

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017–18 (MGLS:2017)
Recruitment Communication Materials for
2016 Item Validation Field Test**

OMB# 1850-0911 v.3

Appendices A through S

February 2015
Revised June 2015

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Consortium/Network/Diocese Endorsement Request Letter

[NCES Letterhead]

[Date]

[Director's name]

[Consortium/Network/Diocese name]

[Address]

[City, State Zip]

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to inform you about a vitally important new national study: the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**. The study is the first of its kind and will provide invaluable information on students' mathematics and reading skills, executive function, socioemotional wellbeing, and to collect survey data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important, yet generally understudied, years of education.

The study will involve multiple phases, including an item validation field test, operational field test, and main study, all of which are essential elements in learning about students in these grades. In order to encourage schools and parents to participate, we are asking esteemed organizations from around the nation to learn about and then endorse the study. We would like to speak with you or, if you prefer, someone else in your organization about the importance of the MGLS:2017 and the opportunity to endorse it.

In the next [#] days, an individual from <data collection contractor>, which is conducting the MGLS:2017 data collection on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), will be following up with you about endorsing this historic study. Alternatively, you can sign up to endorse the study by visiting our website at <recruitment website URL>. Should you have any questions in the meantime, please call the MGLS:2017 information line, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <email address here>.

Enclosed you will find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study and a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs).

Thank you in advance for your support of the MGLS:2017, and working together to improve the quality of education for our country's middle grade students.

Sincerely,

Peggy Carr

NCES Acting Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 Brochure

FAQs

State Notification Letter – Item Validation Field Test

[NCES/ED Letterhead]

[Date]

[Title First Name Last Name]

[State Department of Education Official's Title]

[State Department of Education]

[Address]

[City, State Zip]

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to inform your state education agency about an important new national study: the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**. The study will follow a cohort of 6th grade students as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. The goal of the study is to examine the factors that encourage success during these important yet often understudied years of education. The MGLS:2017 data collection will be conducted by <data collection contractor> on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Schools in your state have been selected to participate in the first phase of the MGLS:2017. In each school, this first phase will include a math, reading, and executive function assessment of students in the middle grades as well as a student survey on socioemotional wellbeing, peers, and schooling experiences. Combined, the assessment and survey will require about 90 minutes. School administrators, math teachers, special education providers, and students' parents will also be asked to complete questionnaires. Each of these will require about 30 minutes. All data will be collected through a computer-based application or a telephone interview. The results of this first phase will significantly inform the main study, which will begin in early 2017 with 6th graders from approximately 700 schools across the country. Schools that participate in the first phase of the MGLS:2017 are not anticipated to participate in any subsequent years of the study.

In < month >, we will begin contacting the school districts and schools that have been selected to participate in the first phase of the study. Each school's participation is important, because the first phase of the study needs an inclusive and diverse group of American schools serving students in the middle grades. A list of school districts and schools selected to participate in your state is attached to this letter.

Enclosed you will find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <email address>. You may also contact Carolyn Fidelman at NCES at 202-502-7312 for more information.

We look forward to working with your schools to make MGLS:2017 a success. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Peggy Carr
NCES Acting Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics

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Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 Brochure

List of selected schools in [State]

Appendix C. District Notification and Recruitment Letters

District Notification and Recruitment Letter – Item Validation Field Test

[MGLS Letterhead]

[Date]

[Superintendent's Name]

Superintendent

[District]

[Address]

[City, State Zip]

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to inform you that schools in your district have been selected to participate in a vitally important new national study: the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**. The study will follow a cohort of 6th grade students as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. The goals of the study are to assess students' mathematics and reading skills, executive function, socioemotional wellbeing, and to collect survey data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important, yet generally understudied, years of education. The MGLS:2017 data collection will be conducted by <data collection contractor> on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Within your district, the schools on the attached list have been selected to participate in the first phase of the MGLS:2017 to be conducted in early 2016. <data contractor> will contact these schools to discuss study details and invite them to join.

In each school, the first phase of the study will include a math, reading, and executive function assessment of students in the middle grades as well as a student survey on socioemotional wellbeing, peers, and schooling experiences. The student assessment will take about 70 minutes to complete and the student survey will require another 20 minutes. School administrators, math teachers, special education providers, and students' parents will also be asked to complete questionnaires. Each of these will require about 30 minutes. All data will be collected through a computer-based application or a telephone interview, and significantly inform the main study, which will begin in early 2017 with 6th graders from approximately 700 schools around the country.

