

Memorandum

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

DATE: October 30, 2018
TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB
THROUGH: Kashka Kubzdela, NCES
FROM: Carolyn Fidelman, NCES
SUBJECT: Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) Main Study First Follow-up (MS2) Tracking and Recruitment Revision and Operational Field Test Second Follow-up (OFT3) (OMB# 1850-0911 v.21)

The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) is the first study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) to follow a nationally representative sample of students as they enter and move through the middle grades (grades 6–8). The data collected through repeated measures of key constructs will provide a rich descriptive picture of the academic experiences and development of students during these critical years and will allow researchers to examine associations between contextual factors and student outcomes. The study focuses on student achievement in mathematics and literacy along with measures of student socioemotional wellbeing and other outcomes. The study includes students with disabilities for whom descriptive information on their outcomes, educational experiences, and special education services are being collected. In preparation for the Main Study (MS), the data collection instruments and procedures were field tested. An Item Validation Field Test (IVFT) was conducted from January through May 2016 to determine the psychometric properties of assessment and survey items and the predictive potential of items so that valid, reliable, and useful assessment and survey instruments could be developed for the Main Study. The MGLS:2017 Operational Field Test (OFT) Base Year (OFT1) data collection was conducted from January through May 2017 to test the near-final instruments and recruitment and data collection procedures and materials in preparation for the MGLS:2017 Main Study Base Year (MS1). The MS1 data collection took place from January to August 2018, and the OFT First Follow-up (OFT2) data collections from February to May 2018. OFT2 was conducted primarily to obtain information on recruiting, particularly for students in three focal IDEA-defined disability groups: specific learning disability, autism, and emotional disturbance; obtain a tracking sample that can be used to study mobility patterns in subsequent years; and test protocols, items, and administrative procedures. Originally, NCES planned for MGLS:2017 to conduct annual main study follow-up data collections first beginning in January 2019 and next beginning in January 2020, when most of the students in the sample will be in grades 7 and 8, respectively. In September 2018, OMB approved NCES's request (OMB# 1850-0911 v.20) to revise the study design due to lower than expected response rates experienced in the sixth grade data collection and to: (1) drop the originally planned seventh grade round of data collection and conduct the Main Study First Follow-up (MS2) data collection in January-July 2020 (when most sample students will be in the eighth grade), (2) notify participating districts and schools of this change in data collection schedule, (3) discontinue the procedures designed to oversample students in specific IDEA-defined disability groups, and (4) conduct MS2 and OFT Second Follow-up (OFT3) tracking activities. This request is to further modify the study design for MS2 to augment the sample with additional schools to achieve about 776 participating schools in MS2.

Procedures and materials pertaining to MS1 and OFT2 were removed from the last approved version of the documents (OMB# 1850-0911 v.20) and the final procedures and materials to be used in MS2 and OFT3 are provided in this version. Due to the resulting extensive edits to the package documents, we are not providing a listing of all changes in this memo, but can provide tracked changes versions of Parts A and B and of Appendices A-S and T-V documents upon request. The Part C document has not changed from the last approved.

The Title in all documents was revised as follows: Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017-18 (MGLS:2017) Main Study ~~Design First Follow-up (MS2) Tracking and Recruitment~~ Revision and Operational Field Test ~~First Follow-up (OFT2) and~~ Second Follow-up (OFT3) ~~and Main Study Base Year (MS1) and Tracking for First Follow-up (MS2)~~