

Section H: Developing a Data Collection Plan and Collecting Data

Step 3: Gather and Analyze Data		
Activities	Recommended Tasks	Highly Recommended
Develop a data collection plan and collect data	<p>Management Team and NAC determine:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roles, responsibilities, and timelines for data collection • Existing data to review • Primary data to collect • Sampling process • Instrumentation • Comparison groups <p>Data collection leader identified to manage the process</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination with data specialists at SEA • Coordination with regional MEP managers

The data collection process should begin with a review of the list of prioritized Need Indicators and recommended sources of data the Needs Assessment Committee (NAC) developed in Step 2 of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment (CNA) process (Explore What Is). All data should directly relate to the Need Indicators developed in *Section G. Writing Need Indicators*.

H.1 Planning Data Collection

We highly recommend that you, the Management Team, the NAC, and the data experts develop a concrete plan for collecting data on the Need Indicators. A well thought out plan will ensure that data collection is efficient, cost-effective, and systematic. It should specify what type of data is to be collected, from what sources, by whom, and in what timeframe.

The plan should reflect the capacity and resources available to carry out the data collection. Each data collection plan will be unique to its state Migrant Education Program (MEP).

Considerations for small states A data collection plan that targets a few of the most critical needs in your state will be more effective than one that collects minimal data on a broad range of issues. For small states, the CNA process in general is one in which you, the Management Team, and the NAC must be strategic with your resources and focus on the areas where you are likely to have the greatest impact. Therefore, we suggest that you conduct an in-depth analysis of data collected in a few key areas.

H.2 Identifying Support and Resources

Effective data collection requires a wealth of expertise and resources. We encourage you to identify staff in your MEP, state education agency (SEA), or community who can provide advice and guidance to you, along with information on resources and strategies that can be utilized to streamline the process. Consider the following:

- Determine the state and migrant information system personnel who need to be involved in data collection planning and gathering.
- Determine any additional MEP or state personnel who need to be involved.
- If possible, acquire additional expertise in survey/instrument development; also, explore what instruments already exist that you may customize for your needs.
- Identify school district or local operating agency contacts to assist with data collection at the local level, if local data are part of the sampling plan.
- Arrange priority processing of requests for data through your state superintendent or assistant superintendent. You may want to utilize a one-page description of the CNA process (See *Appendix C.1 Sample One-Page Description of the CNA Process*) or information in *Section B Overview of Statutes, Regulations, and Non-regulatory Guidance Related to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment* for statutory authority for the CNA to justify your request.
- Work closely with representatives of your state student information systems to arrange the most efficient ways to collect data. Determine if a staff member from student information systems can work directly with you. (Often this person can access information directly, offering a more direct means of data collection.)
- Establish connections to the state migrant student database. Make sure that managers of all data systems involved in the data collection are well-informed about the CNA process and have suggested ways to facilitate the collection of data. Information systems managers should also understand that one outcome of the CNA process may be recommendations for additional or replaced fields in the database.

H.3 Reviewing Existing Data

Data collectors should utilize sources of existing data to their fullest capacity. It is likely that much of the data needed to determine needs already exist in various programs and agencies. Collecting primary data, such as in surveys and focus group, is time consuming and costly. A careful review of existing data may provide you with much of what is needed for the CNA.

Note the following tips and resources for reviewing existing data:

- Every SEA submits data to the U.S. Department of Education in the Consolidated State Performance Report (CSPR). The CSPR includes information such as: academic progress

of all students, program participation (Title I, Title III, special education), and data elements specific to migrant students.

- SEAs are required to collect data on the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) indicators (See *Section B: Overview of Statutes, Regulations, and Non-regulatory Guidance Related to the Comprehensive Needs Assessment*); this data provides a picture of the performance of migrant students relative to Federal goals.
- Additional data may be obtained from the SEA student data system. Most states assign each student a unique identifier; data on each student is submitted annually. This data is useful for identifying academic progress, special education status, dropout status, enrollment in gifted and talented programs, etc.
- Each state has a different structure for collecting data on migrant students. Frequently, some information is on the migrant student database, while other information is on a state student database.
- Programming and/or specific coding may be required in order to merge data and match students across databases.
- Special coding may be needed to identify PFS students.
- Be sure to plan on the time required to have special data requests filled.

Considerations for small states All states have challenges in obtaining sufficiently accurate and representative data to validate their concerns and to establish gaps between migrant and non-migrant populations. Small states have even more hurdles because their migrant students are not always represented in state databases due to a lack of knowledge of which students are eligible for MEP services and/or too few students in a school or district to be counted as a subgroup for purposes of the state's accountability system. One constructive avenue that you can pursue is to improve the accuracy of the systems that you DO have control over—your MEP databases. You should be able to find information on all migrant students in the state in these databases, and you might use the CNA as an opportunity to identify ways the MEP database(s) can be improved so that sufficient data will be available for a future CNA.

H.4 Collecting Primary Data

There is a tendency to build a data collection plan around only the data that are available. Part of the process of developing the Need Indicators is to determine if other data and other data sources are required to assess the needs of migrant students. If new data are critical, then methods to collect this data and to develop other data sources should be established.

