

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017–18 (MGLS:2017)  
Data Collection Communication Materials for the  
2017 Operational Field Test (OFT),  
Recruitment for the 2017-18 Main Study, and  
Tracking for the 2017 OFT**

OMB# 1850-0911 v.14

**Appendices OFT1-A-OFT1-S, MS1A-MS1N, and OFT2A-OFT2L**

Revised April 2017



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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 well-being, and 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 two field tests and a main study, all of which are essential to 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 the study.

In the next few days, an individual from RTI International, which is administering MGLS:2017 on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, 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 at 855-500-1432, or send an email to MGLS@rti.org.

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

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.

Acting Commissioner, NCES

*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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 Brochure

FAQs

## Appendix OFT1-B. State Letter and Sample Endorsement Letter

### State Letter – [NCES/ED Letterhead]

[Title First Name Last Name]

[Date]

[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 a vitally important new national study: the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**. The study will involve multiple phases: a first field test in 2016, a second field test in 2017, and a main study in 2018. The Main Study will follow a cohort of sixth-grade students in spring of 2018 as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. One major goal of the study is to examine the factors that encourage success during these important, yet generally understudied, years of education. MGLS:2017 is described in more detail in the enclosed materials.

To encourage schools and parents to participate, we are asking state departments of education to learn about and then provide a letter of endorsement for 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 the study.

The MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Schools in your state have been selected for one or more of the phases described below.

**Validation Field Test**- data collection will include a one-time student assessment and survey in grades 5, 6, 7 and 8. A school administrator, the math teachers and special education providers for each sampled student, and one parent of each sampled student, will be asked to complete brief questionnaires.

**Operational Field Test**- data collection will include a student assessment and survey for sixth-grade students. A school administrator, the math teachers and special education providers for each sampled student, and one parent of each sampled student will be asked to complete brief questionnaires. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

**Main Study**- data collection will include a student assessment and survey for sixth-grade students. A school administrator, the math teachers and special education providers for each sampled student, and one parent of each sampled student will be asked to complete brief questionnaires. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

While participation in MGLS:2017 is voluntary, we ask for your support of the participation of sampled schools in your state. The MGLS:2017 field test samples are small, as only about 50 to 60 schools will be asked to participate in each. Each school's participation is important, because these phases of the study need an inclusive and diverse group of American schools serving students in the middle grades. The results of this field test will significantly inform the Main Study, which will begin in early 2018 with sixth-graders from approximately 900 schools across the country.

In the next few days, an individual from RTI International, which is administering MGLS:2017 on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, will be following up with you about endorsing this historic study. In the coming weeks, we will begin contacting the school districts and schools that have been selected to participate in the field test. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). You may also contact Carolyn Fidelman at NCES at 202-245-7046 for more information.

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.

Acting Commissioner, NCES

Cc: <STATE> Testing Coordinator  
Middle Grades Coordinator

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Enclosures: MGLS:2017 Brochure and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Sheet

## Sample Endorsement Letter

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

Dear School District and School Administrators:

The [INSERT STATE EDUCATION AGENCY NAME] is pleased to support the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS: 2017)**, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. The study will involve multiple phases: an Item Validation Field Test in 2016, an Operational Field Test in 2017, and a Main Study in 2018. The Main Study will follow a cohort of sixth-grade students in spring of 2018 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. MGLS:2017 is described in more detail in the materials provided by RTI, which is collecting the data for NCES.

We strongly encourage your participation in any phase of MGLS: 2017 for which your district or school is selected. While participation in the study is voluntary, each school's participation is important, because each phase of the study needs an inclusive and diverse group of American schools serving students in the middle grades. We are confident that schools in our state will understand the importance of this national study and will accept the invitation to participate.

Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). You may also contact Carolyn Fidelman at NCES at 202-245-7046 for more information.

Thank you for making MGLS:2017 a success.

Sincerely,

<Name>  
Chief State School Officer

## Appendix OFT1-C. District Notification and Recruitment Letter

### District Notification and Recruitment Letter – Operational Field Test

[MGLS Letterhead]

[Date]

[Superintendent's Name]

Superintendent

[District]

[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 will involve multiple phases: an Item Validation Field Test, an Operational Field Test, and a Main Study. The Main Study will follow a cohort of sixth-grade students in spring of 2018 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 generally understudied, years of education.

The MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Some schools in your district have been sampled for the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test scheduled to begin in early 2017. Data collection in the majority of the sampled schools will include math, reading, and executive function assessments, height/weight measurements, and surveys of a small sample of students in grade 6. A school administrator, the math teachers and special education providers for each sampled student, and one parent of each sampled student will be asked to complete brief questionnaires. Follow-up data collections for the MGLS:2017 will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

The student session will take about 90 minutes. School administrators will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. The math teachers of students selected for 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 selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student). Parents will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. Data will be collected through a computer-based application or a telephone interview, and paper-and-pencil versions of the surveys will be available upon request. Data collected will significantly inform the Main Study, which will begin in early 2018 with sixth-graders from approximately 900 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 2017. As a thank you for the school's help with this phase of the study, each participating school in your district will receive **<\$200, \$400, or \$400 in goods and/or services>**. We will also provide **\$150** for a school coordinator to serve as the central point of contact and help with data collection at the school(s). Teachers completing surveys will receive **\$20** for answering the surveys and an additional **\$7 per student** form. One parent or guardian of each sampled student may receive payment for completing a survey. The exact amount each parent receives will be randomly assigned (\$0 to \$50).

School and student participation is voluntary, but we hope your district and all selected schools will choose to contribute to the 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 at 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org).

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 G. Carr Ph.D.

Acting Commissioner, NCES

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cc: District Testing Coordinator  
Director of Research

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 brochure

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

State Endorsement Letter if provided



School Recruitment Letter – Operational 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 involve multiple phases: an Item Validation Field Test, an Operational Field Test, and a Main Study. The study will focus on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follow a cohort of sixth-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 generally understudied, years of education.

The MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Your school is one of only a limited number of schools around the country selected to participate in the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test to be conducted in early 2017. Student participation in MGLS:2017 will take about 90 minutes and will include a math, reading, and executive function assessment of students in grade 6, as well as a student survey on socioemotional well-being, peers, and schooling experiences. A school administrator, the math teachers, special education providers, and one parent of each sampled student will also be asked to complete a survey. The school administrator survey is estimated to take 40 minutes. The math teachers of students selected for 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 selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student). Parents will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools. Data will be collected through a computer-based application or a telephone interview, and paper-and-pencil versions of the surveys will be available upon request. Data collected will significantly inform the Main Study, which will begin in early 2018 with about 20,000 sixth-graders from approximately 900 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 2017 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 2017 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 help with data collection at your school. Teachers completing surveys will receive **\$20** for answering the surveys and an additional **\$7 per student** form. One parent or guardian of each participating student may receive payment for completing a survey. The exact amount each parent receives will be randomly assigned (\$0 to \$50).

Within the next few days, a representative from RTI International will contact you to answer any questions you may have and address any outstanding issues that may be required for your district and school(s) to participate in 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 at 855-500-1432, or send an email to MGLS@rti.org. 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>.

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 G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

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Enclosures:  
MGLS:2017 Brochure  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet  
State Letter of Endorsement (if provided)

As the MGLS:2017 School Coordinator (SC), you play an important role in the success of the study. RTI will provide a trained Session Facilitator (SF) to conduct the student sessions and to assist you as much as possible. However, we will need to rely on you to complete certain tasks so that data collection will be successful.

### Study Details

MGLS:2017 consists of the following activities:

**MGLS:2017 Student Session** – Selected students in grade 6 will be administered an assessment of mathematics, reading, and executive function, and a background survey. Height and weight measurements will also be collected. The student session will take approximately 90 minutes. The MGLS:2017 SF will conduct the student session(s) at your school and each participating student will receive a small thank you gift.

**School Administrator Survey** – The principal or designee will complete a survey about school characteristics, staffing, the student population, and the academic environment. The survey may be completed online and will take about 40 minutes to complete. A paper-and-pencil version may be available upon request. RTI will send information to the principal or designated administrator with instructions to access the survey.

**Mathematics Teacher Survey** – Mathematics teachers of selected students will complete a survey consisting of two parts: 1) a background survey to collect data for classroom- and school-level context (approximately 20 minutes); and 2) a series of teacher student reports (TSRs) for participating students (about 10 minutes per student). The survey may be completed online. A paper-and-pencil version may be available upon request. RTI will send information to selected teachers.

**Special Education Teacher Survey** – Special education teachers/providers of selected students will complete a survey consisting of two parts: 1) a survey about the teacher's background and experience working with students with disabilities (approximately 10 minutes); and 2) a series of teacher student reports (TSRs) for participating students (about 25 minutes per student). The survey may be completed online. A paper-and-pencil version may be available upon request. RTI will send information to selected teachers.

**Parent Survey** – Parents of participating student will provide information about students' education experiences and about parents' expectations for their children's academic attainment in middle school and beyond. Information will also be collected about family involvement in the child's education and about family characteristics. The survey will take 40 minutes to complete via a self-administered online survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.

For additional information, please visit our website at:

<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls> or call (855) 500-1432.

### Your Responsibilities

You are being asked to complete several tasks prior to the student data collection session that will take place in Winter/Spring 2017. These tasks include providing student information, working with RTI on the session logistics, and assisting with parental permission form distribution.

We will use the MGLS:2017 secure website to exchange any personally identifiable information, such as the student rosters. To access the secure website, visit:

<https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls> and log-in with the following credentials:

Study ID: «EntityID»

Password: «Password»

The following table shows the tasks/activities you are asked to perform and a timeline for these activities.

Task	Timeline
Provide information on grade 6 students and their teachers and parents using the Student Rostering Form.	Within 1 week of receipt of request
Coordinate student session logistics (dates, times, locations, permission type)	Within 3 weeks of receipt of request
Identify location for student height and weight collection	Within 3 weeks of receipt of request
Communicate with teachers, selected students, and parents and encourage participation	At least 4 weeks prior to scheduled session
Distribute parental permission forms to all selected students	At least 3 weeks prior to scheduled session
Monitor return of permission forms and distribute reminder letters as needed. Collect returned, signed forms and submit to SF.	During the 3 weeks from distribution of permission forms to data collection day
Meet with MGLS:2017 SF to review details of student session and discuss students who may need accommodations	One week prior to student session
Notify/remind teachers and students about the data collection sessions	One week prior and one day prior to student session
Assist the SF with getting students to the sessions and setting up the room(s)	On the day of the session

## Providing Student Information

We will select up to 40 students in grade 6. Please refer to the attached instructions to submit the Student Rostering Form (SRF) and include each requested data element for all students in sixth grade. The SRF should be uploaded to the secure MGLS:2017 website.

Teacher and parent information may be submitted with the student information. If you prefer, you can wait until the student sample has been drawn and provide teacher and parent information only for selected students. **Note: feedback from other participating schools indicates that schools find it beneficial and less burdensome to provide ALL requested data elements one time and as early as possible after receiving the request to submit the rostering form.**

## Assisting with Student Session Logistics

In order to minimize disruption at the school on the day of the student data collection, it is crucial that session logistics be made in advance. These arrangements include:

- Confirm the date(s) for student data collection.
- Determine the location and time(s) of the student session(s). If necessary, reserve a separate room for the student session(s).
- Determine parental permission type (implicit or explicit). Determine best method of distributing permission forms, tracking signed returned forms, collecting returned forms, and submitting to the MGLS:2017 SF.
- Work with the SF to identify students with special needs and any accommodations that are needed (i.e., extra time, read-aloud, etc.). **We suggest including your School Counselor and/or Special Education Coordinator in these conversations.** Some schools also involve their data manager in this task. We may need to plan for an additional small-group session to accommodate students with special needs.
- Notify teachers and students of MGLS:2017, the importance of participating, and explain test day activities.
- Contact parents to encourage them to return the signed permission form (if applicable).

## Parental Permission

Parental permission materials will be supplied by RTI a few weeks before the scheduled session. We ask that you distribute the parent permission forms to the sampled students.

Most schools use implicit permission (such that students only return a form if their parent denies permission to participate), as this option lessens the burden on school staff and results in higher participation rates. If you are

using this permission type, please keep track of any returned forms and record parent refusals onto the student tracking form (STF), which will be provided along with the permission forms.

Some schools require explicit permission (we will need a signed form from every student). If your school requires explicit permission, parents are asked to return signed permission forms to the School Coordinator, or they may provide permission via text or the study website. Please keep track of the return status of any paper forms on the STF. Make sure any returned forms have: one "box" checked, a parent/guardian signature (not just a printed name), and the name of the student. Your SF will inform you about any permissions received electronically.

Your MGLS:2017 SF will be in contact with you to track the return of permission forms. Reminder forms will be sent home as needed. The SF will check the permission forms on the day of the first session to make sure we do not include any student whose parents have not granted permission. Please keep the returned parent permission forms in a locked or secure location. At the end of the data collection, your SF will fax any returned forms from your school to a secure fax machine at RTI. Please let him/her know if you need to retain copies.

## Assist on Day of Student Sessions

The MGLS:2017 SF will arrive at the school about an hour before the first student session. To have valid results from the study, we need as many sampled students to participate as possible. **We are depending on you to make certain the students and teachers are aware of the date, time, and location for their participation and to generate enthusiasm.** This often makes the difference in obtaining high student participation. You may want to advertise MGLS:2017 throughout the school and classroom or make a PA announcement about the study the day before and the day of the session to generate interest and encourage participation.

If possible, we would also like for you or another staff person to remain in the room during the student session to help maintain order and assist as needed.

## Token of Appreciation

As a token of our appreciation for your time and effort with MGLS:2017, you will receive \$150 after the student session has been completed. Your school will receive <\$200/\$400/\$400 G/S>, and students will receive a small gift.

**THANK YOU** for your help in making MGLS:2017 a success!! We greatly appreciate your time and assistance.

[DATE]

[School name]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[City, state, zip]

Dear [Principal]:

We are writing to thank you and your school for your participation in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) this spring. The participation of schools like yours provides important information about student development, experiences, and transitions throughout the middle grades and their impact on student achievement. We particularly would like to thank [you/School Coordinator name] for working with us to coordinate the student sessions and ensure the study's success at your school. [if applicable: We have enclosed <incentive> as a token of our appreciation for the school's participation.]

[if the school enrolls grade 7: We will contact you again in the fall to identify those students who participated in the study that remain at the school for the 2017-18 school year and those who have left. We will also begin coordinating the logistics for next year's data collection.] If you have any questions, please call us at (855) 500-1432 or email us at [mglis@rti.org](mailto:mglis@rti.org). We look forward to speaking with you again soon.

Thank you for partnering with MGLS:2017 to make the study a success. We wish you a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Dan Pratt

Project Director, MGLS:2017

Welcome to the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18. The study is also called MGLS:2017 for short. MGLS:2017 is a research study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. We thank you for participating today.

MGLS:2017 is the first national study to learn about the experiences of students in grades six through eight. The study will help us understand what students learn during these grades, and about your experiences with your peers, teachers, school, and family.

You will use the computer to answer some questions about yourself, complete math and reading problems and to play two brain games. We will also measure your height and weight, which is important to understanding growth and development. The whole process will take approximately 90 minutes. After we finish today, we will give you a small gift to thank you for your participation.

When you answer the questions, you will move through each section a little differently. When you answer questions about yourself, you will be able to go back to previous questions if you need to review or change an answer. During the math section, you will only be able to go back to the last problem you completed. When you play the brain game or complete the reading section, you will not be able to go backwards. If you skip a question, you may see a box pop up on some items to ask if you want to consider answering the question. During the reading section, all items have to be answered.

If you want to have an item read out loud to you, you may click this icon [show icon].

The information and answers you give today will not be shared with your parents, teachers, or school. They may be used for research purposes only and may not be disclosed or used for any other purpose except as required by law. Participation in MGLS:2017 is voluntary, but also very important. You may skip any item you do not know or do not want to answer except in the reading section.

On this computer, you do not have a mouse. Instead you can use the track pad like this [DEMONSTRATE THE CHROMEBOOK AND USE OF THE TRACK PAD] and you can touch the screen to select answers or to make the text larger or smaller like this [DEMONSTRATE HOW TO DRAG THE CURSOR AROUND. DRAG YOUR THUMB AND FOREFINGER APART TO ZOOM IN AND THEN PINCH YOUR THUMB AND FOREFINGER TOGETHER TO ZOOM OUT]. To move from screen to screen, you should press NEXT to save your answer and move on to the next item.

The scratch paper next to your computer has graph paper on one side and is blank on the other side. [DEMONSTRATE PAPER AND SHOW BOTH SIDES]. If you need more scratch paper, please raise your hand.

You each received a card with a user ID and password. The password letters are case sensitive, so please type these carefully. Please enter the ID and password now. This should take you to the "Welcome" screen where you will see additional instructions. When you are asked to go to the measurement station, please bring your card with you.

If you need help or have any questions, please raise your hand.

Thank you for participating in MGLS:2017. Press next to begin.

[TO BE DISTRIBUTED IF SCHOOL REQUIRES HARDCOPY STUDENT ASSENT]

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)  
Student Assent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a national study called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). This study is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics within the U.S. Department of Education.

Your participation in MGLS:2017 is voluntary, and all of the information you provide may be used only for research and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573). Each student who participates will receive a small gift.

**Please check only one option below to indicate your decision to participate in the study.**

Yes, I will participate in MGLS:2017.

No, I will not participate in MGLS:2017.

PRINT your name here:

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGN your name here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher Recruitment Letter – Operational Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]

[TEACHER NAME]

[SCHOOL NAME] Website:

[ADDR1] Study ID: [ID]

[ADDR2] Password: [password]

[CITY STATE ZIP]

Dear [TEACHER NAME],

[SCHOOL NAME] has graciously agreed to participate in the Operational Field Test of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017), which is being administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. The study will focus on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follow a cohort of sixth-graders as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. This MGLS:2017 field test includes a teacher survey of approximately [150 MATH or 50 SPECIAL EDUCATION] teachers in grade 6 around the country. 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. [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.]

To access the questionnaire online, please use the web address and unique study ID and password provided on this letter. 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, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). 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>.

