



**School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS)  
2010 and 2012**

**OMB Supporting Statement C**

**September 24, 2009**

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The following appendices are intended to supplement the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) 2010 and 2012 OMB Supporting Statements A and B.

## **Appendix A - NCES Affidavit of Non-Disclosure**

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(Job Title)

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(Date of Assignment to NCES Project)

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(Organization, State or local agency or instrumentality)

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(Organization or agency Address)

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(NCES Data Base or File Containing Individually Identifiable Information)

I, \_\_\_\_\_, do solemnly swear (or affirm) that when given access to the subject NCES data base or file, I will not –

- (i) use or reveal any individually identifiable information [including “schools” in the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS)] under the provisions of Section 183 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (P.L.107-279) and Title V, subtitle A of the E-Government Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-347) for any purpose other than statistical purposes specified in the NCES survey, project, or contract;
- (ii) make any disclosure or publication whereby a sample unit or survey respondent (including “schools” in SSOCS) could be identified or the data furnished by or related to any particular person or SSOCS school under these sections could be identified; or
- (iii) permit anyone other than the individuals authorized by the Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics to examine the individual reports.

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(Signature)

[The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of no more than \$250,000 (under 18. U.S.C. 3571) or imprisonment for not more than five years (under 18 U.S.C. 3559), or both. The word “swear should be stricken out when a person elects to affirm the affidavit rather than to swear to it.]

## **Appendix B – Description and Justification of Survey Items**

## **Item Description and Justification SSOCS 2009–10**

There were few changes to the 2009–10 SSOCS questionnaire from the 2007–08 (SSOCS:2008) SSOCS questionnaire. Changes were made based on the results of the SSOCS:2008 collection with the intent to clarify questions for future respondents. In addition, questions were removed based on historically low response rates, and new items were added to reflect emerging issues. Details on changes between the 2008 and 2010 instruments, along with rationale for these changes, are provided in Appendix C. With the exception of the items discussed in Appendix C, all items are identical to the SSOCS:2008 instrument.

Presented below is a complete description of the sub-sections and the corresponding items (see Appendix L for questionnaire). The SSOCS:2010 questionnaire consists of the following sub-sections:

- School practices and programs;
- Parent and community involvement at school;
- School security;
- Staff training;
- Limitations on crime prevention;
- Frequency of crime and violence at school;
- Number of incidents;
- Disciplinary problems and actions; and
- School characteristics: 2009–10 school year.

### **1.1 School Practices and Programs**

This section collects data pertaining to the nature of current school policies and programs relating to crime and discipline. These data are important in helping schools know where they stand in relation to other schools, and to help policymakers know what actions are already being taken and those that might be encouraged in the future. Potentially, the data can also be used by researchers interested in evaluating the success of school policies. That is, though this study is not designed as an evaluation, the presence of school policies can be correlated with the rates of crime provided elsewhere on the questionnaire, with appropriate controls for school characteristics.

Question 1 asks about several kinds of school policies and practices: Items 1a through 1c and 1f ask about access to the school grounds. The ability of students and outsiders to enter and leave the campus throughout the school day affects the amount of control that administrators have over the school environment, and the potential for bringing weapons or drugs onto school grounds.

Items 1d-1e, 1g-1k, 1n-1o, 1r, 1q, and 1t ask about ways that students are monitored to prevent crime. Such actions can directly affect crime because students may be more reluctant to engage in inappropriate activities for fear of being caught. The school climate also may be affected because students may feel more secure knowing that violators of school policies are likely to be caught.

Items 1l and 1m ask about dress code.

Item p provides information about a system to notify parents in the event of an emergency.

Item 1s provides information about the school environment (e.g., are students and outsiders able to identify staff who might help with a problem?) and about the school's ability to monitor the grounds and identify outsiders.

Items 1u and 1v ask about the availability of telephones or two way radios to staff. Either device gives staff and teachers the opportunity to obtain help without leaving the specific location or classroom, and affects the administration's ability to communicate with teachers.