We are asking you to encourage your school(s) to participate in this vital phase which will take place in early 2016. Part of our pilot involves an experiment on school incentives. Each participating school will receive one of the following incentives as a thank you for their help with this phase of the study: \$200, \$400 or \$400 in goods and/or services. School and student participation is voluntary, but we hope your district and all selected schools will choose to contribute to the study. A representative from <data collection contractor> will contact you in the next few days to answer any questions you may have about MGLS:2017, and address any outstanding issues that might otherwise keep your district and school(s) from being a part of this unprecedented study.

Enclosed you will find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study and a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information line, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <email address here>.

We look forward to working with your schools in this endeavor to advance the quality of education for our country's middle grade students. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Peggy Carr

NCES Acting Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics

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Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 brochure

List of selected schools in District

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

Appendix D. School Recruitment Letters

School Recruitment Letter – Item Validation Field Test MGLS Letterhead

[Date]
[Principal's Name]
[Title]
[School]
[Address]
[City, State Zip]

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to request your school's participation in a vitally important new national study: the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**. The study will focus on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follow a cohort of 6th graders as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. The goal of the study is to examine the factors that encourage success during these important yet often understudied years of education. The MGLS:2017 data collection will be conducted by <data collection contractor> on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

Your school is one of only a limited number of schools around the country selected to participate in the first phase of MGLS:2017 to be conducted in early 2016. The first phase of MGLS:2017 will include a math, reading, and executive function assessment of students in the middle grades as well as a student survey on socioemotional wellbeing, peers, and schooling experiences. Student participation will take about 90 minutes. A school administrator, math teachers, special education providers, and students' parents will also be asked to complete questionnaires. Each of these will require about 30 minutes. All data will be collected through a computer-based application or a telephone interview, and significantly inform the main study, which will begin in early 2017 with about 20,000 sixth-graders from approximately 700 schools.

[IF PUBLIC AND GIVEN SUPPORT OF DISTRICT: The study has been given the support of Superintendent [INSERT NAME OF DISTRICT'S SUPERINTENDENT] and we encourage you to include MGLS:2017 on your 2016 calendar.] [IF PRIVATE AND ENDORSED: The study has been endorsed by [INSERT RELEVANT ENDORSING ORGANIZATION] and we encourage you to include MGLS:2017 on your 2016 calendar.] Your school will receive <**\$200/\$400/\$400 in goods and/or services**> as a thank you for your help with this phase of the study. We will also provide **\$150** for a school coordinator to serve as the central point of contact and manage the data collection at your school.

Within the next few days, a representative from <data collection contractor> will contact you to answer any questions you may have, and address any outstanding issues that might otherwise keep your school from being a part of this unprecedented study.

Enclosed please find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study and a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <insert email address>. You can also learn more about the study and education research focused on students in the middle grades by visiting the MGLS:2017 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/mgls>, following us on Twitter at <Twitter handle for the study>, or liking us on Facebook (<FB name>).

We look forward to working with your school in this endeavor to advance the quality of education for our country's middle grade students. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Peggy Carr
NCES Acting Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

Enclosures: MGLS:2017 brochure and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

Teacher Recruitment Letter – Item Validation Field Test
MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]
[TEACHER NAME]
[SCHOOL NAME]
[ADDR1]
[ADDR1]
[CITY STATE ZIP]

Dear [TEACHER NAME],

[SCHOOL NAME] has graciously agreed to participate in the first phase of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017), sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education. The study will focus on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follow a cohort of 6th graders as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. The first phase of MGLS:2017 includes a teacher survey of approximately 150 [MATH or SPECIAL EDUCATION] teachers in 6th, 7th, or 8th grade from around the county. You are one of the teachers selected to participate in the study.

