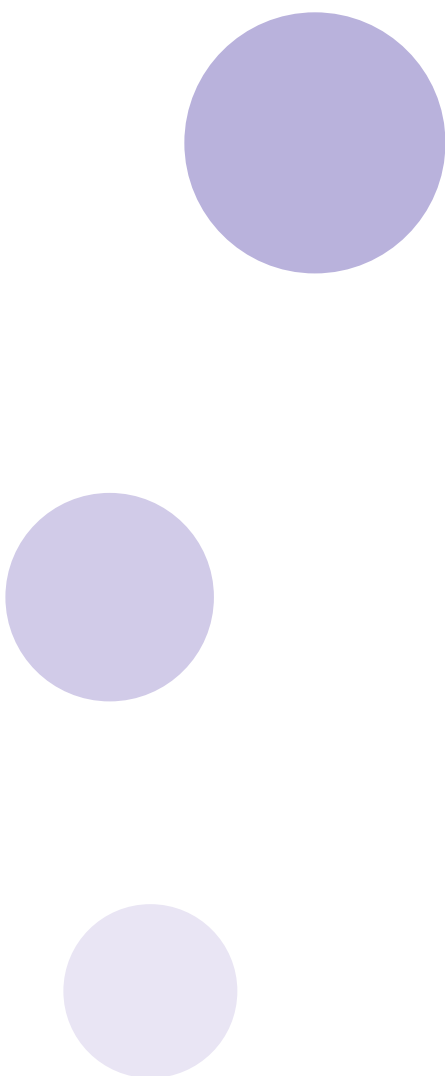


Characteristics of Public School Districts in the United States:

Results From the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey

First Look



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First Look

JULY 2013

Lucinda Gray
Amy Bitterman
Rebecca Goldring
Westat

Stephen Broughman
Project Officer
National Center for Education Statistics

U.S. Department of Education

Arne Duncan
Secretary

Institute of Education Sciences

John Q. Easton
Director

National Center for Education Statistics

Jack Buckley
Commissioner

Elementary/Secondary and Library Studies Division

Jeffrey Owings
Associate Commissioner

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Content Contact

Stephen Broughman
(202) 502-7315
stephen.broughman@ed.gov

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Introduction

This report presents selected findings from the Public School District Data File of the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS). SASS is a nationally representative sample survey of public¹ and private K–12 schools, principals, and teachers in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. School districts associated with public schools and library media centers in public schools are also part of SASS. Developed by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Institute of Education Sciences within the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, SASS was first conducted in school year 1987–88. Since then, SASS has been conducted six times: in school years 1990–91, 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2003–04, 2007–08, and, most recently, 2011–12.

The purpose of SASS is to collect information that can provide a detailed picture of U.S. elementary and secondary schools and their staff. This information is collected through the following surveys: district, school, principal, teacher, and library media center. Information from all the surveys can be linked. For more information about surveys and data files, see appendix C. The SASS questionnaires can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/questionnaire.asp>.

The 2011–12 SASS uses a school-based sample of public and private schools. Because SASS uses a school-based sample design, districts, principals, and library media centers associated with public schools were included, as were principals associated with private schools. Teachers associated with a selected school were sampled from a teacher list provided by the school or district. The selected samples include about 11,000 traditional and charter public schools, public school principals, and public school library media centers; 5,800 public school districts; 51,100 public school teachers; 3,000 private schools and their principals; and 7,100 private school teachers. The samples were drawn to support estimates by geography, grade span, and charter school status for public schools, and by geography, grade span, and affiliation group for private schools for a wide range of topics. The reader is referred to the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming) for details about these estimation domains and their precision criteria.

The data were collected via mailed questionnaires with telephone and in-person field follow-up. The first questionnaires were mailed in October 2011, and data collection ended in June 2012. The weighted unit response rates varied from 65 percent for private school principals to 81 percent for public school districts. For information about response rates, bias analysis results, methodology, and design of the 2011–12 SASS, please see the technical notes of this report in appendix B or the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming).

The purpose of this First Look is to introduce new data through the presentation of tables containing descriptive information. Selected findings chosen for this report demonstrate the range of information available on the 2011–12 SASS Public School District Data File. The selected findings do not represent a complete review of all observed differences in the data and are not meant to emphasize any particular issue. This First Look report highlights findings from the SASS district survey. Findings from the school, principal, teacher, and library media center data files will be presented in four companion First Look reports:

- *Characteristics of Public and Private Elementary and Secondary Schools in the United States: Results From the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (NCES 2013-312);
- *Characteristics of Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Principals in the United States: Results From the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (NCES 2013-313);

¹ Public schools include traditional public and charter schools.

- *Characteristics of Public and Private Elementary and Secondary School Teachers in the United States: Results From the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (NCES 2013-314); and
- *Characteristics of Public Elementary and Secondary School Library Media Centers in the United States: Results From the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (NCES 2013-315).

The tables in this report contain counts and percentages demonstrating bivariate relationships. All of the results have been weighted to reflect the sample design and to account for nonresponse and other adjustments. Comparisons drawn in the selected findings have been tested for statistical significance at the .05 level using Student's *t* statistics to ensure that the differences are larger than those that might be expected due to sampling variation. No adjustments were made for multiple comparisons. Many of the variables examined are related to one another, and complex interactions and relationships have not been explored. Statistical Analysis Software (SAS 9.3) and SUDAAN (10.0) were used to compute the statistics for this report. Tables of standard errors are provided in appendix A. Detailed information about the survey methodology is provided in appendix B. Appendix C contains a description of the survey data files, and appendix D contains a description of the variables used in this report.

More information about the SASS can be found at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>.

Selected Findings

- Of the estimated 16,990 public school districts in the United States, about 8,300 were in rural communities, 3,310 in suburban areas, 2,840 in towns, and 2,540 in cities (table 1).
- A large proportion of districts (89 percent) had salary schedules for teachers in 2011–12 (table 2). The salary schedules for these districts showed the average yearly base salary for teachers with a bachelor’s degree and no teaching experience was \$35,500, while teachers with the same degree but 10 years of teaching experience had an average yearly base salary of \$44,900.
- Among all districts, the average yearly base salary for full-time teachers was \$35,800 for the lowest paid and \$62,700 for the highest paid in 2011–12 (table 3). The median base salary for full-time teachers was \$34,300 for the lowest paid and \$60,400 for the highest paid.
- Almost all (98 percent) of districts offered general medical insurance benefits to teachers, while 87 percent offered dental insurance, and 81 percent offered group life insurance (table 4).
- Districts used pay incentives to reward teachers who attained certification from the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (25 percent), to recruit or retain teachers to teach in fields of shortage (13 percent), to reward excellence in teaching (11 percent), and to recruit or retain teachers to teach in a less desirable location (6 percent) (table 5).
- Districts reported that 7 percent of K–12 teachers were newly hired for the 2011–12 school year (table 6). Among all districts, 27 percent offered free training to district staff members to prepare them to teach in fields with current or anticipated shortages.
- Half (50 percent) of districts had a collective bargaining agreement with teachers’ associations or unions, 8 percent had meet-and-confer agreements with these groups, 1 percent had another type of agreement, and 40 percent had no agreement (table 7).²
- In the 2011–12 school year, the average number of teachers per district was 187. In the 2010–11 school year, an average of 3.5 teachers per district were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed, and an average of 1.1 of these teachers were dismissed as a result of poor performance (table 8).
- Among the 76 percent of districts that granted high school diplomas, the average number of years of instruction required for a standard diploma was 4.0 in English or language arts, 3.3 in mathematics, 3.3 in social sciences and social studies, 3.0 in science, 1.7 in foreign languages, and 1.1 in computer science (table 9).³
- Among the districts with more than one school (66 percent of the 16,990 districts), the average yearly base salary was \$77,500 for the lowest paid full-time principal in the district and \$93,700 for the highest paid full-time principal in the district in 2011–12 (table 10). The median base salary was \$74,400 for the lowest paid full-time principal in the district and \$90,400 for the highest paid full-time principal in the district.
- About 11 percent of districts had a collective bargaining agreement with principals’ associations or unions, 8 percent had meet-and-confer agreements with these groups, 3 percent had another type of agreement, and 79 percent had no agreement (table 11).
- Among all districts, 21 percent had a tenure system for principals, and 21 percent had a training program for aspiring school administrators (table 12).

² Collective bargaining agreements are legally binding agreements and meet-and-confer discussions are for the purpose of reaching nonlegally binding agreements.

³ Districts that did not have a graduation requirement for a subject area were excluded from the calculation of the average for that subject area.

- Among the 66 percent of districts with more than one school, 45 percent offered a school “choice” program that involved accepting students from another district at no tuition cost to the students or families (table 13). About 29 percent of the districts with more than one school offered a school “choice” program that allowed their students to enroll in either their assigned school or another school within the district.

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Estimate Tables

Table 1. Number and percentage distribution of public school districts, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Number of public school districts	Percentage distribution of public school districts
All public school districts	16,990	100.0
District size		
1 school	5,710	33.6
2–3 schools	4,310	25.4
4–5 schools	2,690	15.9
6–9 schools	2,310	13.6
10–19 schools	1,220	7.2
20 or more schools	740	4.3
Community type		
City	2,540	15.0
Suburban	3,310	19.5
Town	2,840	16.7
Rural	8,300	48.9
District K–12 enrollment		
Less than 250	3,430	20.2
250–999	5,820	34.3
1,000–1,999	2,900	17.0
2,000–4,999	2,860	16.9
5,000–9,999	1,080	6.4
10,000 or more	890	5.2
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches		
0–34	4,180	24.6
35–49	3,660	21.5
50–74	4,850	28.5
75 or more	3,060	18.0
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	1,230	7.3

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

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 2. Percentage of public school districts that had salary schedules for teachers and among those that had salary schedules, the average yearly teacher base salary, by various levels of degrees and experience and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent with salary schedules for teachers	Among districts that had salary schedules, average yearly teacher base salary					Highest possible step on the salary schedule
		Bachelor's degree and no teaching experience	Bachelor's degree and 10 years of teaching experience	Master's degree and no teaching experience	Master's degree and 10 years of teaching experience	Master's degree and 15 years of teaching experience	
All public school districts	89.2	\$35,500	\$44,900	\$38,700	\$49,500	\$55,000	\$65,100
District size							
1 school	72.2	34,700	42,900	37,600	46,700	51,100	59,100
2–3 schools	97.6	34,400	43,800	37,500	47,900	53,700	62,700
4–5 schools	96.8	35,700	45,500	38,900	50,400	56,500	67,700
6–9 schools	98.6	37,100	47,900	40,400	53,000	59,300	71,000
10–19 schools	98.5	37,500	47,500	41,000	53,400	59,300	72,300
20 or more schools	98.7	38,200	47,100	41,500	52,800	58,100	72,700
Community type							
City	68.6	37,900	47,300	40,900	51,700	56,500	67,000
Suburban	92.1	40,500	53,500	44,400	59,500	67,700	81,100
Town	95.7	35,000	43,900	38,300	48,500	53,700	64,000
Rural	92.1	33,200	41,300	36,000	45,300	50,000	58,700
∞ District K–12 enrollment							
Less than 250	73.7	32,700	39,900	35,700	44,000	47,800	54,800
250–999	87.4	34,600	43,600	37,600	47,500	52,600	61,000
1,000–1,999	96.0	35,900	46,000	39,000	50,500	56,900	67,800
2,000–4,999	97.8	37,200	48,000	40,600	53,100	59,600	71,700
5,000–9,999	98.5	38,600	49,500	42,400	55,600	62,300	76,600
10,000 or more	98.8	38,700	47,900	42,100	53,900	59,500	74,700
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches							
0–34	95.7	37,400	48,400	40,800	53,700	60,600	72,100
35–49	92.6	34,900	44,100	38,100	48,700	54,300	64,500
50–74	93.4	34,100	42,800	36,900	46,800	51,500	60,900
75 or more	79.9	35,500	43,700	38,700	48,000	52,400	61,700
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	63.6	36,800	46,300	40,300	51,200	56,700	66,300

