



**National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)**

**School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) 2018  
Cognitive Interviews 2016**

**Appendices A – E  
Communication Materials**

**OMB #1850-0803 v.171**

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## **Appendix A: Recruitment E-mail for SSOCS Cognitive Interviews**

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Subject: Opportunity to Participate in a Research Study

<DATE>

Dear School Principal,

My name is <CONTACT NAME> and I am contacting you from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) [<RECRUITER>, a <RECRUITER LOCATION> area research company]. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, and its contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), are conducting an important study on school crime and safety.

On behalf of NCES, we are recruiting elementary and secondary principals (or other school personnel who are most knowledgeable about school crime and policies to provide a safe environment) to assist with the development of the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS). Participants must have at least one full year of experience at their school in order to be eligible to participate in this study.

NCES needs to know if the questions in the survey are clear, and your input will help NCES to improve the overall quality of the survey. Participants will be asked to think aloud while they read questions from the School Survey on Crime and Safety. Additionally, the interviewer (AIR staff member) will ask targeted questions to gain a better understanding of participant comprehension of the survey questions. If selected to participate, you will receive either a \$50 gift card for your participation in a remote interview or a \$75 gift card for your participation in an in-person interview as a thank you for your time and effort.

The interview session can either take place in-person at your school or can be conducted remotely by telephone or video conference and will last approximately 60 minutes. The session can be scheduled at your convenience. Your participation is voluntary, and you may request to stop at any time during the interview session. The interview session will be recorded; all of your responses will be used for research purposes only and will not be disclosed or used, in identifiable form, for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573].

If you are interested in participating in this research study, please call (202) 403-6420 or e-mail [ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org). If you are not the person at your school that is most knowledgeable about school crime and policies to provide a safe environment, please feel free to forward this request to the most appropriate contact. We look forward to speaking with you soon!

Thank you,

Steven Hummel  
American Institutes for Research  
1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 403-6420  
[ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org)

## Appendix B: Recruitment Script for SSOCS Cognitive Interviews

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My name is <CONTACT NAME> and I am contacting you from the American Institutes for Research (AIR) [<RECRUITER>, a <RECRUITER LOCATION> area research company]. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, and its contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), are conducting an important study on school crime and safety. On behalf of NCES, we are looking for school principals or other school personnel who are “most knowledgeable about school crime and policies to provide a safe environment” to participate in interview sessions to help us understand how they interpret survey questions on school crime and safety. I'd like to tell you a little bit about the study; is now a good time? (YES or NO and call back later).

The School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) is a nationally representative survey administered by NCES. Our objective in these interviews will be to assess the clarity of SSOCS survey questions. The information gained from these interview sessions will be used to revise the survey items. AIR will be conducting the interviews on behalf of NCES. Your participation is voluntary, and the interview session can be scheduled at your convenience. As a thank you for your time and effort, you will receive either a \$50 gift card for your participation in a remote interview or a \$75 gift card for your participation in an in-person interview.

As we know that <SCHOOL NAME> is <SCHOOL CHARACTERISTICS (EX: ENROLLMENT SIZE, LOCATION, DEMOGRAPHICS)> you qualify to participate in an interview session with a researcher to discuss survey questions on school crime and safety. Would you be interested in participating in an interview session?

Participants must have at least one full year of experience at their school in order to be eligible to participate in this study. Have you been <POSITION> at this school for at least one full school year?

[If no, thank and terminate.]

The session will last approximately 60 minutes, and the interview is strictly for research purposes. Let me assure you that no one will attempt to sell or enroll you in anything.

We have several options for participation. The interview session can either take place in-person at <PRINCIPAL'S SCHOOL> or can be conducted remotely by telephone or video conference. The session can be scheduled at your convenience. Would you prefer an in-person or remote interview session? What date and time would work best for you?

[Wait for respondent response] Okay, great! The interview is scheduled for <DAY/DATE AND TIME>. Can you provide us with your email address so that we can send you a confirmation email? Following this conversation, you will receive an email confirming your interview time and location.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in an interview session. We look forward to seeing you on the <DATE> at <TIME>.

## **Appendix C: Informed Consent Form for SSOCS Cognitive Interviews**

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Dear Participant,

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, and its contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR), are developing a survey, the School Survey on Crime and Safety. As part of the development process, we are seeking principals or school personnel who are “most knowledgeable about school crime and policies to provide a safe environment” to participate in interview sessions in an effort to gather information that will improve the clarity of the survey. An AIR staff member will meet with principals individually for up to 60 minutes by audio or video conference or in-person at <LOCATION>. As a thank you for their time and effort, participants will receive either a \$50 gift card for their participation in a remote interview or a \$75 gift card for their participation in an in-person interview.