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

*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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 brochure

List of endorsing organizations

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet

## Administrator Data Collection Letter – Operational Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]  
[ADMIN NAME]  
[SCHOOL NAME]  
[ADDR1]  
[ADDR2]  
[CITY STATE ZIP]

Website:  
Study ID: [ID]  
Password: [password]

Dear [ADMIN NAME],

Data collection for the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is now underway and we thank you for your school's continued participation in this important research. MGLS:2017, which is being administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, focuses on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills. The study will follow a cohort of sixth-graders as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school.

We are asking you to complete a 40-minute questionnaire to provide essential information about academic policies and programs, activities and curriculum in the school, and other school related experiences that impact student learning. To access the questionnaire online, please use the web address and unique study ID and password provided on this letter. We recommend gathering the following information in advance of completing the survey:

- Student attendance and matriculation information
- Student body demographics
- Math curriculum information
- School personnel counts
- State assessment scores
- Programs, services, and supports available for students with IEPs, and the percentage of students who use them

If there is someone at your school more knowledgeable about the students, teachers, programs, and services at your school, please provide him or her with this letter and enclosed information so that he or she may complete the survey for your school.

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, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). 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>.

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

*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 U.S. based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 brochure  
List of endorsing organizations  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet



### MGLS:2017 Child Permission Form - Implicit Permission - Operational Field Test

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about a vitally important study of student learning being conducted in <our/your child's> school this spring. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Your child's school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, to participate in the Operational Field Test of MGLS:2017. A sample of students from your child's school will take part. Your child is one of only approximately 1,200 students selected from across the United States to participate. The enclosed summary sheet provides background information about MGLS:2017, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. students in grade 6 can do in reading, math, and other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, it is crucial that each student selected take part in the study. In addition to answering reading and math questions, students will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves and provide height and weight measurements, which is important to understanding the growth and development of adolescents. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your child to take part. One parent of each selected student will also be asked to complete a questionnaire for the study, and information about that will come separately.

Completing the survey is voluntary for you and your child and there are no penalties for not participating. Your child may also skip any question he or she does not want to answer. All of the information collected is protected, as required by law. 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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

If you do not want your child to participate in the MGLS:2017 activities, please let us know by completing the attached form and returning it to the school.

For more information, please visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. You may also call the study hotline at (855) 500-1432 or send email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study.

Sincerely,  
[Signature]

Enclosures:  
Parent/Guardian Consent Form  
Frequently Asked Questions Sheet  
Brochure for MGLS:2017

**Parent/Guardian Implicit Permission Form – MGLS:2017**

Your child has been asked to participate in a study of student learning called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Student data will be collected in a 90-minute session during the school day. The student assessment will be administered by a team of researchers from RTI International, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

**If you give permission for your child to participate in MGLS:2017, you do not need to return this form. Please keep this copy for your records.**

**If you do not give permission for your child to participate in MGLS:2017, please check the box below, and sign and return this form to your child’s school as soon as possible.**

No, I do not give permission for my child to participate in MGLS:2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of parent or guardian)

Date of signature: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Please Print:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

## MGLS:2017 Child Permission Form- Explicit Permission- Operational Field Test

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about a vitally important study of student learning being conducted in <our/your child's> school this spring. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Your child's school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, to participate in the Operational Field Test of MGLS:2017. A sample of students from your child's school will take part. Your child is one of only approximately 1,200 students selected from across the United States to participate. The enclosed summary sheet provides background information about MGLS:2017, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. students in grade 6 can do in reading, math, and other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, it is crucial that each student selected take part in the study. In addition to answering reading and math questions, students will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves and provide height and weight measurements, which is important to understanding the growth and development of adolescents. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your child to take part. One parent of each selected student will also be asked to complete a questionnaire for the study, and information about that will come separately.

Completing the survey is voluntary for you and your child and there are no penalties for not participating. Your child may also skip any question he or she does not want to answer. All of the information collected is protected, as required by law. 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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

**To allow your child to participate in the MGLS:2017 activities, we must have your written permission. Please complete the attached form and return it to the school. If you prefer, you may also text [unique number] to [#####] to indicate your permission, or login to the study website to provide permission at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/> and enter Study ID: [parentID] and password: [password].**

For more information, please visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. You may also call the study hotline at (855) 500-1432 or send email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Enclosures:

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Frequently Asked Questions Sheet

Brochure for MGLS:2017

**Parent/Guardian Explicit Permission Form – MGLS:2017**

Your child has been asked to participate in a study of student learning called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Student data will be collected in a 90-minute session during the school day. The student assessment will be administered by a team of researchers from RTI International, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

**PLEASE CHECK ONE:**

Yes, I give permission for my child to participate in MGLS:2017.

No, I do not give permission for my child to participate in MGLS:2017.

I have read this permission form and understand what my child and I are being asked to do.

**PLEASE SIGN YOUR NAME BELOW:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date of signature: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of parent or guardian)

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix OFT1-G. Parent Data Collection Letter

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

An important study of student learning is being conducted in your child's school this spring. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Data will be collected from students in grade 6 and from school administrators, teachers, and parents. Your child is one of only approximately 1,200 students sampled from across the United States to participate. You may have already received a letter inviting your child to participate in MGLS:2017, or that letter will be coming to you in the next few weeks.

You are the best person to tell us about your family. We would greatly appreciate it if the person most knowledgeable about <student\_firstname>'s school and home life would complete a 40-minute online survey for the study. <IF INCENTIVE: As a token of our appreciation for being a part of the study, when you finish the survey either online or over the phone, you will receive a check for [\$10 to \$50].>

**To access the parent survey, please log into:**

**surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls**

**Study ID: xxxxxxxx**

**password: xxxxxxxx.**

The study is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. The enclosed materials provide more information about MGLS:2017. All of the information collected is protected, as required by law. 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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization based. Data collected 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports. Completing the survey is voluntary for you and your child and there are no penalties for not participating. You may also skip any question you do not want to answer if you choose to participate.

For more information, please visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. You may also call the study hotline at (855) 500-1432 or send email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for supporting education by participating in this important study.

Sincerely,

<Name>

<Title>

Enclosures:

Study brochure

Flyer

### MGLS:2017 Brochure Text – Operational Field Test

#### COVER

Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) – Operational Field Test

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: RTI International

#### 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 Operational Field Test

Participants in the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test will provide invaluable feedback to improve the study. Information from this field test will be used to improve the data collection instruments and practices of the Main Study.

##### Your Participation

As part of the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test, you are one of about 50 schools, about 1,200 students, or about 200 teachers selected to participate across the United States. This field test will be conducted in early 2017. 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: 855-500-1432

E-mail address: [mglsl@rti.org](mailto:mglsl@rti.org)

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



**Quick Facts about the  
Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18  
(MGLS:2017)**

- ✓ MGLS:2017 is a research study which will help educators, policymakers, and researchers learn about growth in math and reading as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the important, yet generally understudied, middle grade years.
- ✓ The study is longitudinal and follows a cohort of students from grade six through eight to fully understand the student middle grade experience.
- ✓ The MGLS:2017 student sessions will involve up to 40 randomly selected sixth-grade students at a given school and will take 90 minutes to complete.
- ✓ Students will provide data to the study through math, reading, and executive function assessments along with some survey questions. These assessments are unique to this research study and are not connected to standardized tests administered by states and school districts.
- ✓ Participation in the study is not required, but participation of each selected student is very important to the study.
- ✓ This is not a high stakes test! Students' responses will not be reported to schools and do not affect student grades.

MGLS:2017 FAQs – Operational Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) – Operational Field Test – 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. RTI International 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 sixth-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, and socioemotional well-being, 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 Operational Field Test will take place in early 2017. The Main Study will begin in early 2018.

**Why participate in the Operational Field Test of MGLS:2017?**

The Operational Field Test, or OFT, will inform protocols and materials for the MGLS:2017 Main Study, for which data collection will begin in January of 2018. Specifically, this field test will be used to obtain information on recruiting schools and students, particularly students in certain disability groups, the practices and procedures leading to successful study administration (e.g., protocols, timing, test accommodations), and the costs of tracking students across years as a result of respondents' mobility. Surveys developed for school administrators, math teachers, special education teachers/providers, parents, and students will also be tested. Participants in the OFT will provide essential feedback to improve data collection for the Main Study.

**How will MGLS:2017 data be used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 of and outcomes for students' with disabilities.

**How many schools and students will be involved in the field test?**

A sample of approximately 1,200 students enrolled in grade 6, from about 50 schools, will participate in the OFT of the MGLS:2017. The Main Study will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 900 public and private schools.

**What is involved for students?**

Students will complete a direct-assessment of their math, reading, and other skills important to learning. Each student will also be asked to complete a survey about his or her school, social, and home experiences, and provide height and weight measurements. The student session will take about 90 minutes. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

**What is involved for school staff?**

A school administrator will be asked to complete an approximately 40 minute web-based questionnaire about the school and the school environment. The math teachers of students selected for 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/provider for selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills



and abilities of specific students in the study (about 25 minutes per student). Paper-and-pencil versions of the surveys may be available upon request.

**What is involved for parents?**

One parent of each sampled student will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may also be available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

**Who will be responsible for the student data collection?**

Trained MGLS:2017 staff will facilitate the completion of 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 assessment 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).

**Why are height and weight data collected in MGLS:2017?**

Height and weight measurements are important in understanding physical growth, puberty status, and obesity status at this important time of growth for adolescents. By collecting this data annually over the three years of the study, we will be able to better understand how physical growth patterns affect student learning and socioemotional well-being.

**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 OFT. 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.C. §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.

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

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). 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>.

## MGLS:2017 Parent FAQs – Operational Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

### Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) – Operational Field Test – 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. RTI International 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 sixth-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, and socioemotional well-being, 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 Operational Field Test will take place in early 2017. The Main Study will begin in early 2018.

#### **Why participate in the Operational Field Test of MGLS:2017?**

Parents contribute vital information on the home learning environment, students' school experiences, their own involvement in their child's learning, and characteristics about the household. The Operational Field Test, or OFT, will inform protocols and materials for the MGLS:2017 Main Study, for which data collection will begin in January of 2018. Specifically, this field test will be used to obtain information on recruiting schools and students, the practices and procedures leading to successful study administration (e.g., protocols, timing, test accommodations), and the costs of tracking students across years as a result of respondents' mobility. Surveys developed for school administrators, math teachers, special education teachers/providers, parents, and students will also be tested. Participants in the OFT will provide essential feedback to improve data collection for the Main Study.

#### **How will MGLS:2017 data be used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 of and outcomes for students' with disabilities.

#### **How many schools and students will be involved in the field test?**

A sample of approximately 1,200 students enrolled in grade 6, from about 50 schools, will participate in the OFT of the MGLS:2017. The Main Study will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 900 public and private schools.

#### **What is involved for students?**

Students will complete a session made up of math and reading questions and one or more computerized games to assess executive function skills, or skills that help a person to organize and act on information. Students will also provide height and weight measurements and complete a student survey. The student session will take about 90 minutes and will be completed in schools on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

#### **What is involved for parents?**

One parent of each sampled student will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may also be available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

#### **Why are height and weight data collected in MGLS:2017?**

Height and weight measurements are important in understanding physical growth, puberty status, and obesity status at this important time of growth for adolescents. By collecting this data annually over the three years of the study, we will be able to better understand how physical growth patterns affect student learning and socioemotional well-being.

**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.

**My child has a disability and is not in a general education setting. Do I still need to participate?**

This study is interested in learning how all students learn and grow in this age range. Even if your child is not able to participate in the school session, we invite you to participate in the survey.

**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.C. §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.

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

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [mgl@rti.org](mailto:mgl@rti.org). 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/mgl>.

## MGLS:2017 Teacher FAQs – Operational Field Test

MGLS Letterhead

### Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) – Operational Field Test – 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. RTI International 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 sixth-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, and socioemotional well-being, 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 Operational Field Test will take place in early 2017. The Main Study will begin in early 2018.

#### **Why participate in the Operational Field Test of MGLS:2017?**

Teachers are uniquely positioned to provide crucial information about instructional practices, planning, classroom characteristics, classroom climate, as well as individualized information about their students in the study. The Operational Field Test, or OFT, will inform protocols and materials for the MGLS:2017 Main Study, for which data collection will begin in January of 2018. Specifically, this field test will be used to obtain information on recruiting schools and students, particularly students in certain disability groups, the practices and procedures leading to successful study administration (e.g., protocols, timing, test accommodations), and the costs of tracking students across years as a result of respondents' mobility. Surveys developed for school administrators, math teachers, special education teachers/providers, parents, and students will also be tested. Participants in the OFT will provide essential feedback to improve data collection for the Main Study.

#### **How will MGLS:2017 data be used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 of and outcomes for students' with disabilities.

#### **How many schools and students will be involved in the field test?**

A sample of approximately 1,200 students enrolled in grade 6, from about 50 schools, will participate in the OFT of the MGLS:2017. The Main Study will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 900 public and private schools.

#### **What is involved for students?**

Students will complete a direct-assessment of their math, reading, and other skills important to learning. Each student will also be asked to complete a survey about his or her school, social, and home experiences, and provide height and weight measurements. The student session will take about 90 minutes. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

#### **What is involved for school staff?**

A school administrator will be asked to complete an approximately 40 minute web-based questionnaire about the school and the school environment. The math teachers of students selected for 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/provider for selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills

and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student). Paper-and-pencil versions of the surveys may be available upon request.

**Is there any information I need to gather before beginning the teacher survey?**

Teachers will be asked both about their own background and about specific students participating in the study. Gathering materials that provide information on student performance and behavior (such as your planning, attendance, and/or grade books) may help navigate the survey quickly. Math teachers should also be prepared to answer questions about the content of their math courses, including information about the textbooks and instructional practices used.

**Some of my students did not participate in the student session although they were selected. Do I still need to complete the teacher survey?**

This study is interested in learning how students of all abilities learn and grow in this age range. Even if a student does not participate in the student session, we will ask teachers to complete the survey to provide information about the student's academic and social skills. This ensures that the study takes into account all students as they move through the middle grades.

**What is involved for parents?**

One parent of each sampled student will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may also be available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

**Who will be responsible for the student data collection?**

Trained MGLS:2017 staff will facilitate the completion of 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 assessment 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).

**Why are height and weight data collected in MGLS:2017?**

Height and weight measurements are important in understanding physical growth, puberty status, and obesity status at this important time of growth for adolescents. By collecting this data annually over the three years of the study, we will be able to better understand how physical growth patterns affect student learning and socioemotional well-being.

**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 OFT. 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?**

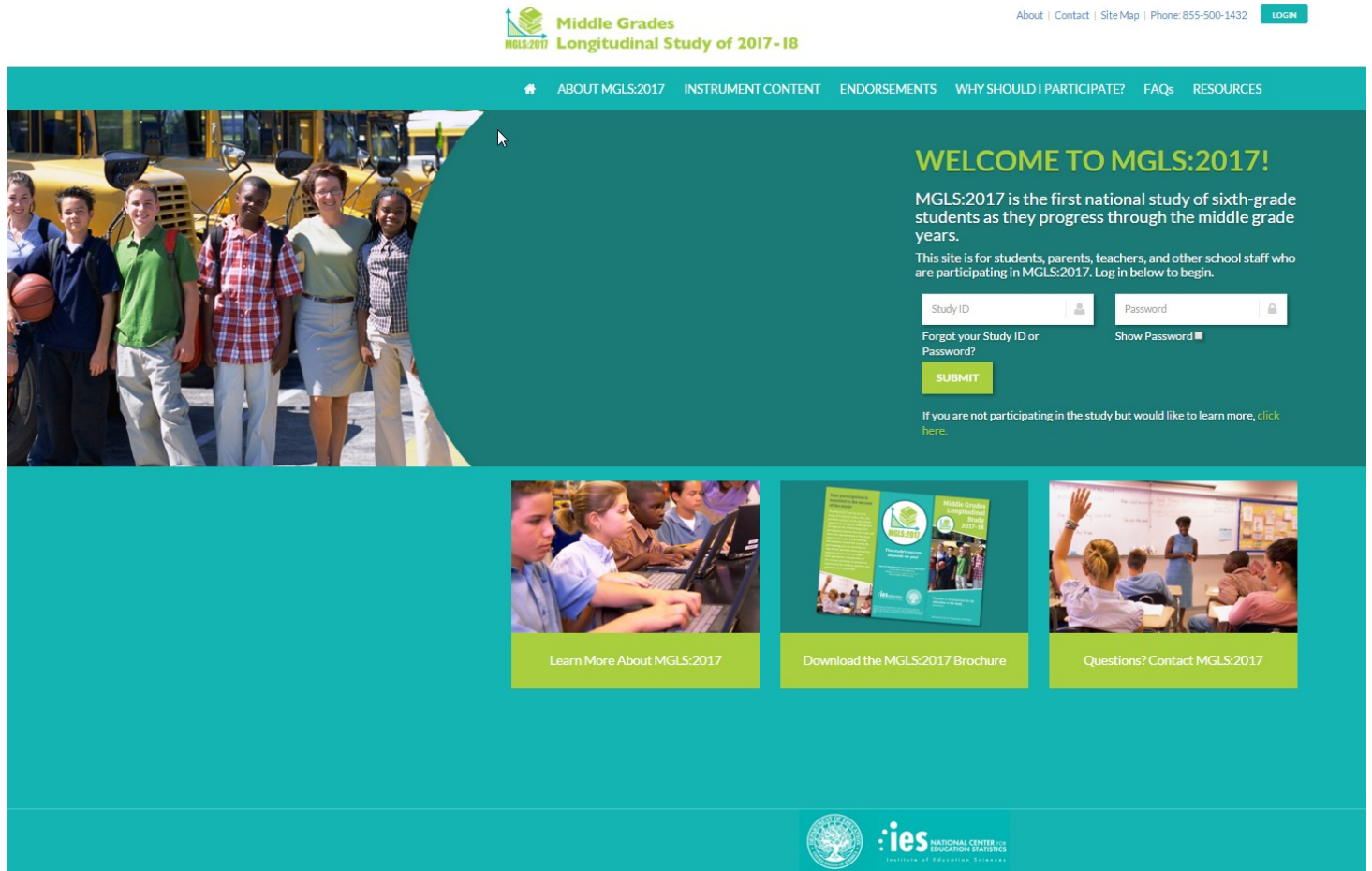
Under law, the information provided by schools, staff, students, and parents may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law [Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9573)]. All field 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.

