

**PROGRAM FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENT
ASSESSMENT (PISA) VALIDATION STUDY**

**REQUEST FOR OMB CLEARANCE
OMB# 1850-NEW v.1**

SUPPORTING STATEMENT PART A

Submitted by:

**National Center for Education Statistics
U.S. Department of Education
Institute of Education Sciences
Washington, DC**

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PREFACE

The Program for International Student Assessments (PISA) is an international assessment of 15-year-old students sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). In the United States, it is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), of the Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. PISA was first administered in 2000 and is conducted every three years. As part of PISA's most recent administration, in 2012, PISA's fifth cycle, a nationally-representative sample of approximately 5,200 15-year-old students took the PISA assessments in the United States (OMB# 1850-0755).

PISA provides information about student performance in mathematics, science, and reading literacy, as well as problem-solving, in the United States and more than 65 other participating countries and education systems. PISA is designed to assess how well students nearing the end of compulsory schooling are prepared for the challenges of further education and the workforce. To do so, PISA measures students' literacy (knowledge and skills to solve problems in real-life contexts) and collects information about students' home background, attitudes, and experiences in and out of school through a questionnaire completed by students. Furthermore, school principals of the participating students complete a questionnaire about school policies and practices, providing additional context for the student measures.

NCES proposes to conduct a follow-up study with students who participated in PISA 2012¹ to learn how performance on PISA relates to subsequent outcomes and skills of young adults. The follow-up study—referred to in materials to potential respondents as the PISA Young Adult Follow-Up Study, and in this clearance request in short as the PISA Validation Study — will provide information about how students' skills and experiences at age 15, collected through PISA, relate to subsequent literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills, as well as educational attainment, education and work experiences, skills used in daily life, and aspects of health and well-being. In fall 2015, when these students will be 18 years of age, they will be asked to take the web-based version of the OECD's Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) assessment and background questionnaire—the Education and Skills Online Assessment (ESO).

This submission is for initial communication with the PISA 2012 sample respondents who provided their contact information during their participation in PISA 2012. As part of the initial communication, they will be asked to update their contact information (referred to as the address update) and will receive information about the upcoming PISA Validation Study. This approval request (currently in draft form)

¹ The sample of ~5,200 students took the PISA mathematics, science, and reading literacy assessment. PISA 2012 also included an assessment of financial literacy given to an additional ~1,100 students. In order to focus the Validation Study on the main PISA domains, the proposed study will not include the students who took financial literacy except in the field trial. Also, in three states (Connecticut, Florida, and Massachusetts), additional samples of ~1,500 students per state took the PISA mathematics, science, and reading literacy assessment so that these states could obtain state-level PISA results (these three states provided funding for their supplemental samples). At this time, students in the state samples are not included in the Validation Study plans, although should states wish to partner with NCES to conduct a follow-up study with the students in the PISA 2012 state samples, the proposed study may be revised to include those students, in which case a change request would be submitted.

describes the study rationale and design and includes draft materials to support the initial contact and address updates (see Appendix A). The draft ESO background questionnaire items are included in Appendix B. In 2014, another request will be submitted for approval of intensive recruitment of sample respondents and data collection for both the field trial and the main study. At that time, the final version of the ESO questionnaire will be provided.

A. JUSTIFICATION

A.1 Importance of Information

As part of a continuing cycle of international education studies, the United States, through the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), is participating in several international assessments and surveys. The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA), sponsored by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), is one of these studies (OMB# 1850-0755).

In light of the growing concerns related to international economic competitiveness, the changing face of our workplace, and the expanding international marketplace in which we trade, knowing how our students and adults compare with their peers around the world has become an even more prominent issue than ever before. Nationwide, interest in understanding what other nations are doing to further the education achievement of their populations has increased beyond simple comparisons. Data at critical points during the education career of our students help inform policymakers in their efforts to guide and restructure the American education system. These critical points may occur during primary, secondary, or tertiary education, as well as extending into adult education and training programs. Consequently, generating comparative data about students in school, at the end of schooling, and about adults in the workplace and in the community has become an important focus for NCES.