To collect data on Need Indicators beyond what is available through state and local data sources, you will need to determine from whom you will collect the data and by what method. You will need to determine whether you want to collect quantitative or qualitative data. A mix of both types often creates the most complete picture of an issue or need.

H.4.1 Determining Sampling

The NAC and the Management Team will need to determine whether data from the entire state should be collected from a representative sampling of districts with high migrant student populations. Consider the following:

- Will the same samples be used when focusing on student achievement as when focusing on school engagement?
- How broad will the sampling be?
 - Who will be involved: local school staff (teachers, counselors, registrars), local MEP staff, parents, PFS students, decision makers, or MEP managers?
 - What geographical areas will be represented?
 - How large will the sample be?
 - To what extent will the samples represent migrant students from specific grades or subgroups, such as out-of-school youth?
- What consideration are you giving to language translation needs so that all selected individuals within a group can fully participate?

Another consideration is deciding when surveys should be distributed or data collected. This will often depend upon migration cycles and whether your state is a receiving or a sending state. Some data may be most appropriately collected when students enroll in the migrant program. This will allow programs to see changes upon entry to the program and after a year or two of participation. State assessment administration dates may be another crucial factor.

H.4.2 Determining Comparison Groups

Review and finalize the comparison groups to be used when collecting data.

- Look closely at the way comparison groups were described in your Need Indicators. Review the rationale behind the discussion regarding comparison groups and determine which comparisons will most effectively show the needs of migrant students.
- Some sampling or small pilot studies may be helpful in making final decisions.
- Be sure to include PFS students in the comparison groups.

When collecting data on comparison groups is not feasible. With limited time and resources, it is often not feasible to collect data on non-migrant student populations. In those cases, the NAC can develop a standard to be used to establish a gap. (Recall we defined a “need” in *Section F Identifying Concerns* as the gap between “what is” and “what should be.”) For example, note the following migrant parent survey question in Figure H.1

Figure H.1 Sample Migrant Parent Survey Question

Do you know about school requirements (rules) related to attendance (such as the number of days that your child can be absent without penalty)?

- Yes
- No

In this instance, you will not have a comparison group to determine the level of knowledge that migrant parents should have related to school requirements on to attendance. Suppose the survey results indicated that only 30% of migrant parents responded “Yes” to the question. In order to establish a gap between their response and what is desired, you will need to set a target. It may be ambitious, modest, or somewhere in between; this will depend on guidance from the NAC. The NAC might decide that the target for this item is that at least 50% of migrant parents should respond “Yes” to this question; therefore the gap is 20% between “what is” and “what should be.”

In addition, state performance targets can be used to define the gap between “what is” and “what should be” in the performance of migrant students.

H.4.3 Determining Data Collection Strategies

Most states will utilize a number of different ways to collect primary data. Examples are:

- Conducting phone or face-to-face interviews
- Conducting focus groups
- Administering surveys in person or online
- Creating data forms to be completed by either district or school level staff at certain times of the school year or when they enroll migrant students
- Conducting classroom observations

For tips and online resources on conducting interviews, administering surveys, and conducting observations, see *Appendix H.1 Tips and Online Resources on Conducting Interviews, Administering Surveys, and Conducting Observations*.

In a Pilot CNA program conducted a few years ago, states used a variety of methods to collect data. One state conducted focus groups within regions of the state using a web survey; another state surveyed High School Equivalency Program (HEP) students, while another state hosted migrant parent focus groups around the state and used Migrant Education staff to give surveys to students in seven districts.

H.4.4 Conducting Surveys

One of the most frequently used methods of data collection is surveys. Whether administered in person or online, surveys are useful for gathering data from role-alike groups of people, such as parents, students, teachers, or service providers.

The following are strategies for obtaining resources for surveys:

Search for published survey instruments that have already been validated and have established internal consistency and reliability. There are a number of sources on the Internet that can provide surveys. Good sources are the U.S. Department of Education, the Institute for Educational Science, and the National Center for Educational Statistics. These agencies have extensive experience in parent surveys and telephone interviews. See *Appendices H.2 Survey Sample - National Center for Educational Statistics: National Household Education Surveys Program (Phone Interview)* and *H.3 Survey Sample - National Center for Educational Statistics: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (Written Survey)* for survey samples from the National Center for Educational Statistics (<http://nces.ed.gov/ecls>).

- Contact MEP directors in other states to see what they use to collect data on migrant students.
- Seek services from commercial publishing organizations, psychological consultants, and technical assistance providers who will develop a survey on a fee-for-service basis. Provide the timeline and budget parameters to see if the work of such an organization can meet your needs.

When using a survey from another source, keep in mind that the purpose and population for which the survey was developed will need to be customized for the population and context you have in mind.

If you or the data collection team decides to develop surveys, you should work closely with someone with expertise in this area. See *Appendix H.1 Tips and Online Resources on Conducting Interviews, Administering Surveys, and Conducting Observations* for online resources that can guide you in this process.

When you plan to conduct a survey, keep the following in mind.

