Preparing to launch the mentor and teacher surveys: Louisiana Department of Education

Ginger Stoker and Jenna Zacamy

April 29, 2019

Today's goals

1. Review progress of **survey development.**

2. Discuss importance of **response rates.**

3. Develop a **communication plan** to announce and promote survey, and to monitor and follow up with nonrespondents.

4. Discuss **programming specifications** for an online survey.

5. Discuss **timeline and next steps.**

Progress of survey development

- Share update on survey draft.
- Discuss additional work needed to complete the survey (who should review it?).
- Discuss timeframe for survey administration.

Response rates

- Why are response rates important?

- How are they calculated?

- Is there a standard target response rate?

- What influences response rates?

- How do you maximize response rates?

Response rates
Why are they important?

The response rate is one way to gauge whether survey results represent the target population:

- A high response rate maximizes the chance that the results are representative of the target population.

- A low response rate increases the chance of biased results, which cannot be generalized to the target population.

- It's important to be able to monitor rates by knowing who has responded and who has not.

Response rates
How are they calculated?

$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{\text{Number of completed surveys}}{\text{Number of surveys distributed}} \times 100$$

For example: If you send out surveys to 200 individuals and 125 surveys are completed, your response rate is 62.5 percent.

$$\text{Response rate} = \frac{125}{200} \times 100 = 62.5\%$$

Response rates
Is there a standard target response rate?

- No standard target response rate exists.

- Higher response rates typically (but don't always) mean that data better reflect the target population.

- Standards for data collection response rates vary.

Response rates
How do you maximize response rates?

- Personalize communications.
- Send prelaunch communications.
- Make the survey topic salient, as brief as possible, and easy to complete.
- Follow up with potential survey participants.
- To personalize communication and track nonrespondents data, we will want to send individual survey invitation links.

Response rates
Confidentiality

Be transparent in consent language shared with participants.

- No individuals, schools, or districts will be identified by name in reporting.

- Only aggregate results will be reported.

- If any open-ended comments are used in reporting, all identifying information (for example, names, schools, or districts) will be omitted.

- Data will be stored with no identifiable information.
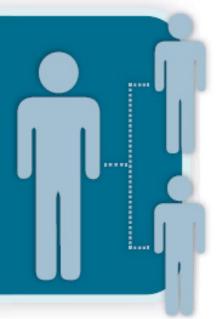
Response rates
Best practices

- Personalize communications.
- Send presurvey notifications.
- Keep items salient and focused.
- Ensure confidentiality of reporting.
- Monitor response rate overall and within groups of interest during data collection, and target additional follow-up contact if warranted.
- Calculate and report the response rate.

Developing a communication plan

- Communication before the survey launch.
- Initial survey launch communication.
- Tracking responses and follow-up.

Prepare to Connect

- Write survey invitation.
- Plan to track nonresponse.
- Prepare follow-up communication.
- Verify contact information.

Communication plan
Before the survey launch

- Why is it important to the mentors to participate? How will they benefit?

- What communication channels (for example, mentor email, blogs, conferences) are available before the survey launch?

- Is there anyone else (for example, school principals, regional contacts) we would like to inform about the survey?

- Is any work needed to finalize contact list (for example, confirm contact information is up to date)?

- How will mentors receive the initial survey (for example, from an LDOE email or online survey platform email address)?

Communication plan
Initial survey communication

- Will participants recognize the email address? (For instance, if the email invitation will come from the online survey platform, we may want a separate email right before the survey launch. Also, we may need to ask people to check their spam folder.)

- Who can respondents consult if they have questions about the survey?

- Are there any questions or concerns coming in from participants that need to be addressed? (For instance, is there trouble with using the platform?) Are responses coming in?

Communication plan
Follow-up communication

- How frequently will mentors receive reminders?

- Are there other strategies to get nonresponders' attention?

- Are there any specific populations we would want to track?

Survey communication plan

Discussion: Developing a survey communication plan for the Believe and Prepare program surveys

- Discuss content and timing of prelaunch communications.

- Discuss content and timing of initial survey communications.

- Develop timeline of follow-up survey reminders.

Programming the online survey

Discussion: Using Survey Monkey to administer the surveys

- – Review process for creating and distributing individual survey links.
- – Discuss item format and programming.
- – Discuss and demonstrate how to program skip patterns.
- – Review process for tracking individual respondents.

Plan to do the following:

- – Test the survey as a responder.
- – Assess the data file structure—that is, output information— and look at the data file to make sure the data is being exported in the format you want.

References

American Association for Public Opinion Research. (2009). Best practices. Deerfield, IL: Author.

Dillman, D. A. (2000). *Mail and internet surveys: The total design method* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Wiley.

Groves, R. M. (2006). Nonresponse rates and nonresponse bias in household surveys. *Public Opinion Quarterly, 70*(5), 646–675.

Scheuren, F. (n.d.). *What is a survey?* Alexandria, VA: American Statistical Association.

Additional resources

For more information, please visit the following websites:

- The American Association for Public Opinion Research: http://www.aapor.org/.

- *Public Opinion Quarterly:* https://poq.oxfordjournals.org/.

- *Journal of Survey Statistics and Methodology:* http://jssam.oxfordjournals.org/content/current.