

**Early Childhood Longitudinal Study,  
Kindergarten Class of 2023-24  
(ECLS-K:2024)**

**Kindergarten and First-Grade Field Test Data  
Collection, National Sampling, and National  
Recruitment**

**OMB# 1850-0750 v.24**

**Supporting Statement  
Part A**

**National Center for Education Statistics  
U.S. Department of Education**

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## **A.1 Circumstances Making Collection of Information Necessary**

### **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 non-parental 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 2023-24 (ECLS-K:2024) 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).<sup>1</sup>

The ECLS-K:2024 is 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 provide data about the population of children who will be kindergartners in the 2023-24 school year.<sup>2</sup> The study 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,<sup>3</sup> teachers, and school administrators/principals,<sup>4</sup> as well as direct child assessments. In later rounds, child surveys will also be administered. 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 school (and potentially teacher) level at the kindergarten year. NCES contracted Westat to carry out the ECLS-K:2024 national data collections for the preschool through third-grade rounds, with the Educational Testing Service (ETS) as the subcontractor developing the child assessments.

In preparation for the ECLS-K:2024 data collections, several OMB packages have been cleared or have been planned for submission. Prior to the field test collection of data from parents of preschool-aged children, in-person focus groups with parents of preschoolers and usability testing of the preschool parent survey instruments were conducted in 2019 (OMB 1850-0803 v.246 and OMB 1850-0803 v.253, respectively). The field test with preschool parents was conducted in the spring of 2020 (OMB 1850-0750 v.19). In order to test recruitment messages and materials for the field test and national data collections, online focus groups with school administrators were conducted in fall 2019 (OMB 1850-0803 v.255) and additional online focus groups were held with school administrators, teachers, and parents in spring 2020 (OMB 1850-0803 v.264). Additionally, usability testing of the kindergarten and first-grade field test instruments was conducted in early 2021 (OMB 1850-0803 v.280). Finally, several future OMB packages are planned; for example, the package requesting permission to conduct the kindergarten and first-grade rounds of the study will be submitted in late 2022 (under OMB 1850-0750, v. 26).

This current request is to conduct a field test of the ECLS-K:2024 kindergarten and first-grade data collection activities to evaluate the design of the national study's kindergarten and first-grade surveys and child assessments, as well as the

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> Initial study design of the ECLS-K:2024 included a round of parent survey data collection in the spring prior to children's kindergarten year, known as the preschool round. While this spring round was referred to as the preschool round, the child sample would have included not only children in preschool or an early care and education (ECE) arrangement, but also those not in preschool or ECE. However, inclusion of the preschool national round was dependent on a successful test of assumptions in the preschool field test. In spring of 2021 following the analysis of the 2020 preschool field test, NCES determined that the field test experiences did not support the successful inclusion of a preschool national collection, and the study design was updated to make the fall kindergarten round the first national data collection. (For additional details on the preschool field test and the national preschool decision, please see OMB# 1850-0750 v.23.)

<sup>3</sup> For the purpose of this submission, the term "parent" includes any parent, guardian, or adult in the household who is knowledgeable about the child's early care and education.

<sup>4</sup> The term school administrator and principal are used interchangeably throughout this submission.

operational procedures (that is, sampling and recruitment) for the national kindergarten and first-grade data collections in the fall 2023, spring 2024, and spring 2025. This data collection to evaluate the kindergarten and first-grade instruments and procedures is referred to throughout the remainder of this package as the K-1 field test. District and school sampling and recruitment activities for the K-1 field test will occur in spring 2022, while student sampling will occur in August and September 2022. From September through November 2022, trained study field staff will visit the participating schools to conduct in-person, one-on-one child assessments. Parents, teachers, and school administrators will also be asked to complete web surveys.<sup>5</sup> As testing and development continues, it is anticipated that changes to the surveys, website language, and respondent materials will be necessary. We are currently preparing materials to administer focus groups in early 2022; the purpose of these focus groups is to test new contact and recruitment materials for use in future rounds of the ECLS-K:2024. If NCES believes that the benefits to revised contact and recruitment materials is substantial enough to warrant an immediate change, we may submit a change request (OMB 1850-0750 v.25) in May 2022 to revise those materials for use in the K-1 field test and/or national base year school and district recruitment. Any revisions to the survey instruments will also be included in this change request. At this time it is not anticipated that substantive changes requiring public review will be required to these materials but if necessary in either case, a 30D revision to this OMB package will be submitted.<sup>6</sup> Substantive changes at that time would still be expected to be minor and to items, websites, and respondent materials, rather than large-scale study revisions such as the addition of completely new study instruments or components.