Items 1w and 1x ask about ways the students' use of cell phones, text messaging devices, and social networking websites is controlled. See Appendix C, section 1.3 for the full description and rationale of these items.

Question 2 asks about the existence of written plans for dealing with crises and if students have been drilled on these plans. When crises occur, there may not be time or an appropriate environment for making critical decisions, and key school leaders may not be available to immediately provide guidance. Thus, having a written plan is considered important in preparing schools to deal with crises effectively.

Question 3 is a general question designed to provide an initial measure of the type of school programs. The presence of such programs is a sign that schools are being proactive by seeking to prevent violence before it occurs rather than reacting to it.

## **1.2 Parent and Community Involvement at School**

This section asks about the involvement of parents and community groups in the school. Parent and community involvement in schools can affect the culture in the school. The presence of law enforcement officers or security guards in schools may have an impact the level of crime in a school.



Question 4 asks about formal policies implemented to involve parents in school programs while question 5 asks about the percentage of parents participating in specific events.

Question 6 asks if specific community agencies were involved in promoting a safe school environment. This item shows the extent to which the school involves outside groups.

### **1.3 School Security Staff**

Questions 7 through 11 ask about the use of paid law enforcement or security services on the school grounds or at school events. Besides directly affecting school crime, the use of paid law enforcement personnel also affects the school environment. It may help to prevent illegal actions, and reduce the amount of crime. It also may affect the feeling of security or freedom on school grounds. Thus, the times the law enforcement personnel are present, their visibility, and their carrying of weapons are all important.

### **1.4 Staff Training**

Question 12 asks about trainings provided by schools or districts for classroom teachers or aides. The trainings include classroom management, school-wide discipline policies and practices related to violence, alcohol, and/or drug use, safety procedures, recognizing potentially violent students, recognizing signs of substance abuse, and positive behavioral intervention strategies. Schools now can obtain early warning signs to identify such potentially violent students, and their use of such profiles may affect both general levels of discipline and the potential for crises (such as multiple shootings). The type of trainings provided to teachers is important because teachers collectively spend the most time with students and observe students closely.

### **1.5 Limitations on Crime prevention**

Question 13 asks for principals' perceptions of the factors that limit their efforts to reduce or prevent crime. Though principals are not trained evaluators, they are the people who are most knowledgeable about the situations at their individual schools, and they know whether their own actions have been constrained by the factors listed.

### **1.6 Frequency of Crime and Violence at School**

Questions 14 and 15 ask about violent deaths, specifically homicides and shootings. Violent deaths get substantial attention by the media but are actually relatively rare, and there is evidence that (in general) schools are much safer than students' neighboring communities. Based on analyses of such previous SSOCS data, these crimes are rare events such that NCES is unable to report estimates per the Center's statistical standards.

Nonetheless, it is important to include the items in the questionnaire as these are significant incidents of crime that, at the very least, independent researchers can evaluate. Furthermore, the survey represents a comprehensive picture of the types of violence that can occur in schools, and the omission of violent deaths and shootings would be questioned by respondents who may have experienced such violence.

### **1.7 Number of Incidents**

This section asks about the frequency of various kinds of crime and disruptions at school (other than violent deaths) (Items 16 - 19). Question 16 asks about the number of incidents that occurred at school and the number of crimes that were reported to the police. The data can be used directly as an indicator of the degree of safety in U.S. public schools, and indirectly to rank schools in terms of the number of problems they face. Question 17 asks about the frequency of hate crimes, gang-related crimes, and gang-related hate crimes. Questions 18 and 19 are designed to gather data on the number of unplanned disruptions that occur during the school year.

