



Frequently Asked Questions 2008 Virginia School Census

Q: What is the 2008 Virginia School Census?

A: The 2008 Virginia School Census is a survey to determine the number of school-age children residing in Fairfax City and Fairfax County.

Q: Why is there a census?

A: There is a census to determine the equitable distribution of state sales tax revenues to school divisions in Virginia. These revenues help fund public school education expenses. Virginia allocates one percent of state sales tax to its schools. This funding provides approximately \$3,000 for each child counted.

Q: How and when will the census be conducted?

A: The census will be mailed to all households in Fairfax County and the City of Fairfax in early March. There are four ways to respond. (See below.)

Q: Do I have to respond to the census?

A: Yes. All households, with or without school-age children, are asked to participate in the census.

Q: What is the quickest, easiest way to respond to the census?

A: There are four quick and easy ways to respond to the census. Online and phone options are preferred and encouraged because they save money on return postage.

1. Online at www.fcps.edu/census.
2. Phone: 703-752-0950.
3. Mail using the envelope provided.
4. Fax: 703-329-0791.

All responses will be kept strictly confidential and privacy is assured.

Q: We live in the City of Fairfax. Are we included in this census?

A: Yes. Fairfax City Public Schools is partnering with Fairfax County Public Schools to conduct the census. Residents in both jurisdictions will receive—and be asked to respond to—the census.

Q: Why must I respond if I do not have children in the school system?

A: There are several reasons why you should respond to the census:

- All residents pay state sales tax. Sales tax revenues must be distributed fairly to each public school division in the state of Virginia. A census count of children, public and nonpublic, is the method used to distribute these funds fairly.
- Excellent schools attract and keep businesses in Fairfax County.
- Entire communities benefit from the public school system. Community sports leagues, community groups, and many religious organizations use school facilities after school hours and on weekends.
- The information gathered with each census helps to measure the current population and to chart future population trends and helps school systems make projections for future needs. These data include information on preschoolers, toddlers, and infants as well as homeschooled and privately schooled children who currently, or who may in the future, use Fairfax County Public Schools services.

Q: My children do not live with me. How should I respond to the 2008 Virginia School Census?

A: Each child should be reported *once*. If your child lives with another parent or guardian, the custodial parent should include the child in his or her census response. Joint-custodial parents (50 percent–50 percent) should coordinate with each other to ensure that their child(ren) are only reported once.

If you have a school-age child or children currently living away from home (including children who might reside in a boarding school, a college, a hospital, a mental hospital, a reformatory, a military complex, or a prison), please add their information to the census form.

Q: Why are two identifications (ID Number and PIN) needed in order to respond to the census online or by phone?

A: Two identifications are needed for security purposes to ensure the confidentiality of your responses. The ID Number is unique to each form, and the PIN is the “password” for the family or household. *Note: These identification numbers are located at the top left of your form.*