Participants will be asked to think aloud while they read questions from the School Survey on Crime and Safety. Additionally, the interviewer (AIR staff member) will ask targeted questions to gain a better understanding of the principal’s comprehension of the survey questions. Participants’ responses will be recorded, and the information collected during these sessions will be used for research purposes only. Your participation is voluntary, and you may request to stop at any time during the interview session.

If you have any questions about this study or your rights as a study participant, you may contact Steven Hummel at the American Institutes for Research by phone (202-403-6420) or by email ([ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org)).

Before you are eligible to participate, you must sign the attached consent form.

Thank you,

Steven Hummel  
American Institutes for Research  
1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 403-6420  
[ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org)

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### Consent Form

You are invited to participate voluntarily in this interview, which is being conducted by the American Institutes for Research, a contract research firm, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is part of the U.S. Department of Education. The purpose of this interview is to help NCES review the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) questionnaire to ensure that new survey items are well understood.

NCES is authorized to conduct these interviews by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA; 20 U.S.C. §9543), and this study has been approved by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB# 1850-0803). The interview and discussion will take approximately 60 minutes, and all responses will be recorded. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions we ask—we just want to ask your opinions about the questionnaire that has been developed. You will be asked how you understand specific terms and phrases in the questions as well as how you arrived at your answers. You can help us by describing anything you find confusing or difficult to understand in the questions or any issues that come up as you answer them.

Again, your participation in this study is voluntary. There is no physical risk and only minimal risk associated with data confidentiality. We will protect your information. We do not anticipate that any of the discussion topics will make you uncomfortable or upset. However, you may refuse to answer any question, and you may take a break at any time. The information you give us will be combined with the responses of others in a summary report that does not identify you as an individual. Your answers may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. § 9573).

There are no direct benefits to you for participating in this study, but we hope that these interviews will help us develop and improve questions for a national survey about school crime and safety. Upon completing the interview, you will receive <INCENTIVE AMOUNT> in appreciation for your time and effort.

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I have read the attached consent form for the School Survey on Crime and Safety and associated activities; all of my questions have been answered. The above document describing the voluntary nature, response confidentiality, and procedures for this research study has been explained to me. I agree to participate.

**Signature of Participant** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

I certify that the purpose, the voluntary nature, and response confidentiality associated with participating in this research have been explained to me.

**Signature of Person Who Obtained Consent** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

**Appendix D: Confirmation E-mail for SSOCS Cognitive Interviews (In Person)**

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Subject: Confirmation of SSOCS Study Participation

<DATE>

Dear <NAME>,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) study. This study is being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, and its contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Your input will help NCES improve the clarity of the survey so that others will better understand it. You will be asked to think aloud as you read sample questions from the School Survey on Crime and Safety so that we can better understand your comprehension of survey items. Your participation is voluntary, and you may request to stop at any time during the session.

Your responses will be used for research purposes only and will not be disclosed or used, in identifiable form, for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. Your responses will be recorded.

You have been scheduled for an interview session at <TIME RANGE> on <DATE> at <LOCATION>. You will receive a \$75 gift card as a thank you for your time and participation.

The address of <LOCATION> is as follows:

<ADDRESS>

We thank you for your participation in this important study. If you have any questions, please contact Steven Hummel at (202) 403-6420 or [ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org).

Thank you,

Steven Hummel  
American Institutes for Research  
1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 403-6420  
[ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org)

**Appendix E: Confirmation E-mail for SSOCS Cognitive Interviews (Remote)**

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Subject: Confirmation of SSOCS Study Participation

<DATE>

Dear <NAME>,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) study. This study is being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, and its contractor, the American Institutes for Research (AIR). Your input will help NCES improve the clarity of the survey so that others will better understand it. You will be asked to think aloud as you read sample questions from the School Survey on Crime and Safety so that we can better understand your comprehension of survey items. Your participation is voluntary, and you may request to stop at any time during the session.

Your responses will be used for research purposes only and will not be disclosed or used, in identifiable form, for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) 20 U.S.C., § 9573]. Your responses will be recorded.

You have been scheduled for a <TELEPHONE OR VIDEO CONFERENCE> interview session at <TIME RANGE> on <DATE>. You will receive a \$50 gift card as a thank you for your time and participation.

<VIDEO CONFERENCE LOG-IN INFORMATION>

We thank you for your participation in this important study. If you have any questions, please contact Steven Hummel at (202) 403-6420 or [ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org).

Thank you,

Steven Hummel  
American Institutes for Research  
1000 Thomas Jefferson St. NW  
Washington, DC 20007  
(202) 403-6420  
[ssocs.survey@air.org](mailto:ssocs.survey@air.org)