PISA is part of the larger international program that NCES has actively participated in through collaboration with, and representation at, the OECD, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), and the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA). Collaboration with Statistics Canada, Eurostat, and ministries of education throughout the world helps to round out the portfolio of data NCES compiles. The United States has participated in PISA since its first administration in 2000.

PISA measures students' knowledge, skills, and competencies primarily in three subject areas -mathematics, science, and reading literacy. The overall strategy is to collect in-depth information on student capabilities in one of these three domains every three years so that detailed information on each becomes available every nine years. During each three-year survey cycle, the major focus is on one content domain, with a minor focus on the other two content domains. The major focus for the data collection in 2012 was on mathematics literacy, with a minor focus on science and reading. PISA 2012 also included an assessment of problem-solving and financial literacy.

PISA is designed to measure "how well students, at age 15, are prepared to meet the challenges they may encounter in future life" (OECD 2009, pg. 9). PISA does this by identifying, with input from participating countries and subject-matter experts, the key competencies that are believed to contribute to students' future success, and by measuring students' knowledge and skills in these areas. In short, PISA is designed to assess how well students nearing the end of compulsory schooling are

prepared for further education or entry into the workforce and, more fundamentally, to contribute to society as functioning young adults.

Unlike other large-scale international assessments that are based on school curricula, such as the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) or the Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), PISA assessments are designed to reflect what students have learned in and out of school and to measure students' ability to apply that knowledge to real-world situations. For this reason, PISA has a unique validity challenge. TIMSS and PIRLS assessments can be validated by evaluating how well they cover mathematics, science, and reading curricula. However, comparing PISA measures with content standards or school curricula does not provide evidence that PISA assesses the competencies that matter for students' "future success" and the "challenges they may encounter in the future." To validate PISA measures, it is necessary to examine whether the competencies assessed by PISA predict future success.

Given the prominence of PISA in the United States, it is of policy interest to better understand how well PISA measures students' preparedness for further education and the workforce. PISA is widely cited as evidence that U.S. students are not as prepared for the global economy as their peers in other high-performing countries, and such claims rest on the assumption that PISA is measuring the skills that students will need to succeed in the 21st century and the global economy.

NCES is requesting approval to conduct a follow-up study with students who participated in PISA 2012 to learn how performance on PISA relates to subsequent outcomes and skills of young adults. The follow-up study — referred to in materials to potential respondents as the PISA Young Adult Follow-Up Study, and in this clearance request in short as the PISA Validation Study — will provide information about how students' skills and experiences at age 15, collected through PISA, relate to subsequent literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills, as well as educational attainment, education and work experiences, skills used in daily life, and aspects of health and well-being. The web-based version of the OECD's Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) will be used to measure young adult skills, outcomes, and experiences in the PISA Validation Study. The PIAAC assessment, administered in 25 countries in 2011, focuses on cognitive and workplace skills needed for successful participation in 21st -century society and the global economy (OECD 2012). Specifically, PIAAC measures relationships between individuals' educational background, workplace experiences and skills, occupational attainment, use of information and communications technology, and cognitive skills in the areas of literacy, numeracy, and problem solving.

The sample for the PISA Validation Study will consist of the approximately 4,700 15-year-old students from the PISA 2012 national sample who took the PISA mathematics, reading, and science test and completed a Student Information Form providing their contact information. PISA 2012 recruitment materials, including materials for parents, stated that students supplying contact information may be contacted by NCES for a future study. In fall 2015, when these students will be 18 years of age, they will be asked to take the web-based version of the PIAAC

assessment and background questionnaire—the Education and Skills Online Assessment (ESO). The ESO is described below. A field trial of the Validation Study will be conducted in fall 2014 with a sample of 200 PISA 2012 students who provided contact information but took financial literacy test booklets and are not the target for the PISA Validation Study.

