

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about an important international study of student learning being conducted in your child's school. The study is known as PISA (the full name is Program for International Student Assessment). PISA looks at student learning in reading, mathematics, and science around the world. It has been conducted every three years since 2000, and documents world-wide trends in the knowledge and skills of 15-year olds in these areas. Along with more than 60 other nations, the United States will take part in the 2009 cycle, just as we have in previous years.

Each time the study is done, new assessment items need to be developed and tested to assure that those items accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. In the spring of 2008, new reading items will be tested in approximately 35 schools and with approximately 1,200 students in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete items that are not working effectively.

Your child's school has accepted an invitation to take part in the PISA field test, and your child is one of approximately 40 students who have been invited to take part. **It is important that each student selected take part in the field test. Each time a selected student does not participate, the accuracy of the U.S. information suffers. I urge you to support this effort by allowing and encouraging your child to take part.** The enclosed summary sheet provides some background information on PISA, explains what is involved for each student, and gives a contact phone number and e-mail address where you can get answers to any questions you might have.

We are showing our appreciation to the school in the form of a \$200 honorarium. Each of the participating students also will receive \$20 as a token of our appreciation.

It goes without saying that all of the information collected is completely confidential. In fact, we are required to do so by law. So, students and schools are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole.

If you are willing to allow your teenager to participate, you do not need to return the attached form. If for any reason you object to your teenager's participation, please fill out the enclosed form and return it to ... at the school by...

Thank you for taking the time to think about this study.