

Appendix B – Participant Contact Materials for wave 4

Initial letter to send out in the fall

Dear [teacher]:

Thank you for your involvement in the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS). Did you know that the BTLS is the only study that follows teachers who began teaching in 2007 and 2008 from all around the United States as their lives progress? The real value of this study comes from having information about the SAME group of people collected over time. That's why we need your continued help! Now, more than ever, policymakers want and need to understand how to retain high-quality teachers. Your information will help to describe how the career and life paths of beginning teachers develop over time. Enclosed please find a brochure with more information about the study.

In early January you will be mailed an invitation to participate in the next wave of the study. You will also receive the invitation by e-mail if we have your e-mail address. The questionnaire is entirely web-based and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. A monetary incentive will be included with the mailed invitation as a token of thanks for your participation in the study.

In order to ensure that you receive your monetary incentive, please take a few minutes to verify, correct, or update your contact information. For your convenience, you can either complete and return the enclosed form or follow the instructions below to log into your account:

1. Go to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>;
2. Enter your username;
3. Enter your password;
4. Click “Sign on” to review your contact information;
5. Verify your contact information and make corrections as necessary; and
6. Click “Update” when you are done.

Your answers 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 [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) Public Law 107-279, Section 183]. The information you provide will be combined with the information provided by others and presented in statistical summaries. Your participation is very important to ensure that this study yields meaningful results; however, participation is voluntary and you may decline to answer any or all of the items.

If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau staff at 1-888-595-1334 or via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov.

We thank you in advance for your continued participation in this important research study.

Sincerely,
Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics
Enclosures

Initial letter to send out in the fall to respondents who had opted out in wave 2 and 3

Dear [teacher]:

We are writing to ask for your support on an important national study that the U.S. Census Bureau is conducting on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS) is the only study that follows teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008 from all around the United States as their lives progress. The real value of this study comes from having information about the SAME group of people collected over time. Your information will help to describe how the career and life paths of beginning teachers develop. Enclosed please find a brochure with more information about the study.

We realize that you have declined to participate in the past, but we would like to invite you to rejoin the study. In early January you will be mailed an invitation to participate in the next wave of the study. You will also receive the invitation by e-mail if we have your e-mail address. The questionnaire is entirely web-based and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. A monetary incentive will be included with the mailed invitation as a token of thanks for your participation in the study.

In order to ensure that you receive your invitation and monetary incentive, please take a few minutes to verify, correct, or update your contact information. For your convenience, you can either complete and return the enclosed form or follow the instructions below to log into your account:

1. Go to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>;
2. Enter your username:
3. Enter your password:
4. Click “Sign on” to review your contact information;
5. Verify your contact information and make corrections as necessary; and
6. Click “Update” when you are done.

Your answers 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 [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002) Public Law 107-279, Section 183]. The information you provide will be combined with the information provided by others and presented in statistical summaries. Your participation is very important to ensure that this study yields meaningful results; however, participation is voluntary and you may decline to answer any or all of the items.

We encourage you to participate in this study. If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau staff at 1-888-595-1334 or via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important research study.
Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner
National Center for Education Statistics

Enclosures

Initial e-mail to send out in the fall

Dear [teacher]:

I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your involvement in the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS). The BTLS is the only study that follows teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008 from all around the United States as their lives progress. The real value of this study comes from having information about the SAME group of people collected over time. Your information will help to describe how the career and life paths of beginning teachers develop.

In early January you will be e-mailed an invitation to participate in the next wave of the study. You will also receive the invitation by mail if we have your contact information. A monetary incentive will be included with the mailed invitation as a token of thanks for your participation in the study.

In order to ensure that you receive your monetary incentive, please take a few minutes to verify, correct, or update your contact information by:

1. Going to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>;
2. Entering your username;
3. Entering your password;
4. Clicking "Sign on" to review your contact information;
5. Making corrections and updates as necessary; and
6. Clicking "Update" when you are done.

The invitation will contain the web link to the survey and your unique username and password. The questionnaire is entirely web based and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Topics include questions about your employment status (e.g., if you are currently teaching, working in a nonteaching position, or not working); characteristics of your current teaching or nonteaching position; and your opinions of your current position, including the reasons for any change in your position that may have occurred.

For more information about the BTLS, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov//surveys/btls/>.

