

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS (NCES)

Attachments I-IV Student Survey Tryouts and Focus Groups

2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20) Pretesting

OMB# 1850-0803 v. 243

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Attachments

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- Attachment II – Survey Tryouts and Focus Groups: Eligibility Screening Questions
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Attachment I. Survey Tryouts and Focus Groups: Recruitment Procedures and Materials

Identification of Respondents

EurekaFacts will locate potential participants through multiple outreach/contact methods and resources, such as cold-calling from directory listings, advertisements within organizations and education institutions, referrals and snowball sampling, and social media posts. Based on past experience, EurekaFacts recommends recruitment efforts of college students to be conducted by directly targeting and contacting college students. Our approach to recruitment will utilize four primary vehicles:

- Usage/purchase of student emails available from a highly reputable commercial vendor that provides similar direct marketing outreach services for major national corporation and consumer brands.
- Placement of advertisements in highly selective/targeted venues to include Facebook and Google ads where they are restricted to users in university environments or with .edu websites.
- Use of classified advertisements or more general announcements to appear in online and print versions of campus newspapers as well as university-based student affairs/career centers.
- Utilize social media and interaction with campus staff and student groups to supplement outreach and amplify visibility and credibility of the recruitment effort.

In response to these outreach/contact methods and resources, potential participants will inform EurekaFacts of their interest to participate in the study by calling or e-mailing the EurekaFacts contact information found in the outreach/contact materials or following a link to the self-administered screener. EurekaFacts will review the responses to the self-administered screeners of potential participants to identify eligible participants. Potential participants will then be notified if they were selected to participate in either the remote web survey tryout or in-person tryout and focus group.

Sample Recruitment Advertisements

Advertisements will target individuals qualified for NPSAS:20, describing briefly the purpose of the testing and the opportunity for participants to contribute to the development of a survey. The advertisements will identify the need for individuals who have attended a college, university, or trade school at any time in the 2018-19 academic year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019), the time commitment of the survey or focus group, and the incentive amount offered for participation.

Sample advertisements using a variety of methods are presented below. The main method will include direct e-mails/ letters sent to individuals and organizations with members who may qualify. The e-mail or letter will also include a flyer and an FAQ page. In addition, social media post language has been included for online advertisements. As part of the recruitment process, recruitment scripts, confirmation phone scripts and e-mails, survey invitation e-mails, and thank you e-mails may be used and are provided in this document.

Initial Contact Recruitment E-mail/Letter to Individuals

IF SENT AS E-MAIL–Subject: Paid Research Study Opportunity

<DATE>

Dear <NAME>,

EurekaFacts is administering an important study on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), and we **need your help.**

We are looking for [<IF RECRUITMENT FOR FIRST-TIME STUDENTS> first-year <IF RECRUITMENT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS> graduate] students who have attended a college, university, or trade school at any time between **July 1, 2018 and today** to participate in a voluntary [<IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> self-administered web survey <IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> 90-minute focus group] to provide feedback on the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20).

<IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> The study requires you to take a self-administered web survey through a computer, tablet, or smartphone and will take about **25 minutes** to complete. After submitting the web survey, you will receive a **\$30** e-gift card from a major credit card company.

<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> The focus groups will take place in Rockville, MD where you will first answer survey questions and then participate in a group discussion about the survey and how to encourage student participation in the NPSAS study. You will receive a **\$90 gift card** from a major credit card company at the end of the session as a 'thank you' for your time and effort.]

By participating in this study, you will improve the questionnaire, so it is clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of other college students across the country!

[<IF E-MAILED> If you are interested in participating, please click on the following link and answer a few screening questions:

<INSERT LINK TO INTAKE/SCREENING FORM>]

I have included a flyer and a FAQ page with additional information about the study. Please call <CONTACT PHONE> or e-mail <CONTACT E-MAIL> with any questions regarding this project.

We look forward to speaking with you soon!

Sincerely,

<CONTACT NAME>

<JOB TITLE>

EurekaFacts, LLC <CONTACT PHONE>

ATTACHED: Flyer and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Recruitment E-mail/Letter to Organizations

IF SENT AS E-MAIL–Subject: Paid Research Study Opportunity

<DATE>

Dear <NAME>,

EurekaFacts, a research company based in Rockville, MD, is administering an important study on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). [<IF SCHOOL OR EDUCATION ORGANIZATION> Because of your role in the educational community <IF OTHER ORGANIZATION> Because your organization plays an active role in the community], we **need your help.**]

We are looking for [<IF RECRUITMENT FOR FIRST-TIME STUDENTS> first-year <IF RECRUITMENT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS> graduate] students who have attended a college, university, or trade school at any time between **July 1, 2018 and today** to participate in a voluntary research interview to provide feedback for the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20).

[<IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete and can be done at a time that is convenient for the participant. Participants will be e-mailed a **\$30 e-gift card** from a major credit card company after they complete the survey as a ‘thank you’ for their time and effort.]

[<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT>The focus group session will last no more than 90 minutes. During the session, participants will be asked to answer questions about their postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year. Some topics may include enrollment in the 2018-19 academic year, financial aid, and employment. Additionally, participants will discuss methods to encourage student participation in the NPSAS study.

The focus group session will be audio and video recorded. NCES is required to follow strict procedures to protect personal information in the collection, reporting, and publication of data.¹

Participants will receive a **\$90 gift card** from a major credit card company at the end of the session as a ‘thank you’ for their time and effort.]

You can play a key role in making sure that a variety of voices will be heard to improve the questionnaire used in this study, so it is clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of college students across the country.

We would like to ask for your assistance in letting your [<IF SCHOOL OR EDUCATION ORGANIZATION> students] [<IF EDUCATION ORGANIZATION OR OTHER ORGANIZATION> members, and/or clients] know how they can be involved in this important study.] We have included a flyer with a brief description of our study in the hope that you can post it for everyone to see. We have also included a FAQ page with additional information about the study.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and invite you to please call <CONTACT PHONE> or e-mail <CONTACT E-MAIL> so we can answer any questions you may have.