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 3. Average and median lowest and highest yearly base salaries paid to full-time teachers among all districts, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Average base salary of the lowest paid teacher in the district	Median base salary of the lowest paid teacher in the district	Average base salary of the highest paid teacher in the district	Median base salary of the highest paid teacher in the district
All public school districts	\$35,800	\$34,300	\$62,700	\$60,400
District size				
1 school	35,100	33,200	53,900	50,000
2–3 schools	35,100	33,200	62,100	59,000
4–5 schools	35,900	34,500	68,000	65,000
6–9 schools	37,100	36,100	70,900	67,900
10–19 schools	37,500	36,000	72,200	69,000
20 or more schools	37,900	37,200	73,200	71,800
Community type				
City	36,700	35,000	59,000	55,000
Suburban	40,500	39,900	78,600	78,200
Town	35,400	34,000	62,300	62,600
Rural	33,800	32,600	57,600	56,900
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	34,000	32,000	50,000	47,400
250–999	35,100	33,400	58,600	56,800
1,000–1,999	36,100	34,700	67,900	65,300
2,000–4,999	37,200	36,100	71,600	68,900
5,000–9,999	38,600	37,200	76,600	73,300
10,000 or more	38,500	38,000	75,600	74,200
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	37,800	36,500	72,200	69,800
35–49	35,100	33,700	63,400	62,900
50–74	34,500	33,400	60,100	58,500
75 or more	35,300	33,500	56,100	53,300
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	37,100	35,100	54,900	51,800

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 4. Percentage of public school districts that offered various benefits to teachers, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	General medical insurance	Dental insurance	Group life insurance	Retirement plan ¹		Tuition reimbursement	Housing, rent assistance, or subsidized housing, meals, or transportation
				Defined benefit	Defined contribution		
All public school districts	98.5	86.8	81.4	83.6	68.9	45.0	6.8
District size							
1 school	96.6	83.2	75.2	75.7	65.2	42.2	8.1
2–3 schools	99.2	82.5	79.0	84.3	68.0	47.5	8.7
4–5 schools	99.6	89.8	84.5	86.8	72.4	46.8	6.0
6–9 schools	99.6	92.8	88.5	91.0	70.5	49.5	2.9
10–19 schools	99.3	95.0	90.2	91.5	73.8	41.1	5.7
20 or more schools	99.8	96.8	95.7	93.3	77.1	38.4	3.9
Community type							
City	98.2	91.2	84.2	75.0	71.5	41.5	6.1
Suburban	99.5	94.8	86.7	86.4	74.6	57.6	3.0
Town	99.4	89.9	81.4	85.0	70.1	45.4	6.3
Rural	97.8	81.2	78.5	84.7	65.4	40.9	8.8
District K–12 enrollment							
Less than 250	94.8	77.9	70.6	75.6	60.3	40.1	11.1
250–999	99.1	83.9	78.7	81.2	67.6	44.2	8.5
1,000–1,999	99.8	90.5	85.4	86.9	74.2	51.6	3.8
2,000–4,999	99.5	92.7	88.2	89.0	72.7	50.1	3.9
5,000–9,999	99.4	96.5	91.5	92.1	71.9	41.4	3.2
10,000 or more	99.9	97.2	94.3	92.3	78.0	36.1	3.8
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches							
0–34	99.5	88.8	83.7	84.3	70.4	54.9	4.7
35–49	99.6	83.4	81.1	86.6	73.1	46.0	7.5
50–74	98.9	88.5	82.2	85.1	66.8	37.2	7.5
75 or more	96.8	86.4	83.4	82.4	66.2	43.0	7.5
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	93.6	84.5	66.6	69.9	66.8	44.3	7.9!

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

¹ Districts can offer both defined-benefit and defined-contribution retirement plans. A defined-benefit retirement plan is a plan in which benefits are invested in a group trust fund that employees do not control. Benefits are based on a formula that takes into account employee's length of employment and earnings. Most state retirement plans are defined benefit. A defined contribution retirement plan is a plan where contributions are paid into an individually controlled retirement account. Funds available at retirement depend on the nature of the investment and its returns. 403(b) plans are defined contribution.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 5. Percentage of public school districts that used pay incentives for various reasons, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	To reward teachers who have attained National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification	To reward excellence in teaching	To recruit or retain teachers to teach in a less desirable location	To recruit or retain teachers to teach in fields of shortage
All public school districts	24.5	11.3	5.6	13.5
District size				
1 school	19.8	22.9	8.8	15.8
2–3 schools	17.0	3.8	2.4	7.6
4–5 schools	22.6	5.8	3.6	13.9
6–9 schools	32.8	4.9	2.6	11.2
10–19 schools	44.0	7.5	7.1	18.1
20 or more schools	54.0	10.5	15.0	28.3
Community type				
City	27.1	34.8	11.3	20.6
Suburban	25.5	9.0	4.2	10.2
Town	26.9	6.1	3.8	12.1
Rural	22.6	6.7	5.1	13.1
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	17.5	16.3	8.3	16.1
250–999	18.8	14.3	5.4	11.2
1,000–1,999	22.3	6.5	2.9	9.6
2,000–4,999	32.7	5.6	3.0	12.6
5,000–9,999	41.2	7.1	6.5	18.6
10,000 or more	50.1	10.5	13.0	27.5
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	22.2	3.7	2.6	8.2
35–49	23.0	6.7	3.0	9.8
50–74	25.9	7.9	5.8	16.0
75 or more	29.7	26.8	12.4	20.1
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	18.9	24.9	6.2!	16.3

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 6. Percentage of public school teachers who were newly hired for grades K–12 and comparable ungraded levels, percentage of districts that offered free training for district staff to prepare them to teach in fields with current or anticipated shortages, and percentage of districts that used various practices to recruit teachers, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent of teachers who were newly hired for grades K–12 and comparable ungraded levels	Percent of districts that offered free training for district staff to prepare them to teach in fields with current or anticipated shortages	Percent of districts that used various practices to recruit teachers			
			Signing bonuses	Forgiveness of student loan(s) funded by the district	Relocation assistance	Finder's fee to existing staff for new teacher referrals
All public school districts	6.9	27.1	3.9	2.4	2.5	1.5
District size						
1 school	12.0	30.6	3.4	3.0	3.0	3.8
2–3 schools	6.7	22.4	2.2	1.6	2.4	‡
4–5 schools	6.6	26.8	5.5	1.4	1.3	0.2!
6–9 schools	6.6	25.7	4.0	1.8	1.7	0.3!
10–19 schools	6.7	27.9	6.5	4.1	3.3	0.8
20 or more schools	6.6	32.6	8.2	6.0	5.0	1.5
Community type						
City	7.5	35.7	5.9	3.9	3.5	6.3
Suburban	6.0	21.5	1.5	1.3	‡	‡
Town	7.3	25.9	5.5	3.5	2.5	0.5!
Rural	7.4	27.2	3.7	2.1	2.8	0.6!
District K–12 enrollment						
Less than 250	12.3	29.0	4.2	2.6	3.3	1.9!
250–999	9.3	29.3	2.7	2.1	3.0	2.6
1,000–1,999	6.7	23.0	3.1	1.7	0.9	‡
2,000–4,999	6.6	24.6	4.8	2.4	2.1	‡
5,000–9,999	6.6	25.4	5.6	3.4	1.8	1.5
10,000 or more	6.6	29.8	8.3	4.9	3.8	1.3
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches						
0–34	6.3	20.3	1.6	1.3	1.4	‡
35–49	6.7	22.4	4.7	1.1	2.0	1.1!
50–74	6.9	28.8	4.5	1.9	2.5	0.7!
75 or more	8.3	40.6	6.4	6.5	3.6	4.3
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	9.6	24.2	‡	2.0!	4.9!	‡

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater (i.e., the standard error is 50 percent or more of the estimate).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 7. Percentage distribution of public school districts, by type of agreement with teachers' associations or unions and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Type of agreement with a teachers' association or union			
	Meet-and-confer ¹	Collective bargaining ²	Other type of agreement ³	No agreement
All public school districts	8.4	50.2	1.4	40.0
District size				
1 school	4.2	29.3	1.5!	65.1
2–3 schools	11.5	60.7	1.6	26.1
4–5 schools	9.9	60.5	1.1	28.5
6–9 schools	9.4	64.4	1.0	25.3
10–19 schools	9.5	58.6	1.7	30.2
20 or more schools	11.7	53.9	1.8	32.5
Community type				
City	3.7	21.0	2.1!	73.3
Suburban	8.6	68.0	0.6	22.8
Town	8.1	57.0	0.8	34.1
Rural	9.8	49.7	1.8	38.8
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	5.2	27.9	2.0!	64.8
250–999	8.6	48.1	1.4	41.9
1,000–1,999	9.0	62.9	1.0	27.1
2,000–4,999	9.0	62.4	1.1	27.4
5,000–9,999	11.3	60.7	1.4	26.6
10,000 or more	11.5	55.8	1.5	31.2
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	8.3	73.1	1.3	17.3
35–49	10.3	62.8	0.8	26.1
50–74	10.1	44.9	1.5	43.5
75 or more	4.5	23.5	2.8	69.3
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	5.9	21.8	#	72.4

Rounds to zero.

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

¹ Meet-and-confer discussions are for the purpose of reaching nonlegally binding agreements.

² Collective bargaining agreements are legally binding agreements.

³ This category includes other agreements that do not meet the precise legal definitions of collective bargaining or meet-and-confer agreements.