Furthermore, this package also includes a request to conduct national district and school sampling and recruitment from fall 2022 to spring 2023. These recruitment activities will closely mimic what will be done in the K-1 field test, but will occur over a much longer period of time.

## **A.1.2 Legislative Authorization**

The ECLS-K:2024 is authorized by law under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (20 U.S. Code Section 9543): *“The Statistics Center shall collect, report, analyze, and disseminate statistical data related to education in the United States and in other nations, including — (7) conducting longitudinal and special data collections necessary to report on the condition and progress of education.”*

## **A.1.3 Prior Related Studies**

The ECLS-K:2024 is part of a longitudinal studies program. The prior ECLS program studies collected data on three cohorts—the kindergarten classes of 1998-99 and 2010-11 cohorts and a birth cohort. Together these cohorts provide the range and breadth of data required to more fully describe and understand children’s education experiences, early learning, development, and health in the late 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s.

The ECLS-B, the birth cohort of the ECLS program, followed a national sample of children born in the year 2001, from birth through kindergarten entry. The ECLS-B focused on the characteristics of children and their families that influence children’s school readiness and first experiences with formal schooling, as well as children’s early health and in- and out-of-home experiences.

The ECLS kindergarten cohort studies followed nationally representative cohorts of children from kindergarten through eighth grade (1998-99 cohort, i.e., the ECLS-K) and fifth grade (2010-11 cohort, i.e., the ECLS-K:2011). For the ECLS-K, the base-year data were collected in the fall and spring of the 1998-99 school year, when the sampled children were in kindergarten. A total of 21,260 kindergartners throughout the nation participated by having a child assessment and/or parent interview conducted during that school year. Five more waves of data were collected: in fall and spring of the 1999-2000 school year when most, but not all, of the children who participated in the base year were in first grade; in the spring of the 2001-02 school year when most were in third grade; in the spring of the 2003-04 school year when most were in fifth grade; and in the spring of the 2006-07 school year when most were in eighth grade.

For the ECLS-K:2011, the base-year data were collected in the fall and spring of the 2010-11 school year, when the sampled children were in kindergarten. Approximately 18,200 kindergartners throughout the nation participated by having a child assessment and/or parent interview conducted during that school year. Seven more waves of data were

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<sup>5</sup> Paper surveys for school administrators and teachers will be made available for non-responders. Non-responding parents will be contacted by field staff to complete the survey via telephone.

<sup>6</sup> For brevity in this submission, the package mentioned above (OMB 1850-0750 v. 25) will be referenced as a change request or change memo. Where that language is used, please note that a 30D package revision is the alternative.

collected: in fall and spring of the 2011-12 school year when most, but not all, of the children who participated in the base year were in first grade; in the fall and spring of the 2012-13 school year when most were in second grade; in the spring of the 2013-14 school year when most were in third grade; in the spring of the 2014-2015 school year when most were in the fourth grade; and in the spring of the 2015-16 school year when most were in fifth grade.

#### **A.1.4 ECLS-K:2024 Study Design for the K-1 Field Test Data Collection**

The K-1 field test has been planned in order to test operational procedures, respondent recruitment materials, and survey instrument design prior to the full-scale national kindergarten and first-grade data collections. The goal is to closely mimic the procedures that will be utilized in those national data collections, albeit on a smaller scale. Results from the field test will be reviewed and recommendations made for improvements for the national study.<sup>7</sup>

The following section provides an overview of the planned field test activities. The data collection for the K-1 field test will include direct child assessments and parent, teacher, and school administrator surveys. Part B contains more detail on these activities, as well as a discussion on the field test and national sampling and district and school recruitment. Attachment A-1 contains the respondent recruitment and communication materials; A-3 contains the script for a respondent video; A-4 contains study informational PowerPoint slide decks for teachers and parents; and A-5 contains infographics created from findings from previous ECLS, as well as other U.S. Department of Education, studies.<sup>8</sup> The data collection instruments described below appear in full in Attachments B-E.<sup>9</sup> Attachment F contains details about the MyECLS respondent website and Attachment G contains a matrix summarizing the study items and their sources.

