

The purpose of this letter is to inform you of our plans to conduct additional research under the generic clearance for questionnaire pretesting research (OMB number 0607-0725). The Center for Survey Measurement (CSM) will be conducting usability testing to examine the efficiency and ease of use of the new Internet applications that will be used in the 2011-12 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) this Fall. The Schools and Staffing Survey is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the statistical agency for the U.S. Department of Education.

The Schools and Staffing Survey is the nation's most extensive sample survey of elementary and secondary schools, as well as the teachers and administrators who staff them. It collects data on topics such as, principals' and teachers' perceptions of school climate and problems in their schools, teacher compensation, district hiring practices and basic characteristics of the student population.

We will be testing two different sets of new automated instruments: one for school principals and one for teachers.

With the principals (Round 1 of testing), we will be testing two new automated systems that will be used to communicate with school staff during the survey:

- 1) The first is a brief questionnaire (Screener) that verifies the school's eligibility for the survey, and establishes a staff person at the school to serve as the coordinator for collection of the questionnaires. It also asks about contact persons for the teacher roster. Usually the school principal will complete this form. Screen shots from the instrument are included as Attachment A.

- 2) The second application (Control Center) is intended for the staff person at the school who will serve as the coordinator—it might be the principal, or another administrative staff member. The Census Bureau will be calling this person to ask about the status of the various questionnaires that were sent to the school. This application allows the staff member to log in, and see a screen that displays the status of each of these questionnaires (whether the Census Bureau has received a completed questionnaire or not). It also allows the staff person to enter contact information for the intended respondent for each questionnaire, and to request another copy of a blank questionnaire. Screen shots from this instrument are included as Attachment B.

With the teachers (Round 2 of testing), we will administer the new online Teacher Questionnaire. Screen shots from this instrument are included as Attachment C.

Between August and September 2011, staff from the Census Bureau's usability lab will conduct a maximum of 20 usability interviews (10 each round) using school principal and teacher participants during two usability tests. We will recruit secondary school principals and teachers in the DC Metropolitan area through the Maryland Association of Secondary School Principals, which will forward the study opportunity to members of their association. Additionally, the opportunity will be forwarded to contacts through the Demographic Surveys Division (DSD). The sessions will take place in the Census Bureau's usability lab. Participants will be paid \$40 for their assistance in this project. The protocols for Rounds 1 and 2 of testing are included as

Appendices D and E.

Each experimental session will include a test administrator and one participant at a time (for a total of 20 sessions). Participants will be asked to fill out an initial questionnaire with demographic questions on their age, sex, and education level. The questionnaire also contains questions about the respondents' computer and Internet experience and is included as Attachment F. They will also complete a satisfaction questionnaire for each round, and these are included as Attachments G and H.

Participants will be informed that their response is voluntary and that the information they provide is confidential and will be seen only by employees involved in the research project.

The estimated time for completion of the experimental session is one hour. Thus, the total estimated burden time for this research is a maximum of 20 hours.

The contact person for questions regarding data collection and statistical aspects of the design of this research is listed below:

Kathleen. T Ashenfelter, Ph.D.
Center for Survey Measurement
Room 5K505
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233
202-763-3577
Kathleen.T.Ashenfelter@census.gov