

Attachment 5

Study of Strategies for Preparing Youth for Postsecondary Success Parent Focus Group Consent Form

Purpose

You are invited to participate in an important national study that is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the study is to feature notable schools and highlight the programs they have to help students stay in school and enroll in college for further education and training. One major goal of the study is to hear from you.

Therefore, we want to learn about you and your child's experience with the [insert name of program]. If you decide to proceed, you will be asked to participate in a discussion with other parents about your opinions and feelings regarding the program. This will require 30 minutes of your time. During that time, an interviewer will ask questions which you may have an opinion about and want to respond to.

Benefits

Your participation in the study will contribute to the body of research that identifies strategies for engaging at-risk youth and promotes college and career readiness.

Risks and Discomfort

The reasonably foreseeable risks and discomforts to you will be minimal; you may not feel like talking, and, although we value your opinion, that would be fine.

Confidentiality

We will treat the information you provide in a confidential manner consistent with the *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* (FERPA). Only research staff will have access to your interview responses, except as required by law. As part of the study, the SRI research team will share its findings with the U.S. Department of Education; however, SRI will not provide information that associates responses or findings with an individual to anyone outside the study team, except as may be required by law.

We would like your consent to record the interview. Recordings will be kept in a secure location by SRI International and will not be accessed by anyone outside of the research team. The audiotape will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. Additionally, if you agree to allow us to record the interview, you may ask us to stop the recording at any time.

More Information

If this explanation leaves you with any unanswered questions, please ask and obtain answers before signing below. If you have questions later, please call Viki Young at 650-859-2751. Additional inquiries may be addressed to the Human Subjects Committee, SRI International, 333 Ravenswood Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025, or 415-859-2686.

Your participation in this research will be voluntary. You will be free to cease participation at any time. If you decide not to participate or later withdraw from participation, you will not be subject to any penalty.

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Study of Strategies for Preparing Youth for Postsecondary Success Parent Focus Group Consent Form (continued)

Informed Consent

By signing this form you are indicating that you have read and understood the information provided to you about your participation in this interview.

I am willing to participate in this focus group. I understand that this is voluntary and is part of a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by SRI International.

Name (please print)

Date

Signature

Child's School/Program

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number XXXX-XXXX. Note: Please do not return the completed XXXX (cite form or other applicable reporting mechanism) application to this address.

Attachment 5

Study of Strategies Preparing At-Risk Youth for Postsecondary Success Participant Consent Form

Purpose

You are invited to participate in an important national study that is sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of the study is to feature notable schools and highlight the programs they have to help students stay in school and enroll in college for further education and training. The study is intended to systematically document and analyze existing strategies that school districts, schools, and their partners implement to reduce the number of students dropping out of school and improve college going among those students who are at-risk of not graduating. One major goal of the study is to hear from you.

Therefore, as a key part of the study, we are inviting you to participate in an interview based on your role in your school, district, or intermediary organization. Interview topic areas may include questions about the specific support strategies that have been implemented to prevent students from dropping out, improve at-risk students' chances of graduating from high school college- and career-ready, as well as the availability of resources, training, and other specialized capacities that influence schools' ability to implement and sustain the support strategies. The interviews are designed to last 60 minutes. The interviews are intended to provide information about the overall program and not to evaluate individuals in their capabilities or performance or to evaluate the school, district, program, or intermediary.

Benefits

Your participation in the study will contribute to the body of research that identifies strategies for engaging at-risk youth and promotes college and career readiness.

Risks and Discomfort

There are no anticipated or known risks in participating in this study. Your participation in the interview is voluntary. If you decide to participate, you may discontinue your participation in the interview at any time without penalty of any kind.

Confidentiality

We will treat the information you supply in a confidential manner. Only research staff will have access to your interview responses, except as required by law. As part of the study, the SRI research team will share its findings with the U.S. Department of Education; however, SRI will not provide information that associates responses or findings with an individual to anyone outside the study team, except as may be required by law.