### **1.8 Disciplinary Problems and Actions**

There is evidence that schools' ability to control crime is affected by their control of lesser violations. That is, lesser violations are an indication of the state of discipline in the school, so that when these violations are controlled, students do not progress to more serious disciplinary problems. This section asks about the degree to which schools face such disciplinary problems, and the way that they respond to them. The data thus will be helpful in confirming or denying the importance of schools' control of lesser violations, as well as providing another measure of the disciplinary situation in U.S. schools. The data may also be helpful in multivariate models of school crime by providing a way of grouping schools that are similar in their general disciplinary situation but different in their school policies or programs.

Question 20 asks about the frequency of nine different kinds of disciplinary problems, providing a general measure of the degree to which there are disciplinary problems at each school.

Question 21 asks about the frequency of three aspects of cyberbullying, providing a general measure of the degree to which cyberbullying is an issue for students.

Question 22 asks what kinds of disciplinary actions were available to each school, and whether they were actually used. It is not intended to be comprehensive, but rather focuses on some of the most important strategies. The data will help policymakers to know what options and what constraints principals face; for example, if an action is

allowed in principle but not used in practice, then policymakers would need to act in a different way than if the action is not allowed.

Question 23 asks about the number of various types of offenses committed by students, and the resulting disciplinary actions. Question 24 asks about how many students were removed or transferred from school for disciplinary reasons. This provides valuable information about how school policies are actually implemented (rather than simply what policies are in place). For example, many schools claim to have zero tolerance policies, but some schools have extremely strong policies while other zero tolerance policies allow so many options that there is little or no constraint on what disciplinary action is imposed. In addition, this item provides information on how many different kinds of actions are taken with regard to a particular offense, and how many times no action is taken.

### **1.9 School Characteristics: School Year 2009–10**

This section asks for a variety of types of information about the characteristics of the schools responding to the survey. This information is necessary in order to be able to understand the degree to which different schools face different situations. For example, one school might have highly effective programs and policies yet still have high crime rates because of the large number of disadvantaged students at the school; another school might appear to have effective policies based on its crime rates but actually have higher crime rates than similar schools.

Question 25 asks for the total enrollment.

Question 26 provides information on the percentage of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches (26a, a measure of poverty), with limited English proficiency (26b, a measure of the cultural environment), in special education (26c, a measure of the academic environment), who are male (26d; most crimes are committed by males, so the percentage who are male can affect the overall crime rate).

Question 27 addresses various levels of academic proficiency and interest (27a-27c), which are factors that have been associated with crime rates.

Question 28 asks for the number of classroom changes made in a typical day. This is important because it affects schools' ability to control the student environment. When students are in hallways, there are more opportunities for problems. Also, a school with fewer classroom changes is likely to be more personal and to have closer relationships between the students and teachers.

Question 29 addresses the issue of crime levels in the neighborhoods where the students live. In some schools, students could be transported to the school from great distances.

Their home communities may have significantly different levels of crime than their school community. Question 30 provides information on the crime level in the area the school is located.

Question 31 asks for the school type. Schools that target particular groups of students (such as magnet schools) have more control over who is in the student body, and may have better motivated students (because the students have chosen a particular program). Charter schools have more freedom than regular schools in their school policies, may have more control over who is admitted into the student body, and may have better motivated students (because the students chose the school).

Question 32 asks for the school's average daily attendance. This is a measure of truancy and thus a measure of the level of disciplinary problems at the school. It also is a measure of the academic environment.

Question 33 asks for the number of transfers. When students transfer after the school year has started, schools have less control over whether and how the students are acculturated to the school. These students are likely to have less attachment to the school and to the other students, thus increasing the risk of disciplinary problems.

Questions 34a through 34c will be used to examine whether schools that respond to the survey before the school year is completed report fewer crimes than schools reporting for the entire year.

## **Appendix C – Questionnaire Changes and Rationale**

## Changes to the Questionnaire and Rationale: 2009–10

The following details the editorial changes, deletions, and additions to the 2007–08 SSOCS instrument. The result is the proposed instrument for 2009–10 SSOCS, which is located in Appendix L.

