



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND IMPROVEMENT

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

November 15, 2002

Dear State Librarian:

I am writing to request your participation in the Public Libraries Survey (PLS) for **fiscal year (FY) 2002**, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), of the U.S. Department of Education, through the Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS) for Public Library Data. NCES is authorized to collect these data in compliance with its mission to collect, analyze, and disseminate statistics and other information related to education in the United States... (P.L. 103-382, Title IV, National Education Statistics Act of 1994, Sec. 404 [a]).

We mailed the FY 2002 PLS to your FSCS State Data Coordinator in mid-November. States have been placed into one of three reporting groups (see table below) based on their fiscal cycles and extraordinary reporting hardship, in order to stagger data submissions and thus enable timelier processing and release of the E.D. Tabs report and data file.

Reporting group and fiscal cycle	States and U.S. territories	Keppel Award date	Survey due date
Group #1 (July–June)	AK, AZ, CA, CT, DE, GA, HI, IA, KY, MA, MD, MT, NC, NM, NV, OK, OR, RI, SC, TN, VA, WV, WY	March 18, 2003	April 15, 2003
Group #2 (October–September, January–December)	AL, AR, CO, DC, FL, ID, IL, IN, KS, LA, ME, MI, MN, MO, MS, ND, NE, NH, NY, OH, PA, SD, UT, VT, WA, WI, Guam, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin islands	July 3, 2003	July 31, 2003
Group #3* (January–December)	NJ, TX	August 15, 2003	August 29, 2003

*extraordinary reporting hardship

The FY 2002 PLS has a firm due date of April 15, 2003 for group #1 states, July 31, 2003 for group #2 states, and August 29, 2003 for group #3 states. No state data submission will be accepted after the due date specified for the state. Please note: If you cannot submit data for all of your public libraries by the due date, please submit the data you do have available, in lieu of no data submission. The Keppel Award, presented for a prompt and complete data submission, will be given to states that meet their respective award deadlines (March 18, 2003 for group #1, July 3, 2003 for group #2, and August 15, 2003 for group #3 states).

There will be no state totals in the E.D. Tabs report for states that have not submitted any data by their assigned due date. The report will include national totals with imputed data for such states. The imputed state values will not be reported in the E.D. Tabs but will be on the data file.

NCES and the Census Bureau, the data collection agent for NCES, will work cooperatively with your data coordinator, who is the contact person for the survey, to ensure the quality and timeliness of data for your state. Census will conduct edit follow-up and send their findings of highly questionable data to the state for review. *Any highly questionable data that are not revised or verified as correct, within three weeks of the date of the letter, will be deleted and imputed.*

We have enclosed an example of the Chief Officer sign-off form that your coordinator will present to you for signing when your final data are ready for submission, providing you the opportunity to certify the accuracy of your data submission. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your data submission, please contact Cynthia Ramsey or Maria Polcari at 1-800-451-6235 or at govs.pls@census.gov.

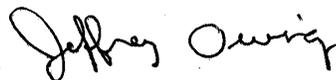
The E.D. Tabs report and the final data file will be available on the NCES Web Site for public libraries at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/libraries/public.asp>. The data will also be accessible through two Web tools on this site: (1) the Public Library Peer Comparison Tool, which allows the user to review data for one or more libraries designated as peers, and (2) the Public Library Locator Tool, which allows the user to review data for any public library in the nation based on search criteria supplied by the user.

Technical assistance for your state's submission is also available from NCES. If you anticipate needing such assistance, please notify Elaine Kroe, Survey Manager, Elementary/Secondary and Libraries Studies Division (ESLSD), at 202-502-7379, as soon as possible. Jeffrey Williams, Acting Program Director, Library Programs, ESLSD, at 202-502-7476, is also available to answer any other questions you may have regarding the survey.

The PLS is administered as a cooperative effort of the Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), the National Commission on Library and Information Science (NCLIS), the U.S. Census Bureau, and NCES. The PLS is an annual survey of over 9,000 public libraries in the 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the outlying areas. The survey requests descriptive information about public libraries, including staffing, revenues, expenditures, circulation, collections, public service hours, and access to electronic services. Your participation will increase the availability of these data to interested users in the public and private sectors.

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 1850-0689. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 45 hours per response, 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 estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this collection of information, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C. 20202-4651.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Owings
Associate Commissioner
Elementary/Secondary and Libraries
Studies Division

Enclosure

**State Librarian Certification of Public Library Data,
Fiscal Year 2002**

**U.S. Department of Education
National Center for Education Statistics**

**Federal-State Cooperative System (FSCS)
for Public Library Data**

I hereby certify that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the data submitted by the FSCS State Data Coordinator for the Public Libraries Survey, Fiscal Year 2002, are accurate.

Name of State

State Librarian's Name *(Please print)*

State Librarian's Signature

Date