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Draft State PISA Field Test Letter

[Date]

[Title] [Name First] [Name Last]

[Title/Department]

[State]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[City], [State] [Zip code]

Dear [Title] [Name Last]:

The United States is participating in an important international study in 2015: the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is the largest international education study in the world. Administered every 3 years since 2000, the U.S. has participated in each cycle of PISA. More than 60 countries representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy participate in PISA. Results are used by researchers and policymakers to chart national progress against international standards and the educational progress of our economic peers and competitors. Some schools in your state have been randomly selected to participate in the international field test for PISA this coming spring, and I am writing to ask your agency to support the participation of those schools in the field test.

PISA provides comparative information on the performance of U.S. 15-year-old students in science, reading, and mathematics with 15-year-old students in other countries. PISA 2015 will also include assessments of students' collaborative problem-solving and financial literacy. The purpose of the field test is both to try out new questions and to help PISA transition from being a primarily paper-based to an entirely computer-based assessment in 2015.

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 by 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 participating in the field test. 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 these studies by contacting Dana Kelly at NCES at 202-219-7101 or dana.kelly@ed.gov or by 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]
Enclosures

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).

Draft School District PISA Field Test Letter

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

Dear [Title] [Name Last]:

The United States is participating in an important international study in 2015: the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is the largest international education study in the world. Administered every 3 years since 2000, the U.S. has participated in each cycle of PISA. More than 60 countries representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy participate in PISA. Results are used by researchers and policymakers to chart national progress against international standards and the educational progress of our economic peers and competitors. Some schools in your district have been randomly selected to participate in the international field test for PISA this coming spring, and I am writing to ask your agency to support the participation of those schools in the field test.

PISA provides comparative information on the performance of U.S. 15-year-old students in science, reading, and mathematics with 15-year-old students in other countries. PISA 2015 will also include assessments of students' collaborative problem-solving and financial literacy. The purpose of the field test is both to try out new questions and to help PISA transition from being a primarily paper-based to an entirely computer-based assessment in 2015. 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. Selected teachers will receive \$20 for completing a brief questionnaire about themselves. Each student who participates will receive \$25 and a volunteer service certificate of 4 hours from the U.S. Department of Education. Schools that participate in the 2014 field test are extremely unlikely to be sampled again for the 2015 main assessment.

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 by 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 for the field test: [LIST SAMPLED SCHOOLS HERE...].

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call 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 NCES at 202-219-7101 or dana.kelly@ed.gov or by visiting the PISA website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>.

Thank you for your time and support.

Jack Buckley
Commissioner
Enclosures

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).

Draft School PISA Field Test Letter

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

Dear [Title] [Name Last]:

The United States is participating in an important international study in 2015: the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). PISA is the largest international education study in the world. Administered every 3 years since 2000, the U.S. has participated in each cycle of PISA. More than 60 countries representing approximately 90 percent of the world economy participate in PISA. Results are used by researchers and policymakers to chart national progress against international standards and the educational progress of our economic peers and competitors. Your school is one of 60 across the United States that has been randomly selected to take part in the PISA field test this coming spring.

PISA provides comparative information on the performance of U.S. 15-year-old students in science, reading, and mathematics with 15-year-old students in other countries. PISA 2015 will also include an assessment of students' collaborative problem-solving and financial literacy. The purpose of the field test is both to try out new questions and to help PISA transition from being a primarily paper-based to an entirely computer-based assessment in 2015. Your school will receive \$200, and students who take the field test will receive \$25 and a volunteer service certificate of 4 hours from the U.S. Department of Education. Your school's PISA school coordinator (a staff person you designate to liaise with PISA staff) will receive \$200 for his or her time and effort coordinating PISA in the school, and selected teachers will receive \$20 for completing a brief questionnaire about themselves.

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. 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 contact you to discuss your participation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call 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 NCES at 202-219-7101 or dana.kelly@ed.gov or by visiting the PISA website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>.

Your participation in the field test for PISA 2015 is vital. Thank you for your time and



Draft PISA 2015 Field Test Study Brochure – Front Cover

Who is participating in PISA 2015?