- The intent of the survey questions must be clear to those completing the survey.
- It is important to build in time to pilot test surveys before launching them to the wider group. See *Appendix H.4 Examples of How Survey Questions Can Be Improved through Pilot Feedback* for examples of how survey questions can be improved through pilot feedback.
- Have a clear beginning and ending date for the survey data collection.

- Develop a survey protocol so that each participant is provided the same information about the survey. See *Appendix H.5* for considerations for ensuring that a survey is administered consistently, guidance on what participants should be told, how administrators should be instructed, and what logistics should be considered.
- If you plan to conduct an online survey, keep in mind the extent to which participants, such as migrant parents, will have access to a computer or the Internet. If migrant parents or students are being surveyed and are not likely to have access, you may want to have school or MEP staff get them to fill out an online survey when they arrive at the office or center or complete them during scheduled meetings.

H.5 Selecting Data Collection Tools and Strategies

You, along with your Management Team and the NAC, will need to make final decisions about the details of the data collection and how you will oversee the process. Key issues decided at the outset will increase the likelihood that you will have the data you and the NAC need to make decisions.

Below are some operational details and suggestions to consider:

- How will you design survey instruments?
 - Create a Data Work Group whose members can brainstorm survey items
 - Hire consultants on a fee-for-service basis
 - Adapt survey items from existing public studies and documents
- How will you administer surveys?
 - Online
 - Paper and pencil format (to be entered into electronic format for tabulation)
 - MEP recruiter or advocate interview
- How will you sample the population?
 - Random—everyone has an equal chance of being picked to respond
 - Systematic—picked by a certain number (e.g., every 5th name)
 - Convenient—people we have access to (e.g., migrant parents at a Parent Advisory Council meeting)
 - Stratified—the right kinds of people (e.g., students represented across all grade levels, geographic representation across the state)
 - Purposive—specific people have specific information (e.g., why teenagers drop out of school)

Data Tip

Plan early for data collection when migrant students are in the state for short periods of time (e.g., predominantly summer programming).

- What comparison groups are appropriate for target setting?
 - All students
 - Non-migrant students
 - Priority for Service (PFS) students
 - Other mobile populations, e.g., homeless students
 - Migrant English Language Learners (ELLs) to migrant non-ELLs
- When will you collect data?
 - Schedule according to migration patterns
 - Avoid times when data burdens are at a peak (e.g., state assessment testing underway)

Considerations for Small States One simple survey instrument may be all you need to measure student or family perceptions that are not available from other sources. One efficient way that you can survey your families and/or students is to plan ahead so that your recruiters and home visitors are prepared to ask the survey questions as part of their usual routines. In this way, they will obtain the necessary data during a regular home visit.

For example, your committee may be concerned that migrant parents are not promoting literacy at home. A typical question might be to ask how often they read to or with their children on a weekly basis. If you have an extended window to obtain this data (say, during a recruitment cycle), you can get an adequate sense of whether this concern is well founded.

As an alternative to one-on-one surveys, you might conduct focus groups of students at school or parents at parent meetings. Remember to keep the questions in either format, survey or focus group, clear and concise so that responses are targeted and not overly complicated.

H.6 Developing a Data Collection Plan

Once the NAC and Management Team have discussed and made decisions about the issues in the previous section, the NAC and Management Team should write a data collection plan. See Table 1 for an example of a data collection plan.

Table 1. Sample Data Collection Plan

Focus Area and Concern	Need Indicator	Source of Data (How to Access Data)	Person(s) Responsible	Deadline
School Readiness We are concerned that migrant students are not enrolled in kindergarten.	Percentage of migrant students who are enrolled in Kindergarten	Kindergarten program enrollment records (school site or local MEP level)	Data leader, School Readiness Work Group, migrant database data manager	May 15

Focus Area and Concern	Need Indicator	Source of Data (How to Access Data)	Person(s) Responsible	Deadline
		in state migrant student database		
Mathematics We are concerned that migrant students are not progressing in math at the middle school level.	Percentage of migrant students enrolled in Algebra I in the 8 th grade who complete the course with proficiency as compared with PFS students, all other students	State assessment data	Data leader, SEA data manager	May 15
Reading We are concerned that migrant students have health problems that prevent them from succeeding in school.	Percentage of migrant students who report that their child has health problems that interfere with learning	Parent Survey, Questions 1, 2, & 3	Data leader, local recruiters in sampling areas, nurse consultants at community clinics, PAC member	Sept. 30

A suggested template for a Data Collection Plan is included in *Appendix H.6 Template for Data Collection*.

We also recommend that you include a segment of the data collection plan for each Need Indicator. This plan articulates the data needed for each Need Indicator. When determining how to actually collect the data for each Need Indicator, this level of detail will enable you, or the data leader, to articulate what data is needed, and how it will be collected (including data elements, sampling, instrumentation, and other issues). A plan for each indicator can be useful if there are multiple team members collecting data; each will have his/her assignment laid out in a concrete, written format. This information will also be useful for you, the Management Team, the NAC, and the data leader to keep track of all data collection efforts for the CNA. See *Appendix H.7 Data Collection Plan for a Need Indicator* for an example of a data collection plan for one Need Indicator. *Appendix H.8 Template for Data Collection Plan for a Need Indicator* provides a template for developing plans for Need Indicators.

