

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017–18 (MGLS:2017)  
2016 Item Validation Field Test (IVFT) Data Collection**

OMB# 1850-0911 v.4

**Appendix W: Data Collection Respondent Materials**

National Center for Education Statistics  
U.S. Department of Education  
Institute of Education Sciences  
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## **Appendix W. Respondent Correspondence**

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This Appendix provides correspondence for the respondents inviting them to participate in and thanking them for completing the school administrator survey, the math teacher survey, the special education teacher survey, and the parent survey.

A previous district and school recruitment focused clearance package (OMB# 1850-0911 v.3, 5, and 7) provides additional information for respondents, including: recruitment letters, first contact letters, consent forms, an MGLS:2017 study overview, and frequently asked questions (see Appendices A-S MGLS Field Tests 2016 Recruitment.docx).

## **Appendix W.1a. Invitation to Survey E-mail, School Administrator**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Please complete by <date, two weeks after sent-date of e-mail>

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <School Administrator>,

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Please use the link below to complete the online survey.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

Gathering the following information in advance will help you complete the questionnaire more quickly:

1. For the current school year:
  - Average daily attendance
  - Math curriculum information
  - Matriculation information
  - Student-body characteristics, including the estimated percentage of students in each grade who are:
    - Receiving free or reduced price lunch
    - English language learners
    - Alternative program attendees
    - Students with disabilities/served by an Individualized Education Program (IEP)
    - In each racial/ethnic category
  - School personnel counts such as the number of:
    - Teachers by subject taught
    - Security personnel
2. For the 2015-2016 school year:
  - State assessment scores by subject
  - Programs, services, and supports available for students with IEPs and the percentage of students who use them

If at any time you should have questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact <data collection contractor contact information>. The survey should take you approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your support of this important study of middle grade students.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

*The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9543). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina. The collected data 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 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

## **Appendix W.1.b Thank You for Participation E-mail, School Administrator**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 - Thank you!

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <School Administrator>,

Thank you for completing your MGLS:2017 survey. This vitally important study examines the factors that encourage success during these important yet often understudied years of middle grades education. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

## **Appendix W.1.c Reminder for Participation E-mail, School Administrator**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Due by <date> – Reminder #<1,2>

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <School Administrator>,

This is a friendly reminder to complete your survey for the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) by <date>. For your convenience we have included the link to your survey below.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

Please let us know if there is any way we may assist you in completing the survey. If you believe that someone else at your school is better suited to complete this survey, please provide us with their information <by replying to this e-mail/ clicking the following link to provide contact information>, and we will reach out to them.

[INSERT POTENTIAL LINK TO ALTERNATIVE RESPONDENT CONTACT INFORMATION HERE]

Your data are essential to the success of the MGLS:2017, which will be used to inform policies and practices shaping middle grades education for years to come. We hope you will take a moment to complete your survey, and be a part of this unprecedented study.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

## **Appendix W.1.d Final Reminder for Participation E-mail, School Administrator**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Due by <date> – Reminder #3

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <School Administrator>,

We have not yet received your completed survey for the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Your participation is needed. Please use the personalized link below to complete your survey now.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

We understand you may be busy, but would appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey. However, if one of your colleagues can provide us with information about your school's policies, programs, and students, please provide us with their contact information <by replying to this e-mail/ clicking the following link to provide contact information>, and we will reach out to them.

[INSERT POTENTIAL LINK TO ALTERNATIVE RESPONDENT CONTACT INFORMATION HERE]

Your data are essential to the success of the MGLS:2017, which will be used to inform policies and practices shaping middle grades education for years to come. You are one of a select number of schools chosen to participate in this unprecedented study. Please take a moment and complete your survey.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

## **Appendix W.2.a. Invitation to Survey E-mail, Math Teacher and Special Education Teacher**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Please complete by <date, two weeks after sent-date of e-mail>

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <TEACHER'S NAME>,

Thank you again for agreeing to participate in the <first phase> for the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017).

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.

As a <math/ special education> teacher at <school name>, you provide essential information about academic policies and programs, activities and curriculum in the classroom, and other school related experiences that impact student learning.

Please use the link below to complete the online <math/ special education> teacher survey.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

If at any time you should have questions about the study, please do not hesitate to contact <data collection contractor contact information>.

<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.>

Thank you for your support of this important study of middle grade students.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

*The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9543). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina. The collected data 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 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

## **Appendix W.2.b. Thank You for Participation E-mail, Math Teacher and Special Education Teacher**

SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Thank you!