Albania	Germany	Norway
Algeria	Greece	Peru
Argentina	Hong Kong-China	Poland
Australia	Hungary	Portugal
Austria	Iceland	Qatar
Belgium	Indonesia	Romania
Brazil	Ireland	Russian Federation
Bulgaria	Israel	Singapore
Canada	Italy	Slovak Republic
Chile	Jordan	Slovenia
China	Kazakhstan	Spain
Chinese Taipei	Korea	Sweden
Colombia	Kosovo	Switzerland
Costa Rica	Latvia	Thailand
Croatia	Lebanon	Trinidad and Tobago
Czech Republic	Lithuania	Tunisia
Denmark	Luxembourg	Turkey
Dominican Republic	Macao-China	United Arab Emirates
Estonia	Malaysia	United Kingdom
Finland	Malta	United States of America
Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia	Mexico	Uruguay
France	Moldova	Vietnam
Georgia	Montenegro	
	Netherlands	
	New Zealand	



How do I get more information?

Visit the PISA website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>.
 For additional questions about PISA 2015, contact the PISA U.S. home office at 1-888-638-2597 or email PISAHELP@wcstat.com.

ies NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS
 Institute of Education Sciences

Please feel free to contact the PISA U.S. home office with any questions via email at PISAHELP@westat.com or by calling 1-888-638-2597



37905.05.13.6128020101

NCES is authorized to conduct PISA under the Education Science Reform Act (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, Section 9543. Information collected will help the U.S. Department of Education's ongoing efforts to benchmark student achievement in the United States. Participation is voluntary. Data collected may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose (20 U.S.C., § 9573). 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.

What is PISA?

The Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) is an international assessment of 15-year-old students. In 2015, students from more than 60 countries including the United States will participate. PISA measures how well students apply their knowledge and skills in science, reading, and mathematics to problems within a real-life context. PISA 2015 will be entirely computer based. Assessments will be conducted in science, reading, mathematics, financial literacy, and collaborative problem solving.

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 U.S. 15-year-old students' science, reading, and mathematics 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.



What will students be asked to do in the field test?

The field test consists of either paper-and-pencil or computer sessions. Each is approximately 3 hours and includes time for instructions, the administration of the assessment, and a brief questionnaire that students complete about themselves. Participation is voluntary but important for ensuring that the sample is representative of schools and students across the country.

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 science, reading, mathematics, financial literacy, collaborative problem solving, and measurement. In a final step, the assessment is endorsed by all participating countries. The assessment contains a mix of types of questions: some require students to select appropriate responses, while others require that students solve problems and provide written answers. Examples of PISA assessment questions are available at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/educators.asp>.

What is the purpose of the PISA Field Test in 2014?

PISA conducts a field test (a small-scale, trial run of the assessment) in every participating country to see if any of the test questions are biased because of national, social, or cultural differences. Statistical analyses of student answers are also conducted to check for evidence of differences in student performance across countries that could indicate a linguistic or conceptual translation problem. Test questions that are found to be problematic are dropped from the assessment or treated differently in the analysis.

In spring 2014, the United States will participate in the PISA 2015 field test. Assessments will be conducted using both paper-and-pencil and computers so that a mode effects study can be performed. The field test data will provide valuable information to ensure both unbiased assessments and a smooth transition to a fully computer-based assessment for PISA 2015.





Who conducts the PISA 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.

How are teacher and school questionnaires administered?

The teacher and school questionnaires are both administered online from a secure website. Up to 25 teachers (10 science and 15 non-science) will be asked to participate by completing an online 45-minute questionnaire that asks about their education and teaching experience. This is the first time PISA is administering the teacher questionnaire. The school questionnaire, which looks at school characteristics such as enrollment and school practices, is also online and takes about 60 minutes to complete.

Do teachers need to help administer the assessment?

No. Westat field 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. Field staff will also bring all of the necessary computer equipment for the computer-based assessments.

When will the field test be conducted?

The field test will be conducted between April 7 and May 16, 2014. Westat will work with schools to identify an assessment date convenient for the school in that time period.

Where will the field test be conducted?

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

How long does the field test take?

Students will take either a paper-and-pencil or computer-based assessment. This approximately 3-hour session includes time for instructions, the assessment, and a brief questionnaire that students complete about themselves. Some students will return to participate in an additional 1-hour assessment in financial literacy.

What will happen with the collected data?

The field test data will be used to evaluate whether the assessment fairly and accurately measures 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 [Education Science Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, Section 9573]. Reports of the findings from the field test 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 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>.

For additional questions about PISA 2015, contact the PISA U.S. home office at 1-888-638-2597 or email PISAHHELP@westat.com.





PISA 2015

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 science, reading, mathematics, financial literacy, and collaborative problem solving. PISA presents problems that students would encounter in the real world.

*Think of PISA as an Olympics of the mind.
More than 60 countries participate 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. Your participation in the field test ensures fairness in the questions that will be used in the main study in 2015.