As a [MATH or SPECIAL EDUCATION] teacher at [SCHOOL NAME], you can provide essential information about academic policies and programs, activities and curriculum in the classroom, and other school related experiences that impact student learning. Within the next two weeks, you will receive an email from <data collection contractor> that will contain your unique USER NAME and PASSWORD, as well as instructions for how to complete the teacher survey. [FOR MATH TEACHERS ONLY: The survey will include several general questions about your background and experiences at school and in the classroom, as well as questions about specific students that are part of the study. The questions on your background and classroom experiences will take approximately 20 minutes to complete, and the questions about specific students will take about 10 minutes per student to complete.] [FOR SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHERS ONLY: The survey will include several general questions about your background and the special education services you provide at the school, as well as questions about specific students that are part of the study. The questions on your background and special education services provided will take about 10 minutes to complete, and the questions about specific students will take approximately 25 minutes per student to complete.] As a token of our appreciation you will receive **\$20** for answering the questions about your background, and **\$7** per student for answering questions about specific students.

Enclosed please find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study, a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs), and a list of national organizations endorsing the study. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <insert email address>. You can also learn more about the study and education research focused on students in the middle grades by visiting the MGLS:2017 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/mgls>, following us on Twitter at <Twitter handle for the study>, or liking us on Facebook (<FB name>).

We thank you in advance for your cooperation in making this important research study a success.

Sincerely,

Peggy Carr
NCES Acting Commissioner, National Center for Education Statistics

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

Enclosures:
MGLS:2017 brochure
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet
List of national organizations endorsing the study

Appendix F. Parent Recruitment Letters, Implicit Consent

Parent Recruitment Letter – Implicit Consent – Item Validation Field Test MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]
[PARENT NAME]
[PARENT ADDRESS]
[PARENT CITY, STATE ZIP]

Dear [PARENT FIRST NAME],

Your child, [CHILD'S NAME], has been selected to take part in the first phase of the new Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Your child is one of about 4,200 students from 50 schools around the country selected to participate. You do not need to do anything in order for your child to be a part of this important study; however, if you would prefer your child not participate, please call 800-xxx-xxxx.

The family is so important for students, and you are the best person to tell us about [CHILD'S NAME] family. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate it if you would complete a brief online survey for the study. [As a token of our appreciation for being a part of the study, when you finish the 30-minute online survey you will immediately receive a gift card worth **[\$20/\$40]**].

Being a part of the study is voluntary for you and your child. There are no penalties for not participating in the study and when completing your survey, you can skip any question you do not want to answer.

For additional information, please see the enclosed brochure and sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). You can also call the MGLS:2017 information number, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <insert email address>. Finally, learn more about the study and education research focused on students in the middle grades by visiting the MGLS:2017 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/mgls>, following us on Twitter at <Twitter handle for the study>, or liking us on Facebook (<FB name>).

Taking part in the MGLS:2017 will be taking part in an unprecedented study of students' in the middle grades, providing data that will be used to improve learning and education for years to come. Thank you in advance for joining us and making this study a success.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Fidelman
Project Officer, MGLS:2017
National Center for Education Statistics

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

Enclosures:
MGLS:2017 brochure
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

Appendix G. Parent Recruitment Letters and Child Consent Forms, Explicit Consent

Parent Recruitment Letter – Explicit Consent – Item Validation Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]

[PARENT NAME]

[PARENT ADDRESS]

[PARENT CITY, STATE ZIP]

Dear [PARENT FIRST NAME],

Your child, [CHILD'S NAME], has been selected to take part in the first phase of the new Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Your child is one of about 4,200 students from 50 schools around the country selected to participate. In order for your child to be a part of this important study, we need your consent.

There is a child consent form included with this letter. **Please [(hard copy contact) sign the enclosed consent form and return it to your child's school in the enclosed envelope / (e-mail contact) print and sign the attached consent form and return it to (fill with address of school coordinator or study address)].**

The family is so important for students, and you are the best person to tell us about [CHILD'S NAME] family. Therefore, we would greatly appreciate it if you would complete a brief online survey for the study. [As a token of our appreciation for being a part of the study, when you finish the 30-minute online survey you will immediately receive a gift card worth **[\$20/\$40]**].

Being a part of the study is voluntary for you and your child. There are no penalties for not participating in the study and when completing your survey, you can skip any question you do not want to answer.

For additional information, please see the enclosed brochure and sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). You can also call the MGLS:2017 information number, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <insert email address>. Finally, learn more about the study and education research focused on students in the middle grades by visiting the MGLS:2017 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/mgls>, following us on Twitter at <Twitter handle for the study>, or liking us on Facebook (<FB name>).

