

APPENDIX C
RESPONDENT LETTERS

FIELD TEST LETTERS

[DATE]

[NAME]

[STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE ZIP]

Dear [CHIEF STATE SCHOOL OFFICER]:

I am writing to inform you about the upcoming Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011), the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The earlier studies have been important sources of data for researchers and policy makers to address key issues related to children's development and learning including literacy in the home, the teaching of reading and mathematics, and the associations between physical exercise, childhood obesity, and well-being. Researchers using the data have published their findings widely in scientific journals and the popular press. NCES also presents the results from these studies for practitioners and the general public on our website, <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls>.

Like its predecessor studies, the ECLS-K:2011 will provide important information on children's early learning and development, transition into kindergarten, and progress through elementary school. The new cohort of kindergartners' school experiences will be compared to those of over a decade earlier to study the extent to which the demographic profile of children and their environment for learning have changed. We are notifying you because {insert number} schools in your state have been selected to take part in phase I of the ECLS-K:2011 this fall. During this phase, we will test and refine the assessments and procedures for the full study in 2010-11.

Participation in this study is voluntary; however, we ask your agency to support the participation of schools in your state in this study. Since ECLS-K:2011 is designed to test a representative sample of U.S. students, the accuracy of ECLS-K:2011 depends on the full participation of the sampled schools and students.

The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences is the primary sponsor of the ECLS-K:2011, which is being conducted on behalf of NCES by Westat. ECLS-K:2011 has been endorsed by the national education organizations listed on this letter, including the Council of Chief State School Officers. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279, Section 153). Under that law, the data provided by your schools, staff, students, and their parents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (Public Law 107-279, Section 183). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0750.

Within the next few days, a Westat representative will contact selected schools to discuss the data collection activities. Detailed information about the ECLS-K:2011 can be found in the materials enclosed with this letter. If you have questions about the study, please feel free to call Westat toll-free at 1-888-204-4864 or send an email to ECLSKHELP@westat.com. Also, more information about ECLS-K:2011 is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/MyECLSK2011>.

Thank you for your support of the ECLS-K:2011.

Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics

cc: [STATE TEST DIRECTOR]

Enclosure

[DATE]

[SUPERINTENDENT NAME]

[DISTRICT NAME/DIOCESE NAME]

[ADDRESS]

[CITY, STATE ZIP]

Dear [SUPERINTENDENT]:

I am writing to inform you about the upcoming Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011), the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The earlier studies have been important sources of data for researchers and policy makers to address key issues related to children's development and learning including literacy in the home, the teaching of reading and mathematics, and the associations between physical exercise, childhood obesity, and well-being. Researchers using the data have published their findings widely in scientific journals and the popular press. NCES also presents the results from these studies for practitioners and the general public on our website, <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls>.

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Participation in this study is voluntary; however, we ask your [agency/diocese] to support the participation of schools in your [district/diocese] in ECLS-K:2011. Since ECLS-K:2011 is designed to be a representative sample of U.S. students, the accuracy of ECLS-K:2011 depends on the full participation of the sampled schools and students. In appreciation for their time and efforts, the schools that participate will each receive an honorarium. In addition, school-level coordinators and participating teachers also will receive honoraria.

The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences is the primary sponsor of the ECLS-K:2011, which is being conducted on behalf of NCES by Westat. ECLS-K:2011 been endorsed by the national education organizations listed on this letter. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279, Section 153). Under that law, the data provided by your schools, staff, students, and their parents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (Public Law 107-279, Section 183). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0750.

Within the next few days, a representative of Westat will contact the schools in your [district/diocese] that are on the attached list. By law, the names of schools selected for the study may not be publicly disclosed. Thus we ask that each [district/diocese] maintain the confidentiality of the selected schools. Information collected from multiple individuals will be combined to produce reports of findings from the ECLS-K:2011. The reports will not identify participating [districts/dioceses], schools, children and their parents, or individual staff.

Detailed information about the ECLS-K:2011 can be found in the materials enclosed with this letter. If you have questions about the study, please feel free to call Westat toll-free at 1-888-204-4864 or send an email to ECLSKHELP@westat.com. Also, more information about ECLS-K:2011 is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/MyECLSK2011>.

Thank you for your support of the ECLS-K:2011.

Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky, Acting Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics

cc: [DISTRICT TEST DIRECTOR]

Enclosure: LIST OF SELECTED SCHOOLS

[DATE]

[PRINCIPAL NAME]

[SCHOOL NAME]

[ADDRESS 1]

[CITY, STATE ZIP]

Dear [PRINCIPAL]:

I am writing to inform you about the upcoming Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011), the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The earlier studies have been important sources of data for researchers and policy makers to address key issues related to children's development and learning including literacy in the home, the teaching of reading and mathematics, and the associations between physical exercise, childhood obesity, and well-being. Researchers using the data have published their findings widely in scientific journals and the popular press. NCES also presents the results from these studies for practitioners and the general public on our website, <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls>.

