

APPENDIX B: Parental Permission Letters and Supporting Materials

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Sample Notification Letter, PISA

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about an important international study of student learning being conducted in our school this spring. This study is called the Program for International Student Assessment or PISA for short. PISA provides important information for internationally benchmarking performance in reading, mathematics, and science of 15-year-old students in the United States against top countries around the world.

Each time the study is done, new test questions need to be developed and tested to assure that those questions accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. In the spring of 2011, new questions will be tested in approximately 35 schools and with approximately 1,600 students in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

Our school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, to participate in the PISA field test. {Insert number} of our 15-year-old students, along with your child, will take part in this study. The enclosed summary sheet provides some background to PISA, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. 15-year-old students can do, it is important that each student selected take part in the study. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your child to take part; however, participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Previous experience suggests that students actually enjoy taking part, and all participating students will receive \$25. Some students will also be selected to participate in a second test session to try out questions administered on a computer. These students will receive an additional \$15.

All of the information collected is kept completely confidential, as required by law. 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 schools, staff, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose (Public Law 107-279, Section 183 and Title V, subtitle A of the E-Government Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-347)). Students and schools are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study. We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:

Facts for Parents About the PISA Field Test

Sample Implicit Consent Letter, PISA

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

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If you have any objection to your child joining in the PISA activities, please let us know by completing the attached consent form and returning it to the school.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study. We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:

Facts for Parents About the PISA Field Test
Parent/Guardian Consent Form
PISA Implicit Consent Form

**Program for International Student Assessment (PISA 2012)
Field Test
Parent Permission Form**

Your child has been asked to participate in a field test of an international study of student learning called the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). This assessment will be conducted by a team of researchers from [contractor name], who are operating under contract on behalf of the U. S. Department of Education. In the spring of 2011, new questions will be tested in approximately 35 schools and with approximately 1,600 students in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

If you grant permission for your child to participate in the PISA field test, you do not need to return this form.

If you do not consent to your child's participation in the PISA field test, please return this form to your child's school as soon as possible.

I do not grant permission for my child, _____, to participate in the Program for International Student Assessment Field Trial.

(Signature of parent or guardian)

Date of signature: ____/____/____

PLEASE PRINT:

Student name: _____

School name: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: _____

Sample Explicit Consent Letter, PISA

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about an important international study of student learning being conducted in our school this spring. This study is called the Program for International Student Assessment or PISA for short. PISA provides important information for internationally benchmarking performance in reading, mathematics, and science of 15-year-old students in the United States against top countries around the world.

Each time the study is done, new test questions need to be developed and tested to assure that those questions accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. In the spring of 2011, new questions will be tested in approximately 35 schools and with approximately 1,600 students in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

Our school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, to participate in the PISA field test. {Insert number} of our 15-year-old students, along with your child, will take part in this study. The enclosed summary sheet provides some background to PISA, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. 15-year-old students can do, it is important that each student selected take part in the study. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your child to take part; however, participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Previous experience suggests that students actually enjoy taking part, and all participating students will receive \$25. Some students will also be selected to participate in a second test session to try out questions administered on a computer. These students will receive an additional \$15.

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Before we can allow your child to join in the PISA field test we must have your written consent. Please let us know by completing the attached form and returning it to the school.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study and consider your child's participation in it. We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:

**Program for International Student Assessment (PISA 2012)
Field Test
Parent/Guardian Consent Form**

Your child has been asked to participate in a field test of an international study of student learning called the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). This assessment will be conducted by a team of researchers from [contractor name], who are operating under contract on behalf of the U. S. Department of Education. In the spring of 2011, new questions will be tested in approximately 35 schools and with approximately 1,600 students in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

Yes, I do grant permission for my child to participate in the PISA field test.

No, I do not grant permission for my child to participate in the PISA field test.

(Signature of parent or guardian)

Date of signature: ____/____/____

PLEASE PRINT:

Student name: _____

School name: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: _____

Facts for Parents About PISA Field Test

Facts for Parents About the PISA Field Test

Between March and May of this year, your child's school will be one of about 35 nationwide taking part in the PISA 2012 Field Test. The schools were selected randomly to represent the nation's schools and, within each school, about 50 students were selected randomly to take part. Your child was among those students selected to take part in the study.

What is PISA?

PISA (the Program for International Student Assessment) is an international assessment that measures student learning in reading, mathematics, and science. The assessment occurs every three years (2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, and 2012), and provides information about how students in the U.S. compare in achievement with students in other countries. More than 60 countries will be participating in PISA 2012. The National Center for Education Statistics within the U.S. Department of Education sponsors U.S. participation in PISA.

What is the purpose of the PISA Field Test?

Each time the study is done, new assessment questions need to be developed and tested to assure that those questions accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively for students in the United States.

What is involved?

PISA staff will visit the school and administer the field test, which consists of two sessions. The first session will take approximately 3 hours; it includes time for instructions, the administration of the paper-and-pencil assessment, and a brief questionnaire that students complete about themselves. The second session is administered on computer; only some of the students who took the paper-based assessment will participate in the approximately 1 hour session, which includes time for instructions and 40 minutes to complete the assessment.

What are the benefits?

The nation as a whole benefits from PISA by having a greater understanding of how the knowledge and skills of U.S. students compare with those of students from other countries. The country benefits from the field test by assuring that the questions used are fair and appropriate for U.S. students. Schools that participate in PISA will receive {\$200/\$800}, and each student who participates will receive \$25. Those students that also participate in the second test session to try out questions administered on computer will also receive an additional \$15.

Where can I find out more about PISA?

More information about PISA is available at the PISA website at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/>. If you have specific questions you can call PISA staff at 1-888-XXX-XXXX or e-mail us at [contractor's email].