

Note: To be printed on ED Letterhead

Dear Teacher/Principal,

The Policy and Program Studies Service of the U.S. Department of Education is currently conducting a national evaluation of the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program. The TIF program was designed to provide financial support to local education agencies, nonprofit organizations, or state education agencies to implement innovative performance pay systems for primary and secondary school teachers and principals. This evaluation is being conducted under contract ED-04-CO-0040/0008 to SRI International, Berkeley Policy Associates, and the Urban Institute.

We are writing to you today to strongly encourage you to participate in this evaluation effort by completing this survey. The opinions and experiences of educators in the schools and districts participating in the Teacher Incentive Fund (TIF) program are essential to the evaluation activities. It is important that we hear from teachers and principals with a variety of experiences including both those who are participating in the program and those who are not.

Findings from the study will inform both national educational policy and local practice. As you know, there is renewed and widespread interest in performance pay in education, with hundreds of millions of dollars in local revenue and federal funds being expended in experiments in new methods of educator pay. Despite this increased investment, little is known about best practices and outcomes of these efforts at the national level. You are on the leading edge of reform, making your participation extremely valuable. The information collected for this study can be used, for example, by (1) States, districts, and schools, in order to identify and develop policies to support promising practices in performance pay systems and (2) the U.S. Department of Education, in order to support refinement of current systems and new efforts to develop pay-for-performance systems.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Your responses will be used only for research purposes and information will not be provided that identifies you or your school. If you have any questions about this survey or the national study, please contact: SRI International at (800) XXX-XXX or email TIF@sri.com.

Thank you in advance for your participation in this very important effort.

Sincerely,

Alan Ginsburg
Director, Policy and Program Studies
Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development