

# **Appendix A:**

## Respondent Materials



November 2011

Dear Principal,

I am writing to invite your school to participate in the development of an insightful study, the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011). The ECLS-K:2011 is the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The earlier studies have been important sources of data for researchers and policy makers to address key issues related to children's development and learning including literacy in the home, the teaching of reading and mathematics, and the associations between physical exercise, childhood obesity, and well-being. Researchers using the data have published their findings widely in scientific journals and the popular press. NCES also presents the results from these studies for practitioners and the general public on our website, <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls>.

Like its predecessor studies, the ECLS-K:2011 will provide important information on children's early learning and development, transition into kindergarten, and progress through elementary school. The new cohort of children's school experiences will be compared to those of over a decade earlier to study the extent to which the demographic profile of children and their environment for learning have changed.

We are contacting you because your school has been selected to take part in a brief data collection focusing on assessment development for the ECLS-K:2011 that will run from January 23<sup>rd</sup> through February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2012. For this phase of the study, we will test and refine the procedures for administering an assessment of second-grade students' executive functioning ability, specifically their ability to follow changing rules in a structured task. This computer-based instrument is planned for inclusion in the full second-grade assessment that will be administered to the students in the main ECLS-K:2011 study. The full assessment includes items on reading, mathematics, and science. To test our assessment procedures, we would like to administer the full ECLS-K:2011 assessment to second graders at your school. The assessment will be individually administered by our trained staff and will take approximately 60 minutes per child. We expect that an assessment team will be in your school for 2-3 days.

Participation in this study is voluntary; however, I encourage your school's participation during this development phase. The responses of children in your school will help to decide whether the new assessment will work in the national data collection. **In appreciation for your time and effort, your school will receive a \$5 honorarium for each participating child.**

The National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences is the primary sponsor of the ECLS-K:2011, which is being conducted on behalf of NCES by Westat. ECLS-K:2011 has been endorsed by the national education organizations listed on this letter. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under 20 U.S. Code, Section 9541. Under that law, the data provided by your school, staff, students, and their parents 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. Code, Section 9573). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0803. Information collected from multiple individuals will be combined to produce reports of findings from the ECLS-K:2011. The reports will not identify participating districts, schools, children and their parents, or individual staff.

**Endorsed by:**

- American Association of School Administrators
- American Federation of Teachers
- American Montessori Society
- Council for American Private Education
- Council for Exceptional Children
- Council of Chief State School Officers
- International Reading Association
- Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod
- National Association for the Education of Young Children
- National Association of Elementary School Principals
- National Catholic Educational Association
- National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- National Education Association
- National Parent-Teacher Association (PTA)
- National School Boards Association
- National Science Teachers Association
- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

**Sponsored by:**



U.S. Department of Education



Westat ● 1600 Research Boulevard ● Rockville, MD 20850

Within the next few days, a representative of Westat will contact you about participating in this important study. Detailed information about the ECLS-K:2011 can be found in the brochure enclosed with this letter. If you have questions about the study, please feel free to call Westat toll-free at 1-888-204-4864 or send an email to [ECLSKHELP@westat.com](mailto:ECLSKHELP@westat.com). Also, more information about ECLS-K:2011 is available at: <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/MyECLSK2011>.

Thank you for your support of the ECLS-K:2011.

Sincerely,



Jack Buckley, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences



Kindergarten Class of 2010-11

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Dear Parent,

I am writing to invite your child to participate in the development of an insightful study, the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011). The ECLS-K:2011 is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences and is being conducted on behalf of NCES by Westat. This study is the third in a series of longitudinal studies of young children sponsored by NCES and is described in more detail in the enclosed brochure. Since fall of 2010, the ECLS-K:2011 has followed children across the nation as they have moved from kindergarten into first grade, collecting information about their educational experiences both in and out of school.

**Your child's district office and school principal have agreed to participate in the current phase of the study in which we are developing a computer-based assessment that measures children's ability to adapt to changing directions. We are asking parents of all second graders in the school to allow their children to assist us with the development of the ECLS-K:2011 assessments by completing an individualized assessment with a trained ECLS-K:2011 assessor.** The assessment is designed to measure children's reading, mathematics, and science skills and knowledge, as well as to obtain information on children's memory and ability to follow rules in a structured task, both of which are associated with learning. The assessment activities will take approximately 60 minutes per child. The information collected during this phase will be used to guide the development of the ECLS-K:2011 second-grade child assessment that will be used in the main study. We are looking forward to working with your child during this phase, which is taking place in January and February of 2012.

Information from multiple individuals will be combined to produce statistical reports; no information that identifies you or your child (for example, name or address) will be included in any reports. All information collected will be protected from disclosure to the fullest extent allowable by law (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Your child's school will not receive any of the information about you or your child collected as part of this study. Performance on the assessment will not affect your child's grades or progress in school.

A consent form for your child to participate in the ECLS-K:2011 assessment tasks is enclosed. Please sign the form and return it to your child's school in the enclosed envelope by the day of the assessment.

The collection of information in this survey is authorized by 20 U.S. Code, Section 9541. Participation is voluntary. Responses are protected from disclosure by federal statute (20 U.S. Code, Section 9573). All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals 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. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0803. Approval expires 09/30/2013.

A

Thank you for your support of the ECLS-K:2011. If you have questions about the study, please feel free to call Westat toll free at 1-888-204-4864 or send an email to [ECLSKHELP@westat.com](mailto:ECLSKHELP@westat.com). Also, more information about the ECLS-K:2011 is available on the NCES website at <http://nces.ed.gov/ecls/myECLSK2011>.

Thank you for your time and consideration of the study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Jack Buckley", is written over a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp or watermark.

Jack Buckley, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences





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A consent form for your child to participate in the ECLS-K:2011 assessment tasks is enclosed. If you will allow your child to participate in the study, you do not need to return this form. If you do not want your child to take part in this study, please fill out the form and return it in the enclosed envelope to your child's school by the day of the assessment.

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Thank you for your time and consideration of the study.

Sincerely,

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Jack Buckley, Ph.D.  
Commissioner  
National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences



