

Attachment 1

Educational Technology in U.S. Public Schools, Fall 2008

Principal Cover Letter



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

September 2008

Dear Principal:

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, I request your school's participation in the national surveys *Educational Technology in U.S. Public Schools* and *Teachers' Use of Educational Technology in U.S. Public Schools*. The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved these surveys (OMB No. 1850-0733 and 1850-XXXX). Westat, a research firm in Rockville, Maryland, is conducting the studies for NCES using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS).

We ask that you (1) have the enclosed school questionnaire completed by the person most knowledgeable about educational technology in your school; and (2) have a list of eligible teachers prepared according to the enclosed instructions. Each of these activities is designed to take about 30 minutes. We will use the lists of eligible teachers to select an average of two teachers per school. In January of 2009, we will ask the selected teachers to complete a three-page survey designed to take about 20 minutes.

- ✍ **Why is NCES conducting the surveys?** These linked surveys will provide nationally representative information on access and use of educational technology in public schools and classrooms. The teacher survey will collect information on technology usage and teachers' perceptions that can not be obtained at the school or district level.
- ✍ **Why is participation by my school important?** Your school's participation, while voluntary, is important because it is vital to the development of national estimates. We need your input because your school is one of a small sample of schools selected for the study.
- ✍ **How does NCES protect the confidentiality of the information that we provide?** The list of eligible teachers will only be used to sample teachers for the survey and will only be seen by people authorized to work on the survey. The list should contain only teachers' names and no other identifying information. The information collected on the school and teacher surveys may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose unless otherwise compelled by law. (Public Law 107-279, Education Sciences Reform Act, Section 183.) Your district has been informed about this survey.
- ✍ **What do we get from the study?** A copy of the final report for each study will be sent to all participating schools once the study is completed.

The **school survey** may be completed using either the enclosed questionnaire or an online version of the survey available through the Internet. The online survey is available at **www.frss-xxxx.org**. The username and password appear on the Web Survey Information Sheet included in the school survey packet. The paper version of the questionnaire may be returned to Westat in the postage-paid envelope. **The school survey should be completed only once, using either the paper or the online version.**

The **list of eligible teachers** may be submitted by fax (1-800-254-0984) or mailed in the postage-paid envelope, according to the instructions.

We ask that the school survey and list of eligible teachers be completed **within 3 weeks**, and that you keep a copy for your files. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Cindy Gray, the Westat survey manager, at 1-800-937-8281, ext. 4336 (toll-free) or 301-251-4336, or by e-mail at cgray@westat.com. You may also call Peter Tice, the NCES Project Officer, at 202-502-7497. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Mark Schneider
Commissioner

Enclosures

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20208

