

March 30, 2020

**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Robert Sivinski, OMB  
**From:** Rachel Hansen, NCES  
**Through:** Carrie Clarady, Avar Consulting, in contract to NCES  
**Re:** School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) 2018 and 2020 – SSOCS 2020 Spring 2020 Change Request (OMB# 1850-0761 v.18)

The School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) is a nationally representative survey of elementary and secondary school principals that serves as the primary source of school-level data on crime and safety in public schools. SSOCS is the only recurring federal survey collecting detailed information on the incidence, frequency, seriousness, and nature of violence affecting students and school personnel from the school's perspective. Data are also collected on frequency and types of disciplinary actions taken for select offenses; perceptions of other disciplinary problems, such as bullying, verbal abuse and disorder in the classroom; the presence and role of school security staff; parent and community involvement; staff training; mental health services available to students; and, school policies and programs concerning crime and safety. Prior administrations of SSOCS were conducted in 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2010, 2016, and 2018. The 2018 and 2020 SSOCS full-scale data collections were approved in July 2017 with the latest update approved in September 2019 (OMB# 1850-0761 v.12-17).

This submission provides updated versions of the SSOCS 2020 communications materials. These changes to the communication materials and schedules of respondent outreach are due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak, which has resulted in the closing of schools and a temporary discontinuation of mailout operations. A workaround for this is to send more email reminders to request for a response via the online instrument and to delay paper questionnaire mailouts to a later date. Part A has been updated to reflect a new addition to the package, and Appendix A has been updated to reflect new dates for emails and packages to be sent, as well as adding two additional emails to be sent throughout data collection.

The noteworthy changes to the approved materials are listed below. Text added since the last approved version of each document is marked in burgundy font color, all text deleted since the last approved version is marked in crossed-out burgundy font color, and all unchanged text is shown in black font.

**The follow updates were made to [Part A](#):**

**Section A. Justification. (p. 1)**

The request to conduct the 2018 and 2020 School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS) was approved in July 2017 with the latest update approved in ~~May 2019 (OMB# 1850-0761 v.12-16). This latest submission provides the final versions of the SSOCS 2020 communications materials and questionnaire.~~ September 2019 (OMB# 1850-0761 v.12-17). This latest submission provides updated versions of the SSOCS 2020 communications materials and new schedules for respondent outreach, changes due to the COVID-19 pandemic outbreak which has resulted in the closing of schools and a temporary discontinuation of mailout operations. Appendix A has been updated to reflect new dates for emails and packages to be sent, as well as

adding two additional emails to be sent throughout data collection.

**The following updates were made to [Appendix A](#) – SSOCS 2018 & SSOCS 2020 Communication Materials**

**The final versions of contact materials for SSOCS:2020 are provided on pp. 58-106.**

**2020 SSOCS Letters and Emails**

SSOCS-15L(WI & W) (pp. 78 & 79)

*The following change was made to the scheduled date for mailing:*

2020 Second Reminder Letter to Principal; 3<sup>rd</sup> Package – Delayed Incentive (first paper questionnaire) ~~(03/26/20) (Updated September 2019)~~ (to be sent 3 weeks after Census National Processing Center is Operational) (Date Updated March 2020)

2020 Second Reminder Letter to Principal; 3<sup>rd</sup> Package – No Incentive (first paper questionnaire) ~~(03/26/20) (No change)~~ (to be sent 3 weeks after Census National Processing Center is Operational) (Date Updated March 2020)

SSOCS-16L (p. 80)

*The following change was made to the scheduled date for mailing:*

2020 Third Reminder Letter to Principal; 4<sup>th</sup> Package, Second Questionnaire ~~(04/23/20) (Updated September 2019)~~ (to be sent 3 weeks after Census National Processing Center is Operational) (Date Updated March 2020)

2<sup>nd</sup> Reminder Email to principals (p.83)

*The following change was made to the scheduled date for mailing:*

2020 Second reminder E-mail – All Treatments ~~(04/2/20) (Updated September 2019)~~ (4/14/20) (Date Updated March 2020)

3<sup>rd</sup> Reminder Email to principals (p. 84)

*The following edits were made:*

2020 Third reminder e-mail ~~(04/14/20) (Updated September 2019)~~ (3/26/20) (Date Updated March 2020)

Subject Line: **Reminder!** U.S. Department of Education Survey – ~~Last Chance to participate~~ Help Provide Information on Written Plans and Emergency Procedures

Did you know that during the 2017-18 school year, ~~a lack 45.7% of or inadequate alternative placements or programs for disruptive students and inadequate funds were~~ all public schools reported as a major way having a written plan describing procedures to be performed in the event of ~~limiting schools' efforts to reduce or prevent crime~~ a pandemic disease?

New Reminder Email to principals to be sent on 4/7/20 (p. 85)

2020 Reminder e-mail (04/7/20) (Date Updated March 2020)

Subject Line: Reminder! U.S. Department of Education Survey – Help Provide Information on Written Plans and Emergency Procedures

Dear (name):

There is still time for your school to participate in the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS), the only national recurring survey on the frequency of crime and violence in public schools and the programs and practices developed to provide a safe school environment. If you have already completed and returned your questionnaire, thank you! If not, in order for your school to be included in this study, which is used by policy makers, school districts, and the media to understand current issues in school safety, it is critical that you respond now by clicking on the link below.

Respond now at <https://respond.census.gov/ssocs>

Log in using this User ID: <USERID>

Please note that reports of the findings from the survey will not identify schools by name. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Did you know that during the 2017-18 school year, 45.7% of all public schools reported having a written plan describing procedures to be performed in the event of a pandemic disease?

You may call with any questions or may complete the survey over the phone by calling the U.S. Census Bureau at 1-888-595-1332 or via e-mail at [ssocs@census.gov](mailto:ssocs@census.gov). To learn more about SSOCS, visit <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/ssocs>.

Sincerely,

James (Lynn) Woodworth, Ph. D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics  
U.S. Department of Education

New Reminder Email to principals to be sent on 5/7/20 (p. 87)

2020 Reminder e-mail (05/7/20) (updated March 2020)

Subject Line: U.S. Department of Education Survey Reminder

Dear (name):

There is still time for your school to participate in the School Survey on Crime and Safety (SSOCS). SSOCS produces valuable data on crime and safety in public schools.

If you have already completed and returned your questionnaire, thank you! If not, please complete and return it as soon as possible. You may also respond now by clicking on the link below.

Respond now at <https://respond.census.gov/ssocs>

Log in using this User ID: <USERID>

Please note that reports of the findings from the survey will not identify schools by name. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

If you have any questions contact the U.S. Census Bureau, the survey collection agency, by phone at 1-888-595-1332 or via e-mail at [ssocs@census.gov](mailto:ssocs@census.gov). To learn more about SSOCS, visit <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/ssocs>.

Sincerely,

James (Lynn) Woodworth, Ph. D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics  
U.S. Department of Education