



State of New Jersey

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February 20, 2008

TO: New Jersey Mathematics and Science Partnership Partners

FROM: Michael Heinz, MSP Program Officer
Office of Academic Standards

SUBJECT: **Student Assessment Data**

The purpose of this memo is to encourage Mathematics and Science Partnership Program (MSP) partner local education agencies to provide disaggregated student level achievement data for students of participant teachers as well as the comparison group teachers. All assessment data collected will be treated with absolute confidentiality at all times.

Title II, Part B of the No Child Left Behind act of 2001 authorizes a Mathematics and Science Partnerships (MSP) competitive grant program within each state. New Jersey receives funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED) that is intended to increase the academic achievement of students in mathematics and science by enhancing the content knowledge and teaching skills of classroom teachers. The legislation requires grant recipients to provide rigorously derived evidence of the effectiveness of their program.

Recipients of MSP funds must submit an annual performance report to the U.S. Department of Education in order to be eligible for a continuation award. The performance report should demonstrate that substantial progress has been made toward meeting the project objectives and the Government Performance and Results Act (GRPA) program performance indicators. The information provided by NJMSP projects will inform the U.S. Department of Education with the information needed to determine whether recipients have done so. Additional information may be found in Sections 75.118, 75.253, 75.590 and 80.41 of the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR).

Student data is needed so that MSP projects can "measure the percentage of students in classrooms of MSP teachers who score at the proficient level or above in State assessments of mathematics or science." This performance indicator is being used to determine the impact that the MSP funds are having on student achievement.

All test information collected for the NJ MSP evaluation study is confidential and unavailable to anyone outside the external evaluation team. In addition, all evaluation team personnel are required to sign a legally binding non-disclosure agreement in respect to this data. The evaluation team will not show or tell anyone else about teachers' and students' responses in the study. The evaluation team will keep all information completely confidential by storing it under ID numbers, not names, and by storing it in a password protected secure server. The information gathered will be used for research purposes only. When the evaluation team writes about or talks about the research, at no time will any information be used that would reveal the identity of any teacher or student participant. Data will only be reported in aggregate. The United States Department of Education, New Jersey Department of Education, and school district administrators will not have access to these data.