In 2011, PIAAC was administered for the first time (although it builds on previous international adult assessments) to a national sample of adults 16 to 65 years old. It examined the adults' literacy and skills in the information age, focusing on what are deemed key skills for individuals to participate successfully in the economy and society of the 21st century. It assessed adults' basic reading skills, reading literacy, numeracy, and problem solving in technology-rich environments (on or with a computer), and measured their ability to use computer and web applications to find, gather, and use information, and to communicate with others. PIAAC used a "Job Requirements Approach" to ask employed adults about the types and levels of a number of specific skills used in the workplace, including not only the use of reading and numeracy skills on the job, but also the use of physical skills (e.g., stamina and manual dexterity), people skills (e.g., public speaking, negotiating, working in a team), and information technology skills (e.g., using spreadsheets, writing computer code). PIAAC also asked about the adults' background, work, and educational experiences, including the requirements of their main job in terms of the intensity and frequency of the use of the aforementioned skills.

The OECD has developed a web-based version of the PIAAC assessment and background questionnaire—the Education and Skills Online Assessment (ESO) — that will be available, as of 2014, for use by countries, institutions, and individuals to support research and workforce development and training efforts. The ESO assessment, which is currently being piloted in multiple countries by the OECD, will be equated to PIAAC, allowing for international benchmarking. The ESO questionnaire is based on that used in PIAAC, with many of the same background items, plus additional optional modules that have been developed.

In the PISA Validation Study, the ESO assessment and background questionnaire will be administered to sample respondents when they are 18 years old, three years after they took PISA. The assessment takes on average 90 minutes to complete and the background questionnaire approximately 30 minutes.

The ESO assessment measures a set of cognitive and non-cognitive skills that individuals need for full participation in modern societies. These skills and knowledge include being able to understand and use printed and electronic texts, reason with numbers, and solve problems using information and communication technologies (see exhibit A-1, below).

The ESO questionnaire, in turn, asks about personal and home background and education and workforce experiences, and includes optional modules related to (i) work/training history and skills transfer, (ii) career interests and intentionality, (iii) subjective well-being and health, and (iv) behavioral performance competencies. It is possible to use one or more of the modules developed by the OECD, but it is not possible to add or remove items or edit items within the modules. One or more of

modules ii, iii, and iv may be used in the PISA Validation Study. Respondents will complete the instruments online. Appendix B includes the draft versions of items in the core part of the background questionnaire and all modules; these are the items currently being piloted by the OECD, many of which are based on PIAAC questionnaires items or are existing scales used in other surveys.

Exhibit A-1. Summary of the cognitive domains in the OECD Education and Skills Online (ESO) Assessment

	Literacy	Numeracy	Problem solving in technology-rich environments
Definition	Ability to understand, evaluate, use and engage with written texts to participate in society, achieve one’s goals, and develop one’s knowledge and potential.	Ability to access, use, interpret and communicate mathematical information and ideas in order to engage in and manage the mathematical demands of a range of situations in adult life.	Ability to use digital technology, communication tools and networks to acquire and evaluate information, communicate with others, and perform practical tasks.
Content	<p>Texts are characterized by</p> <p>Medium:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Print-based • Digital <p>Format:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous or prose texts (narration, argumentation, or descriptions) • Non-continuous or document texts (tables, lists, graphs) • Mixed texts (combination of prose and document elements) • Multiple texts (juxtaposition or linking of independently generated elements) 	<p>Mathematical content, information and ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantity and number • Dimension and shape • Pattern, relationships, change • Data and chance <p>Representations of mathematical content:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objects and pictures • Numbers and symbols • Diagrams, maps, graphs, tables • Texts • Technology-based displays 	<p>Technology:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware devices • Software applications • Commands and functions • Representations (text, graphics, video) <p>Nature of problems:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intrinsic complexity (number of steps, alternatives required for solution, complexity of computation and/or transformation, number of constraints) • Explicitness of the problem statement (largely unspecified or described in detail)
Cognitive Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access and identify • Integrate and interpret (relating parts of text to one another) • Evaluate and reflect on 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify, locate or access • Act upon and use (order, count, estimate, compute, measure, model) • Interpret, evaluate and analyze • Communicate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting goals and monitoring progress • Planning • Acquiring and evaluating information • Using information
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal • Work-related • Community • Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Everyday life • Work-related • Society & Community • Education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal • Work-related • Community

Source: http://www.oecd.org/site/piaac/ENGLISH_Brochure%20Education%20and%20Skills%20Online.pdf.