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

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 8. Average number of teachers per public school district in 2011–12, average number of teachers per district in the previous year (2010–11) who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed for any reason, and as a result of poor performance, by tenure status of teachers and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Average number of teachers per district in 2011–12	During the 2010–11 school year, average number of teachers per district who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed for any reason	During the 2010–11 school year, average number of teachers per district who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed as a result of poor performance		
			Teachers with all tenure statuses	Nontenured teachers ¹	Tenured teachers ²
All public school districts	187.0	3.5	1.1	1.0	0.2
District size					
1 school	27.0	1.0	0.5	0.5	#
2–3 schools	61.0	1.1	0.4	0.4	0.1
4–5 schools	129.3	1.9	0.7	0.6	0.1
6–9 schools	228.5	3.3	1.1	1.0	0.1
10–19 schools	466.3	7.8	2.5	2.3	0.3
20 or more schools	1,779.4	35.8	9.1	7.2	1.9
Community type					
City	316.4	7.1	2.1	1.6	0.4
Suburban	363.6	6.6	2.1	1.9	0.2
Town	147.2	2.3	0.8	0.7	0.1
Rural	90.7	1.5	0.5	0.5	0.1
District K–12 enrollment					
Less than 250	14.4	0.6	0.3	0.2	#
250–999	43.1	1.1	0.5	0.5	0.1
1,000–1,999	104.4	1.6	0.5	0.4	0.1
2,000–4,999	221.5	3.3	1.2	1.1	0.1
5,000–9,999	460.4	7.9	2.8	2.5	0.2
10,000 or more	1,619.2	31.2	8.1	6.4	1.7
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches					
0–34	217.7	2.9	0.9	0.8	0.1
35–49	178.7	3.2	1.0	0.8	0.1
50–74	236.8	4.6	1.4	1.2	0.3
75 or more	138.7	3.8	1.4	1.2	0.2
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	32.3	1.1	0.5	0.4	‡

Rounds to zero.

‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater (i.e., the standard error is 50 percent or more of the estimate).

¹Teachers who are often relatively inexperienced or novices. This includes teachers in their initial induction year, teachers who are on year-to-year contracts, and those teachers who have not entered a more permanent status, traditionally referred to as tenure.

²Teachers who have satisfactorily completed a probationary period and were given a contract as a career or permanent employee.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding and because some data are not shown.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 9. Percentage of public school districts that grant high school diplomas, and among those that grant diplomas, graduation requirements for standard diplomas, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent of districts that grant high school diplomas	Among districts that grant high school diplomas, the average number of years of instruction in various subject areas needed for a standard diploma by high school graduates of the class of 2012 ¹						
		English or language arts	Mathematics	Computer science	Social sciences and social studies (e.g., history, geography, economics)	Science	Foreign languages	
All public school districts	75.8	4.0	3.3	1.1	3.3	3.0	1.7	
District size								
1 school	48.2	4.0	3.4	1.2	3.3	3.1	1.8	
2–3 schools	85.6	4.0	3.2	1.1	3.3	3.0	1.6	
4–5 schools	91.4	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.3	3.1	1.7	
6–9 schools	92.3	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.7	
10–19 schools	92.8	4.0	3.3	0.9	3.3	3.0	1.6	
20 or more schools	95.5	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.2	3.0	1.7	
Community type								
City	54.3	4.0	3.4	1.2	3.3	3.1	1.9	
Suburban	73.9	4.0	3.2	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.7	
Town	83.4	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.6	
Rural	80.5	4.0	3.3	1.1	3.3	3.1	1.6	
District K–12 enrollment								
Less than 250	54.5	4.0	3.3	1.2	3.3	3.1	1.7	
250–999	66.9	4.0	3.3	1.1	3.3	3.0	1.7	
1,000–1,999	88.7	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.4	3.1	1.6	
2,000–4,999	94.3	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.7	
5,000–9,999	91.7	4.0	3.3	0.9	3.3	3.0	1.6	
10,000 or more	95.2	4.0	3.3	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.6	
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches								
0–34	82.8	4.0	3.2	1.0	3.3	2.9	1.6	
35–49	85.0	4.0	3.2	1.0	3.3	3.0	1.5	
50–74	81.9	4.0	3.4	1.1	3.3	3.1	1.8	
75 or more	58.4	4.0	3.5	1.2	3.3	3.1	1.7	
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	43.9	4.0	3.4	1.0	3.3	3.0	2.3	

¹Districts that did not have a graduation requirement for a particular subject area were excluded from the computation of the average for that particular subject area. This resulted in the exclusion of 0.2 percent of diploma-granting districts in English or language arts; 0.2 percent in mathematics; 50.4 percent in computer science; 0.3 percent in social sciences and social studies; 0.3 percent in science; and 58.2 percent in foreign languages.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 10. Among districts with more than one school, percentage of public school districts that had salary schedules for principals, and average and median lowest and highest yearly base salaries paid to all full-time principals, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Number of public school districts	Percent with salary schedules for principals	Average base salary of the lowest paid principal in the district	Median base salary of the lowest paid principal in the district	Average base salary of the highest paid principal in the district	Median base salary of the highest paid principal in the district
All districts with more than one school	11,280	47.4	\$77,500	\$74,400	\$93,700	\$90,400
District size						
2–3 schools	4,310	26.5	74,400	71,200	83,500	80,000
4–5 schools	2,690	43.9	77,400	74,500	93,700	90,100
6–9 schools	2,310	59.6	80,800	78,000	101,000	98,900
10–19 schools	1,220	80.0	81,400	79,300	105,500	105,200
20 or more schools	740	90.4	79,300	78,000	110,900	110,900
Community type						
City	760	84.3	83,300	82,000	109,300	108,200
Suburban	2,640	59.1	94,200	90,200	117,600	113,500
Town	2,380	49.6	74,400	72,900	91,400	90,600
Rural	5,500	35.8	70,000	69,300	81,100	80,000
District K–12 enrollment						
Less than 250	610	20.2	63,400	63,600	67,600	65,000
250–999	3,200	23.1	71,600	69,900	79,500	77,200
1,000–1,999	2,700	42.4	77,900	74,600	93,900	90,400
2,000–4,999	2,810	60.6	82,000	79,100	102,300	99,800
5,000–9,999	1,070	78.7	86,400	84,000	111,600	109,000
10,000 or more	880	89.6	82,100	80,200	113,600	113,200
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches						
0–34	3,280	41.4	87,400	84,800	106,600	103,600
35–49	2,840	40.0	75,500	73,000	91,500	89,600
50–74	3,670	53.1	70,600	69,000	85,000	82,600
75 or more	1,290	65.4	73,500	70,000	88,200	84,400
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	200	31.3	95,500	89,800	109,700	103,900

NOTE: Districts with only one school, including single traditional public schools and public charter schools that operate independently of a regular school district, were not asked about principal salary schedules. Estimates in this table are based on 66 percent of all districts. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 11. Percentage distribution of public school districts, by type of agreement with principals' associations or unions and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent distribution of districts by type of agreement with a principals' association or union			
	Meet-and-confer ¹	Collective bargaining ²	Other type of agreement ³	No agreement
All public school districts	7.7	10.8	2.9	78.6
District size				
1 school	3.4	4.5	0.6!	91.5
2–3 schools	6.6	12.1	4.8	76.5
4–5 schools	9.2	14.0	2.7	74.0
6–9 schools	11.6	15.7	4.7	68.0
10–19 schools	14.0	17.3	3.4	65.3
20 or more schools	19.6	14.8	3.2	62.5
Community type				
City	5.7	5.3	1.3!	87.7
Suburban	11.4	24.7	4.8	59.1
Town	8.8	9.4	2.5	79.2
Rural	6.5	7.5	2.7	83.3
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	2.5	4.1	1.2!	92.2
250–999	4.5	6.4	2.2	86.9
1,000–1,999	11.4	15.2	4.0	69.4
2,000–4,999	10.5	18.6	4.9	66.1
5,000–9,999	13.9	21.4	4.0	60.7
10,000 or more	20.0	14.1	2.5	63.4
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	12.7	19.8	4.1	63.4
35–49	9.5	12.7	3.3	74.6
50–74	6.7	6.6	3.3	83.4
75 or more	3.1	4.9	1.3	90.8
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	1.2	6.5	#	92.3

Rounds to zero.

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

¹ Meet-and-confer discussions are for the purpose of reaching nonlegally binding agreements.

² Collective bargaining agreements are legally binding agreements.

³ This category includes other agreements that do not meet the precise legal definitions of collective bargaining or meet-and-confer agreements.

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

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 12. Percentage of public school district principals who were newly hired, average number of days in the normal contract year for principals, percentage of districts that had a tenure system for principals, percentage of districts that used any incentives for recruiting principals, and percentage of districts that had a training program for aspiring school administrators, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent of principals who were newly hired ¹	Average number of days in the normal contract year for principals ²	Percent of districts that had a tenure system for principals	Percent of districts that used any incentives for recruiting principals	Percent of districts that had a training program for aspiring school administrators
All public school districts	8.6	230	21.1	2.2	21.3
District size					
1 school	†	230	14.8	3.7	20.5
2–3 schools	11.6	230	25.7	1.1!	13.0
4–5 schools	10.1	230	23.1	1.3	18.4
6–9 schools	10.1	230	22.2	1.6	20.6
10–19 schools	7.8	230	25.9	1.9	36.8
20 or more schools	6.7	230	23.4	3.0	63.4
Community type					
City	7.7	240	12.9	5.8	37.5
Suburban	7.5	230	33.0	0.9	27.8
Town	9.2	230	19.3	1.4	19.6
Rural	10.2	230	19.4	1.9	14.4
District K–12 enrollment					
Less than 250	21.3	230	13.7	3.5	12.0
250–999	11.7	230	19.3	2.4	20.4
1,000–1,999	10.7	230	24.8	1.2	15.8
2,000–4,999	9.3	230	26.4	1.6	21.8
5,000–9,999	8.0	230	28.2	1.3!	36.6
10,000 or more	6.7	230	23.4	2.5	61.1
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches					
0–34	8.4	230	31.5	1.5	17.0
35–49	8.7	230	25.6	1.5	20.5
50–74	8.4	220	16.7	1.4	22.1
75 or more	9.2	230	12.7	5.2	28.4
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	8.8	240	10.5	2.3!	17.9

† Not applicable.

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 percent and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

¹ Districts with only one school, including single traditional public schools and public charter schools that operate independently of a regular school district, were not included in this column.

Estimates in this column are based on 66 percent of all districts.

