

[Date]

<fname> <mname> <lname> <suffix>
<addr1>
<addr2>
<city>, <state> <zip> <zip4>

Study ID: <caseid>
Password: <panelinfo>

Dear <fname> <lname>:

We understand that as a parent or guardian of a student at <<SCHOOL_NAME>>, you are very busy. However, we are asking that you take a little time out of your schedule to complete this important interview. The High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs:09) is interested in understanding how your child's in-school and out-of-school experiences affect his or her course choices, learning, and future plans. Because your ninth grader was selected for HSLs:09, your input is key to the success of this study.

For your convenience, we include with this letter a short version of the parent survey in paper form with items that are critically important to the study. Unfortunately, this shortened version does not allow you to give your full perspective on the wide range of topics in the interview. We hope you are interested in providing a more complete picture of your child's experiences, so we listed your study id and password in case you would prefer to take the half-hour version of the survey online or by phone. If your schedule does not allow for this, we encourage you to please complete the very brief enclosed survey.

Please find instructions below for returning the paper survey or accessing the survey online or calling in to complete the survey by telephone by March 31, 2010. When we receive and process your completed paper survey, we will activate the \$5 gift card included with this mailing as a token of our appreciation. <<**IF INCENTIVE GROUP:** If instead, you choose to complete the survey on the web or by phone, we will mail you a check in the amount of <<incentive fill>>.

Instructions for completing paper survey:

Please use a pencil and bubble in your response. Please do not put your name, address, or any other personally identifiable information on the survey or on the postage-paid return envelope.

Instructions for completing survey online or by telephone:

To complete the survey online, please visit our secure website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/hsls/> and use the study ID and password provided at the top of this letter. You may also wish to complete the interview by phone with a professional interviewer, please call us toll-free at 1-877-282-4757.

All responses will be protected from disclosure; no parents or guardians, students, school officials, teachers or staff, will see any answers and no individually identifying data will be reported. Data collected are 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). If you have questions or problems completing your interview online, simply call the HSLs:09 help desk, toll free, at 1-877-282-4757.

RTI is conducting this study for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education. If you have already completed the interview, we would like to thank you. Your assistance is very much appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns about the study, please contact Randy Ottem, toll free at 1-800-334-8571 ex. 28068, or the NCES Project Officer, Dr. Laura LoGerfo, at 202-502-7402.

Thank you in advance for making HSLs:09 a success!



Dan Pratt
HSLs:09 Project Director
RTI International

NCES is authorized to conduct HSLS:09 under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (Public Law 107-279, Section 153). According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number of this information collection is 1850-0852, and it is completely voluntary. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 15 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, search existing data resources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate or suggestions for improving the interview, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20006.