We would like your consent to record the interview. Recordings will be kept in a secure location by SRI International and will not be accessed by anyone outside of the research team. The audiotape will be destroyed at the conclusion of the study. You can participate in the interview but decline to have it recorded. Additionally, if you elect to have the interview recorded, you may stop the recording at any time.

More Information

If this explanation leaves you with any unanswered questions, please ask and obtain answers before signing below. If you have questions later, please contact the project director, Viki Young, at viki.young@sri.com or at 650-859-2751. For questions about your rights as a human participating in this research, you may contact SRI's Human Subjects Committee at 650-859-2686

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Study of Strategies for Preparing At-Risk Youth for Postsecondary Success Participant Consent Form (continued)

Informed Consent

By signing this form you are indicating that you have read and understood the information provided to you about your participation in this interview.

I am willing to participate in this interview. I understand that this is voluntary and is part of a study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by SRI International.

Name (please print)

Date

Signature

School/Organization

Title

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 45 minutes per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20210-4537 or email ICDocketMgr@ed.gov and reference the OMB Control Number XXXX-XXXX. Note: Please do not return the completed XXXX (cite form or other applicable reporting mechanism) application to this address.

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Department Contact Letter

[Date]

Dear [Program Manager or Principal Name]:

I am writing to invite [school name/program] to participate in an important national study that seeks to highlight practices that help youth at risk of dropping out of high school prepare for postsecondary education. Based on a rigorous nomination process, including conversations with national experts, meetings with officials at the U.S. Department of Education, and a review of existing research, [name of school/program] has been identified as one of 15 sites across the country at the forefront of tackling this urgent and persistent problem in education.

The study, *Strategies for Preparing At-Risk Youth for Postsecondary Success*, sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education, will include detailed case studies of each of the 15 nominated sites. Through these case studies, teachers, principals and administrators across the country will have the opportunity to learn from your [school or program's] experiences and can identify strategies they might be able to implement to better serve their at-risk youth. While all selected schools will be actively working to improve outcomes for at-risk youth, the exact nature of the programs will vary. Some visited schools will focus on reconnecting out-of-school youth while others will focus more on college readiness. Your program has been selected because of promising practices in the area of *[fill in with specific explanation for each letter]*.

In order to develop these case studies, a two-person research team will visit each site for two days between December 2012 and March 2013. While it is always extra work to have visitors on campus, the study team is committed to do everything in its power to minimize impact on your school's schedule. This nomination is a testament to the valuable lessons your [school/program] can share with the field and it is important we ensure your participation. The study team will be flexible and work with you to set a date within the study period that is convenient for you.

The two-day visits will include short interviews (less than one hour each) with individual district and school staff, key external partners (e.g., higher education institutions, community-based organizations, social services, local businesses, etc.), and focus groups with parents. The exact people to be interviewed can be determined in future discussions with you about the nature of your [school/program], but will likely include district administrators with responsibilities related to dropout prevention and/or college readiness, school administrators, guidance counselors, selected teachers, and (if applicable) parents associated with the program. Prior to being interviewed, all participants will be informed that their participation is voluntary and that their responses are confidential, except as may be required by law. They will receive a consent form that describes the purposes of the data collection and outlines their privacy rights. Any selected individual that is unable to meet with the research team during the visit can choose instead to schedule a phone call at a different time.

Ultimately, these case study profiles will be included in a report published by the U.S. Department of Education. Because the project aims to provide information that is useful to other practitioners and policymakers in implementing promising strategies, we will name the specific programs and schools in each case study. While individual names and roles of all respondents will be kept confidential, providing the name of the school and/or program will be helpful to others who want to learn more about the program and explore whether they might adopt the strategies. To ensure factual accuracy, you will receive a draft of the case study profile to review prior to publication.

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While participation in this study is voluntary, I strongly encourage you to accept this invitation so that your colleagues across the country can learn from your experiences and insights.

The study is being conducted by SRI International, a not-for-profit research organization, under contract with the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any comments or questions regarding the study, please contact the Project Director, Viki Young, at 650-859-2751 or via email at viki.young@sri.com. A member of the study team will be in touch shortly to discuss further details related to your participation in this important study.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Thomas Weko
Director
Policy and Program Studies Service
Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development

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