

Appendix B: Principal Recruitment Email

Dear [principal],

On behalf of the West Chester Area School District (WCASD), I am pleased to invite you to participate in a research study – specific to our District – that is designed to explore the best ways to support your professional development. The study focuses on describing WCASD teachers' experience collaborating with colleagues in the professional learning communities (PLCs) that are being implemented district-wide in 2013-14. It is also intended to represent the perspective of principals regarding the implementation of the program. The results will guide us in providing professional development, materials, and the supporting conditions to support teachers as we continue to work together to ensure that all students in WCASD achieve at high levels.

We seek your participation in an in-person interview in May-June, 2014 which will last 2 hours. The interview will inquire about your evaluation of the first full-year of the program's implementation in your school from an administrative perspective as well as your honest assessment of the work teachers' accomplished in your school's PLC teams. All 16 principals in all our schools are asked to participate in the interview. As you are aware, we are also asking all teachers in all grades in all our schools to participate in a post-implementation surveys. We know that you appreciate how critical it is for us to hear from as many teachers as possible and we are grateful that all principals have agreed to allocate time in a faculty meeting for teachers to respond to the survey. Your input and that of your principal colleagues is as critical as participation of the teachers.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You should also know that the responses you provide will be kept strictly confidential and the information collected from you will be used for research purposes only. The reports prepared based on analyzing the interview data will summarize findings across all principals and will not associate responses with a specific school or individual. Study reports will not provide information that identifies you or your school to anyone outside the study team. At our request, the Center for Effective School Practices at Rutgers University, a partner of the Mid- Atlantic Regional Educational Laboratory, is helping us with the study, including the analysis of all the survey and interview data collected in this study. The study adheres to the highest standards for research and has received approvals from Rutgers University's Institutional Review Board, the Institute for Educational Studies of the US Department of Education, and the federal Office of Management and Budget. The contractor will follow the confidentiality and data protection requirements of IES (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183) and will protect the confidentiality of all information collected for the study and will use it for research purposes only. Information collected for this study comes under the confidentiality and data protection requirements of the Institute of Education Sciences (The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183). Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for the study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district, school, or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you, your district or your school to anyone outside the study team, except as permitted by law.

You will receive phone contact from the study team at the Center for Effective School Practices on **DATE** to schedule your in-person interview. At the beginning of the interview, you will be asked to read and

sign an informed consent form if you agree to participate in the study. You will then be asked to answer a series of open-ended questions concerning the implementation of PLCs in your school. These are the same questions that all other principals will be asked. You will also be given the opportunity to raise additional points or offer additional observations that are not covered by the interview questions. The interview will be audio-taped for the purposes of transcribing the interview in preparation for data analysis but no one but members of the study team will have access to the recording and no personally identifiable information will be used in conjunction with the interview materials. You can get more information about the study from me directly.

Thank you for your cooperation. We welcome your questions and comments, and look forward to providing the most effective support of the professional learning for all staff and of your continued valuable service to our children.

Sincerely,

Vince Murphy, President, Board of School Directors and Dr. Jim Scanlon, Superintendent
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