In preparation for collecting information on respondent's subjective well-being we will consult the OECD's guidelines for measuring subjective well-being (<http://www.oecd.org/statistics/Guidelines%20on%20Measuring%20Subjective%20Well-being.pdf>). We will use the guidelines when defining specific research questions and then evaluating the identified outputs against the content of the questionnaire module. This will ensure that the questions included in the module are appropriate for the research needs of the study and that they are appropriate for survey respondents. We will also evaluate other modules to ensure that contain appropriate adjacent contextual variables, such as the demographic variables and behavior measures, so that the meaning of the subjective well-being measures can be understood more fully.

A.2 Purposes and Uses of Data

PISA is intended to be an assessment at the end of compulsory education of how well students are prepared for further education or entry into the workforce and to contribute to society as functioning young adults. The PISA subject matter assessments are not developed by canvassing the curricula offered in participating countries, as is done in other large-scale international assessments. The PISA assessment frameworks and items are developed by conferring with subject matter experts around the world and representatives of participating countries about the mathematics, reading, and science competencies required for 15-year-olds to successfully transition to further education, the workforce, and otherwise as functional contributing members of society. For 2012, in which the mathematics framework was revised, the mathematics framework was also circulated internationally among representatives of employers and postsecondary institutions for their comments on the appropriateness of aspects of the PISA mathematics framework.

Because of its emphasis on assessing what is thought to be important for later success rather than assessing what has been taught, PISA must turn to sources of evidence other than participating countries' curricula in order to check that it is assessing what it intends to assess. Currently, the main source for PISA for this sort of validity checking is in the form of experts drawn from across participating countries, as described earlier. Also, two other countries have performed longitudinal studies based on PISA. A longitudinal study in Canada has followed 30,000 students who participated in PISA 2000, gathering information every two years on their educational experiences, transitions, and attainment and employment outcomes (OECD 2010). A similar study drawing on a smaller sample was conducted in Denmark (Schleicher 2007).

What is lacking is an empirical linkage between PISA and the sorts of skills and outcomes required for successful participation in adult life. The proposed study will provide data on how performance on PISA, at age 15, relates to literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving skills; educational attainment and education and workforces experiences; skills use in daily life; and other non-cognitive outcomes at age 18. For example, what thresholds of performance on PISA are associated the ability to successfully navigate the literacy, numeracy, and problem-solving demands of daily

life in the adult world? What thresholds are associated with high school graduation and successful transition to higher education or entry-level workforce? How does performance on PISA relate to measures of subjective well-being at age 18, such as life satisfaction and healthy habits?

By linking performance on PISA to subsequent outcomes in young adulthood, the study will provide the sort of validity evidence needed to understand how well PISA is measuring the skills needed for successful participation in adult life, as it purports to do. The study will also strengthen our understanding of U.S. performance on PISA and its implications for U.S. college and career readiness and for the skills of our future workforce. This information can, in turn, also be used to inform the further development of PISA and future surveys of adult skills.

A.3 Use of Information Technology

Study instruments will be administered through the Internet. Respondents will be invited to log on to a secure website to take the assessment and questionnaire. The use of web-based instruments reduces the burden required for data collection, scoring, and data processing.

