

Frequently Asked Questions about the National Evaluation Team (NET):

Q. Do we have to complete our logic model and evaluation plan before our NET site visit takes place?

A. There is no requirement that you finish your logic model, evaluation plan, or any other item that the site visit letter from NET mentioned. The purpose of the site visit is descriptive: to gain information about your site, not to evaluate your progress.

Q. Will the evaluator from the NET that I worked with at the Evaluation Meeting in Washington D.C. continue to help me with my evaluation plan?

A. Not unless you have a specific question about how to address NET requirements within your plan. Otherwise, your Technical Assistant Specialist (TAS) from the National Center will help you complete it; if you need another evaluator to assist you, your TAS will arrange for this assistance.

Q. Do the required or optional NET questionnaires contain questions that can be used as GPRA measures?

A. The NET requires a school climate measure derived from school staff responses and has made available optional instruments that can be used to collect school climate information from students and parents; “school climate.”. The preferred measures for the four components of GPRA directly measure changes in behavior, such as attendance records, violent incidents, use of mental health services, etc. These measures are not included in the NET surveys, which focus on the process of collaboration and implementation of your program. School climate is not used by the NET for GPRA. However, sites may find indicators from the school climate surveys useful as Project Indicators.

Q. How can I find out if my site is going to be a sentinel site?

A. Sentinel sites have not been chosen yet, and will not be chosen until approximately December 2007.

Q. When will data start to be available from the NET?

A. The purpose of the NET is to evaluate the operation of the nationwide SS/HS initiative. At this time, the NET is collecting baseline data, i.e., what conditions were like at the start of your process. The NET hopes to be able to release this baseline data to the sites during the summer, but approval will rest with the Federal sponsors who actually “own” the data.

Q. What is the NET survey schedule for this first year?

A. The NET hopes to make its Project Level, School Level, School Climate (Staff), School Climate (Student) and School Climate (Parent) surveys available during the last week of April 2006. This is later than anticipated because the Federal government requires a lengthy approval process for the instruments. [If it’s any consolation, grantees will be able to schedule the surveys much earlier next year.]

Q. Can the NET make suggestions about how to schedule their surveys and site specific surveys, to reduce response burden and/or increase response rates?

A. YES. This will need to be done on a case-by-case basis. Email Mike Van Horn at mvanhorn@manilaconsulting.ent for assistance. Tell Mike Van Horn what your plans are for surveys in the 2005-06 school year, and he can help you develop a proposed schedule in consultation with the NET methodologists.

Q. Is it required that we conduct a student survey annually to fulfill SS/HS requirements?

A. No it is not required, but having annual GPRA data , and if possible, climate data, would be extremely useful to the NET and helpful for your own purposes to meet the grant reporting requirements and the needs of your local evaluation.

Q. The Instructions sheet for the School Level survey suggests that grantees have a designated SS/HS person responsible for programs and activities at each school. What if a grantee's structure is such that there is not a particular person at each building assigned as the SS/HS liaison?

A. Even if schools do not have a "SS/HS Liaison" we would still like to have this survey completed for each school. It may require multiple respondents at each school to complete the survey. The Project Director will designate a person responsible for collecting input from that school (e.g. the principal, assistant principal) The NET will forward the survey to the person designated by the Project Director at each school. S/he will be responsible for ensuring completion of the survey, handing it out and collecting it from each contributing respondent.

Q. Are the School Climate Surveys for students and parents mandatory?

A. No, School Climate Survey – Students and School climate – Parents is optional for the NET. However, we believe these assessments will be of great use to local evaluators. These measures may be especially relevant given the short time frame in which the evaluation is to take place. Perceptions of safety may be more easily and accurately measured than broader changes in behavior.

Q. Will the NET provide survey instruments in other languages?

A. No, grantees are to arrange for translation of the instruments into the languages required for their needs. However, translated instruments shared w/the NET will be posted and can then be used by other grantees in their evaluations.

Q. Do we need to acknowledge the NET if we use questions from the Climate surveys?

A. Please make the following acknowledgement in a footnote to the survey:

West Ed and the California Department of Education
The National SS/HS Evaluation Team at Manila, RMC and Battelle

Q. During the NET presentation at the Grantee Evaluation Training meeting there was mention of a follow-up “Webinar” during which the NET would provide more guidance on how best to integrate the instruments and what sort of sampling frame the national evaluation will be suggesting. . Has a Webinar been scheduled?

A. A Webinar has not been scheduled at this time. The hope is that this set of Frequently Asked Questions will resolve many of the questions, and doubts grantees encounter regarding the NET and its requirements. Additional questions about NET requirements and resources that emerge should be addressed to the Technical Assistance Specialists. These questions may be forwarded and addressed in a Webinar.