We look forward to speaking with you soon!

Sincerely,

<CONTACT NAME>

<JOB TITLE>

EurekaFacts, LLC <CONTACT PHONE>

ATTACHED: Flyer and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

¹ All of the information provided 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).

Recruitment Phone Script for Potential Participants/Respondents

(Script when calling potential participants from a compiled list)

Good morning/afternoon/evening. Is this the <LAST NAME FROM CALL LIST> household? My name is <CALLER NAME> and I am calling from EurekaFacts, a Maryland research company. Our company is administering an important research study on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is part of the U.S. Department of Education and we need your help.

We are recruiting individuals to participate in a voluntary research survey [<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT>], followed by a focus group to provide feedback about survey questions and how to encourage student participation in the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20)]. If you qualify and participate in the study, you will [<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> receive a \$90 gift card from a major credit card company at the end of the session <IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> be e-mailed a \$30 e-gift card from a major credit card company at the end of the survey] as a 'thank you.'

I'd like to tell you a little bit more about the study, but first, if now is a good time, can I ask you a few questions? (YES or NO and call back later)

[IF YES, ADMINISTER ELIGIBILITY SCREENING QUESTIONS 1 -7 TO DETERMINE FIRST-TIME BEGINNER (FTB), GRADUATE, AND NON-FTB, NON-GRADUATE STUDENT PARTICIPANTS (see Attachment II)]

Thank you. [<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> The focus group will be split into two main parts: a survey and a group discussion.] During the survey, you will be asked to answer questions about your postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year. Some topics may include enrollment in the 2018-19 academic year, financial aid, and employment. The survey will ask follow-up questions to understand your experience completing the survey. These questions ask you to evaluate the difficulty of the question, your confidence in your answers, your understanding of the question, and the layout and usability of the survey on the device you take it on.

[<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> Then, EurekaFacts will facilitate a group discussion with about 10 people. We will ask questions about your overall survey experience including feedback about specific questions, and what can motivate college students to participate in the study. The focus group session will be audio and video recorded.] Your participation and opinions will help us improve the questionnaire, so it is clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of other college students across the country.

[<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> The entire focus group session, including filling out the survey, will last no more than 90 minutes and can be scheduled at your convenience. The interviews will be administered at the EurekaFacts office in Rockville, MD.]

[<IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete and can be done at a time of your convenience.]

All of the information you provide 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).]

Are you interested in participating in this research study?

*If **NO**: Thank you for your time. Have a good <day/evening>.*

*If **YES**: Great, thank you very much. To ensure that we interview a broad mix of individuals, I have a few brief screening questions to ask you. It should only take about 5 minutes of your time.*

[RESUME ADMINISTERING ELIGIBILITY SCREENING QUESTIONS (see Attachment II)]

Web Survey Social Media Post

[CONTENT OF POST]

EurekaFacts, a Maryland research company, is looking for people who attended a college, university, or trade school at any time between **July 1, 2018 and today** to complete an online self-administered survey. Your feedback on the survey will help improve it for thousands of other college students!

CLICK ON THE LINK BELOW TO SIGN UP!

[CONTENT OF SHARED IMAGE & LINK]

[Image will be linked to study's intake page hosted on the EurekaFacts website]

PAID RESEARCH STUDY

\$XX GIFT CARD

[<IF GENERAL RECRUITMENT> Did you attend a college, university, or trade school at any time between July 1, 2018 and today? <IF TARGETED RECRUITMENT FOR FIRST-TIME OR GRADUATE STUDENTS> Are you a <first-year college OR graduate> student who enrolled at any time between July 1, 2018 and today?]
If so, we need your help!

You can participate in an important <survey OR survey and focus group> for the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). We would like to hear about your postsecondary education experiences, such as enrollment, financial aid, and employment.

[<IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> If you will complete a 25-minute online survey, <IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> If you come to our Rockville office to complete a short online survey and participate in a group discussion about the survey,] you will receive a <INCENTIVE AMOUNT> gift card for your input.

For more information or to register, please contact us at <PHONE NUMBER> or <PROJECT EMAIL ADDRESS>, or go to the website below:
<LINK>



About EurekaFacts

We are an organization dedicated to conducting research that positively impacts our communities. Our mission is to support and empower organizations working towards a better future.

For more information, please go to: www.EurekaFacts.com



ISO Certified to International Quality Standard 20252 market, public opinion and social research

2019–20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20)

NPSAS:20 is a nationally representative study of how students and their families finance education beyond high school. We need participants to test, evaluate, and provide feedback on select survey questions from NPSAS:20 to improve the survey. We are looking for [<IF RECRUITMENT FOR FIRST-TIME STUDENTS> first-year <IF RECRUITMENT FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS> graduate] students who attended a college, university, or trade school at any time between July 1, 2018 and today [<IF FOCUS GROUP> to come to our Rockville office to participate in a focus group].

You will complete a self-administered survey, which will take about <TIME> minutes. [<IF FOCUS GROUP> Then you will participate in an hour-long focus group discussion about your overall survey experience.]

You will receive a \$<INCENTIVE AMOUNT> gift card from a major credit card company at the end as a thank you.

Your feedback will improve the survey, so it is clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of other college students across the country.

The information you provide will be used only for research purposes. You will be assigned a research ID number and your responses will not be linked to your name.

Please contact us today if you are interested in participating.

For more information or to register, please call us at <NUMBER>, or go to the website below:

<LINK>

OMB Control No.:1850-0803

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

1. What is this study about?

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), EurekaFacts, a research company based in Rockville, MD, is looking for college students to [<IF FOCUS GROUP> come to our office and] complete a self-administered survey [<IF FOCUS GROUP> and participate in a focus group]. These are select survey questions from the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20). Your feedback about the survey [<IF FOCUS GROUP> and contribution during the group discussion] will help NCES improve the survey, so it is clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of college students across the country.

