



# PUBLIC SCHOOLS OF NORTH CAROLINA

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC INSTRUCTION | June St. Clair Atkinson, Ed.D., *State Superintendent*

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**TO** LEA Superintendents  
Charter School Directors

**FROM** June St. Clair Atkinson *JSA*

## STUDENT SURVEY INSTRUMENT

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### **Panorama Student Survey**

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) will be conducting a statewide pilot of a new student survey instrument. The purpose of this pilot is to provide targeted feedback to teachers and their supervisors on how well students' are responding to teachers' instructional practice. As with all elements of our educator evaluation system, the goal is to provide educators with substantive, specific feedback in order to foster professional growth and development.

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### **Benefits of Student Perception Surveys**

Over the past several years, NCDPI has investigated the potential benefits of student perception surveys as a way of providing teachers with high-quality feedback on their instructional practices. In 2010, the state piloted the Tripod Survey, developed by Dr. Ron Ferguson at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government, and used in the Measures of Effective Teaching Study. More recently, NCDPI has worked with researchers at Harvard Graduate School of Education in the development of a new student perception survey. This survey, known as the Panorama Student Survey, has been field tested in select districts in North Carolina and has proven to be valid and reliable for measuring teacher effectiveness on a variety of instructional domains. Furthermore, the Panorama Student Survey has separate versions for elementary (grades 3-5) and secondary (grades 6-12) that have been validated for developmental appropriateness and reading level.

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**Benefits of Student Survey, cont'd.**

In a recent presentation to the North Carolina State Board of Education (September 3, 2015), Dr. Gary Henry of Vanderbilt University provided compelling evidence that principal evaluations alone provide limited information on individual teachers' strengths. Dr. Henry further concluded that student surveys could provide greater insight into the relative strengths and weaknesses of teaching practices and deliver targeted feedback for addressing instructional deficiencies.

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**Implementation of Surveys in 2015-16, Administered Online**

NCDPI is requesting that all districts participate in the 2015-16 implementation of the student surveys. Our goal is to collect these data for all teachers in North Carolina. We appreciate that this is a tremendous undertaking, but we have developed strategies for ensuring the success of our participation goal. First, NCDPI will use stratified random sampling to reduce the number of students who must provide feedback for a given teacher while maintaining a representative sample of the teacher's students. The goal of the implementation team is that the majority of students will be required to complete surveys for two of their teachers. Second, the survey will be administered online and students will have access to the instrument on a variety of electronic devices (i.e., computers, tablets, smartphones, etc.). Districts will have the flexibility to allow their students to complete the surveys on, or off, campus depending on their capacity to provide computer access to their students.

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**Phased Roll-Out by Region**

NCDPI will conduct this pilot of the Panorama Student Survey in a phased roll-out by geographic regions. Districts in each of the state's eight educational regions will have approximately two weeks to administer the student surveys to their student populations. NCDPI plans on beginning data collection in January 2016 for first-semester courses. Student surveys for second-semester and yearlong courses will be conducted in late March/early April of 2016. Adherence to the scheduled plan is critical to ensuring that platform will be able to handle the traffic of millions of students completing the surveys. LEAs and charter schools will be asked to designate a survey administrator who will work with NCDPI staff to troubleshoot problems that might arise during implementation.

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**Feedback for  
Teachers**

The data from the Panorama Student Survey will be used to provide teachers with specific feedback on how students view their instructional practices. Teachers will receive aggregate student data on each of the questions presented in the survey instrument. School and district administrators will be provided data on teachers' performance on the instructional domains measured by the instrument (e.g., Student-Teacher Relationships, Classroom Climate, Pedagogical Effectiveness, and Rigorous Expectations). Additionally, NCDPI will map these survey domains back to the first four standards of the North Carolina Educator Effectiveness System (NCEES). Administrators will receive information on how a teacher's students perceived his/her instruction relative to the statewide average for a given school type (elementary, middle, or high school). It is important for teachers to understand that the student survey results will not have a direct impact on the teachers' evaluations, but are provided as an additional data source for principals to make their teacher evaluation more accurate and meaningful. Data from the survey instrument can also function as an artifact of teacher performance and improvement with the added benefit that these measures are uniformly applied across the state and can demonstrate an individual teacher's improvement relative to his or her peers across the state.

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**For Additional  
Information or  
Questions**

Although we have tried to provide as much information about the state's plan for implementing student surveys as possible, we are sure that many LEAs and charter schools will have specific questions about the plan to implement student surveys. We encourage districts to send any questions or concerns to the Department of Educator Human Capital Policy and Research at [educatoreffectiveness@dpi.nc.gov](mailto:educatoreffectiveness@dpi.nc.gov).

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JSA:TT:mw

c: Rebecca Garland  
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