**Field Test Recruitment.** District recruitment for the K-1 field test data collection will begin in the spring of 2022. School districts and Catholic dioceses will be sent a package via FedEx including a letter describing the study and an ECLS fact sheet. Once districts have received these packages, experienced school recruiters will contact the districts via telephone and, when possible, obtain permission to contact schools within the district. Additionally, some districts have special approval and/or handling processes that must be completed prior to a district-level decision. Study staff will complete any necessary research applications, and recruiters will follow up with districts to track the status of application submissions.

Once district approval is secured,<sup>10</sup> principals at selected public and Catholic schools will be sent a package via FedEx. Private non-Catholic schools can be contacted directly; therefore, this package will be sent to private schools at the beginning of the recruitment period, when district and Catholic diocese contacting is occurring. The package will contain a letter describing the study, an ECLS fact sheet, and frequently asked questions with responses. A sticker with the U.S. Department of Education seal and the message, “Important information from the U.S. Department of Education.” may be included on the outside of packages. The enclosed letter will display the name of the district-level approver, when available, to promote additional consideration of participation. School recruiters will contact the sampled schools via telephone to obtain principal approval for the school’s participation in the study. Once approval is obtained, recruiters will collect school information to prepare for fall 2022 data collection logistics, including identifying a school coordinator to serve as the liaison for study activities in the school. District and school recruitment will continue through the spring, summer, and fall of 2022 until there are enough participating schools to yield a sufficient number of children, parents, and teachers to complete the field test assessments and surveys.

In early fall 2022, participating schools will be contacted to provide a child list and to confirm assessment day logistics. After the child list has been received and children sampled, school coordinators who will serve as liaisons between the school and the study staff will be mailed a package containing a welcome letter, an incentive check,<sup>11</sup> and tips for encouraging respondent participation, as well as school administrator, teacher, and parent study packets for

<sup>7</sup> The national study may include collection of additional information beyond that collected in the field test. For example, NCES is considering the collection of hearing data, as well as height and weight measurements and assessments of executive function. The full details of the national study data collection will be provided in a subsequent package.

<sup>8</sup> Note that Attachment A-2 contains respondent recruitment materials for the national data collection. This attachment, and the national recruitment procedures, are described later in this document.

<sup>9</sup> The paper versions of the study instruments have not yet been formatted for Teleform scanning. The Teleform-formatted versions of the instruments will be submitted in the June 2022 change request/change memo.

<sup>10</sup> Given the time constraints for the K-1 field test, there may be districts that are notified about the study, but for which formal district approval is not received during the allotted recruitment period. In these cases, the schools will be contacted directly and informed that the district has been notified.

<sup>11</sup> Please note that while this package uses the term “incentive,” in all respondent materials these will be described as “tokens of appreciation.” The school coordinator, school administrator, and teacher checks will be provided in these welcome packets, in the model of a prepaid incentive. As part of the K-1 field test, an incentive experiment with parents will be conducted. Parents from half of the participating schools will not receive an incentive, while parents from the other half of the participating schools will receive a \$15 Mastercard® in their welcome packet. Schools will receive their incentive at the completion of the K-1 field test. See section A9 for complete details on the planned field test incentives.

distribution. A sticker with the U.S. Department of Education seal and the message, “Important information from the U.S. Department of Education.” may be included on the outside of packages. Each of these packets will contain letters describing the study, with login instructions to the MyECLS website, as well as relevant fact sheets. The MyECLS website will serve as the portal for school staff, teachers, and parents to provide contact information, parental consent, and to complete their web surveys. The MyECLS website’s functionality during the K-1 field period is more fully described in Part B; each screen from the website is contained in Attachment F.<sup>12</sup>

