

Appendix B-4



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-_____

Date __, 2009

Dear District Coordinator:

We are pleased that your district is participating in the U.S. Department of Education's *Study of the Implementation of the Safe and Drug-free Schools and Communities Act Program State Grants*. The purpose of the study is to describe school-based prevention activities, including those funded through the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (SDFSCA) Program. The U.S. Department of Education will use information from the study to improve the SDFSCA Program and meet the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reporting requirements. Once the study is completed, we will share the findings with your state, your district, and all participating schools.

The study consists 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 (spring 2009), (2) a survey of district personnel (e.g., district prevention coordinators) in the districts of sample schools (spring 2009), and (3) a survey of staff who implement prevention programs in a subset of the schools that participate in component 1 (fall 2009). Your superintendent's office indicated that you would be the best person to respond to the survey for component 2, which asks about your district's alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) and/or school crime prevention programs for the 2008–09 school year. You now have access to our web-based questionnaire that is designed specifically for the person most knowledgeable about such programs in your district. Some of the questions in the questionnaire focus on prevention activities that are funded by the SDFSCA Program, as well as those that are supported by other funding sources. We want the information obtained by this survey to accurately reflect the prevention efforts in your district, so we urge you to collaborate with other staff who may have pertinent information (e.g., budget office staff). For your information, we have asked school respondents participating in the study to contact your office regarding the funding sources for programs in their school.

The questionnaire is available at www.sdfs-evaluation.org. The username and password for your district appear on the label affixed at the bottom of this letter and on the enclosed yellow-colored Web Survey Information Sheet. If you do not have access to the web, or you prefer to respond by mail or fax, please complete and return the enclosed paper and pencil version of the questionnaire.

Your participation is important because only a small sample of districts was selected to participate in the study, and your district represents many other similar districts around the nation. Therefore, we depend on your participation to obtain accurate information about the SDFSCA Program. All responses will be kept confidential. 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. 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.

This study is being conducted by Westat, an independent research firm in Rockville, Maryland. We ask that you complete the survey within 3 weeks. Please keep a copy of the completed questionnaire for your files. If you have any questions about the survey, please contact a study representative at Westat at our toll free number 1-888-611-9273 or at SDFSEvaluation@westat.com. You may also contact 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