

Attachment A-5. Superintendent Follow-up Email

Dear [District Superintendent],

We recently contacted you regarding REL Southwest's study investigating relationships between measures of students' noncognitive factors (e.g., persistence, learning strategies academic behaviors, academic mindsets) and their transitions to high school, as well as student's perceptions of their school climate. The goal of the study, with support from the New Mexico Public Education Department, is to identify factors that help students transition to high school and have a successful ninth grade year. Since we did not get a response from you, we wanted to take the time extend the invitation for your district high schools to participate in the study one more time.

Below are some FAQ's about study procedures. Please read them over to learn more about the study and how your district can participate.

Who is eligible to participate?

We are looking for districts that are willing to allow REL Southwest researchers to administer a survey to all ninth grade students in district high schools during the fall of 2015.

What are the study materials and how will they be distributed?

High schools in participating districts will be asked to allow REL Southwest researchers to administer a survey to all ninth grade students during their grade 9 English class. The survey asks students to respond to questions about their teachers, schoolwork, transitions to high school, peers, parents' assistance with planning for the future, and plans for the future. It should take students approximately 20 minutes to complete the survey. Students will not be asked questions about any sensitive topics.

REL Southwest researchers will be responsible for survey administration, including survey dissemination and collection. A REL Southwest researcher will contact a designated administrative staff member to coordinate dates for survey administration and to collect classroom rosters.

What additional information will be collected?

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 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 1850-xxxx. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes/hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, application or survey, please contact (Deborah Van Kummer by email at deborah.vankummer@sedl.org directly. [Note: Please do not return the completed instrument, form, application or survey to this address.]

As part of the study, REL Southwest will need to collect student grade point average (GPA) data for grade 9 students in district high schools. A REL Southwest researcher will be in contact with your designated district database manager to arrange for secure transfer of data. Schools will also need to provide student classroom rosters including their names and ID numbers so that student surveys can be pre-populated with this information.

Will data from the study be secure?

The data collection efforts will ensure that all individually identifiable information about students, their academic achievements, their families and information with respect to individual schools, shall remain confidential in accordance with section 552a of Title 5, United States Code, the confidentiality standards of subsection (c) of this section, and sections 444 and 445 of the General Education Provision Act. The study will also adhere to requirements of subsection (d) of section 183 prohibiting disclosure of individually identifiable information as well as making the publishing or inappropriate communication of individually identifiable information by employees or staff a felony. All administrative records will be sent to ED's contractor by districts using a file transfer protocol (FTP). Access to the FTP site will be password protected, and all data will be immediately deleted from the FTP site upon successful download by ED's contractor. All data files will be stored on secure server administered by ED's contractor.

How will you benefit?

In return, participating high schools will receive a customized survey report. The survey reports will present aggregated results for all survey items and scales contained on the survey. Each customized school report will present the results for the individual high school, as well as the results for all other participating high schools combined. Schools will also receive a copy of the final study report, if desired.

Will results from the survey be made public?

All study results published in public reports will be aggregated across all participating high schools, and results for any group of less than 5 students will be omitted to protect confidentiality. **Absolutely no individual, school, or district results will be made public in any way.**

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 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 1850-xxxx. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes/hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, application or survey, please contact (Deborah Van Kummer by email at deborah.vankummer@sedl.org directly. [Note: Please do not return the completed instrument, form, application or survey to this address.]

The Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183, prohibits disclosure of individually identifiable information as well as making the publishing or communicating of individually identifiable information by employees or staff a felony. Per the policies and procedures required by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183, responses to this data collection will be used only for statistical purposes. The reports prepared for this study will summarize findings across the sample and will not associate responses with a specific school, district, or individual. Any willful disclosure of such information for nonstatistical purposes, except as required by law, is a class E felony.

How can I receive more information or sign up for the study?

This study is voluntary. For more information or to participate in the study, contact Deborah Van Kummer at (512) 391-6551 or deborah.vankummer@sedl.org.

THANK YOU!

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, 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 1850-xxxx. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 20 minutes/hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is voluntary. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, application or survey, please contact (Deborah Van Kummer by email at deborah.vankummer@sedl.org directly. [Note: Please do not return the completed instrument, form, application or survey to this address.]