

# **Now is the Time (NITT)–Project AWARE Evaluation— Site Notification and Recruitment**

## **SUPPORTING STATEMENT**

### **Part B: Collection of Information Employing Statistical Information**

#### **B.1 Respondent Universe and Sampling Methods**

The respondent universe for the AWARE-SEA notification and recruitment task is:

- all AWARE-SEA grantees at the state level (20);
- all grantee partners at the district level (approximately 90 school districts);
- select AWARE-SEA schools in each grantee district to serve as “project site” schools (approximately 4-5 schools per grantee district or 396 “project site” schools total);
- select schools in each grantee district *not* currently supported by AWARE-SEA, to serve as “comparison” schools (approximately 432 “comparison” schools total).

One matched comparison school will be identified for each project site school. The comparison school will be similar to the project site school with regards to demographic characteristics and school safety indicators but is not implementing AWARE-SEA activities. Ideally, the comparison schools will be identified in the same grantee district as the project site schools. Nonpartner districts and schools in neighboring communities will be contacted as needed, should a comparison school not be identified or recruited for a project site school within a grantee district.

#### **B.2 Information Collection Procedures**

As noted earlier, this OMB submission is requesting clearance for the site notification and recruitment portion of the evaluation and is focused on one of several study components: the AWARE-SEA evaluation. A subsequent OMB submission will be prepared and submitted in late summer 2015 to obtain clearance for data collection instruments and procedures for the entire NITT national evaluation.

Notification and recruitment of sites will proceed as follows. The site recruitment letters and other materials are included in the appendices.

#### **Introduce the Study to State, District, and School Leaders**

A letter, brochure, and frequently asked questions (FAQs) will be sent to the AWARE-SEA grant director at the state level to introduce them to the evaluation study, provide a timeline and plans for data collection, and detail the specific areas of support requested from all grantees and their partners. The letter will ask the state official to encourage the cooperation of each of their district-level partners.

School district letters will be sent after confirming the support and approval of the state-level official. As necessary, the approval of district research committees will be requested through submission of the required research application. At the district level, all identified grantee partners will receive a letter, brochure, and FAQs introducing them to the study and asking for their support in specific areas. In particular, grantee districts will be asked to encourage the participation of AWARE-SEA schools in their district and to assist with identifying comparison schools not currently participating in AWARE-SEA. Should it be necessary to enlist the support of nongrantee districts (if a matched comparison school cannot be identified or recruited in a grantee district), a letter and materials will be sent to neighboring school districts where matched schools have been identified. The letter will ask for the district's approval to contact the identified schools.

Upon receiving approval from district officials (including district research committees) to proceed with school-level recruitment, a letter and materials will be sent to schools identified as project site schools or comparison schools in partner districts and to schools identified as comparison schools in nonpartner districts (if necessary). Each letter will indicate the approval of their district superintendent (and research committee, if applicable); describe the study; and invite their participation in the evaluation.

### **Follow-Up Communications**

Within 1 week of sending the letters, follow-up telephone calls will be made to each state, district, and school to confirm receipt of the letter, answer any questions, and ensure their cooperation with the study.

The purpose of the state grantee calls is to: confirm the partner districts and schools; discuss possible comparison schools; and discuss access to MIS data on school safety indicators (e.g., number of suspensions, expulsions, and incidents of school violence).

The purpose of the calls to school district officials is to: discuss project site schools and potential matched comparison schools in more detail; confirm the schools' eligibility for the study (i.e., confirm participation in AWARE-SEA activities for project site schools and no similar activities in place or planned for comparison schools); discuss access to relevant school-level MIS data; and confirm their approval to contact identified schools.

Similar follow-up calls will be made to the school principals to confirm the school's eligibility as a project site or comparison school, enlist their participation in the study, and ask for the identity of a school coordinator to assist with the student surveys.

