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State PISA 2012 Assessment Letter

[Date]

[Title] [Name First] [Name Last]

[Title/Department]

[State]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[City], [State] [Zip code]

Dear [Title] [Name Last]:

I am writing to inform you that one or more schools in your state have been selected to participate in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in the fall of 2012 and to ask for your support in encouraging the selected schools to participate. PISA is the largest international education study in the world. More than 60 countries participate, representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy. PISA results are used by researchers and policy makers to chart national progress against international standards and the educational progress of our economic peers and competitors. Participating schools can use the results to benchmark their performance against schools across the world.

PISA is administered every three years and provides comparative information on the performance of 15-year-old U.S. students in mathematics, reading and science with that of 15-year-old students in other countries. PISA 2012 will also include assessments of problem-solving and financial literacy. For the first time in the United States, PISA will include computer-based assessments as well as paper-based assessments.

PISA is described in more detail in the enclosed materials. PISA is sponsored in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education and is conducted by Westat in Rockville, Maryland. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB #1850-0755. For information on the confidentiality of the data collected, please see the enclosed FAQ. While participation in this study is voluntary, we ask your agency to support participation on the part of schools in your state so that the United States has a representative sample of schools across the country.

Within the next few weeks, a representative of Westat will contact sampled school districts and schools to discuss conducting data collection. In the meantime, if you have questions about the study, please do not hesitate to call David Kastberg at 1-888-638-2597 or send an email to PISAHELP@westat.com. You may also get more information about PISA by contacting Dana Kelly at the U.S. Department of Education at 202-219-7101 or visiting the PISA website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/>.

Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley
Commissioner

cc: [State assessment coordinator name]

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by your schools, staff, and students may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573).

[Date]

[Title] [Name First] [Name Last], [Title/Department]
[School District]
[Address 1]
[City], [State] [Zip code]

Dear [Title] [Name Last]:

I am writing to inform you that one or more schools in your district have been selected to participate in the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) in the fall of 2012 and to ask for your support in encouraging the selected schools to participate. PISA is the largest international education study in the world. More than 60 countries participate, representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy. PISA results are used by researchers and policy makers to chart national progress against international standards and the educational progress of our economic peers and competitors. Participating schools can use the results to benchmark their performance against schools across the world.

PISA is administered every three years and provides comparative information on the performance of 15-year-old U.S. students in mathematics, reading and science with 15-year-old students in other countries. PISA 2012 will also include assessments of problem-solving and financial literacy. For the first time in the United States, PISA will include computer-based assessments as well as paper-based assessments. Participating schools will receive \$200 and each school's PISA school coordinator (school staff person designated to liaise with PISA staff) will receive \$200 as compensation for the coordinator's time and effort. Each student who is assessed will receive \$25 and students selected to take both the paper-based and computer-based assessments will receive an additional \$15.

PISA is described in more detail in the enclosed materials. PISA is sponsored in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in the U.S. Department of Education and is conducted by Westat in Rockville, Maryland. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB #1850-0755. For information on the confidentiality of the data collected, please see the enclosed FAQ. While participation in this study is voluntary, we ask your agency to support participation on the part of schools in your district so that the United States has a representative sample of schools across the country.

Within the next few days, a representative of Westat will contact the following school or schools in your district that have been selected to participate in the study: [LIST SAMPLED SCHOOLS HERE...].

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call David Kastberg at 1-888-638-2597 or send an email to PISAHELP@westat.com. You may also get more information about this study by contacting Dana Kelly at the U.S. Department of Education at 202-219-7101 or visiting the PISA website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/>.

Thank you for your time and support.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley
Commissioner

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School PISA 2012 Assessment Letter

[Date]

[Title] [Name First] [Name Last], [Title/Department]
[School District]
[Address 1]
[City], [State] [Zip code]

Dear [Title] [Name Last]:

I am pleased to inform you that your school has the opportunity to be a part of the upcoming Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2012. PISA is the largest international education study in the world. More than 60 countries participate, representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy. Each country is represented by a small sample of schools and students to represent the range of education contexts and students in the country. Your school is one of 240 across the United States that has been randomly selected to take part in PISA 2012 in the fall of 2012.

PISA 2012 will measure 15-year-old students' performance in mathematics, reading, science, problem-solving and financial literacy, and compare that with students of other countries. PISA results are used by researchers and policy makers to chart national progress against international standards. Participating schools can use the results to benchmark their performance against schools across the world.

