

Task Order 27
Study of Digital Learning Resources for
Instructing English Learner Students

Task 4.5 (Part 7) Survey: Correspondence with Survey Sites and Respondents

October 14, 2016

Submitted to:
U.S. Department of Education
Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development

Submitted by:
Westat
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Study of Digital Learning Resources for Instructing English Learner Students

Task 4.5 (Part 7) Survey: Correspondence with Survey Sites and Respondents

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District Survey Only - District Notification Letter

National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources (NSELD)

Date

Title

School District name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Dear Superintendent /name/:

Your district has been selected to participate in the *National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources* (NSELD), a study conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition and the Office of Educational Technology. We are writing to ask for the support of your district with this important study.

What is the study's goal?

The study will identify the types of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) used in instructing English learner (EL) students and the ways districts and teachers use DLRs to support EL students' second language learning of academic English and core academic content. There is currently only very limited knowledge in the field about the use of DLRs in instructing EL students; the study findings will help to fill that gap.

How will this national study benefit my district?

The findings from the study will inform the field and policy-makers to guide decision-making on the use of DLRS; offer insights as to how DLR developers and practitioners could improve the usefulness of tools for teaching EL students; and lead to the development of guides for educators that we will share with your district at the end of the study.

Who is participating in the study?

This nationally representative study will include approximately 1,000 school districts, and 1,200 teachers of EL students (mainstream and EL-specialist teachers). The study includes both districts with large numbers of EL students and also districts with very small numbers of EL students to understand the use of DLRs across *all* districts with one or more EL student.

What is my district being asked to do?

We are asking you to identify the person at your district who is most knowledgeable about English learner student services in your district. In January 2017, we will ask him/her to complete a survey. Please provide the contact information for this individual within **two weeks** after receiving this request, either via email at DLRS-ELS-Contact@westat.com or by toll-free fax at 1-800-254-0984.

Where can I obtain further information?

Westat and SRI are conducting this study for the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any questions about the study, please contact a study representative at our toll-free number 1-855-241-7535 or by email at DLRS-ELS@westat.com.

Thank you for your cooperation with this important initiative in helping the U.S. Department of Education understand more about how DLRs are being used in K-12 education for EL students. We look forward to working with your district to make this study a success. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Annette M. Zehler, PhD
Project Director
Westat

Phil Vahey, PhD
Deputy Director
SRI International

Attached: Study Description

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will not present any personally identifiable information in any report or publication resulting from the study; we will not identify your school or district in any study report or publication; and no responses will be linked with any identifying information in any final data files created for the study. All responses will be aggregated and summarized across respondents. The study team will protect or maintain confidentiality of your responses except as may be required by law. No individuals other than research staff will see any individually identifying data (for example, names or addresses). Your participation is voluntary; however, your district's participation is very important to providing policymakers with accurate and complete information. Data collection is being conducted in only a sample of districts throughout the nation. This greatly increases the importance of your response since it represents many other districts.

If you have any questions about the study, please call 855-241-7535. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please call the Westat Human Subjects Protections office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name, the name of the study (*Study of DLRs for Instructing English Learner Students*), and a phone number beginning with the area code. A research office staff person will return your call as soon as possible.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such a collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is xxxx-xxxx. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 55 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving the survey, please write: U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the contents or the status of your individual survey, write directly to: Study of the Use of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) in Instructing EL Students, Policy and Program Studies Service, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, 400 Maryland Ave, SW, Washington DC 20202.

Survey and School Roster - District Subsample Notification Letter

National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources (NSELD)

Date

Title

School District name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Dear Superintendent /name/:

Your district has been selected to participate in the *National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources* (NSELD), a study conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition and the Office of Educational Technology. We are writing to ask for the support of your district with this important study.

What is the study's goal?

The study will identify the types of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) used in instructing English learner (EL) students and the ways districts and teachers use DLRs to support EL students' second language learning of academic English and core academic content. There is currently only very limited knowledge in the field about the use of DLRs in instructing EL students; the study findings will help to fill that gap.

How will this national study benefit my district?

The findings from the study will inform the field and policy-makers to guide decision-making on the use of DLRs; offer insights as to how DLR developers and practitioners could improve the usefulness of tools for teaching EL students; and lead to the development of guides for educators and developers that we will share with your district at the end of the study.

