

Privacy Rights

Written Student Surveys

Why are they done?

The rationale given by our education systems for requiring student surveys is – “they are given to students to find out what is happening outside school, to, in and around students so that more government programs can be developed to help them.”

The more realistic goals of the personally invasive student surveys: to condition and normalize children to not consider any information they have to be personal or private. It trains children to believe that if a stranger or loosely connected person asks you questions you are required to tell them your answer.

Parents are often not told that their student is being interrogated by the district and will be asked personal and private questions and will be told their participation in these surveys is required.

We recommend that parents are sent a letter, an email and a text telling them about the survey, including a copy of the questions and be told the student will not be given the survey without their written consent. Any student that does not have written permission from a parent to fill out the survey is not asked/required to fill out the survey.

Oral Student Surveys

Why are they done?

At times district personnel may believe a student has done something that needs to be investigated. Often the student is brought into a room where district personnel will interrogate them about an incident (on or off campus).

District personnel should be prohibited from taking students into private rooms where they ask questions that may incriminate the student without a parent in the room or at least a parent's permission in writing or on the phone. We strongly encourage the district to have the parent in the room to prevent any accusations of inappropriate activities by district personnel.

Conclusion

As we have discussed, the plethora of student surveys are done to condition children to answer the questions of strangers and those they see as “officials.” Using the school environment, which is away from parental supervision, children are being coerced into filling out personally and physically invasive “surveys.” Student surveys should not be given to any child under the age of 18 without the written consent of the parents.