

PEP PHASE III RECRUITMENT EMAILS

INITIAL EMAIL: Sent by Larry Coles

Good morning/Afternoon (Name of Administrator & Name of Financial Aid Director):

My name is Larry Coles and I am the special initiatives manager for the Minority Serving and Under-Resourced Schools Division (MSURSD) within the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA). The purpose of this email is to encourage your participation in a research study that will be conducted by the Windwalker Corporation, an organization that conducts research in education on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education.

Windwalker Corporation was contracted by FSA to evaluate the resources and services that MSURSD currently provides to minority serving institutions (MSIs) and will expand the study to include schools without the minority serving designation. We are requesting your institution's participation in this phase of the study based on its geographic location, resources, enrollment demographics, and institutional level.

Between November 9th and November 20th, one Windwalker researcher would like to visit your campus to conduct the following:

1. A 90 minute focus group with the financial aid director and 2-3 other financial aid staff members; and
2. A 45 minute interview with the institutional administrator that oversees the financial aid office.

Both the focus group and the interview will occur on the same day. During each session, Windwalker will discuss the following topic areas

1. Campus wide strategies for communicating clearer, more explicit, and less technical communications regarding federal aid compliance;
2. Techniques to expand campus-wide leadership buy-in for federal aid compliance; and
3. Strategies for engaging students in the financial aid process.

The ultimate goal of our research efforts is to increase Title IV compliance rates. During the interview Windwalker will explore lessons learned and best practices that are transferable across colleges and universities. At the conclusion of the interviews and focus groups, Windwalker will provide MSURSD insight on issues, challenges, priorities, and most importantly recommendations on ways to enhance MSURSD services.

Please be on the lookout for a follow-up email from a Windwalker researcher to schedule an onsite visit to your institution.

Thank you in advance for your participation in our efforts.

Regards,

Larry Coles

FOLLOW- UP EMAIL: Sent by Windwalker

Good morning/Afternoon (Name of Administrator & Name of Financial Aid Director):

I am (name of researcher), a member of the research team at Windwalker Corporation. This email is a follow-up to one sent on (date) by (name) requesting your participation in a research study that will examine ways the Minority Serving and Under-Resourced Schools Division (MSURSD) can better support the financial aid office at your institution. Specifically, our data collection team is looking to gain a shared understanding of the strategies used to share student financial aid information and resources across campus; opportunities to build relationships with other offices and departments on campus; and identify and enhance available and accessible training and technical assistance resources and opportunities.

As a participant in the data collection portion of this research, we are requesting the following:

1. A 90 minute focus group with the financial aid director and 2-3 other financial aid staff members; and
2. A 45 minute interview with the institutional administrator that oversees the financial aid office.

The ultimate goal of our research efforts is to increase Title IV compliance rates. During the interview we will explore lessons learned and best practices that are transferable across colleges and universities. At the conclusion of the interviews and focus groups, Windwalker will provide MSURSD insight on issues, challenges, priorities, and most importantly recommendations on ways to enhance MSURSD services.

We are aiming to conduct these visits between November 9th and November 20th. Both the focus group and the interview will occur on the same day but at different times during that day. Please indicate the best dates and times for the interview and the focus group. Additionally, we will need you to identify which financial aid staff members will participate in the focus group.

We would love to schedule these visits by Friday November 6, 2015. Please respond to this request as soon as you are able. If necessary, we will reach out to by phone to confirm the onsite interview details. If you have any questions about this study, I can also be reached at (WW telephone number).

Thank you in advance for considering this request. We look forward to working with you on this research study.

Regards,

(WW researcher)

THANK YOU EMAIL: sent by Windwalker

Dear (name of individual participating in interview):

Thank you for meeting with me during my visit to (name of school) on (date). The Federal Student Financial Aid's Minority Serving and Under Resources Schools Division (MSURSD) works continually to enhance its support to Minority Serving Institutions (MSI). This data collection effort will contribute significantly to our work. If additional data, information or clarification is needed, I will contact your office.

Again, thank you.

Sincerely,

(interviewee)

DRAFT