2. IF FOCUS GROUP:

Where will the research interview take place?

You will come to the EurekaFacts office at 51 Monroe Street, PE 10, Rockville, MD 20850. Our office is conveniently located across the pedestrian bridge connected to the Red Line Rockville Metro Station. There is also ample validated parking in our building.

IF WEB SURVEY:

How do I get access to the web survey?

If eligible, you will be sent an e-mail with a link to the survey landing page and a unique passcode to log in to the survey. You will be prompted to provide an electronic signature to acknowledge your consent to participate. Once you've signed the consent, you will begin the survey.

3. What will happen during the <survey/focus group session>?

During the survey, you will be asked to answer questions about your postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year (July 1, 2018 – June 30, 2019). Some topics may include enrollment in the 2018-19 academic year, financial aid, and employment. The survey will ask follow-up questions to understand your experience completing the survey. These questions ask you to evaluate the difficulty of the question, your confidence in your answers, and your understanding of the questions. Additionally, the survey will ask questions about what can motivate college students like yourself to participate in the study.

[<IF FOCUS GROUP> During the focus group, EurekaFacts will facilitate a group discussion with about 10 people. We will ask open-ended questions about your overall survey experience and about specific questions. Additionally, we will ask questions about what can motivate college students like yourself to participate in the study. The focus group session will be audio and video recorded.]

4. What kind of device <will/can> I take the survey on?

[<IF FOCUS GROUP> You will be taking the survey on a tablet computer provided by EurekaFacts.]

[<IF WEB SURVEY> You can take the survey on any of these three platforms: computer, tablet, and smartphone. We are interested in how participants interact with the survey on all devices.]

5. How long will the whole session last?

[<IF FOCUS GROUP> We anticipate the entire session to last 90 minutes. The survey will take about 30 minutes to complete. The group discussion about the survey and ways to encourage student participation in survey research will take about 1 hour.]

[<IF WEB SURVEY> The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete.]

6. Will information be kept confidential?

You will be assigned a unique identifier (ID) and your name will not be linked to your answers. All of the information provided 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). [<IF FOCUS GROUP> Audio and video of the session will be recorded only for analysis, and all personally identifying information will be destroyed after <LENGTH OF TIME>.]

7. Is there an incentive for participating?

Yes. You will receive a [<IF FOCUS GROUP> \$90 gift card <IF WEB SURVEY> \$30 e-gift card] from a major credit card company.

[<IF WEB SURVEY> Once you complete the survey, you will be asked to verify your e-mail address. In about 1 week, you will receive an e-mail, complete with all instructions about using the electronic incentive. You can use it to shop online or request to be sent a traditional plastic gift card.]

8. What are the possible risks of being in the study?

There are no known risks to participating in this voluntary study.

9. Who can I contact with questions or for further information?

If you have any questions about the study, you can call <NAME>, the <TITLE> at <CONTACT PHONE>. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call the EurekaFacts' Office of Research Protection at <PHONE NUMBER> (a toll-free number).

10. Can participation end early?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. You may elect to stop answering the survey questions at any time.

Focus Group Confirmation E-mail for In-person Participants

Subject: Confirmation for NCES Research Interview Study

<DATE>

Dear <NAME>:

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this voluntary research interview to provide feedback on survey questions for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The session will last about 90 minutes.

This is confirmation that you are scheduled at the following location, date, and time:

LOCATION: EUREKAFACTS, LLC

51 Monroe Street, PE 10

Rockville, MD 20850

DATE: <Day of Week>, <Month> <Day>, <Year>

TIME: XX:XX AM/PM <TIMEZONE>

GIFT CARD: You will receive a **\$90 gift card** from a major credit card company at the conclusion of the session for your time and effort.

PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS:

You will come to the EurekaFacts office at 51 Monroe Street, PE 10, Rockville, MD 20850. Our office is conveniently located across the pedestrian bridge connected to the Red Line Rockville Metro Station. There is also ample validated parking in our building.

Please bring the following:

- Your valid picture ID – this is required for participation.
- Signed consent form (attached); we will have copies available, if needed.
- If you use eyeglasses for reading or watching TV, you should wear them during the study session.

We look forward to speaking with you. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact:

<CONTACT NAME>

EurekaFacts, LLC

<CONTACT INFORMATION >

ATTACHED: Consent Form

Focus Group Confirmation Phone Script

(Parenthetical text is provided for reference and does not need to be read aloud)

Good morning/afternoon/evening. May I please speak to <NAME> about an interview research session at EurekaFacts to test and provide feedback for survey questions for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)?

Good morning/afternoon/evening. My name is <NAME> and I'm calling from EurekaFacts about your scheduled interview session that we are carrying out on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. We are pleased that you have agreed to participate in this study and help us improve our questionnaire and how to motivate college students to participate in the study. This is a reminder that we have scheduled your session for <TIME> on <DATE>.

The session will take place at our office at 51 Monroe Street, PE10, Rockville, MD 20850 and will last no more than 90 minutes.

During the focus group, you will be asked to answer questions about your postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year. The moderator will ask open-ended questions about your overall survey experience, specific survey questions, and how to encourage student participation in the 2019–20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study. All of the information you provide 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).

As soon as you complete the session, you will receive a \$90 gift card from a major credit card company as a thank you for participating.

Do you have any questions at this time?

<Answer any questions.>

Again, your session is scheduled at <TIME> on <DATE>. You will come to the EurekaFacts office at 51 Monroe Street, PE 10, Rockville, MD 20850. Our office is conveniently located across the pedestrian bridge connected to the Red Line Rockville Metro Station. There is also ample validated parking in our building. Please arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled time to check in. If you have any questions before then, please call <PHONE NUMBER>.

Thank you again for agreeing to be part of this very important study.