Your school will receive a report with information about how your students performed on PISA compared with schools across the United States and the other PISA countries (provided your school meets response rate and sample size requirements). Your school will also receive \$200 and your school's PISA school coordinator (staff person you designate to liaise with PISA staff) will receive \$200 as compensation for the coordinator's time and effort. Each student who is assessed will receive \$25 and students selected to take both the paper-and-pencil and computer-based assessments will receive an additional \$15. NCES may follow up with participating students as part of a study to look at the relationship between performance on PISA and other outcomes.

Materials enclosed with this letter further describe the PISA 2012 assessment process for schools. PISA is sponsored in the United States by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) and is conducted by Westat in Rockville, Maryland. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB #1850-0755. We will only disclose the names of schools to the governing district for each school, and we require that each district maintain the confidentiality of the sampled schools in the PISA 2012 study. For more information on the confidentiality of the data collected, please see the enclosed FAQ. I

hope you will participate in this voluntary study because it is important that the United States has a nationally representative sample of schools.

Within the next few days, a representative of Westat will call you to answer any questions you have and discuss your participation in PISA. In the meantime do not hesitate to call David Kastberg at 1-888-638-2597, or send an email to PISAHELP@westat.com. You may also contact Dana Kelly at the U.S. Department of Education at 202-219-7101 or visit the PISA website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/>.

Your participation in the PISA 2012 study is vital; I hope you and your school will take advantage of this opportunity. Thank you for your time and for supporting this important international study.

Sincerely,

Jack Buckley
Commissioner

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by your schools, staff, and students may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573).

[PISA 2012 Study Brochure - Outside](#)

What countries are participating in PISA 2012



Asia-Pacific and Africa	
Portugal	Australia
Romania	Hong Kong-China
Russian Federation	Indonesia
Serbia	Israel
Slovak Republic	Japan
Slovenia	Jordan
Spain	Kazakhstan
Sweden	Republic of Korea
Switzerland	Macao-China
United Kingdom	Malaysia
North and South America	
Mauritius	New Zealand
Argentina	Qatar
Brazil	Shanghai-China
Canada	Singapore
Chile	Chinese Taipei
Colombia	Thailand
Costa Rica	Tunisia
Mexico	Turkey
Peru	United Arab Emirates
Trinidad and Tobago	Vietnam
United States	
Netherlands	
Norway	
Poland	Uruguay

How do I get more information?

Visit the PISA web site:

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>

For additional questions about PISA 2012, contact the PISA Information Hotline at 1-888-638-2597 or email to PISAHELP@westat.com.

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 943d. By law, the data provided by your schools, staff, and students may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 957(j)). Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved this data collection under OMB # 1850-0755.



Please feel free to contact the PISA U.S. Home Office with any questions via e-mail at PISAHELP@westat.com or by calling 1-888-638-2597



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What is PISA?

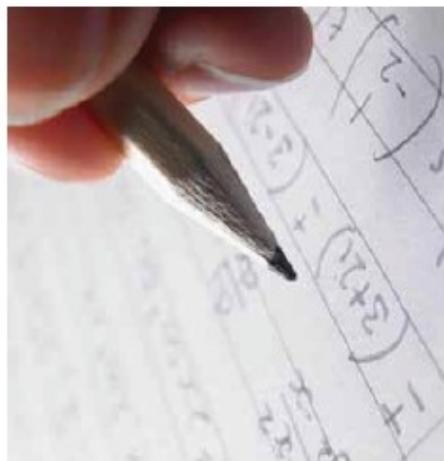
The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international assessment of 15-year-old students. In 2012, students from more than 60 countries including the United States will participate. PISA measures how well students apply their knowledge and skills in reading, mathematics, and science to problems in real-life contexts. Additionally, PISA 2012 will include computer-based assessments in mathematics, reading, and general problem solving, and an assessment of students' financial literacy.

PISA is sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and managed in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education.

Why is PISA important?

PISA provides a unique opportunity to compare 15-year-old U.S. students' reading, mathematics, and science knowledge and skills with those of peers in countries around the world. PISA complements what we learn from national assessments by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of student performance internationally. The results inform national discussions about education as well as international competitiveness.

PISA also compares U.S. student performance over time and across different segments of the U.S. student population. PISA examines relationships between student performance and schooling across countries to suggest national strengths and weaknesses.



Why both paper-based and computer-based sessions?