Prior to conducting the child assessments, parental consent will be obtained. Schools will determine whether to use explicit or implicit consent and whether to use electronic consent or to distribute paper consent forms. Schools have the option to choose electronic consent, but specify paper consent for particular parents, for example, if the school knows that some parents prefer paper communication or do not have Internet access. If electronic explicit consent is chosen, parents must indicate on the MyECLS website that they actively provide permission for their child’s participation, that is, select ‘yes’ and select the ‘Submit’ button or select ‘opt out,’ then select ‘no’ and select the Submit button to complete the form. Each child’s consent status will be updated automatically to consent obtained or refused, as applicable. If implicit consent is chosen, parental permission is assumed unless a parent opts his or her child out of the study. If electronic implicit consent is used, the parent will see the notification when he or she logs into MyECLS. If he or she consents, nothing needs to be submitted, and the parent can proceed to the parent survey. If the parent objects, he or she can choose ‘no’ and click the ‘Submit’ button to complete the form. The child’s consent status will be updated automatically to ‘refused.’ If consent is to be collected on paper, paper consent forms, either explicit or implicit, will be included in the parent packets. Paper implicit forms are to be returned only if the parent objects to the study. For both explicit and implicit paper consent forms, the school coordinator will document returned paper forms manually on MyECLS, and the child’s consent status will be updated accordingly. School coordinators and study staff will follow-up with parents to obtain consent as needed. Paper consent forms can be requested by or offered to parents who have not completed the form electronically.

**K-1 Field Test Data Collection.** The ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test will comprise a purposive sample of 50 elementary schools representing different levels of urbanicity across five geographic areas. The sampled schools will include public and private schools (both religious and nonreligious) that are not selected for the national study. The K-1 field test data collection will include direct child assessments, parent surveys, school administrator surveys, and surveys for general classroom teachers as well as special education teachers. Districts and schools will be recruited to participate in the field test in the spring of 2022, with data collected from school administrators, children, teachers, and parents during the fall of 2022. The goal of the field test will be to recruit 50 schools and to conduct assessments with approximately 3,000 children. In terms of the children, to get sufficient information on the direct assessment items, in addition to kindergartners and first-graders, second-graders will also be included (1,200 kindergartners, 1,200 first-graders, and 600 second-graders). Additionally, web surveys from approximately 50 school administrators, 500 teachers (200 kindergarten, 200 first-grade, and 100 special education), and approximately 3,000 parents will be collected. Field test data collection will occur from August through November 2022, although it may continue into December if scheduling assessment dates within the timeframe becomes problematic.

The child assessments will be conducted with paper easels and scoresheets, whereas the parent, school administrator, and teacher data will be collected primarily via self-administered surveys accessed on the web. There will be hard-copy versions of the school administrator and teacher surveys available upon request. Parents who do not respond to the web survey will be contacted by field data collectors who will attempt to conduct the survey with the parent over the telephone.

The K-1 field test will be conducted to (1) test the various instruments being used in the kindergarten and first-grade rounds of the ECLS-K:2024,<sup>13</sup> (2) examine the data collection procedures prior to the national study, (3) estimate the

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<sup>12</sup> Note that current screenshots from the MyECLS website are included in this submission. The website is currently being programmed and some small changes may be necessary as further review and testing occur. If needed, a change memo that includes screenshots of the updated MyECLS website is planned for June 2022.

<sup>13</sup> In the interest of reducing respondent burden in the field test given the length of some of the included surveys, not every section of every instrument will be fielded with every sample member. A purpose of the longitudinal study is to build understanding of change and/or stability within families in part by asking the same questions over time. However, the K-1 field test is a cross-section of students and associated adults in kindergarten, first grade, and second grade. Therefore it is not necessary to field the same questions across all field test sample members. For example, because the section on child health appears in each (i.e., fall kindergarten, spring kindergarten, and spring first-grade) parent survey, this section of the survey may be administered only to parents who receive the fall kindergarten and spring first-grade surveys, but eliminated from the spring kindergarten parent survey. Programming instructions to skip sections of items were added to the instruments in Attachments B-E so that only a subset of items from any given instrument may be administered to any one respondent.

psychometric parameters of all items in the assessment battery item pool, and (4) produce psychometrically sound and valid direct and indirect cognitive assessment instruments.

**Cognitive assessments.** As in prior cohorts of the ECLS program, direct cognitive assessments will be used in the ECLS-K:2024. The assessments measure the cognitive domains of reading and mathematics using age- and grade-appropriate items. During the K-1 field test, field staff will administer the cognitive assessments directly to the sampled children on an individual basis. Using a spiraled design items from the child cognitive assessment item pool are placed into sets which differ in terms of the included items.<sup>14</sup> The sets will then be randomly assigned to sampled children during the field test, enabling information to be gathered on all items. These procedures differ from the national data collection, in which the structure of the assessments will be the same for all children. Based on information from the field test, for the national rounds a single set of items per domain and grade will be selected. In the national rounds, all children will first be administered a routing test for each measured domain. Performance on the routing test will determine which one of the three second-stage tests will be appropriate for the child's skill level.