### 1.1 Editorial Changes

Throughout the questionnaire, the school year has been updated to reflect the most recent 2009–10 school year.

Page 2. The definition of sexual harassment was revised to read as follows:

**Sexual harassment**—conduct that is unwelcome, sexual in nature, and denies or limits a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from a school’s education program. The conduct can be carried out by school employees, other students, and non-employee third parties. Both male and female students can be victims of sexual harassment, and the harasser and the victim can be of the same sex. The conduct can be verbal, nonverbal, or physical.

This revision was based on a request from the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) as well as researchers who independently provided feedback to NCES. This definition mirrors OCR’s definition in its’ key elements.

Page 2. The definitions of rape and sexual battery were modified to emphasize that both male and female students can be victims of these crimes. The definitions were revised to read as follows:

**Rape** – forced sexual intercourse (vaginal, anal, or oral penetration). This includes penetration from a foreign object. Both male and female students can be victims of rape.

**Sexual battery** – an incident that includes threatened rape, fondling, indecent liberties, child molestation, or sodomy. Both male and female students can be victims of sexual battery. Classification of these incidents should take into consideration the age and developmentally appropriate behavior of the offender(s).

These revisions were based on requests from researchers who independently provided feedback to NCES.

Page 6, item 2, subitem h. “Flu” has been changed to “flu.”

Page 6, item 3. “intended to prevent or reduce violence” has been underlined to read “intended to prevent or reduce violence.”

Page 6, item 3, subitems d and e. These items have been divided into two separate questions, one that measures individual “attention” of students by students, and the other that measures individual “attention” of students by adults. This revision was based on a request from a researcher who independently provided feedback to NCES.

Page 8, section title. The title of this section has been changed from “School Security” to “School Security Staff” to better reflect the contents of the section.

Page 8, item 9. Due to the historically low response rates for the part-time items, the two columns (full time and part time) have been combined into one column that reads “number at your school.” The full-time and part-time subitems have been stacked so they now appear vertically (rather than in a grid format, as was the case in the 2008 instrument). This revision was made in an effort to make this item easier to read.

Page 9, item 12, subitems b and c. These items have been divided into two separate subitems, one that measures training in policies and practices related to violence, and the other that measures training in policies and practices related to alcohol and/or drug use. This revision was based on a request from a researcher who independently provided feedback to NCES. This revision also makes these items consistent with subitems 12e and 12f.

Page 9, item 12, subitem d. An example has been added to this item for clarity.

Page 11, item 16. Column headers, “column 1” and “column 2” have been added for clarity. This change was based on feedback received during cognitive testing.

Page 12, item 17, subitem a. A note was added to clarify that hate crimes should not include gang-related hate crimes. The note reads: “(excludes gang-related hate crime).”

Page 12, item 17, subitem b. A note was added to clarify that gang crimes should not include gang-related hate crimes. The note reads: “(excludes gang-related hate crime).”

Page 14, item 22, subitems e. and f. Due to the historically low response rate for items C0406, C0408, C0410, and C0412 in SSOCS 2008, the formatting of Q22e and Q22f has been revised. Each of these is now a 2-part question, using the same stem. We believe this will help respondents differentiate between the two items.

Page 15, item 23. Examination of the 2008 data indicated double reporting for columns 2 and 3 (removals and transfers respectively). To avoid this issue in the 2010 questionnaire, modifications for the instructions on item Q23 have been implemented.

Page 15, item 23. To emphasize the difference between “number of students” and “number of disciplinary actions”, a border has been added to the “number of students” column.

Page 18, item 32. Due to the low response rate for this item in 2008 it is likely that respondents cannot easily see this question due to its placement on the page. We changed this item so that the response line is right justified.

## **1.2 Item deletions and rationale**

Page 4, last question deleted. This item assists in the collection of data on the time it takes for a principal to complete the SSOCS. Based on past cognitive labs and extrapolation from responses to these questions in previous SSOCS administrations (in 2006 and 2008), it is no longer necessary.

