

SUPPORTING STATEMENT
U.S. Department of Commerce
U.S. Census Bureau
Census in Schools Focus Groups
OMB Control Number 0607-XXXX

Part A – JUSTIFICATION

1. Necessity of the Information Collection

For the 2010 Census, among the many other outreach efforts, the U.S. Census Bureau implemented the Census in Schools (CIS) Program with three primary objectives: (1) to increase the mail-back response rate of Census forms; (2) to improve accuracy and reduce differential undercount; and (3) to increase cooperation with enumerators in the field during the Census data collection period.

The CIS Program educated primary and secondary school students about the Census; the students, in turn, could inform their parents about the importance of returning the 2010 Census forms. The Census Bureau distributed materials, including promotional brochures, take-home materials, fact sheets, lesson plans, maps, quick start teaching guides, and other aids aimed at increasing the mail-back response and participation rates. The Census Bureau distributed these materials to over 118,000 schools representing grades kindergarten through 12th grade. Some of these materials were in the form of printed copies. Hundreds of thousands of additional copies were downloaded in electronic form from the 2010 Census in Schools Web site.

The purpose of the CIS Program research described in this document is three-fold: (1) to identify the types, content, and design of materials that schools prefer in preparation for the 2020 Census and in the years leading up to the 2020 Census; (2) to assess the barriers to use of the materials, so that the Census Bureau can address how to eliminate or minimize the barriers; and (3) to identify improvements in the CIS program that can be implemented in the near-, mid-, and long-term, including the needs of executive-level educators.

The Census Bureau needs to collect and analyze qualitative data to address the following research questions:

- a) How can the CIS program targeting kindergarten through high school level students, teachers, and administrators be improved for the 2020 Census?
- b) What new methods can the Census Bureau use in going forward during the intercensal years to reach out to educators and students from kindergarten to the college levels in order to maintain strong relationships with the education community?
- c) What are the needs of executive-level educators regarding statistical literacy and the types of materials Federal statistical agencies could provide to be most helpful with regards to statistics education, from the most basic level (kindergarten) to the most advanced (graduate studies)?
- d) What metrics can be used to monitor and assess the impact of the CIS program in the future?

Essentially, the research for which data collection approval is being sought seeks to inform the future direction, composition, and maintenance of this outreach program for the next eight or nine years, in preparation for the 2020 Census.

The legal authority under which this information is being collected is the general authority of the Census Bureau to undertake the decennial Census in 2010 (Title 13 U.S.C. Section 141) and the authority to collect supplemental information after the Census is conducted (Title 13 U.S.C., Section 193).

2. Needs and Uses

The Census Bureau proposes to collect qualitative data via six focus groups among CIS school administrators and teachers. The Census Bureau intends to ask CIS program participants about ways the program can be improved, and ways in which their own participation can be enhanced in future years. The resulting qualitative data will be used by Census Bureau management staff to create recommendations for program redesign in order to improve the CIS program in the years leading up to and including the next Census.

Information quality is an integral part of the pre-dissemination review of the information disseminated by the Census Bureau (fully described in the Census Bureau's Information Quality Guidelines). Information quality is also integral to the information collections conducted by the Census Bureau and is incorporated into the clearance process required by the Paperwork Reduction Act.

3. Use of Information Technology

This data collection effort will collect descriptive qualitative data, including respondents' recommendations for future activities that can most easily be obtained by gathering program participants in a group and creating an environment for free discussion. The type of information being sought here is qualitative in nature, and thus is normally not gathered electronically. We will meet in person with each group and record notes of the focus group discussions and interactions on a laptop computer during the focus group sessions. The focus group sessions will not be recorded electronically.

4. Efforts to Identify Duplication

ICF International, the contractor hired to conduct the research, has worked with the Census Bureau to review all prior research that may have collected data from CIS participant schools. The only systematic collection of data for the CIS Program consisted of a brief telephone survey of approximately 10,000 schools ascertaining whether the schools received the CIS materials, and, if so, whether the materials were distributed to teachers. These data are insufficient to answer the research questions posed.

In summary, there is no duplication or significant overlap of information already collected with that which is needed here.

5. Minimizing Burden

The focus groups will not be held with participants from small businesses or other small entities. Schools are not typically categorized as small entities, and this issue does not apply to them.

6. Consequences of Less Frequent Collection

No comparable data are currently available either from published sources or from Census Bureau research studies. The current information collection is necessary to obtain program participants' suggestions for program enhancements. The study was designed to minimize burden to the greatest extent possible by inviting participants to only one focus group session; no technical or legal obstacles to this minimization exist.

7. Special Circumstances

There are no such special circumstances. This is a one-time only data collection.

8. Consultations Outside the Agency

A pretest of draft CIS questions was conducted individually among four teachers and school administrators selected from CIS participant schools. During an approximately hour-long conversation with each teacher and administrator, we asked for his or her views on the content and value of the data that would be gained by asking these questions. We incorporated their individual suggestions into the attached focus group protocol documents that are provided in Appendices A through D. The focus group topics for this proposed data collection effort were taken from the teacher/administrator-tested CIS draft questions.

A notice seeking comment on this proposed collection was published on January 20, 2011, on pages 3609 and 3610 of the Federal Register. We have received no comments thus far.

