Canadian School Survey

Canadian School Survey: Inclusive / Special Education

Consent letter

You are invited to participate in a survey of principals across Canada designed to understand the state of resources and programs and to track the impact of policy and funding changes in public schools across Canada.

The survey is a project of the Centre for Leading Research in Education , an interdisciplinary research centre at Wilfrid Laurier University. The Survey research team includes Dr. Kelly Gallagher-Mackay, Annie Kidder, and Dr. Christine Corso, Dr. Steve Sider and Dr. Veronique Grenier.

In this online survey you will be asked questions about the state of resources in your school. The focus of this survey is inclusive or special education. There are no questions that ask for information about individuals. The online survey will take about five minutes to complete. We aim for approximately 1500 participants in this cycle of the survey. We plan to use this data in public-facing reports and infographics, as well as possible academic articles, to engage media and the public in conversations about how public education contributes to a stronger Canada and the impact of policy on schools.

Individual school responses will remain confidential and neither identifying information about you nor your school will ever be published. We will only ever publish overall results (aggregate data).

All data are kept confidential (except as required by laws regarding the abuse and neglect of children) and stored in conjunction with Tri-Council recommendations for the safeguarding of data on a password-protected drive. Data will be linked to publicly available databases to enable socio-demographic analysis. After analyses are completed, all data will remain securely and confidentially stored indefinitely, identifiable by school, for long-term analysis of resource and policy trends. Non-sensitive data may be stored in a public repository, while to sensitive data (i.e., anything that could identify a school) will be controlled by the research team and only be granted for projects designed to strengthen public education.

Because there are 500 school boards/divisions/districts across Canada, we have not sought permission to conduct this survey from each of them. However, we have informed them that principals in their jurisdiction are being invited to participate in the survey.

Risks, benefits, and incentives: There are no significant risks to participating in this survey. We understand that as a principal you are very busy and reflecting on challenges that you are facing in your school may cause you additional stress. The benefit to participating in this study is that you will be able to give voice to your school's experience. Based on similar principal surveys in the past, our founding partner Education was able to advocate for and achieve policy change.

Your participation is entirely voluntary. All questions are completely optional. You may discontinue completing the survey at any time and only your responses to that point will be saved. If for any reason you decide you wish to withdraw from the study you can contact kgallaghermackay@wlu.ca until December 1 to request your data be deleted.

If you have any questions about the survey, you may contact Kelly Gallagher-Mackay, principal investigator, at kgallaghermackay@wlu.ca or visit our survey website to find FAQs.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Board (REB# 9757). If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form or your rights as a participant in research

have been violated during the course of this project, or if you have any questions for the board, you may contact reb@wlu.ca.

It is advised that you print or save this consent form and/or record the researcher contact information in the case that you have any questions or concerns.

I have read and understand the above information and **agree to participate in this study**. (Selecting this option will open the questionnaire.) I have read and understand the above information. **I do not want to participate in this study.** (If you select this option, you will not be able to proceed with the survey.)

The survey

Welcome to the Canadian School Survey. This 5-minute survey asks about inclusive / special education in your school. You can answer from what you already know – no need to look anything up. Thank you for participating on behalf of your school. **All responses will be confidential,** and results will only ever be shared in aggregate.

1. This survey is focused on public education in Canada. Is your school part of a public school board, district or division (including Catholic/separate and francophone boards)?
    - ○ Yes
    - ○ No
2. In your school, what **grades are served**?
    - ○ Lowest to highest
3. How many students **total** are in your school?
    - ○ _____

Across Canada, school systems use different names for services and supports for students with diverse abilities, needs, or disabilities, for example, special education, inclusive education, exceptional student services etc. In this survey, we are using the term inclusive education.

4. **Approximately how many students in your school have an individual plan (IEP, IPP, IIP, PLP, ISSP)** including those with a formal identification and those receiving support without formal identification?
    - ○ None
    - ○ Approximate number: _____

In this survey, we will refer to students with an individual plan as students with diverse needs or disabilities.