Taking part in the MGLS:2017 will be taking part in an unprecedented study of students' in the middle grades, providing data that will be used to improve learning and education for years to come. Thank you in advance for joining us and making this study a success.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Fidelman
Project Officer, MGLS:2017
National Center for Education Statistics

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 brochure

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

MGLS:2017 Child Consent Form – Explicit Consent – Item Validation Field Test

Your child has been invited to participate in the 2016 pilot study of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Student data will be collected in a 90-minute session during the school day. Data will be collected on math skills, reading skills, executive function skills, and a student survey. This assessment will be conducted by a team of researchers from [contractor], who are operating under contract on behalf of the U. S. Department of Education.

The parent or guardian of each participating student will be eligible to fill out a survey. [As a token of our appreciation for filling out the survey, upon completion of the survey you will immediately receive a gift card worth [\$20/\$40].]

Yes, I grant permission for my child to participate in the 2016 pilot study of the MGLS:2017.

No, I do not grant permission for my child to participate in the 2016 pilot study of the MGLS:2017.

I have read this consent form and understand what I am being asked to do.

If I checked “Yes”, I agree to have my child take part in this study. I also agree to have MGLS researchers collect information from my child’s school records. By law, any information provided by you and your child’s school may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). I may withdraw this consent at any time without penalty.

PLEASE PRINT: Student name _____
Parent name _____
School name _____

PLEASE SIGN: _____ Date: ____/____/____
(Signature of parent or guardian)

PLEASE COMPLETE:

1. Your relationship to child: Mother Father Grandparent Other guardian

2. Home phone () _____

3. Cell/other phone () _____

4. Home address _____
Street City State Zip code

5. Email address _____

6. What language would you like to use to complete your survey? English Spanish Other

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1850-0911. Approval expires XX/XX/2018. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time to review instructions, gather the data needed, and complete and review the information requested. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving the survey instrument, or concerns regarding the status of your individual response to this information collection, please write directly to: National Center for Education Statistics, Middle Grades Longitudinal Study (MGLS), 1990 K Street, N.W., Room 9035, Washington, D.C. 20006-5650. No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

MGLS:2017 Brochure Text – Item Validation Field Test

COVER

Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) – First Phase

Education quote: "Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself." ~John Dewey

Study conducted by: National Center for Education Statistics of U.S. Department of Education

Data collection by: <data collection contractor>

INTERIOR

The Study

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will be the first study to follow a nationally-representative sample of students as they enter and move through the middle grades (grades 6, 7, and 8).

The First Phase

Participants in the first phase of the MGLS:2017 will provide invaluable feedback to improve the study. Information from the first phase will be used to improve the data collection instruments and practices of the main study.

Your Participation

As part of the first phase of the MGLS:2017, you are one of about 50 schools, 4,200 students, and about 150 teachers selected to participate in all of the U.S. The first phase will be conducted in early 2016. Your participation is essential to the success of the study.

What Will Be Included?

- Mathematics and reading skills
- Executive function development
- Socioemotional wellbeing
- Peer experiences
- Classroom characteristics and students' learning
- Services to students with disabilities
- Family characteristics and students' success

BACK

For More Information

If you have questions about MGLS:2017 or would like more information, please contact the study. Its success depends on you!

Phone number: 800-xxx-xxxx

E-mail address: <study email address>

Website: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/mgls>

Twitter symbol: <study account>

Facebook symbol: <study account>

MGLS:2017 FAQs – Item Validation Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) – First Phase – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

What is MGLS:2017?

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is a new, unprecedented study of middle grade students being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. <data collection contractor> is carrying out the MGLS:2017 data collection on behalf of NCES.

What is the focus of MGLS:2017?

The study will follow a cohort of 6th grade students as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. The goals of the study are to assess students' mathematics and reading skills, executive function, socioemotional wellbeing, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important, yet generally understudied, years of education.

When is the study being conducted?

The first phase will take place in early 2016. The main study will begin in early 2017.

Why participate in the first phase of MGLS:2017?

Results from the first phase of the study will significantly inform the creation and development of the assessments and survey instruments used in the main study. For example, the first phase will be used to learn more about how students respond to the sixth, seventh, and eighth grade mathematics and reading assessment items planned for the main study. Surveys developed for school administrators, math teachers, special education teachers, parents, and students will also be tested during the first phase to inform the selection of items to include in the main study. Participants in the first phase of the study will provide essential feedback to improve data collection for the main study, and provide the basis upon which the remainder of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study will be built.

