

INFORMATION LETTER

HCDSB Student Census Pilot Study

Dear Parents and/or Guardians of students in Kindergarten through Grade 3,

You are receiving this letter because your child's class has been selected to participate in a *Student Census Pilot Study* with the Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB). One parent and/or guardian will be asked to participate on behalf of his/her K-3 child.

What is this about?

The census pilot study will help us determine how to promote and collect identity-based information (e.g., language, Indigenous Identity, racial identity, gender, and religion) from HCDSB students and parents/guardians effectively and efficiently. It is an important first step to undertake before 2023 when all Ontario school boards are required to collect identity-based data (via Census) from all families to comply with [Ontario's Anti-Racism Data Standards](#) (ARDS) under the Anti-Racism Act, 2017. We want to have a solid procedure in place to ensure a smooth student census roll-out in the coming years with our entire HCDSB student community.

In this study, a small sample of parents of children in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will be asked to provide information about their child's identity. Ultimately, this type of data will help our schools, and the Board overall, to create and promote a more equitable and inclusive learning environment, where all students can achieve, believe, and belong.

What will I do?

You will be emailed a link to complete a brief online survey beginning the week of May 31st. The survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete and contains various standard identity-based questions. You will also be asked to provide feedback on your experience with answering the questions. You will also have a chance to volunteer to be part of a focus group (more details to follow for those who are interested and selected to participate). Note that completing this survey is voluntary, and so you can choose to complete some or all of it. There will be *no* negative consequences if you choose not to participate.

Are there benefits or risks to participating?

There are no direct benefits, aside from helping the HCDSB understand how to best collect and analyze identity-based data. There are also no expected major risks to participating in this study, although confusion and/or discomfort when responding to some questions might be experienced. You will have the opportunity to select “Not sure”, “I do not understand this question”, skip the question, or stop taking the survey. You may also withdraw your participation (remove your data) at any time by contacting me at the email provided below.

Will my information be kept private?

Data collected will be kept confidential and private, but the survey is not anonymous. The identity-based data you submit on behalf of your child will be linked to a unique identifier so that HCDSB Research and Development staff can retrieve and link it with other student data records. We will ensure data is collected, used, and disclosed in compliance with relevant legislation and that appropriate measures are used to protect personal information. All reports will contain a summary of combined responses from all respondents and will not ever identify any individual student or family.

Where can I receive more information?

Please see the FAQ page for more information about the Pilot Study. We also have included a recording of a parent information session to watch at your convenience.

If you have any questions, please contact Research and Development Services,
research@hcdsb.org

Thank you for your time and attention. We are very much looking forward to this identity-based data collection study. Please look out for the census survey email invitation from SurveyMonkey in your inbox or Junk folder during the week of May 31st.

Sincerely,



Dr. Lisa Collimore
Chief Officer and MISA leader
HCDSB Research and Development Services