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

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [mgl@rti.org](mailto:mgl@rti.org). 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/mgl>.

The recruitment website is used to provide information to school staff and parents about the study. The website also serves as a portal to securely upload student list information and complete the parent and school staff questionnaires. A screenshot of the study homepage and several other pages in the website are provided here as examples. Additional content proposed for the OFT recruitment and data collection website is reflected in the text provided in this appendix.

The study home page



<MGLS:2017 study phone number will appear in header on every page>

<Login box will appear in header on every page><MGLS:2017 StudyID><Password>

Welcome to MGLS:2017! MGLS:2017 is the first national study of sixth-grade students as they progress through the middle grade years.

This site is designed to assist school staff, session facilitators, parents, and students who are participating in MGLS:2017. Login to begin.

If you are not participating in the study but would like to learn more, click here

Login <study id><password>

< link to Home page>

<link to About MGLS:2017>

<link to Content>

<link to Endorsements>

<Link to Why Should I Participate?>

<link to FAQs>

<link to Resources>

<link to Learn More About MGLS:2017 in footer>

<link to MGLS:2017 Brochure>

Questions? Contact MGLS <Study phone number> <study email address>

## **About MGLS:2017**

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is a new, unprecedented national study of middle grade students being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. RTI International is carrying out the MGLS:2017 data collection on behalf of NCES. MGLS:2017 will gather information about the development and learning that occur during students' middle-grade years, or grades 6 through 8. In particular, it will identify school, individual, social, and contextual factors that predict future student success.

### **Sample and Data Collection Schedule:**

The Item Validation Field Test is taking place in early 2016 with a sample of approximately 5,000 students enrolled in grades 5 through 8.

The Operational Field Test will take place in early 2017 and a sample of about 1,200 students in sixth grade from about 50 schools will participate. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

The Main Study will take place in the spring of 2018 and a sample of about 20,000 students in sixth grade from about 900 schools will participate. Planned follow-ups with students, parents, and school staff will occur in the spring of 2019 and 2020.

### **What is involved for participants of MGLS:2017?**

What is involved for students? Students will complete a math and reading assessment and complete one or more computerized games to assess executive function skills, or skills that help a person to organize and act on information. Students will also provide height and weight measurements and complete a student survey. The student session will take approximately 90 minutes and will be completed in schools on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard.

What is involved for school administrators? School administrators will be asked to complete the approximately 40-minute school administrator web-based survey about the school and the school environment.

What is involved for math teachers? Math teachers of students selected for the study will complete the math teacher survey 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).

What is involved for special education teachers? Special education teachers/providers for students selected to participate in the study with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete the special education teacher survey 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 20 minutes per student).

What is involved for parents? Parents of each sampled student will complete the parent survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete

## **What is the purpose of the field test:**

Results from the Item Validation Field Test of the study will significantly inform the creation and development of the assessments and survey instruments used in the Main Study. For example, the field test 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/providers, parents, and students will also be tested during the field test to inform the selection of items to include in the Main Study. Results from the Operational Field Test of the study will test the instrument developed based on the results of the Item Validation Field Test and will also test the study recruitment and data collection procedures. Participants in the field tests 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 the Data be Used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 a diverse group of students.

## **Organizations Conducting and Collecting MGLS:2017 Data:**

MGLS:2017 is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the primary federal statistical agency for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the United States. NCES is located within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543).

The data are collected by RTI International, a nonprofit research organization based in North Carolina under contract to the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics.

## **Confidentiality:**

MGLS:2017 data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports. Students, parents, and schools are never identified in any reports.

All RTI project staff have signed confidentiality agreements and affidavits of nondisclosure and are prohibited by law from using the obtained information for any purposes other than this research study.

You may review the Confidentiality Agreements and Affidavit of Nondisclosure statements (pdf, 81KB) that are signed by project staff.

A nondisclosure form is also required before informing districts which schools are selected for the study. We take the confidentiality of participating schools seriously and limit disclosure to those who need to know to make



informed decisions about school and student participation in the study. A copy of the nondisclosure agreement may be accessed [here](#).

You may also review the procedures that govern NCES and RTI International to protect identifiable information.

### Instrument Content:

A key goal of the study is to provide researchers and policymakers with the information they need to better understand the school and non-school influences associated with mathematics and reading success, socioemotional health, and positive life development during the middle-grade years and beyond.

Select an instrument to learn more about its content

< A graphic box will be displayed listing each instrument. Clicking on the box brings up the content page, which is found in appendix OFT1-K. to R>

### Endorsements



[Home](#) / [Endorsements](#)



### Why Should I Participate?

You are uniquely positioned to provide the much-needed information integral to the success of this comprehensive study of students as they enter and move through the middle grades. The study's success hinges on being able to provide crucial national information on these students' learning and contexts for development. Your participation will help ensure the study captures the diverse and unique experiences of students as they progress across the middle grade years.

**Schools** provide essential information on contexts for learning.

**Teachers** (mathematics teachers and special education teachers/providers) have the opportunity to provide crucial information about instructional practices, planning, classroom characteristics, classroom climate, as well as individualized information about their students in the study in terms of social skills, classroom behaviors, and learning supports.

**Parents** contribute vital information on the home learning environment, students' school experiences, their own involvement in their child's learning, and characteristics about the household.

**Students** will have the opportunity to let us know about their school experiences, activities, and their educational aspirations. To contribute to the understanding of learning and development across the middle grade years, the study also collects invaluable information about students' reading, math, and executive function, which includes skills that help them organize and act on information.

## Frequently Asked Questions

Middle Grades  
MGLS:2017 Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

About | Contact | Site Map | Phone: 855-500-1432 LOGIN

Home / Frequently Asked Questions

Click on a question below to view additional information:

- What is MGLS:2017?
- What is the focus of MGLS:2017?
- When is the study being conducted?
- Why participate in the field test of MGLS:2017?
- How will MGLS:2017 data be used?
- How many schools and students will be involved in the first phase of the study?
- What is involved for students?
- What is involved for school staff?
- What is involved for parents?
- Who will be responsible for data collection?
- Do teachers need to help administer the assessments?
- Are there incentives for participating schools?
- What happens if a student refuses to participate?
- Will the names of participants and their responses be kept confidential?
- Who do I contact for further information about MGLS:2017?

<**Frequently Asked Questions:** The FAQ text is provided in Appendix OFT1-I. <Frequently Asked Questions: The FAQ text is provided in Appendix OFT1-I. The text will include all questions from the three different versions with a note indicating they are specifically for parents or teachers where applicable.>

## Resources

## RESOURCES

[Home](#) / [Resources](#)



### Links to Resources

- [MGLS:2017 Brochure](#)
- [Student Roster Request Letter and Upload Instructions](#)
- [Parent Permission Letter](#)
- [How is MGLS different from state and local assessments?](#)



<The resources page provides links to files in Appendices OFT1-F, OFT1-H, and OFT1-S (with upload instructions on the next page)>

## Contact

## CONTACT US

### Phone and Email

855-500-1432  
[mglsl@rti.org](mailto:mglsl@rti.org)

### Questions or Comments? Use this form.

<input type="text" value="Enter First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Enter Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="Enter Email"/>	<input type="text" value="Enter Phone number"/>
<input type="text" value="Write your message"/>	
<input type="submit" value="SUBMIT"/>	



### OFT text

Questions or Comments? Use this form.

# MGLS:2017- after login

## Student Roster Upload

Welcome!

Your participation in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 is very important.

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine family and educational factors related to students' achievement. Please complete the tasks in the list below with a green arrow next to them.

### Request for Initial Roster – Step 1

Thank you for providing your school's student roster. If you need assistance, please contact the Help Desk at 1-855-500-1432 or [mglsl@rti.org](mailto:mglsl@rti.org). Please complete the following steps:

1. Provide your contact information <name>, <e-mail address>, <telephone number> ,<school name>
2. Download the Student Roster Template
  - a. Save the Student Roster Template on your computer
3. Prepare the Student Roster Template
  - a. List all students in Grade 6
  - b. For each student, please enter the following information:
    - Student information
      - i. District/School Student ID number
      - ii. Student's name (First, Middle, Last, Suffix)
      - iii. Grade
      - iv. Date of birth (MM/DD/YY)
      - v. Sex (M/F)
      - vi. Race/ethnicity
      - vii. IEP Status
      - viii. Disability code (if applicable)
    - Parent contact information (associated with each student)
      - i. Parent's name (first and last name)
      - ii. Parent's mailing address (street, city, state, zip)
      - iii. Parent's email address
      - iv. Parent's home phone number
      - v. Parent's cell phone number
    - Math/Special Education Teacher/Provider Information (associated with each student)
      - i. Student's math teacher (first and last name)
      - ii. Student's math teacher's email address
      - iii. Student's math course name
      - iv. Student's math course period/section
      - v. Student's special education teacher/provider (first and last name, if applicable)
      - vi. Student's special education teacher's/provider's email address (if applicable)
4. Upload the completed Student Roster Template
  - a. Please use the corresponding "Upload" button to upload the completed Student Roster Template
5. Finalize Student Roster Template
  - a. Once steps 1 through 4 above have been completed, please click the button below to finalize your school's Student Roster Template.

### Student Sample and Request for Additional Information – Step 2

#### Stage 1 – Review your school's list of sampled students

Please review the sampled student list and, if any information is missing and/or in need of correction, proceed to "Stage 2" below.

## Stage 2 – Update student information

If any information associated with your sampled students was noticed to be incomplete (such as missing parent contact information or teacher information) and/or in error in “stage 1”, please follow the steps below.

1. Download list of Sampled Students (Excel spreadsheet file)
  - a. Save the template on your computer
2. Prepare Sampled Student File (downloaded in Step 1)
  - a. For each sampled student, add any missing information (parent contacts, teacher information, etc.)
3. Upload the completed Sampled Student File
  - a. Please use the corresponding “Upload” button to upload the completed template.
4. Finalize Sampled Student Template
  - a. Once steps 1 through 3 above have been completed, please click the “Finalize” button below to finalize your school’s Sampled Student Template.

## **Provide parent and teacher information [for sampled students; if unable to provide for entire enrollment list]**

Below are instructions for providing the parent contact information and student math and special education teacher/provider information after the student sample has been selected if you are unable to provide this information for the entire student enrollment list. [Please note, this action can only be completed after the student enrollment list has been uploaded and you have been notified that the student sample has been selected at your school]

1. Click on the link “Parent and Teacher Contact Information” to download an Excel spreadsheet.
2. Save the Excel spreadsheet to your computer.
3. Student information will be pre-filled for all students selected to participate in MGLS:2017.
4. Prepare your document containing the requested information:
  - a. Parent contact information
    - i. Parent’s name (first and last name)
    - ii. Parent’s mailing address (street, city, state, zip)
    - iii. Parent’s email address
    - iv. Parent’s home phone number
    - v. Parent’s cell phone number
  - b. Math/Special Education Teacher/Provider Information (associated with each student)
    - i. Student’s math teacher (first and last name)
    - ii. Student’s math teacher’s email address
    - iii. Student’s math course name
    - iv. Student’s math course period/section
    - v. Student’s special education teacher/provider (first and last name, if applicable)
    - vi. Student’s special education teacher’s/provider’s email address (if applicable)
5. When you have added all of the requested parent and teacher information to the Excel spreadsheet, go to the file menu in Excel and click save.
6. Go back to the MGLS:2017 website and click the corresponding BROWSE button.
7. Find the location where you saved the Excel spreadsheet containing the student information and click open. This will automatically start the upload process.
8. When a completed file has been uploaded, click the FINALIZE button at the bottom of the webpage.
9. Call 855-500-1432 if you need assistance.

### 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 Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs (bullets represent learning progression)	<p><b>Number System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• finding common factors and multiples</li><li>• comparing fractions</li><li>• applying basic operations with fractions and integers to word problems</li><li>• using basic operations</li><li>• representing and understanding rational numbers in multiple forms</li><li>• understanding the relative size of irrational numbers</li></ul> <p><b>Proportional Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• extending students' understanding of the number system</li><li>• multiplying and dividing fractions and multiplicative thinking</li><li>• understanding basic concepts of ratio, rate and proportional relationships</li><li>• using rational numbers to solve problems and understand slope and functions</li></ul> <p><b>Expressions and Equations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understanding the use of expressions beginning with letter representations of a single number</li><li>• applying knowledge of rational numbers and operations to solve equations</li><li>• constructing equations and inequalities to solve real-world problems</li><li>• recognizing different types of notation (such as square root)</li><li>• reasoning with equalities and inequalities</li><li>• solving and representing linear equations and inequalities</li></ul> <p><b>Functions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understanding the definition of a function</li><li>• comparing functions represented in different ways</li><li>• distinguishing between linear and nonlinear functions</li><li>• comparing and creating representations of different functions</li><li>• understanding of functions to context</li></ul>

### Direct Reading Assessment

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	25 minutes (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Two-stage, computerized assessment using Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p><b>Word Recognition &amp; Decoding</b> 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><b>Vocabulary</b> 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><b>Morphological Awareness</b> 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><b>Sentence Processing</b> 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><b>Efficiency of Basic Reading Comprehension (MAZE task)</b> 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-Kinkaid Grade Level estimates of grades 6 and 7. 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><b>Reading Comprehension</b> 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>

### Direct Executive Function Assessment

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	10 minutes, 2 measures used per student (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Computerized administration using Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p><b>Working memory (N-back tasks)</b> 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><b>Cognitive flexibility (Hearts and Flowers task)</b> 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> <p><b>Inhibitory control (Hearts and Flowers task)</b> 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 Hearts and Flowers task provides information on inhibitory control (in addition to cognitive flexibility or shifting) in the incongruent condition.</p>



## Student Survey

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

**Parent Survey**

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	40 minutes
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link, with a telephone-based interview option available. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student demographics</li> </ul> <p>Family Roster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family demographics</li> <li>• Household composition</li> </ul> <p>Family and Parent Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language (student uses most, family primary language)</li> <li>• Parent education</li> </ul> <p>Home Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent-child relationship—monitoring/disclosure</li> <li>• Risk-taking and risky behaviors (i.e. students’ sensation seeking behaviors and parents’ report of students’ deviant behaviors)</li> <li>• Community perspectives (poverty, crime, victimization)</li> </ul> <p>Child’s School Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent contact/communication with school</li> <li>• Disciplinary actions taken by school</li> <li>• Grade progression (retention, early promotion)</li> <li>• ESL participation</li> <li>• Student free- and reduced-price lunch eligibility</li> </ul> <p>Child Health and Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and physical well-being</li> <li>• IEP and Disability Details</li> </ul> <p>Employment and Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent occupation</li> <li>• Family income</li> <li>• Family assets</li> </ul> <p>Mobility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility (number of school changes)</li> </ul> <p>Parent Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation about math courses</li> <li>• Conversation about going to college</li> <li>• Conversation about jobs or careers</li> <li>• Academic expectations</li> </ul>

**Mathematics Teacher Survey**

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	20 minutes for teacher background and classroom characteristics; 10 minutes per student report
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>Teacher background and classroom characteristics</p> <p>Student and Classroom Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class size (number of students)</li><li>• Course type</li><li>• Heterogeneity in math ability</li><li>• Classroom climate (e.g., misbehavior)</li></ul> <p>Classroom Mathematics Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Curriculum/textbook used</li><li>• Opportunities to learn (length of course)</li><li>• Content covered in course (Common Core &amp; practice standards)</li><li>• Instructional practice/pedagogy</li><li>• Availability and use of classroom resources</li></ul> <p>Views on Teaching and School Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instruction in self-contained classrooms or departmentalized</li><li>• Factors for determining math course (take a test, prerequisite)</li><li>• Teacher efficacy</li><li>• Instructional leadership</li><li>• Academic culture (high standards and expectations)</li><li>• Teaching climate</li></ul> <p>Teacher Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Education and degree (courses in math and math education)</li><li>• Years of experience</li><li>• Certification</li><li>• Demographic information</li></ul> <p>Teacher provided information on individual students</p> <p>Mathematical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Math class performance</li></ul> <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approaches to learning</li><li>• Externalizing behaviors</li><li>• Social skills and positive behavior</li></ul> <p>Classroom Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Academic engagement (behavioral and cognitive)</li><li>• Attendance</li></ul> <p>Student and Classroom Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Math support services (tutoring, pull-out, instruction frequency)</li></ul>

### Special Education Teacher/Provider Survey

Approximate length	10 minutes for background; 25 minutes per student report
Goal for Main Study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>Teacher background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teacher Assignment or Position<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teaching Assignment or Position</li><li>Instruction and instructional environment</li></ul></li><li>Teacher Background and Education<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Demographic information</li><li>Experiences and Training</li></ul></li><li>Teacher Experience<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Years of experience</li></ul></li></ul> <p>Teacher provided information on specific students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student Grade and IEP Status<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student Grade and IEP status</li></ul></li><li>Student's Disability and Services<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Primary disability</li><li>Special education and related services</li></ul></li><li>Student's Instruction and Instructional Environment<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Instruction and instructional environment</li></ul></li><li>Communication About Student<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Communication with general education teacher</li></ul></li><li>Student Goals, Performance, and Expectations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>IEP goals and evaluation</li><li>Teacher's expectations for student</li><li>Academic &amp; life skills</li></ul></li></ul>

### School Administrator Survey

Approximate length	40 minutes
Goal for Main Study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>School Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School characteristics (e.g., average daily attendance, tuition)</li><li>• Student population (e.g., percent IEP, percent ELL/LEP)</li><li>• Providing additional support for struggling students (tutoring, extra assistance, pull-out, homework assistance)</li></ul> <p>Services and Supports for Students with Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IEP/Disability-School services and programs</li></ul> <p>School Programs and Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Courses offered: for particular courses ask about the number of slots available</li><li>• Subject-specific academic tracking practices (order/progression of courses)</li><li>• School extended learning opportunities: additional instruction time, Gifted and Talented, International Baccalaureate</li><li>• Assisting students with transitions from elementary to middle grades; from middle grades to high school</li><li>• Health services (e.g., sex education classes)</li></ul> <p>School Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Problems at school: absenteeism, student mobility, student misconduct, bullying</li><li>• School-level security (police officer on site, security officer on site, metal detectors, teachers supervise hallways during transition)</li><li>• Community perspectives (poverty, crime, victimization)</li></ul> <p>School's Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School's teachers: number, preparation</li></ul> <p>School Administrator Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demographic information</li><li>• Years of experience</li></ul>

## Appendix OFT1-S. MGLS:2017 Student Rostering Materials for Operational Field Test

### Request for Student Roster Information from Schools

[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 Operational Field Test of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (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 sixth 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) (20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). For the purposes of this collection of data, FERPA permits education agencies and institutions to disclose personally identifiable information from students' education records, without consent, to authorized representatives of the Secretary of Education in connection with an evaluation of federally supported education programs (34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). Student data are subject to strict protections that are adhered to by NCES and its contractor organizations. Roster information will be securely destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes specified in 34 CFR §99.35.

