APPENDIX C

DISTRICT DATA REQUEST MEMO

MEMORANDUM

TO: [Name]

FROM: [Name] **DATE:** 12/14/10

SUBJECT: Data Request for the Study of the Distribution of Teacher Effectiveness

Thank you for participating in the Study of the Distribution of Teacher Effectiveness, a multi-district study that Mathematica Policy Research is conducting for the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of the study is to examine the distribution of teacher quality in select districts across the country and district policies to promote an equitable distribution. The study will provide valuable information on how effective teachers are distributed within the district and broaden our knowledge base about teacher distribution issues. This memo outlines our request to the [School District] for the first round of data collection for this important study.

We are requesting four types of data: (1) student test score data; (2) enrollment data that provide links between teachers and students; (3) student background data; and (4) teacher personnel data. As shown in Table 1, we are requesting three years of student test score data and two years of enrollment, student background, and teacher mobility data. Table 2 lists the standardized tests needed and Table 3 lists the specific data elements we are requesting. We will work with the district to determine which data elements are available. Appendix A provides a detailed description of the data we are requesting.

The enrollment data are a key aspect of the request. These data should link each student to unique identifiers for each teacher responsible for teaching that student in math and reading/language arts. A student who is enrolled in a self-contained elementary class for math and reading for the whole year would be linked to the same teacher for both math and reading. If a student changes classrooms for different subjects, the student would be linked to different teachers for math and reading. If a student changes their math or reading teacher or changes schools during the year, we would like to know the identification numbers of each teacher to which the student was assigned for each subject and the duration of enrollment in each teacher's classroom, even if the enrollment information is approximate.

Please also provide documentation of data, including definitions of variables/fields any codes used, and contact information for someone who can answer questions about the data. We have arranged the following site to securely transfer the data to Mathematica, and will contact you with the username and password for accessing the site.

Data Confidentiality

Responses to the data collection activities will be used for research purposes only. The reports prepared for the study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

Mathematica and the Urban Institute follow the confidentiality and data protection requirements of the Institute of Education Sciences (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183). We will protect the confidentiality of all information collected for the study and will use it for research purposes only. No information that identifies any study participant will be released. Information on respondents will be linked to their institution but not to any individually identifiable information. No individually identifiable information will be maintained by the study team. All institution-level identifiable information will be kept in secured locations and identifiers will be destroyed as soon as they are no longer required.

Thank you very much for your assistance with this data request. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns at (xxx) xxx-xxxx or name@mathematica-mpr.com.

TABLE 1

TYPE OF DATA REQUESTED

	Student Data			Teacher Data
School Year	Test Score	Enrollment	Background	Personnel Data
2009-10	✓	✓	✓	✓
2008-09	✓	✓	✓	✓
2007-08	✓			

TABLE 2

TESTS REQUESTED

Test	Grade Levels
[relevant tests in math and reading/LA]	[tested grades & subjects]

TABLE 3

STUDENT AND TEACHER RECORD DATA ITEMS

Student Test Score Variables

- Student identification number, consistent across years
- School identification number and school name for each test score year (i.e., school attended at time of test)
- Test grade level
- Testing date
- Scale scores
- Code identifying test retakes, if applicable
- Test retake date, if applicable

- Test form information, such as "Stanford 9 Form S" or an off-grade test indicator if available
- Description of alternative tests, if applicable
- Exemption codes, if applicable
- Test name

Student Enrollment Data (for all students in tested grades and subjects)

- Student identifier
- School identifier
- Grade level
- Teacher identifier*
- Course identifier, if applicable
- Course/teacher crosswalk, if applicable
- Attendance data, including number of days the student was in attendance and total number of days student was enrolled in the district, if available

Student Enrollment Data (for all students in tested grades and subjects) *(continued)*

- Enrollment data as presented in forms such as the following (Options A and B are preferred, but any ONE of these is sufficient):
  A. Transaction data that record each students' move and codes the reason for each move
  B. Summary files that may list all of a student's transactions in a single record and/or summarize enrollment using data items such as days enrolled or start and end dates
  C. Snapshot data that record the school in which a student is enrolled on a given day. Please provide multiple snapshots (for example, one in fall and one in spring) if available. An example of useful time points for snapshot files might be:
    - Twentieth school day or equivalent time point early in the year after enrollment stabilizes
    - End of the 1st semester/term
    - Test date, if annual assessment takes place in spring, or May 15

Student Background Characteristics (for all students in tested grades and subjects)

- Student identifier
- Free/reduced-price lunch program eligibility status
- English language status, such as English language learner, limited-English proficient, or bilingual, with level if available
- Special needs status, such as having an Individual Education Plan or 504 plan
- Disability type and/or severity codes, if applicable
- Race/ethnicity

- Gender

Teacher Personnel Data (for all teachers in tested grades and subjects)
- Teacher identifier*
- Years of experience in district and school
- Total years of experience (including experience outside of school)
- Teacher assignment and mobility data, including
  o   the name of each school where a teacher teaches during the current school year and the start and end dates of each school assignment;
  o   the start and end dates of a teacher's employment with the district (as a teacher); and
  o   any information on the reason for a teacher's mobility or exit.
- Date of birth
- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Tenure status
- Certification type(s) (ex. full, initial/probationary, temporary, emergency)
- Certification area (ex. secondary math, elementary)
- Certification exam score, if available
- Undergraduate college attended, if available
- Undergraduate college major, if available
- Teacher performance measures, if available, including (1) teacher evaluation results or other evaluation tools that result in a numeric rating of teachers (ex. principal ratings), and/or (2) teacher performance measures that are used as the basis for teacher compensation, teacher tenure, or teacher layoff policies. If a district generates an overall categorical rating based on a performance measure, we are interested in obtaining the overall categorical rating and the underlying quantitative score.