Page 5, item 1w was deleted. This variable was shown to have little variance (with 93 percent of schools answering “yes”), and seems of little analytic use.

Page 6, item 3i was deleted. This variable was shown to have little variance (with 90 percent of schools answering “yes”), and seems of little analytic use.

Page 8, item 8e was deleted. The “other – specify” response was originally intended to determine if our response options were capturing the whole picture of when security staff are used, and subsequent analysis shows that the four response options are sufficient.

Page 9, item 10, subitem a. was deleted. The majority of principals responded yes to this question.

Page 15, item 22f was deleted. This is mainly due to the low response rates in these items throughout iterations of SSOCS. Although C0510 and C0512 are used in the creation of a composite (serious disciplinary actions taken), there has been very little variance in these items, with most schools reporting zeros, so we do not expect a trending issue.

Page 18, item 28 was deleted. This is mainly due to the low response rates in these items throughout iterations of SSOCS. Although these variables were used to create a measure of “full-time equivalent” (FTE), the low response rates may cause these estimates to be unreliable. FTE will be taken from the frame.

Page 18, item 35 deleted. This item collects data on the time it takes for a principal to complete the SSOCS. Based on past cognitive labs and extrapolation from responses to these questions in previous SSOCS administrations (in 2006 and 2008), it is no longer necessary.

## **1.3 Item additions and rationale**

Page 5, item 1, subitems w. and x. These items were added based on 1) a body of literature that suggests cyberbullying, harassment via electronic means, and aggression via student social networking sites is an emerging area of concern in schools (Hinduja and Patchin 2009). To date, a handful of studies have examined student reports of cyberbullying (Keith and Martin 2005; Ybarra and Mitchell 2004). The addition of these



items to the 2010 SSOCS questionnaire will estimate the prevalence of policies that may limit students' ability to bully one another via electronic means.

Page 9, item 12, subitem h. This item was added based on feedback from principals during cognitive interviewing.

Page 11, item 16. The instruction was modified to add a "Note" for clarification.

Page 11, item 16, subitem j. This item was added based on feedback from an independent researcher. While SSOCS already collected data on the distribution, possession, and use of illegal drugs, there were no items to collect information on the inappropriate use of prescription drugs.

Page 13, item 20d. This question was added as an indicator of student harassment based on sexual orientation.

Page 13, item 21. This item is new to the 2010 SSOCS and was added as an indicator of the frequency of cyberbullying among students. In August of 2008, the Centers for Disease Control identified electronic aggression as an "emerging adolescent health issue" (<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/ElectronicAggression/>). To date, few studies have assessed the prevalence of electronic aggression. Such behavior is inclusive of *cyberbullying*, *Internet harassment*, and *Internet bullying*. Ybarra and Mitchell (2004) estimate that 19 percent of students between the ages of 10 and 17 (n=1,500) were either victims or aggressors in this type of behavior. A 2001 study of the National Children's home, a charitable organization, found that among youth ages 11 to 19 (n=900), 16 percent had received threatening text messages, 7 percent had been bullied in online chat rooms, and 4 percent had been harassed via email. In a 2005 follow up, 20 percent indicated they had been bullied via electronic means. Hinduja and Patchin (2004) estimate that 30 percent of respondents (ages 17 and younger) to an online survey estimated they had been victims of cyberbullying. A survey of 3,000 youth in grades 5, 8, and 11 indicate that 9 percent had been victims of internet bullying.

The inclusion of questions on cyberbullying would make SSOCS the first nationally-representative principal/school-based survey to estimate the frequency of the cyberbullying problem and its impact on the school environment and resources.

Page 18, item 33. The instruction was modified to add a "Note" for clarification.

