

November 22, 2010

MEMORANDUM

To: Shelly Martinez, OMB
From: Laura Logerfo, NCES
Through: Kashka Kubzdela, NCES
Re: Response to OMB Passback on Proposed Cognitive Interviews for HSLs:09
Student and Parent Survey Draft Items (OMB# 1850-0803 v.37)

Is HSLs convinced that it needs to offer \$40 for a one hour cognitive lab to the teens? As you know, we have typically not approved even this level for teens in longer focus groups.

The HSLs:09 field team understands OMB's concerns about providing an excessive incentive while also discerning the need to encourage and thank students for their participation in an hour-long cognitive lab. Because both parents and students will participate in separate interviews, we have revised the HSLs Cognitive Interviews clearance package documents to reflect the following:

- If both parent and his/her student participate in their respective cognitive interviews, the parent will receive \$40 and the child will receive \$30.
- If only the student is interviewed, the student will receive \$30, and the parent who is facilitating the interview by providing permission and transportation will receive \$10.

A payment to participants is deemed necessary both to compensate individuals for their time, effort, and inconvenience, but also to ensure a sample with minimal bias based on attitudes or lifestyle (e.g., only those people who are more curious or those who are less busy may be more likely to attend). The interviews occur outside of academic school hours in a centrally located facility in the Chicago area that will likely require transportation (car or public transit), thus an incentive helps ensure student motivation and participation. The revised incentive for HSLs:09 reduces the incentive for students while at the same time compensating parents for their efforts in facilitating student participation.