How will MGLS:2017 data be used?

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policy makers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' educational career. More generally, MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers to examine family and schooling factors related to students' achievement. The study will capture changes in young people's lives and their connections with communities, schools, teachers, families, parents, and peers, including:

- Academic (especially in math and reading), social, and interpersonal growth;
- Transitions from elementary school and preparations for transitions into high school;
- School connectedness, belongingness, and engagement;
- Characteristics of schools serving students in the middle grades and their relationship to student outcomes; and
- School progress and outcomes of students' with disabilities.

How many schools and students will be involved in the first phase of the study?

A sample of approximately 4,200 students enrolled in grades 5, 6, 7, and 8 from about 50 schools, will participate in the first phase of the MGLS:2017. The main study will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 700 public and private schools.

What is involved for students?

Students will complete a direct-assessment of their math, reading, and executive function skills that will take approximately 70 minutes. Each student will also be asked to complete a survey that will take about 20 minutes. For the first phase of the MGLS:2017, students will only be asked to participate once. For the main study, students will be followed for the next two years (early 2018 and early 2019, respectively). The assessments and survey will be completed on touch screens, tablets, or computers provided by the study.

What is involved for school staff?

A school administrator will be asked to complete an approximately 30 minute web-based questionnaire about the school and the school environment. The math teachers of students who participate in the study will complete web-based questionnaires about their background and classroom characteristics (approximately 20 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (about 10 minutes per student). The special education teacher for students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and special education services provided (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student).

What is involved for parents?

One parent of each student who participates in the study will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. The questionnaire will take about 30 minutes to complete.

Who will be responsible for data collection?

Trained MGLS:2017 staff will facilitate the student assessments and questionnaires and provide all required materials. Schools will only be asked to designate a school contact to assist MGLS:2017 staff with in-school arrangements.

Do teachers need to help administer the assessments?

No, trained MGLS:2017 staff will visit the school, bringing all required materials for administering the assessments. Exceptions will be made for students with IEP accommodations that may require the assistance of school personnel (e.g., if a student works one-on-one with an aide).

Are there incentives for participating schools?

MGLS:2017 recognizes the demands placed on schools from many sources throughout the school year, and will give a modest incentive to schools that agree to help in the first phase of the study. MGLS:2017 will also provide **\$150** for a school coordinator to serve as the central point of contact and manage the data collection at each school .

What happens if a student refuses to participate?

All participation is voluntary. There are no penalties for not participating in the study. When completing the questionnaires, respondents can skip any question they do not want to answer. If individuals or schools are hesitant to be a part of the study, please reach out to MGLS:2017 staff so we can address any concerns you may have.

Will the names of participants and their responses be kept confidential?

Under law, the information provided by schools, staff, students, and parents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, Section 9573]. All field staff and other staff working on the study have signed an affidavit of non-disclosure where they swear to abide by this law. Field staff have also undergone a criminal background check as a condition of employment. By law, everyone working on this NCES survey is subject to a jail term of up to 5 years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both if he or she willfully discloses ANY identifiable information about any study participant.

Who do I contact for further information about MGLS:2017?

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 800-xxx-xxxx, or send an email to <insert email address>. You may also learn more about the study and education research focused on students in the middle grades by visiting the MGLS:2017 website at <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/mgls>, following us on Twitter at <Twitter handle for the study>, or liking us on Facebook (<FB name>).

Appendix J. MGLS:2017 Recruitment Website Text

The recruitment website has not yet been developed, but will be a very welcoming, interactive website that will allow any interested party (state, district, school, teacher, parent, or student) to learn more about the field tests as well as the main study. Content will include, but will not be limited to, information contained in the recruitment brochure, information from the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet, as well as links for contacting the study. The content of the recruitment website will be provided in the request for the MGLS:2017 field test data collections later in 2015.