PISA 2012 is the beginning of a transition to a wider use of computer-based assessments in future PISA cycles. Computers offer multiple ways of presenting information and afford testing options that cannot be provided in a paper-based assessment. The assessments in PISA 2012 will use both paper-based and computer-based formats in order to make the transition to computer-based assessments in a scientifically valid way.

What type of assessment is PISA?

The PISA assessments are developed through an international consensus-building process involving input from U.S. and international experts in reading, mathematics, science, and financial literacy and measurement. In a final step, the assessment is endorsed as suitable by all participating countries. The assessment contains a mix of questions: some require students to select appropriate responses, while others require that students solve problems and provide written answers. Examples of PISA reading, mathematics, and science assessment questions are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/educators.asp>.

What will students be asked to do in PISA 2012?

PISA 2012 has two separate assessment sessions. All students will participate in the first session lasting about 3 hours. It will consist of a set of instructions, a paper-and-pencil assessment, and a brief questionnaire asking students about themselves. The assessment will include mathematics, reading, science, and financial literacy. PISA 2012 focuses on mathematics so the majority of the questions will be mathematics-related. About half of the students will also participate in a second, computer-based session, lasting about 80 minutes including instruction time. This computer-based session will assess students' knowledge and skill in mathematics, reading, and general problem-solving.





Program for International Student Assessment

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Information for School Leaders

PISA 2012

"PISA's benefit is that it focuses more on the application of information than the memorization of information. Internationally, education focuses on deeper learning. Similarly, PISA reflects that international method and focuses on deeper learning rather than wider."

High School Principal, PISA 2009 Participant

PISA is an international assessment of 15-year-olds that measures how well students apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems related to reading, mathematics, science, and problem-solving in real-life contexts. In PISA 2012, some students will also be assessed in financial literacy, that is, the knowledge and skills that enable individuals to make informed choices about personal finances.

Why was my school selected for participation?

Your school was randomly selected to take part in PISA 2012 in the fall of 2012 to help provide an accurate representation of the overall U.S. school population.

Why should my school and students participate?

PISA is the largest international education study in the world. More than 60 countries participate, representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy. PISA results are used by researchers and policy makers to chart national progress against international standards and the educational progress of our economic peers and competitors. Although participation is voluntary, it is important that every selected school and student participate to ensure the completeness and accuracy of results. Each school and student represents many others. Thus, the validity of results depends upon a high participation rate. Participating schools can use the results to benchmark their performance against schools across the world.

Will all of our 15-year-old students be asked to participate?

Probably not. In each school, all 15-year-olds will have an equal chance of selection, and selected students will be part of a nationally representative sample. Student selection is not based on any student characteristic, other than being 15 years old. Only in very small schools will the school sample include all 15-year-olds. In addition, some students with disabilities or limited English proficiency may be excused from the assessment.

Who conducts the PISA 2012 assessment?

The entire assessment process will be undertaken by trained staff from Westat, a research organization under contract to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). NCES conducts this study under authorization in the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S.C., § 9543) and approval of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget under OMB # 1850-0755.



Do teachers need to help administer the assessment?

No. Westat staff will visit the school on the day of the assessment, bringing with them all the materials required, and they will handle the entire administration of the assessment. PISA staff will also bring all of the necessary computer equipment for the computer-based assessments.

When will the PISA 2012 assessment be conducted?

The assessment will be conducted between September 24 – November 2, 2012. Westat will work with schools to identify an assessment date convenient for the school in that time period.

Where will PISA 2012 assessment be conducted?

The assessment will be conducted in the schools that are selected to participate.

How long does the PISA 2012 assessment take?

The assessment consists of two sessions. The first session is approximately 3 hours; it includes time for instructions, the administration of the paper-and-pencil assessment, and a questionnaire that students complete about themselves. The second session is administered on a computer; only some of the students who took the paper-based assessment will participate in this approximately 80 minute session.

What will happen with the collected data?

The PISA 2012 data will be used to evaluate students' knowledge and skills in all participating countries. By 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 except as required by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). As part of a follow-up study to look at the relationship between performance on PISA and other outcomes, NCES may ask participating students for contact information. NCES may also ask schools for public directory information on participating students. Reports of the findings from the PISA 2012 assessments will not identify participating districts, schools, students, or individual staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Where can I find more information?

Visit the PISA web site:

<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>

For additional questions about PISA 2012, contact the PISA Information Hotline at 1-888-638-2597 or email to PISAHELP@westat.com.



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Program for International Student Assessment

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Information for Students

What is PISA?