If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census staff at 1-888-595-1334 or via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov. You may also contact me directly at freddie.cross@ed.gov.

I thank you in advance for your continued participation in this important research study.

Sincerely,

Freddie Cross

Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study Project Director
National Center for Education Statistics

**Initial e-mail to send out in the fall to respondents who had opted out in wave 2 and
3**

Dear [teacher]:

I am writing to ask for your support on an important national study that the U.S. Census Bureau is conducting on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS) is the only study that follows teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008 from all around the United States as their lives progress. The real value of this study comes from having information about the SAME group of people collected over time. Your information will help to describe how the career and life paths of beginning teachers develop.

I realize that you've declined to participate in the past, but I'd like to invite you to rejoin the study. In early January, you will be invited to participate in the BTLS via e-mail. You will also receive the invitation by mail if we have your contact information. The mailed invitation will include a **monetary incentive** as a token of thanks for your participation in the study.

In order to ensure that you receive your invitation and monetary incentive, **please take a few minutes to verify, correct, or update your contact information by:**

1. Going to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>;
2. Entering your username;
3. Entering your password;
4. Clicking "Sign on" to review your contact information;
5. Making corrections and updates as necessary; and
6. Clicking "Update" when you are done.

The invitation will contain the web link to the survey and your unique username and password. The questionnaire is entirely web based and should take approximately 15 minutes to complete. Topics include questions about your employment status (e.g., if you are currently teaching, working in a nonteaching position, or not working); characteristics of your current teaching or nonteaching position; and your opinions of your current position, including the reasons for any change in your position that may have occurred.

For more information about the BTLS, please visit: <http://nces.ed.gov//surveys/btls/>.

I encourage you to participate in this study. If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau staff at 1-888-595-1334 or via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov. You may also contact me directly at freddie.cross@ed.gov.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important research study.

Sincerely,

Freddie Cross
Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study Project Director
National Center for Education Statistics

E-mail with Password

Dear <panel member name>,

Earlier today we sent you an e-mail about the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS). The earlier e-mail contained your username.

Your password is: <password>

To log in to the BTLS questionnaire,

1. Go to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>;
2. Enter your username provided in the initial e-mail;
3. Enter <password> for your password; and
4. Click “Sign in” to participate in the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau toll-free at 1-888-595-1334 or by e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov. Someone will be available to take your call or answer your e-mail Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time). At any other time, please leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. Thanks, in advance, for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study Team
National Center for Education Statistics

Letter to send out announcing opening of survey

Dear

Your input is highly valued! Please accept the enclosed \$10 as a token of our appreciation.

It's time for the fourth round of the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS). We urge you to participate in this important U.S. Department of Education study, which is being conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau.

The BTLS provides a new source of rich and comprehensive information on teachers' careers, starting with first-year teachers as they move into new phases of their lives. As a beginning teacher in 2007 or 2008, your continued participation enables us to learn about the career paths of beginning teachers and how they respond to different transitions in their lives including transitions into nonteaching careers.

Please complete the BTLS questionnaire over the Internet by going to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>. Type your username and case-sensitive password (provided in the box below) on the Login page, and press "Sign on" to begin the questionnaire. If you are unable to complete the questionnaire by January 31, 2011, a U.S. Census Bureau interviewer will call you to complete the questionnaire by telephone. The interview will take about 15 to 25 minutes to complete.

Please be assured that both the U.S. Department of Education and the U.S. Census Bureau follow strict procedures to protect the privacy of study participants and that your answers 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 (Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Public Law 107-279, Title I, Part E, Section 183).

Your participation is voluntary, but your responses *are necessary* to make the results of this study accurate and timely.

Enclosed you will find a brochure with a brief description of the study. If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau staff at 1-888-595-1334. Staff will be available to take your call Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time). The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov. Please also feel free to contact Freddie Cross, BTLS Project Director, at freddie.cross@ed.gov or 1-202-502-7489.

We greatly appreciate your participation and thank you for helping us conduct this important study.

Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner

Go to: <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>
Your study ID: «username»
Your password: «password»

National Center for Education Statistics
Enclosures

Survey Launch E-mail with Username

Dear [teacher],

We need your input!

