urbanicity (central city, balance metro, nonmetro), (2) state, and (3) number of sampled teachers selected for the pretest. Two hundred districts were selected systematically with equal probability. Half the sampled districts were systematically assigned to treatment 1 and half to treatment 2. All pretest sampled teachers were included in these treatments, regardless of whether they completed and returned a Teacher Questionnaire.

Districts that were selected for treatment panels 1 and 2 were excluded from treatment panels 3, 4, 5, and 6. In addition, districts in which teachers were selected for the pretest sample but had not completed Teacher Questionnaires were excluded as well. The remaining districts were sorted on (1) urbanicity, (2) state, and (3) number of Teacher Questionnaires completed. One hundred districts were selected systematically with equal probability. Sampled districts were systematically assigned to treatment panels 3, 4, 5, and 6. Only teachers who responded to the pretest were included in these treatments groups.

Treatment Groups

The treatment groups for the TCPS varied on two dimensions, which included TCPS form type (SASS-101, 102, or 103) and giving sampled teachers the option to “opt-out” of the study. For each TCPS form type there were two treatment group variations. In one variation, all selected teachers were included in the TCPS (see the Sampling Teachers and Districts section of this document for further details). In the other variation, the sampled teachers were mailed an initial letter informing them that they could choose to “opt-out” of the TCPS. Those who objected within the 2-week opt-out period were excluded from the

TCPS. For additional information about teacher opt-outs, see the Teacher Opt-out section of this document. Table H-1 shows the detailed characteristics of the six TCPS treatment groups.

Table H-1. TCPS treatment group characteristics: 2005–06

Group	Number of districts	Opt-out?	Group details
Total districts	300	†	†
1	100	No	Salary only
2	100	Yes	Salary only
3	25	No	Salary and limited benefits
4	25	Yes	Salary and limited benefits
5	25	No	Salary and extensive benefits
6	25	Yes	Salary and extensive benefits

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, SASS Teacher Compensation Pilot Study, 2005–06.

Data Collection Activities

The U.S. Census Bureau conducted the 2005–06 TCPS during the second half of the 2005–06 school year. Data collection began with a district call operation. District offices were called by telephone staff to inform them of the survey, verify the mailing address, and obtain the name of a district contact to whom the questionnaire could later be mailed. While this district call operation was taking place, opt-out letters were mailed to the teachers from school districts assigned to test panels 2, 4, and 6. These opt-out letters included a telephone number that the teachers could call if they did not want their district offices to provide their salary and benefits information. Next, the TCPS forms were mailed to school district offices for completion. These forms requested salary and benefits information for those teachers who did not opt-out during the teacher opt-out period. Finally, telephone follow-up efforts were conducted to collect TCPS questionnaire data from those sampled districts that had not yet completed and mailed in their TCPS forms.

Timing of TCPS Data Collection

Data collection for the TCPS began in April 2006 and continued through June 2006. Table H-2 summarizes the specific data collection activities and the time frame in which each occurred.

Table H-2. TCPS data collection time schedule: 2005–06

Activity	Date(s) of activity
District Call Operation to establish a district contact name	April 3–7, 2006
Teacher opt-out letters mailed to sampled teachers in test panel groups 2, 4, and 6	March 31, 2006
U.S. Census Bureau staff receives opt-out telephone calls from teachers	April 3–14, 2006
Initial mailing of SASS-101, 102, and 103 forms and district letters to school district offices	May 9, 2006
Second mailing of SASS-101, 102, and 103 forms to nonrespondents	May 23, 2006
Nonresponse telephone follow-up of nonresponding districts	June 2–16, 2006

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, SASS Teacher Compensation Pilot Study, 2005–06.

District Call Operation

In April 2006, U.S. Census Bureau telephone staff conducted a weeklong TCPS district call operation. This district call operation served several purposes. Because the TCPS had not been conducted before and school district offices were not expecting to receive any components of SASS during the spring of the 2005–06 school year,² telephone staff followed a script that provided the school district offices with information regarding the upcoming study.

During the district call operation, telephone staff was also instructed to verify the district office's mailing address to ensure that the clerical processing staff had a valid mailing address to which they could mail the TCPS forms. In addition, staff was instructed to obtain the name of a contact person to whom the TCPS questionnaire should be mailed. This contact person was the person who could best provide information on salaries, benefits, and other compensation for teachers in their district.

