Appendix K: District Records Data Request

*Note that this is a sample letter that will be sent in the summer of 2015, 2016 and 2017 regarding data for the prior school-year. This sample letter is for the collection of baseline data (2014-2015). We anticipate that the contents of the letter will stay the same but that the dates referenced in the letter will change.

{Date}

Dear {Director of Research Office}

{Name} School District (which includes {names of study schools}) is a key partner in the Evaluation of Multi-Tiered Systems of Support for Behavior (MTSS-B), a congressionally mandated national evaluation funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The goal of the evaluation is to implement an MTSS-B program with fidelity and determine whether universal supports (Tier I) and a targeted intervention (Tier II) with appropriate infrastructure are effective when implemented in a large number of districts and elementary schools.

In choosing to participate in the study and signing the Roles and Responsibilities in the Spring of 2015, your district and schools agreed to provide student-level data to the study team. I am contacting you now because {Name of District Coordinator in the District} informed us that you may be able to help us obtain the necessary student-level data. We greatly appreciate the cooperation you, your district and your schools have provided with data collection thus far.

In the coming days, we hope to consult with you in the collection of the district data to review the i) content of our data request, ii) timeline, and iii) options for transmitting the data securely.

In particular, we are requesting the following types of data to be delivered to our team over the next few months:

1) Student characteristics for students enrolled in grades K-5 during the 2014-2015 school year;

2) Behavioral outcomes for students enrolled in grades K-5 during the 2014-2015 school year;

3) Academic outcomes for students enrolled in grades K-5 during the 2014-2015 school year;

4) Special Education Status for students enrolled in grades K-5 during the 2014-2015 school year;

5) Teacher-level data on teacher background, qualifications and experiences for teachers of grades K-5 during the 2014-2015 school years.

6) School-level versions of all variables for the 2014-2015 school year

This data request concerns the following schools in your district:
   {List study schools}

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is #1850-NEW. The time to fulfill this data request is estimated to average 18 hours, including time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, application or survey, please write directly to Lauren Angelo, U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, 555 new Jersey Avenue, NW, Suite 502h, Washington, D.C. 20208 or email lauren.angelo@ed.gov.

When determining students and teachers to include in the files, please include students who enrolled in the school at any point during the 2014-2015 school year and teachers who taught at the school at any point during the 2014-2015 school year. Please also include the date of enrollment and/or withdrawal.

The attached document includes a description of the specific variables we are requesting in each of the six categories. We are asking that you send us the closest equivalent available data to the types mentioned on the attached list. We are able to work with whatever electronic form is most convenient for your district to prepare (e.g., Excel spreadsheet, dbf file, SAS sd2 file).

In districts that request that DIR hold a cross-walk file so that the analysis team never sees personally identifiable information (pii), we will add the following paragraph:

To keep students' identities private, we have created a firewall between our data collection subcontractor— Decisions Information Resources (DIR)—and the analysis team at MDRC. The process is as follows: Your district will send the data files to DIR who will replace the district's unique identifier for each student with an associated research identification number (research ID). The research ID is just for this study and is not a scrambled identifier containing the same numbers as your district's identifier. Only a limited number of DIR staff will have access to actual student district identification numbers (or student names if unique numerical identifiers are not available). In keeping with the Roles and Responsibilities document and prior discussions with schools and district, DIR will transmit data files to MDRC using only the research ID (i.e., without pii for any of the student data). DIR will transfer these de-identified files to MDRC using a secure server with password-protected file transfer protocol as an added measure of security.

In districts that require active parental consent to share student-level data, we will add the following paragraph:

In accordance with your districts' rules, the study team will be request active informed consent from parents regarding our request for district data. The study team will provide you with a database of names of students who have consented to this data collection. Upon request, we can also provide you with copies of their consent forms for your records.

We appreciate your cooperation and want to assure you that the confidentiality of the data will be safeguarded at all times. Information collected for this study comes under the confidentiality and data protection requirements of the Institute of Education Sciences. All information from this study will be kept confidential as 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. Personally identifiable information about individual respondents will not be reported. We will not provide information that identifies specific individuals, schools or your district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.We are requesting these data solely for use in accordance with the U.S. Department of Education study. All staff from MDRC and DIR have been screened by the federal government in order to work with student-level data and have signed confidentiality agreements. All data files will be stored on a firewall-protected secure server.

We are eager to work with you to expedite this request. We realize that the demographic data may be ready before the student-level achievement data and special education counts. We can arrange a timeline that fits

with your district staffing and data arrangement. We can provide compensation for staff time involved in preparing the data we request.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me by phone or email. I or a member of our team will be in touch within the next week to set up a phone appointment with you and/or any other key colleagues to discuss this request in more detail. In the meantime, if you have questions, contact Barbara Condliffe, Research Associate: Barbara.condliffe@mdrc.org

Thank you for your cooperation with this request.
Sincerely,

Fred Doolittle
Project Director
MDRC
16 East 34th Street
New York, NY
Phone: 212-340-8638 | E-Mail: fred.doolittle@mdrc.org

MDRC District Records Data Request: This template describes the data that will be requested for the MTSS-B study. Data will be requested for three school-years (2015-2016; 2016-2017; 2017-2018). The request will be the same each year.