The key characteristics of interest include:

- Name
- District/School Student identification number
- Date of birth
- Grade level
- Sex
- Race/ethnicity
- IEP status (Disability codes, if applicable)
- ELL status
- Students' parent and/or guardians contact information
- Students' math teacher(s)
- Students' special education teacher/provider (if applicable)
- Parent contact information
  - Name (last, first)
  - Parent Street address, City, State, Zip
  - Home phone number
  - Cell phone number
  - E-mail address
- Student's Math Teacher Name (last, first)
- Student's Math Teacher Email Address
- Student's Math Course Name
- Student's Math Course Period/Section
- Student's Special Education Teacher(s)/Provider(s) (list all if applicable)
- Student's Special Education Teacher(s)/Provider(s) email address

We have developed a form to provide guidance for preparing the student roster. You may access and submit the form via the study website. To access the form, please go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls> and enter user ID: xxxxxxxx and password: xxxxxxxx. To protect the students' data, you will be asked to change your password after the initial login.

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 RTI International, which is administering MGLS:2017 on behalf of NCES, will contact you to discuss the best way of obtaining student roster information. Although we have provided a roster form for you, we are happy to collect this information in a different format if that is more 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 855-500-1432 or [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org).

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

Sincerely,

Dan Pratt, Project Director

*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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

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 well-being, and 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 two field tests and a main study, all of which are essential to 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 the study.

In the next few days, an individual from RTI International, which is administering MGLS:2017 on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, 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 at 855-500-1432, or send an email to MGLS@rti.org.

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

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr, Ph.D.

Acting Commissioner, NCES

*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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 Brochure

FAQs

## Appendix MS1-B. State Letter and Sample Endorsement Letter

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### State Letter – [NCES/ED Letterhead]

[Title First Name Last Name]  
[State Department of Education Official's Title]  
[State Department of Education]  
[Address]  
[City, State Zip]

[Date]

Dear [Name]:

I am writing to inform your state education agency about a vitally important new national study: the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**. The study will involve multiple phases: a first field test in 2016, a second field test in 2017, and a main study in 2018. The Main Study will follow a nationally-representative cohort of sixth-grade students in spring of 2018 as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. One major goal of the study is to examine the factors that encourage success during these important, yet generally understudied, years of education. MGLS:2017 is described in more detail in the enclosed materials.

To encourage schools and parents to participate, we are asking state departments of education to learn about and then provide a letter of endorsement for 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 the study.

The MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Schools in your state have been selected for the Main Study, which will begin in early 2018 with sixth-graders from approximately 900 schools across the country. Data collection will include a student assessment, a survey, and the collection of height and weight measurements for selected sixth-grade students. A school administrator, the math teachers, special education providers, and one parent of each sampled student will be asked to complete a questionnaire. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools. While participation in MGLS:2017 is voluntary, we ask for your support of the participation of sampled schools in your state.

In the next few days, an individual from RTI International, which is administering MGLS:2017 on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, will be following up with you about endorsing this historic study. In the coming weeks, we will begin contacting the school districts and schools that have been selected to participate in the Main Study. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). You may also contact Carolyn Fidelman at NCES at 202-245-7046 for more information.

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

Cc: <STATE> Testing Coordinator  
Middle Grades Coordinator

*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 U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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 (20 U.S.C. §9573). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures: MGLS:2017 Brochure and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) Sheet



## Sample Endorsement Letter

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

Dear School District and School Administrators:

The [INSERT STATE EDUCATION AGENCY NAME] is pleased to support the **Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS: 2017)**, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. The study will involve multiple phases: an Item Validation Field Test in 2016, an Operational Field Test in 2017, and a Main Study in 2018. The Main Study will follow a cohort of sixth-grade students in spring of 2018 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. MGLS:2017 is described in more detail in the materials provided by RTI, which is collecting the data for NCES.

We strongly encourage your participation in any phase of MGLS: 2017 for which your district or school is selected. While participation in the study is voluntary, each school's participation is important, because each phase of the study needs an inclusive and diverse group of American schools serving students in the middle grades. We are confident that schools in our state will understand the importance of this national study and will accept the invitation to participate.

Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). You may also contact Carolyn Fidelman at NCES at 202-245-7046 for more information.

Thank you for making MGLS:2017 a success.

Sincerely,

<Name>  
Chief State School Officer

## Appendix MS1-C. District Notification and Recruitment Letter

### District Notification and Recruitment Letter – Main Study

[MGLS Letterhead]

[Date]

[Superintendent's Name]

Superintendent

[District]

[Address]

[City, State Zip]

Dear [Name]:

Until now, middle grades have been noticeably absent from national studies, creating a gap in information needed to answer important questions pertaining to the growth of young adolescents and how we can impact their academic and social success. To meet this need, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, is conducting the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study 2017-18 (MGLS:2017).

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement as well as family and school factors related to their success. **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 a diverse group of students.**

Schools in your district have been randomly selected to participate in this groundbreaking study. You are uniquely positioned to support the study and encourage the participation of these schools to provide the much-needed information integral to the success of this comprehensive study of students as they enter and move through the middle grades. The study's success hinges on being able to provide national information on these students' learning and contexts for development. Your school's participation will help ensure the study captures the diverse and unique experiences of students as they progress across the middle grade years.

NCES has contracted RTI International to conduct the data collection. Our team appreciates all that schools and educators have on their plates, and works with schools and districts to develop a plan that works well for faculty and staff and minimizes the impact on instruction time. Participation in MGLS:2017 is a very small sacrifice for the greater good of all middle grades students, in your district, your state, and across the nation. Data collection in the majority of the sampled schools will include math, reading, and executive function assessments, height and weight, and surveys of a small sample of students in grade 6 (about 35), and will only take about 90 minutes. A school administrator, the math teachers and special education providers for each sampled student, and one parent of each sampled student will be asked to complete brief questionnaires. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in grades 7 and 8, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools. All data will be collected through a computer-based application. Parents will also have the choice of a telephone interview if preferred.

School and student participation is voluntary, but we hope your district and all selected schools will partner with us in this extremely important study and ultimately contribute to the success of middle grades students. Enclosed you will find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study and a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). A representative of RTI will contact you to discuss the study. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information line at 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org).

We look forward to working with your schools and thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.

Acting Commissioner, NCES

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

cc: District Testing Coordinator  
Director of Research

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 brochure

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

State Endorsement Letter if provided

School Recruitment Letter – Main Study

MGLS Letterhead

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

Dear [Name]:

Until now, middle grades have been noticeably absent from national studies, creating a gap in information needed to answer important questions pertaining to the growth of young adolescents and how we can impact their academic and social success. To meet this need, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, is conducting the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study 2017-18 (MGLS:2017).

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement as well as family and school factors related to their success.

**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 a diverse group of students.**

Your school is one of a limited number of schools around the country randomly selected to participate in this groundbreaking study. The study's success hinges on being able to provide national information on schools like yours and your students' learning and contexts for development. Your school's participation will help ensure the study captures the diverse and unique experiences of students as they progress across the middle grade years.

NCES has contracted RTI International to conduct the data collection. Our team appreciates all that schools and educators have on their plates, and works with schools and districts to develop a plan that works well for faculty and staff and minimizes the impact on student instruction time. Participation in MGLS:2017 is a very small sacrifice for the greater good of all middle grades students, in your district, your state, and across the nation. Data collection in the majority of the sampled schools will include math, reading, and executive function assessments, height and weight, and surveys of a small sample of students in grade 6 (about 35), and will only take about 90 minutes. A school administrator, the math teachers and special education providers for each sampled student, and one parent of each sampled student will be asked to complete brief on-line questionnaires. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in grades 7 and 8, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools. All student data will be collected through a computer-based application. Parents will also have the choice of a telephone interview if preferred.

[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 2017 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 help with data collection at your school. Teachers completing surveys will receive **\$20** for answering the surveys and an additional **\$7 per student** form. Students will be given a pair of earbuds used during the assessment and another small token of appreciation (e.g., keychain, pen).

School and student participation is voluntary, but we hope your school will partner with us in this extremely important study and ultimately contribute to the success of middle grades students. Enclosed you will find an MGLS:2017 brochure that further explains the study and a sheet of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). A representative of RTI will contact you to discuss the study. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 information line at 855-500-1432. 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 <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls>.

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 G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:

MGLS:2017 Brochure

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet

State Letter of Endorsement (if provided)

As the MGLS:2017 School Coordinator (SC), you play an important role in the success of the study. RTI will provide a trained Session Facilitator (SF) to conduct the student sessions and to assist you as much as possible. However, we will need to rely on you to complete certain tasks so that data collection will be successful.

**Study Details**

MGLS:2017 consists of the following activities:

- **MGLS:2017 Student Session** - Selected students in grade 6 will be administered an assessment of mathematics, reading, and executive function, and a background survey. Height and weight measurements will also be collected. The student session will take approximately 90 minutes. The MGLS:2017 SF will conduct the student session(s) at your school and each participating student will receive a small thank you gift.
- **School Administrator Survey** - The principal or designee will complete a survey about school characteristics, staffing, the student population, and the academic environment. The survey may be completed online or via telephone interview and will take about 40 minutes to complete. A paper-and-pencil version may be available upon request. RTI will send information to the principal or designated administrator with instructions to access the survey.
- **Mathematics Teacher Survey** - Mathematics teachers of selected students will complete a survey consisting of two parts: 1) a background survey to collect data for classroom- and school-level context (about 20 minutes); and 2) a series of teacher student reports (TSRs) for participating students (about 10 minutes per student).The survey may be completed online. A paper-and-pencil version may be available upon request. RTI will send information to selected teachers.
- **Special Education Teacher Survey** - Special education teachers/providers of selected students will complete a survey consisting of two parts: 1) a survey about the teacher’s background and experience working with students with disabilities (about 10 minutes); and 2) a series of teacher student reports (TSRs) for selected students (about 25 minutes per student). The survey may be completed online. A paper-and-pencil version may be available upon request. RTI will send information to selected teachers.
- **Parent Survey** - The parent survey will ask about students’ education experiences and about parents’ expectations for their children’s academic attainment in middle school and beyond. It will also collect information about family involvement in the child’s education and about family characteristics. The survey will take 40 minutes to complete via a self-administered online

survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.

For additional information, please visit our website at: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls> or call (855) 500-1432.

**Your Responsibilities**

You are being asked to complete several tasks prior to the student data collection session that will take place in Winter/Spring 2018. These tasks include providing student information, working with RTI on the session logistics, and assisting with parental permission form distribution.

We will use the MGLS:2017 secure website to exchange any personally identifiable information, such as the student rosters. Please visit: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls> and log-in with the following credentials:

Study ID: «EntityID»  
 Password: «Password»

The following table shows the tasks/activities you are asked to perform and a timeline for these activities.

Task	Timeline
Provide information on grade 6 students and their teachers and parents using the Student Rostering Form.	Within 1 week of receipt of request
Coordinate student session logistics (dates, times, locations, permission type)	Within 3 weeks of receipt of request
Identify location for student height and weight collection	Within 3 weeks of receipt of request
Communicate with teachers, selected students, & parents and encourage participation	At least 4 weeks prior to scheduled session
Distribute parental permission forms to all selected students	At least 3 weeks prior to scheduled session
Monitor return of permission forms and distribute reminder letters as needed. Collect returned, signed forms and submit to SF.	During the 3 weeks from distribution of permission forms to data collection day
Meet with MGLS:2017 SF to review details of student session and discuss students who may need special accommodations	One week prior to student session
Notify/remind teachers and students about the data collection sessions	One week prior and one day prior to student session
Assist the SF with getting students to the sessions and setting up the room(s)	On the day of the session

## Providing Student Information

We will select up to 40 students in grade 6. Please refer to the attached instructions to submit the Student Rostering Form (SRF) and include each requested data element for all students in sixth grade. The SRF should be uploaded to the secure MGLS:2017 website.

Teacher and parent information may be submitted with the student information. If you prefer, you can wait until the student sample has been drawn and provide teacher and parent information only for selected students. **Note: feedback from other participating schools indicates that schools find it beneficial and less burdensome to provide ALL requested data elements one time and as early as possible after receiving the request to submit the rostering form.**

## Assisting with Student Session Logistics

In order to minimize disruption at the school on the day of the student data collection, it is crucial that arrangements be made in advance. These arrangements include:

- Confirming the date(s) for student data collection.
- Determine the location and time(s) of the student session(s). If necessary, reserve a separate room for the student session(s).
- Determine parental permission type (implicit or explicit). Determine best method of distributing permission forms, tracking signed returned forms, collecting returned forms and submitting to the MGLS:2017 SF.
- Work with the SF to identify students with special needs and any accommodations that are needed (i.e., extra time, read-aloud, etc.). **We suggest including your School Counselor and/or Special Education Coordinator in these conversations.** Some schools also involve their data manager in this task. We may need to plan for an additional small-group session to accommodate students with special needs.
- Notify teachers and students of MGLS:2017, the importance of participating, and explain test day activities.
- Contact parents to encourage them to return the signed permission form (if applicable).

## Parental Permission

Parental permission materials will be supplied by RTI a few weeks before the scheduled session. We ask that you distribute the parent permission forms to the sampled students.

- Most schools use implicit permission (such that students only return a form if their parent denies permission to participate), as this option lessens the burden on school staff and results in higher participation rates. If you are using this permission type, please keep track of any returned forms and record parent refusals

onto the student tracking form (STF), which will be provided with the permission forms.

- Some schools require explicit permission (we will need a signed form from every student). If your school requires explicit permission, parents are asked to return signed permission forms to the School Coordinator, or they may provide permission via text or the study website. Please keep track of the return of these forms on the STF. Make sure any returned forms have: one "box" checked, a parent/guardian signature (not just a printed name), and the name of the student. Your SF will inform you about any permissions received electronically.

Your MGLS:2017 SF will be in contact with you to track the return of permission forms. Reminder forms will be sent home as needed. The SF will check the permission forms on the day of the first session to make sure we do not include any student whose parents have not granted permission. Please keep the returned parent permission forms in a locked or secure location. At the end of the data collection, your SF will fax any returned forms from your school to a secure fax machine at RTI. Please let him/her know if you need to retain copies.

## Assist on Day of Student Sessions

The MGLS:2017 SF will arrive at the school about an hour before the first student session. To have valid results from the study, we need as many sampled students to participate as possible. **We are depending on you to make certain the students and teachers are aware of the date, time, and location for their participation and to generate enthusiasm.** This often makes the difference in high student participation. You may want to advertise MGLS:2017 throughout the school and classroom or make a PA announcement about the study the day before and the day of the session to generate interest and encourage participation.

We would also like for you or another staff person to remain in the room during the student session to help maintain order and assist as needed.

## Token of Appreciation

As a token of our appreciation for your time and effort with MGLS:2017, you will receive \$150 after the student session has been completed. Your school will receive <incentive>, and students will receive a small gift.

**THANK YOU** for your help in making MGLS:2017 a success!! We greatly appreciate your time and assistance.

[DATE]

[School name]

[Address 1]

[Address 2]

[City, state, zip]

Dear [Principal]:

We are writing to thank you and your school for your participation in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) this spring. The participation of schools like yours provides important information about student development, experiences, and transitions throughout the middle grades and their impact on student achievement. We particularly would like to thank [you/School Coordinator name] for working with us to coordinate the student sessions and ensure the study's success at your school. [if applicable: We have enclosed <incentive> as a token of our appreciation for the school's participation.]

[if the school enrolls grade 7: We will contact you again in the fall to identify those students who participated in the study that remain at the school for the 2018-2019 school year and those who have left. We will also begin coordinating the logistics for next year's data collection.] If you have any questions, please call us at (855) 500-1432 or email us at [mglis@rti.org](mailto:mglis@rti.org).

Thank you for partnering with MGLS:2017 to make the study a success. We wish you a wonderful summer.

Sincerely,

Dan Pratt

Project Director, MGLS:2017

Welcome to the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18. The study is also called MGLS:2017 for short. MGLS:2017 is a research study conducted by the U.S. Department of Education. We thank you for participating today.

MGLS:2017 is the first national study to learn about the experiences of students in grades six through eight. The study will help us understand what students learn during these grades, and about your experiences with your peers, teachers, school, and family.

You will use the computer to answer some questions about yourself, complete math and reading problems and to play two brain games. We will also measure your height and weight, which is important to understanding growth and development. The whole process will take approximately 90 minutes. After we finish today, we will give you a small gift to thank you for your participation.

When you answer the questions, you will move through each section a little differently. When you answer questions about yourself, you will be able to go back to previous questions if you need to review or change an answer. During the math section, you will only be able to go back to the last problem you completed. When you play the brain game or complete the reading section, you will not be able to go backwards. If you skip a question, you may see a box pop up on some items to ask if you want to consider answering the question. During the reading section, all items have to be answered.

If you want to have an item read out loud to you, you may click this icon [show icon].

The information and answers you give today will not be shared with your parents, teachers, or school. They may be used for research purposes only and may not be disclosed or used for any other purpose except as required by law. Participation in MGLS:2017 is voluntary, but also very important. You may skip any item you do not know or do not want to answer except in the reading section.

On this computer, you do not have a mouse. Instead you can use the track pad like this [DEMONSTRATE THE CHROMEBOOK AND USE OF THE TRACK PAD] and you can touch the screen to select answers or to make the text larger or smaller like this [DEMONSTRATE HOW TO DRAG THE CURSOR AROUND. DRAG YOUR THUMB AND FOREFINGER APART TO ZOOM IN AND THEN PINCH YOUR THUMB AND FOREFINGER TOGETHER TO ZOOM OUT]. To move from screen to screen, you should press NEXT to save your answer and move on to the next item.