Who is participating in the study?

This nationally representative study will include approximately 1,000 school districts, and 1,200 teachers of EL students (mainstream and EL-specialist teachers). The study includes both districts with large numbers of EL students and also districts with very small numbers of EL students to understand the use of DLRs across *all* districts with one or more EL student.

What is my district being asked to do?

- Identify the person at your district who is most knowledgeable about English learner student services in your district, to serve as the NSELD Study EL Contact.
- Review the attached **list of schools** from your district and make any necessary corrections.

Please provide the requested information within **two weeks** after receiving this request, either via email at DLRS-ELS-Contact@westat.com or by toll-free fax at 1-800-254-0984.

Next Steps

- We will sample one school from the list of schools. That school will be asked to supply a list of teachers (by name or initials only) so that we can randomly select two teachers of English learner students (whether a mainstream teacher or an EL specialist) to participate in a teacher survey. Teachers will receive a \$25 incentive upon completion.
- In January 2017, we will ask the District NSELD Study EL Contact to complete a district survey and ask the two selected teachers to each complete a teacher survey.

Where can I obtain further information?

Westat and SRI are conducting this study for the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any questions about the study, please contact a study representative at our toll-free number 1-855-241-7535 or by email at DLRS-ELS@westat.com.

Thank you for your cooperation with this important initiative in helping the U.S. Department of Education to understand more about how DLRs are being used in K-12 education for EL students. We look forward to working with your district to make this study a success. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Annette M. Zehler, PhD
Project Director
Westat

Phil Vahey, PhD
Deputy Director
SRI International

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We will not present any personally identifiable information in any report or publication resulting from the study; we will not identify your school or district in any study report or publication; and no responses will be linked with any identifying information in any final data files created for the study. All responses will be aggregated and summarized across respondents. The study team will protect or maintain confidentiality of your responses except as may be required by law. No individuals other than research staff will see any individually identifying data (for example, names or addresses). Your participation is voluntary; however, your district's participation is very important to providing policymakers with accurate and complete information. Data collection is being conducted in only a sample of districts throughout the nation. This greatly increases the importance of your response since it represents many other districts.

If you have any questions about the study, please call 855-241-7535. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please call the Westat Human Subjects Protections office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name, the name of the study (*Study of DLRs for Instructing English Learner Students*), and a phone number beginning with the area code. A research office staff person will return your call as soon as possible.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such a collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is xxxx-xxxx. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving the survey, please write: U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the contents or the status of your individual survey, write directly to: Study of the Use of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) in Instructing EL Students, Policy and Program Studies Service, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, 400 Maryland Ave, SW, Washington DC 20202.

Survey: School Notification Letter – Request for Teacher List
National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources (NSELD)

Date

Title

School Name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Dear Principal /name/:

Your school has been selected to participate in the *National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources* (NSELD), a study conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition and the Office of Educational Technology. We are writing to ask for your support with this study.

What is the study's goal?

The study will identify the types of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) used in instructing English learner (EL) students and the ways districts and teachers use DLRs to support EL students' second language learning of academic English and core academic content. There is currently only very limited knowledge in the field about the use of DLRs in instructing EL students; the study findings will help to fill that gap.

How will this national study benefit my district?

The findings from the study will inform the field and policy-makers to guide decision-making on the use of DLRS; offer insights as to how DLR developers and practitioners could improve the usefulness of tools for teaching EL students; and lead to the development of guides for educators and developers that we will share with your school at the end of the study.

Who is participating in the study?

This nationally representative study will include approximately 1,000 school districts, and 1,200 teachers of EL students (mainstream and EL-specialist teachers). The study includes both districts with large numbers of EL students and also districts with very small numbers of EL students to understand the use of DLRs across *all* districts with one or more EL student.

What is my school being asked to do?

- Identify a **study liaison** for your school. (This would generally be the person most responsible for English learner student services in your school.)
- Complete a **list of teachers** (names or initials only) as indicated in the attached form. We will select two teachers of EL students (each a mainstream teacher or EL specialist) from the list to be the survey respondents. We will ask the two teachers to participate in a teacher survey in January 2017. Teachers will receive a \$25 incentive upon completion of the survey.

Please provide the requested information within **two weeks** after receiving this request, either via email at DLRS-ELS-Contact@westat.com or by toll-free fax at 1-800-254-0984.