9. Paying Respondents

Focus group participants will receive \$50 to provide an incentive to participate.

The American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR), in its recommendations for best practices, indicates that "Specific procedures designed explicitly to stimulate survey cooperation or participation should also be considered, such as (where possible) sending advance letters to sample households or individuals to inform them of the pending survey, offering monetary (i.e., cash) or non-monetary (some other valued reward) incentives to encourage participation, and sending reminders or making follow-up calls to those who do not respond initially."¹ The theory of survey participation indicates that a study employing a variety of motivational techniques, including incentives, is more likely to yield a more representativeness research sample than a study relying on a single motivational technique.² Incentives have been found to boost response rates for mail, telephone, and in-person surveys.³ In order to ensure a sufficient response rate by educational professionals, we believe that providing sufficient monetary incentives is an essential aspect of this project. This will enable us to obtain sufficient cooperation in a study that requires respondents come to a centralized location to spend 90 minutes in a focus group.

10. Assurance of Confidentiality

Before the focus group session begins, participants will be informed that the researchers comply with Institutional Review Board requirements by respecting and protecting participants' confidentiality. The researchers will take notes of the focus group discussion and interactions, but will not link specific statements to individuals. Participants also will be told that it is important for focus group participants to agree to respect and protect each other's privacy by refraining from discussing anything about the focus

¹ American Association of Public Opinion Research (May, 2010). Best Practices. (http://www.aapor.org/Best_Practices.htm - accessed 1/24/2011).

² Groves Robert, Singer Eleanor, Corning Amy. Leverage-Saliency Theory of Survey Participation Description and an Illustration. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 2000;64:299-308.

³ See, for example, Church Allan. Estimating the Effect of Incentives on Mail Survey Response Rates: A Meta-Analysis. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1993;57:62-79; Singer Eleanor, van Hooyk John, Maher Mary. Does the Payment of Incentives Create Expectation Effects? *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1998;62:152-64; and Willimack Diane, Schuman Howard, Pennell Beth-Ellen, Lepkowski James. Effects of a Prepaid Nonmonetary Incentive on Response Rates and Response Quality in a Face-to-Face Survey. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 1995;59(1):78-92.

group with anyone outside of the group. If participants are concerned about confidentiality, they will be advised to limit their participation in the group to what they are comfortable discussing, or decline to participate. We will emphasize that participation is voluntary and inform them that they do not have to answer every question and that they may stop participating at any time with no consequences.

Additionally, each focus group participant will be assigned a letter (e.g., participant "A") that will be visible on a placard in front of them and on their name tag. Neither first names nor last names will be used during the sessions. In the analysis phase, the contractor will use these letter designations only to understand the body of statements made by each participant (e.g., person "A" said that he did not think more contact would be needed). These letter designations will not be used to link comments back to individual names in the reporting phase of the study.

The Census Bureau collects and maintains data, including data collected from this collection of information, in accordance with 5 U.S.C. § 552a Public Law 93-579, the Privacy Act of 1974.

11. Justification for Sensitive Questions

Focus group respondents will not be asked to discuss any questions or topics of a sensitive nature, such as sexual behavior and attitudes, religious beliefs, and other matters that are commonly considered private.

12. Estimate of Burden Hours

The estimated burden hours are listed in the following tables:

CIS School Administrator/Teacher Focus Group Protocol				
Number of Focus Groups	Participants Per Group	Total Participants	Focus Group Time Per Participant	Total Burden All Participants
6	15	90	1.5 Hours	135 Hours

The estimated cost burden to participants and respondents are listed in the tables below.

The cost of the burden hours for administrators and teachers is calculated based on per-hour median wage obtained from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, May 2009 National Occupational Employment and Wage Estimates for "Education, Training, and Library Occupations" (\$21.74 median hourly wage); "Education Administrators" (\$35.54 median hourly wage), with 50% per hour added as an average overhead rate for benefits and taxes.

CIS School Administrator/Teacher Focus Group Protocol		
Number of Participants	Frequency of Response	Annual Cost Burden
90 Participants (45 Administrators, 45 Teachers)	One time	\$5,799.60

Total cost burden: \$5,799.60

13. Estimate of Cost Burden

There are no costs to respondents other than that of their time to respond.

14. Cost to Federal Government

An estimate of costs to the Census Bureau is \$79,359.

Except for the travel expenses and payments to respondents, the costs above are estimates of the labor cost required to conduct the activities related to this data collection. This is a one-time data collection so this cost will be incurred only once.

15. Reason for Change in Burden

Not applicable. This is a new collection request.

16. Project Schedule

To the extent consistent with Federal information disclosure law, the Census Bureau does not intend to publish the results, and plans to use the results only for internal purposes.

The schedule for the data collection is provided in the Table below:

Date	Action
May 31, 2011	Receive OMB approval
June 1, 2011	Begin data collection
June 15, 2011	Begin data analysis (initial groups)
July 29, 2011	Conclude data collection
August 31, 2011	Conclude data analysis
September 15, 2011	Submit draft Report
September 27, 2011	Submit final Report

17. Request to Not Display Expiration Date

No such exemption is being requested. We will display the expiration date on all information collection forms.

18. Exceptions to the Certification

There are no exceptions to the certification statement.