

Appendix B-6



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20202-_____

Date __, 2009

Dear Principal:

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*. Your district is participating in the study, and we have notified the Superintendent that your school was randomly selected to participate. The purpose of this 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 better support prevention activities and to meet the Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) reporting requirements. 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 a survey of staff who implement prevention programs in a subset of the schools that participate in component 1 (fall 2009). Once the study is completed, we will share the findings with your state, your district, and all participating schools.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you in advance for participating in the study and to provide instructions for completing the web-based questionnaire in component 1. The U.S. Department of Education is interested in learning about prevention programs that were in place at your school during the 2008-09 school year. These include programs that focused on preventing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use and/or deterring school crime and delinquent behaviors. You now have access to our web-based questionnaire that is designed specifically for the person most knowledgeable about such programs at your school. Please complete this questionnaire if you are the appropriate person, or designate the person most knowledgeable about these programs to complete the questionnaire. Also, please consult with your district SDFSCA or Prevention Coordinator to answer questions on funding sources for the programs.

The questionnaire is available at www.sdfs-evaluation.org. The username and password for your school 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, please complete the enclosed paper and pencil version of the questionnaire, and return it to Westat in the postage-paid envelope.

Your participation is important because only a small sample of schools was selected to participate in the study, and your school represents many other similar schools around the nation. Therefore, we depend on your participation to help us get accurate information about the quality of prevention activities. 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. One exception is that school districts will be provided a list of prevention programs identified by their schools as operating during the 2008-09 school year. 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 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