H.7 Launching the Data Collection and Managing the Process

Now you are ready to collect your data. At this point we strongly recommend that you appoint one person to lead this process. This person may undertake the data collection tasks, or oversee a Data Collection Work Group that will carry out the various data collection activities. Data collection for the CNA is a complex process that must be targeted, timely, and systematic.

The data collection leader will ensure that data is being collected according to the data collection plan, and will follow up when challenges or delays occur.

The data collection leader can be either an external consultant or a member of your Management Team or NAC who is experienced in data collection, data analysis, research methods or evaluation methodology. We suggest that this person participate in the discussions of the NAC from the very first meeting to understand the context and purpose of the data collection. Moreover, this person will be instrumental in the development of the data collection plan.

In order for you to stay involved with the process, you might want to clarify the following questions with the data collection leader:

- What permissions and consents must be obtained before collecting certain data?
 - Ensure that the permissions and consents are provided to you and kept on file.
- How often should the data collection leader report on his/her progress, e.g., weekly or monthly?
 - Consider a set schedule for email updates or phone calls.
- Who will have final approval of the data collection instruments, such as surveys or interview protocols?
 - We suggest that you have additional people with data collection expertise to offer feedback on the data collection instruments developed.
 - It would also be a good idea for the NAC or Data Collection Work Group to offer feedback.
 - Ultimately, you, as the state director, should have final approval.
- Within what budget limits must the data collection take place?
 - The budget limits will guide the scope of the data collection.
- In what format will the data be provided to you?
 - Raw data should always be kept on file, but for the NAC to review the data, summaries, graphs, and charts that enable the group to absorb a lot of data in a short amount of time will work best for determining the extent of need among migrant students.

Once the parameters and expectations are set, the data collection process should begin.

H.8 Archiving Information for the CNA

We recommend that you keep the following documents on file as you plan the data collection process and receive interim reports of progress and a final report:

- Data Collection Plan (with updates as the process proceeds)
- Data Collection Plan by Concern Area
- Data collection permissions and consents

- Participant consent forms
- Progress reports
- Data collection instruments or protocols
- Files with raw data
- Final data report

H.9 Manager's Checklist and Reflection

Here are some key accomplishments for *Section H: Developing a Data Collection Plan and Collecting Data*. Take a moment to jot down your progress on the items below. Also, note any issues or challenges.

Manager's Checklist

- Data Collection Plan links Need Indicators with data collection
- Data Collection Plan includes:
 - Reviewing existing data
 - Reviewing available resources
 - Determining sampling
 - Determining comparison groups
 - Determining instruments
- Deadlines
 - Coincide with migration patterns
 - Avoid peak data burden periods
- Data collection leader identified
 - Plan for frequent updates and communication in place

Reflection

1. Were there any significant challenges that arose during the development of the data collection plan?
2. About what new resources did you learn?
3. How did you customize the plan to fit the needs of your state?
4. How will you monitor the progress of the data collection?

H.10 Resources and Tools in Appendix H

- Appendix H.1 Tips and Online Resources on Conducting Interviews, Administering Surveys, and Conducting Observations
- Appendix H.2 Survey Sample - National Center for Educational Statistics: National Household Education Surveys Program (Phone Interview)
- Appendix H.3 Survey Sample - National Center for Educational Statistics: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS 88)

- Appendix H.4 Examples of How Survey Questions Can Be Improved through Pilot Feedback
- Appendix H.5 Considerations for Consistent Survey Administration
- Appendix H.6 Template for Data Collection Plan
- Appendix H.7 Data Collection Plan for a Need Indicator
- Appendix H.8 Template for Data Collection Plan for a Need Indicator

Appendix H.1 Tips and Online Resources on Conducting Interviews, Administering Surveys, and Conducting Observations

Conducting Interviews

Interviews can provide in-depth information about how a program is working, the impact on participants, barriers to implementation, and program successes. There are several options for conducting interviews—with individuals (either face-to-face or by phone) and in focus groups.

- Face-to-face interviews are best in the case of sensitive subjects and should be conducted by someone with especially good interpersonal skills who knows how to put people at ease.
- Telephone interviews work well when systematic data collection is desirable, content is not too sensitive, and budgetary constraints prevent the interviewer from travelling to meet the interviewee (or vice versa).
- When you want to test out ideas or assess the extent of group consensus on a topic, a focus group interview can be a cost-efficient alternative to individual interviews. On the other hand, a focus group is not an appropriate or effective method for collecting sensitive personal information.

Costs related to conducting different types of interviews include:

- The time needed to schedule individual and group interviews, especially in the case of focus group interviews;
- In the case of individual interviews, especially telephone interviews, the time needed to re-schedule interviews with “no-shows;”
- Time needed for documenting responses (e.g., transcribing notes or recordings), coding them according to themes or prominent ideas, and analyzing responses within thematic groups;
- In the case of focus group interviews, the costs of renting space in a neutral location or familiar community place, and providing childcare and refreshments as an incentive for participants to take part during their free time;
- Time needed to actively recruit focus group participants and follow up to remind them of the date, time, and place where it will be held; and
- The cost of a second party to take notes and observe the dynamic in a focus group, so the focus group facilitator can concentrate on leading the conversation.