Web Survey Invitation (Initial and Reminder) to Participate for Eligible Respondents

IF SENT AS E-MAIL - Subject: Paid Research Study Opportunity

<DATE>

Dear <NAME>,

[<IF REMINDER E-MAIL> Recently, we invited you to participate in a self-administered web survey to learn about your postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year and we'd still like to hear from you!]

EurekaFacts, a research company based in Rockville, MD, is administering an important study on behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

You have been selected at random from a list of eligible respondents to participate in the study by completing an online survey. Your participation will help NCES improve the questionnaire used in this study so that it is clear and easily understood and can be successfully answered by thousands of other college students across the country.

The information you provide will be used only for research purposes. You will be assigned a unique research ID number and your responses will not be linked to your name.

The study requires you to take a self-administered web survey through a computer, tablet, or smart phone and will take about **25 minutes** to complete. After submitting the web survey, you will receive a **\$30 e-gift card** from a major credit card company. Your electronic consent and signature will be needed prior to participation.

**If you are interested in participating in this study,
please go to the website <SURVEY LINK>
and enter your unique ID: [abc123]**

We have included a flyer and a FAQ page with additional information about the study. Please call <CONTACT PHONE> or e-mail <CONTACT E-MAIL> with any questions regarding this project.

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this important study.

Sincerely,

<CONTACT NAME>

<JOB TITLE>

EurekaFacts, LLC

<CONTACT PHONE>

ATTACHED: Flyer and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Thank You E-mail/Letter to Participants/Respondents

IF SENT AS E-MAIL - Subject: Thank you - NCES Survey Interview Study

<DATE>

Dear <Name>,

On behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, EurekaFacts would like to thank you for participating in the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20) Pretest.

Your participation provided valuable feedback about the survey questions. Your open, candid, and insightful comments were very helpful. Your input, combined with input from other respondents like you, is incredibly useful and informative, and is helping us develop the best possible survey questions for NCES.

Again, thank you for your assistance.

Sincerely,

<CONTACT NAME>

<TITLE>

EurekaFacts, LLC

<CONTACT INFORMATION >

Attachment II. Survey Tryouts and Focus Groups: Eligibility Screening Questions

All initial eligibility screening will be conducted by telephone or through a self-administered online recruitment screener. The recruitment screener, a 3-5-minute online survey, will be used to determine whether individuals qualify to participate in the study to test a subset of NPSAS:20 survey items. Potential respondents who contact EurekaFacts via telephone or e-mail in response to the recruitment advertisements will have the choice to complete eligibility screening on the telephone with EurekaFacts or receive an e-mail containing the online recruitment screener link.

Respondents who click the screener link provided in the targeted social media ads and e-mails will go directly to the online recruitment screener. The responses to the online recruitment screener questions will determine their eligibility for the project.

If the recruitment screener determines that potential respondents are eligible, respondents selected for the web survey will receive an e-mail invitation with a link to the web survey (see web survey invitation to participate for eligible respondents in Attachment I). Eligible respondents selected to participate in a focus group will receive a confirmation e-mail and/or phone call with the date, time, and location information for the session they selected in the screener (see Attachment I for focus group confirmation e-mail and phone script).

The introduction to the eligibility screener for the telephone agents when screening is conducted over the telephone can be found in "Recruitment Phone Script" in Attachment I. The script in the beginning of the screener is the text displayed on the online version. Likewise, the language for the last three questions has two versions, dependent on whether the survey would be viewed by the participant or read to them by a EurekaFacts agent.

E-mail with Self-Screener to Interested Participants who Call EurekaFacts

IF SENT AS E-MAIL - Subject: Paid Research Study Opportunity

<DATE>

Hello <NAME>,

Thank you for your interest in our study. EurekaFacts is carrying out this study among college students and would greatly value your opinions.

Eligible respondents who [<IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT> participate in a 90-minute focus group will receive a \$90 gift card <IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT> complete a 25-minute web survey will receive a \$30 e-gift card] as a thank you for their feedback. If you are interested, please click on the link below to take a brief survey to determine your eligibility.

<Link to online eligibility screener>

Please do not share this e-mail or link as it is associated with your specific database entry.

Thank you,

<CONTACT NAME>

<TITLE>

EurekaFacts, LLC

<CONTACT INFORMATION >

Eligibility Screener (Self-Administered and Over the Telephone)

(See “Recruitment Phone Script” in Attachment I for language EurekaFacts agents use when speaking to participants.)

Introduction to self-administered screener (on landing page):

Thank you for your interest. EurekaFacts is carrying out an important research study on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is part of the U.S. Department of Education, and **we need your help.**

We are recruiting individuals to participate in a voluntary research study to provide feedback about survey questions related to postsecondary education experiences. Upon qualifying for this study, you will be sent an e-mail with a link to complete a brief self-administered online survey. If you complete the survey, you will be e-mailed a **\$30 e-gift card** from a major credit card company as a thank you. You can use it to shop online or request to be sent a traditional plastic gift card.

During the survey, you will be asked to answer questions about your postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year. Some topics may include enrollment in the 2018-19 academic year, financial aid, and employment. Additionally, the survey will ask follow-up questions to understand your experience completing the survey. These questions ask you to evaluate the difficulty of the questions, your confidence in your answers, and your understanding of the questions.

Any information gathered during this study, whether online or during the focus group, 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).

The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete and can be done at a time of your convenience.

If you live close to the Rockville, MD area, you will have the option to come to the EurekaFacts office in Rockville and take part in a focus group about this survey, rather than only completing it online. If you qualify and participate in the study at EurekaFacts, you will receive a **\$90 gift card** from a major credit card company at the end of the session as a thank you for completing the survey and participating in the focus group.

The focus group will be split into two main parts: a survey and a group discussion. The survey is the same as the online self-administered one described above.

After completing the survey, EurekaFacts will facilitate a group discussion with about 10 people. We will ask open-ended questions about your overall survey experience, specific survey questions, and what can motivate college students to participate in the study. The focus group session will be audio and video recorded. The entire focus group session will last no more than 90 minutes and numerous dates are offered.

