

APPENDIX D

Chief State School Officer, District Superintendent, and Principal Invitation Letters

{Letterhead}

{DATE}

{FIELD}

Dear Chief State School Officer {FIELD2}:

As you know, bullying behavior in schools has become an increasingly urgent public health and educational policy concern. Fueled by a number of high profile bullying incidents and youth suicides that attracted nationwide media attention, there has been a growing public awareness of bullying as an extremely serious and often neglected youth problem.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your state is among four states selected nationwide to participate in an implementation study of youth bullying policies in schools. The study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is being conducted through a contract with EMT Associates, Inc. The intent of the study is to learn more about local school district policies that address school bullying, to understand how district policies are shaped by legislation within their respective states, and to identify successes and challenges of implementing state laws and district policies around bullying. Four states were selected based on the comprehensiveness of their state's bullying legislation. Within each state, three school districts will be recruited into the study and two middle schools will be selected to serve as case study sites based on the size of school enrollment.

The U.S. Department of Education would like to invite you to participate in the school bullying study as a representative of the [STATE NAME] Department of Education. Your state's support for the study is very important to us. By agreeing to participate in the study you will be asked to: 1) recommend a designee from your agency office who is knowledgeable about school bullying policy and program development within your state and who can participate in a one-hour telephone interview; and, 2) support efforts to recruit school districts in your state for the study. Your agency's participation in the research study is completely **voluntary**. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate.

The study will involve interviews with a representative from each of the selected school districts, as well as on-site interviews with a selection of school personnel, to include the following staff members: Principal, Vice-Principal, teachers and teachers' aides, a special education instructor, a physical education instructor, a school counselor or school psychologist, recess/yard supervisors, transportation personnel, and a school resource officer as appropriate. The U.S. Department of Education respects the educational mission of schools. For that reason, every effort possible will be made to accommodate the schedules of the schools and to minimize burden.

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Additionally, we want to assure you that to the extent provided by law, participation in the study will not violate the privacy of individuals who are interviewed, nor will it publicly identify participating schools, school districts, or government officials. Interview transcripts and notes will be stored in a secure location, and results will be reported to the U.S. Department of Education without identifying individual schools, districts or government officials. By participating in the study, your state will help inform policy and implementation guidelines for schools as part of a national initiative to improve school effectiveness in reducing bullying and its consequences.

The data collections are tentatively scheduled for XXX through XXX. In the next month, you will be contacted by a Field Coordinator from EMT Associates, Inc. to discuss your interest in participation, and to provide further information about the study. If you have any immediate questions, please feel free to contact EMT's Principal Investigator, Dr. Fred Springer, at (916) 983-6680.

We appreciate your consideration of this very important effort.

Sincerely,

XXX

XXX

Stuart Kerachsky
Director, Policy and Program Studies Service
U.S. Department of Education

CC: XXX

{Letterhead}

{DATE}

{FIELD}

Dear Superintendent {FIELD2}:

As you know, bullying behavior in schools has become an increasingly urgent public health and educational policy concern. Fueled by a number of high profile bullying incidents and youth suicides that attracted nationwide media attention, there has been a growing public awareness of bullying as an extremely serious and often neglected youth problem.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your school district is among twelve districts selected nationwide to participate in an implementation study of youth bullying policies in schools. The study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is being conducted through a contract with EMT Associates, Inc. The intent of the study is to learn more about local school district policies that address school bullying, to understand how district policies are shaped by legislation within their respective states, and to identify successes and challenges of implementing state laws and district policies around bullying. Twelve school districts, including [name of your district], have been chosen for the study across the four identified states. Two middle school sites will be selected within each district based on the size of their enrollment.

The U.S. Department of Education would like to extend an invitation to your district to participate in our national school bullying study. Your district's support for the study is very important to us. By agreeing to participate in the study you will be asked to: 1) appoint a district representative who will participate in a one-hour telephone interview; and 2) provide recruitment support to obtain the selected schools' cooperation. Your district's participation in the research study is completely **voluntary**. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate.

Site visits will be conducted by a two-member field team over the course of two school days. During which time, every effort will be made to accommodate school schedules. Site visits will be comprised of individual, in-person interviews with a selection of school personnel, to include the following staff members: Principal, Vice-Principal, teachers and teachers' aides, a special education instructor, a physical education instructor, a school counselor or school psychologist, recess/yard supervisors, transportation personnel, and a school resource officer as appropriate. The U.S. Department of Education respects the educational mission of schools. For that reason, every effort possible will be made to accommodate the schedules of the schools and to minimize burden.

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Additionally, we want to assure you that to the extent provided by law, participation in the study will not violate the privacy of individuals who are interviewed, nor will it publicly identify participating schools, school districts, or government officials. Interview transcripts and notes will be stored in a secure location, and results will be reported to the U.S. Department of Education without identifying individual schools or districts. By participating in the study, your school district will help inform policy and implementation guidelines for schools as part of a national initiative to improve school effectiveness in reducing bullying and its consequences.

The data collections are tentatively scheduled for XXX through XXX. In the next month, you will be contacted by a Field Coordinator from EMT Associates, Inc. to discuss your interest in participation, and to provide further information about the study. If you have any immediate questions, please feel free to contact EMT's Principal Investigator, Dr. Fred Springer, at (916) 983-6680.

We appreciate your consideration of this very important effort.

Sincerely,

XXX
XXX

Stuart Kerachsky
Director, Policy and Program Studies Service
U.S. Department of Education

CC: XXX

{Letterhead}

{DATE}

{FIELD}

Dear Principal {FIELD2}:

As you know, bullying behavior in schools has become an increasingly urgent public health and educational policy concern. Fueled by a number of high profile bullying incidents and youth suicides that attracted nationwide media attention, there has been a growing public awareness of bullying as an extremely serious and often neglected youth problem.

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that your school is among twenty-four school sites selected nationwide to participate in an implementation study of youth bullying policies in schools. The study is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and is being conducted through a contract with EMT Associates, Inc. The intent of the study is to learn more about local school district policies that address school bullying, to understand how district policies are shaped by legislation within their respective states, and to identify successes and challenges of implementing state laws and district policies around bullying. Twelve school districts, including [name of your district], have been chosen for the study across the four states that were selected based on the comprehensiveness of their state bullying legislation. Your school was selected as one of two middle school sites within your district to participate in the study, based on the size of your school enrollment.

The U.S. Department of Education would like to extend an invitation to your school to participate in our national school bullying study. Your school's support for the study is very important to us. By agreeing to participate you will be committing to a two-day field visit from two members of our research team. We will request that you identify personnel from your school who are each willing to participate in a 45-60 minute in-person interview to discuss implementation of school bullying policies. While on-site we will request to speak with the following individuals: the Principal, Vice-Principal, up to four teachers and teachers' aides, a special education instructor, a physical education instructor, a school counselor or school psychologist, up to two recess/yard supervisors, two transportation personnel, and a school resource officer as appropriate. Your school's participation in the research study is completely **voluntary**. There is no penalty for choosing not to participate. The U.S. Department of Education respects the educational mission of schools. For that reason, every effort possible will be made to accommodate the schedules of the schools and to minimize burden.

Additionally, we want to assure you that to the extent provided by law, participation in the study will not violate the privacy of individuals who are interviewed, nor will it publicly identify participating schools, school districts, or government officials. Interview transcripts and notes will be stored in a secure location, and results will be reported to the U.S. Department of Education without identifying individual schools or districts. By participating in the study, your school will help inform policy and implementation guidelines for schools as part of a national initiative to improve school effectiveness in reducing bullying and its consequences.

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The data collections are tentatively scheduled for XXX through XXX. In the next month, you will be contacted by a Field Coordinator from EMT Associates, Inc. to discuss plans for scheduling field interviews and to provide further information about the study. If you have any immediate questions, please feel free to contact EMT's Principal Investigator, Dr. Fred Springer, at (916) 983-6680.

We appreciate your consideration of this very important effort.

Sincerely,

XXX

XXX

Stuart Kerachsky
Director, Policy and Program Studies Service
U.S. Department of Education

CC: XXX