² Includes professional development, student contact days, and other days covered in a typical principal's contract.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table 13. Number of public school districts with more than one school, and among those districts, percentage that offer various school “choice” programs to students within or outside of the district, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Number of public school districts	Percent of districts that offer a school “choice” program in which			
		Students can enroll in either their assigned school or another school within the district	Students from this district can enroll in a school in another district at no tuition cost to themselves or their families	Students from this district can choose to enroll in a private school using state or district funds	Students from other districts can enroll in a school within this district at no tuition cost to themselves or their families
All districts with more than one school	11,280	29.3	40.5	7.3	45.3
District size					
2–3 schools	4,310	10.8	40.4	7.1	45.9
4–5 schools	2,690	21.5	43.3	6.4	49.1
6–9 schools	2,310	41.1	38.5	7.3	43.0
10–19 schools	1,220	62.1	39.1	8.0	40.1
20 or more schools	740	74.6	39.0	11.2	44.7
Community type					
City	760	73.8	44.3	9.2	47.2
Suburban	2,640	33.9	36.3	6.0	33.8
Town	2,380	28.3	44.7	7.0	51.1
Rural	5,500	21.4	40.1	7.9	48.1
District K–12 enrollment					
Less than 250	610	10.8	33.4	‡	46.1
250–999	3,200	13.1	43.6	8.1	50.9
1,000–1,999	2,700	19.4	44.0	7.6	47.2
2,000–4,999	2,810	37.9	37.8	6.2	41.2
5,000–9,999	1,070	55.9	34.6	6.9	36.7
10,000 or more	880	71.5	39.1	10.8	42.8
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches					
0–34	3,280	22.3	40.0	6.0	41.3
35–49	2,840	27.1	44.2	8.2	48.8
50–74	3,670	35.0	39.2	7.4	48.6
75 or more	1,290	39.4	39.6	8.9	43.0
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	200	8.7	24.1	7.1!	19.1

! Interpret data with caution. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is between 30 and 50 percent (i.e., the standard error is at least 30 percent and less than 50 percent of the estimate).

‡ Reporting standards not met. The coefficient of variation (CV) for this estimate is 50 percent or greater (i.e., the standard error is 50 percent or more of the estimate).

NOTE: Districts with only one school, including single traditional public schools and public charter schools that operate independently of a regular school district, were not asked about school choice. Estimates in this table are based on 66 percent of all districts. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District Data File,” 2011–12.

Appendix A: Standard Error Tables

Table A-1. Standard errors for Table 1: Number and percentage distribution of public school districts, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Number of public school districts	Percentage distribution of public school districts
All public school districts	198	†
District size		
1 school	186	1.29
2–3 schools	197	0.95
4–5 schools	114	0.55
6–9 schools	47	0.29
10–19 schools	39	0.17
20 or more schools	11	0.05
Community type		
City	74	0.43
Suburban	91	0.38
Town	45	0.31
Rural	128	0.41
District K–12 enrollment		
Less than 250	151	0.99
250–999	144	0.68
1,000–1,999	113	0.55
2,000–4,999	78	0.35
5,000–9,999	40	0.19
10,000 or more	17	0.07
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches		
0–34	136	0.64
35–49	140	0.70
50–74	174	0.81
75 or more	136	0.92
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	81	0.51

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District Data File,” 2011–12.

Table A-2. Standard errors for Table 2: Percentage of public school districts that had salary schedules for teachers and among those that had salary schedules, the average yearly teacher base salary, by various levels of degrees and experience and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent with salary schedules for teachers	Among districts that had salary schedules, average yearly teacher base salary					Highest possible step on the salary schedule
		Bachelor's degree and no teaching experience	Bachelor's degree and 10 years of teaching experience	Master's degree and no teaching experience	Master's degree and 10 years of teaching experience	Master's degree and 15 years of teaching experience	
All public school districts	0.68	110	130	110	140	170	200
District size							
1 school	2.09	470	510	510	580	620	690
2–3 schools	0.49	190	270	220	320	370	410
4–5 schools	0.53	130	230	150	270	330	400
6–9 schools	0.25	120	230	130	250	300	310
10–19 schools	0.14	100	190	120	220	310	320
20 or more schools	0.06	50	80	40	110	130	140
Community type							
City	2.62	570	490	570	560	620	830
Suburban	1.30	160	240	170	290	370	430
Town	0.97	170	280	190	270	340	320
Rural	1.05	100	140	110	160	180	190
District K–12 enrollment							
Less than 250	2.43	530	680	590	720	850	1,030
250–999	1.25	180	210	180	250	290	360
1,000–1,999	0.74	150	230	180	270	340	430
2,000–4,999	0.38	110	190	120	210	260	330
5,000–9,999	0.23	140	270	170	330	410	480
10,000 or more	0.15	80	140	90	180	210	250
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches							
0–34	0.70	190	270	220	320	400	520
35–49	0.98	170	280	190	320	360	420
50–74	0.97	150	200	170	220	260	320
75 or more	2.72	510	560	590	620	690	830
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	4.14	630	980	710	1,140	1,450	1,570

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-3. Standard errors for Table 3: Average and median lowest and highest yearly base salaries paid to full-time teachers among all districts, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Average base salary of the lowest paid teacher in the district	Median base salary of the lowest paid teacher in the district	Average base salary of the highest paid teacher in the district	Median base salary of the highest paid teacher in the district
All public school districts	90	100	250	360
District size				
1 school	330	290	480	690
2–3 schools	230	250	420	330
4–5 schools	140	180	440	570
6–9 schools	120	100	350	620
10–19 schools	110	90	350	390
20 or more schools	40	70	150	190
Community type				
City	380	190	640	1,250
Suburban	220	230	610	470
Town	210	120	610	270
Rural	110	110	220	220
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	410	200	640	540
250–999	170	250	350	480
1,000–1,999	150	160	410	410
2,000–4,999	120	70	370	540
5,000–9,999	150	330	550	580
10,000 or more	80	90	230	250
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	210	250	530	910
35–49	200	130	440	380
50–74	160	120	370	220
75 or more	350	390	670	950
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	730	410	1,530	2,290

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-4. Standard errors for Table 4: Percentage of public school districts that offered various benefits to teachers, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	General medical insurance	Dental insurance	Group life insurance	Retirement plan		Tuition reimbursement	Housing, rent assistance, or subsidized housing, meals, or transportation
				Defined benefit	Defined contribution		
All public school districts	0.29	0.52	0.68	0.44	0.80	0.59	0.47
District size							
1 school	0.89	1.36	1.79	1.33	2.12	1.55	1.27
2–3 schools	0.18	1.10	1.21	1.03	1.33	1.51	0.77
4–5 schools	0.08	0.67	1.01	0.87	1.19	1.32	0.57
6–9 schools	0.13	0.67	0.80	0.61	1.05	1.92	0.25
10–19 schools	0.07	0.26	0.48	0.50	0.82	0.83	0.36
20 or more schools	#	0.12	0.16	0.28	0.35	0.44	0.15
Community type							
City	0.67	1.79	1.73	2.18	2.02	2.14	1.68
Suburban	0.33	0.64	1.03	1.15	1.38	1.49	0.48
Town	0.11	0.78	2.31	2.04	2.08	1.07	0.84
Rural	0.57	0.91	0.90	0.79	1.14	0.85	0.67
District K–12 enrollment							
Less than 250	1.31	2.12	2.33	1.98	2.46	2.18	1.70
250–999	0.40	1.04	1.30	1.29	1.45	1.26	0.95
1,000–1,999	0.08	0.73	0.97	1.06	1.55	1.24	0.72
2,000–4,999	0.08	0.38	0.54	0.60	0.85	1.22	0.44
5,000–9,999	0.08	0.34	0.55	0.54	1.01	0.99	0.31
10,000 or more	#	0.17	0.22	0.22	0.43	0.60	0.28
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches							
0–34	0.13	0.82	1.05	1.18	1.41	1.18	0.52
35–49	0.13	1.09	1.13	0.98	1.40	1.73	0.95
50–74	0.27	0.81	1.26	0.80	1.27	1.30	0.95
75 or more	1.46	1.94	1.77	2.00	2.32	2.35	1.20
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	1.75	3.35	5.29	4.61	4.89	4.80	2.55

Rounds to zero.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-5. Standard errors for Table 5: Percentage of public school districts that used pay incentives for various reasons, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	To reward teachers who have attained National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification	To reward excellence in teaching	To recruit or retain teachers to teach in a less desirable location	To recruit or retain teachers to teach in fields of shortage
All public school districts	0.54	0.61	0.35	0.62
District size				
1 school	1.40	1.70	1.08	1.62
2–3 schools	0.96	0.48	0.52	0.98
4–5 schools	0.96	0.71	0.42	0.90
6–9 schools	0.97	0.61	0.32	0.56
10–19 schools	0.79	0.47	0.53	0.95
20 or more schools	0.44	0.23	0.22	0.30
Community type				
City	1.58	3.07	1.93	2.48
Suburban	1.07	0.99	0.74	0.81
Town	1.03	0.64	0.53	0.83
Rural	0.95	0.66	0.55	0.88
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	1.84	2.02	1.34	1.87
250–999	1.18	1.05	0.68	1.03
1,000–1,999	1.11	0.73	0.67	1.01
2,000–4,999	1.12	0.47	0.26	0.70
5,000–9,999	1.01	0.60	0.56	0.85
10,000 or more	0.53	0.38	0.22	0.54
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	0.93	0.46	0.42	0.61
35–49	1.40	0.90	0.71	0.75
50–74	0.96	0.74	0.74	0.99
75 or more	1.62	2.52	1.43	1.78
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	3.01	4.08	2.11	2.80

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-6. Standard errors for Table 6: Percentage of public school teachers who were newly hired for grades K–12 and comparable ungraded levels, percentage of districts that offered free training for district staff to prepare them to teach in fields with current or anticipated shortages, and percentage of districts that used various practices to recruit teachers, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent of teachers who were newly hired for grades K–12 and comparable ungraded levels	Percent of districts that offered free training for district staff to prepare them to teach in fields with current or anticipated shortages	Percent of districts that used various practices to recruit teachers				
			Signing bonuses	Forgiveness of student loan(s) funded by the district	Relocation assistance	Finder's fee to existing staff for new teacher referrals	
All public school districts	0.03	0.76	0.30	0.22	0.25	0.29	
District size							
1 school	0.44	1.95	0.68	0.60	0.68	0.94	
2–3 schools	0.17	1.00	0.28	0.22	0.35	†	
4–5 schools	0.13	1.12	0.62	0.25	0.23	0.09	
6–9 schools	0.09	0.81	0.42	0.15	0.26	0.11	
10–19 schools	0.12	0.77	0.53	0.62	0.33	0.18	
20 or more schools	0.01	0.35	0.19	0.15	0.16	0.14	
Community type							
City	0.08	2.58	1.22	1.15	0.92	1.50	
Suburban	0.05	1.53	0.14	0.27	†	†	
Town	0.10	1.73	0.59	0.49	0.32	0.17	
Rural	0.07	1.09	0.28	0.27	0.30	0.24	
District K–12 enrollment							
Less than 250	0.49	2.74	0.70	0.60	0.64	0.82	
250–999	0.21	1.35	0.46	0.51	0.58	0.65	
1,000–1,999	0.16	1.14	0.48	0.31	0.20	†	
2,000–4,999	0.08	1.11	0.49	0.29	0.24	†	
5,000–9,999	0.12	0.99	0.56	0.46	0.26	0.34	
10,000 or more	0.03	0.43	0.27	0.21	0.14	0.11	
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches							
0–34	0.06	1.30	0.19	0.24	0.23	†	
35–49	0.09	1.11	0.53	0.19	0.43	0.46	
50–74	0.06	1.35	0.41	0.31	0.45	0.22	
75 or more	0.13	2.48	1.02	1.01	0.58	1.20	
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	0.57	4.04	†	0.92	2.08	†	

