

Dear [Project Director]:

The Policy and Program Studies Service (PPSS) of the U.S. Department of Education would like to request your participation in a site visit to your program to be conducted between July and October, 2009, preferably at the same time as your scheduled Summer Institute. We would like to request that you allow two site visitors from Berkeley Policy Associates and/or SRI International, the national evaluators for the Teaching American History Evaluation (described below) to attend your Summer Institute for a period of two to three days to conduct interviews with you (the project director), with one to three trainers or partners and 15-20 teachers participating in the Summer Institute. In addition, the site visitors would like to observe some training sessions.

The Teaching American History Evaluation is a four-year study sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education to examine the relationship between teachers' participation in the Teaching American History program and increased teacher content knowledge and student achievement. Activities of the evaluation will include an *Analysis of State American History Assessment Data* to determine whether there is a relationship between participation in the grants and gains in student achievement, an *Analysis of Grantee Evaluations through Annual Performance Report (APR) Data and Grantee Evaluation*; a *Meta-Analysis/Empirical Synthesis of High Quality Grantee Evaluations*; and two sets of *Case Studies to Document Practices*. One set of eight site visits will focus on the relationship between TAH participation and increases in teacher content knowledge in U.S. history and the other set of eight site visits will focus on the relationship of TAH participation to increased student achievement in U.S. history. The full study period extends from September 2007 through September 2011. Teaching American History grantees awarded in FY04 through FY06 will be included in the study. The evaluation questions for the study include:

- What is the association between participation in activities supported through the Teaching American History (TAH) program and teacher content knowledge?
- What is the association between teacher participation in TAH and student achievement?
- What are the grantee practices associated with gains in teacher content knowledge?
- What are the grantee practices associated with gains in student achievement?

We are asking for your participation in the case studies related to teacher content knowledge or student practices. A BPA or SRI representative will be contacting you soon to explain the study in more depth and answer any questions you may have.

We will treat the information you supply in a confidential manner. Only selected evaluation staff will have access to your actual interview responses and to those of your participants and partners. Individuals will never be identified by name in any report to the public or the Department of Education, but they may be identified by title, e.g. Grade 8 Social Studies teacher.

As part of the evaluation, the SRI team will be sharing its findings with the U.S. Department of Education. The results of the study will describe the strengths as well as areas for improvement in the TAH grant program. Findings submitted to the Department will describe the progress made and the difficulties encountered during the course of implementing these TAH grants. Reports released to the public will always use pseudonyms when referring to TAH grantees, schools, and districts, as well as individuals.

Your participation will contribute greatly to the advancement of knowledge related to what makes the TAH Grant program successful and to recommendations for improvement. BPA and SRI are experienced case study evaluators who will work to minimize the time burden to you and your program participants.

If you have additional questions about the study, please contact Dr. Phyllis Weinstock of Berkeley Policy Associates at Phyllis@bpacal.com or 510-465-7884 x221.

Thank you very much for helping in this important data collection effort.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Director, Policy and Program Studies Service

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency is not allowed to collect information unless it displays a valid OMB control number and no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such 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 one hour for teachers and training providers, and three hours for project directors, 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 estimates or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, write directly to: [insert program sponsor/office], U.S. Department of Education, 600 Independence Avenue, S.W., [insert building/room number], Washington, D.C. 20202-xxxx.