### **B.3 Methods to Maximize Response Rates**

As recipients of the AWARE-SEA grants, it is expected that grantees and their partners will demonstrate high levels of cooperation and be fully engaged as partners in the evaluation. Nongrantee districts and their schools will only be contacted as necessary if a comparison school cannot be identified in a grantee district. For these nongrantee districts and schools, recruitment will be more challenging. For planning purposes, it is assumed that three schools will need to be contacted before one school will agree to participate as a comparison school in a nongrantee district. At the district level, additional nongrantee districts will be contacted as needed to gain approval for contacting identified matched comparison schools.

Regardless of grantee status, recruitment efforts will be based on establishing strong partnerships at all levels, actively addressing potential concerns, and minimizing burden. Efforts to maximize cooperation include:

- Send customized letters and informational materials to state grantees, districts, and schools; letters will use AWARE-SEA letterhead so they can be readily identified and will be signed by a SAMHSA official;
- Provide clearly written, user-friendly materials (brochure and FAQs);
- Employ trained, experienced recruiters who are part of the evaluation team and will transition into site liaison roles following recruitment;
- Follow up the letters with telephone calls to personally address any concerns and establish rapport;
- In all project site and comparison schools, provide aggregated student survey data for their own schools each year; and
- Make in-person visits to some schools, as necessary.

#### **B.4 Test of Procedures**

Because the site recruitment approach is similar to the approach used in previous studies conducted by the contractor, no field testing of the recruitment scripts is planned. The school contacting system that will be developed to document contact information and track all communications with sites will be based on existing systems and tested appropriately prior to deployment.

As noted in B.3, experienced recruiters with deep knowledge of site recruitment procedures, including use of the school contacting system, will be employed for this study.

#### **B.5 Statistical Consultants**

The study design aspects related to site notification and recruitment have been reviewed by:

- Nainan Thomas, Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA, 240-276-1744.
- Kirstin Painter, Alternate Contracting Officer's Technical Representative, Center for Mental Health Services, SAMHSA, 240-276-1932.
- James Trudeau, RTI International, Project Director, 919-485-7751.
- Heather Ringeisen, RTI International, Deputy Project Director, 919-541-6931.
- Duren Banks, RTI International, AWARE-SEA evaluation lead, 919-541-8026.
- Suyapa Silvia, RTI International, AWARE-SEA school contact lead, 919-541-5851.

An Expert Panel with diverse expertise will advise the evaluation team on study design, instrumentation, and data collection. The panel members, listed below, include experts in school-based mental health programs, systems of care, school safety, school climate, youth violence prevention programs, and bullying prevention.

- Dr. Lynda Gargan, Interim Director, Federation of Families for Children's Mental Health
- Dr. Susan Keys, Associate Professor and Senior Researcher, College of Public Health and Human Sciences, Oregon State University

- Dr. Benjamin Le Cook, Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Harvard Medical School and Senior Scientist, Center for Multicultural Mental Health Research
- Dr. Michael Pullmann, Research Assistant Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, University of Washington
- Dr. Pamela Orpinas, Professor, Department of Health Promotion and Behavior, University of Georgia
- Dr. Mark Salzer, Professor and Chair, Department of Rehabilitation Sciences, Temple University
- Dr. MaJose Carrasco, Director, Multicultural Action Center, National Alliance on Mental Illness

## **LIST OF APPENDICES**

### **Appendix A: State/Grantee Notification Letter**

### **Appendix B: District Notification and Recruitment Letters**

Appendix B.1: District Notification Letter – AWARE-SEA District

Appendix B.2: District Recruitment Letter – non-AWARE-SEA District

### **Appendix C: School Recruitment Letters**

Appendix C.1: School Recruitment Letter – AWARE-SEA School

Appendix C.2: School Recruitment Letter – Comparison School in AWARE-SEA School District

Appendix C.3: School Recruitment Letter – Comparison School in non-AWARE-SEA School District

### **Appendix D: NITT Brochure Text**

### **Appendix E: AWARE-SEA FAQs**