



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

April 27, 2009

Dr. Joseph B. Morton
Superintendent of Education
Alabama Department of Education
Gordon Person Office Building
50 North Ripley Street
Montgomery, AL 36104

Dear Dr. Morton:

I am writing to request your immediate assistance on a task that will have important consequences for your state's allocation under Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), as amended (Public Law (P.L.) 107-110). I request that you designate a mapping coordinator for reviewing the Census Bureau's current local educational agency (LEA) information and providing updates and corrections to the LEA names, Federal LEA IDs, boundaries, and grade ranges in your state. In choosing a mapping coordinator, you should consider the position's primary responsibilities listed at the end of this letter.

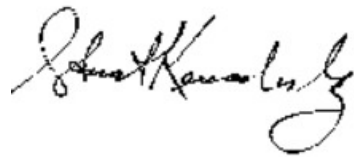
The U.S. Department of Education (ED) allocates more than \$14.9 billion Title I funds to LEAs based primarily on the number of children ages 5 through 17 in low-income families identified from the most recent estimates produced by the Census Bureau. In the ESEA Congress mandated that ED allocate Title I funds using school district poverty and population estimates that have been updated every year. Consequently, the Census Bureau updates the poverty and population estimates annually using the most recent income data available.

As part of the Census Bureau's effort to update these estimates, the geographic framework for the data must be reviewed and updated. Census Bureau geographers will send materials to the mapping coordinator and request information to update the Census Bureau's LEA data, as it will exist on January 1, 2010 (for school year (SY) 2009-2010). In addition to boundary information, the Census Bureau will be asking for information regarding the grade ranges for which each LEA is financially responsible. Because the census poverty and population estimates will be produced for LEAs according to their SY 2009-2010 boundaries and grade ranges, their accuracy is critical to the production of the estimates, and thus the allocations of Title I funds. Your immediate assistance is essential in order for the Census Bureau to maintain the tight time schedule necessary to complete this boundary and data update. It is the responsibility of the Title I Coordinator to oversee the program and assure all materials are reviewed and any updates returned to the Census Bureau by the specified deadlines. Participation in the LEA review is voluntary, but you should strive to have all LEA officials participate.

Within one week of receiving this letter, please send contact information including official phone number, email address, and mailing address for your designated mapping coordinator to: geo.school.list@census.gov. The Census Bureau staff must also receive permission from you or your designee to post the mapping coordinator's name and business contact information (telephone number, e-mail address, and mailing address) on the School District Review Program website, which will be accessible to all stakeholders and the public.

If you or your designee have any questions about the program or the public posting of contact information for your designee, please phone one of the Census Bureau's geographers working on this School District Review Program: Ms. Pat Ream at 301-763-9042, or Mr. Ian Millett at 301-763-9038. A courtesy copy of this letter is being sent to the person who served as the mapping coordinator for this effort in SY 2007-2008, the Title I coordinator, the Common Core of Data coordinator, and the state National/State Geographic Information Council representative. I thank you for your assistance, and look forward to working with you on this important task.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart Kerachsky". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, stylized initial 'S'.

Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner

cc: James Nuckles
Maggie Rivers
Patsy Eiland

Responsibilities of Mapping Coordinator:

- Initiate and maintain contact with all local school district officials to ensure the timely review and submission of any school district updates/corrections to boundaries, names, codes, grade ranges, or levels.
- Act as liaison between local superintendents, the state Department of Education, and the Geography Division of the Census Bureau.
- Determine the best source for school district boundary and data updates.
- Adjudicate boundary discrepancies between school districts.
- Review submissions from local or state education officials for accuracy and completeness before delivery to Census Bureau.
- Update school district inventory listings as necessary.
- Provide detailed boundary update submissions via digital map files or as annotations on Census Bureau school district paper maps.