The scratch paper next to your computer has graph paper on one side and is blank on the other side. [DEMONSTRATE PAPER AND SHOW BOTH SIDES]. If you need more scratch paper, please raise your hand.

You each received a card with a user ID and password. The password letters are case sensitive, so please type these carefully. Please enter the ID and password now. This should take you to the "Welcome" screen where you will see additional instructions. When you are asked to go to the measurement station, please bring your card with you.

If you need help or have any questions, please raise your hand.

Thank you for participating in MGLS:2017. Press next to begin.



[TO BE DISTRIBUTED IF SCHOOL REQUIRES HARDCOPY STUDENT ASSENT]

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)  
Student Assent Form**

You are being asked to participate in a national study called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). This study is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics within the U.S. Department of Education.

Your participation in MGLS:2017 is voluntary, and 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). Each student who participates will receive a small gift.

**Please check only one option below to indicate your decision to participate in the study.**

Yes, I will participate in MGLS:2017.

No, I will not participate in MGLS:2017.

PRINT your name here:

\_\_\_\_\_

SIGN your name here:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix MS1-E. Staff Data Collection Letters

### Teacher Recruitment Letter – Main Study MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]  
[TEACHER NAME]  
[SCHOOL NAME]  
[ADDR1]  
[ADDR2]  
[CITY STATE ZIP]

Website:  
Study ID: [ID]  
Password: [password]

Dear [TEACHER NAME],

[SCHOOL NAME] has graciously agreed to participate in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017), which is being administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. The study will focus on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and will be the first national study to follow a cohort of sixth-graders as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school. This MGLS:2017 data collection includes a teacher survey of approximately 3600 [MATH or SPECIAL EDUCATION] teachers in grade 6 around the country. 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. [FOR MATH TEACHERS ONLY: The survey will include several general questions about your background and experiences at school and in the classroom (about 20 minutes), as well as questions about specific students that are part of the study (about 10 minutes per student).] [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 (about 10 minutes), as well as questions about specific students that are part of the study (about 25 minutes per student).]

To access the questionnaire online, please use the web address and unique study ID and password provided on this letter. 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, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). 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 <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/MGLS/>

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:  
MGLS:2017 brochure  
List of endorsing organizations  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet

Administrator Data Collection Letter – Main Study  
MGLS Letterhead

[DATE]  
[ADMIN NAME]  
[SCHOOL NAME]  
[ADDR1]  
[ADDR2]  
[CITY STATE ZIP]

Website:  
Study ID: [ID]  
Password: [password]

Dear [ADMIN NAME],

Data collection for the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is now underway and we thank you for your school's continued participation in this important research. MGLS:2017, which is being administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, focuses on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills. MGLS:2017 will follow a nationally-representative cohort of sixth-graders as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school.

We are asking you to complete a 40-minute questionnaire to provide essential information about academic policies and programs, activities and curriculum in the school, and other school related experiences that impact student learning. To access the questionnaire online, please use the web address and unique study ID and password provided on this letter. We recommend gathering the following information in advance of completing the survey:

- Student attendance and matriculation information
- Student body demographics
- Math curriculum information
- School personnel counts
- State assessment scores
- Programs, services, and supports available for students with IEPs, and the percentage of students who use them

If there is someone at your school more knowledgeable about the students, teachers, programs, and services at your school, please provide him or her with this letter and enclosed information so that he or she may complete the survey for your school.

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, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [MGLS@rti.org](mailto:MGLS@rti.org). 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>.

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

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

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Enclosures:  
MGLS:2017 brochure  
List of endorsing organizations  
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) sheet

**MGLS:2017 Child Permission Form - Implicit Permission - Main Study**

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about a vitally important study of student learning being conducted in <our/your child's> school this spring. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will be the first national study to follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Your child's school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, to participate in MGLS:2017. A sample of students from your child's school will take part. Your child is one of approximately 20,000 students selected from across the United States to participate. The enclosed summary sheet provides background information about MGLS:2017, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. students in grade 6 can do in reading, math, and other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, it is important that each student selected take part in the study. In addition to answering reading and math questions, students will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves and provide height and weight measurements, which is important to understanding the growth and development of adolescents. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your child to take part. One parent of each selected student will also be asked to complete a questionnaire for the study, and information about that will come separately.

Completing the survey is voluntary for you and your child and there are no penalties for not participating. Your child may also skip any question he or she does not want to answer. All of the information collected is protected, as required by law. NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information your child provides 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 collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

As a thank you for participating, your child will be given a pair of earbuds used during the study and another small token of appreciation (e.g., keychain, pen). If you do not want your child to participate in the MGLS:2017 activities, please let us know by completing the attached form and returning it to the school.

For more information, please visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. You may also call the study hotline at (855) 500-1432 or send email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study.

Sincerely,  
[Signature]

Enclosures:  
Parent/Guardian Consent Form  
Frequently Asked Questions Sheet  
Brochure for MGLS:2017

**Parent/Guardian Implicit Permission Form – MGLS:2017**

Your child has been asked to participate in a study of student learning called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Student data will be collected in a 90-minute session during the school day. The student assessment will be administered by a team of researchers from RTI International, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

**If you give permission for your child to participate in MGLS:2017, you do not need to return this form. Please keep this copy for your records.**

**If you do not give permission for your child to participate in MGLS:2017, please check the box below, and sign and return this form to your child’s school as soon as possible.**

No, I do not give permission for my child to participate in MGLS:2017.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of parent or guardian)

Date of signature: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

**Please Print:**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

## MGLS:2017 Child Permission Form- Explicit Permission- Main Study

Dear Parent or Guardian,

This letter is to inform you about a vitally important study of student learning being conducted in <our/your child's> school this spring. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will be the first national study to follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Your child's school has accepted an invitation from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education, to participate in MGLS:2017. A sample of students from your child's school will take part. Your child is one of approximately 20,000 students selected from across the United States to participate. The enclosed summary sheet provides background information about MGLS:2017, explains what is involved for each student selected to participate in the study, and gives a contact phone number and email address where you can find answers to any questions you might have.

To have an accurate picture of what U.S. students in grade 6 can do in reading, math, and other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, it is crucial that each student selected take part in the study. In addition to answering reading and math questions, students will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire about themselves and provide height and weight measurements, which is important to understanding the growth and development of adolescents. I urge you to support this effort by encouraging your child to take part. One parent of each selected student will also be asked to complete a questionnaire for the study, and information about that will come separately.

Completing the survey is voluntary for you and your child and there are no penalties for not participating. Your child may also skip any question he or she does not want to answer. All of the information collected is protected, as required by law. NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information your child provides 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 collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

**To allow your child to participate in the MGLS:2017 activities, we must have your written permission. Please complete the attached form and return it to the school. If you prefer, you may also text [unique number] to [#####] to indicate your permission, or login to the study website to provide permission at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/> and enter Study ID: [parentID] and password: [password].**

As a thank you for participating, your child will be given a pair of earbuds and another small token of appreciation (e.g., keychain, pen). [IF PERMITTED BY THE SCHOOL: Students who return the attached form by [DATE] will be invited to a food event (e.g., lunch) sponsored by the study.]

For more information, please visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. You may also call the study hotline at (855) 500-1432 or send email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for taking the time to learn about this important study.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Enclosures:

Parent/Guardian Consent Form

Frequently Asked Questions Sheet

Brochure for MGLS:2017

**Parent/Guardian Explicit Permission Form – MGLS:2017**

Your child has been asked to participate in a study of student learning called the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). Student data will be collected in a 90-minute session during the school day. The student assessment will be administered by a team of researchers from RTI International, on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES).

**PLEASE CHECK ONE:**

Yes, I give permission for my child to participate in MGLS:2017.

No, I do not give permission for my child to participate in MGLS:2017.

I have read this permission form and understand what my child and I are being asked to do.

**PLEASE SIGN YOUR NAME BELOW:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Date of signature: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of parent or guardian)

**PLEASE PRINT:**

Student name: \_\_\_\_\_

School name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent email: \_\_\_\_\_

**FOR OFFICE USE ONLY:**

Student ID: \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix MS1-G. Parent Data Collection Letter

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Dear Parent or Guardian,

An important study of student learning is being conducted in your child's school this spring. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) will be the first national study to follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Data will be collected from students in grade 6 and from school administrators, teachers, and parents. Your child is one of approximately 20,000 students sampled from across the United States to participate. You may have already received a letter inviting your child to participate in MGLS:2017, or that letter will be coming to you in the next few weeks.

You are the best person to tell us about your family. We would greatly appreciate it if the person most knowledgeable about <student\_firstname>'s school and home life would complete a 40-minute online survey for the study. <IF INCENTIVE: As a token of our appreciation for being a part of the study, when you finish the survey either online or over the phone, you will receive a check for **[\$10 to \$50]**.>

**To access the parent survey, please log into:**  
**surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls**  
**Study ID: xxxxxxxx**  
**password: xxxxxxxx.**

The study is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. The enclosed materials provide more information about MGLS:2017. All of the information collected is protected, as required by law. NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information you and your child 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports. Completing the survey is voluntary for you and your child and there are no penalties for not participating. You may also skip any question you do not want to answer if you choose to participate.

For more information, please visit the study website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. You may also call the study hotline at (855) 500-1432 or send email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for supporting education by participating in this important study.

Sincerely,

<Name>  
<Title>

Enclosures:  
Study brochure  
Flyer



### MGLS:2017 Brochure Text – Main Study

#### **COVER**

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

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: RTI International

#### **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).

MGLS:2017

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-2018 (MGLS:2017) will follow a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect from the students, their families, and their schools data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education.

Your Participation

As part of the MGLS:2017, you are one of 900 schools, about 20,000 students, or about 3,600 teachers selected to participate across the United States. MGLS:2017 will be conducted in early 2018. 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: 855-500-1432

E-mail address: [mglis@rti.org](mailto:mglis@rti.org)

Website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/MGLS/>



## **Quick Facts about the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)**

- ✓ MGLS:2017 is a research study which will help educators, policymakers, and researchers learn about growth in math and reading as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the important, yet generally understudied, middle grade years.
- ✓ The study is longitudinal and follows a cohort of students from grade six through eight to fully understand the student middle grade experience.
- ✓ The MGLS:2017 student sessions will involve up to 40 randomly selected sixth-grade students at a given school and will take 90 minutes to complete.
- ✓ Students will provide data to the study through math, reading, and executive function assessments along with some survey questions. These assessments are different from the standardized tests administered to students by states and school districts.
- ✓ Participation in the study is not required, but participation of each selected student is very important to the study.
- ✓ This is not a high stakes test! Students' responses will not be reported to schools and do not affect student grades.

## MGLS:2017 FAQs – Main Study

MGLS Letterhead

**Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) -- 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. RTI International 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 sixth-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, and socioemotional well-being, 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?**

MGLS:2017 will begin in early 2018 with students in sixth grade. Planned follow-ups with the same students will occur in the winter/spring of 2019 and the winter/spring of 2020.

**Why is MGLS:2017 important?**

MGLS:2017 will help educators, researchers, and policymakers learn about student growth in math and reading as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the middle grade years. The data collected will provide a rich, descriptive picture of the experiences and lives of young adolescents during this critical time and will permit researchers to examine associations between contextual factors and student outcomes. Because mathematics and literacy skills are important for preparing students for high school and are linked with later education and career opportunities, the study is placing a focus on instruction and student growth in these areas.

**Why participate in MGLS:2017?**

Over the past two decades, education policy has become more data driven with a recognition of the importance of reliable and systematically collected information at the federal, state, and local levels. MGLS:2017 will provide, for the first time, national data for a longitudinal cohort that can be used to examine various aspects and components of middle grades education, as well as evidence about the effectiveness of middle grades programs and practices.

**How will my school benefit from participating in MGLS:2017?**

The value to you of participating in MGLS:2017 includes extrinsic benefits, such as monetary incentives, but the true value is an intrinsic one. It is your opportunity as a dedicated supporter and advocate of the middle grades to positively contribute to the success of middle grades education for our current and future principals, teachers, students, and parents. The benefits of participation in MGLS:2017 include: **Excitement**—the feeling of being part of the first national longitudinal study of the middle grades by the U.S. Department of Education; **Contribution**—you can take pride in knowing that you are making a positive contribution to the field of middle grades education; and **Understanding**—if enough of your school's students participate in the study, your school will receive a report showing how your students compare with students attending schools nationwide, as well as comparisons between your students and those at schools similar to yours on selected dimensions, such as public/private.

**How will MGLS:2017 data be used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 of and outcomes for students' with disabilities.

### **How many schools and students will be involved in MGLS:2017?**

MGLS:2017 will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 900 public and private schools.

### **What is involved for students?**

Students will complete a direct-assessment of their math, reading, and other skills important to learning. Each student will also be asked to complete a survey about his or her school, social, and home experiences, and provide height and weight measurements. The student session will take about 90 minutes. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

### **What is involved for school staff?**

A school administrator will be asked to complete an approximately 40-minute web-based questionnaire about the school and the school environment. The math teachers of students selected for 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/provider for selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student). Paper-and-pencil versions of the surveys may be available upon request.

### **What is involved for parents?**

One parent of each sampled student will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may also be available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

### **Who will be responsible for the student data collection?**

Trained MGLS:2017 staff will facilitate the completion of 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 assessment 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).

### **Why are height and weight data collected in MGLS:2017?**

Height and weight measurements are important in understanding physical growth, puberty status, and obesity status at this important time of growth for adolescents. By collecting this data annually over the three years of the study, we will be able to better understand how physical growth patterns affect student learning and socioemotional well-being.

### **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. 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?**

NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35). 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). 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. The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

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

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [mgl@rti.org](mailto:mgl@rti.org). 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 <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/MGLS/>.

# MGLS:2017 Parent FAQs – Main Study

MGLS Letterhead

## Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) -- 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. RTI International 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 sixth-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, and socioemotional well-being, 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?**

MGLS:2017 will begin in early 2018 with students in sixth grade. Planned follow-ups with the same students will occur in the winter/spring of 2019 and the winter/spring of 2020.

### **Why is MGLS:2017 important?**

MGLS:2017 will help educators, researchers, and policymakers learn about student growth in math and reading as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the middle grade years. The data collected will provide a rich, descriptive picture of the experiences and lives of young adolescents during this critical time and will permit researchers to examine associations between contextual factors and student outcomes. Because mathematics and literacy skills are important for preparing students for high school and are linked with later education and career opportunities, the study is placing a focus on instruction and student growth in these areas.

### **Why participate in MGLS:2017?**

Parents contribute vital information on the home learning environment, students' school experiences, their own involvement in their child's learning, and characteristics about the household. Over the past two decades, education policy has become more data driven with a recognition of the importance of reliable and systematically collected information at the federal, state, and local levels. MGLS:2017 will provide, for the first time, national data for a longitudinal cohort that can be used to examine various aspects and components of middle grades education, as well as evidence about the effectiveness of middle grades programs and practices.

### **How will MGLS:2017 data be used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 of and outcomes for students' with disabilities.

### **How many schools and students will be involved in MGLS:2017?**

MGLS:2017 will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 900 public and private schools.

### **What is involved for students?**

Students will complete a session made up of math and reading questions and one or more computerized games to assess executive function skills, or skills that help a person to organize and act on information. Students will also provide height and weight measurements and complete a student survey. The student session will take about 90 minutes and will be completed in schools on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades,

respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools. Students will be given a pair of earbuds used during the assessment and another small token of appreciation (e.g., keychain, pen).

**What is involved for parents?**

One parent of each sampled student will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be also available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

**Why are height and weight data collected in MGLS:2017?**

Height and weight measurements are important in understanding physical growth, puberty status, and obesity status at this important time of growth for adolescents. By collecting this data annually over the three years of the study, we will be able to better understand how physical growth patterns affect student learning and socioemotional well-being.

**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.

**My child has a disability and is not in a general education setting. Do I still need to participate?**

This study is interested in learning how all students learn and grow in this age range. Even if your child is not able to participate in the school session, we invite you to participate in the survey.

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

NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35). 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). 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. The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

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

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). 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 <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/MGLS/>.

## MGLS:2017 Teacher FAQs – Main Study

### MGLS Letterhead

#### Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) -- 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. RTI International 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 sixth-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, and socioemotional well-being, 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?**

MGLS:2017 will begin in early 2018 with students in sixth grade. Planned follow-ups with the same students will occur in the winter/spring of 2019 and the winter/spring of 2020.

##### **Why is MGLS:2017 important?**

MGLS:2017 will help educators, researchers, and policymakers learn about student growth in math and reading as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the middle grade years. The data collected will provide a rich, descriptive picture of the experiences and lives of young adolescents during this critical time and will permit researchers to examine associations between contextual factors and student outcomes. Because mathematics and literacy skills are important for preparing students for high school and are linked with later education and career opportunities, the study is placing a focus on instruction and student growth in these areas.

##### **Why participate in MGLS:2017?**

Teachers are uniquely positioned to provide crucial information about instructional practices, planning, classroom characteristics, classroom climate, as well as individualized information about their students in the study. Over the past two decades, education policy has become more data driven with a recognition of the importance of reliable and systematically collected information at the federal, state, and local levels. MGLS:2017 will provide, for the first time, national data for a longitudinal cohort that can be used to examine various aspects and components of middle grades education, as well as evidence about the effectiveness of middle grades programs and practices.

##### **How will my school benefit from participating in MGLS:2017?**

The value to you of participating in MGLS:2017 includes extrinsic benefits, such as monetary incentives, but the true value is an intrinsic one. It is your opportunity as a dedicated supporter and advocate of the middle grades to positively contribute to the success of middle grades education for our current and future principals, teachers, students, and parents. The benefits of participation in MGLS:2017 include: **Excitement**—the feeling of being part of the first national longitudinal study of the middle grades by the U.S. Department of Education; **Contribution**—you can take pride in knowing that you are making a positive contribution to the field of middle grades education; and **Understanding**—if enough of your school's students participate in the study, your school will receive a report showing how your students compare with students attending schools nationwide, as well as comparisons between your students and those at schools similar to yours on selected dimensions, such as public/private.

