

## STUDY OF SCHOOL TURNAROUND - Recruitment

### STATE NOTIFICATION LETTER (from IES)

[Date]

[Name]

[Position]

[Street Address]

[City, state, ZIP Code]

Dear [State Superintendent of Education]:

We are writing to inform you of an important study sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education focused on the turnaround efforts of chronically low-performing schools. We would like to outline the purpose and activities of this study and ask for your cooperation and support in this important endeavor.

The **Study of School Turnaround** (SST) will conduct case studies of a sample of 60 chronically low-performing schools receiving Title I Section 1003(g) School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, beginning in winter of 2011 and continuing through the 2012-13 school year. Through these case studies, this study intends to document the change process and identify critical components and leading indicators of successful school turnaround. This study will also support schools undertaking actions to turn around student performance by sharing accumulating knowledge and lessons from study schools with key decision makers.

Staff from our contractors at the American Institutes for Research (AIR) and its partners, Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) and Decision Information Resources (DIR), will conduct annual principal interviews and administer an annual teacher survey in 60 case study schools, of which [X] are located in your state. In addition, the study team will identify three subsamples of schools to which they will conduct visits to collect in-depth interview data. The first set of these schools will be identified in the winter of 2011, and the final set will be identified in the fall of 2011, at which point we will contact you again if any such schools are in your state.

Notification materials will be delivered to the schools and the districts in which the schools are located in winter 2011. Staff from AIR will also conduct telephone interviews with your state's Title I Director or School Improvement Director each fall to collect data on topics for which extant data are not available. We will be sending letters to the Title I State Directors in order to notify them about these telephone interviews. In addition, this study will use ED*Facts* data reported to the U.S. Department of Education and will also gather extant data at the state, district and school levels.

Should you have any questions or if you would like to discuss this study, please feel free to contact the project officer, Thomas Wei of the U.S. Department of Education at 202-208-0452 or [Thomas.Wei@ed.gov](mailto:Thomas.Wei@ed.gov). You may also contact the project director, Kerstin Carlson Le Floch of the American Institutes for Research at 202-403-5649 or [klefloch@air.org](mailto:klefloch@air.org).

Again, we thank you in advance for your cooperation. We hope that this study will be a useful source of information for Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, other policymakers, and educators.

Sincerely,

John Easton,  
Director, Institute of Education Sciences

## STUDY OF SCHOOL TURNAROUND - Recruitment

### District Notification Email

Date: [Date]  
To: [District Coordinator]  
CC: [District Superintendent]  
Subject: Study of School Turnaround

Dear [District Coordinator]:

We are writing to inform you of an important study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education focused on the turnaround efforts of chronically low-performing schools. We would like to outline the purpose and activities of this study and ask for your cooperation and support in this important endeavor. Your participation, along with that of districts across the country, will ensure that local perspectives on the School Improvement Grant (SIG) program are represented.

The **Study of School Turnaround (SST)** is designed to provide Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, other policymakers, and educators with important information about how to improve the lowest-performing schools in our country. To do so, the study team will conduct case studies of 60 chronically low-performing schools receiving Title I Section 1003(g) SIG funds, beginning in winter 2011 and continuing through the 2012–13 school year. Through these case studies, this study intends to document the change process in low-performing schools and identify critical components and leading indicators of successful school turnaround. This study will share lessons learned from study schools with SIG program staff and other key stakeholders.

Staff from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) and Decision Information Resources (DIR) will conduct annual principal interviews and administer an annual teacher survey in the case study schools, of which [X] are in your district. In addition, the study team will identify three subsamples of schools to which they will conduct visits to collect in-depth interview data. The first set of these schools will be identified in the winter of 2011, and the final subset will be identified in the fall of 2011, at which point we will contact you again if any such schools are in your district. The information from your district, and several others from across the country, will provide a thorough picture of SIG implementation and the critical local perspective in this important national evaluation.

A member of our research team will contact you within the next few days to discuss the study and the participation of your district and the identified sample of schools receiving SIG-funding. In the meantime, should you have any questions or if you would like to discuss this study, please feel free to contact the project officer, Thomas Wei of the U.S. Department of Education at 202-208-0452 or [Thomas.Wei@ed.gov](mailto:Thomas.Wei@ed.gov). You may also contact the project director, Kerstin Carlson Le Floch of the American Institutes for Research at 202-403-5649 or [klefloch@air.org](mailto:klefloch@air.org).

We thank you in advance for your cooperation and truly appreciate your willingness to provide the time needed for the success of this important study.

