

**APPENDIX D**

## Letter of Introduction to Schools

[insert date here]

Dear School Principal:

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's Regional Educational Laboratory Program (REL West at WestEd), we invite you to join us in a formal research study of assessment accommodations for English language learners. Your school's participation will help us to evaluate the effectiveness of a testing accommodation for this population. Your district superintendent has approved your school's participation in this important study and will be providing achievement test scores, level of English language proficiency, and demographic data for each eligible student.

We are recruiting 3,600 students in California to participate in Spring 2008. Student participants will include both general education students and English language learners. Each eligible student will be randomly assigned to take one of two short 30-item math tests—either one with linguistically modified items (accommodated version) or one with non-modified items (original version). Each student also will be asked to answer 12 questions designed to help us better understand his/her language background. We estimate the maximum time for students to complete all tasks for this study to be approximately 1 hour.

In addition, we ask for your staff's assistance in 1) helping us collect signed consent forms for each eligible student; and 2) providing support to trained test administrators during student testing. We also appreciate your time in sharing information about this study with your staff so they may encourage student participation. To thank you and your staff for your contributions, each participating school will be compensated with \$500 for their assistance during the randomized field study. Each participating student will be compensated with a T-shirt to thank them for participating.

Student participation is voluntary. Students are not required to participate in this study. There will be no actions or penalties against anyone for not participating. Participants are allowed to ask questions and/or refuse to answer any test item or background question. The collection of these data is authorized by Public Law 107-279 Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part C, Sec. 151(b) and Sec. 153(a).

Confidentiality of participants is protected. All student responses are protected from disclosure by federal statute (PL 107-279, Title I, Part C, Sec. 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 district or individual. We will not provide information that identifies your school or district to anyone outside the study team, except as required by law.

We look forward to speaking with you about this study and working with you and your students in the coming months. Please contact our research coordinator, Carole Gallagher, at 415-615-3211 or [cgallag@wested.org](mailto:cgallag@wested.org) if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Stanley Rabinowitz, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator  
REL-West at WestEd  
[srabino@wested.org](mailto:srabino@wested.org) or 415-615-3154