*Only 1,900 students will participate
in the PISA field test in the United States.*

*Participating in PISA is a national service.
How often do you get to represent your country?*

What subjects are assessed in PISA?

In the field test students will take either a paper-and-pencil or computer-based assessment. Students will be assessed in science, reading, mathematics, financial literacy, or collaborative problem solving, or some combination of these subjects.

How long does PISA take?

The PISA assessment takes approximately 3 hours to complete. This includes time for instructions, the assessment, and a brief questionnaire that students answer about themselves. Some students will return to participate in an additional 1-hour assessment in financial literacy.

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 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, 42 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.



Draft PISA 2015 Timeline of Activities - Outside

<p>other similar U.S. schools.</p> <p>national report with with PISA 2015 results.</p> <p>receive \$200 for participating.</p> <p>receive \$20 for completing the teacher</p>	<p>national report with PISA 2015 results.</p> <p>for participating.</p>	<p>certificate of Volunteer Service for 4 hours</p> <p>by service.</p> <p>other U.S. students like themselves and</p> <p>the profile of what our nation's students</p> <p>can do.</p>	<p>for participating. Students participating in the</p> <p>survey assessment will receive an additional \$15.</p>
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Draft Teacher Invite Email
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SUMMARY OF FIELD TEST ACTIVITIES FOR PISA 2015			
	Nov-Dec 2013	Jan-Mar 2014 Preassessment Contact	April-May 2014 Assessment Visit
Principal and Teachers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a school coordinator. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an online School Questionnaire on the characteristics of the school. Complete an online Teacher Questionnaire on education and teaching experience. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Receive Receive Receive Receive
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. Provide a list of eligible students to PISA staff. Provide a list of eligible teachers to PISA staff. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify teachers, selected students, and students' parents of the study and benefits of participating. Coordinate the principal's completion of the School Questionnaire. Coordinate the teachers' completion of the Teacher Questionnaire. Confirm the data 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"> 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 after the assessment.
Students			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take the assessment and complete a Student Questionnaire.
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 and teachers to participate. Provide online access information for the teacher and school questionnaires 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. Meet with school coordinator after the assessment. Pack up the materials to ensure that the assessments are complete and secure.
Find Out More	http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa		

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the data collection under OMB #1850-0755. For more detailed information, please see the enclosed FAQ.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call 1-888-638-2597 or send an email to PISAHELP@westat.com. You may also get more information about this study by visiting the PISA website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>.

Your participation in the field test for PISA 2015 is vital. Thank you for your time and for supporting this important international study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DK' or similar initials, with a stylized flourish extending upwards and to the right.

David Kastberg
Project Director, Westat

Appendix B: Draft PISA 2015 Field Test Consent Letters and Supporting Materials

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Enclosures:
Facts for Parents about the PISA Field Test

Draft Sample Implicit Consent Letter, PISA

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about an important international study of student learning being conducted in our school this spring. This study is called the Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA. PISA provides important information for internationally benchmarking performance in science, reading, and mathematics of 15-year-old students in the United States against top countries around the world.

Each time the study is done, new test questions need to be developed and tested to ensure that those questions accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. In spring 2014, new questions will be tested in approximately 60 schools in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

Our school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, to participate in the PISA field test. A select few of our 15-year-old students, along with your teenager, will take part in this study. The enclosed summary sheet provides some background to PISA, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. 15-year-old students can do, it is important that each student selected take part in the study. Some students will try out questions administered on a computer while other students will try out questions using paper and pencil. Also, students will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your teenager to take part; however, participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Previous experience suggests that students enjoy taking part, and all participating students will receive \$25 and a certificate from the U.S. Department of Education for 4 hours of volunteer service.

All of the information collected is kept completely confidential, as required by law. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA, 2002), 20 U.S. Code, Section 9543. Under that 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 (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Students and schools are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole.

If you have any objection to your teenager joining in the PISA activities, please let us know by completing the attached consent form and returning it to the school.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:
Facts for Parents About the PISA Field Test
Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Draft PISA Implicit Consent Form

**Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)
Field Test
Parent/Guardian Consent Form**

Your teenager has been asked to participate in a field test of an international study of student learning called the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Each student who participates will receive \$25 and a volunteer service certificate of 4 hours from the U.S. Department of Education. This assessment will be conducted by a team of researchers from Westat, who are operating under contract on behalf of the U. S. Department of Education. In spring 2014, new questions will be tested in approximately 60 schools in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

If you grant permission for your teenager to participate in the PISA field test, you do not need to return this form.

