



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. Some schools, such as infants schools and schools for specific purposes (SSP schools) can survey their teachers without running the *Tell Them From Me* student survey.

The teacher survey is anonymous. It 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 (Term 3/4), and is run at the same time as the Partners in Learning parent survey and the second optional student survey. Over 960 schools in NSW participated in the 2017 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 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 eight measures. The report also shows the distribution of answers for each measure which allows school leaders to target specific factors. Your school's results will be compared against state-wide averages.

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

The *Tell Them From Me* student, parent and teacher surveys provide valid and reliable data to help schools during the

planning cycle, including with the annual review of strategic directions, development of improvement measures and milestones, self-assessment against the School Excellence Framework and preparation of the annual school report. The survey can help schools:

- understand teachers' perspectives on critical aspects of school and classroom effectiveness
- provide evidence of areas of strength to support self-assessment and reporting
- engage the school community in discussions to identify strategic directions for school improvement
- establish quantitative improvement measures and help schools track achievement against them.

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 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 support better student outcomes?

The department is committed to using data, evidence and evaluation to inform its planning and practice.

The survey data allows the department, through the Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE), to analyse and understand better student performance data and the impact of engagement, wellbeing and teaching practices on student outcomes.



6. 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 formats. Individual responses to the open-ended questions will not be passed on to CESE researchers.

7. How does my school participate in the surveys?

CESE has invited expressions of interest from all schools. Schools in special circumstances, such as infants schools and schools for specific purposes (SSP schools), may also participate.

8. 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.

9. 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.

10. 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 from the end of Term 3 to the beginning of Term 4. 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.

11. How will teacher anonymity be ensured?

To protect teacher anonymity, schools will be provided with anonymous and randomly generated usernames and passwords prior to the start of the survey period. These usernames and passwords will then be distributed to teachers. Survey responses will not be linked to DoE staff identification numbers. Data suppression rules are applied to the school reporting tools where there are fewer than five responses.



12. 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. Support will be available every day during term time between 8.30am and 4.30pm, before, during and after active survey periods.

13. 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 during and at the end of the survey period providing information about how to interpret the reports and analyse the data provided by the surveys. Recordings of the training webinars are available in the *Tell Them From Me* online portal in the 'My Resources' folder.

14. 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 questions in PDF form are

available for participating schools. Please note that the survey questions are the intellectual property of *The Learning Bar* and must not be distributed beyond your school or used in any manner other than that stipulated by the department.

15. 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.

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

The student surveys will take place in Term 1 and (optionally) Term 3/4. The parent and teacher surveys will take place at the same time as the second student survey, in Term 3/4.

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

Schools can take part in the Term 1 student survey without taking part in either the teacher or parent surveys. However, we ask that schools commit to do the 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, schools for specific purposes (SSP schools). The parent and teacher surveys are designed to complement the student survey.

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

To protect teacher, student and parent confidentiality, data suppression rules do apply where fewer than five survey takers answer a question. This may limit the capacity of small schools to drill down into their data.

Small schools can choose to cluster together, allowing them to pool data. Clustering is completely optional. To form a cluster, all schools involved must agree. If schools form a cluster this will mean that these schools receive a report that shows the combined data from all the schools in that particular cluster. These schools will also receive their individual school report if enough data has been collected to protect teacher confidentiality.

Please indicate whether you would like to be part of a school cluster when lodging your expression of interest.

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

Infants schools can take part in 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.

20. 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 open-ended custom questions. No teacher will be identified in any publication. No school will be identified unless they have given permission.

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.

21. 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. Helpdesk support will be available. Schools setup their surveys and download individual user-names and passwords for distribution to teachers.
Mid-Term 3 – beginning of Term 4	Active period for surveys. Helpdesk support will continue to be available. Training for school principals and coordinators in using the survey website continues to be conducted by webinar. Schools receive their reports three days after closing their survey. Training for school principals and coordinators in analysing school survey results conducted by webinar.



What is CESE?

The Centre for Education Statistics and Evaluation (CESE) is part of the NSW Department of Education.

CESE has been established to improve the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of education in New South Wales. CESE identifies and shares 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 6,300 schools and 5.4 million students have participated in the survey. Australian schools have been participating in the *Tell Them From Me* surveys since 2012.

The Learning Bar is led by Dr J Douglas Willms. Dr Willms is the President of the International Academy of Education, a Member of the US National Academy of Education and a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada. He recently held the Tier 1 Canada Research Chair in Literacy and Human Development for 14 years. Dr Willms has played a lead role in the development of questions 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: **1300 131 499**.