

OMB Supporting Statement Part A: Alternative Student Growth Measures for Teacher Evaluation: Case Studies of Early Adopters

August 6, 2013

Appendix A: District Recruitment Notification Letter

Month XX, 20XX

Firstname Lastname

Title

Organization Name

Street Address

City, ST ZZZIP

Dear Dr./Mr./Ms. Lastname:

I am writing to invite your district to participate in an important study about the way alternative measures of student growth (other than state tests) can be used to evaluate teacher performance. This study is being conducted by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) for the mid-Atlantic region (www.relmidatlantic.org), in response to the priorities expressed by our Teacher Evaluation Research Alliance. The measures examined as part of the study will include (1) end-of-course curriculum-based assessments to which statistical growth models are applied; (2) nationally-normed assessments such as the PSAT or ITBS, to which statistical growth models are applied; and (3) student learning objectives, which do not involve the application of statistical growth models, and instead are intended to account for growth implicitly, because they are selected separately for each teacher's students. To explore your district's use of alternative measures of student growth in the assessment of teacher performance, we would like to conduct interviews with no more than ten district and school staff this fall. Specifically, we would like to interview at least one district administrator, two principals, three classroom teachers, and one teachers' union/association representative. Each interview will last approximately one hour and will be confidential. All information collected will be reported at an aggregate level, and no individuals or districts will be identified in any published reports.

We recognize that districts are facing major budget constraints right now, so we will work closely with you to identify ways to schedule the interviews at times convenient to your staff and to make the study work within your district's constraints.

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.

By participating in this study you will be helping districts around the country better understand and improve their efforts to use alternative measures in teacher evaluations. This study will provide information on the implementation process, the effectiveness of the measures in differentiating teacher performance, and the perceived costs and benefits of the measures from stakeholder perspectives. The finding will help districts identify which measures are promising for use in evaluation, which are of doubtful value, and how to move forward with implementation.

We hope that you will agree to be part of this important study. If you have any questions about the project, please feel free to contact me at (617) 301-8962 or by email at bgill@mathematica-mpr.com.

Sincerely,

Brian Gill

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 Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183 of this Act requires, “All collection, maintenance, use, and wide dissemination of data by the Institute” to “conform with the requirements of section 552 of title 5, United States Code, the confidentiality standards of subsection (c) of this section, and sections 444 and 445 of the General Education Provision Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g, 1232h).” Respondents will be assured that confidentiality will be maintained, except as required by law.

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