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <TEACHER'S NAME>,

Thank you for completing your MGLS:2017 survey. This vitally important study examines the factors that encourage success during these important yet often understudied years of middle grades education. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

As a token of our appreciation you are receiving \$20 for answering the questions about your background, and \$7 per student for answering questions about specific students.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

## **Appendix W.2.c Reminder for Participation E-mail, Math Teacher and Special Education Teacher**

SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Due by <date> – Reminder #<1,2>

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear < TEACHER'S NAME >,

This is a friendly reminder to complete your survey for the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) by <date>. For your convenience we have included the personalized link to your survey below.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

Please let us know if there is any way we may assist you in completing the survey. 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. We estimate it should take you about <#> minutes to complete the entire survey, and you will receive \$<#>.

Your data are essential to the success of the MGLS:2017, which will be used to inform policies and practices shaping middle grades education for years to come. We hope you will take a moment to complete your survey, and be a part of this unprecedented study.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>



## Appendix W.2.d Final Reminder for Participation E-mail, Math Teacher and Special Education Teacher

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Due by <date> – Reminder #3

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear < TEACHER'S NAME >,

We have not yet received your completed survey for the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Your participation is needed. Please use the personalized link below to complete your survey now.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

We understand you may be busy, but would appreciate you taking the time to complete the survey. Upon completion, you will receive **\$20** for answering the questions about your background, and **\$7** per student for answering questions about specific students. We estimate it should take you about <#> minutes to complete the entire survey, and you will receive \$<#>.

Your data are essential to the success of the MGLS:2017, which will be used to inform policies and practices shaping middle grades education for years to come. You are one of a select number of teachers chosen to participate in this unprecedented study. Please take a moment and complete your survey.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

### **Appendix W.3.a. Invitation to Survey E-mail, Parent Survey Respondent**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Please complete by <date, two weeks after sent-date of e-mail >

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <Name>,

As you know, <CHILD'S NAME> was selected to take part in the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). The family is very important for students, and you are the best person to tell us about <CHILD'S NAME> family.

<Once we have your answers, you will receive <incentive amount> to thank you for taking the time to fill out the survey.>

Please click the link below to complete the online parent survey.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

If at any time you have questions about the study, please contact <data collection contractor contact information>. The survey should take you approximately 30 minutes to complete.

Thank you for your support of this important study of middle grade students.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

*The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9543). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina. The collected data 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 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C., § 9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

### **Appendix W.3.b. Thank You for Participation E-mail, Parent Survey Respondent**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 - Thank you!

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear <NAME>,

Thank you for completing the MGLS:2017 parent survey. You and <CHILD'S NAME> are part of an unprecedented study of students' in the middle grades, providing data that will be used to improve learning and education for years to come. Your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

As a token of our appreciation, you are receiving <incentive amount> for taking the time to complete the survey.

Sincerely,

<NAME>

<CONTACT INFORMATION>

### **Appendix W.3.c Reminder for Participation E-mail, Parent Survey Respondent**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Due by <date> – Reminder #<1,2>

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear < NAME > ,

This is a friendly reminder to complete your survey for the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) by <date>. Click the link below to go to your survey.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

<Once we have your answers, you will receive <incentive amount> to thank you for your time.>

Your answers are very important to the success of the MGLS:2017. Please take a moment to fill out the survey, and be a part of this exciting new study.

Sincerely,

<NAME>  
<School coordinator>  
<CONTACT PHONE>

<NAME>  
<CONTACT INFORMATION>

### **Appendix W.3.d Final Reminder for Participation E-mail, Parent Survey Respondent**

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SUBJECT LINE: MGLS:2017 – Due by <date> – Reminder #3

[MGLS:2017 LOGO]

Dear < NAME > ,

We have not yet received your completed survey for the <first phase> of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Your participation is needed. Click the link below to go to your survey now.

[INSERT LINK WITH INSTRUCTIONS HERE]

<Once we have your answers, you will receive <incentive amount> to thank you for your time.>

Your answers are very important to the success of the MGLS:2017. You are one of the few people from around the country chosen to participate in this amazing study. Please take a moment and fill out your survey.

Sincerely,

<NAME>  
<CONTACT INFORMATION>

## Appendix W.4.a. Debriefing Questionnaire for Participating Schools

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### MGLS: 2017 IVFT Debriefing Interview

School ID: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Did the informational materials and study staff who called to ask for your participation in the study accurately describe the data collection in your school and the amount of time it would take?