A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication

Comparable U.S. data are not available from other data sources; nor would a PISA follow-up study make any data redundant. The purpose of this study is to look at the relationship of performance on PISA to performance on similar domains and to other outcomes after a period of time, to validate PISA's measures. No other study in the United States has collected follow-up data from or about PISA students so this would be a unique source of data to accomplish this objective. The current study could produce some information that is similar to a subset of information from the High School Longitudinal Study (HSLs), which follows a similar age group, however HSLs would not allow for validation of PISA measures, which is the goal of this study, and does not provide data directly comparable with data from other countries.

A.5 Minimizing Burden for Small Entities

This study will not impose burden on small businesses or small entities.

A.6 Frequency of Data Collection

The main data collection will take place in fall 2015. A field trial of procedures will take place in 2014. Although there are currently no plans for a second follow-up study with the PISA 2012 students, NCES may decide at a later date to re-contact the sample to collect additional data at another point in time on education and workforce experiences and skills in order to evaluate PISA measures against longer term outcomes.

A.7 Special Circumstances of Data Collection

No special circumstances of data collection are anticipated.

A.8 Consultations Outside NCES

NCES has sought input from a wide range of individuals with knowledge of PISA and PIAAC. Both PISA and PIAAC are sponsored by the OECD and are coordinated internationally by a consortium of contractors responsible for various aspects of the studies. Key persons from the OECD and key contracting organizations who are involved in the international design, development, and operation of PISA and PIAAC follow.

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A.9 Provision of Payments or Gifts to Respondents

As part of the planned efforts to reach response rate goals, NCES proposes giving sampled respondents the same incentive used for the PIAAC Main Study: \$50 cash card for the respondent's time and effort spent answering the survey. The amount of burden is equivalent to that of the PIAAC respondents. NCES received OMB approval to offer a \$50 incentive for the PIAAC Main Study after the results of an incentive experiment during the 2010 PIAAC Field Test indicated that \$50 improved responses rates compared with lower amounts.

. Due to the unclustered sample, it would be prohibitively expensive to conduct an in-person data collection. A web approach has been designed to administer the ESO to PISA 2012 students. During recruitment, respondents will be supplied with an unloaded cash card that will be loaded upon their completion of the ESO assessment and questionnaire. The card can be used by the respondent anywhere a MasterCard can be, once remuneration has been added to it. Until the survey is completed, the card acts as a visual incentive to the respondent to attempt to complete the survey.

A.10 Assurance of Confidentiality

Procedures for handling confidential aspects of the study that will be used in PISA 2015 will mirror those used in past administrations of PISA. Expertise in data security and confidentiality was a significant criterion in the selection of the PISA 2015 contractor. The plan for maintaining confidentiality includes signed confidentiality agreements and notarized nondisclosure affidavits obtained from all

personnel who will have access to individual identifiers. Also included in the plan is personnel training regarding the meaning of confidentiality, particularly as it relates to handling requests for information and providing assurance to respondents about the protection of their responses; controlled and protected access to computer files under the control of a single data base manager; built-in safeguards concerning status monitoring and receipt control systems; and a secured and operator-manned in-house computing facility.

The physical and/or electronic transfer of personally identifiable information (particularly names and addresses) will be limited to the extent necessary to perform project requirements. This limitation includes both internal transfers (e.g., transfer of information between agents of Westat) and external transfers (e.g., transfers between Westat and NCES, or between Westat and another government agency or private entity assisting in data collection). All data files constructed to conduct the study will be maintained in secure network areas at Westat. These files will be subject to Westat's regularly scheduled backup process. Backups are stored in secure facilities on site as well as off site. These data are stored and maintained in secure network and database locations where access is limited to those Westat staff who are specifically authorized access. Access is only granted once a staff member is assigned to the project and has completed the NCES Affidavit of Non-disclosure. Identifiers are maintained in files required to conduct survey operations that are physically separate from other research data and that are accessible only to sworn agency and contractor personnel.

All information identifying the individual respondents will be kept confidential, in compliance with the law (20 U.S. C. § 9573), which states that:

- (c) (2) "No person may
 - i. use any individually identifiable information furnished under the provisions of this section for any purpose other than a research, statistics, or evaluation purpose under this subchapter;
 - ii. make any publication whereby the data furnished by any particular person under this subchapter can be identified; or
 - iii. permit anyone other than the individuals authorized by the Director to examine the individual reports."

