

**Supporting Justification for OMB Clearance of an Implementation
Study of the Ramp-Up to Readiness Program Under the Regional
Educational Laboratory Program**

Section B

**November 2013
(Revised January 2014)**

Submitted to

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B. Collection of Information Employing Statistical Methods

Introduction

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) requests clearance for data collection under the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) clearance agreement (OMB number [IES to complete]) for activities related to the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Program. ED, in consultation with American Institutes for Research (AIR), intends to study the implementation of the Ramp-Up to Readiness Program (“Ramp-Up”) in Minnesota public schools. Ramp-Up, developed by the College Readiness Consortium at the University of Minnesota, is a schoolwide guidance program that aims to increase students’ likelihood of college enrollment and completion by promoting multiple dimensions of college readiness (academic, admissions, financial, career, and personal/social). It is an intensive and comprehensive approach to college preparation (compared with many other college-access programs) through which all students within a school meet repeatedly with an advisor in groups over multiple years and receive detailed instruction and assistance related to dimensions of college readiness. OMB approval is being requested for a multimode data collection and analysis of a group of schools, students, and staff members in Minnesota public schools to provide data on the fidelity with which Ramp-Up schools implement the program, and on the contrast between Ramp-Up’s core components and the college-related programs, activities, services, and resources in schools without Ramp-Up.

Education stakeholders in the Midwest (i.e., members of REL Midwest’s College and Career Success Research Alliance) believe Ramp-Up shows promise as a means to increase students’ college readiness because there is empirical (nonexperimental) support for each of the Ramp-Up dimensions. However, the program as a whole has not yet been evaluated. In contrast to the traditional approach to college counseling, Ramp-Up involves all teachers within a school presenting program content to all students in weekly group advisories and periodic workshops. Although this model has the potential to provide more detailed help to more students than the traditional approach to college counseling, the Ramp-Up model relies heavily on the participation of teachers. Given the time commitment involved in preparing for and leading the advisories and workshops, teachers may be reluctant to adhere to the program and schedule. A well-executed implementation study will document how well the teachers adhere to the professional development schedule and to the curriculum and structure of the advisories and workshops. The study also can document the ways in which the Ramp-Up approach differs from the approaches schools without Ramp-Up take to improve students’ college-readiness.

This study will assess the quality of implementation in schools adopting Ramp-Up. This study is designed to address six research questions (RQs):

- RQ1. What are the characteristics of the student populations, geographical settings, and historical performance for the schools implementing Ramp-Up to Readiness?
- RQ2. Among students enrolled in schools implementing Ramp-Up, how do students’ academic achievement, college enrollment actions, and college enrollment differ for students eligible versus not eligible to receive free or reduced price lunch and for students enrolled in rural versus nonrural high schools)?

RQ3. To what extent do (a) schools implement the core components of Ramp-Up (i.e., structural supports, curriculum and tools, and professional development) as intended by the program developer, and (b) students in Ramp-Up schools receive the program exposure that the College Readiness Consortium believes is necessary to produce impacts?

RQ4. How does Ramp-Up differ from college-related supports (i.e., programs, services, activities, and resources) in other schools?

RQ5. What do school staff members (e.g., teachers, counselors, administrators) who are involved in implementing the Ramp-Up program perceive as the strengths and weaknesses of its curriculum, tools, and professional development? According to school staff, which aspects of Ramp-Up were more difficult to implement and why?

RQ6. To what extent are measures of personal readiness on ACT's Engage survey (i.e., the Commitment to College and Goal Striving scales) valid? That is, to what extent do the Engage scales indicate concurrent and predictive validity within a high school sample?

Findings from this study will inform practitioners and policymakers about what implementation of Ramp-Up entails, the factors that may facilitate or hinder successful implementation of a schoolwide guidance program, and the variety of supports that schools provide to improve students' college readiness. More important, the study findings will show whether high schools are able to implement Ramp-Up at a level that the program developers consider adequate. The College Readiness Consortium will use the results for program improvement, and research findings on the implementation of a schoolwide college-readiness intervention will allow educators to make more informed decisions on which college-readiness programs to adopt, the degree to which schools implement the programs, and the key components of these programs. This study also can provide information on the challenges of implementing schoolwide interventions more generally (even those unrelated to college readiness).

This implementation study will require the following data collections during 2013–14:¹

- Existing student- and school-level data gathered through requests for extant data from participating schools, school districts, the Minnesota Department of Education (MDE), the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE), and the State Longitudinal Educational Data System (SLEDS) (see Attachment A-1 for the school/district data request)
- An assessment of students' personal college readiness (i.e., ACT's Engage® assessment for Grades 10–12) administered in spring 2014
- A student survey to collect information about students' experiences with school college-readiness supports, which will be administered in spring 2013–14 (see Attachment A-2)
- March interviews with key school staff person involved in delivering college-readiness supports (i.e., college-related programs, services, activities, and resources) in their schools (see Attachments A-4 for instrument)

¹ Collecting administrative data from MDE, MOHE, and SLEDS does not require OMB clearance because providing data to researchers is part of staff's regular practice at these organizations. This data collection was listed here only to provide context for the data collections that require OMB clearance.

- May focus groups with key school staff involved in delivering college-readiness supports (i.e., college-related programs, services, activities, and resources) in their schools (see Attachments A-7 for instruments)
- Extant school documents related to high schools' college-readiness supports collected in February and June (see Attachment A-5)
- Extant documents from the program developers, including schools' participation in professional development and use of resources, to be collected in February of 2014 and May/June of 2014.
- Instructional logs on which teachers implementing Ramp-Up in 2013–14 record the activities conducted during two workshops (see Attachment A-6 for instrument)
- A survey of school staff involved with implementing Ramp-Up in 2013–14 (see Attachment A-8 for instrument)

ED believes that the data collections for which clearance is being requested represent the bare minimum necessary to assess the fidelity of program implementation.

1. Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods

Universe of High Schools and School Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible to participate in the study, schools must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- They must be public schools (free to the public)
- They must be located in Minnesota
- They must serve students in Grades 10–12²
- They must not already be implementing Ramp-Up

Public data available through the Common Core of Data's website (<http://nces.ed.gov/ccd/bat>) indicate there were approximately 621 schools within this eligible pool at the end of the 2012 school year (Table 1). The College Readiness Consortium intends to roll out Ramp-Up to at least another 22 high schools over the next two academic years, with half of the high schools implementing Ramp-Up during the 2013–14 school year (early-implementing schools), and the remaining schools delaying implementation by one year (later-implementing schools).³ The proposed study takes advantage of the program rollout among these schools. With these 22 schools, ED's contractor can examine the contexts of schools implementing Ramp-Up, the degree to which schools implement the program during their first year, the program dosage that

²

³ The College Readiness Consortium is a part of the University of Minnesota, and as part of the public university's outreach mission has provided Ramp-Up free of charge to middle and high schools in Minnesota. In early 2013, the College Readiness Consortium solicited applications from Minnesota schools to implement Ramp-Up free of charge, and 22 schools applied. This solicitation was not related to the proposed study. To better understand the contrast between Ramp-Up and the college readiness supports offered in high schools without Ramp-Up, the program developers chose to begin implementing Ramp-Up in 2013–14 in half of the schools, with the remaining schools to begin implementing Ramp-Up the following school year (2014–15). The developers used a randomization process to choose which schools were to implement Ramp-Up during year 1 versus year 2.

students actually receive (compared with the dosage intended), the contrast between Ramp-Up and college-readiness programming in the later-implementing schools, and the relationship between program dosage and students’ scores on measures of personal college readiness.

High schools considering participation in the study also will have to indicate their willingness to provide logistical support for the study team’s data collection activities.

Table 1. Size of Universe of Public High Schools in Minnesota and Sample Size for This Study

School Type	Number of Schools in Minnesota
Public high schools in Minnesota (population universe)	655
High schools presently implementing Ramp-Up	34
High schools eligible for this study	621
High schools that agreed to participate in the implementation study ⁴	22

Source: Common Core of Data, 2010–11.

Universe of Students Within Participating Schools

The evaluation team intends to collect administrative data on all students in Grades 10–12 within the sampled schools. For the administrative data, no sampling of students will take place, and no subgroups will be excluded.

A student survey and a personal college readiness assessment will be administered to a randomly selected subgroup of students (a simple random sample) in the spring of the school year. To reduce burden and to adhere to the project budget, a random sample of 30 students will be selected from each grade (10–12) in study schools to participate in the personal readiness assessment. The survey will be administered in conjunction with the personal readiness assessment for these students. In addition, because many college enrollment activities take place during senior year, any Grade 12 students not randomly selected to take the personal readiness assessment will be asked to complete the survey.

2. Procedures for the Collection of Information

All schools that met the eligibility criteria and that volunteered for the study (22 schools) will be included in the study. These schools do not reflect all schools in Minnesota (e.g., they include more rural schools and schools with lower percentages of minority students), and, therefore, the

⁴ The only formal test for relationships in this the study involves looking at relationships between ACT ENGAGE scale scores and students’ exposure to Ramp-Up (i.e., RQ 6). Power analyses indicate that 22 schools is sufficient to detect an effect size of less than 0.10 at 80 percent power, assuming 90 students per school, 22 schools, and an intraclass correlation coefficient of 0.15.

generalizability of the results is limited. Because of resource constraints, the study team has placed higher importance on understanding implementation in the schools that indicate their interest and readiness to adopt Ramp-Up than in understanding how all schools in the universe might implement the program.

The types of data to be collected are:

1. De-identified student records.
2. Documents pertaining to schools' college readiness activities
3. Responses from focus groups with school staff involved in college readiness activities.
4. Teacher responses to online instructional logs to be completed after each Ramp-Up workshop (for Ramp-Up group only).
5. Teachers' responses to an online teacher survey.
6. Students' responses to an online survey.
7. Students' responses to a series of college readiness measures administered online.

The processes for collecting the data are further described in the following sections.

Preliminary Activities

Before collecting data, project staff will conduct two activities:

1. Communicate data needs to schools. Project staff will share a schedule of data collection activities with principals of participating schools (or with schools' point of contact). The project team will then conduct a phone conference with the point of contact to discuss data collection plans and confirm the presence of necessary student records.
2. Obtain the necessary parental and school staff consent. The processes for obtaining consent from these two groups are as follows:
 - a. **Parental consent:** The project team will provide schools with the necessary "opt out" informational letters (passive consent documents; see Attachment A-3) and postage-paid envelopes so that schools can mail the informational opt-out documents to students' parents or guardians. These letters will give parents all of the information found on a consent form, and allow parents to "opt out"—not allow the school to share the student's de-identified data with the study team and not allow any collection of data from their child for study purposes. Schools will collect and keep the letters that are returned, and in mid-March, they will provide the study team with the state-issued unique identifier (referred to as the "Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System"—or MARSS—number) for students in Grades 10–12 whose parents or guardians did not withhold their consent for their

child to participate in the study. Providing these MARSS numbers will allow REL staff to determine response rates for student data collections.

- b. School staff consent:** “Active consent” forms will be distributed to faculty. These letters (see Attachment A-3) inform them of the study’s purpose, the data collection activities in which they will participate, the risks and benefits of participation, their freedom to withdraw from the study without repercussions, and contact information for the Institutional Review Board and the principal investigator. Faculty members have the choice of indicating “Yes, I agree to participate” or “No, I do not wish to participate.” The school principal will provide two reminders to school staff to return these consent forms. After all faculty have returned their consent forms, REL staff will create a unique identification number for each consenting faculty member and develop a separate crosswalk data file containing teachers’ names and their ID numbers. This file will be encrypted, and only shared with REL staff who are (1) e-mailing staff to request that they complete a data collection instrument, or (2) processing the data provided by school staff.

De-identified Student Records

The schedule of data collection activities to be shared with participating schools (described under Preliminary Activities; Attachment A-1) will list the data elements needed for the study. In February and June of 2014, REL Midwest will submit the formal data requests to schools. Schools will receive the list of data elements, the MARSS numbers of students whose parents/guardians did not withhold consent, and instructions for secure transfer of the data to REL Midwest’s servers. Schools will be asked to provide the data associated with each MARSS number (i.e., student) and to structure the data by MARSS number.