PISA is an international assessment of 15-year-old students that assesses how well students apply their knowledge and skills in mathematics, reading, science, problem solving and financial literacy. PISA presents problems that students would encounter in the real world.

Think of PISA as an Olympics of the mind.

The United States is one of 67 countries participating in PISA.

Why should I participate in PISA?

You represent other students like you all across the country. PISA informs discussions about U.S. education and international competitiveness.

Only about 5,000 students will participate in PISA in the United States, representing students nationwide.

Participating in PISA is a national service.

How often do you get to represent your country?

What subjects are assessed in PISA?

You will answer questions about mathematics, reading, and science or financial literacy in a paper-and-pencil assessment. Some students will also be selected to take an assessment on a computer and will answer questions about reading, mathematics, problem-solving, or a combination of these subjects. You will also complete a questionnaire about your home and school experiences.

How long does PISA take?

Students will take a paper and pencil assessment lasting about three hours. Some students will also take an 80 minute computer-based assessment.

How does PISA select a representative sample of students?

The schools that participate in PISA in the United States are randomly selected from a list of all schools in the country that have 15-year-old students. This is to ensure that the U.S. participants accurately represent the whole United States and not just particular types of schools or students. In each PISA school, each 15-year-old student has an equal chance of being selected. From a list of all 15-year-old students in the school, 50 students are randomly selected to participate. Participants in other countries are selected just the same way to make sure each country is fairly represented and no country has an advantage because of types of schools or students selected. As part of a follow-up study to look at the relationship between performance on PISA and other outcomes, NCES may contact you after the PISA assessment.

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, and students may only be used for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573).



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O.M.B. No. 1850-0755

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APPLYING
KNOWLEDGE AND
SKILLS TO SOLVE
REAL-WORLD
CHALLENGES

PISA focuses on young peoples' abilities to use their knowledge and skills to meet real-life challenges in the future.

PISA provides a unique opportunity for the United States to understand its educational standing in comparison to other nations.

Findings from PISA are a valuable resource for discussing improvements in reading, mathematics, and science achievement for all students in this country.



PROGRAM FOR
INTERNATIONAL
STUDENT
ASSESSMENT
(PISA) 2012

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT THE PISA WEB SITE AT <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>

PISA 2012



PISA 2012

PISA 2012 Instructions for the School Coordinator Information – Front Page

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES FOR PISA 2012				
	Winter 2011	Summer – Fall 2012 Pre-assessment Contact	Fall 2012 Assessment Visit	Benefits
Principal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Identify a school coordinator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Complete a School Questionnaire on the characteristics of the school and its enrollment, resources, policies, and learning environment. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Represent other similar U.S. schools. ■ Receive U.S. national report with PISA 2012 results. ■ Receive \$200 check for the school's participation. ■ Receive report with your school's PISA results compared with other countries provided response rate and sample size requirements are met.
School Coordinator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Select an assessment date convenient for your school. ■ Arrange for the use of a classroom or an alternative quiet space for the assessment. ■ Determine parent notification procedures. ■ Notify teachers, selected students and students' parents of the study and benefits of participating. ■ Coordinate the principal's completion of the School Questionnaire. ■ Confirm the date and location of the assessment for PISA staff. ■ Collect parental consent forms where required and submit to PISA staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Invited to International PISA Conference in Washington, D.C. ■ Provide a list of eligible students to PISA staff. ■ Collect completed School Questionnaire and return it to PISA staff. ■ Ensure all sampled students are released from class for the assessment. ■ Meet with PISA staff and review the assessment procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Arrange assessment space. ■ Help ensure all sampled students attend the assessment. ■ Ensure all sampled students are released from class for the assessment. ■ Meet with PISA staff and review the assessment procedures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive U.S. national report with PISA 2012 results. ■ Receive \$200 for participating.
Students			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Take the assessment and complete a Student Questionnaire, in a 3 hour session. ■ Some of these students will also take a computer-based assessment in an 80 minute session. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive a Certificate of Volunteer Service for 4 hours of community service. ■ Represent other U.S. students like themselves and contribute to the profile of what American students know and can do.
PISA Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provide school with materials explaining PISA and its importance. ■ Work with the school coordinator to set an assessment date. ■ Maintain school and student confidentiality. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Call the school coordinator to discuss assessment day space, and student participation. ■ Select a random sample of eligible students to participate. ■ Provide a School Questionnaire to the school coordinator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Conduct assessment from start to finish. ■ Furnish all the assessment materials, pencils, test booklets, and computers. ■ Conduct a follow-up interview with the school coordinator at the end of the assessment. ■ Pack up the materials to ensure that the assessments are complete and secure. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Receive compensation for participating. Students will receive \$25 for completing the paper-based assessment and an additional \$15, if selected, for participating in the computer-based assessment.
Find Out More	http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/PISA			

