Tell Them From Me teacher survey
Frequently Asked Questions

Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation

1. What is the Focus on Learning teacher survey?

The Focus on Learning teacher survey is part of the Tell Them From Me suite of surveys on student engagement. The teacher survey is for teachers in schools that are running the Tell Them From Me (TTFM) student survey, as well as schools that participated in the pilot 2014 Focus on Learning teacher survey.

The teacher survey is anonymous and can be used either as a one-off survey or to identify trends within schools over time and better inform school priorities. The survey is held once a year, and is run at the same time as the Partners in Learning parent survey and the second optional student survey.

Over 500 secondary schools in NSW have already participated in a 2014 pilot of the teacher survey.

2. What are the benefits for my school?

The teacher survey provides school principals and school leaders with insights into school and classroom effectiveness, from the perspective of teachers. This builds on the Tell Them From Me student survey and provides part of an overall school improvement toolkit.

Data reports are provided to school leaders which are available within three business days of the surveys closing. Schools will be able to access a ‘one click’ PDF summary report of their school’s results. A summary ‘radar’ chart shows your school’s average scores on a ten-point scale for the eight measures. The report shows a distribution of answers for each measure which allows school leaders to target specific factors. Your school’s results will also be compared against state-wide averages.

3. How does this survey relate to the new school planning cycle?

The Tell Them From Me student, parent and teacher surveys can be used to evaluate the achievements of the previous school year and to gather evidence and baseline data for the 2015-2017 planning cycle.

Tell Them From Me data can be very valuable for school leaders to use in leading the school community to identify strategic directions for school improvement. The surveys can also provide improvement measures, inform the development of products to be achieved over the three years of the cycle and provide evidence of impact in school plan milestones.

4. How are these surveys different from existing Departmental surveys on the School Survey System?

Schools have access to national and Departmental surveys of students, parents and teachers available through the School Survey System. The Tell Them From Me suite of student, parent and teacher surveys incorporate many of the same topics and have some similarly worded questions. However, they also:

- include a number of different measures
- bring student, teacher and parent surveys together in a single reporting tool
- will include data collected over multiple years
- enable comparison with state averages.

5. How will the student, parent and teacher surveys help the Department to contribute to school and student outcomes?

The Department is committed to using data, evidence and evaluation to inform its planning and practice. At present, there is little system-wide information available in New South Wales about student engagement and wellbeing. The survey data allows the Department, through the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE), to analyse and better understand student performance data and the impact of engagement, wellbeing and teaching practices on student outcomes.
6. How is the teacher survey different from the 2014 pilot teacher survey?

CESE has already piloted the teacher survey in around 500 schools. This is the 2014 pilot Focus on Learning teacher survey. All schools, whether they took part in the 2014 pilot teacher survey or not, have the option of taking part in the teacher survey in 2015. On the expression of interest form, simply indicate if your school was involved in the 2014 pilot teacher survey.

7. What kind of questions does the teacher survey ask?

The survey questions relate to the following evidence-based drivers of student learning:

| Leadership | Teaching strategies | Setting challenging and visible learning goals for students |
| Teacher collaboration | Classroom technology | Planned learning opportunities |
| The learning culture in classrooms | School inclusiveness | Quality feedback for students |
| The use of data to inform practice | Parent/carer involvement | Helping students overcome obstacles to learning |

Schools will also have the option to include their own custom questions in closed and open-ended format. Individual responses to these questions will not be passed on to CESE researchers.

8. How does my school participate in the surveys?

CESE has invited expressions of interest from all principals for the 2015 surveys. To participate in the teacher survey, a school must also participate in the student survey. Schools that participated in the pilot 2014 Focus on Learning teacher survey or schools in special circumstances, such as infants schools, may also participate.

9. How many teachers at my school can take part?

All teachers across all year levels in the school are encouraged to take the survey, regardless of whether their students participated in the student survey.

10. What is the cost to my school?

The surveys are provided free of charge to schools. In return, schools are asked to encourage as many teachers as possible to complete the survey. CESE may also ask schools to take part in a feedback questionnaire once the surveys have finished.

11. How will the survey be conducted?

The teacher survey will take around 15 minutes and is conducted entirely online during specific survey windows. The survey will take place during Term 3. Teachers will have the option of completing the survey on their school or home computers at any time that is convenient within the survey window.
12. How will teacher anonymity be ensured?

To protect teacher anonymity, schools will be provided with a single username and password for the school prior to the start of the survey period. This username and password will then be distributed to teachers. Survey responses will not be linked to DEC staff identification numbers. Data suppression rules are applied to the school reporting tools where there are fewer than five responses.

13. Will support be available to schools during the survey period?

Schools will have access to technical support provided by The Learning Bar, the company that has been contracted to supply the surveys for the Department. A free-call telephone number and email address will be provided to participating schools which will be available every day during term time between 8.30am and 4.30pm, before, during and after active survey periods.