For more information about conducting different types of interviews, check out the following online resources:

- A good overview of face-to-face, telephone, and focus group interviews: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/section_1047.aspx
- Step-by-step instructions for setting up and conducting focus groups: http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/section_1018.aspx

Administering Surveys

Surveys are generally a good way of getting specific information from a large group of people in a relatively short period of time. There are two types of questions used on surveys: close-ended and open-ended.

- Close-ended questions include a specific set of answers, or response options, from which survey respondents select the best one(s). Response items may include the points on a five-point scale (1 = strongly disagree...5 = strongly agree), a list of services offered (“check all services you have received”), and other types of answers that respondents simply check or circle. To be sure all possible answers are captured, close-ended questions may include a response for “Other (please specify): _____.”
- Open-ended survey questions require survey respondents to write answers in their own words. We use these types of questions when we do not know what the possible response options are, or when we want to know what respondents think without prompting them. For example, the question “How has your child benefited from the Summer Program?” could include a list of all the benefits we hope they received, but ideally we would leave the question open-ended in order to get the most reliable, unprompted answer.

All surveys require time to develop clear and concise questions that respondents will be motivated and able to answer.

- Use plain and simple language so your questions can be understood by the broadest range of people. If English is not the first language of your target population, translate the survey into their language.
- Open-ended survey questions should be used sparingly, only when absolutely necessary. Use interviews and other qualitative data collection methods to identify the range of answers to a question. Then use these answers as close-ended response options to your survey question.
- Stay focused on one idea at a time, avoiding double-barreled questions. For example, “Do you feel your child benefited from instruction and other support services provided by this MEP?” Respondents may have different answers for each category of services because instruction and support services are different in nature. As a result, ask two questions instead: (1) Do you feel your children benefited from the instructional

services provided by the MEP? (2) Do you feel your child benefited from MEP support services?

Writing good survey questions is more involved than it looks, but the payoff in terms of data quality makes it worth taking the time to learn more. Here are a few resources that provide useful guidance on how to prepare good survey questions:

- For guidance on wording, formatting, and pretesting surveys, see: <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/g3658-2.pdf>.
- For examples of “good and not so good” survey questions, go to: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/tobaccoeval/resources/surveyquestions.html>.

Surveys can be administered in person, over the phone, by mail, or online. Your selection should be based on the method that is most likely to reach your target population without systematically excluding members of that population, and the costs associated with the method. For example:

- The cost of telephone surveys varies depending on the number of people you want to survey, whether you have staff that are trained and available to make the calls, or whether you need to contract with a telephone survey center to make the calls. Similarly, the cost of mailed surveys varies depending on the number of people you want to survey, the cost of the initial mailing plus self-addressed/stamped envelopes, incentives to increase response rates, and mailed reminders. These methods may not be the best for reaching this target population because phone numbers and mailing addresses for migrant families change frequently.
- A wide variety of online survey tools makes it easier than ever to assemble and disseminate online surveys; for example, see: http://idealware.org/articles/fgt_online_surveys.php. The cost of these services may vary depending on the number of surveys you wish to collect, the number of questions in your survey, and the length of time you need to keep your survey open for responses. However, online surveys are only useful if you have accurate e-mail addresses and the people you want to reach either own or regularly access a computer.
- The costs associated with administering surveys in person depend on whether respondents come to you (e.g., students on the last day of the program, parents attending a culminating event) or you go to them (e.g., stationed at a popular location, going door-to-door in the community). Given the limitations of other survey methods for reaching the target population, administering surveys in person may be the most effective way to collect survey data from migrant students and their families.

For more information about survey methods, planning and implementing surveys, as well as sample survey materials, check out: <http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/G3658-10.PDF>.

Observing Activities

An often overlooked way to collect evaluation information is to directly observe a program, activity, service, or meeting to decide for yourself whether things are going as planned or whether there is evidence of the desired outcomes. Costs associated with collecting observational data include training observers, traveling to observation sites, and time needed to document observations and analyze them.

Some important principles of conducting observations include:

- Schedule observations at a time that is convenient and least intrusive for the people and activities you are observing;
- Develop a checklist or protocol to guide your observations and ensure that you look for key elements associated with high-quality implementation or desired outcomes; and
- When using multiple observers, train them to recognize and document the same key elements of the program.

For more information about how to conduct observations, check out:

<http://learningstore.uwex.edu/assets/pdfs/G3658-5.pdf>.

Source: *Migrant Education Program Evaluation Toolkit: A Tool for State Migrant Directors*, excerpt from Section D: Collecting Evaluation Data

Appendix H.2 Survey Sample-National Center for Educational Statistics: National Household Education Surveys Program (Phone Interview)

The National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES) provides descriptive data on the educational activities of the U.S. population and offers researchers, educators, and policymakers a variety of statistics on the condition of education in the United States. The NHES surveys cover learning at all ages, from early childhood to school age through adulthood. The most recent data collection in 2007 consisted of two surveys: Parent and Family Involvement in Education and School Readiness. More information can be found online at <http://nces.ed.gov/nhes/index.asp>. An excerpt from NHES can be found below.

