

STUDENTS AS ALLIES IN SCHOOL REFORM

STUDENT SURVEY (2011)

Notes

The original Students as Allies Student Survey was co-created in 2003 by students, teachers, and WKCD (What Kids Can Do, Inc.), then administered and completed by over 6,000 high school students in five cities. Since then, more than 150,000 teachers, teacher educators, education majors in college and graduate school, and student groups have downloaded the survey from www.wkcd.org.

Given this remarkable interest, WKCD recently revised and refreshed the original survey and we post it here. We invite you to use it at your school, providing students an opportunity to help strengthen teaching and learning. We also encourage teachers to complete the complementary teacher survey: the variance between how students and teachers answer similar questions yields important information in its own right.

The survey on the pages that follow was produced using the online tool “Survey Monkey” (www.surveymonkey.com). Survey Monkey also does a wonderful job of organizing your survey data, once entered.

In the ideal scenario, students fill out the survey directly on Survey Monkey. In practice, this can be difficult, producing lower survey completion rates. Most often, it works best for a team of students (who have “signed up” for the project) go class to class, explain the survey and its purpose, and hand it out. The teacher gives the class—right then in class—time to complete it; otherwise, the return rate drops substantially. The more students who complete the survey—shoot for 60 percent student participation!—the more reliable the results will be.

Entering the students’ responses into Survey Monkey is the next step. It’s time intensive but simple—this is where a couple of parent volunteers can make a big contribution. The result is an easy-to-follow analysis, with the option to sort student responses by grade, income, etc.

If you want to add your own questions and/or subtract some of ours, that’s fine. We caution you, though, against re-wording, unless a particular word or phrase seems confusing in the context of your school. Students helped create the language in the survey and it has proved, by and large, to be clear and appropriate.

Finally, we *urge* you to use the survey results as a springboard for dialogue between and among students and teachers. We *urge* you to use these discussions as a chance to create together small action steps that, in turn, produce positive change. Needless to say, this last step is crucial.

If you do use this survey, please let us know! We're happy to answer questions—info@whatkidscando.org—and eager to post your results on WKCD.org.

Tips from Students as Allies Student Researchers (2004)

Promise students anonymity.

Remember that you only get answers to the questions you ask.
Sometimes you may want to ask the same question in different ways.

Be careful how you word your questions.
Poor questions get poor answers.

Make sure the students filling out the survey are representative of your school:
“good” students and “poor,” engaged and alienated, a mix of races and income (if
your school has a mix).

Learn about sampling.

Survey teachers along with students, especially on the same issues.
We found big differences in each group’s experience of school.

Explain to students in advance of administering the survey
what it involves and why it’s important.

Remind students that it’s not a test—nor a joke.

Tell them how you’ll use the results.

Get as many students as possible to complete the survey! Set a high goal, like 60
percent participation, and work for it!

Students as Allies in School Reform: Student Survey (2011)

**1. Thinking about your school, how much do you agree or disagree with the following?
For each statement, please check the appropriate box.**

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
Students in my school treat one another with respect.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My school disciplines students fairly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My school respects all races and cultures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My principal models respectful behavior.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty and staff value what students have to say.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students in my school care about learning and getting a good education.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Classes in my school are challenging.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students are involved in decisions about things that affect them in school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most of my teachers are enthusiastic about teaching and communicate this to students.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel that I am accepted and liked at school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel respected by my teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel respect for my teachers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students in my school help one another even if they are not friends.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bullying is not much of an issue at my school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Students are encouraged to say what they think.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel physically safe in my classes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Most of my teachers understand what my life is like outside of school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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2. How well do each of the following statements describe you as a student?

	Strongly agree	Somewhat agree	Somewhat disagree	Strongly disagree
I really want to learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I participate regularly in class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often need extra help with schoolwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
It's often hard to pay attention in class because I'm worrying about problems outside of school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. How would you assess your teachers overall on each of the following?

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Knowing their subjects well.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Believing all children can learn.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Maintaining discipline in the classroom.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Teaching individual students according to their different needs and abilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. How much would the following help you learn?

	Would help a lot	Would help some	Would help little
More examples of how the things I learn in school matter in the real world.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More challenging classes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
More one-on-one attention from teachers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

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5. How often do your teachers speak with you one-on-one about the following?

	Regularly	Occasionally	Never
Your academic performance: noticing when it's good, offering suggestions if/when it's not-so-good.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your behavior in class: recognizing your good behavior, helping you redirect your behavior if/when it's difficult.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your understanding: checking to see if you have questions about what's being taught in class, homework, and other assignments.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Interests and things that are important to you.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Your plans for college or work after high school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

6. Getting help with a problem:

	More than 3	2 - 3	1	0
How many adults at school do you feel you could talk to if you had a problem (involving something in or outside school)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
How many peers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. Have you ever skipped class or school?

- Yes
- No

8. Have you ever considered dropping out of school?

- Yes
- No

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9. If you answered "yes" to question #7 or #8, please indicate how much each of the following was an influence. (If you answered "no," you can skip this section.)

	A strong influence	Somewhat of an influence	Not an influence
You did not feel prepared for class.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You felt you'd fallen too far behind in your schoolwork as a whole.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You were not getting along with a teacher.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You did not feel safe at school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You did not feel safe traveling to and from school.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
School was boring.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
You had family responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Think of the best teachers you have had. What are the qualities that made them good teachers?

11. What do you think are the most important issues that need to be addressed in your school?

12. Please tell us more about yourself.

	Your gender	Your grade	Your race	Language most often spoken at home	Qualify for reduced or free lunch
Please choose answer from pull down menu for each item.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

GENDER: female male

GRADE: 9th 10th 11th 12th

RACE: African-American Asian Caucasian Latino/a Other

LANGUAGE MOST OFTEN SPOKEN AT HOME: English Other

QUALIFY FOR REDUCED OR FREE LUNCH: Yes No Aren't sure