Because the field test is not intended to measure the ability levels of the children in the field test sample, but instead to test the assessment items, a representative field test sample is not necessary. For the field test purposes, it is simply important to ensure a diverse sample, in terms of characteristics such as race, socioeconomic status, and urbanicity. The diversity of the sample is supported through the purposive selection of schools. Participating schools will be asked to provide a roster of all kindergartners, first-graders, and second-graders. Due to the scope of the field test, schools will be instructed to exclude children whose primary language is not English, as well as children who require accommodations that cannot be met by the study (e.g., Braille or large print). All children from the roster with parental consent will then be assessed as part of the K-1 field test.

The K-1 field test assessments will comprise two domains: reading and mathematics. Each assessment will be conducted by a trained assessor, who will read each item and any relevant response categories to the child. The assessment items will be displayed on easels, with the item text and any relevant response categories and graphics displayed on the page facing the child. The back of the easel page, which will face the assessor, will contain the item text and any relevant gesturing instructions. After the child provides a response, the assessor will record the response on a paper score sheet. The assessments will be untimed, although they are expected to last approximately 45 minutes.

**Parent surveys.** A self-administered, web survey will be administered to parents/guardians of the participating children in the K-1 field test. While there is no national second-grade round, the parents of second-graders are included in the field test data collection to ensure there is a large enough sample for the parent incentive experiment (described in A.9.5.1). While they will be asked to complete the spring first-grade version of the parent survey, most if not all of the questions will still be applicable and relevant to these parents. Parent surveys will be available in English. The parent surveys will ask about family structure, kindergarten selection, early care and education arrangements, parental involvement with their child's school, household composition, and their child's health and well-being. Additionally, the survey will ask parents to report on their marital history, family income, parent education levels, and other demographic indicators. Please note that this list is not all inclusive, and several topic areas will only be included in specific surveys due to the length of the surveys.

In early fall 2022, schools will distribute study welcome packets to parents of sampled children. Included in the packet will be unique login credentials for the MyECLS website. Parents will be asked to visit the MyECLS website to provide contact information and consent for their child's participation and to complete the web survey.

**Teacher surveys.** For the kindergartners and first-graders in the field test, the primary teacher of participating children will be asked to complete self-administered, web surveys. The primary teacher is the teacher who would be considered the child's regular classroom teacher, with whom the child spends the most time, and who is most familiar with the child's abilities. Teachers of second-grade students are unlikely to be included in the K-1 field test, as the primary purpose of including second-graders in the field test is to gain information on the direct assessment items.<sup>15</sup> Within each of the K-1 field test schools, children's special education teachers or related services providers of the kindergarten and first- graders in the field test will also be asked to complete surveys for children with an Individual Education

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<sup>14</sup> Due to the large number of assessment items which will be field tested, not every child will receive every item. Multiple versions of the assessment easels will be created, with the items divided or spiraled throughout the easels. Every item will likely appear on at least two of the easel versions. This will allow enough responses to analyze the field test results before choosing the final set of items for the national assessments.

<sup>15</sup> Second-graders are purposefully tested on the direct assessment materials, but please note that there is no second-grade national data collection. Second-grade teachers may be asked to participate in the field test to meet sample size targets dependent on response rates for the kindergarten and first-grade teachers during the field period.



Program (IEP) on file at the school. If this selection method for participants is unable to obtain a sufficient number of primary or special education teachers to complete the field test teacher surveys, additional kindergarten and first-grade primary or special education teachers at the school who do not necessarily teach sampled children will also be asked to complete the web surveys. (Primary teachers would be asked to complete fall kindergarten, spring kindergarten, or spring first-grade surveys, depending on response rates; special education teachers would be asked to complete either spring kindergarten or spring first-grade surveys, depending on response rates.)

