



**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**  
**INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES**

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

October 2010

Dear District Superintendent:

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, I am asking you to participate in the national survey *Distance Education Courses for Public Elementary and Secondary School Students: 2009–10*. The purpose of the survey is to provide the U.S. Department of Education with nationally representative data about the prevalence and characteristics of these types of courses, and about changes in distance education since this survey was last conducted in 2005. Westat, a research firm in Rockville, Maryland, is conducting the study for NCES using the Fast Response Survey System (FRSS). The survey is designed to be completed in about 30 minutes.

Please look over the definition of distance education courses and the questions being asked and determine who in your district is best suited to provide this information. This may be, for example, the director of curriculum and instruction, the technology coordinator, or the distance education coordinator. **The first question on the survey should be completed whether or not there are students in your district enrolled in distance education courses.**

- ✎ **Why is participation by your district important?** Your district's participation, while voluntary, is important because it is vital to the development of national estimates. We need your input because your district is one of a small sample of districts selected for the study. Your cooperation is critical to make the results of this survey comprehensive, accurate, and timely.
- ✎ **How does NCES protect the confidentiality of the information that you provide?** Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose unless otherwise compelled by law (Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, 20 U.S.C. 9573). The federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the survey (OMB No. 1850-0733).
- ✎ **What do you get from the study?** A copy of the final study report will be sent to all participating districts once the study is completed.

The survey may be completed using either the enclosed questionnaire or an online version of the survey available through the Internet. The online version of the survey is available at **www.frss-XXX.org**. Your username and password appear on the enclosed Web Survey Information Sheet. If you complete the paper version of the questionnaire, please return it to Westat in the enclosed postage-paid envelope. **Please complete the survey only once, using either the paper or the online version.**

We ask that the survey be completed **within 3 weeks**, and that you keep a copy of the completed survey for your files. If you have any questions about this survey, please contact Barbara Queen, the Westat survey manager, at 800-937-8281, ext. 4476 (toll-free) or 301-294-4476, or by e-mail at [barbaraqueen@westat.com](mailto:barbaraqueen@westat.com). You may also call Peter Tice, the NCES Project Officer, at 202-502-7497. Thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky,  
Deputy Commissioner

Enclosures