

B. COLLECTION OF INFORMATION EMPLOYING STATISTICAL METHODS

1. Respondent Universe

We will draw a sample of 800 school districts for this study from the 2008-2009 NCES CCD Public Elementary and Secondary Agency Universe File. Specifically, we will draw the sample from the over 16,500 agencies overall in this data file, of which almost 15,000 (or 90%) are classified as regular school districts.

2. Sample Design

A stratified sample of 800 school districts will be selected for the survey. To select the sample, we propose to stratify the school districts in the frame by school district size and poverty status. The most recent district-level poverty estimates will be used to stratify the school districts by level of school district poverty.

3. Methods for Maximizing the Response Rate

A letter (Appendix C) will be sent to each school district along with the survey, reiterating the reasons for selection and requesting cooperation. Districts will be given the option of responding by mail or by fax, whichever they find easiest. If the returned survey is not received by the expected date, a reminder card will be sent to the school district. Following the reminder card, contractor personnel will re-send the data collection instrument to non-respondents and continue to attempt to obtain completed surveys for 2 months after the initial mail out of the data collection instruments. The contractor for this study has a long history of achieving high response rates through repeated mail and telephone follow-ups. This study is striving for a response rate of 80 percent. The contractor will examine non-respondents to determine any response bias.

4. Tests of Procedures and Methods

The proposed data collection instrument was pilot tested with five school districts. Although the 2002-03 Title II, Part A study used a form that is very similar to the one proposed for this data collection, we conducted the pilot test to ensure that the information requested on the form is readily available from the school districts and that the burden estimates are accurate. The results of this pilot test caused us to revise our burden estimates and make several minor modifications to the data collection instrument that have been incorporated into this clearance package.

5. Consultations on Statistical Aspects of the Design

All sample design development will be provided by Dr. Adam Chu of Westat's Statistical Support Group.