##### **How will MGLS:2017 data be used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 of and outcomes for students' with disabilities.

### **How many schools and students will be involved in MGLS:2017?**

MGLS:2017 will involve a nationally representative sample of about 20,000 students enrolled in grade 6 from about 900 public and private schools.

### **What is involved for students?**

Students will complete a direct-assessment of their math, reading, and other skills important to learning. Each student will also be asked to complete a survey about his or her school, social, and home experiences, and provide height and weight measurements. The student session will take about 90 minutes. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2019 and spring of 2020, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

### **What is involved for school staff?**

A school administrator will be asked to complete an approximately 40-minute web-based questionnaire about the school and the school environment. The math teachers of students selected for 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/provider for selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 20 minutes per student). Paper-and-pencil versions of the surveys may be available upon request.

### **Is there any information I need to gather before beginning the teacher survey?**

Teachers will be asked both about their own background and about specific students participating in the study. Gathering materials that provide information on student performance and behavior (such as your planning, attendance, and/or grade books) may help navigate the survey quickly. Math teachers should also be prepared to answer questions about the content of their math courses, including information about the textbooks and instructional practices used.

### **Some of my students did not participate in the student session although they were selected. Do I still need to complete the teacher survey?**

This study is interested in learning how students of all abilities learn and grow in this age range. Even if a student does not participate in the student session, we will ask teachers to complete the survey to provide information about the student's academic and social skills. This ensures that the study takes into account all students as they move through the middle grades.

### **What is involved for parents?**

One parent of each sampled student will complete a questionnaire via a web survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be also available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

### **Who will be responsible for the student data collection?**

Trained MGLS:2017 staff will facilitate the completion of 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 assessment 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).

### **Why are height and weight data collected in MGLS:2017?**

Height and weight measurements are important in understanding physical growth, puberty status, and obesity status at this important time of growth for adolescents. By collecting this data annually over the three years of the study, we will be able to better understand how physical growth patterns affect student learning and socioemotional well-being.

### **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. 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. Students will be given a pair of earbuds used during the assessment and another small token of appreciation (e.g., keychain, pen).

### **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?**

NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported



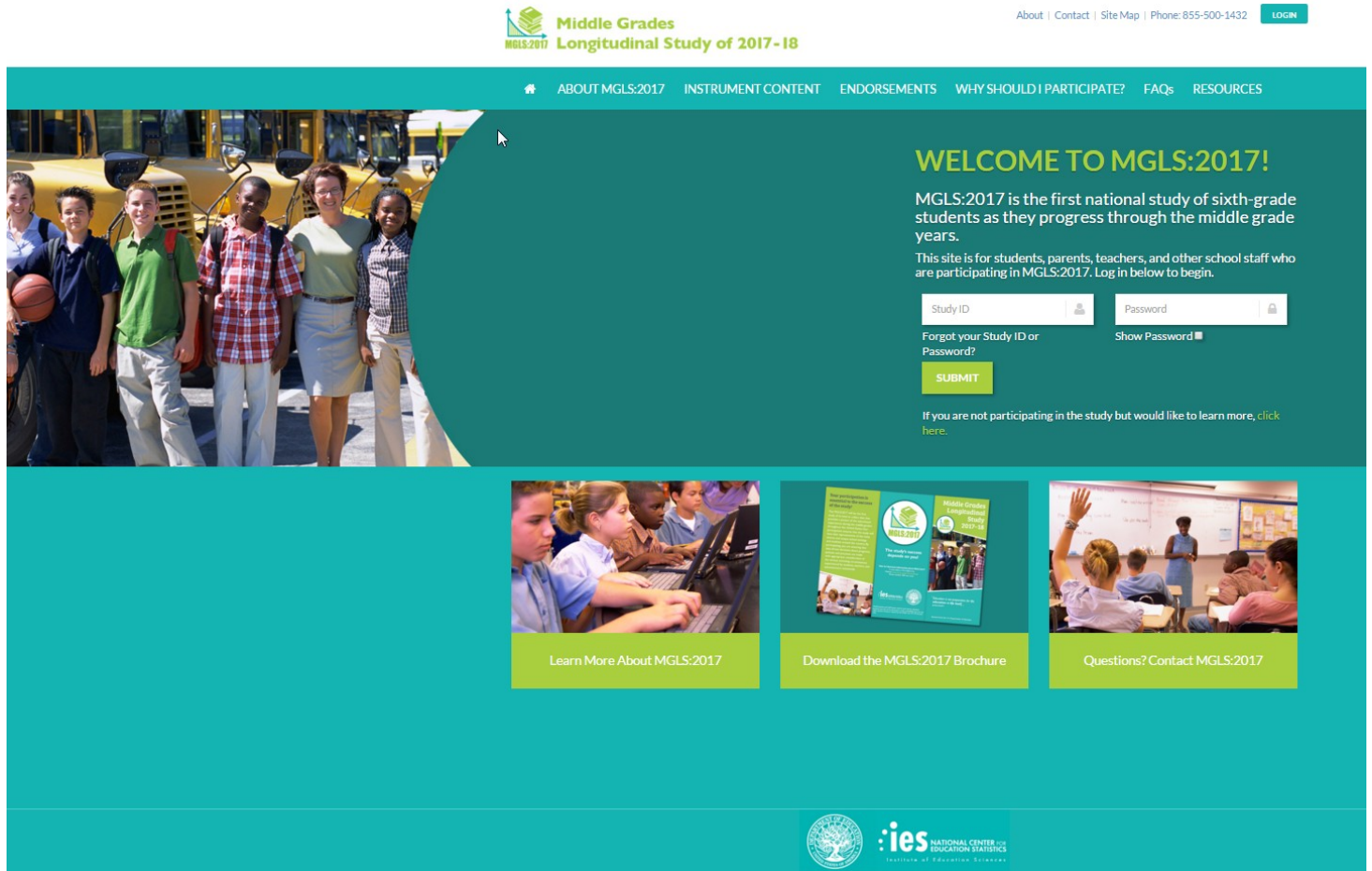
education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3) and 99.35). All of the information you provide may be used only for statistical purposes and may not be disclosed, or used, in identifiable form for any other purpose except as required by law (20 U.S.C. §9573 and 6 U.S.C. §151). 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. The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.

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

For additional information, call the MGLS:2017 information number, 855-500-1432, or send an email to [mgl@rti.org](mailto:mgl@rti.org). 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 <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/MGLS/>.

The recruitment website is used to provide information to school staff and parents about the study. The website also serves as a portal to securely upload student list information and complete the parent and school staff questionnaires. A screenshot of the study homepage and several other pages in the website are provided here as examples. Additional content proposed for the Main Study recruitment and data collection website is reflected in the text provided in this appendix.

The study home page



<MGLS:2017 study phone number will appear in header on every page>

<Login box will appear in header on every page><MGLS:2017 StudyID><Password>

Welcome to MGLS:2017! MGLS:2017 is the first national study of sixth-grade students as they progress through the middle grade years.

This site is designed to assist school staff, session facilitators, parents, and students who are participating in MGLS:2017. Login to begin.

If you are not participating in the study but would like to learn more, click here

Login <study id><password>

< link to Home page>

<link to About MGLS:2017>

<link to Content>

<link to Endorsements>

<Link to Why Should I Participate?>

<link to FAQs>

<link to Resources>

<link to Learn More About MGLS:2017 in footer>

<link to MGLS:2017 Brochure>

Questions? Contact MGLS <Study phone number> <study email address>

## **About MGLS:2017**

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is a new, unprecedented national study of middle grade students being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education. RTI International is carrying out the MGLS:2017 data collection on behalf of NCES. MGLS:2017 will gather information about the development and learning that occur during students' middle-grade years, or grades 6 through 8. In particular, it will identify school, individual, social, and contextual factors that predict future student success.

### **Sample and Data Collection Schedule:**

The Operational Field Test occurred in early 2017 with a sample of about 1,200 students in sixth grade from about 50 schools. Follow-up data collections will occur in the spring of 2018 and spring of 2019, when students are in the seventh and eighth grades, respectively, regardless of whether they have changed schools.

The Main Study will take place in the spring of 2018 and a sample of about 20,000 students in sixth grade from about 900 schools will participate. Planned follow-ups with students, parents, and school staff will occur in the spring of 2019 and 2020.

### **What is involved for participants of MGLS:2017?**

What is involved for students? Students will complete a math and reading assessment and complete one or more computerized games to assess executive function skills, or skills that help a person to organize and act on information. Students will also provide height and weight measurements and complete a student survey. The student session will take approximately 90 minutes and will be completed in schools on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard.

What is involved for school administrators? School administrators will be asked to complete the approximately 40-minute school administrator web-based survey about the school and the school environment.

What is involved for math teachers? Math teachers of students selected for the study will complete the math teacher survey 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).

What is involved for special education teachers? Special education teachers/providers for students selected to participate in the study with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete the special education teacher survey 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 20 minutes per student).

What is involved for parents? Parents of each sampled student will complete the parent survey or a telephone interview. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request. The questionnaire will take about 40 minutes to complete.

### **What is the purpose of the MGLS:2017:**

MGLS:2017 will help researchers and policymakers learn about growth in math and reading as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the important, yet generally understudied, middle grade years.

### **How Will the Data be Used?**

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine student development and achievement through this important stage of students' education 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 a diverse group of students.

### **Organizations Conducting and Collecting MGLS:2017 Data:**

MGLS:2017 is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the primary federal statistical agency for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the United States. NCES is located within the Institute of Education Sciences of the U.S. Department of Education. NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students’ education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35).

The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization.

### **Confidentiality:**

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). Under contract with NCES, RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization, administers MGLS:2017 on behalf of NCES. NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students’ education records from education agencies and institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). 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).

All RTI project staff have signed confidentiality agreements and affidavits of nondisclosure and are prohibited by law from using the obtained information for any purposes other than this research study.

You may review the Confidentiality Agreements and Affidavit of Nondisclosure statements (pdf, 81KB) that are signed by project staff.

A nondisclosure form is also required before informing districts which schools are selected for the study. We take the confidentiality of participating schools seriously and limit disclosure to those who need to know to make informed decisions about school and student participation in the study. A copy of the nondisclosure agreement may be accessed [here](#).

You may also review the procedures that govern NCES and RTI International to protect identifiable information.

### **Instrument Content:**

A key goal of the study is to provide researchers and policymakers with the information they need to better understand the school and non-school influences associated with mathematics and reading success, socioemotional health, and positive life development during the middle-grade years and beyond.

Select an instrument to learn more about its content

< A graphic box will be displayed listing each instrument. Clicking on the box brings up the content page, which is found in appendix MS1-K to R.>

## Endorsements



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## Why Should I Participate?

You are uniquely positioned to provide the much-needed information integral to the success of this comprehensive study of students as they enter and move through the middle grades. The study's success hinges on being able to provide crucial national information on these students' learning and contexts for development. Your participation will help ensure the study captures the diverse and unique experiences of students as they progress across the middle grade years.

**Schools** provide essential information on contexts for learning.

**Teachers** (mathematics teachers and special education teachers/providers) have the opportunity to provide crucial information about instructional practices, planning, classroom characteristics, classroom climate, as well as individualized information about their students in the study in terms of social skills, classroom behaviors, and learning supports.

**Parents** contribute vital information on the home learning environment, students' school experiences, their own involvement in their child's learning, and characteristics about the household.

**Students** will have the opportunity to let us know about their school experiences, activities, and their educational aspirations. To contribute to the understanding of learning and development across the middle grade years, the study also collects invaluable information about students' reading, math, and executive function, which includes skills that help them organize and act on information.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

[Home](#) / [Frequently Asked Questions](#)

Click on a question below to view additional information:

- What is MGLS:2017? +
- What is the focus of MGLS:2017? +
- When is the study being conducted? +
- Why participate in the field test of MGLS:2017? +
- How will MGLS:2017 data be used? +
- How many schools and students will be involved in the first phase of the study? +
- What is involved for students? +
- What is involved for school staff? +
- What is involved for parents? +
- Who will be responsible for data collection? +
- Do teachers need to help administer the assessments? +
- Are there incentives for participating schools? +
- What happens if a student refuses to participate? +
- Will the names of participants and their responses be kept confidential? +
- Who do I contact for further information about MGLS:2017? +

<**Frequently Asked Questions:** The FAQ text is provided in Appendix MS1-I. <Frequently Asked Questions: The FAQ text is provided in Appendix MS1-I. The text will include all questions from the three different versions with a note indicating they are specifically for parents or teachers where applicable.>

## Resources

## RESOURCES

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### Links to Resources

- [MGLS:2017 Brochure](#)
- [Student Roster Request Letter and Upload Instructions](#)
- [Parent Permission Letter](#)
- [How is MGLS different from state and local assessments?](#)



<The resources page provides links to files in Appendices MS1-F, MS1-H, and MS1-S (with upload instructions on the next page)>

## Contact

## CONTACT US

### Phone and Email

855-500-1432  
[mglsl@rti.org](mailto:mglsl@rti.org)

### Questions or Comments? Use this form.

<input type="text" value="Enter First Name"/>	<input type="text" value="Enter Last Name"/>
<input type="text" value="Enter Email"/>	<input type="text" value="Enter Phone number"/>
<input type="text" value="Write your message"/>	
<input type="submit" value="SUBMIT"/>	



## Main Study text

Questions or Comments? Use this form.

# MGLS:2017- after login

## Student Roster Upload

Welcome!

Your participation in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 is very important.

MGLS:2017 data will allow researchers, educators, and policymakers to examine family and educational factors related to students' achievement. Please complete the tasks in the list below with a green arrow next to them.

### Request for Initial Roster – Step 1

Thank you for providing your school's student roster. If you need assistance, please contact the Help Desk at 1-855-500-1432 or [mglsl@rti.org](mailto:mglsl@rti.org). Please complete the following steps:

1. Provide your contact information <name>, <e-mail address>, <telephone number> ,<school name>
2. Download the Student Roster Template
  - a. Save the Student Roster Template on your computer
3. Prepare the Student Roster Template
  - a. List all students in Grade 6
  - b. For each student, please enter the following information:
    - Student information
      - i. District/School Student ID number
      - ii. Student's name (First, Middle, Last, Suffix)
      - iii. Grade
      - iv. Date of birth (MM/DD/YY)
      - v. Sex (M/F)
      - vi. Race/ethnicity
      - vii. IEP Status
      - viii. Disability code (if applicable)
    - Parent contact information (associated with each student)
      - i. Parent's name (first and last name)
      - ii. Parent's mailing address (street, city, state, zip)
      - iii. Parent's email address
      - iv. Parent's home phone number
      - v. Parent's cell phone number
    - Math/Special Education Teacher/Provider Information (associated with each student)
      - i. Student's math teacher (first and last name)
      - ii. Student's math teacher's email address
      - iii. Student's math course name
      - iv. Student's math course period/section
      - v. Student's special education teacher/provider (first and last name, if applicable)
      - vi. Student's special education teacher's/provider's email address (if applicable)
4. Upload the completed Student Roster Template
  - a. Please use the corresponding "Upload" button to upload the completed Student Roster Template
5. Finalize Student Roster Template
  - a. Once steps 1 through 4 above have been completed, please click the button below to finalize your school's Student Roster Template.

### Student Sample and Request for Additional Information – Step 2

Stage 1 – Review your school's list of sampled students

Please review the sampled student list and, if any information is missing and/or in need of correction, proceed to "Stage 2" below.



## Stage 2 – Update student information

If any information associated with your sampled students was noticed to be incomplete (such as missing parent contact information or teacher information) and/or in error in “stage 1”, please follow the steps below.

5. Download list of Sampled Students (Excel spreadsheet file)
  - a. Save the template on your computer
6. Prepare Sampled Student File (downloaded in Step 1)
  - a. For each sampled student, add any missing information (parent contacts, teacher information, etc.)
7. Upload the completed Sampled Student File
  - a. Please use the corresponding “Upload” button to upload the completed template.
8. Finalize Sampled Student Template
  - a. Once steps 1 through 3 above have been completed, please click the “Finalize” button below to finalize your school’s Sampled Student Template.

## **Provide parent and teacher information [for sampled students; if unable to provide for entire enrollment list]**

Below are instructions for providing the parent contact information and student math and special education teacher/provider information after the student sample has been selected if you are unable to provide this information for the entire student enrollment list. [Please note, this action can only be completed after the student enrollment list has been uploaded and you have been notified that the student sample has been selected at your school]

1. Click on the link “Parent and Teacher Contact Information” to download an Excel spreadsheet.
2. Save the Excel spreadsheet to your computer.
3. Student information will be pre-filled for all students selected to participate in MGLS:2017.
4. Prepare your document containing the requested information:
  - a. Parent contact information
    - i. Parent’s name (first and last name)
    - ii. Parent’s mailing address (street, city, state, zip)
    - iii. Parent’s email address
    - iv. Parent’s home phone number
    - v. Parent’s cell phone number
  - b. Math/Special Education Teacher/Provider Information (associated with each student)
    - i. Student’s math teacher (first and last name)
    - ii. Student’s math teacher’s email address
    - iii. Student’s math course name
    - iv. Student’s math course period/section
    - v. Student’s special education teacher/provider (first and last name, if applicable)
    - vi. Student’s special education teacher’s/provider’s email address (if applicable)
5. When you have added all of the requested parent and teacher information to the Excel spreadsheet, go to the file menu in Excel and click save.
6. Go back to the MGLS:2017 website and click the corresponding BROWSE button.
7. Find the location where you saved the Excel spreadsheet containing the student information and click open. This will automatically start the upload process.
8. When a completed file has been uploaded, click the FINALIZE button at the bottom of the webpage.
9. Call 855-500-1432 if you need assistance.