## **Appendix D – Letter to Superintendents**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

**SSOCS-10(L)**  
**(1-2010)**

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS



**The SSOCS is endorsed by:**

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American School Counselors Association
- Association of American Educators
- Center for the Prevention of School Violence
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of School Resource Officers
- National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Education Association
- National Middle School Association
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association
- National School Safety Center
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- Police Executive Research Forum
- School Safety Advocacy Council
- School Violence Resource Center

**Conducted by:**

Dear Superintendent:

The U.S. Census Bureau, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education, is conducting an important national study that collects information about crime and safety in public schools from school principals. The School Survey on Crime and

Safety (SSOCS) was previously conducted in the 1999-2000, 2003-04, 2005-06, and 2007-08 school years.

**At least one school in your district has been selected to participate in the SSOCS.** For your information, we are enclosing the materials that

are being sent to the schools, including the letter asking them to participate, the questionnaire, and a brochure describing the survey. Please do not provide this questionnaire to any schools or complete it with district information. This questionnaire is only for your reference. We recognize that some schools may not want to share information related to crime for fear of receiving negative attention. Please be assured that by federal mandate we are

required to protect the identity of all schools included in our survey from public disclosure. The data we collect may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) Public Law 107-279, Section 183] and U.S. Code Title 20 Section 9573. Reports of the findings from the survey will not identify participating districts, schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

The success of any survey depends on the willingness of those selected to participate. The greater the level of participation, the better our survey data can provide a current picture of the full diversity of situations found across the nation's schools. **We hope that you will encourage your schools to participate if they ask for authorization to complete the survey.**

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any general questions about the study, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-800-221-1204. Someone will be available to take your call Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at [dse.education@census.gov](mailto:dse.education@census.gov). Sincerely,

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

**Sponsored by:**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION  
STATISTICS

Stuart Kerachsky  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center for Education  
Statistics  
Enclosures

## **Appendix E – Letter to Chief State School Officers**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

SSOCS-11(L)  
(1-2010)

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS



**The SSOCS is endorsed by:**

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American School Counselors Association
- Association of American Educators
- Center for the Prevention of School Violence
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of School Resource Officers
- National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Education Association
- National Middle School Association
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association
- National School Safety Center
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- Police Executive Research Forum
- School Safety Advocacy Council

**Conducted by**  
School Violence Resource Center  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Dear

The U.S. Census Bureau, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education, is conducting an important national study that collects information about crime and safety in public schools from school principals. The School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) was previously conducted in the 1999–2000, 2003–04, 2005–06, and 2007–08 school years.

**At least one school in your state has been selected to participate in the SSOCS.** For your information, we are enclosing the materials that are being sent to the schools, including the letter asking them to participate, the questionnaire, and a brochure describing the survey.

We recognize that some schools may not want to share information related to crime for fear of receiving negative attention. Please be assured that by federal mandate we are required to protect the identity of all schools included in our survey from public disclosure. The data we collect may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) Public Law 107-279, Section 183] and U.S. Code Title 20 Section 9573. Reports of the findings from the survey will not identify participating districts, schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Though participation in the survey is voluntary, the success of any survey depends on the willingness of those selected to participate. The greater the level of participation, the better our survey data can provide a current picture of the full diversity of situations found across the nation's schools. **We hope that you will encourage the schools in your state to participate.**

Thank you for your assistance. If you have any general questions about the study, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-800-221-1204. Someone will be available to take your call Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at [dsd.education@census.gov](mailto:dsd.education@census.gov).

Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center for Education  
Statistics

Enclosures

**Sponsored by:**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATION STATISTICS

## **Appendix F – Advance Letter to Principals**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

SSOCS-12(L)  
(1-2010)

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS



**The SSOCS is endorsed by:**

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American School Counselors Association
- Association of American Educators
- Center for the Prevention of School Violence
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of School Resource Officers
- National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Education Association
- National Middle School Association
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association
- National School Safety Center
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- Police Executive Research Forum
- School Safety Advocacy Council
- School Violence Resource Center

Sincerely,

**Conducted by:**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Stuart Kerachsky  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center for Education  
Statistics  
Enclosures

Dear Principal:

I am writing to invite you to participate in the 2010 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) by providing information about your school. This survey is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education. The SSOCS is a biennial survey that focuses on the frequency of crime and violence in public schools and the programs and practices schools have developed to provide a safe school environment. It provides a unique opportunity to collect national data on crime and safety from the school's perspective. **The SSOCS is the only survey of its kind.** Your response is critical to the success of this study because your school is one of only a small number invited to participate in the SSOCS. Your school represents hundreds of similar schools nationwide. Your involvement will only require the completion of a brief questionnaire.

Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [*Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002)* Public Law 107-279, Section 183] and U.S. Code Title 20 Section 9573. Reports of the findings from the survey will not identify participating districts, schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

**The U.S. Census Bureau will be sending the SSOCS survey to your school via FedEx next week.** If you have any general questions about the study, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-800-221-1204. Someone will be available to take your call Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at [dse.education@census.gov](mailto:dse.education@census.gov).

Thank you for giving this matter your attention. We look forward to your school's participation in this important data collection effort.

**Sponsored by:**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR  
EDUCATION STATISTICS

**Appendix G – Advance Letter to Principals in Special Permission  
Districts**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

**SSOCS-12(L)S  
(1-2010)**

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS



**The SSOCS is endorsed by:**

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American School Counselors Association
- Association of American Educators
- Center for the Prevention of School Violence
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of School Resource Officers
- National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Education Association
- National Middle School Association
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association
- National School Safety Center
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- Police Executive Research Forum
- School Safety Advocacy Council
- School Violence Resource Center

**Conducted by:**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Dear Principal:

I am writing to invite you to participate in the 2010 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) by providing information about your school. This survey is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education. The SSOCS is a biennial survey that focuses on the frequency of crime and violence in public schools and the programs and practices schools have developed to provide a safe school environment. It provides a unique opportunity to collect national data on crime and safety from the school's perspective. **The SSOCS is the only survey of its kind** because your school is one of only a small number invited to participate in the SSOCS. Your school represents hundreds of similar schools nationwide. Your involvement will only require the completion of a brief questionnaire.

Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [*Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002)* Public Law 107-279, Section 183] and U.S. Code Title 20 Section 9573. Reports of the findings from the survey will not identify participating districts, schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

We know that your school district requires researchers to obtain approval to conduct research in your district. **The NCES is in the process of obtaining permission to conduct the SSOCS in your district.** If you

have any questions about this process, please contact your district or Samantha Neiman, the SSOCS Communications Director, at 1-202-

**The U.S. Census Bureau will be sending the SSOCS survey to your school via FedEx in the next 1-2 weeks.** If you have any general

questions about the survey, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-800-221-8200, or on the 501 Pennsylvania Avenue Titak Tower 4th Floor, Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time. You can also contact us at [education@census.gov](mailto:education@census.gov).

Thank you for giving this matter your attention. We look forward to your school's participation in this important data collection effort.

Sincerely,

**Sponsored by:**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION  
STATISTICS

Stuart Kerachsky  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center for Education  
Statistics  
Enclosures

## **Appendix H – Cover Letter to Principals**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

SSOCS-13(L)  
(1-2010)

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS



**The SSOCS is endorsed by:**

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American School Counselors Association
- Association of American Educators
- Center for the Prevention of School Violence
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Association of School Resource Officers
- National Association of School Safety and Law Enforcement Officers
- National Association of Secondary School Principals
- National Association of State Boards of Education
- National Education Association
- National Middle School Association
- National PTA
- National School Boards Association
- National School Safety Center
- Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory
- Police Executive Research Forum
- School Safety Advocacy Council
- School Violence Resource Center



While your participation in this survey is voluntary and your decision will not affect any benefits or funding you receive from the U.S. Department of Education, we do hope that you will participate in this important national survey. **We would appreciate the return of the questionnaire by March 22, 2010.** A postage-paid return envelope has been enclosed for your convenience. If you have any general questions about the study, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-800-221-1204. Someone will be available to take your call Monday through Friday, between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time). The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at [dsd.education@census.gov](mailto:dsd.education@census.gov).