REL Midwest’s analysts will review the provided data for completeness. The analysts will follow up with schools to confirm that missing data are unavailable.

Collection of Documents on College Readiness Activities

In February and May, REL staff will send participating schools a request for scanned copies of all documents that reflect the college readiness-related activities that were performed with students within the school during the 2013–14 school year. Schools will be given a two-week deadline for these documents. The following are examples of relevant documents:

- Calendar of college-readiness activities
- Agenda from college and career events
- Summary of in-class presentations on college by a guidance counselor (an outline of topics covered)
- Agenda or handouts from an event for parents on financing college
- Visits by college representatives

- Field trips to local colleges or a college fair
- Summary of topics discussed in assemblies about college

If a school fails to submit documents within two weeks, REL staff will call the point of contact about the request to follow up.

Interview With Staff Person from Each School

The schedule of data collection activities shared with schools will list the types of individuals needed for the initial interviews, to be conducted in March of 2014. The interviewees should be the staff member from each school who is most involved with the school's college readiness activities, as judged by the school principal. For early implementing Ramp-Up schools, these individuals most likely will be the Ramp-Up coordinator in the school. In later implementing schools, these interviewees most likely will be guidance counselors.

The protocol for the March interviews is presented in Attachments A-4.

Focus Groups With School Faculty

The schedule of data collection activities shared with schools also will list the types of individuals needed for the winter and spring focus groups. The focus group members should include the staff members who are most involved with the school's college readiness activities, as judged by the school principal. For early implementing Ramp-Up schools, these individuals will include the Ramp-Up coordinator in the school, two to three teachers who led weekly advisories and bi-monthly college readiness workshops, one or more counselors, and the school principal. In later-implementing Ramp-Up schools, focus group participants will likely include two to three teachers, guidance counselors, and the school's principal.

The school principal (or point of contact) will be responsible for gathering the focus group members. REL Midwest staff will find possible dates for the focus groups that do not conflict with important dates in the schools' calendars. The person from each school who was interviewed in March also will participate in the focus group. If the interviewee is not available in May, then someone in a similar role will be asked to join. Focus group members will receive a \$25 gift card from Amazon.com for participation in each focus group.

The protocol for the May focus groups is presented in Attachments A-7. The discussion from each focus group will be audio-recorded, and these recordings will later be transcribed. Only the school's unique identification number will appear on the transcriptions. The electronic recording files will be stored in a password-secured folder to which only the project director has access. The recordings will be stored only so that focus group members' responses that are difficult to hear or transcribe can be clarified by the focus group facilitators. Once the report is published, the recordings will be erased, leaving only the printed transcripts to consult for more information.

Teachers' Instructional Logs

The consent forms that school staff members in the early implementing Ramp-Up schools fill out make explicit that teachers will be asked to complete instructional logs following the final two Ramp-Up workshops (likely to occur after OMB approval has been obtained). Teachers in Ramp-Up schools who provide their consent will be e-mailed a link to the instructional log immediately following their scheduled workshops and a deadline for completing the logs. REL staff will send teachers two reminders to complete each log.

The first page of each instructional log will repeat much of the study consent information for which teachers have already signified agreement but also will provide the expected time commitment for the log (see Attachment A-6). The relevant OMB clearance information also will appear on the introductory page. At the bottom of this introductory page, teachers will have two options: “I want to continue” or “I do not want to complete this log.” Those choosing to continue will move on to pages with the log items and response options. Those who choose not to complete the log will receive a “Thank You” page that exits them from the online data collection instrument.

Once each log is completed, the teacher’s identifying information will be stripped from the data and replaced with their unique identification number. Teachers completing both instructional logs will receive a \$25 gift card to Amazon.com.

Online Teacher Surveys

The process for administering the online teacher survey will be the same as that used for the instructional logs. In early May (prior to the last two weeks of school), consenting teachers in the early implementing Ramp-Up schools will be e-mailed a hyperlink to the online teacher survey and a deadline for completing the survey. Teachers will receive two reminders to complete the survey.

When teachers follow the hyperlink to the survey, they will receive the same initial page (containing consent information) as with the instructional logs, except that the time estimate will be specific to the online survey. As before, on the bottom of the introductory screen, teachers will have two options: “I want to continue” or “I do not want to complete this survey” (see Attachment A-8). Those wanting to continue will move on to pages with the survey items and response options. Those who do not wish to complete the survey will receive a “Thank You” page that exits them from the online data collection instrument.

Once the surveys are completed, respondents’ identifying information will be stripped from the data and replaced with a unique identification number. The crosswalk file linking respondents’ names with their unique identifier will be stored in a separate password-protected file. Teachers completing the survey will receive a \$25 gift card to Amazon.com.

Online Student Surveys and College Readiness (ENGAGE) Measures

REL project staff will be responsible for randomly selecting 30 students per grade in Grades 10–12 at each school to complete the ENGAGE measures. These students will be drawn from the pool of eligible students (i.e., all students for whom parents did not withhold consent). For these

90 students, they will also complete the online survey at the end of the ENGAGE instrument. Those Grade 12 students who were not selected for the ENGAGE assessment will complete the same online student survey, but hosted by REL Midwest rather than ACT. Students' MARSS numbers will be received by REL Midwest through the sharing of students' administrative records. Prior to beginning the administration of ACT's ENGAGE and the student survey, REL Midwest will first request that schools identify MARSS numbers for any students that may have left the school since February.

The randomly selected samples will be drawn from the remaining pools of eligible students in Grades 10 and 11 using the SPSS "select cases" function and students' MARSS numbers. The randomly selected MARSS numbers for students in Grades 10–12, along with the MARSS numbers of all eligible students in Grade 12, will be e-mailed to each school's point of contact, along with instructions for students to follow to log into the combined ENGAGE/online survey. The project team will send a second batch of MARSS numbers—those for the remaining 12th grade students—and those students will answer just the student survey. In addition to providing MARSS numbers to schools, REL Midwest will highlight the only parameters for the completion of online instruments: that students complete the ENGAGE/survey during school hours on a school computer during a two-week window in May (or other mutually arranged weeks if these dates conflict with other school activities).

The online ENGAGE instrument and student survey will be hosted by ACT. ACT allows those using the ENGAGE to add a specified number of supplemental items, and these items will consist of the student survey items.

Students selected to complete the combined instruments will complete them on a computer in a school computer lab. Students will be given a sheet of paper with (1) the student's name, (2) the student's MARSS number, (3) the URL/website address for the combined ENGAGE/student survey instrument, and (4) directions for log-in. Schools will be responsible for printing students' names on the sheets containing students' MARSS numbers, hyperlinks, and directions.

The remaining details regarding administration of the student survey will be left to the discretion of the participating schools. For instance, schools may want the online data collection instruments to be completed by groups of students at assigned times or by individual students during a particular class.

When the selected students sit down at the computer, they will enter the URL for the combined ENGAGE/student survey. The initial screen will provide the students with the information found on the consent documents, including the estimated amount of time necessary to complete the ENGAGE/student survey. At the bottom of the initial screen, students can either choose a button saying "I want to continue with the survey" (indicating the student's assent) or "I do not want to complete the survey" (see Attachment A-2). Students assenting to complete the online data collection will then encounter a screen requesting their identification number. Students will enter their MARSS number into the available field. Next, the students will complete the ENGAGE assessment, followed by the student survey items.

At the bottom of each screen of questions, students will have three options to choose from: an arrow pointing to the left saying "Go back," a button in the middle saying "Quit", and an arrow

pointing to the right saying “Continue.” Once students have completed the ENGAGE/student survey, they will see a screen saying that they have completed the data collection activity and a button that says “End.” Clicking the “End” button takes the user away from the website.

Within a week of the deadline for the student surveys, ACT will upload to REL Midwest’s secure FTP site (file transfer protocol) the data file containing all of the students’ responses to the ENGAGE items and the survey items, by MARSS number. They will also provide REL Midwest with a codebook indicating which data fields go with which ENGAGE/survey items.

Student survey data obtained from ACT will be appended to the file of student survey data that were collected through REL Midwest’s online survey.

Data Request From Minnesota Department of Education (MDE)⁵

The REL Midwest team will work with personal contacts within MDE to identify the best person in the department with whom to discuss the availability of student-level data, such as students’ state standardized test scores and leave records.

To obtain these data, REL Midwest will develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with MDE that specifies the purpose of the data request (i.e., this Ramp-Up study), the data elements being requested, and the de-identified nature of the data (i.e., data listed by MARSS number).

Once this MOU is in place, MDE staff will assemble the data files for students in the 22 schools (excluding those whose parents/guardians withheld consent). They can then upload the data file(s) to REL Midwest’s secure FTP site.

Data Request From Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE)

The REL Midwest team also has connections to representatives of the Minnesota Office of Higher Education (MOHE). In August, the project team will discuss data needs with these contacts. The MOHE contacts will be able to indicate the availability and condition of the data, and if the necessary data are available, to share the appropriate process for making data requests.

Of most interest for this project are the college enrollment data collected by MOHE for Minnesota colleges and college enrollment data from the National Student Clearinghouse. MOHE is the current home for the college enrollment data, but there are efforts underway to integrate the data with the State Longitudinal Data System (SLEDS)—a data system to which both MDE and MOHE have access.

To obtain these data, REL Midwest will develop an MOU with MOHE that specifies the purpose of the data request (i.e., this Ramp-Up study), the data elements being requested, and the de-identified nature of the data (i.e., data listed by schools’ ID number).

Once this MOU is in place, MOHE staff will assemble the data files for the 22 participating schools. They can then upload the data file(s) to REL Midwest’s secure FTP site.

⁵ The two sections regarding data requests to state government agencies are included in this OMB packet just so that the packet aligns with the project’s proposal. Because these requests are only for extant data, these activities do not require OMB clearance.

3. Methods to Maximize Response Rates and Deal With Nonresponse

The ED is committed to obtaining complete data for this study. To ensure the acquisition of administrative data is as complete as possible, emphasis will be placed on tracking the data components from MDE, MOHE, SLEDS, schools, and districts. Evaluation staff will resolve issues of missing or delayed data files by maintaining e-mail and telephone contact with the appropriate parties. All data files received for the study will be reviewed for completeness. When data files contain too many missing values, project staff will connect with research staff at schools or state-level educational organizations to obtain a better understanding of the sources of missing data elements.

Although high response rates are expected for the study (because schools volunteer for this study to receive Ramp-Up cost-free, and instruments are being developed with extreme sensitivity to respondent burden), nonresponse follow-up will be performed to ensure adequate response rates. ED's contractor for REL Midwest has extensive experience administering similar studies for the National Center for Education Statistics, and a response rate of at least 85 percent for the school staff instruments is expected. Project staff will perform nonresponse follow-up with staff via phone and e-mail in the event that responses for instructional logs and the online survey are lagging. In addition, instructional logs and surveys will be available online, and each respondent will receive a link via e-mail to complete them. Focus groups will be administered face-to-face, making these components readily accessible for easy completion. The student survey and readiness assessment will be administered during the school day, with the in-school logistics left up to school leaders, and it is expected that these response rates also will be at least 85 percent. Student nonresponse could occur if a student is absent on the day of the student survey and readiness assessment, if he or she leaves the school during the study year, or if a child's parents do not give consent for the student to participate. Because personally identifiable information will not be provided to researchers, it is expected that parents will not have significant concerns that will result in withdrawal of their children from the study.

Several additional steps will be taken to maximize response rates. Sampled respondents or their parents will receive advance communications explaining the study.⁶ The staff consent form will provide sampled school staff with full knowledge of the data collection activities involving them and the financial compensation for the data collection burden. The consent form also will provide assurance that the data will remain confidential. Staff members will receive their copies of the consent form, and the form will list contact information to receive additional information about the study or to resolve any questions. The parental information letter and consent form will provide parents with full knowledge of the data collection activities involving students and the assurance that data will remain confidential. School leaders will send e-mails to school staff to encourage them to complete the surveys. The email will also indicate that staff will receive a \$25 gift card for completion. The schools also track students' completion of ENGAGE/surveys and follow up with students who have not completed the online instruments in the allotted time.