### 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 Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs (bullets represent learning progression)	<p><b>Number System</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• finding common factors and multiples</li><li>• comparing fractions</li><li>• applying basic operations with fractions and integers to word problems</li><li>• using basic operations</li><li>• representing and understanding rational numbers in multiple forms</li><li>• understanding the relative size of irrational numbers</li></ul> <p><b>Proportional Relationships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• extending students' understanding of the number system</li><li>• multiplying and dividing fractions and multiplicative thinking</li><li>• understanding basic concepts of ratio, rate and proportional relationships</li><li>• using rational numbers to solve problems and understand slope and functions</li></ul> <p><b>Expressions and Equations</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understanding the use of expressions beginning with letter representations of a single number</li><li>• applying knowledge of rational numbers and operations to solve equations</li><li>• constructing equations and inequalities to solve real-world problems</li><li>• recognizing different types of notation (such as square root)</li><li>• reasoning with equalities and inequalities</li><li>• solving and representing linear equations and inequalities</li></ul> <p><b>Functions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• understanding the definition of a function</li><li>• comparing functions represented in different ways</li><li>• distinguishing between linear and nonlinear functions</li><li>• comparing and creating representations of different functions</li><li>• understanding of functions to context</li></ul>

### Direct Reading Assessment

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	25 minutes (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Two-stage, computerized assessment using Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p><b>Word Recognition &amp; Decoding</b> 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><b>Vocabulary</b> 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><b>Morphological Awareness</b> 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><b>Sentence Processing</b> 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><b>Efficiency of Basic Reading Comprehension (MAZE task)</b> 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 grades 6 and 7. 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><b>Reading Comprehension</b> 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>

### Direct Executive Function Assessment

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	10 minutes, 2 measures (part of 90 minute student assessment and survey)
Mode of administration	Computerized administration using Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, that will be brought in to the school by the study
Key constructs	<p><b>Working memory (N-back tasks)</b> 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><b>Cognitive flexibility (Hearts and Flowers task)</b> 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> <p><b>Inhibitory control (Hearts and Flowers task)</b> 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 Hearts and Flowers task provides information on inhibitory control (in addition to cognitive flexibility or shifting) in the incongruent condition.</p>

**Student Survey**

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

**Parent Survey**

Approximate length Goal for Main Study	40 minutes
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link, with a telephone-based interview option available. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student demographics</li> </ul> <p>Family Roster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family demographics</li> <li>• Household composition</li> </ul> <p>Family and Parent Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language (student uses most, family primary language)</li> <li>• Parent education</li> </ul> <p>Home Life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent-child relationship—monitoring/disclosure</li> <li>• Risk-taking and risky behaviors (i.e. students’ sensation seeking behaviors and parents’ report of students’ deviant behaviors)</li> <li>• Community perspectives (poverty, crime, victimization)</li> </ul> <p>Child’s School Experiences</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent contact/communication with school</li> <li>• Disciplinary actions taken by school</li> <li>• Grade progression (retention, early promotion)</li> <li>• ESL participation</li> <li>• Student free- and reduced-price lunch eligibility</li> </ul> <p>Child Health and Well-Being</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health and physical well-being</li> <li>• IEP and Disability Details</li> </ul> <p>Employment and Income</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parent occupation</li> <li>• Family income</li> <li>• Family assets</li> </ul> <p>Mobility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobility (number of school changes)</li> </ul> <p>Parent Involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Conversation about math courses</li> <li>• Conversation about going to college</li> <li>• Conversation about jobs or careers</li> <li>• Academic expectations</li> </ul>

### Mathematics Teacher Survey

Approximate length	20 minutes for teacher background and classroom characteristics; 10 minutes per student report
Goal for Main Study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>Teacher background and classroom characteristics</p> <p>Student and Classroom Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Class size (number of students)</li><li>• Course type</li><li>• Heterogeneity in math ability</li><li>• Classroom climate (e.g., misbehavior)</li></ul> <p>Classroom Mathematics Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Curriculum/textbook used</li><li>• Opportunities to learn (length of course)</li><li>• Content covered in course (Common Core &amp; practice standards)</li><li>• Instructional practice/pedagogy</li><li>• Availability and use of classroom resources</li></ul> <p>Views on Teaching and School Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instruction in self-contained classrooms or departmentalized</li><li>• Factors for determining math course (take a test, prerequisite)</li><li>• Teacher efficacy</li><li>• Instructional leadership</li><li>• Academic culture (high standards and expectations)</li><li>• Teaching climate</li></ul> <p>Teacher Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Education and degree (courses in math and math education)</li><li>• Years of experience</li><li>• Certification</li><li>• Demographic information</li></ul> <p>Teacher provided information on individual students</p> <p>Mathematical Thinking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Math class performance</li></ul> <p>Social Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Approaches to learning</li><li>• Externalizing behaviors</li><li>• Social skills and positive behavior</li></ul> <p>Classroom Behaviors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Academic engagement (behavioral and cognitive)</li><li>• Attendance</li></ul> <p>Student and Classroom Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Math support services (tutoring, pull-out, instruction frequency)</li></ul>

### Special Education Teacher/Provider Survey

Approximate length	10 minutes for background; 25 minutes per student report
Goal for Main Study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>Teacher background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teacher Assignment or Position<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Teaching Assignment or Position</li><li>• Instruction and instructional environment</li></ul></li><li>Teacher Background and Education<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demographic information</li><li>• Experiences and Training</li></ul></li><li>Teacher Experience<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Years of experience</li></ul></li></ul> <p>Teacher provided information on specific students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Student Grade and IEP Status<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Student Grade and IEP status</li></ul></li><li>Student's Disability and Services<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Primary disability</li><li>• Special education and related services</li></ul></li><li>Student's Instruction and Instructional Environment<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Instruction and instructional environment</li></ul></li><li>Communication About Student<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Communication with general education teacher</li></ul></li><li>Student Goals, Performance, and Expectations<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IEP goals and evaluation</li><li>• Teacher's expectations for student</li><li>• Academic &amp; life skills</li></ul></li></ul>



**School Administrator Survey**

Approximate length	40 minutes
Goal for Main Study	
Mode of administration	Web-based administration accessible by individualized link. A paper-and-pencil version of the survey may be available upon request.
Key constructs	<p>School Characteristics</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School characteristics (e.g., average daily attendance, tuition)</li><li>• Student population (e.g., percent IEP, percent ELL/LEP)</li><li>• Providing additional support for struggling students (tutoring, extra assistance, pull-out, homework assistance)</li></ul> <p>Services and Supports for Students with Disabilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• IEP/Disability-School services and programs</li></ul> <p>School Programs and Practices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Courses offered: for particular courses ask about the number of slots available</li><li>• Subject-specific academic tracking practices (order/progression of courses)</li><li>• School extended learning opportunities: additional instruction time, Gifted and Talented, International Baccalaureate</li><li>• Assisting students with transitions from elementary to middle grades; from middle grades to high school</li><li>• Health services (e.g., sex education classes)</li></ul> <p>School Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Problems at school: absenteeism, student mobility, student misconduct, bullying</li><li>• School-level security (police officer on site, security officer on site, metal detectors, teachers supervise hallways during transition)</li><li>• Community perspectives (poverty, crime, victimization)</li></ul> <p>School's Teachers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• School's teachers: number, preparation</li></ul> <p>School Administrator Background</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demographic information</li><li>• Years of experience</li></ul>

### Request for Student Roster Information from Schools

[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 Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (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 sixth grade at your school, including ungraded students whose primary IEP designations are one of the 3 focal IEP categories. 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) (20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99). For the purposes of this collection of data, FERPA permits education agencies and institutions to disclose personally identifiable information from students' education records, without consent, to authorized representatives of the Secretary of Education in connection with an evaluation of federally supported education programs (34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). Student data are subject to strict protections that are adhered to by NCES and its contractor organizations. Roster information will be securely destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes specified in 34 CFR §99.35.

The key characteristics of interest include:

- Name
- District/School Student identification number
- Date of birth
- Grade level
- Sex
- Race/ethnicity
- IEP status (Disability codes, if applicable)
- ELL status
- Students' parent and/or guardians contact information
- Students' math teacher(s)
- Students' special education teacher/provider (if applicable)
- Parent contact information
  - Name (last, first)
  - Parent Street address, City, State, Zip
  - Home phone number
  - Cell phone number
  - E-mail address
- Student's Math Teacher Name (last, first)
- Student's Math Teacher Email Address
- Student's Math Course Name
- Student's Math Course Period/Section
- Student's Special Education Teacher(s)/Provider(s) (list all if applicable)
- Student's Special Education Teacher(s)/Provider(s) email address

We have developed a form to provide guidance for preparing the student roster. You may access and submit the form via the study website. To access the form, please go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls> and enter user ID: xxxxxxxx and password: xxxxxxxx. To protect the students' data, you will be asked to change your password after the initial login.

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 RTI International, which is administering MGLS:2017 on behalf of NCES, will contact you to discuss the best way of obtaining student roster information. Although we have provided a roster form for you, we are happy to collect this information in a different format if that is more 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 855-500-1432 or [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org).

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

Sincerely,

Dan Pratt, Project Director

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Email and Registration text



## Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

### Webinar Registration

Event Registration

#### Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)

Wed, 5 Apr 2017 01:00 PM EDT - 02:00 PM EDT  
Duration: 1 hour(s)

If you have registered with us before, please [click here](#)  
Fields marked with (\*) are mandatory.

Are you passionate about middle grades education? Interested in an unprecedented new study designed to fill the gap in national data related to this critical developmental stage of adolescence?

Register using Email

Join representatives from the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and RTI International for a webinar to learn more about the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017), the first nationally representative longitudinal study of middle grade students.

MGLS:2017 data will provide a rich, descriptive picture of the experiences and lives of adolescents to help educators, researchers, and policymakers examine associations between contextual factors and student outcomes. Growth in math and reading, as well as family and school factors that encourage success during the middle-grade years, will be the focus of MGLS:2017, which will provide evidence about the effectiveness of middle-grades programs and practices.

Superintendents, principals, school leaders, teachers, and anyone with an interest in middle grades education are invited to learn more about this exciting study!

[MGLS:2017 Study Website](#)

Email Address \*

First Name \*

Last Name \*

Title \*

Organization

City

State

Submit

Reset

Submit a Question

# An Overview of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017)

Getting from *Maybe...* to *Yes!* with our nation's schools



## The MGLS:2017 Team

- National Center for Education Statistics



Chris Chapman (presenter)  
Associate Commissioner  
Sample Surveys



Gail Mulligan  
Branch Chief  
Longitudinal Surveys



Carolyn Fidelman  
MGLS:2017  
Project Officer

- RTI International (Data collection contractor)



Dan Pratt  
RTI Project Director



Debbie Herget (presenter)  
RTI Assoc. Project Director

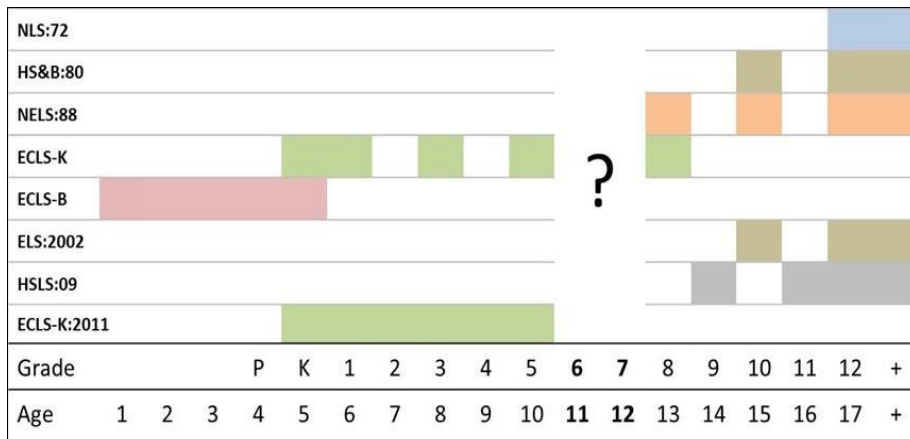


Kimrey Millar  
Recruitment Lead

## What is MGLS:2017?

- A longitudinal study of sixth-graders being conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (Institute of Education Sciences/U.S. Department of Education)
- First study to follow a nationally representative sample of sixth-grade students as they enter and move through the middle grades
- Measurement of student growth in mathematics and reading and aspects of their instruction in these subjects
- Data to allow researchers to examine associations between executive function, contextual factors, and student outcomes

## History and the Gap in Data



## Key Study Features

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- Nationally representative sample of sixth-grade students in the 2017-18 school year
- Public and private schools and their students
- Schools with different grade configurations
- Representative of students in three IDEA-defined disability groups
- Longitudinal study will follow students for 3 years regardless of whether they are promoted to the next grade or change schools

## Challenges

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### **For the study:**

- Getting and keeping our randomly selected sample of schools and students in the study to meet goals related to data quality.

### **For schools and districts:**

- Protecting the time of your students and staff by carefully considering your decision to participate in voluntary research.

## What do schools get for participating?

- Choice of monetary or cash equivalent token of appreciation
- Aggregate school-level results comparing the school to other similar schools and to the national averages\*
- Information about how to access data tools and reports

\* dependent upon sample size and student participation

## Products and Reports

- National reports
  - Descriptive reports of the characteristics of the cohort of students, their families, their teachers, and their schools
  - Analytic reports on various policy-relevant topics
- Data files developed for statistical analysis
  - Used for policy briefs, academic journal articles, dissertations, and master's theses
  - Restricted-use data and public-use data from grade 6 data collection available in late 2019
  - Online data tools and training



## Schedule

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- Cohort of ~20,000 students in grade 6 in winter/spring 2018
- School district and school recruitment for main study to begin in mid- to late April
- Follow-ups in winter/spring 2019 and winter/spring 2020

## Multiple Instruments and Respondents

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- Student assessments and questionnaire
- Parent questionnaire
- Two-part math teacher & special education teacher questionnaires
  - Classroom and background information
  - Teacher/student reports
- School administrator questionnaire
- Facilities checklist
- School records/transcripts (in future)

## Multiple Instruments and Respondents

<p><b>Student</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Math and reading assessments</li> <li>• Executive function “brain games”</li> <li>• Survey</li> <li>• Height/weight measurements</li> </ul>	<p><b>Math Teacher &amp; Special Education Teacher</b></p> <p>Two part questionnaire:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Classroom and professional preparation</li> <li>• Teacher/ student reports</li> </ul>	<p><b>School Administrator</b></p> <p>Characteristics of the school, school programs, and school policies</p> <p>Characteristics of the school administrator</p>
<p><b>Parent</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Family characteristics</li> <li>• Activities students engage in out of school</li> </ul>	<p><b>Facilities Checklist</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical aspects of the building</li> <li>• Presence of facilities like gyms/computer labs</li> </ul>	<p><b>School records/ transcripts (future)</b></p> <p>Courses taken</p> <p>GPA</p>

MGLS: 201711

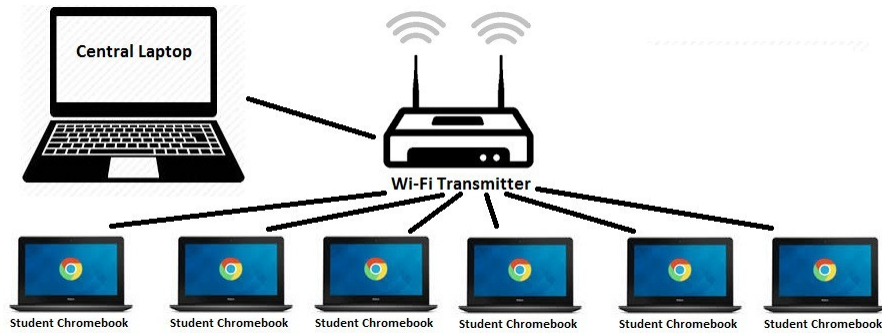
## Student Data Collection



MGLS: 2017

12

## Student Data Collection



## MGLS:2017 will be used to study...

- Students' 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;
- Impact of school configuration; and
- School progress and outcomes of students with disabilities.

## NCES Data Resources

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- Electronic Codebooks (ECB) and
- Public-use or restricted-use data files
  - Example from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011)  
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2013060>
- Distance Learning Dataset Training at  
<http://nces.ed.gov/training/datauser/>

## How can you help?

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- If we contact your school district or school to participate, please say:

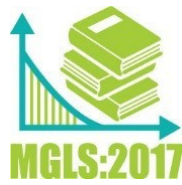
**YES!**

More information? Questions?

[mgl@rti.org](mailto:mgl@rti.org)

855-500-1432

<http://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgl/>



## Appendix OFT2-A. MGLS:2017 District Notification Letter

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[DATE]

[DistSuptName]

[DistrictName]

[Address]

[CitySTZip]

Dear Superintendent,

During the 2016-2017 school year, one or more schools in your district graciously participated in the Operational Field Test (OFT) phase of the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). I am writing to thank you for the district's continued support and to inform you that we will soon be contacting your school(s) to discuss plans for the OFT first follow-up data collection activities which will be conducted in the spring of 2018.

MGLS:2017 is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) of the U.S. Department of Education and is being administered by RTI International. In the next few days, an RTI MGLS:2017 study representative will be contacting the school(s) to discuss the upcoming MGLS:2017 OFT data collection activities, including:

- Verifying the enrollment status of the students at your school who were selected to participate in the study
- Confirming the parent contact information for those same students, and
- Discussing the details regarding data collection scheduled to begin in January of 2018.

Data collection will consist of a 90-minute student survey and assessment, student height and weight measurements, and web surveys by principals, math and special education teachers/providers, and parents. As with the base year study, students will be asked to complete the data collection activities in the school on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, provided by RTI. Participating students will receive a small token of appreciation for their participation. The school coordinator will receive \$150 as a thank you for making the study successful in the school. Participating teachers will receive \$20 for completing the questionnaire plus an additional \$7 for each student about whom the teacher provides input. As a thank you for your school's continued support of this important research, participating schools will receive <incentive fill>.

Enclosed you will find a MGLS:2017 brochure and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) to offer further information about the study. For additional study details please visit the MGLS:2017 study website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls>. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:17 toll-free information number, 855-800-1432, or send an e-mail to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org)

Your continued support in this endeavor is important to advance the quality of education for our country's middle-grade students. We look forward to working with your school(s) to make MGLS:2017 a success.

