

The NYC School Survey Report helps school leaders understand what key members of the school community say about the learning environment at each school. The information captured by the survey and shared in this report is designed to support a dialogue among all members of the school community about how to make the school a better place to learn.

Every year, all parents, all teachers, and students in grades 6 – 12 take the NYC School Survey. The survey ranks among the largest of any kind ever conducted nationally. In 2015, 951,424 surveys out of a possible 1,526,553 were submitted, representing 62% of the NYC public-school community.

Survey results are shared in the NYC School Survey Report for school and public audiences and provide insight into a school's learning environment. This year, survey questions are organized and reported as they relate to the six elements of the [Framework for Great Schools](#): Rigorous Instruction, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, Effective School Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, and Trust. Survey results also inform the family-facing [School Quality Snapshot](#) and school-facing [School Quality Guide](#) by providing information from the school community alongside other data points.

A detailed breakdown of survey responses is reported in each school's [NYC School Survey Report](#). The survey report presents response rates, survey results, and a question-by-question look at constituent responses. Section 1 of this guide explains calculations related to the survey results, which are reported as the percentage of positive responses. Section 2 addresses frequently asked questions.

Section 1: SURVEY RESULTS (PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES)

For each school, the report presents the percentage of positive responses for the six categories of the survey: Rigorous Instruction, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, Effective School Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, and Trust. Calculating these percentages at the school level begins with the responses of parents, teachers, and students at a school.

Question – Percentage of Positive Responses

For each question, the percentage of positive responses is the percentage of respondents who answered in the favorable half of the possible response options. For example, for questions with response options of “Strongly disagree,” “Disagree,” “Agree,” and “Strongly Agree,” responses of “Agree” and “Strongly Agree” were considered positive responses. As another example, for questions about the frequency of positive behaviors with response options of “Never,” “Once,” “Once a month,” “Weekly,” “A few times a week,” and “Almost every day,” responses of “Weekly,” “A few times a week,” and “Almost every day” were considered positive responses.¹

¹ For three frequency-based questions that parents were asked about parent involvement in the schools, a different rule was applied to define positive responses. For the questions “How often have you had an in-person parent-teacher meeting?” and “How often have you volunteered time to support this school?”, a response of “Once” or more was treated as positive. For the question “How often have you communicated with your child’s teacher about your child’s performance?”, a response of “Once a month” or more frequent was treated as positive.

Category – Percentage of Positive Responses

For each category, the percentage of positive responses is calculated through a multi-step process, which reflects the structure of the survey. The survey questions in each category fall within subtopics called measures. For example, the survey questions in the Rigorous Instruction category fall within the following measures: Common Core shifts in literacy, Common Core shifts in math, course clarity, and quality of student discussion.² For each measure, the percentage of positive responses is calculated by averaging the percentage of positive responses for the questions within the measure. This is done first for each respondent group (parents, teachers, or students) that was asked about the measure; those percentages of positive responses are then averaged to form a percentage of positive responses for the measure. The percentage of positive responses for each category is the average of the percentage of positive responses for all measures within that category.

Low Response Rates or Numbers

Survey results not reported. If fewer than four survey responses were received from a respondent group, then that group’s results are not reported due to reliability and confidentiality concerns. Additionally, if fewer than five survey responses were received from a respondent group and that number of responses constitutes less than 50% of the eligible respondents, then that group’s results are also not reported due to reliability and confidentiality concerns.

Response Options: “Does Not Apply” and “Don’t Know”

For questions that include the options “Does Not Apply” or “Don’t Know,” these response options do *not* factor into the calculation of the percentage of positive responses.

For example, suppose that a school has 10 responses to a question with response option “Does Not Apply.” Two respondents selected each response as shown below:

Response option	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Does Not Apply
Number of respondents	2	2	2	2	2

In this example, four respondents responded positively (Strongly Agree or Agree). This number is divided by eight (the number of respondents who did not answer “Does Not Apply”) to produce a percentage of positive responses of $4 \div 8 = 50\%$.

² The Appendix to this Guide shows the measures within each element and the respondent group(s) that were asked about each measure.

Section 2: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Are there any changes to the content of this year's surveys?

Yes. We revised the survey this year to ask questions designed to gather information about the six elements of the [Framework for Great Schools](#): Rigorous Instruction, Collaborative Teachers, Supportive Environment, Effective School Leadership, Strong Family-Community Ties, and Trust.

Are schools penalized for low response rates?