Excerpt from National Household Education Surveys Program (NHES)

Format: Phone Interview

Topic: Family Involvement in Schoolwork

...Now I have some questions about (CHILD)'s homework.

1. How often does (CHILD) do homework, either at home, at an after-school program, or somewhere else outside of school? Would you say...
 - a. Never
 - b. Less than once a week,
 - c. 1 to 2 days a week,
 - d. 3 to 4 days a week,
 - e. 5 or more days a week, or
 - f. Does (CHILD) not have homework?

2. In an average week, how many hours does (CHILD) spend on homework outside of school?
Number of hours _____

3. How do you feel about the amount of homework (CHILD) is assigned? Would you say...
 - a. The amount is about right?
 - b. It's too much?
 - c. It's too little?

4. Is there a place in your home that is set aside for (him/her) to do homework?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Child does not do homework at home

5. Are there family rules for (CHILD) about doing homework?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

6. (Do/Does) (you/any adult in your household) check to see that (his/her) homework is done?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

7. During this school year, about how many days in an average week do you or does anyone in your household help (him/her) with (his/her) homework?
Would you say...
 - a. Never
 - b. Less than once a week
 - c. 1 to 2 days a week
 - d. 3 to 4 days a week
 - e. 5 or more days a week

8. Some schools and districts help students get free tutoring or extra academic help outside of regular school hours. This extra help can be offered after school, on weekends, or during the summer. Have you received information from (CHILD)'s current school or district about opportunities for free tutoring?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

9. During the school year, has (CHILD) received free tutoring outside of regular school hours by a provider approved by your state or district?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

*NHES Family and Parent Involvement in Education, 2007, pgs 53-54.

Appendix H.3 Survey Sample – National Center for Educational Statistics: National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS 88)

National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS 88)

A nationally representative sample of eighth-graders were first surveyed in the spring of 1988. A sample of these respondents were then re-surveyed through four follow-ups in 1990, 1992, 1994, and 2000. On the questionnaire, students reported on a range of topics including: school, work, and home experiences; educational resources and support; the role in education of their parents and peers; neighborhood characteristics; educational and occupational aspirations; and other student perceptions. Additional topics included self-reports on smoking, alcohol and drug use, and extracurricular activities. For the three in-school waves of data collection (when most were eighth-graders, sophomores, or seniors), achievement tests in reading, social studies, mathematics, and science were administered in addition to the student questionnaire. To further enrich the data, students’ teachers, parents, and school administrators were also surveyed. Coursework and grades from students’ high school and postsecondary transcripts are also available in the restricted use dataset – although some composite variables have been made available in the public use file.

Excerpt from National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS 88)

Format: Written Survey

Topic: Why students leave school

Think back to the longest time over the last two years that your teenager was out of school for a reason other than illness or vacation. Which of the following reasons describes why your teenager stopped attending school?

	(CIRCLE ONE ON EACH LINE)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
a. My teenager had a job that conflicted with school	1	2	3
b. My teenager couldn't get along with teachers or other students	1	2	3
c. My teenager was pregnant or became a parent	1	2	3
d. My teenager's friends or family member(s) had dropped out of school	1	2	3
e. My teenager was suspended or expelled from school	1	2	3
f. My teenager was getting poor grades/failing school	1	2	3
g. My teenager got married or planned to get married	1	2	3
h. My teenager had a drug or alcohol problem	1	2	3

NELS 88 Parent Questionnaire, 1988 pg. 22.

Appendix H.4 Examples of How Survey Questions Can Be Improved Through Pilot Feedback

To establish some of the Concern Statements and Need Indicators with data, it may be necessary to use surveys, interviews, or focus groups. It is recommended that you tap into the expertise of your NAC and/or your state program evaluation team for additional support. Regardless of the availability of expertise in this area, you can still collect useful data that will shed light on identified concerns.

HOW TO ASK

State migrant education programs that have ventured into developing and using surveys have benefited from a basic item-writing that includes drafts 1 and 2 and pilot feedback before using an item on a wider-scale. Below are a few examples that show how items have improved with more iterations and feedback. Study these examples so that you can follow a similar process.

Almost every survey item benefits from a pilot test. This can be as simple as asking staff to try to answer these items and make suggestions for improvement. These can also be given to a small sample of parents followed by a conversation about which items were confusing. Another source of feedback can be your NAC. This group will be able to help ensure that the survey question matches the original intent of the Concern Statement.