Sincerely,

Beatrice Birman, Ph.D.  
*Co-Principal Investigator*

Jennifer O'Day, Ph.D.  
*Co-Principal Investigator*

Kerstin Carlson Le Floch, Ph.D.  
*Project Director*

## STUDY OF SCHOOL TURNAROUND - Recruitment

Study of School Turnaround

Study of School Turnaround

Study of School Turnaround



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[DATE]

Dear [PRINCIPAL NAME],

As the principal of a school that is receiving School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, you are one of 60 principals who have been selected to participate in a study funded by the U.S. Department of Education to document the change process as schools, like yours, implement SIG-intervention models, approaches and strategies over time.

The Study of School Turnaround (SST) is designed to provide Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, other policymakers, and educators with important information about how to improve the lowest-performing schools in our country. To do so, the study team from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) and Decision Information Resources (DIR) will conduct case studies of 60 chronically low-performing schools receiving Title I Section 1003(g) SIG funds, beginning in the winter/spring of 2011 and continuing through the 2012-13 school year. Through these case studies, the research team intends to document the change process in low-performing schools and identify critical components and leading indicators of successful school turnaround. This study will share lessons learned from study schools with SIG program staff and other key stakeholders.

Your participation is critical to our research. School participation consists of taking part in an annual principal phone interview (less than one hour) and annual teacher surveys (10 minutes surveys). In addition, the study team will identify three subsamples of schools to which we will conduct visits to collect in-depth interview data. The first two sets of these schools will be identified in the winter of 2011, and the final subset will be identified in the fall of 2011, at which point we will contact you if your school is selected.

The information from your school, district, and others, will provide a thorough picture of SIG implementation and the critical local perspective in this important national evaluation. In addition, please know that **we will not identify you, your school, or your district in any study reports and the information you provide will only be viewed by members of the study team.** No one from your school, district, or state will have access to any information you provide, and the study team will carefully protect your privacy.

Initially, **we are requesting that you participate in a phone interview that is designed to take less than one hour of your time.** I will contact you in the next few days to schedule the interview at a time that is convenient for you. It is our hope to complete these interviews by MONTH DAY.

Attached to this email you will find additional information about the study. Please feel free to contact me at [PHONE NUMBER] or [EMAIL ADDRESS] if you have any

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questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your participation, and I look forward to speaking with you soon.

All the best,

[INTERVIEWER NAME]

Phone: [PHONE NUMBER]

Email: [EMAIL ADDRESS]

## STUDY OF SCHOOL TURNAROUND - Recruitment

### INTRODUCTORY EMAIL FOR TEACHER SURVEY

Dear [TEACHER NAME],

As a teacher working in a school that is receiving School Improvement Grant (SIG) funds, your school is one of 60 SIG schools from across the country that has been selected to be part of a study funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The study is designed to document the change process as schools, like yours, implement SIG-intervention models, approaches and strategies over time. As part of the study **we are requesting that you participate by responding to an online survey that is designed to take approximately 10 minutes of your time.**

This teacher survey is a critical part of a larger study, called the Study of School Turnaround (SST), which is designed to provide Congress, the U.S. Department of Education, other policymakers, and educators with important information about how to improve the lowest-performing schools in our country. To do so, the study team from the American Institutes for Research (AIR), Mathematica Policy Research (MPR) and Decision Information Resources (DIR) will conduct case studies of 60 chronically low-performing schools receiving Title I Section 1003(g) SIG funds, beginning in the winter/spring of 2011 and continuing through the 2012-13 school year. Through these case studies, the research team intends to document the change process in low-performing schools and identify critical components and leading indicators of successful school turnaround. This study will also share lessons learned from study schools with SIG program staff and other key stakeholders.

Your participation is critical to our research. Participation consists of participating in three brief teacher surveys administered annually and designed to garner important information about your experience working in a school that is implementing a SIG-related intervention model. Each time you complete the online survey, you will receive a \$10 gift card. In addition to the teacher survey, the study team will identify three subsamples of schools to which we will conduct visits to collect in-depth interview and focus group data. The first two sets of these schools will be identified in the winter of 2011, and the final subset will be identified in the fall of 2012.

The information from you, and others in your school, district and community will provide a thorough picture of SIG implementation and the critical local perspective in this important national evaluation. In addition, please know that **we will not identify you, your school, or your district in any study reports and the information you provide will only be viewed by members of the study team.** No one from your school, district, or state will have access to any information you provide, and the study team will carefully protect your privacy.

Attached to this email you will find additional information about the study. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. Thank you in advance for your participation.

All the best,

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