

MEMORANDUM

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Institute of Education Sciences
National Center for Education Statistics

DATE: April 20, 2017
TO: Robert Sivinski & E. Ann Carson, OMB
THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela, NCES
FROM: Stephen Provasnik, NCES
Re: Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS 2019) Field Test Recruitment Confidentiality Pledge Change Request (OMB# 1850-0695 v.9)

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is an international assessment of fourth and eighth grade students' achievement in mathematics and science. Since its inception in 1995, TIMSS has continued to assess students every 4 years, with the next TIMSS assessment, TIMSS 2019, being the seventh iteration of the study. TIMSS provides a comparison of U.S. student performance with those of their international peers in mathematics and science at grades 4 and 8. TIMSS is coordinated by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA), an international collective of research organizations and government agencies that creates the assessment framework, assessments, and background questionnaires and provides procedures and technical standards which all countries must follow. In the U.S., the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) conducts TIMSS. In preparation for the TIMSS 2019 main study, NCES is conducting a pilot data collection in Spring 2017, and will conduct a field test in 2018 to evaluate new assessment items and background questions, to ensure practices that promote low exclusion rates, and to ensure that classroom and student sampling procedures proposed for the main study are successful. The U.S. TIMSS field test recruitment will begin in May 2017, with data collection conducted from March through April 2018, and the U.S. TIMSS main study recruitment will begin in May 2018, with data collection conducted from March through May 2019. The request for field test recruitment and pilot test data collection was approved in December 2016 (OMB# 1850-0695 v.8).

This request is to update the confidentiality pledge cited as part of TIMSS to account for the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015, and to cite additional data security and confidentiality requirements.

Citation of the data security and confidentiality protection procedures has been expanded in Part A to reflect all of the laws and regulations with which TIMSS data collection contractors and agents comply. Also, the confidentiality pledge has been updated throughout the submission documents (in Part A, Appendix A-2, and Appendix B-2) to reflect the addition of the Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015 provision. The revised pledge reads: "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 Test notification letters, recruitment materials, and parental consent letters (Appendices A-2 and B-2) include the updated confidentiality pledge. Pilot materials for recruitment and parental consent (found in Appendices A-1 and B-1) are not updated because they have already been fielded, given that recruitment began prior to the implementation of the revised pledge. All other aspects of the Field Test data collection will include the revised pledge in future OMB packages.

These revisions do not affect the estimated burden to respondents or the total cost to the federal government for TIMSS 2019.