Direct Mathematics Assessment

Approximate length Goal for main study	30 minutes (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Computerized administration using touch screen, tablets, or computers that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs (bullets represent learning progression)	<p>Number System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• finding common factors and multiples• comparing fractions• applying basic operations with fractions and integers to word problems• using basic operations• representing and understanding rational numbers in multiple forms• understanding the relative size of irrational numbers <p>Proportional Relationships</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• extending students' understanding of the number system• multiplying and dividing fractions and multiplicative thinking• understanding basic concepts of ratio, rate and proportional relationships• using rational numbers to solve problems and understand slope and functions <p>Expressions and Equations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding the use of expressions beginning with letter representations of a single number• applying knowledge of rational numbers and operations to solve equations• constructing equations and inequalities to solve real-world problems• recognizing different types of notation (such as square root)• reasoning with equalities and inequalities• solving and representing linear equations and inequalities <p>Functions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• understanding the definition of a function• comparing functions represented in different ways• distinguishing between linear and nonlinear functions• comparing and creating representations of different functions• understanding of functions to context

Appendix L. MGLS:2017 Summary of Reading Assessment

MGLS Letterhead

Direct Reading Assessment

Approximate length Goal for main study	30 minutes (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Two-stage, computerized assessment using touch screen, tablets, or computers that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p>Word Recognition & Decoding Students read words (e.g., elect), pronounceable nonwords (e.g., clort) and pseudohomophones (e.g., brane) and decide whether the stimulus is a word, not a real word, or sounds exactly like a real word.</p> <p>Vocabulary A single target word is presented and the student decides which of provided three words goes with the target word. Correct answers are either synonyms (e.g., data - information) or meaning associates (e.g., thermal - heat).</p> <p>Morphological Awareness The student completes a sentence by choosing from three words derived from the same root word (e.g., She is good at many sports, but her _____ is basketball: specialty, specialize, specialist). The target words vary in difficulty based on the frequency of the derived forms (i.e., lower frequency derivations are more difficult).</p> <p>Sentence Processing The student completes sentences of increasing length and syntactic complexity by choosing from three choices (e.g., Shouting in a voice louder than her friend Cindy's, Tonya asked Joe to unlock the door, but _____ didn't respond: he, she, they). In this task, frequent words used in everyday language are used in the sentences to decrease the influence of vocabulary knowledge in this task. Consequently, the focus is on understanding of sentence syntax and meaning (rather than word meaning).</p> <p>Efficiency of Basic Reading Comprehension (MAZE task) Students read short passages containing sentences that are completed using a forced-choice cloze task (e.g., Agriculture meant that people stayed in one place to grow their baskets / crops / rings.). These passages are between 250-300 words in length and have Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level estimates of 6th - 7th grade. Students in this block will read approximately 3 paragraphs in this way. This task is timed such that students are given 3 minutes to complete a passage and its corresponding items, making it a measure of efficiency as well as basic comprehension.</p> <p>Reading Comprehension Students answer questions about the passage they read while doing the MAZE task. The passage presented in the MAZE task will be presented again with the correct completions for the items presented in the MAZE task. The passage will appear on the same screen as the questions. Easier questions will be selected for this skill-based block.</p>

Appendix M.MGLS:2017 Summary of Executive Function Assessments

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Direct Executive Function Assessment

Approximate length Goal for main study	10 minutes (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Computerized administration using touch screen, tablets, or computers that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p>Inhibitory control (Stop Signal task) Involves the ability to stop ongoing thoughts or actions, particularly prepotent responses. Development of inhibitory control occurs rapidly in early childhood and advances more slowly during adolescence. The Stop Signal task is a measure of inhibitory control that has been positively correlated with achievement among students in the middle grades. It distinguishes children with ADHD from both typically developing children and children with other clinical problems. The task revealed age effects for ages 10 through 14.</p> <p>Working memory (N-back tasks) Working memory is considered a strong measure of reasoning ability, and involves keeping information active in primary memory while acting on it in relation to other information, such as keeping a list of words in memory and then ordering the words alphabetically or by categories. The n-back tasks are measures of working memory often used in research, particularly in neuroscience studies that look at the regions of the brain activated by different types of working memory (that is memory for verbal, symbolic, and spatial information).</p> <p>Cognitive flexibility (Hearts and Flowers task) Shifting involves flexibility in thinking and moving between rules, tasks, or mental states. With shifting, each mental set may involve several task rules. Several regions of the brain (cortex and the prefrontal cortex) show increased activation when participants respond to measures of shifting. The Hearts and Flowers task (Dots task) includes a congruent condition, an incongruent condition, and a mixed condition. The task calls on working memory and inhibitory control as students remember the rule and decide whether to inhibit a prepotent response. The mixed condition measures shifting (or cognitive flexibility) as the task shifts between the congruent and incongruent condition.</p>