If a response rate lower than 85 percent is achieved, researchers will conduct a bias analysis to compare the characteristics of respondents with those of nonrespondents. Little information

⁶ School faculty in both Ramp-Up and later-implementing schools will be aware of the study taking place in their schools. The low level of data collection burden, incentives, and support from administrators will help ensure a good response rate.

about staff characteristics will be available to compare staff members who responded to the survey with those who did not. Instead, researchers will assess the extent to which schools with high response rates differ from schools with low response rates by testing (using a *t*-test) for statistical differences in school-level characteristics such as high school graduation rates. For students, a bias analysis will be conducted if a response rate lower than 85 percent is achieved to compare characteristics from administrative data of students who responded to the survey with those who did not. Univariate statistical analysis (*t*-tests) will compare respondents on individual characteristics (e.g., the test scores of students who did and did not respond, and a multivariate statistical analysis (logistic regression analysis) will consider whether a combination of student characteristics predicts nonresponse.

Reports will clearly note any differences found between respondents and nonrespondents.

4. Tests of Procedures and Methods to Be Undertaken

Administrative data for the study will come from school, district, or state administrative records, and there will be no need to test procedures or instruments. The personal college readiness measure will be the ACT Engage assessment, which has been demonstrated to be psychometrically sound, albeit using college student samples (ACT, 2013).

The implementation study involves data collection using several instruments. The interview protocols, focus group protocols, instructional logs, and online student and staff questionnaires have been shared with contractors' colleagues who were former educators with content expertise. These "critical colleagues" looked for three things during their review: (1) whether the questions asked are clear, understandable, free of research jargon, and answerable; (2) whether the questions actually assess the intended constructs (e.g., degree to which schools are implementing Ramp-Up as intended or implementing a Ramp-Up-like intervention); and (3) whether the number and type of questions is suitable for the time allotted (not redundant and focused enough to solicit clear answers). In addition, some of the student and staff survey questions are based on questions used in prior student surveys conducted by the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement or the Consortium on Chicago School Research. Finally, cognitive interviews have been conducted with five respondents for each instrument to understand how typical respondents understand the questions.

5. Individuals Consulted on Statistical Aspects of the Design and Key Staff

The following individuals were consulted on the statistical, data collection, and analytic aspects of the Ramp-Up evaluation study:

- Michael Cohen, sampling statistician, American Institutes for Research (202-403-6453)
- Jennifer Stephan, researcher, American Institutes for Research (312-283-2409)
- Ayrin Molefe, senior researcher, American Institutes for Research (630-649-6516)
- Jim Lindsay, senior researcher, American Institutes for Research (630-649-6591)
- Pia Peltola, principal researcher, American Institutes for Research (202-577-4613)

- Elizabeth Tipton, assistant professor of applied statistics at Teachers College, Columbia University (212-678-3844)
- Larry Hedges, professor, Institute for Policy Research at Northwestern University (847-491-3395)

Content experts contributing to the project include:

- Jennifer Stephan, researcher, American Institutes for Research (312-283-2409)
- Sara Goldrick-Rab, associate professor of educational policy studies at University of Wisconsin (608-262-1760)
- Barbara Schneider, professor of sociology and education, Michigan State University (517-432-0188)

Electronic file transfers will be conducted by

- Shaheen Khan, senior database specialist, American Institutes for Research (630-649-6585)

Interviews and Focus groups to be performed by

- Pamela Bonsu, researcher, American Institutes for Research (312-588-7337)
- Elisabeth Davis, researcher, American Institutes for Research (312- 288-7640)
- Jennifer Stephan, researcher, American Institutes for Research (312-283-2409)

Online data collection and analysis to be overseen by

- Jim Lindsay, senior researcher, American Institutes for Research (630-649-6591)
- Kristina Wu, senior database specialist, American Institutes for Research (630-649-6538)

6. Reference

ACT. (2013). *ACT Engage: Research*. Iowa City, IA: Author. Retrieved from http://www.act.org/engage/10-12_research.html

Attachment A-1. Extant Data Request

March xx, 2014

Dear [SCHOOL/DISTRICT STAFF MEMBER]:

Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest at American Institutes for Research (AIR) is the evaluator of the Ramp-Up to Readiness program at [SCHOOL]. REL Midwest is one of 10 regional educational laboratories funded by the Institute of Education Sciences at the U.S. Department of Education and tasked with providing technical assistance and research support to topic-focused groups of education-related stakeholders with the ultimate aim of learning what works for improving student academic outcomes

In [MONTH/YEAR], our research team received approval from [SCHOOL/DISTRICT] to conduct this study. REL Midwest is beginning the data collection process. As a first step, we are sharing with you a list of student- and school-level data that we will need to collect for the study. The data that you share with our project team, in combination with data from the Minnesota Department of Education, will allow us to understand schools' experience with implementing Ramp-Up.

A data request for this project is on the second page of this letter. It provides a general description of the data elements needed for this part of the project. You will see that the data request is organized according to these levels of data (i.e., student data and school data). We are requesting student-level data only for students enrolled in 10th, 11th, or 12th grade in fall 2013.

We have found that an initial phone discussion about the data elements being requested can help prevent misunderstandings about data availability and quality. That said, we would like to find a 30-minute window of time next week, [DATES], when we can discuss the data request. Please let me know of your availability (or the availability of someone else who is familiar with the data), and we will arrange a phone conference.

We appreciate your support for this study. Please let me know when you are available next week. In the meantime, if there are other questions you have, feel free to contact me at the phone number below my name.

Best regards,



Jim Lindsay, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator, REL Midwest
630-649-6591

REL Midwest Study of Ramp-Up to Readiness: Administrative Data Request Student-Level Variables

Student-Level Variables	Grade Level of Student in Fall 2013–14		
	10th	11th	12th
Student MARSS ID in fall 2013–14	✓	✓	✓
Grade level in fall 2013–14	✓	✓	✓
Student leave code (e.g., to indicate transfer, dropout)	✓	✓	✓
Cumulative unweighted and weighted GPA in spring 2013	✓	✓	✓
EXPLORE score and date of administration	✓	✓	✓
PLAN score and date of administration		✓	✓
Indicator of whether student took the ACT or SAT in 2012–13		✓	✓
ACT composite scores with dates of administration		✓	✓
SAT critical reading and mathematics scores with dates of administration		✓	✓
Number of E-level courses enrolled in 2012–13 and fall 2013–14	✓	✓	✓
Number of D-level courses enrolled in 2012–13 and fall 2013–14	✓	✓	✓
Number of A-level courses enrolled in 2012–13 and fall 2013–14	✓	✓	✓
Number of C-level courses enrolled in 2012–13 and fall 2013–14	✓	✓	✓
Number of transcripts requested in fall 2013–14			✓

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes total, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary.

Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

School-Level Variables

School ID
Number of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders (separately) in 2012–13
Percentages of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders (separately) who took an E-level course in 2012–13
Percentages of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders (separately) who took a D-level course in 2012–13
Percentages of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders (separately) who took an A-level course in 2012–13
Percentages of 10th, 11th, and 12th graders (separately) who took a C-level course in 2012–13
School average PLAN composite score in 2012–13
Percentages of 11th and 12th graders (separately) who took the ACT during 2012–13
Percentages of 11th and 12th graders (separately) who took the SAT during 2012–13
School average ACT composite score in 2012–13
School average SAT critical reading and mathematics scores in 2012–13
Percentage of 12th graders who submitted a college application in 2012–13

Attachment A-2. Student Survey Questionnaire

Purpose. We want to learn about your experiences at school with planning and preparing for life after high school. The questions on this survey ask about preparing for college and a career. The information you provide will help schools provide better information and assistance to students so that they can prepare for the future. This study is being conducted through the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest.

Your answers will be kept confidential. The responses that you provide will be linked to you only through the identification number assigned to you by the Minnesota Department of Education. REL Midwest will be unable to link that number to your identity. We will not provide information that identifies you or your school to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law. Your answers will be combined with the answers of other students to describe what students think about the ways schools prepare them for life after high school.

Risks. There are no known risks related to participating in this survey.

Your answers are voluntary. You have the right to stop participating in this survey at any time without consequences. We hope you will answer all the questions, but if there is a question you do not wish to answer, simply skip it. Also, there are **no right or wrong answers** to these questions—we really just want to learn about your experiences at your school.

Procedure. This survey will take about 10 to 15 minutes.

Contact Information. If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Jim Lindsay at jlindsay@air.org or 630-649-6591. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant, contact the chair of AIR’s Institutional Review Board (which is responsible for the protection of study participants) using the following contact information:

E-Mail: IRBChair@air.org
Phone: 1-800-634-0797 (toll free)
Mail: IRB Chair
c/o AIR
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW
Washington, DC 20007

If you want to take the survey, please continue. If you prefer not to participate, please check the “do not” box below and inform your survey administrator. Thank you for your help!

I want to continue with the survey

I **do not** want to complete the survey

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection (survey and ACT Engage instrument) is estimated to average 45 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary. Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

OMB Control Number XXXX-XXXX (Exp XX/XX)

Background Information

1. What grade are you currently in?

- 9th
- 10th
- 11th
- 12th
-

Postsecondary Plans

The following set of questions asks about your plans after high school. When this survey says “college,” it means any kind of college, including two-year colleges, four-year colleges, universities, community colleges, and career or technical colleges (such as a culinary school or a cosmetology school)..

2. At this time, what is your plan for next year? (Check all that apply)

- Attend a four-year college or university
- Attend a community college
- Attend a career or technical college
- Get a job
- Enter the military
- Take a year off
- Other
- I don't know.

3. So far this school year, how often have you talked to a counselor, teacher, or other adult at school about planning for college?

- Never
- One or two times
- More than two times but less than once a week
- Once a week
- More than once a week

4. This school year, have you developed a written plan for achieving your educational or career goals after high school?

- Yes
- No

- I'm not sure.
5. Is your plan stored electronically (for example, in the Minnesota Career Information System [MCIS] or Naviance)?
- Yes
 - No
 - I'm not sure.
 - I have not developed a written postsecondary plan with a counselor, teacher, or other adult at my school.
6. At the last registration time, did school staff help you in choosing classes that you need to reach your goals for after high school?*
- Yes
 - No
7. So far this school year, how many times have you discussed your progress towards attaining the goals on your plan with a counselor, teacher, or other adult in your school?
- Never
 - Once
 - Twice
 - Three times
 - More than three times
 - I'm not sure.
 - I have not developed a written postsecondary plan with a counselor, teacher, or other adult at my school.

To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

8. At my school, all students are expected to go to some type of college.*
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

9. I know the skills that I need to work on if I am going to graduate from high school ready for success in college.*⁷
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - I don't plan to attend college.

Students' Academic Readiness

The following set of questions asks about your academic preparation for college.

10. This school year, has an adult at your school encouraged you to take an honors course or a course for college credit, such as an Advanced Placement (AP), International Baccalaureate (IB), Postsecondary Enrollment Options (PSEO), or College in the Schools course?*
- Yes
 - No
11. So far this school year, how often has an adult at your high school discussed with you your likelihood to succeed academically in college-level classes?***
- Never
 - Once
 - Twice
 - Three to five times
 - More than five times

Students' Admissions Readiness

The following set of questions asks about developing college plans.

To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statement?

12. I know which type of college (for example a four-year college, a community college, a career or technical college) would help me reach my goals after high school.
- Strongly disagree

⁷ An * indicates that this question is based on a question included on a survey from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota. ** indicates that this question is based on a question included on the Consortium on Chicago School Research 2009 12th-grade student survey (http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/downloads/23532009_my_voice_senior_student_codebook.pdf). Some questions have been reworded slightly to accommodate this study.

- Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - I don't plan to attend college.
13. This school year, how often has an adult at your high school discussed with you the steps that you need to take to apply to the type of college that you want to attend?*
- Never
 - One or two times
 - Three to five times
 - More than five times
 - I don't plan to attend college.
14. This school year, how often has an adult at your high school discussed with you your likelihood of being accepted at different types of colleges?***
- Never
 - One or two times
 - Three to five times
 - More than five times
 - I don't plan to attend college.

Students' Career Readiness

The following set of questions asks about developing career plans.

To what extent do you disagree or agree with the following statements?

15. I know the kinds of careers that would best fit my strengths and skills.*
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
16. I know the level of education required for the career I am most interested in.*
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

17. This school year, how helpful has your high school been to you in assessing your career interests and abilities? **

- Not at all helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful

18. How helpful has your high school been to you in developing a career plan? **

- Not at all helpful
- Somewhat helpful
- Helpful
- Very helpful
- I do not have a career plan.

Students' Financial Readiness

The following set of questions asks about paying for college.

19. This school year, how often has an adult at your school talked to you about how to pay for tuition or other college expenses?***

- Never
- Once
- Twice
- Three to five times
- More than five times

20. Do you have a plan for paying for college?*

- Yes
- No
- I don't plan to attend college.

Students' College Actions

The following set of questions asks about some college-related actions you may have taken or plan to take.

21. Have you ever taken the ACT or SAT test?

- Yes
- No, but I plan to take the ACT or SAT.

- No, I do not plan to take the ACT or SAT.
22. Have you submitted the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) so far this school year?
- Yes
 - No, but I plan to submit the FAFSA by the end of the summer.
 - No, I do not plan to submit the FAFSA.
 - I don't know.
23. So far this school year, how much have your teachers, counselors, or other school staff helped you fill out the FAFSA? **
- Not at all
 - A little
 - Some
 - A lot
24. How many college applications, if any, have you submitted so far this school year?
- None
 - One
 - Two or three
 - Four or five
 - More than five
25. So far this school year, how much have your teachers, counselors, or other school staff helped you with a college application essay or personal statement? **
- Not at all
 - A little
 - Some
 - A lot
 - I do not plan to graduate from high school this school year.
26. So far this school year, how much have your teachers, counselors, or other school staff helped you find scholarships to apply for? **
- Not at all
 - A little
 - Some
 - A lot

- I do not plan to graduate from high school this school year.

Wrap-Up

These last questions ask for some general information.

27. This school year, who has helped you most to prepare for college? (Check only one).

- Counselors
- Teachers
- Dean
- Other adults in my school
- Parents/guardians
- Other family members
- Other adults aside from my school or family
- Friends
- No one

28. Do you have at least one parent or guardian who has completed a college degree? *

- Yes
- No
- I'm not sure.

Thank you for participating in this survey!

ACT ENGAGE SCALES FOLLOWS SURVEY ITEMS.

Attachment A-3. Consent Documents

Parent Information Letter and Opt Out Form

[high school letterhead]

February XX, 2014

Dear Parent or Guardian:

[Insert high school] is committed to helping our students graduate college and career ready. As part of our commitment, we are working with the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest to study a schoolwide guidance program called Ramp-Up to Readiness (“Ramp-Up”). Scholars at the College Readiness Consortium at the University of Minnesota developed Ramp-Up based on existing research.

The purpose of this letter is to let you know that we plan to release some information about the students in [high school] to REL Midwest and that your son or daughter may be asked to complete a survey and college-readiness assessment. **The information provided to REL Midwest will not include student names or any other personally identifiable information about you or your child. In other words, the data will be anonymous to the researchers.**

Parents and students should understand the following:

- This anonymous information will help the research team better understand the challenges that schools have in carrying out Ramp-Up and the experiences students have when participating in Ramp-Up activities.
- The anonymous information will include students’ grades, test scores, course enrollments, college enrollment activities, and the student identification number used by the Minnesota Department of Education. The researchers will be able to use your son or daughter’s identification number to obtain other information from state databases, such as test scores, but they will be unable to link that number with your child’s identity.
- As part of the study, your son or daughter may be asked to do the following:
 1. Take a survey this spring that asks about his or her experiences at school with planning and preparing for life after high school.
 2. Take an online college-readiness assessment (ACT’s Engage assessment) in the spring. This assessment will measure students’ motivation and skills, social engagement, or self-regulation.

No student has to answer questions on the survey or assessment that he or she does not want to answer.

- All information about your child will be anonymous. The information collected will only be used for this research project, and the researchers will average the data for all students and all participating schools. They will report these averages in government reports and

research articles, but readers will be unable link those findings with individual students, teachers, or schools.

- Risks: This study presents *minimal risk* to your child. That is, students do not experience any risks beyond what they experience every day at school.
- Benefits: Study participation helps build knowledge about how to better support students to be college or career ready.

Participation in the study is voluntary. Students do not have to participate if they do not want to, and they will experience no repercussions at school if they decide not to participate. Our school's participation in this research study helps educators learn more about how schools can help students become college and career ready.

If you do not wish us to release anonymous information for your child or have your child complete the surveys and assessments, please fill in the form below and have your son or daughter return this letter to [return location] by [deadline].

If you have questions about this research project or about your child's rights as a participant, please contact Jim Lindsay of REL Midwest at 630-649-6591.

Sincerely,

[insert district signatory

By signing this form, you are indicating that you do not wish your child to participate in the study or for us to share your child's information with the REL Midwest research team.

I do NOT want my child, _____,
Full Student Name

(Student ID # _____) to participate in the Ramp-Up evaluation being conducted by REL Midwest.

Your name: _____

Your signature: _____

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in the data collection activities is voluntary.

Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Staff Consent Form

Purpose

Our school has partnered with the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL) Midwest to study the implementation of a schoolwide guidance program called Ramp-Up to Readiness (“Ramp-Up”) developed by the College Readiness Consortium at the University of Minnesota. REL Midwest, operated by American Institutes for Research, is sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) at the U.S. Department of Education. The evaluation will examine how school staff implement Ramp-Up and how the intervention compares with college-readiness supports in other high schools. The study has been submitted to IES for research approval. An application also will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget for review.

REL Midwest invites you and other school staff to participate in the study, which will begin this spring. The study involves the following data collection activities, which you may be asked to participate in:

- An interview to be conducted in March.
- A focus group, to be conducted in May
- Short instructional logs following each of five Ramp-Up college workshops
- An online survey in the spring 2014

Voluntary Participation

Participation in the data collection activities is voluntary. You also can withdraw from the study at any time. Individuals who decline to participate or later withdraw from the study will face no personal or professional repercussions.

Risks

There are few anticipated or known risks in participating in this study. Data collected and maintained by, or under the auspices of, IES under a pledge of confidentiality shall be treated in a manner that will ensure that individually identifiable data will be used only for statistical purposes and will be accessible only to authorized persons.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX-XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection (consent form) is estimated to average 5 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary.

Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

OMB Control Number XXXX-XXXX (Exp XX/XX)

Benefits

Your participation in the evaluation will contribute to an understanding of a schoolwide college readiness program that seeks to improve the college readiness outcomes of all students. You will also receive a \$25 gift card from Amazon.com for participating in the data collection activities.

Confidentiality

Your responses will not be connected to your personally identifiable information. Responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with any specific individual. The researchers will not provide information that identifies you or your school to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

More Information

If you would like more information about this study, you may contact Jim Lindsay of REL Midwest at 630-649-6591.

Informed Consent

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

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I want to participate in this study.
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes, I give permission to be audiorecorded during a focus group.
<input type="checkbox"/> No, I do not wish to participate in this study.
Print Name: _____
Signature: _____
Date: _____
School Name: _____

Position at School: _____

Attachment A-4. March Interview Protocol

Introduction and Welcome (5 min.)

Hello, my name is [fill in name]. Thank you for speaking with me today.

I am from **the Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory**. REL Midwest is conducting these interviews as part of our study of the Ramp-Up to Readiness intervention, a study in which your school is participating. Today, we want to better understand the programs, services, activities, and resources that [fill in name of high school] provides to students to prepare them for college. Although students may pursue a variety of pathways after high school, the questions for today focus on the types of supports that high schools offer to help students pursue college; by “college,” we mean a two-year college, four-year college or university, community college, or career technical college. This information will become part of a study report describing the college-readiness supports provided by high schools.

We’ve estimated that this interview group will take one hour. During this hour, we will discuss a number of topics related to preparing students for college. Please respond to the questions based on your experiences and programming at [fill in name of high school].

Consent

All data being collected will be kept confidential by REL Midwest and American Institutes for Research. You have the right to discontinue your participation in this data collection process at any time without consequences.

Confidentiality

Let me just highlight one issue that is discussed in the consent form. It is impossible to write down everything that you say today, so I would like to record the interview so that I can go back and listen to the discussion to make sure I recorded your statements accurately. Anything that is discussed will remain confidential. The audiorecordings will be transcribed and then erased. We will not identify any interviewees or other individuals in the transcriptions.

Are there any questions before we begin?

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 60 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary. Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Notes to interviewer: The purposes of this interview are to (1) understand what college-readiness supports are available in the high school; and (2) understand the frequency, intensity, and accessibility of the identified college-readiness supports.

Background Information

Today, we'd like to hear about any programs, services, activities, and resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students prepare for college.

Questions About College-Access or College-Readiness Programs (5 minutes)

1. What formal college-access or -readiness programs, if any, does **[fill in name of high school]** offer to students to help them prepare for college? By formal programs, I mean programs developed by local, regional, or national organizations that are often (but not always) targeted at a select group of students. These could include programs such as Upward Bound, College Possible, or AVID.

[Probe for each program identified:

- a. *What kinds of students are eligible to participate (i.e., grade-level, level of academic achievement, demographic characteristics)?*
- b. *How many students who are eligible to participate actually do participate (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]*

2. Are there any college-access or -readiness programs offered to everyone in the school?

Questions About College-Access Services, Activities, and Resources

The next set of questions will ask about any school services, activities, and resources offered outside of the programs that we just discussed to help prepare students for college.

Questions About Academic Readiness (15 minutes)

First, let's talk about any services, activities, and resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students prepare to succeed in first-year, nonremedial, college classes.

3. Do students have the opportunity to take college-level courses?

[Probe:

- a. *Dual-credit, AP, IB, or College in the Schools classes?*
- b. *What kinds of students are eligible to participate (i.e., which grade levels, those with a specific level of academic achievement)?]*

4. Do students have the opportunity to take honors courses?

[Probe:

- a. *In what subjects are honors courses offered?*
 - b. *What kinds of students are eligible to participate (i.e., which grade levels, those with a specific level of academic achievement)?]*
5. How are students encouraged to take college-level or honors courses?
6. Does **[fill in name of high school]** provide feedback to students about whether they are on track academically for college?

[Probe if yes:

- a. *Who receives feedback (e.g., all seniors, freshmen who have failed a class)?*
 - b. *In what format do students receive feedback (e.g., discussions with a teacher or counselor, written information sent home)?*
 - c. *How often do students receive feedback (e.g., annually in a meeting with a counselor, after key milestones such as taking the PLAN)?]*
7. Does **[fill in name of high school]** offer workshops or classes for students to develop study or note-taking skills?

[Probe if yes:

- a. *When do these workshops or classes take place (month, time of the day, multiple times over the school year)?*
- b. *Who is invited (e.g., juniors, seniors, parents)?*
- c. *How many of the invitees actually attend (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]*

[Probe if no: Do teachers discuss study or note-taking skills in their classes?]

8. What percentage of students who graduate from **[fill in name of high school]** are prepared academically to succeed in nonremedial college classes (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?

[Probe:

- a. *For students who are prepared, what do you attribute students' preparedness to?*
- b. *Which students are not prepared?]*

Questions About Admissions Readiness (15 minutes)

Next, let's talk about the kinds of services, activities, or resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students identify and complete the admissions requirements for a college that matches their goals, interests, and abilities.