Sincerely,

Peggy G. Carr Ph.D.  
Acting Commissioner, NCES

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures:  
MGLS:2017 Brochure  
MGLS:2017 FAQs

<date>

<School Coordinator name>

<school name>

<address>

<city> <state> <zip>

Dear <School Coordinator Name>:

Go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>

Select “Student Enrollment Form”

Enter your Study ID: <ID fill>

Enter your Password: <psswrld fill>

We are looking forward to working with you and your school this school year on the follow-up to the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). As the designated School Coordinator for MGLS:2017, you play a critical and invaluable role in assisting us with study preparations. We really appreciate your assistance, particularly given the many demands on your time

As you may recall, MGLS:2017 is a comprehensive longitudinal study that follows a cohort of 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, their other (noncognitive) skills important to learning, their socioemotional well-being, and to collect data on family and school factors that may encourage success during these important years of education. MGLS:2017 is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) at the U.S. Department of Education and is being administered by RTI International on behalf of NCES.

We are requesting your assistance to verify the enrollment status of the students at your school who participated in MGLS:2017 last year. While actual data collection will occur in spring 2018, it is imperative that we maintain current enrollment records. We would appreciate your help in completing this task via our study website within three weeks of receipt of this letter. Instructions for completing this task are included with this letter.

In the upper right hand corner of this letter, you will find a web address and a unique Study ID and password. We ask that you go to that web address and log in with the study ID and password provided in this letter. For data security purposes, you will first be prompted to provide information to confirm your identity and then change your password. Next you will click on “Student Enrollment Update” where you will find a list of all the students who were selected to participate in MGLS:2017 in spring 2017. We would appreciate your review of these students’ enrollment status at <SCHOOL NAME>. If the student is no longer enrolled at your school, you will be asked to provide:

- Last Date of attendance
- Reason for leaving (transferred to a new school, left to be home schooled, moved on to the next school or don’t know.)
- For transfer students: Name, city, and state of new school (if known)
- Last known address for student (address, city, state, zip, phone, and email)

We ask that you provide as much information as you have for these students. We are very grateful for your time and your assistance, which are critical to the success of the study. If you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 help desk at 855-500-1432 or by email at [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for your continued support of MGLS:2017!

Sincerely,

Dan Pratt

Project Director

Enclosures:

Enrollment Status Instructions

### Instructions for Student Enrollment Verification

Below are instructions for verifying the current enrollment status for those students who were selected to participate in MGLS:2017 in spring 2017.

1. Go to the MGLS:2017 website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>
2. You will be prompted to enter your study ID and password that were provided to you in the upper right hand corner of the School Coordinator letter, which accompanied this instructions page. If this is the first time you have logged onto the website, you will be prompted to answer a question to confirm your identity and then change your password for data security purposes. If you do not have a study ID and password, please call 1-855-500-1432.
3. You will then click on the link for the “Student Enrollment Update” where you will find a list of all the students who were selected to participate in MGLS:2017 in spring 2017.
4. Please review the current enrollment status for each student listed. For each student who is currently enrolled at your school, you will be asked to confirm or provide the following information:
  - Current grade
  - Student/Parent Contact information including street address, city, state, zip, phone, and email
5. For each student who is no longer enrolled at your school, you will be asked to provide the following additional information:
  - Last date of attendance
  - Reason for leaving (transferred to a new school, left to be home schooled, moved on to the next school (e.g. middle school or high school), or don’t know)
  - For transfer students: Name, city, and state of new school (if known)
  - Last known address for student/parent (address, city, state, zip, phone, and email)

If you need assistance with the website, please call 1-855-400-1432 or send an e-mail to [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org).



**ENROLLMENT UPDATE FORM**

			If enrolled:	If no longer enrolled:		For all students																		
					If transferred:																			
Student Name	Student ID	Still Enrolled?	Current Grade	Last Date of Attendance	Reason for Leaving	Current School Name	Current School City	Current School State	Student's Current / Last Known Address	City	State	Zip	Student's Home Phone	Student's Cell Phone	Mother's Name	Mother's Address (if different from student)	Mother's Home Phone	Mother's Cell Phone	Mother's Email	Father's Name	Father's Address (if different from student)	Father's Home Phone	Father's Cell Phone	Father's Email

## Appendix OFT2-E. MGLS:2017 Reminder Email for Enrollment Update

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[Sample Maintenance Enrollment Update Email, Group 1: Schools that have not changed their password or initiated the process yet]

Dear <SCHOOL COORDINATOR>:

Select students from <SCHOOL NAME> participated in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education (NCES) in spring of 2017. We recently sent you a letter asking you to verify the current enrollment status of these students. We know you are very busy and appreciate your time. If you have already completed this information, we thank you. If you have not provided this information yet, please do so at your earliest convenience.

One of the most powerful aspects of MGLS:2017 is that it is longitudinal. Our ability to assess the progress of participating students over time will help educators better understand what drives students to academic and personal success.

Please visit the web address below and use the study ID and password provided to update your students' enrollment status. We appreciate your continued support of MGLS:2017. If you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 help desk at 855-500-1432.

**Go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>**

**Enter your Study ID: <ID fill>**

**Enter your Password: <psswrld fill>**

**Select "Student Enrollment Update"**

Thank you in advance for your help with this important effort!

Dan Pratt  
Project Director  
Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

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[Sample Maintenance Enrollment Update Email, Group 2: Schools that have started to update the form, have changed their password, but have not "submitted" their updated form yet]

Dear <NAME>:

Select students from <SCHOOL NAME> participated in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education (NCES) in the spring of 2017. Our records show that you have begun but not completed the student enrollment update form for the participating students. This is a request to please complete this online form at your earliest convenience. We know you are very busy and we appreciate your help with this important effort.

One of the most powerful aspects of MGLS:2017 is that it is longitudinal. Our ability to assess the progress of participating students over time will help educators better understand what drives students to academic and personal success.

To complete the student enrollment update form, go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>. Your Study ID is <ID fill>. Please use the password you created to log in and then click on "*Student Enrollment Update Form.*" to resume the update. If you need your password reset, call the MGLS:2017 help desk at 855-500-1432. We greatly appreciate your continued support of this important research!

We look forward to hearing from you.

Dan Pratt  
Project Director  
Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

## Appendix OFT2-F. MGLS:2017 District Letter: Newly Identified Schools in Study District

«dist\_contact\_name»

«dist\_entity\_name»

«dist\_address»

«dist\_citystzip»

Dear «dist\_contact\_name»:

Last school year, one or more schools in your district participated in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) Operational Field Test. MGLS:2017 focuses on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follows a cohort of sixth-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 generally understudied, years of education.

In preparation for the next round of the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test data collection, we recently learned that «stuCnt» student(s) who were attending participating schools in your district during the 2017-18 school year are now attending other schools in your district. I am writing to request the opportunity to contact these other schools for this upcoming data collection of the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test. As a longitudinal study, the success of MGLS:2017 lies with the continued participation of all students initially selected for the study.

MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Data collection will occur on a date convenient for the school, anytime between January and May 2018, and will consist of a 90-minute student session that includes a student survey, student assessments, and height and weight measurements. A trained session facilitator will be sent to the school to conduct the student session. The student session will be conducted on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, provided by RTI for students to use. School administrators will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. The math teachers of students selected for 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/provider for selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (about 25 minutes per student). Parents will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. Participating students will receive a small token of appreciation for their participation. The person coordinating the session at the school will receive \$150 as a thank you for their assistance. Teachers will receive \$20 for completing the questionnaire and an additional \$7 for each student about whom they provide input. Schools will receive <incentive> as a token of our appreciation for their participation. Parents will receive <incentive> for their participation.

Enclosed you will find a brochure describing the study and a copy of the MGLS:2017 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). For additional details please visit the MGLS:2017 study website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls>. In the next few days, a representative from RTI International will call you to answer any questions you may have. Your participation is important to advance the quality of education for our country's middle-grade students.

We look forward to working with your schools to make MGLS:2017 a success. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 toll-free information number, 1-855-500-1432, or send an e-mail to or [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

<name>

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures

MGLS:2017 brochure

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet and Flyer

## Appendix OFT2-G MGLS:2017 District Letter: Newly Identified Schools in Non-Study District

Title><fname><lname>

<date>

<districtname>

<address>

<city>, <state> <zip>

Dear <SUPERINTENDENT NAME>,

We are writing to request your district's participation in an important national study: the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) First Follow-up. This unprecedented study focuses on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follows a cohort of sixth-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 generally understudied, years of education.

During the 2017-2018 school year, over 50 middle-grade schools participated in the Operational Field Test of MGLS:2017. We recently learned that <#> students that were attending participating schools during the 2017-18 school year have since transferred to schools in your district. We would like to request your permission to contact schools to which sampled students have enrolled so that we can continue to work with these students at their new school. As a longitudinal study, the success of MGLS:2017 lies with the continued participation of all students initially selected in the study.

MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Data collection will occur on a date convenient for the school anytime between January and May 2018 and will consist of a 90-minute student session that includes a student survey, student assessment, and height and weight measurements. A trained session facilitator will be sent to the school to conduct the student session. The student session will be conducted on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, provided by RTI for students to use. School administrators will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. The math teachers of students selected for 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 selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student). Parents will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. Participating students will receive a small token of appreciation for their participation. The person coordinating the session at the school will receive \$150 as a thank you for their assistance. Teachers will receive \$20 for completing the survey and an additional \$7 for each student about whom they provide input. Schools will receive <incentive> as a token of our appreciation for their participation. Parents will receive <incentive> for their participation.

Enclosed you will find a brochure describing the study and a copy of the MGLS:2017 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). For additional details please visit the MGLS:2017 study website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls>. In the next few days, a representative from RTI International will call you to answer any questions you may have. Your participation is important to advance the quality of education for our country's middle-grade students.

We look forward to working with your schools to make MGLS:2017 a success. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 toll-free information number, 1-855-500-1432, or send an e-mail to or [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

<name>

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures

MGLS:2017 brochure

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) sheet and Flyer

## Appendix OFT2-H MGLS:2017 School Letter: Newly Identified Schools

Title<fname><lname>  
<schoolname>  
<address>  
<city>, <state> <zip>

<date>

Dear Principal,

During the 2017-2018 school year, over 50 middle-grade schools participated in the Operational Field Test (OFT) of the Middle Grade Longitudinal Study of 2017 (MGLS:2017). This unprecedented study focuses on students' mathematics, reading, and executive function skills and follows a cohort of sixth-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 generally understudied, years of education.

In preparation for the next round of MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test data collection, we recently learned that «stuCnt» students who were attending participating schools during the 2017-18 school year are now in your school. I am writing to request the opportunity to work with <#> students at your school for this upcoming data collection of the MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test. As a longitudinal study, the success of MGLS:2017 lies with the continued participation of all students initially selected for the study.

MGLS:2017 data collection will be administered by RTI International on behalf of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. Data collection will occur on a date convenient for the school, anytime between January and May 2018, and will consist of a 90-minute student session that includes a student survey, student assessment, and height and weight measurements. A trained session facilitator will be sent to the school to conduct the student session. The student session will be conducted on Chromebooks, tablet-like computers with touchscreen capability and an attached keyboard, provided by RTI for students to use. School administrators will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. The math teachers of students selected for 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 selected students with an Individualized Education Program (IEP) will be asked to complete web-based questionnaires about their background and the special education services they provide (about 10 minutes), as well as answer questions about the skills and abilities of specific students in the study (approximately 25 minutes per student). Parents will be asked to complete a 40-minute survey. Participating students will receive a small token of appreciation for their participation. The person coordinating the session at the school will receive \$150 as a thank you for their assistance. Teachers will receive \$20 for completing the survey and an additional \$7 for each student about whom they provide input. Schools will receive <incentive> as a token of our appreciation for their participation. Parents will receive <incentive> for their participation.

Enclosed you will find a brochure describing the study and a copy of the MGLS:2017 Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). For additional details please visit the MGLS:2017 study website: <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls>. In the next few days, a representative from RTI International will call you to answer any questions you may have. Your participation is important to advance the quality of education for our country's middle-grade students.

We look forward to working with your schools to make MGLS:2017 a success. Should you have any questions, please call the MGLS:2017 toll-free information number, 1-855-500-1432, or send an e-mail to or [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org). Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

<Signature>

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. All of the information schools 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures  
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<date>

<name>

<address>

<city> <state> <zip>

**Go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls>**

**Enter your study ID: <ID fill>**

**Enter your password: <psswrld fill>**

Dear <name>:

In the spring of 2017, <student's name> [IF PARTICIPATED SAY: participated; IF NONRESPONDENT SAY: was selected to participate] in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). This important research, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, follows a cohort of students as they progress through the middle grade years, making the transition from elementary school and preparing for the transition into high school.

As we prepare for the next phase of MGLS:2017, which will take place in the spring of 2018, we are updating our contact information for selected students. We hope that you can take just 5 minutes to update <student's name> contact information and current school information. The success of this national longitudinal study depends on having the most up-to-date contact information for all of the students and parents involved in MGLS:2017. Please visit our secure website and use the study ID provided above to update your contact information. If you prefer, you may also complete and return the enclosed address update form.

MGLS:2017 is being administered by RTI International for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), part of the U.S. Department of Education. If you have any questions about MGLS:2017 or about updating your contact information, please call the MGLS:2017 help desk at 1-855-500-1432. You may also send us an e-mail at [mgls@rti.org](mailto:mgls@rti.org).

We thank you in advance for your help and greatly appreciate your continued support of this important research!

Sincerely,

Dan Pratt

Project Director

Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

*NCES is authorized to conduct MGLS:2017 by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). The data are being collected for NCES by RTI International, a U.S.-based nonprofit research organization. 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). The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.*

Enclosures

Address update form

[Sample Maintenance Email to Parents that have not updated within a week after the letter]

Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

Dear <NAME>:

In the spring of 2017, your son or daughter [IF PARTICIPATED SAY: participated; IF NONRESPONDENT SAY: was selected to participate] in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). MGLS:2017 is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics, part of the U.S. Department of Education.

Recently, we sent a letter asking for your help in verifying your child's contact information. If you have already completed this update, we thank you! If you have not yet had an opportunity, this is a friendly reminder to please spend about 5 minutes to update this information at your earliest convenience. We greatly appreciate your help with this critical effort. One of the most powerful aspects of MGLS:2017 is that it is longitudinal. Our ability to assess the progress of students over time will help educators better understand what leads to student growth and success across the middle grade years.

Please visit the web address below and use the study ID and password provided to update your student's contact information. If you have any questions or encounter any difficulty, please call the MGLS:2017 help desk, toll-free, at 855-500-1432.

**Go to <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/mgls/>**

**Enter your study ID: <ID fill>**

**Enter your password: <psswrld fill>**

Thank you for your continued participation in this important study. We look forward to hearing from you!

Dan Pratt

Project Director

Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18

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## The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) Address Update Information

Thank you for your interest and continued participation in the Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017). We are preparing for the follow-up study to take place in the Spring of 2018 and need to verify some information with you about your child who was in sixth grade during the 2016–17 school year.

1. If the current contact information is not correct below, please provide the updated contact information on the right.

**Student** «studentpanelinfo»

**Updated information**

Name:	«studentname»	_____
Address:	«studentaddr»	_____
City	«studentcity»	_____
State	«studentstate»	_____
ZIP	«studentzip»	_____
Home phone:	«studentphone»	_____
Cell phone:	«studentphone»	_____
Primary email:	_____	_____

**Parent or guardian**

**Updated information**

Check if same as student

«parent1panelinfo»

Name:	«parentname»	_____
Address:	«parentaddr»	_____
City	«parentcity»	_____
State	«parentstate»	_____
ZIP	«parentzip»	_____
Home phone:	«parenthphone»	_____
Work phone:	«parentwphone»	_____
Cell phone:	«parentcphone»	_____
Primary email:	_____	_____
Secondary email:	_____	_____

**Parent or guardian 2**

«parent2panelinfo»

Name:	«parent2name»	_____
Address:	«parent2addr»	_____
City	«parent2city»	_____
State	«parent2state»	_____
ZIP	«parent2zip»	_____
Home phone:	«parent2hphone»	_____
Work phone:	«parent2wphone»	_____
Cell phone:	«parent2cphone»	_____
Primary email:	_____	_____
Secondary email:	_____	_____

**Updated information**

Check if same as student

2. Is there a relative or friend, who does not live in this household, who will always know where you are if you move? What is the name, address, and telephone number of that person? We will only contact this person if we cannot locate you for the next interview.

Name:	_____
Address:	_____
City	_____
State	_____
ZIP	_____
Home phone:	_____
Work phone:	_____
Cell phone:	_____

3. Please enter the name of the school you expect your teenager to be enrolled at in the spring of 2018:

\_\_\_\_\_

Check if same school attended as in spring 2017 (Skip to question 6)

4. If this is a different school than the one attended in spring 2017, in what city and state is this school?

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the reason for leaving the school attended in spring 2017?

- Transferred to a new school
- Left to be home schooled
- Graduated and moved on to the next school (e.g. middle school or junior high school).
- Don't know

6. Would you like us to send a text message to the cell phone listed on the first page when data collection is about to begin? (Please note: standard text message rates apply)

- Yes
- No

**NOTE:** The next question will only be displayed if the “yes” box under number 6 is checked. It will not be displayed if “no” is checked or nothing is checked.

We will need the name of your cell phone service provider (e.g., AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, etc.) to ensure the message is sent to the correct carrier.

Service provider: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you in advance for making MGLS:2017 a success!***



**Parent or guardian 2**

Check if same as student

Name: <name>  
Address: <address>  
City <city>  
State <state>  
ZIP <ZIP>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_  
ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone: <homephone>  
Work phone: <workphone>  
Cell phone: <cellphone>  
Primary email: <email1>  
Secondary email: <email2>

Home phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Cell phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Secondary email: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Please enter the name of the school you expect your teenager to be enrolled at in the spring of 2018:

\_\_\_\_\_

Check if same school attended in spring 2017 (Skip to question 6)

4. If this is a different school than the one attended in spring 2017, in what city and state is this school?

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is the reason for leaving the school attended in spring 2017?

- Transferred to a new school
- Left to be home schooled
- Graduated and moved on to the next school (e.g. middle school or junior high school).
- Don't know

6. Would you like us to send a text message to the cell phone listed on the first page when data collection is about to begin? (Please note: standard text message rates apply)

- Yes
- No

If yes, we will need the name of your cell phone service provider (e.g., AT&T, Verizon, Sprint, etc.) to ensure the message is sent to the correct carrier.

Service provider: \_\_\_\_\_

***Thank you in advance for making MGLS:2017 a success!***