Appendix N. MGLS:2017 Summary of Student Survey

MGLS Letterhead

Student Survey

Approximate length	20 minutes (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Goal for main study	
Mode of administration	Computerized administration using touch screen, tablets, or computers that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p>Demographics</p> <p>School experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversations with teachers about math courses, jobs or careers, and going to college• Student perspective of teacher support• Perceptions of school climate (e.g., safety and rule fairness)• Academic culture (e.g., high standards and expectations)• Problems at school (e.g., student misconduct and bullying) <p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Time use-structured activities: student employment; participating in activities (sports, clubs, etc.)• Time use-unstructured or unsupervised activities (e.g., watching television, doing homework, or being with friends)• Technology activities <p>Health</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Physical well-being <p>Peers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Perception of peer social support• Peer victimization• Perception of peer values (importance of education, engagement in risky behaviors, peer pressure)• Belongingness (a sense of belonging in school)• Risk-taking (students' sensation seeking behaviors) <p>"Tell us about Yourself"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic engagement (e.g., persistence)• Identity formation (interests of students ("sparks"); ethnic and gender identity; perceived social status)• Socioemotional well-being <p>Home Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversations with parents about math courses, jobs or careers, and going to college• Parental support to help child achieve• Parent-child relationships (autonomy-granting, disclosure)• Community perspectives <p>Future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Aspirations and expectations (educational, career/life goals)

Appendix O. MGLS:2017 Summary of the Parent Survey

MGLS Letterhead

Parent Survey

Approximate length	30 minutes
Goal for main study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link, with a telephone-based interview option available.
Key constructs	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student demographics <p>Family Roster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Family demographics• Household composition <p>Family and Parent Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Language (student uses most, family primary language)• Parent education <p>Home Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent-child relationship—monitoring/disclosure• Risk-taking and risky behaviors (i.e. students' sensation seeking behaviors and parents' report of students' deviant behaviors)• Community perspectives (poverty, crime, victimization) <p>Child's School Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent contact/communication with school• Disciplinary actions taken by school• Grade progression (retention, early promotion)• ESL participation• Student free- and reduced-price lunch eligibility <p>Child Health and Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Health and physical well-being• IEP and Disability Details• IEP/Disability - Receipt of Special Education Services• IEP/Disability - Participation in IEP• IEP/Disability - School Services and Programs• IEP/Disability - Outside Services• IEP/Disability - Satisfaction with Services <p>Employment and Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent occupation• Family income• Family assets <p>Mobility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mobility (number of school changes) <p>Parent Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Conversation about math courses• Conversation about going to college• Conversation about jobs or careers• Academic expectations

Appendix P. MGLS:2017 Summary of the Math Teacher Survey

MGLS Letterhead

Mathematics Teacher Survey

Approximate length	30 minutes
Goal for main study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link.
Key constructs	<p>Teacher background and classroom characteristics</p> <p>Student and Classroom Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Class size (number of students)• Course type• Heterogeneity in math ability• Classroom climate (e.g., misbehavior) <p>Classroom Mathematics Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Curriculum/textbook used• Opportunities to learn (length of course)• Content covered in course (Common Core & practice standards)• Instructional practice/pedagogy• Availability and use of classroom resources <p>Views on Teaching and School Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Instruction in self-contained classrooms or departmentalized• Factors for determining math course (take a test, prerequisite)• Teacher efficacy• Instructional leadership• Academic culture (high standards and expectations)• Teaching climate <p>Teacher Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Education and degree (courses in math and math education)• Years of experience• Certification• Demographic information <p>Teacher provided information on individual students</p> <p>Mathematical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math class performance <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approaches to learning• Externalizing behaviors• Social skills and positive behavior <p>Classroom Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Academic engagement (behavioral and cognitive)• Attendance <p>Student and Classroom Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Math support services (tutoring, pull-out, instruction frequency)