9. How do students at **[fill in name of high school]** learn about the variety of colleges that exist, differences in their admissions requirements, and differences in their application processes?

[Probe:

- a. *College fairs (e.g., at the school or school-organized field trips to fairs outside of the school)? Who participates (e.g., sophomores, juniors)? How many students participate (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?*
- b. *College representatives visiting the high school? Who participates (e.g., sophomores, juniors, high-achieving students)? How many students participate (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?*
- c. *Student visits to college campuses (clarify if those are sponsored by the school)? If visits are school sponsored, who participates (e.g., sophomores, juniors, high-achieving students, low-SES students)? How many students participate (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]*

10. Do students at **[fill in name of high school]** complete an individualized postsecondary plan that specifies the coursework and activities necessary to meet admissions requirements at a college matching their goals, interests, and abilities?

[Probe if yes:

- a. *When do students first create the plan (e.g., freshman year)?*
- b. *How often is it updated (e.g., annually)?*
- c. *Who is involved in creating the plan (e.g., counselor, teachers, parents)?*
- d. *How many students have such a plan (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]*

11. What kinds of help, if any, does **[fill in name of high school]** provide students for finding a college that matches their goals, interests, and abilities?

[Probe: *Individual meetings with a counselor, general information presented in a large group, workshops for selecting colleges to consider?*]

12. Do students receive any school help with completing steps in the application process, such as taking college admissions exams, writing college essays, or completing college applications?

[Probe:

- a. *Do seniors receive assistance with college applications individually or in small groups? How many seniors take advantage of such assistance (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)? Are students required to complete a certain number of college applications?*
- b. *Does someone (e.g., a counselor or teacher) review college applications? What is reviewed (e.g., college essays, checked for completion)? How many seniors take advantage of such assistance (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?*
- c. *Are students required to write a college essay (e.g., in their English class)?*

d. Does **[fill in name of high school]** offer classes or workshops to prepare students for college entrance exams such as the ACT? Who is eligible to attend? How many eligible students attend (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]

13. Does **[fill in name of high school]** take any steps to monitor students' completion of key enrollment steps, such as taking college admissions exams or completing college applications?

[If yes, probe:

a. *Which enrollment steps are monitored?*

b. *Does the school contact students if they have not completed key enrollment steps, such as completing a college application, by the end of senior year?]*

14. Do students at **[fill in name of high school]** use college software, such as Naviance or the Minnesota Career Information System (MCIS), to organize their college planning and application process?

[If yes, probe:

a. *When do students learn about this software (e.g., freshman year, junior year)?*

b. *How many students actively (more than just having a login) use the software (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]*

15. To what extent do students here at **[fill in name of high school]** who are planning to attend college take the necessary steps to enroll?

Questions About Career Readiness (5 minutes)

Now, let's talk about the kinds of services, activities, or resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students understand what types of jobs might be a good match for their interests and abilities.

16. Do students at **[fill in name of high school]** receive any information about careers, such as their educational and skill requirements and earnings payoffs?

[If yes, probe:

How do they receive this information (e.g., written materials provided, website recommendations provided, in workshops or an advisory)?]

17. Does **[fill in name of high school]** offer any kinds of career exploration activities (e.g., job shadowing, help in finding internships, speakers who discuss careers, help writing a resume, career interest inventory, ACT's World-of-Work map)?

[Probe for each key activity named, where key reflects the emphasis placed on it by focus group members:

a. *If unclear, clarify the format of the activity (e.g., one-on-one assistance, hands-on workshop, informational session, written information)?*

- b. *When does this activity occur (month, time of the day, multiple times over the school year)?*
 - c. *Who is invited to participate (e.g., juniors, seniors, parents)?*
 - d. *How many of the invitees participate (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?]*
18. To what extent do students here at **[fill in name of high school]** understand the requirements of different careers and which will match their personal goals and abilities?

Questions About Financial Readiness (10 minutes)

Now, let's talk about the kinds of services, activities, or resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students prepare to pay for college.

19. Does **[fill in name of high school]** offer a “financial aid night” or similar information session to students and families?
- [If yes, probe:*
- a. *When is that offered (month, time of the day, multiple times over the school year)?*
 - b. *Who is invited (e.g., juniors, seniors)?*
 - c. *How many of the invited students and families attend (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?*
 - d. *What are the main topics covered?]*
20. Do counselors or other school staff ever meet individually with students and/or their families to discuss different strategies for paying for college (e.g., savings, loans, scholarships, financial aid)?
- [If yes, probe:*
- a. *Who meets with students (e.g., counselor, school staff, volunteer parent or local college student, peer counselor, representatives from an educational agency)?*
 - b. *When do these meetings take place (month, time of the day, multiple times over the school year, in the summer after high school graduation)?*
 - c. *How many seniors and/or their families meet individually with a counselor (or other knowledgeable individual) to talk about paying for college?*
 - d. *Do counselors help seniors and/or their families to obtain a FAFSA PIN or complete the FAFSA form?]*

21. Does **[fill in name of high school]** offer any workshops or classes related to paying for college, such as workshops about completing the FAFSA application, searching for scholarships, or completing scholarship applications?

[Probe for each workshop:

- a. *What topics are covered?*
- b. *When do these meetings take place (month, time of the day, multiple times over the school year, in the summer after high school graduation)?*
- c. *Who is invited (e.g., juniors, seniors, parents)?*
- d. *How many of the invited students and/or parents attend (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?*

22. Are there other resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers students for figuring out how to pay for college (e.g., a list of recommended websites to search for scholarship information)?

23. Does **[fill in name of high school]** take any steps to monitor students' completion of the FAFSA or scholarship applications?

[Probe if yes: Does the school contact students if they have not completed the FAFSA or scholarship applications by the end of senior year?]

Questions About Personal/Social Readiness (5 minutes)

Next, let's discuss the kinds of services, activities, or resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students set educational goals, make progress towards those goals, and create relationships with peers and adults to support achieving those goals.

24. To what extent do students graduating from **[fill in name of high school]** have the personal and social skills necessary for succeeding in college? Such skills could include, for example, goal setting, monitoring progress towards goals, persisting in the face of obstacles, help-seeking behavior, or time management)?
25. Are there any services, activities, or resources that **[fill in name of high school]** offers to help students develop personal and social skills to succeed at college?

[Probe:

- a. *What are these services, activities, and resources?*
- b. *What skills do they address?*
- c. *For any key activities described:*
 - i. *When do these activities take place (month, time of the day, multiple times over the school year, in the summer after high school graduation)?*
 - ii. *Who is invited (e.g., juniors, seniors, parents)?*
 - iii. *How many invited students participate (i.e., all, most, half, some, hardly any)?*

Questions About College-Going Culture (10 minutes)

Now, let's talk about the goals and expectations of school staff, parents, and students attending this school.

26. To what extent do teachers, counselors, and administrators share a common goal to prepare all students for college?*
27. To what extent are teachers expected to provide assistance to students in planning for college?
28. Do school staff communicate with parents/guardians about their children's readiness for college?
[Probe if yes:
 - a. *What is the format of these communications (e.g., one-way versus two-way conversation)?*
 - b. *How often does this communication occur?*
 - c. *Which families are reached with this communication?]*
29. To what extent do students see themselves succeeding at college?
30. To what extent do students understand what it takes (academically, financially, and personally) to succeed in college?
31. To what extent do students take the appropriate actions to make their postsecondary plans a reality?
32. Who at **[name of high school]** is responsible for delivering college-related programs, services, activities, and resources to students?

Questions About Barriers to Implementing a Schoolwide College Readiness Program (10 minutes)

Finally, let's talk about implementing a schoolwide college readiness program.

33. What educational initiatives, if any, has **[name of high school]** been involved in implementing this year?
[Clarify:
 - a. *Is this initiative school-wide? What is the format of these communications (e.g., one-way versus two-way conversation)?*
 - b. *[If this is an early implementing school] Are staff able to successfully implement more than one initiative at a time?*

⁸ An * indicates that this question is based on a question included on a survey from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota.

- c. *[If this is a late implementing school] Do you foresee any barriers to implementing a schoolwide college-readiness initiative next year?]*

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today!

Attachment A-5. Extant Document Collection Request

Month XX, 20XX

Dear [SCHOOL STAFF MEMBER]:

REL Midwest at American Institutes for Research (AIR) is studying the Ramp-Up to Readiness program at [SCHOOL]. In [MONTH/YEAR], our research team received approval from your school to conduct this study. As part of our study, we are collecting existing, publicly available documents related to college-readiness programs and initiatives in your school. We are interested in the programs, services, activities, and resources that [SCHOOL] offers to help students prepare for college.

The types of documents that we would like to receive are the following:

- Calendars of events related to college readiness (e.g., college fairs, visits from college representatives, financial aid night for families)
- Agendas from professional development activities related to college readiness
- Written descriptions of college readiness programs offered in your school (e.g., Upward Bound)
- Written descriptions of activities or services related to college offered in your school
- A description of how [SCHOOL] calculates a student's cumulative GPA
- Master schedule showing the availability of advanced courses (e.g., honors, advanced placement, dual-enrollment courses)

In the recently conducted focus groups, we heard about several college-readiness supports that we would like to request more information about. They are:

[LIST RELEVANT PROGRAMS, SERVICES, ACTIVITIES, AND RESOURCES]

Please do *not* create any original documents to fulfill this request. Documents can be e-mailed to me at [e-mail address]. To meet our analysis and reporting deadlines, we will need to receive the complete collection of documents no later than [DATE].

We have found that an initial phone discussion about the requested documents can help prevent misunderstandings. That said, we would like to find a 30-minute window of time next week, [DATES], when we can discuss this document request. Please let me know of your availability (or the availability of someone else who is familiar with the data), and we will arrange a phone conference.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact me at the phone number below.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Jim Lindsay, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator, REL Midwest
630-649-6591

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary.

Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Attachment A-6. Instructional Log for Ramp-Up Workshop

Purpose. We would like your feedback on the workshop you taught today and some information about the advisories that you have taught so far this year. Your opinions are useful for improving the quality of the Ramp-Up program.

Confidentiality. REL Midwest has established safeguards to insure that your responses will not be linked with your personally identifiable information. We will not provide information that identifies you to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, without the informed consent of the respondent, is a class E felony.

Risks. There are no known risks related to participating in this survey.

Voluntary Participation. You have the right to discontinue your participation in this survey at any time without consequences. We hope you will answer all the questions, but if there is a question you do not wish to answer, simply skip it.

Procedure. Completion of each log entry will take no longer than 10 minutes. If you complete both logs, you will receive a \$25 gift card for your participation.

Contact Information. If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Jim Lindsay at jlindsay@air.org or 630-649-6591. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant, contact the chair of AIR's Institutional Review Board (which is responsible for the protection of study participants) using the following contact information:

E-Mail: IRBChair@air.org
Phone: 1-800-634-0797 (toll free)
Mail: IRB Chair
c/o AIR
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW
Washington, DC 20007

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary. Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Background Information

1. What is your current position at this school? **Check all that apply.**
 - Teacher
 - Counselor
 - Dean
 - Principal
 - Assistant principal
 - Other school staff
2. What is the name of your school? [text box]

Today's Ramp-Up Workshop

The following questions ask about the Ramp-Up workshop that you taught today.

3. Did you teach or assist in teaching a Ramp-Up workshop today?
 - Yes [continue to q4]
 - No [skip to q19]
4. What topic(s) did you cover in today's workshop? [text box]
5. How many students actually attended the workshop? [drop down box]
6. What percentage of your students attended the workshop? [drop down box]
7. In what grades are the students who attended the workshop that you taught today?
Check all that apply.
 - 9th grade
 - 10th grade
 - 11th grade
 - 12th grade
8. How long did today's workshop last?
 - Less than 30 minutes
 - 30–45 minutes
 - 46–60 minutes
 - More than 60 minutes
9. Select the college-readiness pillars that were discussed during today's workshop? **Check all that apply.**

- Academic Readiness
 - Admissions Readiness
 - Career Readiness
 - Financial Readiness
 - Personal/Social Readiness
10. Did you adapt the instructional materials to suit the needs of your workshop?
- Yes [continue to q11]
 - No [skip to q12]
11. Please describe how you adapted the instructional materials to suit the needs of your workshop. [text box]
12. What percentage of students who attended today’s workshop was actively engaged in the workshop’s activities?
- Less than 25%
 - 25–50%
 - 51–75%
 - More than 75%
 - I do not know.
13. I had enough time to prepare lesson content prior to teaching today’s workshop.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
14. I had enough information about the college selection and enrollment process to teach today’s workshop.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree
15. I had enough information about the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college to teach today’s workshop.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree

- Agree
 - Strongly agree
16. What worked well in today’s workshop? [text box]
 17. What could be improved about today’s workshop? [text box]
 18. If you have any additional comments about today’s workshop, please enter them here:
[text box]

Weekly Ramp-Up Advisories

The following questions ask about the weekly Ramp-Up advisories taught so far this year.

19. Have you taught at least one Ramp-Up advisory this school year?
 - Yes [continue to q20]
 - No [end survey]
20. Are you assigned to teach a ninth-grade Ramp-Up advisory?
 - Yes [continue to q21]
 - No [skip to q22]
21. Which lessons have you taught so far this year to ninth graders? **Check all that apply.**
[insert names of each lesson taught to ninth graders]
22. Are you assigned to teach a 10th-grade Ramp-Up advisory?
 - Yes [continue to q23]
 - No [skip to q24]
23. Which lessons have you taught so far this year to 10th graders? **Check all that apply.**
[insert names of each lesson taught to 10th graders]
24. Are you assigned to teach an 11th-grade Ramp-Up advisory?
 - Yes [continue to q25]
 - No [skip to q26]
25. Which lessons have you taught so far this year to 11th graders? **Check all that apply.**
[insert names of each lesson taught to 11th graders]
26. Are you assigned to teach a 12th-grade Ramp-Up advisory?
 - Yes [continue to q27]
 - No [skip to q28]
27. Which lessons have you taught so far this year to 12th graders? **Check all that apply.**
[insert names of each lesson taught to 12th graders]

28. On average, what percentage of students scheduled to attend your weekly advisory has attended every session so far?
- Less than 25%
 - 25–50%
 - 51–75%
 - More than 75%
 - I do not know.
29. On average, how long have the weekly advisory sessions you've taught so far this year lasted?
- Less than 20 minutes
 - 20–29 minutes
 - 30 minutes
 - I do not know.
30. So far this year, how often have you adapted the instructional materials to suit the needs of your advisory?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
31. On average, what percentage of students in your advisory actively engages in the advisory's activities?
- Less than 25%
 - 25–50%
 - 51–75%
 - More than 75%
 - I do not know.
32. If you have any additional comments about the Ramp-Up advisories, please enter them here: [text box]

Thank you for completing this log!

Attachment A-7. May Focus Group Protocol

Introduction and Welcome (5 min.)

Hello, my name is [fill in name]. Thank you for coming in today.

I am from **the Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory** and helping me today is [fill in name of assistant]. REL Midwest is conducting this focus group as part of our study of the Ramp-Up to Readiness intervention, a study in which your school is participating. Today, we want to better understand the programs, services, activities, and resources provided to students in [fill in name of high school] to prepare them for college. We also want to understand your experiences this year in implementing the Ramp-Up to Readiness program. This information will become part of a study report describing the effects of the Ramp-Up to Readiness program.

Please note that when we say “college,” we mean a two-year college, four-year college or university, community college, or career or technical college. To begin, I have to go over some logistics with you. We’ve estimated that this focus group will take 90 minutes. During these 90 minutes, I will ask questions about the Ramp-Up program and other college-readiness supports offered in your school. We hope that you will feel free to attempt to answer the questions as best you can based on the experiences you have had here at [fill in name of high school]. Some of these questions will ask you to estimate the percentage of students who participate in a particular activity. Please just do your best to provide an estimate. We will have a 10-minute break at [XXXX time, 50-minute mark].

My role and the role of [fill in name of assistant] will be to ask questions, moderate the discussion, and record major themes and feelings expressed by focus group participants.

Consent

As stated in the study consent form that you have previously signed, all data being collected will be kept confidential by REL Midwest and American Institutes for Research (the third-party evaluator). You have the right to discontinue your participation in this data collection process at any time without consequences.

Confidentiality

Let me just highlight one issue that is discussed in the consent forms. It is impossible to write down everything that you say today, so we will be recording the focus group conversation so that we can go back and listen to the discussion to make sure that we did not miss anything. Anything that is discussed will remain confidential. The audiorecordings will be transcribed and then erased. We will not identify any focus group participants in the transcriptions.

Are there any questions before I begin?

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 90 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary. Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Introductions

Before beginning with the questions and turning on the audiorecorder, let's go around the room and introduce ourselves. Please say your name and your role here at **[fill in name of high school]**.

Now, we are beginning with the questions. I'll turn on the audiorecorder and start asking questions.

Notes to focus group moderator: The purposes of this focus group are to understand (1) the extent to which treatment schools faithfully adopt the program model, and what enables them or prevents them from doing so; and (2) the degree to which the intervention model differs from the services and activities underlying the business-as-usual comparison condition.

If participants are reluctant to estimate percentages when asked, probe for more than 25 percent or less than 25 percent, more than 50 percent or less than 50 percent, or more than 75 percent or less than 75 percent.

Background Information

The Ramp-Up to Readiness program is offered to high schools throughout Minnesota. The developers note that there is no single way to implement the program because of variations in local context, but there are elements of Ramp-Up that are to be implemented in all settings. Today, we'd like to gather a better understanding of how the program has been implemented at **[fill in name of high school]**. First, I'll ask questions about whether and when you completed key implementation activities. This will be followed by questions on the Ramp-Up curriculum, tools, professional development, your school culture, the challenges and success of implementation, and to what extent you think Ramp-Up is changing the college readiness of students' in your school.

Thank you for joining us today.

Fidelity of Implementation Questions for Early Implementing Ramp-Up Schools

Ramp-Up Annual Plan Activities

In the fall, your school filled out the Ramp-Up to Readiness Annual Plan indicating when your school was planning to complete key actions. I would like to discuss some of these actions.

[Note to moderator: have a copy of the Annual Plan to refer to]

1. Have there been any changes over the school year in who serves on the Ramp-Up leadership team or who serves as the Ramp-Up coordinator?

[Probe if yes: Why did a change occur?]

2. How often did the Ramp-Up leadership team meet this school year to guide and monitor Ramp-Up implementation in your school?

[Probe if no: What challenges did you face in meeting quarterly?]

3. Do all students at **[name of high school]** use a technology platform (e.g., Naviance or MCIS) as part of the Ramp-Up program?

[Probe if yes:

- a. Which platform?
- b. Did students use this platform prior to implementing Ramp-Up?
- c. To what extent is the technology platform integrated with Ramp-Up advisories or workshops?

Probe if no:

- d. What challenges have you faced in adopting a technology platform?]

4. Have you conducted any internal evaluation of your school's implementation of Ramp-Up or progress on improving college-readiness indicators (e.g., taking advanced courses, completing college enrollment activities)?

[Probe if yes:

- a. Have you discussed your findings with staff at the College Readiness Consortium?
- b. Did you make any changes to instructional practices based on your review of the data?

Probe if no:

- c. What challenges have you faced in conducting internal evaluations of the Ramp-Up program?]

Ramp-Up Curriculum

Now, I would like to talk about the Ramp-Up advisories and workshops.

5. Thinking about the Ramp-Up weekly advisories...
 - a. What percentage of students do you estimate received all 28 lessons?
[Probe if less than 100 percent: Which students did not receive all 28 lessons and why?]
 - b. How long did the lessons last?
[Probe if less than 30 minutes: Why did the lessons last less than the planned 30 minutes?]
 - c. How much time were advisors provided to prepare and learn about the lesson content prior to teaching it?
 - d. Was the amount of time provided to advisors to prepare and learn the lesson content adequate?
[Probe if not: How much time would have been adequate?]

6. Thinking about the Ramp-Up workshops...
 - a. How many workshops were held over the course of the year?
[Probe: Did the number of workshops differ by grade-level (i.e., did Grade 10 students receive fewer than Grade 12 students)?
Probe if less than five: What challenges did you face in delivering all five workshops?
Probe if more than five: Most Ramp-Up schools schedule five workshops. Why did your school decide to have additional ones?]
 - b. What were the topics of these workshops?
[Probe: Were they differentiated by grade?]
 - c. When were the workshops offered?
 - d. On average, how long did these workshops last?
 - e. Who taught the workshops (i.e., the same staff teaching the Ramp-Up advisories or different staff)?
 - f. What percentage of students do you estimate attended all the workshops?
[Probe if less than 100 percent: Which students did not attend and why?]

Ramp-Up Tools

Next, I would like to talk about the tools used in the Ramp-Up program, specifically the Readiness Rubric or Postsecondary Plan.

7. Thinking specifically about the Postsecondary Plan...

[Note to moderator: Show an example of the Postsecondary Plan to remind participants what it is]

- a. What percentage of all students completed a Postsecondary Plan this school year?
[Probe if less than 100 percent: Which students did not complete a Postsecondary Plan and why?]
- b. What percentage of students discussed the Postsecondary Plan with a teacher/advisor or counselor as part of the course registration process?
[Probe if less than 100 percent: Which students did not review their Postsecondary Plan with a teacher/advisor or counselor? Why? Were there times other than course registration when the Postsecondary Plan was reviewed with students?]
- c. Can you provide an example of how you discussed the Postsecondary Plan with a student?
- d. How do school staff engage with parents using the Postsecondary Plan?
[Probe: How often do school staff talk with parents about their student's Postsecondary Plan? What percentage of parents talks to school staff about their student's Postsecondary Plan?]
- e. Is the student's Postsecondary Plan stored electronically for your review and review by students or parents?
[Probe if not: Why?]

8. Thinking specifically about the Readiness Rubric...

[Note to moderator: Show an example of the Readiness Rubric to remind participants what it is]

- a. What percentage of students completed the Readiness Rubric three times this year?
[Probe if less than 100 percent: What percentage of students completed the Readiness Rubric at least twice? What percentage of students completed it at least once? Which students did not complete the Readiness Rubric three times this year? Why not?]
- b. How often did school staff review the rubric with students this school year?
- c. Can you provide an example of how you discussed the Readiness Rubric with a student?
- d. How do school staff engage with parents using the Readiness Rubric?
[Probe: How often do school staff talk with parents about their student's Readiness Rubric? What percentage of parents talks to school staff about their student's Readiness Rubric?]
- e. Is the student's Readiness Rubric stored electronically for your review and review by students or parents?

9. Did school staff experience barriers in talking to parents about their child’s Readiness Rubric or Postsecondary Plan (e.g., language barriers)?

[Probe if yes: How did your school address those?]

Professional Development

10. At the beginning of the school year, were four hours spent introducing staff to the Ramp-Up program?
 - a. Can you describe the content covered that day?
 - b. Which teachers had the opportunity to attend this four-hour training?
 - c. How did staff respond to the introduction of the Ramp-Up to Readiness program?

[Probe if some staff were not receptive: What were the concerns of staff about Ramp-Up?]

11. How often does the Ramp-Up leadership team or coordinator provide professional development related to Ramp-Up?
 - a. How long do these professional development sessions last?
 - b. Which teachers have the opportunity to attend professional development?
 - c. How engaged are school staff during these meetings (e.g., the extent to which they participate in discussions)?
 - d. How challenging has it been to provide regularly scheduled professional development on Ramp-Up to teachers?
12. Have you had or are you planning a one-hour feedback session where school staff can provide feedback to the leadership team on program implementation?