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-7. Standard errors for Table 7: Percentage distribution of public school districts, by type of agreement with teachers' associations or unions and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Type of agreement with a teachers' association or union			
	Meet-and-confer	Collective bargaining	Other type of agreement	No agreement
All public school districts	0.45	0.77	0.17	0.90
District size				
1 school	0.84	1.73	0.49	2.10
2–3 schools	1.02	1.57	0.33	1.22
4–5 schools	0.70	1.26	0.15	1.05
6–9 schools	0.58	1.73	0.16	1.49
10–19 schools	0.65	1.36	0.18	0.97
20 or more schools	0.20	0.43	0.09	0.41
Community type				
City	0.59	1.33	0.73	1.85
Suburban	0.76	1.33	0.09	1.39
Town	0.58	2.17	0.13	2.25
Rural	0.71	0.91	0.28	0.88
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	0.93	2.35	0.79	2.82
250–999	0.92	1.31	0.28	1.20
1,000–1,999	0.67	1.21	0.18	0.98
2,000–4,999	0.55	1.15	0.13	0.99
5,000–9,999	0.93	1.33	0.19	0.86
10,000 or more	0.34	0.63	0.07	0.56
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	0.46	1.00	0.26	1.00
35–49	0.99	1.46	0.20	1.34
50–74	0.91	1.15	0.21	1.14
75 or more	0.89	1.91	0.78	2.48
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	1.64	2.80	†	3.36

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-8. Standard errors for Table 8: Average number of teachers per public school district in 2011–12, average number of teachers per district in the previous year (2010–11) who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed for any reason, and as a result of poor performance, by tenure status of teachers and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Average number of teachers per district in 2011–12	During the 2010–11 school year, average number of teachers per district who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed for any reason	During the 2010–11 school year, average number of teachers per district who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed as a result of poor performance		
			Teachers with all tenure statuses	Nontenured teachers	Tenured teachers
All public school districts	1.74	0.05	0.03	0.03	#
District size					
1 school	0.90	0.06	0.05	0.05	†
2–3 schools	1.08	0.05	0.03	0.02	0.01
4–5 schools	1.83	0.11	0.04	0.03	0.01
6–9 schools	3.01	0.14	0.07	0.06	0.01
10–19 schools	3.43	0.27	0.11	0.10	0.02
20 or more schools	13.20	0.38	0.14	0.13	0.02
Community type					
City	10.34	0.23	0.11	0.10	0.02
Suburban	6.05	0.16	0.06	0.05	0.01
Town	3.18	0.12	0.04	0.04	0.01
Rural	1.24	0.05	0.02	0.02	#
District K–12 enrollment					
Less than 250	0.48	0.05	0.03	0.03	†
250–999	0.47	0.05	0.04	0.04	0.01
1,000–1,999	0.69	0.09	0.03	0.03	0.01
2,000–4,999	1.45	0.10	0.05	0.04	0.01
5,000–9,999	2.67	0.30	0.12	0.12	0.02
10,000 or more	15.23	0.41	0.14	0.13	0.02
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches					
0–34	5.00	0.08	0.03	0.03	0.01
35–49	4.02	0.11	0.04	0.03	0.01
50–74	5.24	0.12	0.05	0.04	0.01
75 or more	8.06	0.19	0.10	0.09	0.02
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	3.23	0.15	0.08	0.08	†

† Not applicable.

Rounds to zero.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-9. Standard errors for Table 9: Percentage of public school districts that grant high school diplomas, and among those that grant diplomas, graduation requirements for standard diplomas, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent of districts that grant high school diplomas	Among districts that grant high school diplomas, the average number of years of instruction in various subject areas needed for a standard diploma by high school graduates of the class of 2012						
		English or language arts	Mathematics	Computer science	Social sciences and social studies (e.g., history, geography, economics)	Science	Foreign languages	
All public school districts	0.88	#	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	
District size								
1 school	1.83	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.04	
2–3 schools	1.34	#	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.03	
4–5 schools	0.77	#	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.02	
6–9 schools	0.80	#	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	0.02	
10–19 schools	0.54	#	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	
20 or more schools	0.29	#	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	
Community type								
City	2.12	0.01	0.02	0.05	0.02	0.03	0.04	
Suburban	1.46	#	0.01	0.03	0.02	0.01	0.04	
Town	1.72	0.01	0.02	0.03	0.01	0.02	0.03	
Rural	1.29	#	0.01	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	
District K–12 enrollment								
Less than 250	2.77	0.01	0.03	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	
250–999	1.33	#	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.04	
1,000–1,999	0.88	#	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.02	0.03	
2,000–4,999	0.58	#	0.01	0.03	0.01	0.01	0.02	
5,000–9,999	0.71	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.02	
10,000 or more	0.49	#	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches								
0–34	1.32	#	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.02	
35–49	1.70	#	0.02	0.04	0.01	0.02	0.03	
50–74	1.61	#	0.02	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.02	
75 or more	2.49	0.01	0.02	0.04	0.02	0.03	0.04	
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	4.93	0.02	0.06	0.05	0.06	0.08	0.15	

Rounds to zero.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District Data File,” 2011–12.

Table A-10. Standard errors for Table 10: Among districts with more than one school, percentage of public school districts that had salary schedules for principals, and average and median lowest and highest yearly base salaries paid to all full-time principals, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Number of public school districts	Percent with salary schedules for principals	Average base salary of the lowest paid principal in the district	Median base salary of the lowest paid principal in the district	Average base salary of the highest paid principal in the district	Median base salary of the highest paid principal in the district
All districts with more than one school	321	0.83	240	320	330	340
District size						
2–3 schools	197	1.35	530	480	680	610
4–5 schools	114	1.41	520	720	620	510
6–9 schools	47	2.30	410	760	520	1,010
10–19 schools	39	0.85	450	540	510	430
20 or more schools	11	0.43	120	120	190	400
Community type						
City	42	1.28	560	700	600	710
Suburban	84	1.14	500	490	580	590
Town	83	1.81	340	460	570	500
Rural	160	1.13	290	400	380	350
District K–12 enrollment						
Less than 250	70	3.47	1,320	900	1,470	3,120
250–999	119	1.59	460	410	600	660
1,000–1,999	119	1.62	510	550	600	490
2,000–4,999	72	1.49	400	430	430	540
5,000–9,999	39	0.91	570	1,320	600	530
10,000 or more	16	0.46	210	250	270	340
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches						
0–34	96	1.11	560	370	630	750
35–49	101	1.39	470	600	490	640
50–74	136	1.55	310	360	490	610
75 or more	72	2.37	1,000	870	1,230	1,190
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	20	3.93	2,300	3,730	2,870	3,980

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-11. Standard errors for Table 11: Percentage distribution of public school districts, by type of agreement with principals' associations or unions and selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent distribution of districts by type of agreement with a principals' association or union			
	Meet-and-confer	Collective bargaining	Other type of agreement	No agreement
All public school districts	0.35	0.34	0.21	0.46
District size				
1 school	0.61	0.62	0.25	0.90
2–3 schools	0.85	0.88	0.58	1.22
4–5 schools	1.05	0.80	0.35	1.13
6–9 schools	0.76	0.70	0.64	0.87
10–19 schools	0.65	1.05	0.38	1.04
20 or more schools	0.33	0.28	0.14	0.38
Community type				
City	0.40	0.46	0.50	0.94
Suburban	0.82	1.05	0.60	1.34
Town	0.75	0.72	0.34	1.06
Rural	0.51	0.54	0.31	0.73
District K–12 enrollment				
Less than 250	0.68	0.67	0.41	1.03
250–999	0.50	0.65	0.40	0.83
1,000–1,999	1.29	1.19	0.63	1.25
2,000–4,999	0.68	0.83	0.54	0.77
5,000–9,999	0.72	0.95	0.54	1.24
10,000 or more	0.41	0.29	0.14	0.42
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches				
0–34	0.98	0.87	0.50	1.18
35–49	0.95	0.94	0.42	1.13
50–74	0.50	0.39	0.47	0.84
75 or more	0.65	0.62	0.38	1.04
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	0.34	1.52	†	1.50

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-12. Standard errors for Table 12: Percentage of public school district principals who were newly hired, average number of days in the normal contract year for principals, percentage of districts that had a tenure system for principals, percentage of districts that used any incentives for recruiting principals, and percentage of districts that had a training program for aspiring school administrators, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Percent of principals who were newly hired	Average number of days in the normal contract year for principals	Percent of districts that had a tenure system for principals	Percent of districts that used any incentives for recruiting principals	Percent of districts that had a training program for aspiring school administrators
All public school districts	0.12	1	0.45	0.28	0.80
District size					
1 school	†	2	0.98	0.71	1.84
2–3 schools	0.66	1	1.12	0.37	1.05
4–5 schools	0.46	1	0.99	0.23	0.99
6–9 schools	0.27	1	1.01	0.28	1.45
10–19 schools	0.15	1	1.06	0.26	0.92
20 or more schools	0.03	#	0.29	0.09	0.46
Community type					
City	0.12	3	1.34	1.56	2.67
Suburban	0.19	2	1.20	0.23	1.35
Town	0.30	1	0.97	0.28	1.64
Rural	0.28	1	0.79	0.32	0.89
District K–12 enrollment					
Less than 250	2.78	2	1.50	1.03	1.63
250–999	0.73	1	0.88	0.52	1.38
1,000–1,999	0.50	1	1.20	0.29	1.17
2,000–4,999	0.24	#	0.92	0.23	0.92
5,000–9,999	0.23	1	1.09	0.39	1.13
10,000 or more	0.04	#	0.37	0.08	0.53
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches					
0–34	0.26	1	1.14	0.33	0.90
35–49	0.34	1	1.19	0.43	1.23
50–74	0.17	1	0.95	0.25	1.10
75 or more	0.28	2	1.68	1.40	2.56
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	1.29	5	1.73	1.11	3.65

† Not applicable.

Rounds to zero.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), "Public School District Data File," 2011–12.