We would like to receive the closest equivalent available measures to those listed below. We recognize that actual available data may vary from this request, which covers data needed for school years 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017.

Note that for the student-level data requests we are requesting that any student in grade k-5 who has attended one of the study schools (program and business-as-usual schools) during the *school-year* for which the request is made be included in the file even if they have left the school/district or entered the school/district late. For the teacher-level data we are requesting that any homeroom teacher of students in grades k-5 in the study schools (program and business-as-usual schools) be included in the file even if they have left the district or school during the year.

Please include any definitions of variables and data codebooks that will help us interpret the values for the requested variables.

Data type	Level of each observation in the data file	School-Years for which we need data	Where to send the data (password will be provided)
1) Student Characteristics	Student	2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017	FTP folder for **MDRC**
2) Behavioral Outcomes	Student per behavioral event	2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017	FTP folder for **MDRC**
3) Academic Outcomes	Student per test	2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017	FTP folder for **MDRC**
4) Special Education Status	Student	2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017	FTP folder for **MDRC**
5) Teacher characteristics	Teacher	2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017	FTP folder for **MDRC**
6) School-level and grade-level (by school) versions of all variables	School and grade-level summary or aggregate statistics	2014-2015 2015-2016 2016-2017	FTP folder for **MDRC**

1. Student-level characteristics for students enrolled in grades k-5 in the study schools as of *{Date}*

   a. State or District ID
   b. Date of enrollment in school during *School Year* (mm/dd/yy)
   c. Date of departure from school if left school prior to end of *School Year*
   d. Gender
   e. Date of Birth (actual, or month and year)
   f. Hispanic (e.g. 1 if Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin. 0 if not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin)
   g. Race (e.g. "1:White"; "2:Black or African American"; "3:American Indian or Alaska Native"; etc.)
   h. Poverty codes
      a. Free/reduced-price lunch eligibility codes (e.g. 2 if eligible for free lunch; 1 if eligible reduced price lunch and 0 if not eligible for free or reduced lunch)
      b. Any other poverty or family income measure
   i. Special education status codes (e.g.
      a. IEP (1 if has an IEP, 0 if no IEP)
      b. Etc.
   j. English Learner status codes (e.g.
      a. ELL (1 if English Language Learner, 0 if not English Language Learner)
      b. etc.
   k. Grade level
   l. NCES school ID for the school student was attending in spring 2015 (The National Center for Education Statistics code is listed at the end of this document)
   m. School name for the school student was attending in spring 2015
   <u>Student Identifiers</u>: This should be the actual unique State or District ID assigned to the student, which distinguishes this student from any other student in the state or district. This should not be a number created just for this data request. The actual State or District ID is necessary to merge the demographic and test data provided by the district with other student-level data collected by the study team including the roster provided to DIR.

*Please include definitions of the following codes: Race/Ethnicity, Poverty status, English learner. Please indicate the effective date of this data.

2. Behavioral outcomes for students enrolled in grades k-5 during the 2014-2015 school year

   a. Student ID (please use the same State or District ID provided with demographic data)

   b. Start and end-date for each spell of Expulsion in *School-Year*

   c. Start and end date for each spell of Suspension in *School Year*

   d. Count of days attended school in *School Year* (at each school attended)

   e. Count of total days enrolled in school in *School Year* (at each school attended)

     f.   Date for each office disciplinary referral in *School Year* [if available]

3. Academic outcomes

    a. Student ID (Please use the same State or District ID provided with demographic data)
    b. Test date: mm/dd/yyyy
    c. Indicator of whether the student took an alternative or modified assessment
    d. Test type: math or reading
    e. Test name: e.g. for math and e.g for reading
    f. Total raw score: e.g. for math and e.g. for reading
    g. Total scaled score: E.g. for math and e.g for reading
    h. Proficiency category: E.g. for math and e.g for reading
    i. Retention/promotion decision at the end of *School Year*
    j. Description of the standardized math and reading tests

4. Special education status (Students in Grades K-5)
    a. Student ID (please use same state or district ID provided with demographic data)
    b. Data referred for assessment: mm/dd/yyyy
    c. Date identified for IEP
    d. Date exited IEP status (if applicable)
    e. Date identified for 504 plan
    f. Disability category
    g. Inclusion status (e.g. 1 if supported in age-appropriate general education classes and receiving the specialized instruction within the context of the core curriculum and general class activities; 0 if no)

5. Teacher characteristics for homeroom teachers of students in grades K-5 during the *School-year*

    a. Teacher ID this should be the actual unique State or District ID assigned to the student, which distinguishes this student from any other student in the state or district. This should not be a number created just for this data request. The actual State or District ID is necessary to merge the demographic and test data provided by the district with other student-level data collected by the study team including the roster provided to DIR
    b. NCES school ID
    c. Teacher school
    d. Teacher position title
    e. Teacher gender
    f. Teacher race/ethnicity
    g. Teacher absenteeism
    h. Position title
    i. Credential
    j. Years of experience working as a teacher in the district
    k. Years of experience working as a teacher in the school

6. **School-Level Variables:** For all variables listed above, please provide us with school-level and grade-level (by school) versions of these variables for all students and teachers in grades

K-5. We will provide more details on the specs on these variables when the formal request is made.