14. Will training be available to school coordinators?

Online live training and information webinars will be offered to all schools. All school coordinators and principals are encouraged to attend one of these training sessions prior to the survey window. There will also be additional webinars offered at the end of the survey period providing information about how to interpret the reports and analyse the data provided by the surveys.

15. Can I see the survey questions?

Schools will be able to view the surveys online via a password protected portal once they have formally committed to undertaking the surveys. The 2015 questions in PDF form are available for interested schools. Please note that the survey questions are the intellectual property of The Learning Bar and should not be distributed beyond your school or used in any manner other than that stipulated by the Department. The questions for 2015 will use similar wording to the 2014 pilot survey questions.

16. How does the teacher survey relate to the student and parent surveys?

CESE is offering the full suite of Tell Them From Me surveys (student, parent and teacher surveys) to ensure schools can capture the views of students, teachers and parents. The surveys are complementary.

For more detail on each of the surveys, see the survey website: http://surveys.cese.nsw.gov.au/

17. Will the surveys all take place at the same time?

The student surveys will take place in Term 1 and (optionally) Term 3. The parent and teacher surveys will take place at the same time as the second student survey, in Term 3.

18. Can our school do one of the surveys and not the others?

Generally no, schools must commit to do the Tell Them From Me student survey to be able to run the parent and/or teacher survey. Some exceptions do apply to schools in special circumstances, such as infants schools or schools that participated in the 2014 pilot Focus on Learning teacher survey. The parent and teacher surveys are designed to complement the student survey.

19. Has the survey been used in Australia before?

To date, over 500 NSW public schools have used the teacher survey. These schools have all helped The Learning Bar adapt their survey so that it is appropriate for use in an Australian context.

20. My school is small. Will the survey work for me?

To protect student and parent confidentiality, data suppression rules do apply where fewer than five students answer a question. This may limit the capacity of small schools to drill down into their data. Unlike the student survey, schools do not have the option of forming clusters for the teacher survey.
What is CESE?

The Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) is part of the Department of Education and Communities, within the Office of Education.

CESE has been established to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of education in New South Wales. CESE will identify and share what works, creating new opportunities to improve teaching and learning across all of education.

More information about CESE is available at: www.cese.nsw.gov.au

What is The Learning Bar?

The Learning Bar is a Canadian education company that specialises in school surveys for both primary and secondary students. Its survey, Tell Them From Me, is the largest national school survey in Canada, used in nine of Canada’s ten provinces. More than 2,600 schools and 1.7 million Canadian students have participated in the survey over the last nine years.

The Learning Bar is led by Dr J Douglas Willms. Dr Willms is a Professor and Director of the Canadian Research Institute for Social Policy at the University of New Brunswick, and holds the Canada Research Chair in Literacy and Human Development. Dr Willms led the development of questions on student engagement for the OECD’s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA).

More information about The Learning Bar is available at: www.thelearningbar.com

If you have any questions about the parent survey, please contact CESE via email: TTFM@det.nsw.edu.au or by telephone: 9561 8688 /9561 8331 /9561 8370.

21. Can infants schools, SSP schools or other schools with special circumstances participate?

Infants schools can take the teacher survey, even though the student survey is only suitable for students in Years 4 to 12. SSP schools and other schools with special circumstances may do the parent and/or teacher surveys without doing the student survey after first enquiring with CESE.

22. Who will be able to see my school’s data?

Schools will be able to see their own aggregated data. They will not see individual teacher responses.

CESE researchers will have access to teacher level data for system-wide analysis. The researchers are interested in trends only, not individual teacher responses. CESE will not be able to see responses to your school’s custom questions. No teacher or school will be identified in any publication.

As with other Departmental data, your Director, Public Schools and selected policy staff from State Office may view your school’s report.

Schools are encouraged to use the data as part of their ongoing community and stakeholder discussions.

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<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tr>
<td>Early Term 3</td>
<td>Training for school principals and coordinators in using the survey website (conducted by webinar).&lt;br&gt;Schools provided with a single username and password for their school for distribution to teachers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term 3</td>
<td>Active period for surveys. Help desk support will be available.&lt;br&gt;Schools receive reports three days after closing their survey.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Term 4</td>
<td>Training for school principals and coordinators in analysing school survey results (conducted by webinar).</td>
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23. What will happen next for schools that choose to participate in the teacher survey?

Early Term 3: Training for school principals and coordinators in using the survey website (conducted by webinar).<br>Schools provided with a single username and password for their school for distribution to teachers.

Mid-Term 3: Active period for surveys. Help desk support will be available.<br>Schools receive reports three days after closing their survey.

Term 4: Training for school principals and coordinators in analysing school survey results (conducted by webinar).