No matter the method – your participation and opinions will help us improve the questionnaire, so the questions are clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of other college students across the country.

Are you interested in participating in this research study?

- Yes → CONTINUE
- No → THANK AND TERMINATE

Great, thank you very much. To ensure that we interview a broad mix of individuals, please answer the following brief screening questions. It should take only about 5 minutes of your time.

1. *Were you attending high school or completing any high school requirements at any time between July 1, 2018 and today?*
 - o Yes → THANK AND TERMINATE (Ineligible)*
 - o No → CONTINUE*

2. *Did you attend a college, university, or trade school at any time between July 1, 2018 and today?*
 - o Yes → CONTINUE*
 - o No → THANK AND TERMINATE (Ineligible)*

3. *What is your age?*
 - Under 18 → THANK AND TERMINATE (Ineligible)*
 - 18-24*
 - 25-29*
 - 30-34*
 - 35-39*
 - 40-49*
 - 50-59*
 - 60 or older*

4. *What is the name of the college, university, or trade school you attended at any time between July 1, 2018 and today? (If more than one: What is the name of the school you consider to be your primary school?)*

[NPSAS SCHOOL]

5. *Which of the following are you working on at [NPSAS SCHOOL] in the 2018-2019 academic year (July 1, 2018 - June 30, 2019)?*

Degrees

 - o Associate's degree (usually a 2-year degree)*
 - o Bachelor's degree (usually a 4-year degree)*
 - o Master's degree → GRADUATE ELIGIBLE*
 - o Doctoral degree--research/scholarship (for example, PhD, EdD, etc.) → GRADUATE ELIGIBLE*
 - o Doctoral degree--professional practice (including: chiropractic, dentistry, law, medicine, optometry, pharmacy, podiatry, or veterinary medicine) → GRADUATE ELIGIBLE*

Certificates

 - o Undergraduate certificate or diploma (usually less than 2 years), including those leading to a certification or license (example: cosmetology)*
 - o Post-baccalaureate certificate*
 - o Post-master's certificate*

Classes only (not in a degree program)

 - o Undergraduate level classes*
 - o Graduate level classes*

6. *Other than the degree or certificate you are working on at [NPSAS SCHOOL], have you earned any degrees or certificates since high school? (Only include degrees or certificates earned through a college, university, or trade school.)*
 - o Yes → FTB INELIGIBLE*
 - o No*

7. *Was [NPSAS SCHOOL] the first college, university, or trade school you attended after completing your high school requirements?*
 - o Yes → IF Q 6 IS "NO" AND Q 7 IS "YES", THEN FTB ELIGIBLE*
 - o No*

8. Are you of either Hispanic or Latino origin?
- Yes
 - No
 - Prefer not to Answer
9. What is your race? (Select all that apply)
- American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian
 - Black or African American
 - Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - White
 - Prefer not to answer
10. What is your total annual income based on the following ranges?
- Less than \$20,000
 - \$20,000 to \$49,999
 - \$50,000 to \$99,999
 - \$100,000 or more
 - Prefer not to answer
11. What is your sex?
- Male
 - Female
 - Prefer not to answer

12. **[IF SELF-ADMINISTERED]**

If you are interested in participating in a focus group session at EurekaFacts, we are holding sessions between <DATE> and <DATE>. We are administering sessions at <LOCATION>. What day and time would work best for you to participate in the research interview? If you are not interested, please respond with N/A.

[IF TELEPHONE SCREENING]

[IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT: *We are administering sessions at <LOCATION> between <DATE> and <DATE>. Would you be interested in attending? [IF YES: What day and time would work best for you to participate in the research interview?]*

RECORD DATE AND TIME:

13. **[IF SELF-ADMINISTERED]**

To participate in either the web survey or the focus group interview and receive your gift card, we must receive a signed consent form. If you participate in the online survey, you will have to read and complete the consent form before you can be directed to the survey. If you are coming to our Rockville, MD office to participate in the survey and focus group session, you will have to sign the consent form in our office before the start of the study. Do you understand that you must have a completed and signed consent form to participate?

[IF TELEPHONE SCREENING]

[IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT: *To participate in the interview and receive the \$90 e-gift card we must receive a signed consent form when you come to our office. Do you understand that you must have a completed and signed consent form to participate?]*

[IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT: *To participate in the survey and receive the \$30 e-gift card you will be directed to a website landing page, hosted by EurekaFacts. There you must read and complete the consent form before you can be directed to the survey. Do you understand that you must complete the electronic consent form to participate?]*

- o Yes
- o No → THANK AND TERMINATE

14. **[IF SELF-ADMINISTERED]**

Thank you for your interest. If you qualify, EurekaFacts will reach out to you. For web survey participants, you will be directed to a landing page, hosted by EurekaFacts, where you will log in with a provided passcode and complete the consent form. Then, after completing the survey, you will receive an e-gift card incentive.

For potential focus group participants, we will follow up with you to schedule the exact date of the session. Can you please provide us with your preferred contact details?

[IF TELEPHONE SCREENING]

[IF POTENTIAL FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANT: *Thank you for your interest. If you qualify, we will follow up with you to schedule the interview. Could you please provide us with your contact information? (All required except "Alternate phone number.")*]

[IF POTENTIAL WEB SURVEY RESPONDENT: *Thank you for your interest. If you qualify, you will be directed to a landing page, hosted by EurekaFacts, where you will log in with a provided passcode and complete the consent form. Then, after completing the survey, you will receive an e-gift card incentive. Could you please provide us with your name and a working e-mail address?*]

RECORD FIRST NAME: _____

RECORD LAST NAME: _____

RECORD E-MAIL ADDRESS: _____

BEST PHONE NUMBER (focus group only): _____

ALTERNATE PHONE NUMBER (focus group only): _____

[Termination Language: *Thank you for your expressed interest. Based on the requirements of this study, we are not able to include you in the study at this time. <IF TELEPHONE> Have a good <day/evening.>*]

Figure 1. Online Landing Page - Screenshot

Thank you for taking the time to complete the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20). To begin the survey, please enter your unique ID. Your ID is located immediately below the link you used to locate this page.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, is authorized to conduct NPSAS:20 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). EurekaFacts, with RTI International, is administering this voluntary survey on behalf of NCES. There are no penalties should you choose not to participate in this study. All of the information you provide 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151).