Each teacher, both primary and special education, will be asked to complete both a teacher-level survey and child-level surveys. The teacher-level surveys for both primary and special education teachers will include questions about the teacher's own background and education, class materials, teaching practices, and specific information about the topics and skills taught in the classroom. The teachers will also be asked to complete one child-level survey for each sampled child that they teach. Similarly, special education teachers will be asked to complete one child-level survey for each sampled child they teach. The child-level surveys will contain child-specific questions, such as ratings on the child's skills in the areas of language and literacy, mathematics, and executive functioning; children's social skills and behaviors; and information about program placements and special services that the child may receive.

**School administrator surveys.** The web-based school administrator surveys will be completed by school administrators and/or their designees in the schools participating in the K-1 field test. The instruments include a broad range of questions about the school setting, policies, and practices at both the school level and in kindergarten and first grade, as well as questions about the principal and the teaching staff. Fifty percent of school administrators will complete the spring kindergarten survey, while 50 percent will complete the spring first-grade survey. As with teachers and parents, school administrators will receive unique logins to the MyECLS website in order to gain access to their self-administered, web surveys. On the MyECLS website, the school administrators can review a document that provides an overview of the survey sections. The school administrators will complete the survey section on school administrator characteristics, but if they do not have the knowledge to respond to other sections, or if they do not have time, they will have the option to delegate other survey sections to a designated school staff member. The school administrators will be provided with a secondary MyECLS login for the designee to use to access the survey sections. The designee will not have access to the school administrator characteristics section. The name or title of the person completing the other sections will be recorded on the MyECLS website to inform school administrator survey instrument design for the national study.

**National Sampling, District, and School Recruitment.** For the national collection, or main study, that will begin data collection in schools in the fall of 2023, sampling to select the participating districts and schools will occur in the spring of 2022. Approximately 1,710 schools will be sampled for a projected yield of about 1,000 schools. Complete details on the sampling process are contained in Section B.1 of this package. Attachment A-2 contains the national respondent recruitment materials.

Recruitment of the selected districts and schools for the ECLS-K:2024 national data collection will begin in August 2022. Recruitment for the national data collection will begin with states. State school superintendents will be sent a FedEx package containing a letter describing the study and an ECLS-K:2024 fact sheet. As in the ECLS-K:2011, NCES staff members may also contact the state school superintendents via telephone to describe the study and discuss efforts to encourage the state's districts and schools to participate.

District recruitment will then follow. The national district recruitment will follow similar procedures as will be utilized in the K-1 field test. Public school districts and Catholic dioceses containing schools selected for the ECLS-K:2024 national study will be sent a package via FedEx in August of 2022. A sticker with the U.S. Department of Education seal and the message, "Important information from the U.S. Department of Education." may be included on the outside of packages. This package will include a letter describing the study and an ECLS-K:2024 fact sheet. Experienced school recruiters will contact these districts and dioceses via telephone to attempt to obtain permission to contact the associated schools and to obtain information about special approval processes. As with the district and school recruitment for the K-1 field test, any special approval processes for these districts will be completed by study staff, and then tracked by recruiters. In some cases, in-person visits by field recruiters or teleconferences with study and/or NCES staff may be necessary to secure district cooperation.

Beginning in fall 2022, once district approval is secured, or on rare occasions, once the district has been notified and ample time has passed, principals at selected public and Catholic schools will be sent a package via FedEx. This package will be sent to private schools at the beginning of the field period. A sticker with the U.S. Department of

Education seal and the message, “Important information from the U.S. Department of Education.” may be included on the outside of packages. The package will include a letter describing the study and an ECLS-K:2024 fact sheet. The letter will display the name of the district-level approver, when available. School recruiters will contact the sampled schools via telephone to obtain principal approval for the school’s participation in the study. In some cases, in-person visits by field recruiters may be necessary to secure school cooperation. Once approval is obtained, recruiters will collect school information to prepare for fall 2023 data collection logistics, including identifying a school coordinator to serve as the liaison for study activities in the school. The district, diocese, and school recruitment will continue through the spring of 2023, and into the summer and fall of 2023 as necessary. Statisticians will select replacement schools as needed, depending on response rates, using the same methods as the original sampled school.

## **A.2 Purpose and Uses of the Data**

The ECLS-K:2024 study will provide rich data that are designed to serve two purposes: descriptive and explanatory. The study will provide descriptive data related to: (1) children’s status prior to and at entry into kindergarten and at different points in children’s elementary school careers, (2) children’s transition into school and into the later elementary grade levels, and (3) children’s school progress through the fifth grade. Additionally, the study data will enable researchers to test hypotheses about how a wide range of child, family, school, classroom, education provider, and community characteristics relate to experiences and success in school.