Table A-13. Standard errors for Table 13: Number of public school districts with more than one school, and among those districts, percentage that offer various school “choice” programs to students within or outside of the district, by selected public school district characteristics: 2011–12

Selected public school district characteristic	Number of public school districts	Percent of districts that offer a school “choice” program in which			
		Students can enroll in either their assigned school or another school within the district	Students from this district can enroll in a school in another district at no tuition cost to themselves or their families	Students from this district can choose to enroll in a private school using state or district funds	Students from other districts can enroll in a school within this district at no tuition cost to themselves or their families
All districts with more than one school	321	0.48	0.57	0.33	0.61
District size					
2–3 schools	197	0.80	1.31	0.74	1.46
4–5 schools	114	0.98	1.26	0.57	1.15
6–9 schools	47	1.14	0.84	0.46	1.11
10–19 schools	39	0.85	0.87	0.59	1.00
20 or more schools	11	0.31	0.43	0.34	0.43
Community type					
City	42	1.39	1.25	0.68	1.40
Suburban	84	1.09	1.16	0.58	1.06
Town	83	0.99	1.30	0.87	1.36
Rural	160	0.70	0.90	0.48	1.02
District K–12 enrollment					
Less than 250	70	1.56	3.33	†	4.29
250–999	119	0.99	2.00	0.63	1.77
1,000–1,999	119	1.07	1.43	0.94	1.27
2,000–4,999	72	0.87	0.92	0.47	0.86
5,000–9,999	39	1.10	0.89	0.71	1.04
10,000 or more	16	0.47	0.52	0.29	0.54
Percent of K–12 students in district who were approved for free or reduced-price lunches					
0–34	96	0.91	1.08	0.57	1.17
35–49	101	1.05	1.36	0.82	1.13
50–74	136	1.10	1.12	0.72	1.21
75 or more	72	1.83	2.19	1.11	2.16
District did not participate in free or reduced-price lunch program	20	2.11	4.53	2.18	4.28

† Not applicable.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District Data File,” 2011–12.

Appendix B: Methodology and Technical Notes

Overview of the Schools and Staffing Survey

The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the Institute of Education Sciences within the U.S. Department of Education and is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau. SASS is a nationally representative sample survey of public and private K–12 schools, principals, and teachers in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. School districts associated with public schools and library media centers in public schools are also part of SASS. SASS has been conducted seven times: in school years 1987–88, 1990–91, 1993–94, 1999–2000, 2003–04, 2007–08, and 2011–12.

The 2011–12 SASS consisted of questionnaires for five types of respondents: school districts (public), schools (public and private), principals (public and private), teachers (public and private), and school library media centers (public). Modified versions of the public school principal, public school, and public school teacher questionnaires that incorporated wording and questions appropriate for private school settings were sent to private schools. Charter schools and schools in single-school districts received a modified public school questionnaire that included both district and school items.

For public schools, information can be linked across teachers and their principals, schools, library media centers, and districts. For private schools, information can be linked across teachers and their principals and schools. For the content of the questionnaires, see <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/questionnaire.asp>. Appendix C of this report provides information about how the SASS data files used to produce this report were created.

SASS was designed to produce national, regional, and state estimates for public elementary and secondary schools, school districts, principals, teachers, and school library media centers; and national and regional estimates for public charter schools, as well as principals, teachers, and school library media centers within these schools. For private schools, the sample supports national, regional, and affiliation strata estimates for schools, principals, and teachers. Comparisons between public and private schools and their principals and teachers are possible only at the regional and national levels, because private schools were selected for sampling by affiliation strata and region rather than by state.

The teacher survey was designed to support comparisons between new and experienced teachers (3 years or less of experience vs. more than 3 years of experience) at the state level for public school teachers and at the regional or affiliation strata level for private school teachers.

This appendix includes information on all components of SASS. For additional information on the specific SASS-related topics discussed in this appendix, consult the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming) or the *User’s Manual for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey Volumes 1–6* (Goldring et al. 2013). To access additional general information on SASS or for electronic copies of the questionnaires, go to the SASS home page (<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass>).

Sampling Frames and Sample Selection

Public schools. The starting point for the 2011–12 SASS public school sampling frame was the preliminary 2009–10 Common Core of Data (CCD) Nonfiscal School Universe data file.¹ The sampling frame was adjusted from the CCD in order to fit the definition of a school eligible for SASS. To be eligible for SASS, a school was defined as an institution or part of an institution that provides classroom

¹ For more information about the CCD, see <http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/>.

instruction to students, has one or more teachers to provide instruction, serves students in one or more of grades 1–12 or the ungraded equivalent, and is located in one or more buildings apart from a private home. It was possible for two or more schools to share the same building; in that case, they were treated as different schools if they had different administrators (i.e., principal or school head).

The SASS 2011–12 universe of schools is confined to the 50 states plus the District of Columbia and excludes the other jurisdictions, Department of Defense overseas schools, Bureau of Indian Education schools, and CCD schools that do not offer teacher-provided classroom instruction in grades 1–12 or the ungraded equivalent. This last group includes schools that are essentially administrative units that may oversee entities that provide classroom instruction or may only provide funding and oversight.

The SASS definition of a school is generally similar to the CCD definition, with some exceptions. Because SASS allows schools to define themselves, Census Bureau staff observed that schools generally report as one entity in situations where the administration of two or more schools reported separately on CCD is the same. Thus, CCD schools with the same location, address, and phone number were collapsed during the SASS frame building on the assumption that the respondent would consider them to be one school. A set of rules was applied in certain states to determine in which instances school records should be collapsed together. When school records were collapsed together, the student and teacher counts, grade ranges, and names as reported to CCD were all modified to reflect the change.

Finally, additional school records were added to the sampling frame. Most of these records were for alternative, special education, or juvenile justice facilities in California, Pennsylvania, and New York.² For a detailed list of frame modifications, see the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming). After deleting, collapsing, and adding school records, the SASS public school sampling frame consisted of about 90,530 traditional public schools and 5,080 public charter schools.

SASS uses a stratified, probability proportionate to size (PPS) sample (for an explanation of PPS sampling, see Cochran, 1977). The first level of stratification was school type: (1) schools in a subset of the states where counties are the school districts (Florida, Maryland, Nevada, and West Virginia) so that each of these districts had school(s) selected; (2) public charter schools; and (3) all other traditional public schools. The second-level stratification was state and school district for type 1 schools, and states or groups of states for type 2 and 3 schools. Each of the school types was then stratified by grade level (elementary, secondary, and combined for public charter schools; primary, middle, high, and combined for traditional public schools). Within each stratum, schools were sorted prior to sampling by state, community type (12 categories), collapsed ZIP code, percent free or reduced-price lunch (2 categories), highest grade in the school, percent minority enrollment (4 categories), and enrollment. The measure of size used for the schools was the square root of the number of full-time-equivalent teachers reported or imputed for each school during sampling frame development. If a school's measure of size was greater than the sampling interval, the school was included in the sample with certainty. Each stratum was assigned a sample size to meet the defined precision goals of the survey. For example, for public primary schools, the goal was 15 percent or lower for coefficient of variation (CV) for national, regional, and state estimates for key characteristics. These sampling procedures resulted in a total public school sample of about 10,250 traditional public schools and 750 public charter schools.

Private schools. The 2011–12 SASS private school frame was based on the 2009–10 Private School Universe Survey (PSS) as updated for the 2011–12 PSS.³ That update is conducted prior to each

² In the 2007–08 SASS, records for Career Technical Centers (CTCs) were added to the frame because they were believed to be underrepresented in CCD. In 2011–12 SASS, special handling of CTCs was not deemed necessary. However, CTCs listed in CCD that met the SASS eligibility criteria were included on the SASS sampling frame.

³ For more information about the PSS, see <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pss>.

administration of PSS by collecting membership lists from private school associations and religious denominations, as well as private school lists from state education departments. The 2011–12 SASS private school frame was further augmented by the inclusion of additional schools that were identified through the 2009–10 PSS area frame data collection; these area frame schools were included in the SASS sample survey with certainty. Schools with kindergarten as the highest grade level were deleted from the frame to fit the SASS definition. After these changes, the private school sampling frame consisted of about 28,490 private schools.

Private schools were stratified by affiliation strata, grade level (elementary, secondary, and combined), and Census region (Northeast, Midwest, South, and West). The 11 affiliation strata included 3 strata for Catholic (parochial, diocesan, and private); Baptist; Jewish; Lutheran; Seventh-day Adventist; other religious; and 3 strata for nonsectarian (regular, special emphasis, and special education). Within each stratum, private schools in the list frame were sorted prior to sampling by: state, highest grade in the school, community type (12 categories), ZIP code, and enrollment. The measure of size and PPS procedures described for public schools were used for private schools as well. Of the 3,000 private schools sampled for the 2011–12 SASS, about 2,750 were from the list frame and about 250 were from the 2009–10 PSS area frame.

Public school districts. Since the SASS sample design calls for schools to be selected first, the public school district sample consists of the districts that were associated with the schools in the public school sample. This provides the linkage between the district and the school. In Florida, Maryland, Nevada, and West Virginia, school sampling was done in such a way that all districts were taken with certainty. About 5,800 public school districts were pulled into the sample by being associated with sampled public schools.

Teachers. Teachers are defined as staff members who teach regularly scheduled classes to students in any of grades K–12. Teacher Listing Forms (i.e., teacher rosters) were collected from sampled schools and districts, primarily by mail, and compiled at the Census Bureau. This compilation was done on an ongoing basis throughout the roster collection period. Along with the names of teachers, sampled schools were asked to provide information about each teacher’s teaching experience (1st year, 2–3 years, 4–19 years, and 20 or more years), teaching status (full or part time), and subject matter taught (special education, general elementary, math, science, English/language arts, social studies, vocational/technical, or other).

Sampling was also done on an ongoing basis throughout the roster collection period. The Census Bureau first stratified teachers into four teacher strata: (1) beginning teachers (in their first year of teaching); (2) early-career teachers (in their second or third years of teaching), (3) mid-career teachers (in their 4th through 19th years of teaching), and (4) experienced teachers (in their 20th or later years of teaching). Beginning and early-career teachers were oversampled to improve the survey estimates for this subpopulation. Teachers within a school were sorted by the teacher stratum code, the subject matter taught, and the teacher line number code. The teacher line number is a unique number assigned to identify the individual within the teacher list. Within each teacher stratum in each school, teachers were selected systematically with equal probability.

So that a school would not be overburdened by sampling too large a proportion of its teachers, the maximum number of teachers per school was set at 20. About 20 percent of the eligible public schools and 28 percent of the eligible private schools did not provide teacher lists that could be used for sampling teachers. For these schools, no teachers were selected. About 51,100 public schools teachers and 7,100 private school teachers were sampled.

Principals. The principal of each sampled school was selected. About 14,000 school principals were sampled (10,250 traditional public school principals, 750 public charter school principals, and 3,000 private school principals).

Library media centers. A library media center in each sampled public school was also selected. Private schools were not included in the library media center survey. About 10,250 traditional public school and 750 public charter school library media centers were sampled.

For details on sampling at all levels, see the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming).

Data Collection Procedures

In 2011–12, SASS employed a mail-based survey approach with subsequent telephone and in-person field follow-up. Prior to the beginning of data collection, research applications were submitted to public school districts that required applications to conduct research in their schools. Starting in June 2011, all districts were contacted by telephone to verify or collect the information about the district and sampled school(s) needed for data collection, identify the best person to receive the district questionnaire, and determine if the district would provide an electronic teacher list for sampled school(s). Survey packages were mailed to districts in October 2011.⁴ Follow-up was conducted sequentially by mail, telephone, and in person to districts that did not provide the requested questionnaire and/or teacher list.

