

DATE: February 11, 2021
TO: Robert Sivinski, OMB
THROUGH: Carrie Clarady, NCES
FROM: Jill McCarroll, NCES
SUBJECT: Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2022-23 (ECLS-K:2023) Study Delay Change Request (OMB# 1850-0750 v.22)

The upcoming Early Childhood Longitudinal Study will be the fourth cohort in the series of early childhood longitudinal studies conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education. Because of school closures in some areas of the country, changes to schooling models in others (e.g., virtual and hybrid models), and variable school visitor policies as a result of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, NCES expects the ECLS field test and national study recruitment activities that had been planned for 2021 may not be successful. **As such, NCES has decided to postpone the study 1 year. The kindergarten-first grade field test will be moved from fall 2021 to fall 2022. The national study data collections will also be delayed a year, beginning in 2023. The third-fifth grade field test will be moved from fall 2025 to fall 2026. No other planned procedures or features of the study will change.**

The study will now be the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2023-24 (ECLS-K:2024). It will follow the cohort of students who will be kindergartners in the 2023-24 school year from their kindergarten year (2023-24) until the spring of 2029, when most will be in fifth grade. In addition, the ECLS-K:2024 still plans to add a preschool round of data collection in the spring prior to the children's kindergarten year, i.e., spring 2023. The kindergarten-first grade field test will be conducted in fall 2022, 1 year prior to the full-scale kindergarten fall data collection. The third-fifth grade field test will be conducted in spring 2026, 1 year prior to the full-scale third-grade spring data collection.

The ECLS program studies deliver national data on children's status at birth and at various points thereafter; children's transitions to nonparental care, early care and education programs, and school; and children's experiences and growth through the elementary grades. The ECLS-K:2024 will be exceptionally broad in its scope and coverage. The study will advance research in child development and early learning by providing a detailed and comprehensive source of current information on children's early learning and development, transitions into kindergarten and beyond, and progress through school. Data will be collected relevant to emerging policy-related domains and areas not fully measured in previous ECLS program studies, as well as to allow for comparisons to two other nationally representative kindergarten cohorts (i.e., the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011) that experienced different policy, educational, demographic, and economic environments than children are expected to experience in the years of the ECLS-K:2024.

The ECLS-K:2024 will focus on children's early school experiences continuing through the fifth grade. It is designed to provide data that can be used to analyze the relationships between a wide range of family, school, community, and individual variables and children's development, early learning, and performance in school. The study includes collection of data from parents, teachers, and school administrators, as well as direct child assessments. In later rounds, child questionnaires will also be collected. While all of these components will be included in the study, the ECLS-K:2024 is designed such that the child will be the unit of analysis; the study will also be representative at the teacher and school levels at the kindergarten year.

The request to conduct the ECLS-K:2023 preschool field test was first approved in November 2019 with change memos approved in January 2020 and July 2020 (OMB# 1850-008 v.19-21). The activities outlined in this request were for the 2020 preschool field test data collection, which has since concluded. This request is to update Part A of the package to note the change in the study periodicity. As no state, district, school, teacher, or parent contacts had begun for either the kindergarten-first grade field test or the national study, the postponement of these data collections does not necessitate contacting any such entities. Rather, this request is being submitted to alert the public of the change in

the study's timing as noted in Part A of the preschool field test package, the addition to which is highlighted below in red text. This change request will be accompanied by a published 30-day notice in the Federal Register. Approval for the fall 2022 kindergarten-first grade field test and national study recruitment will be requested in a separate submission later in 2021.

The change requested here does not affect the approved total cost to the federal government nor the estimated respondent burden for the concluded preschool field test. It is expected that the delay of the forthcoming field test and national data collection will affect the costs to the federal government for that future work, the clearances for which will be requested in future OMB packages. The revised cost, which is not currently known, will be included in those future data collection packages, the first of which will be the request for the kindergarten-first grade field test and national study recruitment, which is currently planned for submission to OMB later in 2021.

Changes to Part A

A.1.1 Purpose of this Submission

The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study (ECLS) program, conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education (ED), draws together information from multiple sources to provide rich, descriptive data on child development, early learning, and school progress. The ECLS program studies deliver national data on children's status at birth and at various points thereafter; children's transitions to nonparental care, early care and education programs, and school; and children's experiences and growth through the elementary grades. The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2022-23 (ECLS-K:2023) is the fourth cohort in the series of early childhood longitudinal studies that began with the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99 (ECLS-K) and continued with the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ECLS-B), and the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 (ECLS-K:2011).¹ While the ECLS-K:2023 is referenced throughout this package, in early 2021 the timing of the study was changed due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic such that all upcoming data collection activities will be delayed by 1 year. The study will now be the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2023-24 (ECLS-K:2024).

¹ Throughout this submission, reference is made to the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-99. For ease of presentation, it will be referred to as the ECLS-K. The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2010-11 will be referred to as the ECLS-K:2011.