In addition to the descriptive objectives mentioned above, the data will describe the diversity of young children with respect to demographic characteristics such as race/ethnicity, language, and school readiness. Such information is critical for establishing policies sensitive to this diversity. The longitudinal nature of the study will enable researchers to study cognitive, socioemotional, and physical growth, as well as relate trajectories of growth and change to variation in home and school experiences in the elementary grades. Ultimately, the ECLS-K:2024 data sets will be used by policymakers, educators, and researchers to consider the ways in which children are educated in our nation’s schools and to develop effective approaches to education. The data will be particularly valuable to policymakers, as the ECLS-K:2024 is being launched a dozen years after ECLS-K:2011 and a quarter century after the ECLS-K. Analyses of the three cohorts will provide valuable information about the influences of changing policy and demographic environments on children’s early learning and development.

Beyond testing the instruments and assessment items, the goal of the K-1 field test is to test the operational procedures and assumptions for the national kindergarten and first-grade rounds. The field test data will (1) shed light on the anticipated response rates for the national data collection, (2) allow for the evaluation of the web adaptations of the kindergarten and first-grade instruments, (3) allow for the testing of the MyECLS website, (4) allow for the testing of nonassessment items, (5) allow for preparation of the cognitive assessments for the kindergarten and first-grade national rounds, and (6) allow for the review of operational procedures and respondent materials for national recruitment and data collection rounds.

### **A.2.1 Research Issues Addressed in the ECLS-K:2024**

Today’s early care and education environment differs from that of the past in numerous ways. In recent years, changes at the federal, state, school, family, and societal levels have affected students’ learning environments. These changes range from evolving federal education policy, increased attention and support for early learning, technological changes influencing how children learn, and demographic changes in student and family populations in the United States. The early elementary school rounds of the ECLS-K:2024 offer an opportunity to learn more about how families and schools respond to these changes. Exhibit A-1 shows examples of developments since the earlier ECLS program studies related to children’s learning environments that are relevant to the ECLS-K:2024.

The widespread use of the ECLS program data is a testament to their importance. Like the other ECLS studies, the ECLS-K:2024 will be an exceptionally valuable resource because it will collect measures of children’s cognitive growth and development in the context of the many school and family influences on children’s early lives.

Exhibit A-1. Examples of developments since the earlier ECLS program studies relevant to the ECLS-K:2024

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#### Policy changes

- Passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) 2015
  - Passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act in 2017
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#### Economic challenges

- State and local budget constraints and cuts
- Continued child poverty and food insecurity
- Growth in skilled jobs and demand for schools to prepare students for workforce

#### Changes in early childhood education–Birth to school-entry

- Increase in state-funded pre-kindergarten (Pre-K) programs
- Improvements in quality and access from turn of the century until present, but access to high-quality early childhood education varies widely across states and communities
- Quality rating and improvement systems for early care and education
- Increased attention to the early childhood educator workforce
- Increased emphasis on enhancing early learning opportunities and outcomes
- Focus on decreasing the achievement gap through early intervention

#### Changes in schools and challenges to schools

- Growth in preschool use and recognition of the importance of early childhood education for closing achievement gaps
- Increased access to full-day kindergarten
- Growth in school choice and increasing number of charter schools
- Continued growth in use of technology and the Internet in schools, including increased use of mobile devices, “bring your own device” policies, online assessments, and new methods of classroom interactions
- Blended learning where in-person instruction and technology-delivered information are combined, especially in light of the coronavirus pandemic
- Differentiated instruction and personalized learning
- Training teachers to use technology effectively and to become online educators
- Growth of Hispanic, Asian, and multi-race child populations
- Growth in English language learners (ELL) in schools, especially at young ages
- Continued development of data systems to monitor student outcomes and make decisions