While high participation rates are important in gathering broad and representative information about a school, response rates are reported for informational purposes and schools are not penalized for low response rates. (In sections of the School Quality Snapshot and School Quality Guide with ratings based on a combination of survey data and other data, the way that different data sources are weighted may be adjusted if the survey response rate or number of responses is very low. In particular, weight may be shifted from the survey data to the non-survey data in those instances.) Further, survey results will be suppressed if certain minimum numbers of responses are not received for a particular respondent group, as outlined in Section 1.

How are response rates calculated?

The response rate is the number of surveys submitted divided by the number of people in the survey population. The student survey population represents all students in the school who are enrolled in grades 6 through 12. The parent survey population represents all parents of students in the school. Parents with more than one child in the same school are counted only once in the parent survey population. Parents with children in more than one school are counted once in each of those schools, and are invited to fill out a survey for each school. The teacher survey population represents all full-time teachers and guidance counselors in the school.

Some survey questions do not fall within the list of elements and measures in the Appendix. Are these questions counted?

Survey questions that do not fall within the list of elements and measures in the Appendix do not contribute to the percentage of positive responses for each element. These questions collect important information about a variety of topics that help schools leaders and other stakeholders better understand schools' strengths and target areas for improvement. These questions are marked "Informational" on the Survey Report.

The sum of response percentages for one survey question does not equal 100%. Why?

For purposes of display, percentages are rounded to the second decimal place. As a result, the sum of the displayed response percentages may not appear to add up to 100% for all questions. For example, if the percentages used for calculation for a question are 49.5% Strongly Agree and 50.5% Agree, they are displayed in rounded form as 50% and 51%.

Likewise, if the true percentages are $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ Strongly Agree, $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ Agree, and $33\frac{1}{3}\%$ Disagree, they are displayed as 33%, 33%, and 33%.

How are schools categorized?

Schools are categorized by school type as outlined below.

School type	Grade range
Early Childhood School	K, K-1, K-2, K-3
Elementary School	K-4, K-5, K-6, 2-5, 3-5, 4-5, 5
Elementary / Middle School	K-7, K-8, 3-8, 4-8
Elementary / Middle / High School	K-9, K-10, K-11, K-12
Middle School	5-7, 5-8, 6, 6-7, 6-8, 8
Middle / High School	5-9, 5-11, 5-12, 6-9, 6-10, 6-11, 6-12, 7-12, 8-12
High School	9, 9-10, 9-11, 9-12, 10-12, 11-12, 12
Transfer School	Transfer Schools serving grades from 9-12
District 75 School	District 75 Schools

How are blank responses handled?

Survey participation is voluntary. Question satisfaction rates are calculated by dividing the number of respondents selecting each choice by the total number of respondents who answered that particular question. Respondents who left the question blank are not included in the percentages reported per survey question and do not have an impact on the question's percentage of positive responses.

How are multiple responses treated on the NYC School Survey Report?

Answer choices of respondents who selected multiple answer choices to questions that did not indicate "check all that apply" are not reported and are not included in percentage of positive responses.

Appendix (Measures Within Each Element Category)

Element Measure	Respondent group(s) asked about the measure				
	Non-elementary schools			Elementary schools	
	Students	Teachers	Parents	Teachers	Parents
Rigorous Instruction					
Common Core shifts in literacy		✓		✓	
Common Core shifts in math		✓		✓	
Course clarity	✓				
Quality of student discussion		✓		✓	
Collaborative Teachers					
Cultural awareness	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Inclusive classroom instruction		✓		✓	
Quality of professional development		✓		✓	
School commitment		✓		✓	
Innovation		✓		✓	
Reflective dialogue		✓		✓	
Peer Collaboration		✓		✓	
Focus on student learning		✓		✓	
Collective responsibility		✓		✓	
Supportive Environment					
Safety	✓			✓	
Classroom behavior	✓			✓	
Social-emotional measure		✓		✓	
Peer interactions	✓				
Next-level guidance	✓				
Press toward academic achievement	✓			✓	
Personal attention and support	✓				
Peer support for academic work	✓		✓	✓	✓
Effective School Leadership					
Inclusive principal leadership			✓		✓
Teacher influence		✓		✓	
Program coherence		✓		✓	
Principal instructional leadership		✓		✓	
Strong Family-Community Ties					
Teacher outreach to parents		✓	✓	✓	✓
Parent involvement in the school			✓		✓
Trust					
Parent-teacher trust			✓		✓
Parent-principal trust			✓		✓
Student-teacher trust	✓				
Teacher-principal trust		✓		✓	
Teacher-teacher trust		✓		✓	