For the following questions, we will ask for the full-time equivalency (FTE) for each staff position. 1.0 FTE = one full-time person; 0.5 = half-time.

5. How many FTE specialized **inclusive education teachers** does your school have?
    - ○ None
    - ○ Approximate FTE: _____

Of these, how many FTE work only in a self-contained classroom with a group of students with diverse needs or disabilities?

- ○ None
- ○ Approximate FTE: _____

Of these, how many FTE have a **schoolwide role** (e.g., a Resource Teacher, Program Support Teacher)?

- ○ None
- ○ Approximate FTE: _____

Please **rank the following tasks** performed by your dedicated inclusive education teacher(s), based on how much time they take, from 1 to 6.

- ○ providing direct learning support to students,
- ○ coaching/consulting with classroom teachers or Eas
- ○ supporting educators facing urgent classroom challenges
- ○ communicating with families and administration
- ○ communicating with other professionals, including outside the school (e.g., guidance counsellors, psychologists, speech language pathologists, behavioural consultants)
- ○ meeting school needs unrelated to their direct role (e.g. providing coverage for absent teachers)

6. How many FTE **educational assistants (EAs) / teacher assistants / student assistants** does your school have?

- ○ None
- ○ Approximate FTE: _____

7. Approximately how many students in your school are currently **waiting for assessments by a specialist** (e.g., psychologist, occupational therapist, speech language pathologist/therapist)?

- ○ None
- ○ 1-5
- ○ 6-10
- ○ 11-20
- ○ 21 or more

How long is the average wait?

- ○ Under 3 months
- ○ 3 to 6 months
- ○ 6 months to a year
- ○ More than a year
- ○ Don't know

8. In the past year, have you had to recommend that a student with diverse needs or disabilities not attend school for most or all of the school day?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

On average, how often does this occur?

- ○ Never
- ○ A few times a year
- ○ Monthly
- ○ Weekly
- ○ Daily

What is the most common reason? (e.g., safety, student health, no supports available)?

_____

9. Thinking about students with diverse needs or disabilities at your school, to what extent does the day-to-day implementation of their supports match what was originally planned?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ To a small extent
- ○ To a moderate extent
- ○ To a great extent
- ○ Don't know

10. To the best of your knowledge, are teachers in your school assessing the progress of students with diverse needs or disabilities against measurable criteria?

- ○ Not at all
- ○ To a small extent
- ○ To a moderate extent
- ○ To a great extent
- ○ Don't know

11. Overall, **how adequate** are the services and supports currently available to meet the needs of students with diverse needs and disabilities in your school?

- ○ Completely adequate
- ○ Somewhat adequate
- ○ Somewhat inadequate
- ○ Very inadequate
- ○ Don't know

12. If some students in your school are not getting sufficient supports, are there particular groups of students who are less likely to get support?

- ○ Not applicable
- ○ Which groups? _____

13. If some students in your school are not receiving recommended supports, what are the main factors limiting your school's ability to provide those services and supports? **Select up to three.**

- ○ Shortage of qualified school-based staff
- ○ Limited availability of external specialists or agencies
- ○ Long wait lists
- ○ Limited time for team-based planning and collaboration
- ○ Inadequate facilities, space, or equipment
- ○ Eligibility criteria limit supports available to some students
- ○ Transportation or geographic barriers
- ○ Language or cultural barriers
- ○ Challenges working with families
- ○ Staff attitudes about inclusion
- ○ Don't know
- ○ Other: _____
- ○ Not applicable

14. All the data in the survey is strictly confidential and your school and board will never be identified.

- ○ **School name** (we will not use this in any reporting; this is just for data quality purposes) _____
- ○ **First three digits of your school's postal code** (this allows us to link to Census data) _____
- ○ **Province or territory** _____

15. Please share any successes in the inclusive education programming in your school.

- ○ _____

16. Please share any challenges in the inclusive education programming in your school.

- ○ _____