CBAPP-1



INSTRUCTIONS

FOR THE SCHOOL COORDINATOR

PISA 2012



Welcome and thank you for your efforts as the School Coordinator for the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2012 at your school. In PISA 2012, the United States will participate along with more than 60 other countries in a study that produces important international benchmarks in reading, mathematics, science, general problem-solving, and financial literacy of 15-year-old students. Your assistance is critical to the success of the study.

The first step is to generate a list of all 15-year-old students in your school to submit to PISA. Detailed instructions for how to submit student lists to PISA as well as more information about the assessment day are included in the enclosed handbook titled ***PISA 2012 School Coordinator Handbook***.

Shortly after you receive the list of selected students, your local PISA representative will contact you to arrange a preassessment visit to your school. If you have any questions before then, please feel free to call **1-888-638-2597**, or email the PISA Help Desk at **PISAHELP@westat.com**.

ACTIVITIES TO COMPLETE...

NOW

- Create a list of all 15-year-old students in the school (born between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997).
- Submit this list to PISA using the instructions in the ***PISA 2012 School Coordinator Handbook***.

BEFORE THE ASSESSMENT

- Receive the Student Tracking Form, which lists the students selected for the assessment.
- Verify students' demographic information.
- Meet with a PISA representative during a preassessment visit to:
 - Identify students with special needs who, although selected, may not be asked to participate in the assessment.
 - Identify other students listed who cannot participate (withdrawn or ineligible for other reasons).
 - Confirm the date and time for the sessions.
 - Secure appropriate space for the sessions.
 - Paper-based: space for up to 50 students
 - Computer-based: space for 20 students and laptops
 - Receive the school questionnaire.
 - Meet with selected students to introduce them to PISA and motivate them to attend.
 - Show a 20-minute PISA PowerPoint presentation.
 - Distribute student invitations.
- Notify parents/guardians and teachers of students selected for the assessment.
- Distribute and collect the school questionnaire.
- Remind the students of the upcoming assessment and urge them to attend.

ON ASSESSMENT DAY

- Ensure that the testing location is available and set up for the assessment.
- Provide the PISA representative with a dated copy of the parent/guardian notification letter.
- Identify students who are absent or whose status has changed since the preassessment visit.
- Ensure that participating students attend the assessment sessions.
- Provide the PISA representative with the completed school questionnaire.
- Meet with the PISA representative after the assessment briefly to share your insight into how the assessment went in your school.



PISA 2012

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS...

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 United States compare in achievement with students in other countries.

PISA is sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and managed in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education.

When will data collection take place?

The assessment will take place during the fall of 2012. A PISA staff member will work with your school to establish a convenient date for the assessment.

Who will be asked to take part in the assessment?

PISA staff will select a random sample of up to 50 15-year-old students (those born between July 1, 1996 and June 30, 1997) in your school.

Who conducts the assessment?

Trained PISA representatives will administer the assessment and provide all required materials, including laptop computers for the computer-based assessment.

Will the school, staff members, and students receive compensation for their time and effort?

For participating in PISA 2012, your school will receive \$200. You will also receive \$200 for helping to coordinate activities in your school. Also, if such payments are approved by the school, each student who participates in the paper-based assessment will receive \$25. Those students who also participate in the computer-based assessment will receive an additional \$15.

What is involved for school staff and students?

Schools will be asked to designate a School Coordinator to work with PISA staff on school arrangements as well as provide space to conduct the assessment sessions. The school principal will be asked to complete a 30-minute school questionnaire that asks about the characteristics and environment of the school.

Students will be asked to take part in an assessment that is divided into two parts. The first part is a paper-based assessment that will last a little over 2 hours and is followed by a short break. Afterwards, students will be asked to complete a 30-minute student questionnaire. Students will then be dismissed for lunch. Up to 20 of the original students will then come back for a 1 hour 15 minute computer-based assessment.

As part of a follow-up study to look at the relationship between performance on PISA and other outcomes, NCES may ask participating students for contact information. NCES may also ask schools for public directory information on participating students.



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