Telephone staff documented each call attempt in a call record by entering a code called an outcome code; this outcome code indicated what had happened during each follow-up attempt (e.g., a complete interview was collected, the district refused to participate, the district's telephone number was incorrect, etc.).

Teacher Opt-out

In March 2006, sampled teachers whose districts were assigned to treatment groups 2, 4, and 6 were mailed a TCPS teacher opt-out letter. This letter explained the purpose and content of the TCPS and included an assurance of confidentiality. In addition, it gave the teacher the option to exclude him or herself, or opt-out, from the study. If a teacher chose to opt-out, his or her school district was not asked to report that teacher's salary and benefit information. The teachers were instructed to contact U.S. Census Bureau staff by telephone to opt-out of the study and were given an opt-out period of approximately 2 weeks to do so.

As U.S. Census Bureau staff received opt-out telephone calls from teachers, they indicated the opt-out decision in a TCPS teacher Excel spreadsheet. Once the 2 week opt-out period was over, the teachers who opted-out were removed from the final teacher sample. These teachers were not listed on the TCPS forms, and school district offices were not contacted in regards to these teachers. Of the 1,115 teacher opt-out letters that were mailed out, only 59 teachers chose to opt-out of the TCPS.

Mailing out the SASS Teacher Compensation (and Benefits) Forms

In May 2006, the first mailing of questionnaires took place. All district offices were mailed a version of the TCPS introductory letter that explained the purpose and content of the survey and included a statement of authority and assurance of confidentiality. Each of the six treatment groups had its own version of the letter. The respondents in the opt-out groups were provided with an explanation of the teacher opt-out operation and were assured that the teachers who opted-out were not included on their TCPS form.

Respondents in all treatment groups received their paper SASS-101, 102, or 103 questionnaires with this introductory letter. All initial TCPS packages were addressed to the contact person whose name was provided during the district call operation at the address that was verified or provided during the district call operation.

² The Schools and Staffing Survey is conducted every 4 years. The following administration of SASS was conducted during the 2007–08 school year.

In May 2006, 2 weeks after the first mailing, a follow-up mailing of the SASS teacher compensation (and benefits) forms took place. Each sampled district that had not yet completed a TCPS questionnaire was mailed a second questionnaire for completion.

Nonresponse Telephone Follow-up

Follow-up efforts for the TCPS took place in June 2006. Cases were included in nonresponse telephone follow-up when the sampled districts had not returned a completed paper questionnaire. All of the nonresponse cases had valid telephone numbers because they were verified or researched during the district call operation. Telephone staff contacted the district contacts by telephone to complete the TCPS interview.

Telephone staff was supplied with a preprinted labeled questionnaire for each nonresponse case. The questionnaires were labeled with the district contact person's name and the district's address. After the telephone staff member completed a follow-up action (e.g., conducted an interview, left a message, verified that the questionnaire had been mailed), he or she would indicate what had occurred by entering an outcome code into the TCPS Excel spreadsheet, which kept track of the status of all TCPS nonresponse follow-up cases. The telephone center mailed all completed questionnaires to the clerical processing staff twice weekly. Progress reports for the nonresponse cases were run daily.

Data Processing

Once the 2005–06 TCPS data collection was completed, data processing began. The U.S. Census Bureau clerical processing staff in Jeffersonville, Indiana was responsible for the first phase of data processing. This involved using the Automated Tracking and Control (ATAC) system to assign a check-in code for each questionnaire received to indicate its status. The data from completed questionnaires then were captured (converted from paper to electronic format) and sent to U.S. Census Bureau analysts in reformatted SAS datasets so they could more easily review the data. U.S. Census Bureau analysts were responsible for assigning the interview status (ISR), the determination of whether each case was an interview or a non-interview. Analysts then performed a series of computer edits on the data to identify and resolve inconsistencies. After these steps were completed, analysts ran a series of programs to determine the item response rates for each item on each survey. Once all stages of data processing were completed, the final data products were created and ready to be compared against the SASS public school teacher salary data from the 2005–06 SASS pretest.