Attachment III. Survey Tryouts and Focus Groups: Consent to Participate in Research

Consent Form for Participants

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH

Thank you for your interest in participating in the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20) Pretest <web survey/focus groups>. This consent form explains the research study. Please read it carefully and feel free to ask questions about anything you do not understand. If you do not have questions now, you may ask them later as they occur to you.

1. What is this study about?

On behalf of the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), EurekaFacts, a research company based in Rockville, MD, is looking for college students to [<IF FOCUS GROUP> come to our office and] complete a self-administered survey [<IF FOCUS GROUP> and participate in a focus group]. These are select survey questions from the 2019-20 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20). Your feedback about the survey [<IF FOCUS GROUP> and contribution during the group discussion] will help NCES improve the survey, so it is clear and can be easily understood and answered by thousands of other college students across the country.

2. [<IF FOCUS GROUP>

Where will the research interview take place?

You will come to the EurekaFacts office at 51 Monroe Street, PE 10, Rockville, MD 20850. Our office is conveniently located across the pedestrian bridge connected to the Red Line Rockville Metro Station. There is also ample validated parking in our building.]

[<IF WEB SURVEY>

How do I get access to the web survey?

If eligible, you will be sent an e-mail with a link to the survey landing page and a unique passcode to log in to the survey. You will be prompted to provide an electronic signature to acknowledge your consent to participate. Once you've signed the consent, you will begin the survey.]

3. What will happen during the <survey/focus group session>?

During the survey, you will be asked to answer questions about your postsecondary education experiences in the 2018-19 academic year. Some topics may include enrollment in the 2018-19 academic year, financial aid, and employment. Additionally, the survey will ask follow-up questions to understand your experience completing the survey. These questions ask you to evaluate the difficulty of the question, your confidence in your answers, and your understanding of the questions.

[<IF FOCUS GROUP> During the focus group, EurekaFacts will facilitate a group discussion with about 10 people. We will ask open-ended questions about your overall survey experience, specific survey questions, and what can motivate college students like yourself to participate in the study. The focus group session will be audio and video recorded.]

4. What kind of device <will/can> I take the survey on?

[<IF FOCUS GROUP> You will be taking the survey on a tablet computer provided by EurekaFacts.]

[<IF WEB SURVEY> You can take the survey on any of these three platforms: computer, tablet, and smartphone. You can take the survey on any platform as we are interested in how participants interact with the survey on all devices.]

5. How long will the whole session last?

[<IF FOCUS GROUP> We anticipate the entire session will last 90 minutes. The survey will take about 30 minutes to complete. The group discussion about the survey and ways to encourage student participation in survey research will take about 1 hour.]

[<IF WEB SURVEY> The survey will take about 25 minutes to complete.]

6. Will information be kept confidential?

You will be assigned a unique identifier (ID), and your name will not be linked to your answers. All of the information provided 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.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). [IF FOCUS GROUP] Audio and video of the session will be recorded only for analysis, and all personally identifying information will be destroyed after [LENGTH OF TIME].]

7. Is there an incentive for participating?

Yes. You will receive a [IF FOCUS GROUP] \$90 gift card [IF WEB SURVEY] \$30 e-gift card] from a major credit card company.]

[IF WEB SURVEY] Once you complete the survey, you will be asked to verify your e-mail address. In about 1 week, you will receive an e-mail, complete with all instructions about using the electronic incentive. You can use it to shop online or request to be sent a traditional plastic gift card.]

8. What are the possible risks of being in the study?

There are no known risks to participating in this voluntary study.

9. Who can I contact with questions or for further information?

If you have any questions about the study, you can call [NAME], the [TITLE] at [CONTACT PHONE]. If you have questions about your rights as a study participant, you can call the EurekaFacts' Office of Research Protection at [PHONE NUMBER] (a toll-free number).

10. Can participation end early?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse to answer particular questions. You may elect to stop answering the survey questions at any time.

Yes, I agree to participate in this study

No, I do not want to participate in this study [IF WEB SURVEY] Pop up: Thank you for your time. You may now exit the website.]

[IF FOCUS GROUP] By signing below, you agree that you, _____, may participate in this study and that we may record your conversation with the researcher. You will receive a \$90 gift card from a major credit card company at the conclusion of the session.]

[IF WEB SURVEY] By signing below, you agree to participate in this study and understand that your responses will be recorded. You will be e-mailed a \$30 e-gift card from a major credit card company after completion of the survey (or request to be sent a traditional plastic gift card). Please allow up to two weeks to receive the e-gift card.]

Your signature below will indicate that your questions have been answered satisfactorily, and that you have read and understood the information provided above.

We thank you for your voluntary participation and ask you to sign the form below.

Print Name: _____

<Signature/Type Name>: _____

Date: _____

To be completed by EurekaFacts staff:

Respondent Payment Card Transaction Number:

Attachment IV. Survey Tryouts and Focus Groups: Focus Group Protocol

Focus Group Moderation Guide

Road Map of Discussion

Issues/information to be discussed	Approx. allotted time for discussion
Welcome/Introduction	3 minutes
Individual Survey Completion	25-30 minutes
Focus Group/Introductions	10 minutes
Topics and Questions for Discussion	
Topic 1: Introduction to Survey	5 minutes
Topic 2: First Year Education Experiences (FTB only ¹)	5 minutes
Topic 3: Paying for Education	5 minutes
Topic 4: School Jobs (graduate only)	5 minutes
Topic 5: Employment Experiences (non-graduate and non-FTB only)	5 minutes
Topic 6: Housing and Food Experiences	10 minutes
Topic 7: Incentives	10 minutes
Topic 8: E-mail Legitimacy	10 minutes
Topic 9: Closing	2 minutes
Total time	90 minutes available

MODERATOR: THIS IS A GUIDE TO HELP YOU LEAD THE DISCUSSION. YOU CAN MODIFY AND ADAPT THESE QUESTIONS TO MEET SITUATIONAL NEEDS DURING EACH SESSION.

