Sample Parent Letter

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Each year, every school district in Iowa is required to report student data by race and ethnicity to the Iowa Department of Education. Iowa must report this information to the federal government. The Iowa Department of Education reports school level data and does not report individual student data to the federal government. School data is reported as totals within various categories. These reports help keep track of changes in student enrollments and ensure that all students receive the educational programs and services to which they are entitled. Iowa must follow the reporting requirements determined by the federal government, including categories for reporting race and ethnicity.

Recently, the federal government changed the procedure for identifying race and ethnicity. Not only do the changes allow individuals to more accurately identify themselves, but it also matches the race and ethnicity collections on all other federal reporting like the Census. Because of the new reporting categories for race and ethnicity, you will need to update your child's data. Starting with the 2009–2010 school year, all schools in Iowa will report student data to the Iowa Department of Education using the new categories.

Please update your child's student data, by completing the enclosed form and sending it to your child's school by (DATE). If we do not receive a response from you, an employee of the district will be required to provide this information based on observation. (Note that federal regulations do not permit districts to leave the space blank.) Please contact your child's school principal if you would like to check the student data currently on file for your child.

For more information about the data reporting categories, please visit the Race/Ethnicity Regulations section at the Iowa Department of Education's website under Date Reporting/Project EASIER. The URL address is as follows: http://www.iowa.gov/educate/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=44&Itemid=1261

Sincerely,

[NAME OF SUPERINTENDENT]
Superintendent of Schools

Enclosure