If you do not consent to your teenager's participation in the PISA field test, please return this form to your teenager's school as soon as possible.

I do not grant permission for my teenager, _____, to participate in the Program for International Student Assessment Field Test.

(Signature of parent or guardian)

Date of signature: ____/____/____

PLEASE PRINT:

Student name: _____

School name: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: _____

Draft Sample Explicit Consent Letter, PISA

SCHOOL LETTERHEAD

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about an important international study of student learning being conducted in our school this spring. This study is called the Program for International Student Assessment, or PISA. PISA provides important information for internationally benchmarking performance in science, reading, and mathematics of 15-year-old students in the United States against top countries around the world.

Each time the study is done, new test questions need to be developed and tested to ensure that those questions accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. In spring 2014, new questions will be tested in approximately 60 schools in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

Our school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Department of Education, to participate in the PISA field test. A select few of our 15-year-old students, along with your teenager, will take part in this study. The enclosed summary sheet provides some background to PISA, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. 15-year-old students can do, it is important that each student selected take part in the study. Some students will try out questions administered on a computer while other students will try out questions using paper and pencil. Also, students will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your teenager to take part; however, participation in this study is entirely voluntary. Previous experience suggests that students enjoy taking part, and all participating students will receive \$25 and a certificate from the U.S. Department of Education for 4 hours of volunteer service.

All of the information collected is kept completely confidential, as required by law. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA, 2002), 20 U.S. Code, Section 9543. Under that 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 (20 U.S.C., § 9573). Students and schools are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole.

Before we can allow your teenager to join in the PISA field test we must have your written consent. Please let us know by completing the attached form and returning it to the school.

Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study and consider your teenager's participation in it.

Sincerely,

Enclosures:
Facts for Parents About the PISA Field Test
Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Draft PISA Explicit Consent Form

**Program for International Student Assessment (PISA)
Field Test
Parent/Guardian Consent Form**

Your teenager has been asked to participate in a field test of an international study of student learning called the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). Each student who participates will receive \$25 and a volunteer service certificate of 4 hours from the U.S. Department of Education. This assessment will be conducted by a team of researchers from Westat who are operating under contract on behalf of the U. S. Department of Education. In spring 2014, new questions will be tested in approximately 60 schools in the United States. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively.

Yes, I do grant permission for my teenager to participate in the PISA field test.

No, I do not grant permission for my teenager to participate in the PISA field test.

(Signature of parent or guardian)

Date of signature: _____/_____/_____

PLEASE PRINT:

Student name: _____

School name: _____

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: _____

Draft PISA Facts for Parents About the Field Test

Facts for Parents About the PISA Field Test

Between March and May of this year, your teenager's school will be one of about 60 nationwide taking part in the PISA 2015 Field Test. The schools were selected randomly to represent the nation's schools and, within each school, about 42 students were selected randomly to take part. Your teenager was among those students selected to take part in the study.

What is PISA?

PISA (the Program for International Student Assessment) is the world's largest international assessment that measures student learning in science, reading, and mathematics. More than 60 countries representing more than 90 percent of the world's economy participate in PISA. The assessment occurs every 3 years (2000, 2003, 2006, 2009, 2012, and 2015), and provides information about how students in the U.S. compare in achievement with students in other countries. The National Center for Education Statistics within the U.S. Department of Education sponsors U.S. participation in PISA.

What is the purpose of the PISA Field Test?

Each time the study is done, new assessment questions need to be developed and tested to ensure that those questions accurately measure the knowledge and skills of students. This field test will allow test developers to modify or delete questions that are not working effectively for students in the United States.

What is involved?

PISA staff will visit the school and administer the field test. The field test will take approximately 3 hours; it includes time for instructions, the administration assessment, and a brief questionnaire that students complete about themselves. Some students will be asked to return for an additional 1-hour assessment of financial literacy.

What are the benefits?

The nation as a whole benefits from PISA by having a greater understanding of how the knowledge and skills of U.S. students compare with those of students from other countries. The country benefits from the field test by ensuring that the questions used are fair and appropriate for U.S. students. Schools that participate in PISA will receive \$200, and each student who participates will receive \$25 and a certificate from the U.S. Department of Education for 4 hours of volunteer service. Students who also participate in the financial literacy assessment will receive an additional \$15.

Where can I find out more about PISA?

More information about PISA is available at the PISA website at <http://www.nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa>. If you have specific questions you can call PISA staff at 1-888-638-2597 or email us at PISAHelp@westat.com.

