

Appendix B-3



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202- _____

Date __, 2009

Dear District Superintendent:

The U.S. Department of Education is conducting the *Study of the Implementation of the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act Program State Grants*, and we need your assistance. As you know, youth substance abuse and school crime continue to be major issues for America's schools. The following questions and answers explain why your participation in a study pertaining to those issues is so important.

- **Why is the U.S. Department of Education conducting the study?**

The purpose of this study is to assess the quality of prevention activities funded through the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) Program. The study is authorized under Section 4121(a)(9) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (P.L. 107-110). The U.S. Department of Education will use information from the study to provide data for SDFSCA performance measures required under the Government Performance Results Act (GPRA). Findings will be shared in aggregate form with your state and will help the U.S. Department of Education describe the range and nature of prevention activities across the country.

- **How will the study be conducted?**

The study will consist of three components: (1) a survey of school personnel (e.g., principals or other school staff familiar with prevention programs) in a nationally-representative sample of elementary and secondary schools, (2) a survey of district personnel (e.g., district prevention coordinators) in the districts of sample schools, and 3) a survey of staff who implement prevention programs in a subset of the schools that participate in component 1. This study is being conducted by Westat, a research firm in Rockville, Maryland.

- **Is participation in the study voluntary?**

Federal law states that "a grantee shall cooperate in any evaluation of the program by the Secretary [of Education]" (Authority: 20 U.S.C.1221e-3, 1226c, 1231a, 3474, and 6511 (a)) [45 FR 86298, Dec 30, 1980, as amended at 57 FR 30341, July 8, 1992]. This evaluation is required of the Secretary of Education by Congress. The information you provide will help the U.S. Department of Education to improve the SDFSCA program and report to Congress on GPRA measures for the SDFSCA State Grants Program.

- **What is needed from your schools and district?**

The schools on the enclosed list were selected to participate in the study. The design of the study requires that we collect information about prevention activities and programs from the sampled schools and districts (components 1 and 2) in spring 2009. We will send a letter to principal of each sampled school informing him or her about the study and asking for cooperation. Any support that you can provide for the study would be greatly appreciated.

- **Why is your participation in the study necessary?**

Because we selected only a small sample of schools and districts to participate in the study, your sampled schools and district represent many other schools and districts around the nation. Therefore, we depend on your participation to help us get accurate information about the quality of the SDFSCA Program. We will make every effort to minimize the burden on schools and districts, and we will be as flexible as possible in scheduling data collection.

- **How will confidentiality be protected?**

Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. Reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district, school, or individual. Information that identifies the district, school, or respondent will not be provided to anyone, except as required by law.

We have enclosed informational copies of the draft questionnaire we plan to send to schools and districts in Spring 2009. If you have any questions about the study, please contact Dr. Scott Crosse, the Project Director at Westat, at 1-800-937-8281, ext. 3979 or at ScottCrosse@Westat.com. You may also call Dr. Sharon Stout, the Contracting Officer's Representative at the U.S. Department of Education, at (202) 260-2493 or at Sharon.Stout@ed.gov.

Thank you very much for your cooperation with this important study.

Sincerely,

Alan L. Ginsburg
Director
Policy and Program Studies Service

William Modzeleski
Acting Assistant Deputy Secretary
Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools

Enclosures