In preparation for school-level data collection, advance letters were mailed to the sampled schools in June 2011 to verify their addresses. School packages were mailed in October 2011.⁵ Next, schools were telephoned using a computer-assisted telephone-interviewing instrument to verify school information, establish a survey coordinator (who became the main contact person at the school for subsequent communication), and follow up on the Teacher Listing Form if the school district had not already provided an electronic teacher list. Teacher questionnaires were mailed to schools on a flow basis as teachers were sampled on an ongoing basis from the data provided on the Teacher Listing Form or electronic teacher list. The field follow-up period was preceded by phone calls from the telephone centers to remind the survey coordinators to have staff complete and return all forms. Individual survey respondents (principal, librarian, and teachers) were also called from the telephone centers and asked to complete the questionnaire by phone. Data collection ended in June 2012.

Data Processing and Imputation

The Census Bureau used both central processing and headquarters staff to check returned questionnaires, key the data, and implement quality control procedures. Questionnaires that had a preliminary classification of a complete interview were submitted to a series of computer edits consisting of a range check, a consistency edit, a blanking edit,⁶ and a logic edit. After these edits were run and reviewed by analysts, the records were put through another edit to make a final determination as to whether the case

⁴ The SASS district package contained a cover letter, the School District Questionnaire, and postage-paid return envelope. Districts that indicated they would provide electronic list(s) of teachers for their selected school(s) received a letter that explained the purpose of the teacher list and provided instructions for uploading the file. In districts with only one school, the school received the Public School Questionnaire (With District Items) in lieu of the School District Questionnaire and School Questionnaire.

⁵ The SASS school package contained a cover letter to the principal, a cover letter to the survey coordinator, the Teacher Listing Form if the district could not provide it, the Public School Principal Questionnaire or Private School Principal Questionnaire, the Public School Questionnaire or Public School Questionnaire (With District Items) or Private School Questionnaire, the School Library Media Center Questionnaire (for public schools only), postage-paid return envelopes, and the *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 2011 CD*.

⁶ Blanking edits delete answers to questions that should not have been filled in (e.g., if a respondent followed a wrong skip pattern).

was eligible for the survey and whether sufficient data had been collected for the case to be classified as a complete interview.

After the final edits were run, cases with “not-answered” values for items remained. Values were imputed using two main approaches. Donor respondent methods, such as hot-deck imputation, were used. If no suitable donor case could be matched, the few remaining items were imputed using mean or mode from groups of similar cases to impute a value to the item with missing data. After each stage of imputation, computer edits were run again to verify that the imputed data were consistent with the existing questionnaire data. If that was not the case, an imputed value was blanked out by one of these computer edits due to inconsistency with other data within the same questionnaire or because it was out of the range of acceptable values. In these situations, Census Bureau analysts looked at the items and tried to determine an appropriate value. Edit and imputation flags, indicating which edit or imputation method was used, were assigned to each relevant survey variable. For further information, see the sections on data processing and imputation in the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming).

Response Rates

Unit response rates. The unit response rate indicates the percentage of sampled cases that met the definition of a complete interview. The weighted SASS unit response rate was produced by dividing the weighted number of respondents who completed questionnaires by the weighted number of eligible sampled cases, using the initial base weight (the inverse of the probability of selection).⁷ Table B-1 summarizes the weighted unit response rates for each survey type. Because response rates vary between surveys, it is possible to not have information for all the components related to a particular school. For example, it is possible that a district does not have a corresponding school record or there may not be a principal record for every school.

Table B-1. Weighted unit and overall response rates using initial base weight, by survey: 2011–12

Survey	Unit response rate (percent)	Overall response rate (percent)
Public School Teacher Listing Form	79.6	†
Private School Teacher Listing Form	71.6	†
Public School District	80.6	†
Public School	72.5	†
Private School	65.7	†
Public School Principal	72.7	†
Private School Principal	64.7	†
Public School Teacher	77.7	61.8
Private School Teacher	69.9	50.1
Public School Library Media Center	72.9	†

† Not applicable.

NOTE: Response rates were weighted using the inverse of the probability of selection (initial base weight).

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School and Private School Teacher Listing Forms; Public School District, Public School, Private School, Public School Principal, Private School Principal, Public School Teacher, Private School Teacher, and Public School Library Media Center Documentation Data Files,” 2011–12.

⁷ For the formula used to calculate the unit response rate, see *NCES Statistical Standards* (U.S. Department of Education 2003).

Overall response rates. The overall response rate represents the response rate to the survey taking into consideration each stage of the survey. For teachers, the overall response rate is calculated as the product of the response rate to two stages: the Teacher Listing Form and the teacher questionnaire.⁸ The weighted overall response rate using the initial base weight for public school teachers was 61.8 percent; and for private school teachers, 50.1 percent. For the other surveys, the overall and unit response rates are the same since these surveys have only one sampling stage.

Unit nonresponse bias analysis. Because the *NCES Statistical Standards* (4-4) require analysis of nonresponse bias for any survey stage with a base-weighted response rate less than 85 percent, all SASS files were evaluated for potential bias. For each survey, national-level estimates were first examined for potential bias. For public schools, principals, teachers, and library media centers, these national-level estimates were evaluated within charter and noncharter schools. Next, the base-weighted⁹ unit response rate was calculated by state or affiliation strata depending on the sector (public and private, respectively). If the base-weighted response rate for any state or affiliation stratum was below 85 percent, a detailed comparison of respondents to the frame population was conducted by examining characteristics. For the public school district survey, these characteristics were enrollment and community type. A difference between the frame and respondent population was considered noteworthy if the difference was statistically significant and the following three conditions were met:

- The relative difference between the frame and respondent population was greater than 10 percent;
- The absolute difference was greater than one percentage point; and
- The cell for each subpopulation contained at least 30 interviews.

As shown in table B-1, the weighted response rate using the initial base weight was 80.6 percent for public school districts. Table B-2 contains a list of the comparisons between the frame and the weighted distribution where evidence of potential bias was found for national-level data on the district survey. The weighted response rate using the initial base weight was 72.5 percent for public schools and 65.7 percent for private schools. The weighted response rate using the initial base weight was 72.7 percent for public school principals and 64.7 percent for private school principals. The weighted response rate using the initial base weight for the teacher listing form was 79.6 for public schools and 71.6 for private schools. The weighted questionnaire response rate using the initial base weight for the teacher survey was 77.7 percent for public school teachers and 69.9 percent for private school teachers. The weighted response rate using the initial base weight was 72.9 percent for public school library media centers.

Nonresponse adjustments were designed to reduce or eliminate nonresponse bias. The nonresponse-adjusted comparison to the frame shown in table B-2 reflects the nonresponse adjustment. This table shows that there is no evidence of potential bias after nonresponse adjustments were made for the national-level items included in the analysis. For further information on unit response rates and nonresponse bias analysis, see the *Survey Documentation for the 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey* (Chambers et al. forthcoming).

Item response rates. The item response rate indicates the percentage of respondents who answered a given survey question or item. The weighted SASS item response rate is calculated by dividing the weighted number of respondents who provided an answer to an item by the weighted number of

⁸ For the formula used to calculate the overall response rate, see *NCES Statistical Standards* (U.S. Department of Education 2003).

⁹ Unit nonresponse bias analysis was conducted using the base weight, defined as the product of the initial base weight (the inverse of the probability of selection) and the sampling adjustment factor. The sampling adjustment factor is an adjustment that accounts for circumstances that affect the school's probability of selection that are identified after the data collection has begun, such as a merger, duplication, or incorrect building-level collapsing (i.e., a junior high school and a senior high school merge to become a junior/senior high school).

respondents who were eligible to answer that item.¹⁰ Table B-3 provides a brief summary of the weighted item response rates for each questionnaire. All items on the public school district questionnaire had item response rates of 85 percent or more.

Table B-2. Indication of potential sources of bias for district data at the national level based on comparisons between frame distribution and base-weighted or nonresponse-adjusted respondent distributions: 2011–12

Potential source of bias			Base-weighted respondent distribution	Nonresponse-adjusted respondent distribution
Estimate level	Characteristic	Value		
National	Agency type code	(Charter agency)	x	
National	Poverty rate ¹	(>= 28.2%)	x	
National	Poverty rate ¹	(Missing)	x	

¹ The poverty rate estimate is from the Census Bureau’s Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates program computed at the district level. The rate is based on the proportion of the population of 5- to 17-year-olds below the poverty level.

NOTE: x denotes comparisons that are a potential source of bias.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District Documentation Data File,” 2011–12.

Table B-3. Summary of weighted item response rates, by survey: 2011–12

Survey	Percent of items with a response rate of 85 percent or more	Percent of items with a response rate of less than 85 percent
Public School District	100.0	0.0
Public School	96.2	3.8
Private School ¹	93.5	6.1
Public School Principal	98.9	1.1
Private School Principal	98.3	1.7
Public School Teacher	94.2	5.8
Private School Teacher	92.5	7.5
Public School Library Media Center	100.0	0.0

¹ There was one item on the Private School Questionnaire that had 0 eligible respondents, thus the response rate could not be calculated. For this reason, the percentages on this row do not sum to 100.

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

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School and Private School Teacher Listing Forms; Public School District, Public School, Private School, Public School Principal, Private School Principal, Public School Teacher, Private School Teacher, and Public School Library Media Center Documentation Data Files,” 2011–12.

Weighting

The general purpose of weighting is to scale up the sample estimates to represent the target survey population. For SASS, a base weight is used as the starting point. In some cases, this base weight is the simple reciprocal of the unit’s probability of selection on the frame (the initial base weight), and in other

¹⁰ For the formula to calculate the item response rate, see *NCES Statistical Standards* (U.S. Department of Education 2003).

cases, adjustments are made to this frame base weight to reflect multiple chances of selection from the frame or other situations such as subsampling.

Next, a series of nonresponse adjustment factors are calculated and applied based on a weighting cell adjustment. Weighting cells are developed using tree search algorithms. These cells are selected to be homogeneous in response propensity within cells and heterogeneous in response propensity across cells (response propensity is the underlying “chance” that a particular sample unit will respond by completing the questionnaire: its individual response rate). The adjustment is the inverse of the weighted response rate within each cell, and each respondent in the cell receives this adjustment. Nonrespondents are given weights of zero: the respondents are reweighted to represent the nonrespondents.

Finally, for some files, a ratio-adjustment factor is calculated and applied to the sample to adjust the sample totals to the frame totals. This improves the precision of survey estimates.

The product of these factors is the final weight for each SASS respondent, which appears as DFNLWGT on the SASS Public School District Data File, AFNLWGT on all SASS Principal Data Files, SFNLWGT on all SASS School Data Files, TFNLWGT on all SASS Teacher Data Files, and MFNLWGT on the SASS Library Media Center Data File.

