



SAN ANTONIO INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT Administrative Procedures

E – Instruction No. 21	E21
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Revised March 15, 2008	

SURVEYS, QUESTIONNAIRES, EVALUATIONS OF STUDENTS

Various individuals or groups may request that students participate or fill in surveys, questionnaires, evaluations, or other such instruments. *The term "survey" in this procedure includes, but is not limited to, any of the aforementioned instruments or other similar instrument used to elicit responses from students, whether it is a formal or informal questioning instrument.* However, the term does not include academic examinations related to instruction.

The provisions of these administrative procedures shall not be construed to limit or abolish a District employee's authority to counsel, instruct, advise, or discipline a student in accordance with District policy.

Generally, any survey that requests information concerning any of the controversial/sensitive/personal topics listed below must be reviewed by the District Parent Survey Review Committee, must have approval of the campus principal, and must also have prior written consent of the parent/guardian. Other surveys must have written approval by the principal.

CONTROVERSIAL/SENSITIVE/PERSONAL TOPICS

No student shall be required or asked to volunteer to submit to a survey, analysis, or evaluation that reveals information concerning the following topics without the prior written consent of the parent/guardian or the student (if the student is an adult or emancipated minor). Topics covered by this provision are the following:

1. Political affiliations;
2. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his or her family;
3. Sexual behavior and attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, and demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
7. Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program);
8. Religious beliefs or affiliations;
9. Other matters that are of a personal family nature.

REQUESTS BY CAMPUS PERSONNEL - TEACHERS, COUNSELORS, ETC.

1. Prior to the use of any survey, principal review and approval is required.
 - a. Instructional Uses: Teachers shall plan surveys directly related to curriculum with the principal and obtain the principal's approval that the survey is an appropriate part of the instruction.
 - b. Other Educational Uses (not including research purposes): At any time a school counselor, social worker, or other employee acting in a counseling or advisory capacity, such as a homeroom teacher or advisor, asks students to complete a survey for a purpose not directly related to the curriculum, those staff members shall submit the survey to the principal for review and approval for the purposes intended. Note: Requests for any research purposes must follow the procedures for research approval.

2. The principal shall determine whether or not the survey covers any controversial/sensitive/personal topics listed above that require expressed written permission from a parent/guardian. Both Federal and State statutes require parental consent for surveys that ask about these highly sensitive topics, and failure to follow this procedure will subject employees to discipline, including possible termination.
 - a. If not, the principal may then note approval or non-approval on the *Survey Administration Request and Approval* [FORM E21-A] and then return the form to the requestor. The requestor may then administer the survey if approved.
 - b. If the survey **does** ask information of students that is among the topics requiring expressed written consent from a parent/guardian, the principal shall first determine whether or not the survey is, in the principal's opinion, appropriate for the purpose indicated by the teacher or staff member. If the principal determines that the survey would be appropriate, the principal shall forward the *Survey Administration Request and Approval* form [FORM E21-A] and a copy of the survey to the Parent Survey Review Committee. If the principal determines that the survey would not be appropriate, the principal shall note that the survey is not approved and return the form and survey to the employee.
3. The teacher or other professional shall file and retain copies of the survey instrument, the *Survey Administration Request and Approval*, the *Survey Notice and Permission Form* sent to the parents/guardians, and the signed parent/guardian permission forms.
4. Requests to have students participate in any survey, formal or informal, regardless of the purpose, by any student teacher, intern, student observer, or other candidate for educational certification who is not an employee of the District, must be handled as an employee request. In addition to having the approval of the cooperating teacher, the requestor must have the approval of the principal.

REQUESTS FROM NON-CAMPUS PERSONNEL, OTHER DISTRICT DEPARTMENTS, OR NON-EMPLOYEES

1. Survey requests: Requests to conduct surveys other than those that originate from teachers or other campus personnel must be reviewed by the Parent Survey Review Committee as outlined in the sections below prior to presentation to a principal. These provisions shall apply to the following individuals or entities, regardless of whether or not the survey relates to curriculum, whether or not the survey may be administered during the school day, whether or not the survey responses are anonymous, or whether or not the survey may be administered on or off school property:
 - a. District departments/offices;
 - b. Local agencies, community organizations, parent organizations, churches, and other volunteer groups;
 - c. Organizations or individuals who may be operating an approved program in the schools or providing approved services to students;
 - d. Organizations that operate after school programs or summer programs, such as the YMCA, etc.
2. Research requests: The principal shall ensure that those who request to conduct research follow the procedures for research requests. In these cases, the entire research proposal will be reviewed and approved by the District Research Review Committee prior to any action by a principal/department head.

PARENT SURVEY REVIEW COMMITTEE

1. A Parent Survey Review Committee comprised of the parents that serve on the District Leadership Team shall meet with the Director of Parent, Community and Business Partnerships Department or designee.
 - a. Each parent shall serve for the term of their District Leadership Team service.

- b. The committee shall meet at least after each District Leadership Team as needed to review surveys submitted through this procedure.
 - c. The Director of the Parent, Community and Business Partnerships Department or designee shall serve as facilitators for the committee.
 - d. The Parent Survey Review Committee shall provide its opinion whether a survey requires expressed written parent approval and note their opinion on the *Survey Administration Request and Approval* form [FORM E21-A]. The committee shall also note if they have concerns about the use of the survey even with the expressed written consent by parents/guardians.
2. The requestor shall submit a copy of the survey instrument along with a completed *Survey Administration Request and Approval* [FORM E21-A] that explains in writing the following:
 - a. The purpose for the survey;
 - b. The topics covered and a copy of the instrument;
 - c. The method of administration of the survey (when, where, by whom will it be given);
 - d. The targeted participants (grade level, etc.);
 - e. The intended uses of the results;
 - f. The procedures that will be used to protect the privacy of the students;
 - g. The procedures for disposal or retention of the surveys after they have been used for the purpose listed in the request.
 3. Following committee review, the Director/designee shall consult with the Superintendent about committee concerns regarding any survey. The Superintendent has the final authority to approve or disapprove the use of a survey.
 4. The Director/designee shall return to the requestor the signed form, maintaining a copy for the file.

ADMINISTRATION OF SURVEYS

1. Following review by the committee, the requestor may ask principals for approval to administer the survey to their students. **Review by the committee does not obligate any campus to participate in the survey.**
2. The principal shall file and retain copies of the survey instrument, the *Survey Administration Request and Approval*, the *Survey Notice and Permission Form* sent to the parents/guardians.

Attachments: FORM E21-A: *Survey Administration Request and Approval*
FORM E21-B: *Survey Notice and Permission Form [E21-B/SP Spanish]*

References: Board Policy EF (LEGAL); EMB (LOCAL); FFE (LEGAL)

See these INDEX references for related procedures: research requests

Questions regarding this procedure should be addressed to the Director of Parent, Community and Business Partnerships, 141 Lavaca Street, San Antonio, Texas 78210-1095/ (210) 299-5562.