

Attachment 1

District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007-08

Cover Letter



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

August 2008

Dear Superintendent:

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, I request your participation in the national *District Survey of Alternative Schools and Programs: 2007-08*. By alternative schools and programs, we mean kinds of education designed to address the needs of at-risk students that typically cannot be met in regular schools. The questionnaire is designed to be completed in about 30 minutes by the person most knowledgeable about alternative school and programs in your district. **Even if your district does not have any alternative schools and programs, please respond to question 1 and return the survey.** Westat, a research firm in Rockville, Maryland, is conducting the study for NCES using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS).

- ✍ **Why is NCES conducting the survey?** This survey is being conducted to provide nationally representative information about public alternative schools and programs. The survey will also provide information about changes in alternative schools and programs since 2001, when NCES conducted a similar survey.
- ✍ **Why is participation by my district important?** Your district's participation, while voluntary, is important because it is vital to the development of national estimates. We need your input because your district is one of a small sample of districts selected for the study. Your cooperation is critical to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.
- ✍ **How does NCES protect the confidentiality of the information that we provide?** Your answers 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.) The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the survey (OMB No. 1850-0733).
- ✍ **What do we get from the study?** A copy of the final study report will be sent to all participating districts once the study is completed.

The survey may be completed using either the enclosed questionnaire or an online version of the survey available through the Internet. The online version of the survey is available at www.frss-xxxx.org. Your username and password appear on the enclosed Web Survey Information Sheet. If you complete the paper version of the questionnaire, please return it to Westat in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Please complete the survey only once, using either the paper or the online version.**

We ask that the survey be completed **within 3 weeks**, and that you keep a copy of the completed survey for your files. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Priscilla Carver, the Westat survey manager, at 800-937-8281, ext. 4596 (toll-free) or 301-279-4596, or by e-mail at priscillacarver@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