Moderator: Review each item and probe thoroughly prior to the focus group. Some items are EITHER MARKED as a “priority” (MUST BE ASKED), NOT MARKED (SHOULD BE ASKED), or MARKED AS “not a priority” (may be skipped if time is needed to complete the focus group).

(Parenthetical text is provided for reference and does not need to be read aloud.)

¹ FTB = First-time beginning student.

I. Welcome/Introduction [3 minutes]

Good [morning/afternoon]. My name is _____ and I work for EurekaFacts, a research company in Rockville, Md. We are carrying out a comprehensive research study on behalf of the National Center for Educational Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education.

This is a two-part session. During the first part, I'll ask you to complete an online survey that is part of the 2019 -2020 National Postsecondary Student Aid Study (NPSAS:20). It should take about 25-30 minutes for you to complete the survey. Once everyone has finished the survey, we will use the next hour to discuss your overall experience completing the survey, as well as your reactions to some of the survey questions. I will also obtain your feedback on possible incentive structures and different motivations for participating in survey research.

Your views and experiences are important, so we would like you to tell us what you think and feel about your experience completing the survey, the select survey questions, and opinions on ways to motivate students to participate in the survey. It is important that you provide us with your honest opinions and that you understand that we will not make any judgements of you for your opinions. Also, as we are talking about your personal opinions and experiences, it is not necessary for everyone to agree with each other.

DISCLOSURES

1. Mention mics, audio, and videotaping.
2. One-way mirror and associates viewing.
3. Introduce notetaker and role.
4. The session is being audio-taped so I can write an accurate report, not of "who said what," but "what was said." Your name will not be used in the report. We ask each of you to not share with others any of the information discussed in this room today.

II. Individual Survey Completion [25-30 minutes]

At this time, please open your device and sign on to the survey website [provided on cards spelled out and with QR codes] and begin the survey. Please let me know when you are done and wait quietly until all are finished. Thank you.

III. Focus Group/Introductions [10 minutes]

Now that everyone has finished the survey, I want to provide a few more guidelines for the discussion portion of this session.

GUIDELINES

In order to make this session work as a research session, there are some guidelines to follow:

1. Please talk in a voice at least **as loud as mine**.
2. There are no wrong answers – just **different points of view**. Say what you are thinking.
3. We will observe the no smoking rule during this session.
4. In the interest of time, **I may need to move** on to another area of discussion sooner than you are ready and have to cut a conversation short. If I interrupt you, it is not personal; I just want to cover everything on the agenda.
5. Do you have **any questions** before we continue?

Respondent Introductions/Warm Up

To start this section, I'd like to learn a little more about you. Since we will be discussing some topics which relate to your education experiences, let's start with who you are and what you are studying in school.

Specifically, please share with everyone (this will be on the smart board or a flip chart)

- your first name;
- your degree type and area of study;

Topics and Questions for Discussion

Topic 1: Introduction to Survey [5 minutes]

Today we will be talking about your overall experience completing the survey, as well as your reactions to some of the survey questions. So, to begin:

1. What were your overall impressions of the survey?
2. How easy or difficult was it to recall the details you were asked in the survey?
3. How easy or difficult was it for you to recall details about the 2018-2019 academic year (rather than a calendar year)?
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** for example, you were asked about employment information in the 2018-2019 academic year.
4. Do you recall any specific types of questions or questions about specific topics that were particularly difficult to answer?

Topic 2. First Year Education Experiences [5 minutes] – First-Time Beginners (FTB) FOCUS GROUP ONLY

MODERATOR: If focus group is a “FTB-only” group, administer the following questions; otherwise skip to next topic.

Now we'll ask you some questions about experiences in your first year of education.

1. You were asked a series of questions about academic activities you've participated in while at college. How easy or difficult were those activities to understand or answer?
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** for example, experiential learning, shared student experiences, first year experiences, or guided research?
 - b. **Probe:** Had you heard of these types of activities before today?
 - c. **Probe:** What types of experiences were you thinking about in your response?
2. Another question asked you about your frequency of interactions outside of class with students that are different from yourself.
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** The different social groups included race/ethnicity, economic background, religious beliefs, political beliefs, and sexual orientation.
 - b. **Probe:** What did you include when thinking about “interactions outside of class”?
 - c. Recognizing differences between yourself and others may sometimes be difficult or not immediately apparent. For example, how did you come to your survey response about your interactions with students with political or religious beliefs different from your own?
 - d. **Probe:** Which, if any, social groups mentioned were you not sure about how to answer? Why?

Topic 3: Paying for Education [5 minutes]

Next, we're interested in student loans.

- a. Did any of you borrow student loans? How easy or difficult was it to provide information about your student loans?

- b. Has anyone heard of student loans borrowed from a state? How did you hear about this type of loan?
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** For example, loans from the state of Maryland or Virginia.
 2. **Probe:** If you were to borrow student loans from a state, would you classify them as private student loans or federal student loans? Why?

Topic 4: School Jobs [5 minutes] – GRADUATE STUDENTS ONLY FOCUS GROUP

MODERATOR: If “graduate student” focus group only, administer the following questions; otherwise skip to next topic.

Next, let’s talk about any school-related jobs you reported in the survey, including assistantships, traineeships, fellowships, and work-study jobs.