Recently we mailed a letter inviting your participation in the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS). This study is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education. This study is designed to help us better understand the career paths, whether in education or not, of those who were first-year teachers in 2007 or 2008. Your responses will be collected on a secure website, and we estimate that it will take only 15 minutes to complete.

To log in to the BTLS questionnaire, go to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>.

Your username is: [username]

Your password will be sent in a separate e-mail.

If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau toll-free at 1-888-595-1334 or by e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov. Staff will be available to take your call Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time). At any other time, please leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov.

Thanks, in advance, for your participation in this important study.

Sincerely,

Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study Team
National Center for Education Statistics

Reminder Letter

Dear

Don't miss your opportunity to educate the policy makers that influence education policy!

Recently, the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education invited you to participate in the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS). Your responses provide insight into the teaching profession and career paths of current and former teachers. We rely on professionals like you to provide information that aids those who determine school policies and practices.

If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your assistance and please disregard this letter. If you haven't had the opportunity to complete the survey yet, we strongly encourage you to participate. You can access the survey by:

1. Going to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>;
2. Entering your username:
3. Entering your case-sensitive password:
4. Clicking "Sign on" to begin the survey.

If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau staff at 1-888-595-1334. Staff will be available to take your call Monday through Friday between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time).

Alternatively, the U.S. Census Bureau is available to answer your questions via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov. Please also feel free to contact Freddie Cross, BTLS Project Director, at freddie.cross@ed.gov or 1-202-502-7489.

We want to assure you that the information you provide is protected from disclosure by federal statute (Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Public Law 107-279, Title I, Part E, Sec. 183). We are using a secure server to collect your data online. In addition, information you provide on working conditions, commitment, job satisfaction, and perceptions and attitudes is combined with that of teachers and former teachers from all over the country to give an overall portrait of today's teacher career paths. Your answers 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. Your decision to participate is voluntary, but your responses are necessary to make the results of this study accurate and timely.

For additional information about the BTLS, please visit
<http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/btls/respondent.asp>.

Thank you, again, in advance for your contribution to this important survey effort.
Sincerely,

Stuart Kerachsky
Acting Commissioner for Education Statistics
National Center for Education Statistics

Reminder E-mail

Dear [teacher],

We know that you are really busy, but we need your help!

Your responses to the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS) are critical. Your participation contributes to providing valuable information to those that determine school policies and practices.

If you have already completed the survey, thank you for your assistance and please disregard this e-mail. If you haven't had the opportunity to complete the survey yet, we encourage you to participate by going to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>.

Your username is: [username]

If you have forgotten your password, you can retrieve it with your username by going to <http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls>.

If you have any questions, please contact the U.S. Census Bureau toll-free at 1-888-595-1334. Staff will be available to take your call Monday through Friday, between 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 midnight (Eastern Time). At any other time, please leave a message, and someone will get back to you as soon as possible. The U.S. Census Bureau is also available to answer your questions via e-mail at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov.

Thanks, in advance, for your participation.

Sincerely,

Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study Team
National Center for Education Statistics

Contact Information Update FORM **BTLS-1** (10/06/2010) U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE Economics and Statistics Administration U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

Please review your current contact information displayed on the left side of the box below. Check here if all preprinted information is **correct**. If the preprinted information is not correct or is not current, **please update** it in the space provided on the right side of the box.

Name

Name

Address

Address

City

City

State

Zip Code

State

Zip Code

Country

Country

Personal e-mail

Personal e-mail

Work e-mail

Work e-mail

Home telephone number

Home telephone number ()

Work telephone number

Work telephone number ()

Cell telephone number

Cell telephone number ()

Thank you for your assistance. Please return this page in the enclosed postage-paid envelope to: U.S. Census Bureau ATTN: SPB64C 1201 E. 10th Street Jeffersonville, IN 37132-0001 Username:

Contact Information Update Information available on the web page

Revised Informed Consent Language

What is the purpose of this study?

The Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS) is a study of a group of public school teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008. The study will follow this cohort of teachers for ten years to create an unfolding “story.” Over time, the information gathered will permit a better understanding of the impact that different life events have on teachers’ careers and how teachers respond to transitions in their lives.

Who authorizes this study?

This study is authorized by Title I, Part C, Sections 151(b) and 153(a) of Public Law 107-279, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. The U.S. Census Bureau is conducting this study for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education.