Overall Experiences With Implementation

13. How have the goals or beliefs of school staff changed during the school year, if at all, with the introduction of Ramp-Up?
14. Has the introduction of Ramp-Up changed the way that school staff interact with parents?
15. What aspects of Ramp-Up worked well as you implemented the program?

[Probe: Why did they work well?]

16. What aspects of the program did not work well?

[Probe: Why did they not work well?]

Ramp-Up to Readiness: Contrast Between Implementing and Non-Implementing Schools

In February, we talked about the college-readiness programs, services, activities, and resources that [name of high school] provides to prepare students to enroll and succeed in college. I have a list of the supports that you named, and now I would like to ask some specific questions about each of these activities. If the school no longer offers a support that I read, please let me know.

[Instructions to moderator: complete the following matrix by asking questions 17 – 22 for each support listed. Probe as necessary to be able to complete the matrix]

Matrix of College-Readiness Supports

College-Readiness Support	Participation Rate			Frequency	Intensity	Corresponding Readiness Dimension				
	10th	11th	12th			Academic	Admissions	Career	Financial	Personal/Social
Program 1										
Program 2										
Program 3										
Program 4										
Program 5										
Service 1										
Service 2										
Service 3										
Service 4										
Service 5										
Activity 1										
Activity 2										
Activity 3										
Activity 4										
Activity 5										
Resource 1										
Resource 2										
Resource 3										
Resource 4										
Resource 5										

17. Which grade does [**name of support**] target? [moderator to check each grade targeted]
18. What percentage of Grade 10, Grade 11, and Grade 12 students participate in or receive [**name of support**]?
19. How often has [**name of support**] been offered this school year?
20. How long does [**name of support**] last?
21. Which of the following does [**name of support**] primarily address: students' academic preparation, the college admissions process, career planning, how to pay for college, or on goal setting or achievement?
22. Are there any other college-readiness programs, services, activities, or resources that [name of high school] offers but that we haven't talked about?

I want to wrap up with a few more general questions.

Professional Development

23. So far this school year, has the school provided staff any professional development related to preparing students for college?
 - a. Can you describe what was provided?
 - b. How long did each professional development session last?
 - c. Who received this professional development?
[Probe: What percentage of teachers?]
 - d. What did you find helpful or unhelpful about these materials or this professional development?

College Culture

Next, I would like to talk about the expectations and practices of school staff for preparing students for college.

24. Thinking about the goals and beliefs of school staff...
 - a. To what extent do school personnel here share a common goal to prepare all students for college?*
 - b. To what extent do school personnel believe that college counseling is the job of school counselors, not teachers?*
25. Thinking about the practices in your school...

⁹ An * indicates that this question is based on a question included on a survey from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota.

- a. How are students encouraged to take advanced coursework (e.g., honors, dual-credit, AP, IB, or College in the Schools classes)?
- b. To what extent is the curriculum at this school focused on helping students get ready for college?*
- c. Does your school collect data to assess students' college readiness?
[Probe if yes: How do you use this information?]

26. Thinking about parents...

- a. To what extent do parents of students in this school expect their children to go to college?*

Barriers to Implementing a Schoolwide College Readiness Program

Finally, let's talk about implementing a schoolwide college readiness program.

27. What educational initiatives, if any, has **[name of high school]** been involved in implementing this year?

[Clarify:

- a. *Is this initiative school-wide? What is the format of these communications (e.g., one-way versus two-way conversation)?*
- b. *[If this is an early implementing school] Are staff able to successfully implement more than one initiative at a time?*
- c. *[If this is a late implementing school] Do you foresee any barriers to implementing a schoolwide college-readiness initiative next year?*

Thank you again for participating in today's focus group!

Attachment A-8. Staff Survey Questionnaire

Purpose. The Midwest Regional Educational Laboratory at American Institutes for Research (REL Midwest) is conducting this survey as part of its evaluation of Ramp-Up to Readiness. We want to learn about your experiences with Ramp-Up overall and also as they relate to the program’s curriculum, tools, and professional development. The information you provide will be used to improve Ramp-Up and other college-readiness programs.

Confidentiality. REL Midwest has multiple safeguards in place to keep collected data confidential. Moreover, once REL Midwest sends you a gift card for participating, your name will not be attached to the data that you provide.

Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific district or individual. We will not provide information that identifies you or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, without the informed consent of the respondent, is a class E felony.

Risks. There are no known risks related to participating in this survey.

Voluntary Participation. You have the right to discontinue your participation in this survey at any time without consequences. We hope you will answer all the questions, but if there is a question you do not wish to answer, simply skip it.

Procedure. This survey will take about 20 to 30 minutes, and you will receive a \$25 gift card for your participation.

Contact Information. If you have questions or concerns about this study, please contact Jim Lindsay at jlindsay@air.org or 630-649-6591. If you have concerns or questions about your rights as a participant, contact the chair of AIR’s Institutional Review Board (which is responsible for the protection of study participants) using the following contact information:

E-Mail: IRBChair@air.org
Phone: 1-800-634-0797 (toll free)
Mail: IRB Chair
c/o AIR
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street NW
Washington, DC 20007

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is XXXX.XXXX, OMB expiration date is XXXX, XX, 2014. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per respondent, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collected. Participation in this data collection task is voluntary.

Per the policies and procedures required by 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 this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 New Jersey Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20208.

Background Information

1. What is your current position at this school? **Check all that apply.**
 - Teacher
 - Counselor
 - Dean
 - Principal
 - Assistant principal
 - Other school staff

2. What is your role in delivering the Ramp-Up to Readiness program? **Check all that apply.**
 - I do not play any role in delivering the Ramp-Up to Readiness program [end survey and display “Thank you for participating in this survey”]
 - Ramp-Up coordinator
 - Member of the Ramp-Up leadership team
 - Ramp-Up advisor (a teacher who facilitates Ramp-Up advisories)
 - Other. Please indicate your role: [text box]

[If Q2=Ramp-Up advisor, ask Q3; else, skip to Q4]

3. What is the grade-level of students in your Ramp-Up advisory?
 - Grade 9
 - Grade 10
 - Grade 11
 - Grade 12

4. What is the name of your school? [text box]

Ramp-Up Goals, Components, and Roles

The following set of questions asks about your understanding of the goals of the Ramp-Up to Readiness program (“Ramp-Up”) and your role in it. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with the following statements:

5. I understand the goals of Ramp-Up.
 - Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree

- Strongly agree
6. I understand Ramp-Up's five pillars of readiness (academic, admissions, career, financial, and personal-social readiness).
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
7. I understand my role in delivering Ramp-Up.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
8. Do you know who the Ramp-Up Coordinator at your school is?
- Yes
 - No
 - I'm not sure.

[If Q2=Ramp-Up advisor, ask Q9; else, skip to 10]

9. My school and district gives me enough time to implement the Ramp-Up program.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

[If Q2=Ramp-Up coordinator or Member of the Ramp-Up leadership team, ask 10; else, skip to 11]

10. My school and district gives me enough time to coordinate the Ramp-Up program.
- Strongly Disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly Agree

Expectations and Beliefs

The following set of questions asks about your expectations and beliefs related to college preparation. In this survey, “college” refers to all postsecondary educational opportunities, including two-year colleges, four-year colleges or universities, community colleges, and career or technical colleges. Please indicate to what extent you disagree or agree with the following statements:

11. I believe that our school should prepare all students to go on to college.*¹⁰

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

12. School personnel share a common goal to prepare all students for college.*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

13. All teachers should be able to advise students on college options.*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

14. College counseling is the job of school counselors, not teachers.*

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

College Knowledge

The following set of questions asks about your knowledge of college and career readiness. Please rate your own level of knowledge in the following areas:

The range of postsecondary options available to students*

- None

¹⁰ An * indicates that this question is based on a question included on a survey from the Center for Applied Research and Educational Improvement (CAREI) at the University of Minnesota.

- Limited
- Basic
- Moderate
- Proficient
- Advanced

15. The level of academic skill (for example, reading, writing, mathematics) necessary for college work*

- None
- Limited
- Basic
- Moderate
- Proficient
- Advanced

16. Tests that students need for admission to college*

- None
- Limited
- Basic
- Moderate
- Proficient
- Advanced

17. The college application process*

- None
- Limited
- Basic
- Moderate
- Proficient
- Advanced

18. Financing a college education*

- None
- Limited

- Basic
- Moderate
- Proficient
- Advanced

19. The types of personal and social skills that students need to succeed in college

- None
- Limited
- Basic
- Moderate
- Proficient
- Advanced

Ramp-Up Curriculum

The following set of questions asks about your perceptions of the Ramp-Up curriculum taught in advisories and workshops.

20. How familiar are you with the Ramp-Up curriculum?

- Not at all familiar [skip to q33]
- Slightly familiar [continue to q22]
- Moderately familiar [continue to q22]
- Very familiar [continue to q22]

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:

21. The Ramp-Up curriculum helps students develop postsecondary plans.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

22. The Ramp-Up curriculum enables students to make informed decisions about preparing for college.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

- Agree
 - Strongly agree
23. The Ramp-Up curriculum enables students to make informed decisions about preparing for a career.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
24. The Ramp-Up curriculum helps students develop the belief that they can turn their postsecondary plans into reality.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
25. The Ramp-Up curriculum helps students understand whether they are on or off track to reach college readiness by the end of high school.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
26. The Ramp-Up curriculum provides students with clear information about what steps must be taken to enroll in college.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
27. The Ramp-Up curriculum provides students with clear information about when key steps in the enrollment process must occur.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree

- Agree
 - Strongly agree
28. The Ramp-Up curriculum covers appropriate topics on preparing for college.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
29. The Ramp-Up curriculum spends the appropriate amount of time on each topic.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
30. The Ramp-Up curriculum consists of a coherent sequence of concepts and ideas.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
31. The Ramp-Up curriculum is engaging to students.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
32. Have you taught at least one Ramp-Up advisory this school year?
- Yes [continue to q34]
 - No [skip to q41]
33. How many of the Ramp-Up lessons did you teach this school year in your advisory?
- Fewer than five lessons [continue to q35]
 - 5–10 lessons [continue to q35]
 - 11–15 lessons [continue to q35]

- 16–20 lessons [continue to q35]
 - 21–25 lessons [continue to q35]
 - All 28 lessons [skip to q36]
 - I don't remember. [skip to q36]
34. Why did you teach fewer than 28 lessons? [text box]
35. Did you receive an Advisor Guide at the beginning of the school year that describes the lesson plan and activities for each weekly advisory?
- Yes
 - No
36. How often did you receive information from the Ramp-Up coordinator about a lesson prior to teaching it?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
 - I am not sure who the Ramp-Up coordinator in my school is.
37. Did you teach the Ramp-Up lessons as they were designed or did you modify them?
- I taught them without any modifications.
 - I modified some of the lessons.
 - I modified most of the lessons.
 - I modified all of the lessons.
38. How often did you provide the Ramp-Up instructional materials and resources to students at the time assigned for the advisory?
- Never
 - Rarely
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always
39. Did you have enough time to prepare lesson content prior to teaching it?

- Never
- Rarely
- Sometimes
- Often
- Always

Ramp-Up Tools

The Ramp-Up program includes two tools to assist students with their plans after high school. These are the Postsecondary Plan and the Readiness Rubric.

The following questions ask about the Postsecondary Plan.

40. How familiar are you with the Postsecondary Plan?

- Not at all familiar [skip to q46]
- Slightly familiar [continue to q42]
- Moderately familiar [continue to q42]
- Very familiar [continue to q42]

Thinking about the Postsecondary Plan and how students, parents, and school staff use it, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

41. The Postsecondary Plan helps students to develop a plan for their life after high school.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

42. I use the Postsecondary Plan when helping students develop plans for their life after high school.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

43. How many students in your Ramp-Up advisory completed the Postsecondary Plan at least once this year?

- None

- A few students
 - Most students
 - All students
 - I do not teach a Ramp-Up advisory.
44. For how many students in your Ramp-Up advisory have you discussed a student's Postsecondary Plan with his or her parents?
- None
 - A few students
 - Most students
 - All students
 - I do not teach a Ramp-Up advisory.

