

## **Appendix A. Recruitment Materials**

1. Information Sheet
2. District Letter
3. Principal Invitation Letter

# Information on the Study: Practices to Sustain the Effects of Preschool

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## What is the Study of Practices to Sustain the Effects of Preschool?

American Institutes for Research (AIR), under contract with the Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS), U.S. Department of Education, is conducting the **Study of Practices to Sustain the Effects of Preschool**. We will conduct case studies of five intentionally selected sites. The study is intended to document characteristics of programs, practices, and policies that could support student growth and development as children enter early elementary school from earlier educational settings. The approaches of interest are (1) prekindergarten to Grade 3 alignment and (2) differentiated instruction. We are interested in learning more about the theoretical or practical background of these programs, how they are implemented, how they are sustained and resourced, and their outcomes

The research will involve phone interviews with key district staff, and site visits during which we will interview key staff at schools, including a sample of teachers or other program staff and, if applicable, the program's funder or evaluator. We also will observe key

## How will the study involve me?

The research team may ask you to participate in an interview (approximately 60-90 minutes) and/or observe your classroom or trainings. Participation is voluntary and any information you provide will be kept anonymous. The project does not involve evaluation of anyone and, though sites will be identified in the final report, individual participants will not be named in any reporting. More information about specific research activities can be found in additional forms that we will provide.

## Who is conducting the study?

The U.S. Department of Education has contracted with AIR to conduct this study.

## When will the study be conducted?

Case study site visits are planned for October 2015.

## For more information

The study team welcomes your questions. Please feel free to contact Katie Drummond (AIR) at 541-521-8517 or [kdrummond@air.org](mailto:kdrummond@air.org), or Karen Manship (AIR) at 650-843-8198 or [kmanship@air.org](mailto:kmanship@air.org).

program activities, such as classroom instruction or teacher trainings. A small stipend will be given to each school in appreciation of your participation.

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## [Department of Education letterhead]

Dear [District Superintendent]:

The U.S. Departments of Education and Health and Human Services are sponsoring a study to learn what practices in the early elementary grades help sustain the positive effects of preschool. [Insert name of district or program] is one of five sites from around the country we hope will participate. We are interested in learning more about the theoretical or practical background of your program, how it is implemented, how it is sustained and resourced, and your program's outcomes.

Each case study will consist of (1) document reviews; (2) phone or in-person interviews with one or two key district-level staff members; (3) phone or in-person interviews with funders and program evaluators, if applicable; and (4) in-person interviews with a sample of teachers or program staff in two schools within your district. The interviews will take approximately 60–90 minutes of the respondents' time. Sites will be identified in the report, but individuals' names and responses will be kept confidential to the extent possible, except as may be required by law. The research will result in a report that identifies cross-site lessons, reveals how practices work on the ground, and discusses implementation challenges and solutions.

A representative from American Institutes for Research (AIR), which is conducting the study, will contact you soon to discuss the your district's program and participation. If you prefer us to contact someone else in your district or have questions about the study, please contact AIR's Study Director, Dr. Kathryn Drummond, at 541-521-8517 or [kdrummond@air.org](mailto:kdrummond@air.org) or Terris Ross at the U.S. Department of Education at (202) 401-4614 or [terris.ross@ed.gov](mailto:terris.ross@ed.gov).

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us gather and disseminate information about how districts and schools implement policies and practices to support the growth and development of students in early elementary grades and sustain the advantages of preschool. We look forward to learning more about the interesting work that you are doing.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Bell-Ellwanger, Director  
Policy and Program Studies Service  
Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development

Libby Doggett, Deputy Assistant Secretary  
for Policy and Early Learning  
Office of Elementary and Secondary  
Education

## Principal Invitation/Notification Letter

[Date]

[Name]

[Position]

[Street Address]

[City, State, Zip]

Dear [Principal]:

We are writing to invite you to participate in an important study sponsored by the Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS) of the U.S. Department of Education focused on best practices in early elementary grades to sustain the positive effects of preschool. Your district is one of five that has been selected for the study because we are interested in learning more about your \_\_\_\_\_ (*list practices or program*) \_\_\_\_\_. We are interested in learning more about the theoretical or practical background of this program, how it is implemented, how it is sustained and resourced, and your program's outcomes.

As a part of the case study, we would like to visit your school, in addition to the district office and one other school in the district, at a convenient date this fall. We have selected your school because the district recommended it as a place where we could learn more about how \_\_\_\_\_ (*list practices or program*) \_\_\_\_\_ are being implemented. Site visits will include interviews with key staff and observations of your classrooms and programs. The interviews will take approximately 60–90 minutes of the respondents' time, and individual responses in the interviews will be kept anonymous to the extent possible, except as may be required by law. Sites will be identified in the report, but individuals' names will not be included. The result of this effort will be a report that identifies cross-site lessons, revealing how practices work on the ground as well as implementation challenges and solutions. A stipend of \$100 will be given to your school in appreciation of your participation.

American Institutes for Research (AIR) is conducting the study. Someone from AIR will contact you in the next two weeks to talk with you more about this study and answer any questions you might have. Should you have any questions in the meantime or if you would like to discuss this study, please feel free to contact me at 541-521-8517 or [kdrummond@air.org](mailto:kdrummond@air.org) or Erica Lee at the U.S. Department of Education at 202-260-1463 or [erica.lee@ed.gov](mailto:erica.lee@ed.gov).

We appreciate your cooperation in helping us gather and disseminate information about how districts and schools are implementing policies and practices to support the growth and development of students in early elementary grades, sustaining the advantages of preschool. We look forward to learning more about the interesting work that you are doing.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Drummond, Study Director  
American Institutes for Research