The counts in table 1 (in the Estimate Tables section) do not necessarily match the frame counts because some cases in the frame were found to be ineligible (i.e., out of scope) and because not all data files (e.g., principal or library media center) are post-stratified to match the frame counts.

Variance Estimation

In surveys with complex sample designs, such as SASS, direct estimates of sampling errors that assume a simple random sample typically underestimate the variability in the estimates. The SASS sample design and estimation include procedures that deviate from the assumption of simple random sampling, such as stratifying the school sample, oversampling new teachers, and sampling with differential probabilities.

One method of calculating sampling errors of complex sample designs is replication. Replication methods involve constructing a number of subsamples (i.e., replicates) from the full sample and computing the statistic of interest for each replicate. The mean square error of the replicate estimates around the full sample estimate provides an estimate of the variance of the statistic. Each SASS data file includes a set of 88 replicate weights designed to produce variance estimates. The set of replicate weights for each file should be applied to the respondents in that file. The replicate weights for SASS respondents are DREPWT1–DREPWT88 for districts, AREPWT1–AREPWT88 for principals, SREPWT1–SREPWT88 for schools, TREPWT1–TREPWT88 for teachers, and MREPWT1–MREPWT88 for library media centers.

Reliability of Data

SASS estimates are based on samples. The sample estimates may differ somewhat from the values that would be obtained from the universe of respondents using the same questionnaire, instructions, and field representatives. The difference occurs because a sample survey estimate is subject to two types of errors: nonsampling and sampling. Estimates of the magnitude of sampling error for SASS data can be derived or calculated. Nonsampling errors are attributed to many sources, including definitional difficulties, the inability or unwillingness of respondents to provide correct information, differences in the interpretation of questions, an inability to recall information, errors made in collection (e.g., in recording or coding the

data), errors made in processing the data, and errors made in estimating values for missing data. Quality control and edit procedures were used to reduce errors made by respondents, coders, and interviewers.

Caution Concerning Changes in Estimates

Care must be taken in estimating change over time in a SASS data element, because some of the measured change may not be attributable to a change in the education system.

Some of the change may be due to changes in the sampling frame, changes in questionnaire item wording, or other changes. For example, the definition of locale codes has undergone major changes since the 2000 Decennial Census. The first major change was an improvement in geocoding technology, which improved the assignment of specific addresses to physical locations. In 2005, a new locale code for CCD was implemented based on the new urban-centric method of classifying locale. Changes in how areas and, thus, schools are categorized may account for at least some changes that are noted from previous administrations.

Appendix C: Description of Data Files

Description of Data Files

The 2011–12 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) data are being released in eight restricted-use data files. Those data files were created from nine survey questionnaires: the School District Questionnaire, School Questionnaire (public), Public School Questionnaire (With District Items),¹ Private School Questionnaire, Principal Questionnaire (public), Private School Principal Questionnaire, Teacher Questionnaire (public), Private School Teacher Questionnaire, and Library Media Center Questionnaire (public). Table C-1 identifies each data file and the questionnaire data used to build the file.

Table C-1. Names of data files and the questionnaires from which the data were drawn: 2011–12

Data file	Questionnaire source
School district	School District Questionnaire, Public School Questionnaire (With District Items)
Public school	School Questionnaire, Public School Questionnaire (With District Items)
Private school	Private School Questionnaire
Public school principal	Principal Questionnaire
Private school principal	Private School Principal Questionnaire
Public school teacher	Teacher Questionnaire
Private school teacher	Private School Teacher Questionnaire
Public school library media center	Library Media Center Questionnaire

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), 2011–12.

For the most part, there is a separate data file for each type of respondent (district, school, principal, teacher, and library media center) for each school sector (public² and private). There are two exceptions: 1) there is no district file for private schools, and 2) there is no library media center file for private schools.

The Public School District Data File includes responses from school districts to the School District Questionnaire along with the “district items” taken from the Public School Questionnaire (With District Items) completed by the subset of public schools that were not associated with “traditional” school districts. These schools include state-run schools, traditional public schools in single-school districts, and independent charter schools. Rather than ask these public schools to complete two questionnaires, School and School District, the National Center for Education Statistics created the Public School Questionnaire (With District Items) to capture district data from these schools. Table C-2 shows the different respondents and questionnaires used to create the Public School District Data File. The “district items” gathered from the Public School Questionnaire (With District Items) were not placed on the Public School Data File.

¹ The School Questionnaire (With District Items) is an expanded version of the Public School Questionnaire that includes items from the School District Questionnaire.

² Public includes traditional public and public charter.

Table C-2. The number of cases in the Public School District Data File, by respondent and source of data: 2011–12

Respondent	Source of data in the district file	Number of cases
Total		4,640
Regular districts	School District Questionnaire	4,000
State-run schools ¹	Public School Questionnaire (With District Items)	50
Schools in single-school districts	Public School Questionnaire (With District Items)	330
Independent charter schools	Public School Questionnaire (With District Items)	200
Dependent charter schools in charter school districts	Public School Questionnaire (With District Items)	60

¹These include schools for the blind, career and technical centers, and schools in detention centers run by a state.

NOTE: Rounded, unweighted number of respondents in the data file. Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District and Public School Documentation Data Files,” 2011–12.

Appendix D: Description of Variables

Description of Variables

The variables that are included in this report are listed in table D-1. Those with variable names that begin with “D” and are followed by four digits are survey variables that come from items on the School District Questionnaire and/or Public School Questionnaire (With District Items). For survey variables, the numeric part of the variable name can be found in the questionnaires to the left of the corresponding question. The variables without the letter plus four digit names are “created variables,” meaning they were created using survey variables, frame variables (variables taken from the sampling frame), other created variables, or a combination of these. They are frequently used in National Center for Education Statistics publications and have been added to the data files to facilitate data analysis. The definitions for the created variables follow table D-1. The variables without a variable name were created for the analyses in this report and are not on the data files.

Table D-1. Variables used in the *Characteristics of Public School Districts in the United States: Results From the Schools and Staffing Survey* report: 2011–12

Variable	Variable name in data file
Average number of years of instruction in computer science needed for a standard diploma	D0563
Average number of years of instruction in English or language arts needed for a standard diploma	D0561
Average number of years of instruction in foreign languages needed for a standard diploma	D0566
Average number of years of instruction in mathematics needed for a standard diploma	D0562
Average number of years of instruction in science needed for a standard diploma	D0565
Average number of years of instruction in social sciences or social studies (e.g., history, geography, economics) needed for a standard diploma	D0564
Base salary for teachers with bachelor’s degree and 10 years of teaching experience	D0506
Base salary for teachers with bachelor’s degree and no teaching experience	D0505
Base salary for teachers with highest possible step on the salary schedule	D0510
Base salary for teachers with master’s degree and 10 years of teaching experience	D0508
Base salary for teachers with master’s degree and 15 years of teaching experience	D0509
Base salary for teachers with master’s degree and no teaching experience	D0507
Base salary of the highest paid full-time principal	D0502
Base salary of the highest paid full-time teacher	D0512
Base salary of the lowest paid full-time principal	D0501
Base salary of the lowest paid full-time teacher	D0511

See notes at end of table.

Table D-1. Variables used in the *Characteristics of Public School Districts in the United States: Results From the Schools and Staffing Survey* report: 2011–12—Continued

Variable	Variable name in data file
District enrollment	D0418
District gives incentives to recruit or retain teachers to teach in a less desirable location	D0526
District gives incentives to recruit or retain teachers to teach in fields of shortage	D0527
District grants high school diplomas	D0560
District has a training program for aspiring school administrators	D0477
District has public school “choice” program in which students can enroll in either their assigned school or another school within the district	D0540
District has public school “choice” program in which students from other districts can enroll in a school within the district at no tuition cost to themselves or their families,	D0543
District has public school “choice” program in which students from the district can enroll in a school in another district at no tuition cost to themselves or their families,	D0541
District has public school “choice” program in which students from the district can choose to enroll in a private school using state or district funds	D0542
District has salary schedules for principals	D0500
District has salary schedules for teachers	D0503
District has tenure system for principals	D0457
District offers defined-benefit retirement plan	D0516
District offers defined-contribution retirement plan	D0517
District offers dental insurance	D0514
District offers free training in fields with current or anticipated shortages	D0523
District offers general medical insurance	D0513
District offers group life insurance	D0515
District offers housing, rent assistance, or subsidized housing, meals, or transportation ¹	<i>Not in file</i>
District offers tuition reimbursement	D0519
District rewards excellence in teaching	D0525
District rewards teachers who have attained National Board for Professional Teaching Standards certification	D0524
District uses finder’s fee to existing staff for new teacher referrals to recruit new teachers	D0474

See notes at end of table.

Table D-1. Variables used in the *Characteristics of Public School Districts in the United States: Results From the Schools and Staffing Survey* report: 2011–12—Continued

Variable	Variable name in data file
District uses incentives to recruit principals	D0475
District uses forgiveness of student loan(s) funded by the district to recruit new teachers	D0472
District uses relocation assistance to recruit new teachers	D0473
District uses signing bonuses to recruit new teachers	D0471
Number of days in the normal contract year for principals	D0456
Number of newly hired principals	D0476
Number of principals	D0454
Number of schools per district ¹	AG_NOOSC2
Number of all teachers who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed	D0480
Number of all teachers who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed as a result of poor performance	D0481
Number of teachers	D0448
Number of teachers with tenure who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed as a result of poor performance	D0483
Number of teachers without tenure who were dismissed or did not have their contracts renewed as a result of poor performance	D0482
Percentage of students in district approved for National School Lunch Program ¹	NSLAPP_D
Teachers who were newly hired for grades K–12 and comparable ungraded levels	D0470
Type of agreement district has with a principals’ association or union	D0455
Type of agreement district has with a teachers’ association or union	D0452
Urban-centric district locale code ¹	URBAND12

¹The definition for this variable can be found below.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “Public School District Data File,” 2011–12.

District offers housing, rent assistance, or subsidized housing, meals, or transportation. A variable created for this analysis based on whether the district offers housing, housing subsidies, or rent assistance (D0520), subsidized meals (D0521), or subsidized transportation (D0522).

Number of schools per district (AG_NOOSC2). A created categorical variable based on the continuous variable that identifies the number of public schools per school district, after frame collapsing procedure.

Percentage of students in district approved for the National School Lunch Program (NSLAPP_D).

For districts approved for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP), this is a continuous variable created by dividing the number of K–12 students approved for free or reduced-price lunches (D0433) by the total number of K–12 students enrolled (D0418). Districts that did not participate in the NSLP have valid skip values. For this report, NSLAPP_D is recoded as a categorical variable describing the proportion of students approved for free or reduced-price lunches.

Urban-centric district locale code (URBAND12). A created variable collapsed from the 12-category urban-centric district locale code (DLOCP12) that was assigned using the 2000 Decennial Census data and recoded into four categories: city, suburban, town, and rural. The district urban-centric locale codes are derived from the locale codes of the school buildings within the district, weighted by the number of students in each locale type.