

**APPENDIX A**  
**DISTRICT NOTIFICATION LETTER**



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION  
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance

Month XX, 20XX

Firstname Lastname

Title

Organization Name

Street Address

City, ST ZZZIP

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. Lastname:

I am writing to invite [District] to participate in a five-year study to examine the distribution of teacher effectiveness across schools. The study will provide valuable information about the distribution of teacher effectiveness in participating school districts and track changes in the distribution over time. The study will also analyze how district policies are related to the distribution of effective teachers. We are seeking a select group of about 30 school districts across the country to participate.

We recognize that districts are facing major budget constraints right now, so this study is designed to be low burden. We will not be interacting with teachers, students, principals, or schools, and we will work closely with the district to identify ways to make the study work within the district's constraints.

The study will measure teacher effectiveness using a method called value-added modeling. By accounting for factors that are outside of the teacher's control, a value-added model isolates how much a teacher contributes to student test score improvements. We will conduct a value-added analysis for multiple school years—from 2008-09 through 2012-13—to track changes in the distribution of teacher effectiveness over time. In each year of the study we will collect data for the value-added analysis: student test scores, demographics, and teacher-student links for grades four through eight. We will also gather teacher personnel data to understand how teacher mobility and attrition affects the distribution of teacher effectiveness within districts.

Interviews with district staff will be used to gather information on district policies related to the distribution, including teacher personnel and school improvement policies. We will conduct three one-hour interviews in the upcoming summer as well as in the two subsequent summers. This information will be used to analyze how these district policies relate to the distribution of teacher effectiveness in the district, and changes in this distribution over time.

We have contracted with Mathematica Policy Research to conduct this study. A member of the research team will call you in the next few days to tell you more about the study and to discuss your district's potential participation. Participation in the study is voluntary.

Additional details about the project are provided in the enclosed information sheet. If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact me at 202-219-2180 or at [Lauren.Angelo@ed.gov](mailto:Lauren.Angelo@ed.gov).

Sincerely,

Lauren Angelo  
Federal Project Officer

## **Notice of Confidentiality**

Responses to the data collection activities will be used only for research purposes. 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.

The contractor follows the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183) and in accordance with all relevant regulations and requirements, including the The Privacy Act of 1974, P.L. 93-579 (5 U.S.C. 552a), The Family Educational and Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99), The Education Sciences Reform Act, P.L. 107-279 (20 U.S.C. 9573). The contractor 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.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is xxxx-xxxx. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 32 hours, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.