Where can I obtain further information?

Westat and SRI are conducting this study for the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any questions about the study, please contact a study representative at our toll-free number 1-855-241-7535 or by email at DLRS-ELS@westat.com.

Thank you for your cooperation with this important initiative in helping the U.S. Department of Education to understand more about how DLRs are being used in K-12 education for EL students. We look forward to working with your district to make this study a success. Thank you in advance for your participation.

Sincerely,

Annette M. Zehler, PhD
Project Director
Westat

Phil Vahey, PhD
Deputy Director
SRI International

Attached: Teacher Listing Form and Instructions
 Study Description

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will not present any personally identifiable information in any report or publication resulting from the study; we will not identify your school or district in any study report or publication; and no responses will be linked with any identifying information in any final data files created for the study. All responses will be aggregated and summarized across respondents. The study team will protect or maintain confidentiality of all responses except as may be required by law. No individuals other than research staff will see any individually identifying data (for example, names or addresses). Your participation is voluntary; however, your school's participation is very important to providing policymakers with accurate and complete information. Data collection is being conducted in only a sample of districts throughout the nation. This greatly increases the importance of your response since it represents many other districts.

If you have any questions about the study, please call 855-241-7535. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, please call the Westat Human Subjects Protections office at 1-888-920-7631. Please leave a message with your full name, the name of the study (*Study of DLRs for Instructing English Learner Students*), and a phone number beginning with the area code. A research office staff person will return your call as soon as possible.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such a collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is xxxx-xxxx. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 40 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving the survey, please write: U.S. Department of Education, Washington D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the contents or the status of your individual survey, write directly to: Study of the Use of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) in Instructing EL Students, Policy and Program Studies Service, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, 400 Maryland Ave, SW, Washington DC 20202.

Survey: Teacher Notification Letter
National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources (NSELD)

Date

Title

School Name

Address

City, State, ZIP

Dear Teacher /name/:

You have been selected to participate in the *National Study of English Learners and Digital Learning Resources (NSELD)*, a study conducted for the U.S. Department of Education, Office of English Language Acquisition and the Office of Educational Technology.

What is the study's goal?

The study will identify the types of Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) used in instructing English learner (EL) students and the ways districts and teachers use DLRs to support EL students' second language learning of academic English and core academic content. There is currently only very limited knowledge in the field about the use of DLRs in instructing EL students; the study findings will help to fill that gap.

Who is participating in the study?

This nationally representative study includes approximately 1,000 school districts, and 1,200 teachers of EL students (mainstream and EL-specialist teachers). The study includes teachers who instruct only EL students as well as mainstream teachers who instruct only one or a very few EL students. It is very important to include the responses of *all* teachers who instruct EL students.

What am I being asked to do?

We are asking that you complete an online survey about your experiences using DLRs for instructing your EL students:

- The survey will take approximately 35 minutes to complete.
- In appreciation of your time, you will receive a \$25 incentive within six to eight weeks after submission of your completed survey.

How do I complete the online survey?

The survey is available at (*insert web link*). The username and password for accessing the NSELD Teacher Online Survey appear at the bottom of this letter and is also included on the attached web survey if you have any problems in accessing the survey, please contact xxxx by calling 1-855-241-7535 or by emailing xxxxx. We ask that you please **complete your survey within the next 2 weeks**. You will receive a friendly reminder if your survey is not completed by the end of the first week.

Why should I participate?

Your participation is critical to the success of the study. You are contributing to an important initiative on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education to understand how DLRs are used in K-12 education for EL students. Your participation is voluntary but is needed to ensure that the findings of the study are accurate, and your responses will represent many other teachers in similar instructional roles. All data

collected for this study will be protected to maintain confidentiality, except as required by law, and no individual person, school or district will be identified in any reports or other descriptions of findings.

Where can I obtain further information?

Westat and SRI are conducting this study for the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any questions about the study, please contact a study representative at our toll-free number 1-855-241-7535 or by email at DLRS-ELS@westat.com. Thank you in advance for your participation in this study. We look forward to working with you to make this study a success!

Sincerely,

Annette M. Zehler, PhD
Project Director
Westat

Phil Vahey, PhD
Deputy Director
SRI International

Attached: Teacher Online Survey Link
 Study Description

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