**SDP Case Memo Assignment**

***Instructions:***

Please read the scenario below. Using the accompanying fictitious data set (see attached Excel file), generate a memo with a recommendation for the Chief of Research and Evaluation, Dr. Donna Silver, based on your analysis. You may communicate in technical terms for this memo but be prepared to answer questions about your work in everyday language if asked. Please upload your completed memo to your application at sdp.smapply.io.

***Guidelines:***

a) Your memo should be written in 12-point font and the narrative should not exceed two single-spaced pages of text.

b) For this task, most successful candidates use SAS, STATA, R, or SPSS though it is possible to complete a successful analysis using Excel.

c) Please include relevant figures or tables (not counted toward page limit).

d) We encourage you to push yourself beyond a descriptive analysis for this task (e.g., going beyond a simple difference in means for the outcome).

***Scenario:* A Principal’s Academy to Improve Teacher Retention**

Superintendent Jeff Wiggins joined the School District of San Metropolis (SDSM) in June 2017. SDSM is located in a large metropolitan area in the Southeast and enrolls approximately 160,000 students in 170 schools (105 elementary schools, 35 middle schools, and 30 high schools). Dr. Wiggins is aware of research showing that high teacher turnover negatively affects student achievement. One of his main goals as Superintendent is to improve teacher retention (from an average of about 80 percent over the past two school years) in SDSM.

Dr. Wiggins has hit the ground running. Over the summer, he’s asked a task force to develop a Model Middle Schools Academy (MMSA) that will convene middle school principals six times over the course of the year. Each session will last two days and will involve visiting a model middle school and its classrooms and administrative offices. Wiggins believes that by identifying middle schools to serve as models of success, school leaders will learn best practices and improve teacher retention among all SDSM schools. The community is energized around the vision of the new Superintendent to improve student achievement through teacher retention; he doesn’t want to lose momentum. Wiggins wants the first MMSA session to take place a week before the start of school – August 28, 2017. There are about three weeks left until this deadline.

Wiggins has asked Dr. Donna Silver, the Chief of Research and Evaluation, to recommend the appropriate middle school to serve as a principal workshop site for the first two sessions of MMSA. He has asked Dr. Silver to present her recommendation to senior leadership at the next cabinet meeting in two weeks; they would go forth to the school board quickly after that.

Dr. Silver is very invested in your professional development and sees this as a great opportunity for you. She pulls you aside and briefly describes the MMSA proposal. She finishes by saying:

*“I need you to make a recommendation about which school should serve as a model site to host the first two MMSA sessions. I leave it to you to decide on the appropriate selection criteria, and it seems important to include the middle school’s current teacher retention rates in the decision process. Have a recommendation ready for me in two days.”*