Appendix Q. MGLS:2017 Summary of the Special Education Teacher Survey

MGLS Letterhead

Special Education Teacher/Provider Survey

Approximate length	35 minutes
Goal for main study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link.
Key constructs	<p>Teacher background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Teacher Assignment or Position<ul style="list-style-type: none">Teaching Assignment or PositionInstruction and instructional environmentTeacher Background and Education<ul style="list-style-type: none">Demographic informationExperiences and TrainingTeacher Experience<ul style="list-style-type: none">Years of experience <p>Teacher provided information on specific students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Student Grade and IEP Status<ul style="list-style-type: none">Student Grade and IEP statusStudent's Disability and Services<ul style="list-style-type: none">Primary disabilitySpecial education and related servicesStudent's Instruction and Instructional Environment<ul style="list-style-type: none">Instruction and instructional environmentCommunication About Student<ul style="list-style-type: none">Communication with general education teacherStudent Goals, Performance, and Expectations<ul style="list-style-type: none">IEP goals and evaluationTeacher's expectations for studentAcademic & life skills

Appendix R. MGLS:2017 Summary of the School Administrator Survey

MGLS Letterhead

School Administrator Survey

Approximate length	20 minutes
Goal for main study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link.
Key constructs	<p>School Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School characteristics (e.g., average daily attendance, tuition)• Student population (e.g., percent IEP, percent ELL/LEP)• Providing additional support for struggling students (tutoring, extra assistance, pull-out, homework assistance) <p>Services and Supports for Students with Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• IEP/Disability-School services and programs <p>School Programs and Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Courses offered: for particular courses ask about the number of slots available• Subject-specific academic tracking practices (order/progression of courses)• School extended learning opportunities: additional instruction time, Gifted and Talented, International Baccalaureate• Assisting students with transitions from elementary to middle grades; from middle grades to high school• Health services (e.g., sex education classes) <p>School Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Problems at school: absenteeism, student mobility, student misconduct, bullying• School-level security (police officer on site, security officer on site, metal detectors, teachers supervise hallways during transition)• Community perspectives (poverty, crime, victimization) <p>School's Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• School's teachers: number, preparation <p>School Administrator Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demographic information• Years of experience

Appendix S. MGLS:2017 Student Rostering Materials for Item Validation Field Test

Request for Student Roster Information from Schools Item Validation Field Test, General Education sample

[MGLS Letterhead]

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

Dear [School Contact Name]:

Thank you again for participating in the < first phase / pilot study > of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017 (MGLS:2017). Your participation is critical to the success of the study.

Not all students in your school are needed for participation. We will be selecting a sample. In order to select the sample, we are requesting a complete roster of the students currently enrolled in < 5th, 6th, 7th, or 8th grade / 6th grade > at your school. The roster should include key characteristics about each student for sampling purposes. The MGLS:2017 roster data request conforms fully to the requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA) (34 CFR Part 99.31). Under FERPA's general consent rule, the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is authorized to obtain student level data from education entities for any study-eligible student, without prior consent, if the disclosure is to an organization conducting studies for, or on behalf of, NCES. Student data are subject to strict protections that are adhered to by NCES and its contractor organizations. Roster information will be used for sampling purposes only and will be securely destroyed once student samples are drawn.

The key characteristics of interest include:

- Name
- Student identification number
- Date of birth
- Grade level
- Gender
- Race/ethnicity
- IEP status (Disability codes, if applicable)

After students have been selected for the sample, we will send you a list of their names and a request for additional information. The additional information will include:

- Students' parent and/or guardians contact information
- Students' math teacher(s)
- Students' special education teacher (if applicable)

We have developed a two-part form to provide guidance for preparing a student roster.

The sample of students will be selected in the next few weeks, but in order to select the sample we first need the student roster with key characteristics from you. In the next few days, a study representative from <data collection contractor>, which is conducting the MGLS:2017 data collection on behalf of NCES, will contact you to discuss the best way of obtaining student roster information. We are prepared to collect this information in a format convenient to you. This could be electronically or through a paper and pencil form. If at any time you should have questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact me at <data collection contractor contact information, both phone and email>.

Thank you for your time and participation in this unprecedented study.

Sincerely,

<Data Collection Contractor contact information>

NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002), 20 U.S. Code, § 9543. By law, the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S. Code, § 9573). No data identifying respondents, or relating to or describing individuals, will be released. All data will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.