Like its predecessor studies, the ECLS-K:2011 will provide important information on children's early learning and development, transition into kindergarten, and progress through elementary school. The new cohort of kindergartners' school experiences will be compared to those of over a decade earlier to study the extent to which the demographic profile of children and their environment for learning have changed. We are notifying you because your school has been selected to take part in phase I of the ECLS-K:2011 this fall. During this phase, we will test and refine the assessments and procedures for the full study in 2010-11.

We are currently developing child assessment items and teacher questionnaires for use in the ECLS-K:2011. We are asking children in kindergarten through third grade to participate so that we can refine the assessments to accurately measure children's skills in reading, mathematics, and science; children also will have their hearing and vision screened. The assessment items and screenings will be individually administered to children in your school by trained staff and will take approximately 90 minutes per child.

Participation in this study is voluntary; however, I encourage your school's participation in ECLS-K:2011. Since ECLS-K:2011 is designed to be a representative sample of U.S. students, its accuracy depends on the full participation of your school, teachers, and students. In appreciation for your time and efforts, your school will receive a \$5 honorarium for each participating child, and participating school staff also will receive an honorarium.

The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences is the primary sponsor of the ECLS-K:2011, which is being conducted on behalf of NCES by Westat. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279, Section 153). Under that law, the data provided by your schools, staff, students, and their parents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (Public Law 107-279, Section 183). The

vision and hearing screenings are sponsored by the National Eye Institute and the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, within the National Institutes of Health. ECLS-K:2011 been endorsed by the national education organizations listed on this letter. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0750.

Within the next few days, a representative of Westat will contact you about participating in this important study. Information collected from multiple individuals will be combined to produce reports of findings from the ECLS-K:2011. The reports will not identify participating districts, schools, children and their parents, or individual staff.

Detailed information about the ECLS-K:2011 can be found in the materials enclosed with this letter. If you have questions about the study, please feel free to call Westat toll-free at 1-888-204-4864 or send an email to ECLSKHELP@westat.com. Also, more information about ECLS-K:2011 is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/MyECLSK2011>.

Thank you for your support of the ECLS-K:2011.

Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner
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NATIONAL LETTERS

[DATE]

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[STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION]

[ADDRESS]

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Like its predecessor studies, the ECLS-K:2011 will provide important information on children's early learning and development, transition into kindergarten, and progress through elementary school. The new cohort of kindergartners' school experiences will be compared to those of over a decade earlier to study the extent to which the demographic profile of children and their environment for learning have changed. We are notifying you because {insert number} schools in your state have been selected to take part in ECLS-K:2011 in the 2010-11 school year. Participation in the study is voluntary; however, we ask your agency to support the participation of schools in your state in this study so that the sample is truly representative of kindergarteners across the country.

The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences is the primary sponsor of the ECLS-K:2011, which is being conducted on behalf of NCES by Westat. ECLS-K:2011 has been endorsed by the national education organizations listed on this letter, including the Council of Chief State School Officers. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279, Section 153). Under that law, the data provided by your schools, staff, students, and their parents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (Public Law 107-279, Section 183). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0750.

This fall Westat will notify sampled school districts about the study. During the winter, a Westat representative will contact sampled schools to discuss the data collection activities. Detailed information about the ECLS-K:2011 can be found in the materials enclosed with this letter. If you have questions

about the study, please feel free to call Westat toll-free at 1-888-204-4864 or send an email to ECLSKHELP@westat.com. Also, more information about ECLS-K:2011 is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/MyECLSK2011>. Thank you for your support of the ECLS-K:2011.

Sincerely,

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Participation in this study is voluntary; however, we ask your agency to support the participation of schools in your district in ECLS-K:2011. Since ECLS-K:2011 is designed to test a representative sample of U.S. students, the accuracy of ECLS-K:2011 depends on the full participation of the sampled schools and students. In appreciation for their time and efforts, the schools that participate will each receive an honorarium of \$200 in spring 2011. In addition, school-level coordinators and participating teachers also will receive honoraria.

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Next winter, a representative of Westat will contact the schools in your district that are on the attached list. We are required by law to protect the names of schools selected for the study from disclosure; we ask that each district respect this requirement and protect the identity of participating schools as well. Information collected from multiple individuals will be combined to produce reports of findings from the ECLS-K:2011. The reports will not identify participating districts, schools, children and their parents, or individual staff.

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The selected kindergarten children will complete individual assessments with trained ECLS-K:2011 assessors. These assessments are designed to measure children's language and quantitative skills, as well as obtain indicators of children's working memory and regulation of attention, both of which are associated with learning. Children will also have their height and weight measured. These activities will take approximately 1 hour to complete. Parents and teachers will also be asked to participate. Parents will be asked to provide background information about their children and their families. Teachers will be asked to provide information about their teaching practices, the sampled children's classrooms, and the sampled children.

Participation in this study is voluntary; however, I encourage your school's participation in ECLS-K:2011. Since ECLS-K:2011 is designed to be a representative sample of U.S. students, its accuracy depends on the full participation of your school, teachers, and students. We are asking you to identify a staff member at your school to act as a liaison with the ECLS-K:2011 and facilitate the activities in the school that are part of the study. In appreciation for your time and efforts, your school will receive a \$200 honorarium, and participating school staff also will receive an honorarium.

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