**Conducted by:**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Dear Principal:

Last week, I wrote to request your participation in the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), an important national study that collects information about crime and safety in public schools. The survey is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education.

As we mentioned in our previous letter, the SSOCS provides a unique opportunity to collect national data on crime and safety from the school's perspective. We are confident that, with your participation, we can provide data to state and federal agencies about various types of crime and discipline that exist in schools today. Although the SSOCS may ask some questions that appear similar to those on other surveys, this survey is not connected to any other state or federal data collection system. **The SSOCS is unique in that it provides national estimates of school crime and safety using common definitions across all states.** Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [*Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002)* Public Law 107-279, Section 183] and U.S. Code Title 20 Section 9573. Reports of the findings from the survey will not identify participating districts, schools, or staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Sincerely,

**Sponsored by:**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION  
STATISTICS

Stuart Kerachsky  
Acting Commissioner  
National Center for Education  
Statistics  
Enclosures

## **Appendix I – Postcard for Schools in Special Permission Districts**

Front

SSOCS-13(l)  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS  
Conducted by:  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
Economics and Statistics Administration  
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

## **YOUR DISTRICT HAS APPROVED SSOCS**



Back

Dear School Principal:

We know that your school district requires researchers to obtain approval to conduct surveys in your district. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education completed the application process and has received permission to conduct the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) in your district. If you have any questions about this application process, please contact your district or Samantha Neiman, the SSOCS Communications Director, at 1-202-403-6554 or [ctr\\_sneiman@air.org](mailto:ctr_sneiman@air.org).

I would like to thank you in advance for your help in completing this survey.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Chandler  
SSOCS Project Officer  
National Center for Education Statistics

## **Appendix J – Reminder E-mails to Respondents**

March, 2008

Subject – Reminder – Deadline for SSOCS

If you have already completed the **School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS)**, thank you!

If not, **please complete and return your questionnaire as soon as possible**. We will contact you shortly to determine the status of your questionnaire.

Your participation is critical to the success of our survey because your school was selected to represent hundreds of similar schools and cannot be replaced. Please contact me if there is anything I can do to help you complete the questionnaire.

Sincerely,  
Kathryn Chandler

Kathryn A. Chandler  
Director, El/Sec Sample Survey Studies Program  
National Center for Education Statistics  
U.S. Department of Education  
1990 K Street, NW, Room 9017  
Washington, DC 20006  
Email: [Schoolcrime@ed.gov](mailto:Schoolcrime@ed.gov)

May, 2008

Subject: Be Counted – SSOCS Final Deadline

If you have already completed the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), thank you! We truly appreciate your response.

If not, please complete and return your questionnaire as soon as possible. We will contact you shortly to determine the status of your questionnaire.

SSOCS is important because parents, school staff, and policymakers must understand the extent and nature of school crime in order to address the problem. SSOCS is designed to provide measures of crime and safety in the nation's public schools. Your participation is critical to the success of our survey because your school was selected to represent hundreds of similar schools and cannot be replaced.

Please contact me if there is anything I can do to help you complete the questionnaire.

Thanks,  
Kathy Chandler

Kathryn A. Chandler  
Director, El/Sec Sample Survey Studies Program  
National Center for Education Statistics  
U.S. Department of Education  
1990 K Street, NW, Room 9017  
Washington, DC 20006  
Email: [schoolcrime@ed.gov](mailto:schoolcrime@ed.gov)

## **Appendix K – Voice-mail Left by Interviewers**



This is the United States Census Bureau's Jeffersonville Telephone Center. Please return our call at: (toll-free number). Refer to case number: (case ID). Thank You.