Why should you participate in this study?

Policymakers and educational leaders rely on data from this study to inform their decisions concerning K-12 schools. This study provides important insight into the career paths of beginning teachers and your participation will contribute to the success of this data collection. Because it is a sample survey, your responses represent the responses of many. Higher response rates give us confidence that the findings are accurate.

Does data remain confidential?

All responses are protected by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Public Law 107-279, Title I, Part E, Section 183. Your answers will be used for statistical purposes only and will not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as provided by law. Your responses to the survey are stored on a secure server, at the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

How will your information be reported?

The information you provide will be combined with the information provided by others in statistical reports. Some of your answers, without any direct personal identifiers such as names, addresses, or any other contact information, will be made available to researchers at government agencies, universities, and private research organizations through restricted-use data files after those researchers go through a thorough licensing process at NCES. They must sign a legally binding agreement to protect the confidentiality of all individual survey answers.

Please know that your participation is completely voluntary. If you would like to be removed from the study, please contact Freddie Cross in writing at freddie.cross@ed.gov. However, we hope you will want to be part of this important and exciting study.

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850–0868. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 20 minutes per response, including the time spent to review instructions, search existing data sources, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate(s) or suggestions for improving this form, please write to: U.S. Department of Education, Washington, DC 20202–4651. If you have comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission of this form, e-mail: dsd.education.surveys@census.gov, or write directly to: Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study, National Center for Education Statistics, 1990 K Street, N.W., #9030, Washington, DC 20006.

Brochure Language

How was I selected?

In your first year of teaching, you participated in the Schools and Staffing Survey. As a result, you were selected for this study to be representative of the entire population of public school teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008.

What is the Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study?

The Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study (BTLS) is a study of a group of public school teachers who began teaching in 2007 or 2008. The study will follow this cohort of teachers for a decade.

Over time, the information gathered will permit a better understanding of the career paths of beginning teachers and how they respond to different transitions in their lives. These transitions might include moving to a different school, teaching a different grade or subject, becoming a mentor, exiting teaching to pursue a nonteaching career, starting a family, and so forth.

Why is my involvement important?

BTLS is the only study that follows beginning teachers from all around the United States. The unique value of this study comes from having information about the same people collected over time. Even if you have left teaching, your continuing participation is very important because the decisions you make and the path you follow can help researchers gain deeper insight into what influences a teacher's decision to leave the teaching profession. The information you have given us so far is being used to inform policymakers about the needs of beginning teachers in the areas of professional development, education, and support.

How will this interview differ from the previous ones?

While some questionnaire items have been revised, each interview is similar to the previous one. It is important that we hear from you in order to understand when life transitions happen and how they affect your career path. We would really appreciate your support for each wave of the study.

What kinds of questions are asked?

You will be asked questions about your employment status (e.g., if you are currently teaching, working in a nonteaching position, or not working); characteristics of your current teaching or nonteaching position; your opinions of your current position, including the reasons for any change in your position that may have occurred; as well as background information.

How are the data collected?

The data will be collected through a web-based questionnaire. At the beginning of each data collection, you will receive e-mails from the National Center for Education Statistics containing a username, password, and link to the questionnaire. The web-based questionnaire is easy for you to complete quickly and at a time and place convenient to you.

Planning on moving?

It can be difficult to keep in touch with people on the move, so please let us know if your contact information is changing by logging on to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/btls> using your username and password and updating your profile. You can also e-mail us at dsd.education.surveys@census.gov.

How will my information be reported?

The information you provide will be combined with the information provided by others in statistical reports. No individually identifiable data will be included. Please know that your participation is completely voluntary. If you would like to be removed from the study, please contact Freddie Cross by e-mail at freddiecrs@ed.gov. However, we hope you continue to be part of this important and exciting study.

Do data remain confidential?

All responses are protected by Public Law 107-279, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002, Title I, Part E, Section 183. Your answers will be used for statistical purposes only and will not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as provided by law. Your responses to the survey are stored on a secure server at the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education.

Where do I get more information?

To obtain additional information, go to <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/btls>. This survey is authorized by Title I, Part E, Sections 151(b) and 153(a) of Public Law 107-279, the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. The Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study is sponsored by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education, and the U.S. Census Bureau is conducting data collection on its behalf. According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0868.