Check-in

The U.S. Census Bureau clerical processing staff received questionnaires directly from both the sampled school districts and from the nonresponse telephone follow-up from the U.S. Census Bureau telephone center. Upon receipt, staff assigned a check-in code (e.g., completed questionnaire, blank questionnaire, refusal, etc.) to each questionnaire to indicate its status. A paper questionnaire was checked-in as a "completed questionnaire" when the respondent completed at least one item. The remaining check-in codes were assigned based upon any notes or indicators written on the cover of or attached to the returned questionnaire.

All received TCPS forms were assigned a check-in code. The code was entered into the Automated Tracking and Control (ATAC) system. If there was a change to the address, either marked on the questionnaire label or indicated by the post office, the address information was updated in the ATAC

system as well. The questionnaires were then grouped into batches by form type, doc type,³ and check-in code. Only completed interviews were sent on for the next step of data processing, which was data capture.

Data Capture and Reformat

The 2005–06 TCPS data were captured (i.e., converted from paper to electronic format) using manual data keying. During check-in, the questionnaires were split up into groups called “batches” by questionnaire type, doc type, and check-in code and then they were manually keyed. Manual data keying for the TCPS questionnaires was accomplished using a Key from Paper (KFP) data capture system. Analysts wrote specifications for data keying and programmers used these specifications to develop the KFP system for each survey prior to keying. It was programmed to present screens of questionnaire items to data keying staff, who worked through each page of the questionnaire and keyed any entries into the appropriate fields on the screens.

All KFP entries were 100 percent verified by the keying staff, meaning that each field was keyed twice and the results were compared automatically for discrepancies and, subsequently, verified. The verification during this operation allowed up to a 1 percent error on a field-to-field basis. Error rates were calculated by dividing the total number of keying errors by the total number of keyed fields.

If an entire batch of questionnaires had a total error of more than 1 percent (i.e., all keying errors for that batch divided by the total keyed fields in that batch exceeded 1 percent), the batch was unacceptable and all questionnaires within the batch were 100 percent verified a second time.

After data entry was completed, clerical processing staff mailed the questionnaires to U.S. Census Bureau analysts. When necessary, analysts referred to these questionnaires during later stages of data processing.

Interview Status (ISR) Assignment

After the TCPS data were captured, U.S. Census Bureau analysts assigned an interview status (ISR) to each case; that is, whether each case was an interview or a non-interview. Cases with data entries were classified as completed interviews (ISR = 1). Cases without data or cases where the respondent refused to complete the survey were classified as non-interviews (ISR = 2). A non-interview code was created for each non-interview case to indicate the reason that the case was a non-interview. ISR assignment is important, as it determines which cases progress through the remaining stages of data processing.

Computer Edits

After ISR classification, the cases that were classified as completed interviews were submitted to a series of computer edits. The only records that were put through this series of edits were those classified as completed interviews during the ISR assignment. These edits consisted of a consistency edit (SASS-101 only) and a blanking edit (SASS-101, 102, and 103).

The TCPS forms were designed so that the source codes⁴ were consistent across all three forms (SASS-101, 102, and 103). However, because the three questionnaires differed significantly in length, the formats of each of the questionnaires were slightly different from one another. The SASS-101 was

³ The doc type indicates whether the questionnaire that was received by the clerical staff was from the first mailing, second mailing, or telephone follow-up.

⁴ Source codes are used to identify specific items on all SASS questionnaires. For each questionnaire item, the 4-digit source code can be found to the left of the answer choice(s).

formatted such that each two-page spread had one column of questions and three columns allowing data collection for three teachers. Each answer column was for collecting data on one teacher, whose name and school were printed at the top of the column. Three of the salary questions on this questionnaire (items 3, 4, and 5) had stacked answer choices, which allowed the respondent to write in the dollar amount or indicate “none,” “not offered,” or “data not available” for each salary item. There were two source codes assigned for each of these questions. The first source code was attached to the write-in dollar amount, and the second was attached to the “none,” “not offered,” and “data not available” answer choices.

Because the SASS-102 and 103 forms were significantly longer than the SASS-101 and required two pages for questions, they were formatted such that each two-page spread collected data on one teacher. The same three salary questions (items 3, 4, and 5) still had the same two source codes corresponding to each question. However, on these forms, the first source code was attached to both the write-in dollar amount AND the “none” option (indicated in the data file as “0”). The second source code was attached to the “not offered” and “data not available” answer choices.

