

# Memorandum

United States Department of Education  
Institute of Education Sciences  
National Center for Education Statistics

---

DATE: May 16, 2016

TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB

THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela, OMB Liaison, NCES

FROM: Elise Christopher, HSLS:09 Project Officer, NCES

SUBJECT: High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLS:09) Second Follow-up Main Study Survey Update (OMB# 1850-0852 v.20)

The High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLS:09) Second Follow-up Main Study and 2018 Panel Maintenance request was approved by OMB in December 2015 with an update approved in March and another in May 2016 (OMB# 1850-0852 v.17, v.18, and v.19 respectively). This memorandum requests a non-substantive wording change to one survey question to correct an issue with misinterpretation which has become evident in the survey data collected to date. This change does not introduce changes to content, respondent burden, or the cost to the federal government.

The requested change is to question C07 on page E-139 of the approved Appendix E. The wording change, which affects only those respondents who had held more than one job, is as follows:

FROM:

Were you working for pay [*if respondent held only one job: in this job/if respondent held more than one job: **in this job or any other job***] in February 2016?

TO:

Were you working for pay [*if respondent held only one job: in this job/if respondent held more than one job: **in any job***] in February 2016?

Data collected to date suggests that some respondents who have held more than one job are incorrectly answering “no” because they are focusing on “in this job” and missing “or any other job.” Respondents who answer “no” are subsequently asked (C10 on page E-140):

Before February 2016, in what month and year did you last work for pay?

The disproportionate number of respondents with multiple jobs who have answered January 2016 and February 2016 suggest misinterpretation of the question. Moreover, among respondents who were asked to correct their answers to C10 because they were outside the expected range (i.e., February 2016 or later), the overwhelming majority backed up to change their answer to C07 to ‘yes’ or changed their answer to C10 to the latest month allowed by the instrument.

NCES thanks OMB for considering these changes.