EXAMPLE 1	
CONCERN	Parents do not provide sufficient academic support in the home.
Draft 1	How often do you read to your child? <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week <input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Never
Draft 2	How many times do you read to your child? <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes <input type="checkbox"/> Once a week <input type="checkbox"/> Always <input type="checkbox"/> Never
Pilot Feedback	While we think all forms of reading are helpful, at this grade level of 6-8 th grade, we are more interested in how parents help their children with reading. Also, we should be aware of the fact that many of our migrant students are cared for by other family members besides parents. The choices available should be more quantifiable, if possible.
Working Version	How many times each week do you or a family member help your child with reading (Check one) (If another family member helps with reading (e.g. sister, aunt specify _____)) <input type="checkbox"/> 1-3 times a week <input type="checkbox"/> 4-6 times a week <input type="checkbox"/> Every day <input type="checkbox"/> Never

EXAMPLE 2

CONCERN	Students are not involved in extra-curricular or community events
Draft 1	Do you participate in any school clubs or sports during middle school? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, why not?
Draft 2	Since the beginning of the school year, have you participated in any school-related clubs or sports in middle school? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If no, why not?
Pilot Feedback	Use the term “extracurricular.” Be specific when you say, “this year.” Do you mean “academic” or “calendar” year? Students may not know what you mean. Consider giving a date. Also, instead of asking why, maybe we can provide a checklist of likely answers.
Working Version	Do you now participate or have you participated (Since September 1, 2005) in any school-related extracurricular activities during middle school? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If No, why not? (Please check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Language barrier <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of money <input type="checkbox"/> Health reasons <input type="checkbox"/> After-school job or responsibilities <input type="checkbox"/> Don’t feel welcome <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please explain:

EXAMPLE 3

CONCERN	Parents are not aware of school attendance policies.
Draft 1	Have you received your school handbook about attendance policies? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Draft 2	Have you read your school handbook about attendance policies? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Pilot Feedback	We are not sure that this item really gets at our concern. Regardless if parents get the information from the handbook or from a parent meeting, we want to know if they understand the policy about extended absences.
Working Version	Do you know about school requirements (rules) related to attendance (such as, number of days that you can be absent without penalty)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

EXAMPLE 4

CONCERN

Parents do not participate in school events.

Draft 1

In what ways are you involved in your child’s school?

Check all that apply:

- Committees
- PTA
- Teacher Conferences
- Fundraisers
- Other _____

Draft 2

In what ways are you involved in your child’s school?

Check all that apply:

- Committees
- PTA
- Teacher Conferences
- Fundraisers
- Other _____

How often are you involved in each?

- Once a year
- Once a month
- Once a week

Pilot Feedback

The choices of activities need to be expanded. Also the frequency of participation feels odd as a follow up question. Is there a way to combine them? Also, we think that you should have the parents specify the grade level of the child they are talking about. This will help in our analysis.

Working Version

This school year, have you been to your child(ren)’s school to do any of the following activities? (mark all that apply)	Elementary Child(ren) (Grades K-5)			
	5 or more	2 to 4 times	1 time only	Never
Attend a parent/teacher association (PTA) meeting.				
Attend a migrant parent advisory council (MPAC) meeting.				
Attend a parent meeting (orientation, open house, etc.).				
Participate in a school committee meeting.				
Attend a Reading or Math Night (or other academic event).				

Working Version

This school year, have you been to your child(ren)'s school to do any of the following activities? (mark all that apply)	Elementary Child(ren) (Grades K-5)			
	5 or more	2 to 4 times	1 time only	Never
Attend a school performance (music, play, etc.)				
Attend a sporting event.				
Attend a parent/teacher conference.				
Volunteer with a school activity.				
Volunteer as an aide in the classroom.				
Meet with the guidance counselor.				
Attend a student recognition event/graduation.				
Go on a field trip with my child(ren).				
Participate in training on how to help my child(ren) improve academically.				
Other (please describe activity/event).				

EXAMPLE 5

CONCERN	Students do not access supplementary academic services.
Draft 1	When do you receive additional academic support? <input type="checkbox"/> After School <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Program
Draft 2	When do you receive additional academic support? <input type="checkbox"/> After School <input type="checkbox"/> Before School <input type="checkbox"/> Summer Program
Pilot Feedback	Since this is for students, try to find a simpler way to ask about “additional academic support.” Specify that this is outside instruction.
Working Version	When do you receive extra help (outside of regular classroom instruction)? Select all that apply. <input type="checkbox"/> During school <input type="checkbox"/> Before school <input type="checkbox"/> After school <input type="checkbox"/> At home <input type="checkbox"/> During summer break <input type="checkbox"/> Other, please specify: _____

EXAMPLE 6

CONCERN	Migrant students do not participate fully in regular instruction.								
Draft 1	In general, do your migrant students participate fully in instruction? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No								
Draft 2	In general, do migrant students in your class exhibit the following behaviors: (check all that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> Try hard <input type="checkbox"/> Ask for help <input type="checkbox"/> Turn in work								
Pilot Feedback	The words “in general” may be too vague. We need to ask about specific students (randomly chosen). Also, give more thought to the behaviors listed. “Try hard” is very subjective.								
Working Version	Questions for Teachers of Migrant Children in Grades 6-12 Do your migrant students <u>actively</u> participate in your class/course? Student #1 (AS IDENTIFIED) <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Please rate Student #1 on a scale of 1(low) – 5(high) in each of these categories: <table><tr><td>___ Offering to help others</td><td>Raising hand, answering</td></tr><tr><td>___ Completing homework</td><td>___ teacher questions</td></tr><tr><td>___ Pursuing extra credit</td><td>___ Asking for help</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>___ Other, please specify</td></tr></table>	___ Offering to help others	Raising hand, answering	___ Completing homework	___ teacher questions	___ Pursuing extra credit	___ Asking for help		___ Other, please specify
___ Offering to help others	Raising hand, answering								
___ Completing homework	___ teacher questions								
___ Pursuing extra credit	___ Asking for help								
	___ Other, please specify								