The laws pertaining to the collection and use of personally identifiable information are clearly communicated in correspondence with participants, per NCES requirements (see materials in Appendix A). Materials will carry a statement addressing confidentiality as follows:

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9543). Participation is voluntary. Data collected are used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9573). Individual responses will be

combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Westat will deliver data files, accompanying software, and documentation to NCES at the end of the main study. Neither names nor addresses will be included on any data file.

A. 11 Sensitive Questions

It is not anticipated that the survey will include questions usually considered to be of a highly sensitive nature, such as items concerning religion, substance abuse, or sexual activity.

A. 12 Estimates of Response Burden

Table A-1. Estimated burden to respondents*

Activity	Sample size	Estimated response rate	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses	Estimated average burden (minutes)	Total burden (hours)
Address update requests - main study sample (5)	4,729	1.00	4,729	4,729	5 min per request 25 min total	1,970
Address update requests - field trial sample (3)	1,081	1.00	1,081	1,081	5 min per request 15 min total	270
Total burden - this request			5,810	5,810		2,240
Field trial						
Communications	235	0.85	200	200	10	33
Questionnaire	235	0.85	200	200	30	100
Assessment	235	0.85	200	200	90	300
Data collection						
Communications	3,447	0.85	2930	2,930	10	488
Questionnaire	3,447	0.85	2930	2,930	30	1,465
Assessment	3,447	0.85	2930	2,930	90	4,395
Total burden - data collections (communications and questionnaire)			3,130	6,260		2,086

*Total burden in the current request is for address updates only (estimated at 5 minutes each). Burden estimates for the field trial and main study communications and data collection (shown in gray font) are provided for information purposes and will be part of a Supporting Statement Part A in subsequent approval requests for field trial and main study recruitment and data collections.

Table A-1 shows the estimated respondent burden for address updates until participation in the survey, as well as estimated respondent burden for field trial and main study recruitment and data collection. This submission requests approval of respondent burden for the address updates only. Five contacts are estimated for the main study sample, and three contacts for the field trial sample. Each contact has an estimated average burden of 5 minutes, for a total average burden of 25 minutes for the main sample and 15 for the field trial sample. The total burden in this request is 2,241 hours.

At an estimated \$7.25 per hour (federal minimum wage), cost to respondents for the total burden associated with the address updates (2,241 hours) is \$16,747.

A.13 Estimates of Cost to Respondents

Other than the burden associated with completing the address updates and study instruments, the study imposes no additional cost to respondents.

A.14 Cost to Federal Government

The cost to the Federal Government for conducting the validation study is estimated to be \$1,945,602 over a four-year period, based on the cost for the Validation Study task in the PISA 2015 contract. This includes tracing and tracking sample respondents, data collection, use of the OECD’s ESO instruments, and analysis and reporting. These figures include all direct and indirect costs of the project.

A.15 Program Changes or Adjustments

The PISA Validation Study is a new data collection effort.

A.16 Publication Plans and Timetable

NCES will release a general audience report and technical/operations report, along with restricted-use data files. Electronic versions of each report will be made available on the NCES website. The expected data collection dates and a tentative reporting schedule are as follows:

Date	Activity
Fall 2012	Collect contact information from PISA 2012 students (completed)
Fall 2013 - September 2015	Establish initial contact and conduct semi-annual contact with respondents for address updates
Fall 2014	Conduct field trial of procedures
September-December 2015	Web-based main study data collection
2016-2017	Reporting: general audience report; survey operations report; restricted-use data-files

A.17 Display OMB Expiration Date

The OMB expiration date will be displayed on all data collection materials.

A.18 Exceptions to Certification Statement

No exceptions are requested to the "Certification for Paperwork Reduction Act Submissions" of OMB Form 83-I.

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