

Appendix N

MSAP Project/School Choice Coordinator Interview Guide

National Evaluation of Magnet Schools

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January 2010

Paperwork Burden Statement

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INTRODUCTION

Hello, I am _____, with [the American Institutes for Research/Berkeley Policy Associates], a research firm in [Palo Alto/Oakland, California]. I'm calling to interview you for the National Evaluation of Magnet Schools as we arranged [last week]. The evaluation is a study of the federal government's Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) that districts receiving MSAP grants, such as yours, are required to participate in as a condition of accepting the grant. This interview should take us about 30 minutes. Your answers are confidential, and responses to the study's data collections will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district, school, or individual. We will not provide information that identifies respondents, students, or districts to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

Can you talk to me now, or do we need to schedule a different time?

Okay. You should have received a copy of the interview questions within the past few days. Do you have those with you? **[Interviewer:** verify that the questions arrived and are available for use during the interview.]

In this interview we will ask you questions about a number of elementary schools in your district, some of which received funding from the federal government's Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP). The purposes of the interview are to:

- verify information about some of the schools in this study,
- clarify some of the elementary school choice options in your district
- identify changes in the recruitment, application, and admissions practices and outcomes for federally funded elementary school magnet programs in your district
- learn whether there are plans to continue the magnet programs in schools that became magnet schools with federal funds.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

A. Characteristics of Selected MSAP-funded and Comparison Schools

1. MSAP-funded Magnet Schools

Interviewer: Ask respondent to answer the questions in items 1a through 1g for each of the MSAP-funded elementary schools identified below.

	MSAP School #1	MSAP School #2	MSAP School #3	MSAP School #4
School Name				
1a. Did school maintain magnet program in 2009-2010? Y/N				
1b. Is this a whole school magnet where all students are in the magnet program? Y/N				
1c. What is the theme or focus of the magnet school?)				
1d. Did the theme or focus change over the three years of the grant? If so, how?				
1e. Has the schools neighborhood attendance boundaries or catchment area remained stable over the past three years? (Y/N)				
1f. Has this school ever been identified for Program Improvement under NCLB? (Y/N)				
1g. If yes, in what year of the school improvement process was the school in 2009-2010? (circle the year)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

A. Characteristics of Selected MSAP-funded and Comparison Schools (continued)

2. Non-MSAP Comparison Schools

Interviewer: Ask respondent to answer the questions in items 2a through 2f for each of the MSAP-funded elementary schools identified below.

	Comparison School 1	Comparison School 2	Comparison School 3	Comparison School 4
School Name				
2a. Has the school implemented a magnet program (federal or local) since 2001?				
2b. Are students residing in a particular neighborhood attendance zone or catchment area automatically admitted to this school? Y/N				
2c. If yes, have the school’s neighborhood attendance boundaries remained stable over the past three years? Y/N				
2d. Does this school have programs designed to attract from students from beyond the immediate neighborhood? <i>(Please specify.)</i>				
2e. Has this school ever been identified for Program Improvement under NCLB? (Y/N)				
2f. If yes, in what year of the school improvement process was the school in 2009-2010? (circle the year)	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5	1 2 3 4 5

B. District's School Choice Options

It is important to know what overall school choice options are available to students in your school district.

3. Aside from the Magnet Schools Assistance Program (MSAP) magnets and school choice options required by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which of the following types of public school choice are available to *elementary school* students in this district?

- a. Open enrollment
- b. Magnet school(s) not funded by MSAP
- c. Charter school(s)
- d. Traditional busing system designed to integrate students
- e. Other type of school choice (*Please describe*): _____
- f No other types of public school choices are available to elementary school students in the district.

4. Please answer items 4a and 4b if your district has one or more elementary magnet schools that are not funded by MSAP:

- a). What sources are used to fund those magnet programs? _____
- b) How does the funding level of those magnets compare to the financial support level of the MSAP magnets?
 - 1) Higher level of funding than MSAP magnets
 - 2) About the same level of funding as MSAP magnets
 - 3) Lower level of funding than MSAP magnets
 - 4) Other (*Please describe*): _____

5. Has your district offered students in low performing elementary public schools (i.e., schools identified for school improvement under NCLB or through another state or district accountability process) an opportunity to transfer to a higher performing school, with transportation provided?

- Yes (Go to item 6)
- No, (Explain why not and then go to item 8) _____

6. Have students at the following MSAP magnet schools been offered an opportunity to transfer to a higher performing school with transportation provided? If no, why not?

MSAP Elementary School	a. MSAP Students given opportunity to transfer to other schools? (Y/N)	b. If "No", why not?
A. <i>Name(s) of MSAP study school in Need of Improvement</i>		
B.		
C .		

7. Have students from lower-performing schools been offered the opportunity to transfer to any of the following MSAP magnet schools with transportation provided? If no, why not?

MSAP Elementary School	a. Students at low performing schools given opportunity to transfer to this MSAP school? (Y/N)	b. If "No", why not ?
A. <i>Name(s) of MSAP study school <u>not</u> in Need of Improvement</i>		
B.		
C.		

8. To what extent do elementary charter schools affect the ability of the following elementary MSAP schools to retain students?

MSAP Elementary School	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	No effect	Somewhat Postive	Very Postive
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

9. To what extent do elementary charter schools affect the ability of the following elementary MSAP schools to recruit students?

MSAP Elementary School	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	No effect	Somewhat Postive	Very Postive
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. To what extent do private elementary schools affect the ability of the following elementary MSAP schools to retain students?

MSAP Elementary School	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	No effect	Somewhat Postive	Very Postive
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

11. To what extent do private elementary schools affect the ability of the following elementary MSAP schools to recruit students?