*Teacher IDs: Teacher IDs need to uniquely identify each teacher in the district and should remain consistent over time. Also, the teacher ID used in the student enrollment data should be the same ID as in the teacher personnel data.

APPENDIX A

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF DATA ELEMENTS REQUESTED BY MATHEMATICA POLICY RESEARCH

STUDENT DATA

Data Element	Description	School Year 2007-2008	School Year 2008-2009	School Year 2009-2010
Test Score Data				
Student Identification Number	Number that uniquely identifies students across multiple files, records, and years.	✓	✓	✓
School Identification Number	Number that uniquely identifies school attended at time of test.	✓	✓	✓
School Name	Name of school attended at time of test.	✓	✓	✓
Test Grade Level	Grade level of test taken by the student.	✓	✓	✓
Testing Date	Date test was administered.	✓	✓	✓
Scale Scores	Scaled score for each subject.	✓	✓	✓
Test Retake Code	Code identifying that test is a retake, if applicable.	✓	✓	✓
Test Form Type	Test form information such as "Stanford 9 Form S" or off-grade test indicator, if available	✓	✓	✓
Alternative Test Code	Description of alternative test administered, if applicable	✓	✓	✓
Exemption Codes	Exemption codes for students receiving exemption for test, if applicable	✓	✓	✓
Test Name	Name of the test administered	✓	✓	✓
Enrollment Data				
Student Identification Number	Number that uniquely identifies students across multiple files, records, and years.		✓	✓
School Identifier	Number that uniquely identifies school attended by student.		✓	✓
School Name	Name of school attended at time of test.		✓	✓
Grade Level	Grade level of the student.		✓	✓
Teacher Identification Number	Number that uniquely identifies teachers across multiple files, records, and years.		✓	✓
Course Identification Number	Number that uniquely identifies course across multiple files, records, and years.		✓	✓
Course Name	Name of the course.		✓	✓
Course/teacher crosswalk	Information to linking teachers to courses.		✓	✓
Days Attended	Number of days student was in attendance.		✓	✓

Data Element	Description	School Year		
		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Days Enrolled	Number of days student was enrolled in the district.		✓	✓
Enrollment Data	A. Transaction data that record each students' move and codes the reason for each move –OR– B. Summary files that may list all of a student's transactions in a single record and/or summarize enrollment using data items such as days enrolled or start and end dates –OR– C. Snapshot data that record the school in which a student is enrolled on a given day. Please provide multiple snapshots (for example, one in fall and one in spring) if available.		✓	✓
Background Characteristics Data				
Student Identification Numbers	Number that uniquely identifies students across multiple files, records, and years.		✓	✓
Date of Birth	Student's date of birth.		✓	✓
Free/reduced lunch status	Free and reduced-price lunch program eligibility status.		✓	✓
English Language Status	English language learner, limited-English proficient, or bilingual, with level if available.		✓	✓
Special Education	Special education status, such as having an Individual Education Plan or 504 plan.		✓	✓
Disability Code	Disability type and/or severity code, if applicable		✓	✓
Race/Ethnicity	Race/ethnicity of student		✓	✓
Gender	Student's gender		✓	✓

TEACHER DATA

Data Element	Description	School Year		
		2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Teacher Personnel Data				
Teacher Identification Number	Number that uniquely identifies teachers across multiple files, records, and years.		✓	✓
Years of Experience (District)	Number of years teacher has been teaching in the school district.		✓	✓
Years of Experience (School)	Number of years teacher has been teaching in their current school.		✓	✓
Years of Experience (ever)	Number of years teacher has been teaching in any school or school district.		✓	✓
School Identifier	Number that uniquely identifies school where teacher is assigned.		✓	✓
School Name	Name of school where teacher is assigned.		✓	✓
School Assignment Start Date	Date when teacher began his/her school assignment.		✓	✓
School Assignment End Date	Date when teacher ended his/her school assignment.		✓	✓
Exit Code or Reason Code	Any information on the reason for a teacher's mobility or exit.		✓	✓
Date of Birth	Teacher's date of birth.		✓	✓
Gender	Teacher's gender.		✓	✓
Race/Ethnicity	Race/ethnicity of teacher		✓	✓
Tenure status	Tenure status of teacher (ex. tenured, not tenured)		✓	✓
Certification Type	Type of certification held by teacher		✓	✓
Certification Area	Grade/subject areas covered by teacher's certification.		✓	✓
Certification Exam Score	Teacher's score on the certification exam.		✓	✓
Undergraduate College Attended	Undergraduate college where teacher graduated.		✓	✓
Undergraduate College Major	Teacher's major for their undergraduate degree.		✓	✓
Teacher performance measures	Includes (1) teacher evaluation results or other evaluation tools that result in a numeric rating of teachers (ex. principal ratings), and/or (2) teacher performance measures that are used as the basis for teacher compensation, teacher tenure, or teacher layoff policies. If a district generates an overall categorical rating based on a performance measure, we are interested in obtaining the overall categorical rating and the underlying quantitative score.		✓	✓