

Memorandum

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

DATE: July 22, 2020

TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB

THROUGH: Carrie Clarady, OMB Liaison, NCES

FROM: Holly Xie, Program Officer, PIAAC, NCES

SUBJECT: International Study of Adult Skills and Learning (ISASL) [Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) Cycle II] Summer 2020 Change Request (OMB# 1850-0870 v.9)

The Program for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) is a cyclical, large-scale study of adult skills and life experiences focusing on education and employment. PIAAC is an international study designed to assess adults in different countries over a broad range of abilities, from simple reading to complex problem-solving skills, and to collect information on individuals' skill use and background. PIAAC is coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and developed by participating countries with the support of the OECD. In the United States, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education (ED) conducts PIAAC. The U.S. participated in the PIAAC Main Study data collection in 2012 and conducted national supplement data collections in 2014 and 2017. All three of these collections are part of PIAAC Cycle I. A new PIAAC cycle is to be conducted every 10 years, and PIAAC Cycle II Main Study data collection will be conducted from August 2021 through March 2022. In preparation for the main study collection, PIAAC Cycle II will begin with a Field Test in 2020, in which 34 countries are expected to participate with the primary goal of evaluating newly developed assessment and questionnaire items and to test the PIAAC 2022 planned operations. PIAAC 2022 defines four core competency domains of adult cognitive skills that are seen as key to facilitating the social and economic participation of adults in advanced economies: (1) literacy, (2) numeracy, (3) reading and numeracy components, and (4) adaptive problem solving. The U.S. will administer all four domains of the PIAAC 2022 assessment to a nationally representative sample of adults, along with a background questionnaire with questions about their education background, work history, the skills they use on the job and at home, their civic engagement, and sense of their health and well-being. The results are used to compare the skills capacities of the workforce-aged adults in participating countries, and to learn more about relationships between educational background, employment, and other outcomes. In addition, in PIAAC 2022, a set of financial literacy questions will be included in the background questionnaire. As in Cycle I, a user-friendly name for PIAAC Cycle II was created – the International Study of Adult Skills and Learning (ISASL) – to represent the program to the public and will be used on all public-facing materials and reports. As this international program is well-known within the federal and education research communities, we continue to use "PIAAC" in all internal and OMB clearance materials and communications, and use the "PIAAC" name throughout this submission; however all recruitment and communication materials refer to the study as ISASL.

The request to conduct the PIAAC Cycle II Field Test in April-June 2020 was approved by OMB in December 2019 (OMB# 1850-0870 v.7-8). This request updates Part A of the package to reflect a one-year delay in all data collections, due to the global coronavirus pandemic.

The revisions made to the last approved MGLS:2017 clearance documents (OMB# 1850-0870 v.8) are reflected below. **Blue text** indicates the document and **green text** the section of the document in which a change was made, followed by notes regarding the edits. Black font demarks the text that remains unchanged from the last approved, while text in **red font** shows the revisions that were made. ~~Red-text-with-a-strikethrough~~ represents text that has been deleted for the current submission.

Part A

Preface was modified to reflect the current request, as follows (p.3):

~~Subsequently, in Fall 2020, we will submit a clearance request with the procedures and instruments to be used in the Main Study data collection beginning in the late summer of 2021.~~ The 2020 PIAAC Cycle II Field Test, scheduled to begin in April 2020, was postponed due to the 2020 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) global pandemic. The OECD has delayed both the Field Test and Main Study 12-months and therefore in Fall 2020 we will submit a revised clearance request, reflecting updated procedures, instruments, and schedule for the Field Test, to begin data collection in Spring 2021.