MSAP Elementary School	Very Negative	Somewhat Negative	No effect	Somewhat Postive	Very Postive
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
B.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
C .	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

C. Student Recruitment Process for MSAP Schools

We are interested in how and to what extent the strategies for recruiting students to the MSAP magnets in your districts have remained the same or changed over the past three years.

12. The following is a list of the principal methods that your district was reported to be using in 2007 to recruit applicants for the MSAP elementary magnet schools. Does this information reflect what the district is using in 2010? (If not, please describe and explain the changes.)

13. The following is a summary of what we were told in 2007 about the extent to which recruitment materials and activities for elementary school MSAP magnets targeted families in particular neighborhoods or with particular characteristics, and whether or not such targeting differed by school. Does the information reflect what is done in 2010? (If not, please describe and explain the changes.)

14. Over the course of the past 3 years, has the district changed its strategies for recruiting students to any of the MSAP elementary schools listed below? If yes, please describe changes in the strategy.

MSAP Elementary School	Description of Changes in Recruitment Strategies Over the Past 3 Years
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	
B.	
C.	
D.	

D. Application Process for MSAP Schools

Two important aspects of the application process are the significance of deadlines for students applying to the magnet program and the implications for an applicant of applying to more than one magnet program. The information below summarizes what was reported in 2007 about late applications and applications to multiple magnet programs. Please review the information and let us know whether or not the characterizations are still accurate.

15. Late Applications

Question	Previously (2007)	How Practices Differ in 2010
15a. Is there a date by which the student must apply for admission to the elementary magnet school(s)?	Y/ N	
15b. If a student applies later than this date, is he or she placed later on a waiting list for admission?	Y/ N/ NA	
15c. If so, are students admitted from this waiting list only after all the students who applied before the deadline are admitted?	Y/ N/ NA	

16. Multiple Applications

Question	Previously (2007)	Differences in 2010 (and when change occurred)
16a. Can the student apply to multiple magnet schools?	Y/ N/ NA	
16b. Must the student rank order the magnet schools to which he or she applied?"	Y/ N/ NA	
16c. Does the student then get preferences of some sort at his or her higher ranked schools?	Y/ N/ NA	

E. Admission Process for MSAP Schools

Schools often have a limited number of seats available. The admission of students who apply to magnet schools may depend on a random drawing of names or a lottery to determine who will fill those seats. The information below represents what we were told in 2007 about the use of random assignment and in connection with other priorities for admitting students. Please review the information and tell us whether or not these descriptions are still accurate today.

17. Lottery or Random Assignment

Question	Previously (2007)	Differences in 2010 (and when change occurred)
17a. Does the district use a lottery, random drawing or a similar randomized method to decide upon the order in which applicants will be admitted?	Y/ N	
17b. Does the district itself conduct this randomized ordering, or do individual magnet schools do this?	District/ School/ NA	
17c. Do magnet schools in your district make separate admission decisions for each grade level?	Y/ N/ NA	
17d. Are applicants to a particular grade in magnet elementary schools in your district divided into groups before students are randomly assigned to admission rankings? (e.g., based on sibling preference , test scores, reading ability, place of residence, income level, or other considerations)	Y/ N/ N/A	

18. How does your district prioritize applicants for admission to elementary MSAP magnet schools?

The information below summarizes for each MSAP magnet school in the study what we learned in 2007 about how applicants to a particular grade in this school are prioritized for admission to the school. (For example, “Siblings are given top priority, followed by students who do not have siblings in the school, with preference given to students from certain geographic areas of the city before others, and finally, inter-district transfers.”) Please review the information and tell us whether it is still accurate. Where relevant, please indicate what other categories are used in determining the priority for admitting students.

MSAP Elementary School	Preference Categories in Order of Priority
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	2007 (<i>Description for interviewee from past records</i>):
	Current (2010):
B.	2007 (<i>Description for interviewee from past records</i>):
	Current (2010):
C.	2007 (<i>Description for interviewee from past records</i>):
	Current (2010):

19. For each of the MSAP elementary schools listed below, please indicate:

- a) How many students living outside the school’s neighborhood attendance or catchment area applied to the school for the 2009-2010 school year?
- b) How many of those applicants were admitted and enrolled in the school?
- c) How many of those applicants were admitted but enrolled elsewhere?
- d) How many were not offered admission because of too few seats available?

MSAP Elementary School	a. Number of applicants for 2009-2010 school year	b. Number of applicants admitted who enrolled	c. Number of applicants admitted who did not enroll	d. Number of applicants not offered admission because too few seats available	e. Comment, if any
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>					
B.					
C.					

20. For each of the MSAP elementary schools listed below, which of the following best describes the number of applications compared to the number of seats available to students for the 2009-2010 school year?

- a) In all or nearly all grades there have been enough seats available to admit all the students who apply.
- b) In some grades there have been enough seats to admit all the students who apply, but in other grades the school was not able to admit all applicants
- c) In almost all grades the school did not have enough slots to admit all the students who apply.

MSAP Elementary School	a. Enough seats for all applicants in most or all grades	b. Enough seats for all applicants in some grades	c. Not enough seats for all applicants in most or all grades	d. Comment, if any
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>				
B.				
C.				

F. Future of Magnet Schools

We are interested in learning what happens to magnet schools and their programs when three years of federal funding ends.

21. For each of the schools listed below, please answer the following: Is this school continuing as a magnet school beyond 2009-2010? If so, how will the program be funded? How, if at all, will the focus of the magnet program change (e.g., remain the same, change theme or teaching method, etc.)?

MSAP-funded Elementary School	Continuing?	Source of Funding?	Program Change?
A. <i>Name of MSAP School in Study</i>	Y/ N		
B.	Y/ N		
C.	Y/ N		