The following questions ask about the Readiness Rubric.

45. How familiar are you with the Readiness Rubric?
- Not at all familiar [skip to q51]
 - Slightly familiar [continue to q47]
 - Moderately familiar [continue to q47]
 - Very familiar [continue to q47]

Thinking about the Readiness Rubric and how students, parents, and school staff use it, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

46. The Readiness Rubric helps students to monitor their progress towards their postsecondary goals.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
47. I use the Readiness Rubric to monitor students' progress toward their postsecondary goals.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree

- Strongly agree
48. How many students in your Ramp-Up advisory completed the Readiness Rubric at least twice this year?
- None
 - A few students
 - Most students
 - All students
 - I do not teach a Ramp-Up advisory.
49. For how many students in your Ramp-Up advisory have you discussed a student's Readiness Rubric with his or her parents?
- None
 - A few students
 - Most students
 - All students
 - I do not teach a Ramp-Up advisory.

Ramp-Up Activity: Personal Readiness Evaluation for Postsecondary

[If Q2=Ramp-Up advisor and Q3=Grade 10 ask Q51 – Q55; else, skip to Q56]

The following questions ask about the Personal Readiness Evaluation for Postsecondary (PREP) survey.

50. How familiar are you with the PREP survey?
- Not at all familiar [skip to q56]
 - Slightly familiar [continue to q52]
 - Moderately familiar [continue to q52]
 - Very familiar [continue to q52]

Thinking about the PREP survey and how students, parents, and school staff use it, please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

51. The PREP survey helps students to understand their personal readiness for college.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree

- Agree
 - Strongly agree
52. I use the PREP to understand students' personal readiness for college.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
53. How many students in your Ramp-Up advisory completed the PREP survey at least once this year?
- None
 - A few students
 - Most students
 - All students
 - I do not teach a Ramp-Up advisory.
54. For how many students in your Ramp-Up advisory have you discussed a student's PREP survey results with his or her parents?
- None
 - A few students
 - Most students
 - All students
 - I do not teach a Ramp-Up advisory.

Professional Development

The following set of questions asks about professional development related to Ramp-Up.

55. Are you a Ramp-Up coordinator or member of the Ramp-Up leadership team?
- Yes [continue to q57]
 - No [skip to q62]
 - Uncertain [skip to q62]
56. Have you received any training by the University of Minnesota's College Readiness Consortium?

- Yes [continue to q58]
- No [skip to q62]
- Uncertain [skip to q62]

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:

57. The training I received provided useful information to me about how to gain staff support for implementing a schoolwide college-readiness program.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
58. The training I received provided useful information to me about my role and responsibilities in delivering Ramp-Up.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
59. Staff at the College Readiness Consortium have responded effectively to questions I have asked about the Ramp-Up program.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - I have not asked the College Readiness Consortium any questions about Ramp-Up.
60. Were the travel costs of your training at the University of Minnesota paid by your school or district?
- Yes
 - No
61. Have you received any training about Ramp-Up at your school?
- Yes [continue to q63]
 - No [skip to q72]

- Uncertain [skip to q72]

62. How many times this school year did you attend training on Ramp-Up?

- Not at all
- One time
- A couple of times
- Every month
- More than once a month
- Other [text box to specify]

Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements:

63. The training I received helped me to understand why my school has adopted a college-readiness program.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

64. The training I received helped me understand the Ramp-Up curriculum.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

65. The training I received helped me understand the Ramp-Up tools (specifically, the Postsecondary Plan and the Readiness Rubric).

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly agree

66. The training I received provided useful information to me about my role and responsibilities in delivering Ramp-Up.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree

- Agree
 - Strongly agree
67. I have enough information about the college selection and enrollment process to teach the Ramp-Up curriculum.
- Strongly disagree [continue to q69]
 - Disagree [continue to q69]
 - Agree [skip to q70]
 - Strongly agree [skip to q70]
 - I do not teach the Ramp-Up curriculum.
68. What additional information would be useful? [text box]
69. I have enough information about the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college to teach the Ramp-Up curriculum.
- Strongly disagree [continue to q71]
 - Disagree [continue to q71]
 - Agree [skip to q72]
 - Strongly agree [skip to q72]
 - I do not teach the Ramp-Up curriculum.
70. What additional information would be useful? [text box]

Perceptions of Program Effectiveness

The following set of questions asks about your perceptions of Ramp-Up's effects. Please indicate the extent to which you disagree or agree with the following statements.

71. The Ramp-Up program increases students' ability to set educational goals.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
72. The Ramp-Up program increases students' ability to make and monitor progress toward educational goals.
- Strongly disagree

- Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
73. The Ramp-Up program increases students' ability to create relationships to support their educational goals.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
74. The Ramp-Up program increases students' ability to meet admissions requirements at a range of colleges.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
75. The Ramp-Up program increases students' likelihood of succeeding academically at college.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
76. The Ramp-Up program increases students' ability to find a career that matches their goals and abilities.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
77. The Ramp-Up program increases students' understanding of ways to pay for college (for example, through savings, loans, financial aid).
- Strongly disagree

- Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
78. The Ramp-Up program has increased my ability to help students prepare and plan for college.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
79. I have more productive conversations with students about how to prepare for life after high school because of Ramp-Up.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - I have not had conversations with students about how to prepare for life after high school.
80. I have more productive conversations with families about how to prepare their children for life after high school because of Ramp-Up.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree
 - I have not had conversations with families about how to prepare their children for life after high school.
81. I have more productive conversations with colleagues about how to prepare students for life after high school because of Ramp-Up.
- Strongly disagree
 - Disagree
 - Agree
 - Strongly agree

- I have not had conversations with colleagues about how to prepare students for life after high school.

82. Which students, if any, can benefit from Ramp-Up? **Check all that apply.**

- Students performing in the lower third of their class academically
- Students performing in the middle third of their class academically
- Students performing in the upper third of their class academically
- Students who would be the first in their families to attend college
- Students whose parents attended college
- All types of students
- No students
- Uncertain

Final Thoughts

Finally, thinking about the Ramp-Up program overall...

83. What are the strengths of Ramp-Up? [text box]

84. What are the weaknesses of Ramp-Up? [text box]

85. What factors, if any, have made implementing Ramp-Up challenging at your school?
[text box]

86. What factors, if any, have facilitated the implementation of Ramp-Up at your school?
[text box]

Thank you for participating in this survey!

Attachment A-9. Educational Sciences Reform Act (ESRA)

This evaluation is authorized through provisions in the Education Sciences Reform Act (ESRA) of 2002. Specifically, ESRA Part D, Section 174 (4) describes the role of regional education laboratories and its mission and function. One aspect of that role is

(4) in the event such quality applied research does not exist as determined by the regional educational laboratory or the Department, carrying out applied research projects that are designed to serve the particular educational needs (in prekindergarten through grade 16) of the region in which the regional educational laboratory is located, that reflect findings from scientifically valid research, and that result in user-friendly, replicable school-based classroom applications geared toward promoting increased student achievement, including using applied research to assist in solving site-specific problems and assisting in development activities (including high-quality and on-going professional development and effective parental involvement strategies) (ESRA, Part D, Section 174, f.4).

Attachment A-10. Federal Register Notices

Attachment A-11. Confidentiality Form and Affidavits

CONFIDENTIALITY AGREEMENT

Ramp-Up to Readiness Implementation Study
(American Institutes for Research under Contract No. ED-IES-12-C-0004)

Safeguards for Individuals Against Invasion of Privacy: In accordance with the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 United States Code 552a), the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279), the Federal Statistical Confidentiality Order of 1997, the E-Government Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-347), and the Computer Security Act of 1987, American Institutes for Research (AIR) and all its subcontractors are required to comply with the applicable provisions of the legislation, regulations, and guidelines and to undertake all necessary safeguards for individuals against invasions of privacy.

To provide this assurance and these safeguards in performance of work on this project, all staff, consultants, and agents of AIR, and its subcontractors who have any access to study data, shall be bound by the following assurance.

Assurance of Confidentiality

1. In accordance with all applicable legislation, regulations, and guidelines, AIR assures all respondents that their responses may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9573].
2. The following safeguards will be implemented to assure that confidentiality is protected as allowable by law (20 U.S.C. § 9573) by all employees, consultants, agents, and representatives of AIR and all subcontractors and that physical security of the records is provided:
 - a. All staff with access to data will take an oath of nondisclosure and sign an affidavit to that effect.
 - b. At each site where these items are processed or maintained, all confidential records that will permit identification of individuals shall be kept in a safe, locked room when not in use or personally attended by project staff.
 - c. When confidential records are not locked, admittance to the room or area in which they reside shall be restricted to staff sworn to confidentiality on this project.
 - d. All electronic data shall be maintained in secure and protected data files, and personally identifying information shall be maintained on separate files from statistical data collected under this contract.
 - e. All data files on network or multi-user systems shall be under strict control of a database manager with access restricted to project staff sworn to confidentiality, and then only on a need-to-know basis.
 - f. All data files on single-user computers shall be password protected and all such machines will be locked and maintained in a locked room when not attended by project staff sworn to confidentiality.

- g. External electronically stored data files (e.g., tapes on diskettes) shall be maintained in a locked storage device in a locked room when not attended by project staff sworn to confidentiality.
 - h. Any data released to the general public shall be appropriately masked such that linkages to individually identifying information are protected to avoid individual identification in disclosed data.
 - i. Data or copies of data may not leave the authorized site for any reason.
3. Staff, consultants, agents, or AIR and all its subcontractors will take all necessary steps to ensure that the letter and intent of all applicable legislation, regulations, and guidelines are enforced at all times through appropriate qualifications standards for all personnel working on this project and through adequate training and periodic follow-up procedures.

By my signature affixed below, I hereby swear and affirm that I have carefully read this statement and fully understand the statement as well as legislative and regulatory assurances that pertain to the confidential nature of all records to be handled in regard to this project, and will adhere to all safeguards that have been developed to provide such confidentiality. As an employee, consultant, agent, or representative of AIR or one of its subcontractors, consultants, agents, or representatives, I understand that I am prohibited by law from disclosing any such confidential information to anyone other than staff, consultant, agents, or representatives of AIR, its subcontractors, or agents, and Institutes of Education Science. I understand that any willful and knowing individual disclosure or allowance of disclosure in violation of the applicable legislation, regulations, and guidelines is punishable by law and would subject the violator to possible fine or imprisonment.

(Signature) (Date)

AFFIDAVIT OF NONDISCLOSURE

Ramp-Up to Readiness Implementation Study
(American Institutes for Research under Contract No. ED-IES-12-C-0004)

[insert name]

[insert position]

Date of Assignment to Ramp-Up to Readiness Implementation Study: January 2014
American Institutes for Research
1000 Thomas Jefferson Street, NW
Washington, DC 20007-3835

I, [insert name], do solemnly swear (or affirm) that when given access to any Ramp-Up to Readiness Implementation Study databases or files containing individually identifiable information, I will not:

- i. use or reveal any individually identifiable information furnished, acquired, retrieved or assembled by me or others, under the provisions of Section 183 of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (PL 107-279) and Title V, subtitle A of the E-Government Act of 2002 (PL 107-347) for any purpose other than statistical purposes specified in the NCES survey, project or contract;
- ii. make any disclosure or publication whereby a sample unit or survey respondent could be identified or the data furnished by or related to any particular person under this section could be identified; or
- iii. permit anyone other than the individuals authorized by the Commissioner of the National Center for Education Statistics to examine the individual reports.

(Signature)

(The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of not more than \$250,000 [under 18 U.S.C. 3571] or imprisonment for not more than 5 years [under 18 U.S.C. 3559], or both. The word "swear" should be stricken out wherever it appears when a person elects to affirm the affidavit rather than to swear to it.)

State of _____

County of _____

Subscribed and sworn/affirmed before me, _____, a Notary Public in and for

_____ County, State of _____, on this date,

_____.

Notary Public

My commission expires: _____.