YES

NO

Comments:

2. Did you feel the pre-session visit by the TA was useful?

YES

NO

Comments:

3. Did the TA arrive on time for the:

a. pre-session visit,

YES

NO

b. the primary visit when most students were assessed?

YES

NO

c. all make-up sessions?

YES

NO

NOT APPLICABLE

Comments:

4. Did the student assessment session(s) take place as scheduled?

YES

NO

Comments:

5. Was the TA competent at setting up the electronic equipment for the MGLS:2017 student assessment sessions(s) (e.g., ChromeBooks, wifi, etc.)?

YES

NO

Comments:

6. Did the TA effectively manage the student assessment session (e.g., did the students seem to understand what they were being asked to do)?

YES

NO

Comments:

7. If any participating students from your school required accommodations, did the TA effectively provide the required accommodations? If NO, please explain which accommodations were NOT met:
- YES  
NO  
Comments:
8. Did the TA do anything specific to help reduce the amount of time associated with participating in the study for you or other school staff? [YES OR NO] If yes, please specify
- YES  
NO  
Comments:
9. Was there anything specific that the TA could have done to help reduce the time associated with participating in the study for you, other school staff, or the students? [YES OR NO] If yes, what could have been done?
- YES  
NO  
Comments:
10. Did the TA and his/her assistant behave in a professional manner?
- YES  
NO  
Comments:
11. Approximately how many hours did you spend on activities related to the study? # hrs \_\_
12. Did anyone else from your school assist you with activities related to the study? If yes, please indicate the person's role in the school and the activities they performed.
- YES  
NO  
Comments:
13. Did the [incentive] your school received play a part in the decision for your school to participate in MGLS:2017? [YES OR NO]
- YES  
NO  
Comments:
14. Besides things you have told us about already, is there anything else you would like to tell us or anything we could do to improve the data collection processes for MGLS:2017?

## **Appendix W.4.b. Debriefing Questionnaire for NON-Participating Schools**

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### MGLS: 2017 IVFT Debriefing Interview

School ID: \_\_\_\_\_ School Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Respondent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In the summer/fall of 2015, your school was invited to participate in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) but declined to do so. We are not asking for your participation at this time, but instead are interested in learning more about your reasons for not participating. It is important for us to understand why schools decide not to participate so that we can improve our procedures for future rounds of the study. We have a very quick, 5-minute survey with a few questions about the reasons for your decision not to participate in the study.

1. For what reasons did your school decide not to participate in MGLS:2017?
2. Your school was offered [incentive] to participate in the study. Would a different incentive have changed your mind about participating? In other words, would you have agreed to let your school participate in MGLS:2017, if the incentive was a different amount or type of incentive?

YES

NO

Comments:

3. [If yes] How much or what would the incentive need to be for your school to decide to participate?

Comments:

4. Is there anything else, not mentioned above, we could have done to enable your school to participate?

## **Appendix W.5. Student Survey Instructions Script**

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INSTRUCTION TO TA: READ THE FOLLOWING SCRIPT VERBATIM TO THE STUDENTS PRIOR TO STARTING THE STUDENT ASSESSMENT.

Good morning/afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_ [introduce your TAA if in the room] and I/we am/are working with the U.S. Department of Education on a research study called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18, or MGLS:2017 for short.

This is the first national study to learn about the experiences of students in the middle grades. This study will ask questions of middle-grade students like you from many different schools around the nation, and help us better understand you and what you know, as well as your experiences with your peers, your teachers, your school, and your family. Your participation in this study today will help us learn about the questions we are using so that we can improve them for students who will take part in the study in the future.

All students in this study will be given some math problems to answer; however, not everyone will be given the same math problems. Once you are done with math, some of you will be given reading questions to answer, others will be asked to complete a task involving memory and reaction, and others will be asked to complete a brief survey. Not everyone will be asked to do the same things, and no one will be asked to do all of these things.

None of your responses today will be shared with your parents, teachers, or school. Your help today may be used only for research purposes and may not be used for any other purpose except as required by law. It will not take more than 90 minutes total to complete the activities we ask you do.

You each received a card with a unique user ID and password to log in with. This will take you to the "Welcome" screen where you will see additional instructions. Please enter that now.

[Wait here: Assist students that have trouble entering their passwords].

If you need help, raise your hand and I/we will assist you.

[After all questions are answered:] You may now begin.