Appendix H.5 Considerations for Consistent Survey Administration

Participant Rights

Regardless of the format of the data collection (survey, interview, focus group), the participants should be given some basic information before beginning. Explain the following to the participants:

- The purpose of the survey is to gather more information that will help state and school programs improve services for migrant children and families.
- Their participation is voluntary.
- They may skip any question that they do not want to answer.
- Their responses will be confidential.
- Their responses will be anonymous.
- The time that will be required to complete the survey.
- Their time is greatly appreciated.

You must obtain consent forms from all participants and keep these on file. Be sure to consult your SEA policies for conducting surveys.

Administration

To the extent possible, the way the data are collected should be consistent. Although formal scripts may not be necessary, program managers will need to give specific instructions to the staff members who will be administering the survey. It may be helpful to have staff rehearse administering the survey so that any issues can be addressed and they feel more confident collecting the data.

Logistics

Consider the following decisions to be made:

Where will the survey be given?

- Decide in advance where the survey will be given. Options include the participant's home, school or at a meeting.
- Set controls in place to ensure that the setting will not influence the responses.

How long will the survey take?

- Be respectful of participants' time and willingness to help out.
- If administering in person, ask if this is a good time.

In what languages will it be available?

- A language barrier will impact the quality of the data.

How will you know if the participant qualifies for the survey?

- Develop concrete criteria for the sample you wish to survey; ensure that all participants meet the criteria.

How will participant forms be coded, e.g. new migrant parent, parent of PFS student?

- Determine the coding method ahead of time.

What kinds of leading prompts should be avoided?

- Pilot test prompts and questions with people representing the participant group to ensure that questions are understood and culturally appropriate.

How will you show appreciation for their participation?

- Thank participants for their time.
- Consider providing a token of appreciation, such as a gift card.

Appendix H.6 Template for Data Collection Plan

Focus Area and Concern	Need Indicator	Source of Data (How to Access Data)	Person(s) Responsible	Deadline

Appendix H.7 Data Collection Plan for Need Indicator

Goal: High School Graduation
Area of Concern: Continuity of Instruction
Concern Statement: We are concerned that secondary school migrant students who have had their school year interrupted are not accruing the credits needed to graduate on time.
Need Indicator: Percentage of migrant students completing four credits by the end of ninth grade, eight credits by the end of tenth grade, and 12 credits by the end of eleventh grade. Credits must be applicable toward graduation (Core courses-English, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies).
Source of Data: School records, State and Migrant databases

Plan	Issues to Consider
Variables/Data Elements:	
Ninth graders enrollment data to determine first year ninth grade status. Course completion data for English I, Algebra I or Geometry, Biology I, and World Geography	What specific data elements or variables will be needed?
Sampling:	
First time ninth grade migrant students that have had their school year interrupted. Non-migrant first-time ninth-graders in predominately migrant schools.	From whom will the data be collected? Total population? Random sample? Stratified? Geographic? Convenient?
Instrumentation	
Analysis of current school records, State or Migrant databases-English, math, science, and social studies fields	Existing data sources? New data sources? If so, who will develop and validate new instruments? If making a database query, what fields will be needed?

H-7-1

Comprehensive Needs Assessment Toolkit: Step 3 - Gather and Analyze Data:
 Developing a Data Collection Plan and Collecting Data
 Appendix H.7 Data Collection Plan for Need Indicator

Plan	Issues to Consider
Collection Procedures	
Formally request data from state database or local school records, providing a rationale.	Is there a protocol for requesting data? If data are in hard copy at the school level, how will you collect them? How will survey data be collected, if applicable?
Data Analysis	
Calculate the percentage of first-time ninth-graders completing their core courses by migrant, PFS migrant, and non-migrant status. Chart percentages by region and for state.	In what forms will data be collected? How will data be disaggregated (PFS, grade level, ELP, etc.)? How will data be analyzed? By comparing counts, means, medians, content analysis? How will the range of variation names used to post course be handled?

Appendix H.8 Template for Data Collection Plan for Need Indicator

Goal:

Area of Concern:

Concern Statement:

Need Indicator:

Source of Data:

Plan	Issues to Consider
Variables/Data Elements:	
	What specific data elements or variables will be needed?
Sampling:	
	From whom will the data be collected? Total population? Random sample? Stratified? Geographic? Convenient?
Instrumentation	
	Existing data sources? New data sources? If so, who will develop and validate new instruments? If making a database query, what fields will be needed?
Collection Procedures	
	Is there a protocol for requesting data? If data are in hard copy at the school level, how will you collect them? How will survey data be collected, if applicable?
Data Analysis	
	In what forms will data be collected? How will data be disaggregated (PFS, grade level, ELP, etc.)? How will data be analyzed? By comparing counts, means, medians, content analysis? How will the range of variation names used to post course be handled?