1. If you reported having an assistantship or traineeship, you were asked to provide the total amount of that assistantship or traineeship. How easy or difficult was it to provide that information?
 - a. **Probe:** What did you include in your answer? Is that before or after taxes? (PRIORITY)
 - b. **Probe:** If you had an assistantship, you were asked which type of assistantship you had. What was easy or difficult about providing that information?
2. You were then asked to provide details on these school jobs, such as dates, earnings, and hours worked per week.
 - a. **Probe:** How easy or difficult was it to provide details on this job?
 - b. **Probe:** What did you include in your response when reporting your earnings amount? (PRIORITY)

Topic 5: Employment Experiences [5 minutes] – NON-GRADUATE AND NON-FTB GROUP ONLY

MODERATOR: If focus group is not a “graduate only” and not an “FTB-only” group, administer the following questions; otherwise skip to next topic.

Okay, now let’s explore the questions about your employment experiences.

1. How easy or difficult was it to recall details about your employer(s)?
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** for example, number of employers, dates of employment, pay rate, hours per week (while enrolled and not enrolled)?
2. You may have been asked about you parent or guardians’ occupations. Were you able to provide your parents’ or guardians’ job title and job duties? How easy or difficult was it for you to provide that information? (PRIORITY)
 - a. **Probe:** If you did not get this question, would you be able to provide this information? (PRIORITY)

Topic 6: Housing and Food Experiences [10 minutes]

Okay, now let’s explore the questions about housing and food experiences. Some of you were asked about the past 30 days for these experiences, while others were asked about the 2018-2019 academic year.

1. You were asked several questions about your eating habits and money spent on meals.
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** for example, you were asked questions about not being able to afford buying food, and cutting meal size, and skipping meals or eating less.
 - b. **Probe:** Thinking about your living arrangement and life as a student, were there any questions that were difficult to answer about your food situation? Why? (PRIORITY)

- c. **Probe:** How would you come up with your response if you were given the opposite reference period (30 days or 2018-2019 academic year)? What reference period would be easier for you?
2. You were also asked about places you have slept. What, if any, terms were confusing or difficult to answer?
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples to help participants remember, if needed:** for example, at a shelter, in a camper, at a group home, in transitional housing or independent living program, etc.
 - b. **Probe:** What, if any, types of places you've slept were not included in this list?
 - c. **Probe:** How would you come up with your response if you were given the opposite reference period (30 days or 2018-2019 academic year)? What reference period would be easier for you?

TOPIC 7: Incentives [10 minutes]

Now let's talk about incentives some more. Usually, respondents receive something as a token of appreciation for completing a survey.

1. If you had the option, would you prefer to receive a monetary incentive, for example, paid by check or by PayPal, or a nonmonetary incentive, such as a gift or a service, for completing a survey? And why?
 - a. **Probe:** What kind of nonmonetary incentives were you thinking of?
 - b. **[IF MONETARY IS THE PREFERRED OPTION]** What, if any, types of nonmonetary incentives (gifts or services) would be better to receive than money?
 - c. **Probe:** What if you had the choice to receive a nonmonetary incentive of a greater value or a monetary incentive of a smaller value – which one would you prefer? Why?
2. We are considering offering the following nonmonetary incentives when inviting people to participate in our survey. **MODERATOR: Provide a list of nonmonetary incentives to each participant.** Please take a look at the list in front of you:
 - a. **Probe:** What, if any, nonmonetary incentives stood out to you? In what way?
 - b. **Probe:** Would you prefer that incentive, or a monetary one, even if it is of smaller value?
 - c. **Probe:** When deciding to participate in a survey or not, would you prefer to have a choice of selecting from a list of several nonmonetary incentives, or would it be easier to decide if only one option was offered?
3. (NOT A PRIORITY) Now imagine you were offered a nonmonetary incentive and you decided to complete the survey:
 - a. **Probe:** If something were to happen to your nonmonetary incentive order, such as you never received the order, or there were issues with the website, who would you contact first?
 - b. **MODERATOR: If needed, suggest:** the survey contractor (RTI), the agency conducting the survey (NCES), or the vendor of the incentive?
 - c. **Probe:** Who would you prefer to contact?
 - d. **Probe:** (NOT A PRIORITY) Who would you contact if you had issues with the product you received?

TOPIC 8: E-mail Legitimacy [10 minutes]

Now let's talk about some reminders you might receive to complete a survey. Often you would receive an invitation letter in the mail but may receive reminders to complete the survey by e-mail. Let's talk about such e-mails:

1. When you receive an e-mail from a new sender, what types of items do you typically look for to consider the e-mail legitimate rather than SPAM?
 - a. **MODERATOR: Provide examples, if needed:** For example, do you look at the design, sender, subject line, or content?
 - b. **Probe:** What about these features make an e-mail seem more legitimate to you?
 - c. **Probe:** What about an “unsubscribe link” – do you look for such links in e-mails sent, for example, from or on behalf of governmental agencies? Would you expect such a link in a survey invitation? If provided, what would you think of the survey? Would you use the link?
2. What do you typically do with an email that you are not interested in?
 - a. **Probe:** Do you delete the email, flag it as SPAM, or unsubscribe if this option is provided?
3. Do you prefer to receive HTML e-mails or plain text e-mails? HTML e-mails are those with nice graphic designs/colors and plain text e-mails contain just the basic details of your participation.
 - a. **Probe:** Do you ever have difficulty viewing HTML e-mails?
4. The NPSAS study is conducted by the federal government and is contracted out to a survey vendor. Specifically, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the Department of Education conducts this survey, but RTI International is responsible for communication with the sample members. Would it make a difference in your decision to participate in the survey if the e-mail comes from an RTI e-mail address (NPSAS@rti.org), or from a federal government e-mail address (NPSAS@ed.gov)? And why?
 - a. **Probe:** (NOT A PRIORITY) Which of these e-mail address options, @rti.org or @ed.gov, would you be more likely to open? Why?

TOPIC 9: Closing

MODERATOR: Please excuse yourself to check with the observers to determine if there are any additional questions.

MODERATOR: After asking any follow-up questions, thank and dismiss the participants.