



**Guidelines for Survey Administration,  
Analysis, and Application**

## Guidelines for Survey Administration, Analysis, and Application

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### Introduction

The *Inspire* protocol requires schools to collect survey data and analyze that data for the purpose of school improvement. The information gathered may be in reference to how well the school does with the academic program, the spiritual formation of students, or more functional aspects such as regular communication. While the school can ask parents for their responses individually or in focus groups, it may be more efficient to use a survey. Surveys can be designed by the school to ask specific questions or can come from organizations with expertise in this area who can also help with the norming of the survey on a larger population. Nationally normed data is particularly helpful when it comes to knowing if the school program is rated as effective by a group of stakeholders in comparison to other schools.

ACSI recommends a separate Survey Administration subcommittee to manage the decisions regarding choosing, administering, analyzing, and distributing the results of the surveys. The “Self-Study Instructions” section below provides outlines for how the school should approach surveys in their self-study for accreditation. The results and conclusions should be given to each of the subcommittees to use as input for their domain section work.

### Types of Surveys

- Third-party organizations
  - May enable the school to obtain nationally normed data
  - May have platforms that assist with administration of surveys, as well as the collection and organization of data.
  - Cognia schools can utilize Cognia’s platform, which houses faith-based surveys created with input from the Coalition of Christian School Accreditors (of which ACSI is a part)
- In-house surveys (created by the school)
  - May enable the school to have more control over the survey process
  - May allow the school to have additional specificity with questions
  - With this option the school must ensure that it aligns its surveys with the standards and indicators for accreditation to obtain pertinent feedback that will inform the school’s self-study process and improvement efforts.
- ACSI’s Flourishing School Culture Instrument (see below)

### Flourishing School Culture Instrument

Schools may wish to utilize ACSI’s *Flourishing School Culture Instrument* (FSCI) to fulfill the survey requirement for accreditation (though this is **not** required). The FSCI was designed to identify elements of school culture that contribute to flourishing. The instrument is comprised of stakeholder-specific surveys for seven groups: students; parents; alumni; teachers; leaders/administrators; support staff; and board members. Schools may notice that the Domains in the *Inspire* accreditation protocol are aligned with the Domains in the FSCI (with Expertise and Resources being split into separate domains for accreditation).

It is important to note that, as with any existing survey utilized to satisfy the survey usage requirements of the *Inspire* protocol, analysis of connections between survey results and specific accreditation indicators will have to be completed by the individual school. There is not a one-to-one correlation between the FSCI constructs and accreditation indicators; thus, schools may need to gather and analyze additional data (i.e., using additional surveys, focus groups, or targeted interviews) relevant to specific accreditation indicators.

## Timing

Schools are encouraged to administer surveys regularly. Best practice would suggest that the surveys are given at least every other year. Specifically for the accreditation requirements, any feedback measures should be conducted near the beginning of the self-study process to allow time for the results to inform the prioritized goals for improvement, which will then inform the **Accreditation Action Plan** and overall improvement process. They must be completed within 18 months of the visiting team's arrival.

## Required Stakeholder Groups with Minimum Response Rate Goals:

- Staff-60%
- Students (at least middle school and above)-40%
- Alumni (age-appropriate former students)-20%
- Parents-20%

ACSI *recommends* conducting student classroom evaluations at the high school level (wherein students evaluate their courses/teachers), which could yield valuable feedback for individual courses as well as the overall instructional program.

## Tips for Survey Administration, Analysis, and Application

### Survey Administration

1. Review each survey the school uses and its benefit toward overall school and/or program improvement.
  - a. For purposes of the self-study and the school's prioritized goals for improvement, it is helpful to identify a direct correlation to Accreditation Standards that are addressed by the survey questions.
  - b. Ensure that each stakeholder group has appropriate representation within the feedback data. Review the response rates of each stakeholder group to identify if any group could use focused attention from the school (Often alumni are difficult to track and contact for helpful feedback. If that is true of your school, consider what initiatives will help build relationships with alumni.)
2. Review a summary of the results, with key statistics, for each version of the survey the school administered.

### Survey Analysis

1. Identify 3-5 overall strengths/high scores identified through surveys. Take note of any significant differences between stakeholder groups.
2. Identify 3-5 overall areas for improvement/low scores identified through surveys. Take note of any significant differences between stakeholder groups.
3. Determine what the school can learn from the survey results:
  - a. Do the high scores and/or low scores **confirm** other feedback measures the school has collected (such as focus groups, informal surveys, classroom evaluations, etc.)?
  - b. Do the high scores and/or low scores **conflict with** other feedback measures the school has collected (such as focus groups, informal surveys, classroom evaluations, etc.)? How is the school reconciling these differences?
  - c. Are there any **trends** (whether positive or negative) that emerged from a previous survey administration as compared to the most recent survey administration?

### Survey Application

1. Use the analysis of survey results to adjust instruction, the school environment, or other aspects of the school program. Consider communicating significant changes to the school community.
2. Use the analysis of results from the most recent survey administration to contribute to the school's prioritized goals for improvement for the current self-study.