In order to keep the data files for all three TCPS questionnaires consistent, a consistency edit program was developed by U.S. Census Bureau analysts which altered the answers to questions 3, 4, and 5 on the SASS-101 so that the “none” option was attached to the first source code for each question, rather than the second.

After the consistency edit was run on the SASS-101 data, the data from all three TCPS questionnaires were put through a blanking edit. The blanking edits deleted extraneous entries (e.g., in situations where the respondent indicated more than one answer choice for an item) and assigned the “not answered” code to items that the respondent should have answered but did not.

Item Response Rates

The TCPS item response rates were found by dividing the number of sampled districts that responded to an item by the number of sampled districts that were eligible to answer that item. For all TCPS items, a counted response is any item that is not missing (not assigned a “.n” in the data).

The item response rates for all items on the SASS TCPS forms combined ranged from 65.18 percent to 98.12 percent. Table H-3 provides a summary of the item response rates by form type and by treatment group. Table H-4 contains the TCPS items that had response rates below 85 percent. The item response rates in these tables are unweighted and do not reflect additional response loss due to respondents’ refusal to participate in the survey.

Table H-3. Summary of item response rates, by form type and treatment group: 2005–06 TCPS

TCPS form type and treatment group	Range of item response rates	Percent of items with a response rate of 85.0 percent or more	Percent of items with a response rate of 70.0–84.9 percent	Percent of items with a response rate of less than 70.0 percent
All TCPS forms	65.18–98.12	78.79	18.18	3.03
SASS-101	81.87–97.22	91.67	8.33	0
Group 1	82.50–96.99	91.67	8.33	0
Group 2	81.32–97.44	91.67	8.33	0
SASS-102	62.02–98.06	52.17	43.48	4.35
Group 3	58.75–97.50	52.17	43.48	4.35
Group 4	67.35–98.98	60.87	34.78	4.35
SASS-103	69.01–98.59	81.82	15.15	3.03
Group 5	75.00–99.08	84.85	15.15	0
Group 6	54.81–99.04	78.79	15.15	6.06

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, SASS Teacher Compensation Pilot Study (TCPS), “SASS-101, 102, and 103 Data Files,” 2005–06.

Table H-4. Items with response rates of less than 85 percent, by form type and treatment group: 2005–06 TCPS

TCPS form type and treatment group	Items
SASS-101	8
Group 1	8
Group 2	8
SASS-102	9, 10a, 10b, 10e, 11, 12, 13, 14-Name, 14-Title, 14-Phone, 15
Group 3	9, 10a, 10b, 10e, 11, 12, 13, 14-Name, 14-Title, 14-Phone, 15
Group 4	9, 10a, 11, 12, 12, 14-Name, 14-Title, 14-Phone, 15
SASS-103	9, 10a, 12, 13, 14, 16
Group 5	9, 10a, 12, 13, 14
Group 6	8h, 9, 10a, 12, 13, 14, 16

NOTE: Numbers in this table refer to questionnaire item numbers, while letters or descriptions refer to sub-items.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, SASS Teacher Compensation and Pilot Study (TCPS), “SASS-101, 102, and 103 Data Files,” 2005–06.

Datasets: Transformation from District Datasets to Teacher Datasets

TCPS data were kept in three distinct datasets, by form type (SASS-101, SASS-102, SASS-103), throughout data processing. In these datasets, each data record contained the data from one completed TCPS form. That is, each data record contained the data for all selected teachers listed on that particular district’s TCPS form. Because the next step of data processing was the teacher salary data validity study, each selected teacher’s salary data from the 2005–06 SASS pretest Teacher Questionnaire had to be matched to the TCPS data by the teacher control number.⁵ Therefore, U.S. Census Bureau programmers transformed the TCPS from datasets by district record to datasets by the individual teacher records. In addition, when datasets were organized by district record (rather than teacher record), the group of TCPS questionnaire items for each teacher had differing source codes throughout the questionnaire (in

⁵ The teacher control number is a unique, 14-digit number that is associated with each teacher sampled for SASS. This is the number that is used to identify and track individual questionnaires throughout data processing.

increments of fifty), depending on the teacher referenced. Programmers altered the newly transformed teacher datasets so that the source codes of the individual items were consistent across all teacher records. Once these two transformations were made to the TCPS datasets, they were ready for the next stage of data processing—the teacher salary data validity study (see appendix I).