

# Heller Research Associates

Educational Research, Evaluation, Assessment

Joan I. Heller, M.A., Ph.D.  
Director

Dear [First Name],

Welcome to *Understanding Science*! Thank you for choosing to participate in this study of teacher professional development. We are very excited to work with you. This letter lists the research activities to which you have been assigned.

Please formally agree to participate in the project by July 18, 2008 by signing the bottom half of this form and mailing it to me at Heller Research Associates using the envelope provided.

When you take your survey, you will be asked to provide a teacher ID number. Your teacher ID number is [Site#]-[Teacher#]. Please keep this number in a safe place. Using this number instead of your name helps us track your teacher and student data while protecting the anonymity of you and your students.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Have a wonderful summer!



Joan I. Heller, Ph.D.  
Principal Investigator  
510-873-0808  
jheller@edservices.org

**[First Name] [Last Name] • [Site Name] • [Site#]-[Teacher#]**

Yes! I agree to participate in *Understanding Science*:

- I received my letter and agree to the professional development and research activities.
- I think I will teach eighth grade during the 2007-08 and 2008-09 school years.
- I agree to teach/co-teach force and motion using my regular classroom unit.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

[Next section of letter will be constructed from the following options, depending upon Teacher's assignment (Treatment vs. Control; also Classroom substudy vs. Non-classroom substudy)]

### **Your Project Activities [Treatment group only]**

*Understanding Science* is a randomized, controlled experiment (like a clinical trial in medicine). You have been randomly assigned to the immediate professional development group of this study, meaning you will take the force and motion course in August 2008. We know random assignment can be frustrating and are very appreciative of your accommodating the study. Thank you!

Below is a brief summary of your professional development and research activities. Please add the following information to your calendar:

#### **Attend one professional development course**

Your course dates: [Date and time 1]  
[Date and time 2]  
[Date and time 3]  
[Date and time 4]  
[Date and time 5]  
[Date and time 6]

Your course location: [Location]

Your course instructors will provide directions and an address two weeks prior to your professional development course.

Your course instructors: [Instructor Names]

#### **Teach force and motion at a specific time of year**

You are free to teach whatever classroom force and motion unit you normally teach. We just ask that you do so at a particular time of year. Your district will adjust your pacing guide and/or kit rotation schedule as needed. The dates below are approximate and subject to your input—we want to accommodate your needs! We will be asking you to tell us your preferences.

2008-09 school year:[Range of classroom instruction dates]

#### **Provide teacher, student, and classroom data [Treatment with classroom study]**

You have been randomly selected to participate in core components of the research study, plus a more intensive study that includes the items below. Your stipend will be **\$1,100** upon completion of the data

collection requirements and the professional development course. If you have questions or need more information about the data collection process, see the teacher consent form (<http://xxx>) or email me at [jheller@edservices.org](mailto:jheller@edservices.org).

- **Teacher data.** You will take a force and motion science quiz and written surveys during the Spring before and the Spring after your professional development.
- **Student data.** You will work with a district staff person who is responsible for proctoring a student force and motion science quiz in your classes before and after you instruct your force and motion classroom unit. We will also be collecting California state standardized test data for your students.
- **Classroom data.** I or one of my colleagues will visit your classroom to observe and audio record two lessons during your Spring 2008 and Spring 2009 force and motion unit, and conduct the interviews (total 45 minutes) before and after each lesson.

### **Provide teacher and student data [Treatment without classroom study]**

You have been randomly selected to participate in the core components of the research study. Your stipend will be **\$1,000** upon completion of the data collection requirements and the professional development course. If you have questions or need more information about the data collection process, see the teacher consent form (<http://xxx>) or email me at [jheller@edservices.org](mailto:jheller@edservices.org).

- **Teacher data.** You will take a force and motion science quiz and written surveys during the Spring before and the Spring after your professional development.
- **Student data.** You will work with a district staff person who is responsible for proctoring a student force and motion science quiz in your classes before and after you instruct your force and motion classroom unit. We will also be collecting California state standardized test data for your students.

## Your Project Activities [Control group only]

*Understanding Science* is a randomized, controlled experiment (like a clinical trial in medicine). You have been randomly assigned to the delayed professional development group of this study, meaning you will take the force and motion course in August 2009. We know random assignment can be frustrating and are very appreciative of your accommodating the study. Thank you!

Below is a brief summary of your research activities. Please add the following information to your calendar:

### Teach force and motion at a specific time of year

You are free to teach whatever classroom force and motion unit you normally teach. We just ask that you do so at a particular time of year. Your district will adjust your pacing guide and/or kit rotation schedule as needed. The dates below are approximate and subject to your input—we want to accommodate your needs! We will be asking you to tell us your preferences.

2008-09 school year:[Range of classroom instruction dates]

### Provide teacher, student, and classroom data [Control with classroom study]

You have been randomly selected to participate in core components of the research study, plus a more intensive study that includes the items below. Your stipend will therefore be **\$1,100** upon completion of the data collection requirements and the professional development course. If you have questions or need more information about the data collection process, see the teacher consent form (<http://xxx>) or email me at [jheller@edservices.org](mailto:jheller@edservices.org).

- **Teacher data.** You will take a force and motion science quiz and written surveys in Spring 2008 and Spring 2009.
- **Student data.** You will work with a district staff person who is responsible for proctoring a student force and motion science quiz in your classes before and after you instruct your force and motion classroom unit. We will also be collecting California state standardized test data for your students.
- **Classroom data.** I, or one of my colleagues, will visit your classroom to observe and audio record two lessons during your Spring 2008 and Spring 2009 force and motion unit, and conduct the interviews (total 45 minutes) before and after each lesson.

### Provide teacher and student data [Control without classroom study]

You have been randomly selected to participate in the core components of the research study. Your stipend will be **\$1,000** upon completion of the data collection requirements. If you have questions or need more information about the data collection process, see the teacher consent form (<http://xxx>) or email me at [jheller@edservices.org](mailto:jheller@edservices.org).

- **Teacher data.** You will take a force and motion science quiz and written surveys during the Spring before and the Spring after your professional development.
- **Student data.** You will work with a district staff person who is responsible for proctoring a student force and motion science quiz in your classes before and after you instruct your force and motion classroom unit. We will also be collecting California state standardized test data for your students.

**Provide teacher and student data [Control without classroom study and opts out of the delayed professional development]**

You have been randomly selected to participate in the core components of the research study. Your stipend will be **\$200** upon completion of the data collection requirements. If you have questions or need more information about the data collection process, see the teacher consent form (<http://xxx>) or email me at [jheller@edservices.org](mailto:jheller@edservices.org).

- **Teacher data.** You will take a force and motion science quiz and written surveys during the Spring before and the Spring after your professional development.
- **Student data.** You will work with a district staff person who is responsible for proctoring a student force and motion science quiz in your classes before and after you instruct your force and motion classroom unit. We will also be collecting California state standardized test data for your students.

We look forward to working with you!