#### Child health and experiences

- Improvements in childhood lead exposure, but continued risk
  - Lower rates of teen pregnancy (and associated possible implications for maternal age of kindergartners)
  - Increase in infant breastfeeding
  - Increase in proportion of children who received a well-child checkup, but variation by subgroups
  - Continued problem of obesity and associated diabetes
  - Rise in incidence of allergies, autism, and attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder
  - Increased number of homeless children and children in foster care
  - Increased childhood exposure to violence
  - Child disabilities related to the Zika virus
  - Increased parental substance abuse
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### **A.2.1.1 Developments in Early Education Policy**

A major change in early education occurred when, in 2015, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was reauthorized as the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA maintains some of the same ideas as the 2002 reauthorization of ESEA, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), but includes more flexibility and decision-making at the state level resulting in state differences in schools’ goals, testing, interventions, and standards for academics and teacher qualifications. ESSA explicitly recognizes the importance of early learning from birth through third grade, allows Title I funds to be used for improving access and quality of preschool programs, and allows Title III funds to provide professional development to teachers to improve instruction for English learners from ages 3 and up. Title III also allows states to integrate early learning more fully into their state accountability and school improvement systems. In addition, ESSA includes a new Preschool Development Grant that focuses on providing more access to quality preschool education and the coordination of programs (Klein 2016).<sup>16</sup> The Preschool Development Grant supports state efforts to create high quality early childhood education programs that are aligned with K-12 programs and help low- and moderate-income children have better transitions to kindergarten (First Five Years Fund 2016). ESSA also includes new federal grants for Statewide Family Engagement Centers that focus on engaging parents and the community (Ujifusa and Tully 2016).

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<sup>16</sup> References for all publications cited in this document are provided at the end of the Supporting Statement Part C of this submission.

Other changes in federal policy, such as the 2017 “Tax Cuts and Jobs Act,” include the repeal of the former penalty in the Affordable Care Act for not having health insurance, the ability for families to use 529 college savings accounts to pay for private K-12 education, and the increase of the maximum Child Tax Credit to \$2,000 per child for some families, depending on income (Internal Revenue Service 2018; Society for Research in Child Development 2018). The ECLS K:2024 is an opportunity to obtain current data that may reflect these policy changes.

Until recently, economic data show a continued economic recovery from the deep recession that started over a decade ago. From 2015 to 2016, the poverty rate for children decreased from 19.7 to 18.0 percent (Semega, Fontenot, and Kollar 2017). Compared to previous years, more parents are employed and earning higher wages, more children have health insurance, and more students are graduating from high school (Annie E. Casey Foundation 2017). In addition, the number of families living in neighborhoods with concentrated poverty declined in 2016 for the first time in 20 years (Annie E. Casey Foundation 2018). However, economic disparity remains. One in five children live in poverty, some families lack food, and there are inequalities among racial/ethnic groups in poverty levels and family structure (Annie E. Casey Foundation 2018). School funding has also not fully recovered and many schools have less funding than they had in 2008 (Ogletree and Robinson 2016). In addition, the pay gap between teachers and workers with comparable education levels has increased over time (Allegretto and Mishel 2016) and some teachers have been striking for higher wages. The ECLS-K:2024 data could be used to examine associated issues such as current school resources and how schools are meeting the needs of students and families.

The economic effects from the coronavirus pandemic are just beginning to be explored but are expected to impact the educational arena. For example, districts and schools may lose significant numbers of teachers—leading to increased classroom size and reduced resources for special education—due to the economic downturn brought on by the pandemic. High levels of unemployment resulting from the coronavirus pandemic could affect family dynamics and resources. The ECLS-K:2024 study is in a unique position to collect data from schools and families during this time; the data could then be used to report on the early effects of the pandemic and its economic impact.

#### **A.2.1.2 Increased Attention and Support for Early Learning**

Educational policymakers and researchers continue to search for effective ways to promote school readiness. In the past decade, there has been a greater recognition of the potential for high-quality early learning experiences to help close the achievement gaps that already exist when students start kindergarten. Access to high-quality, state-funded preschool has increased across the two decades since the ECLS-K began in 1998, but there are wide differences among states in enrollment and program quality.

Other recent changes include increased access to full-day kindergarten, a proliferation of quality rating and improvement systems across states, and increased attention to improving teacher training and professionalism in the early childhood educator workforce. In addition, a growing number of schools and districts have implemented school-wide practices and policies for socioemotional learning, an area that research suggests has long-term impacts on positive youth development and educational attainment (Taylor et al. 2017). Research from the previous ECLS study cohorts further suggests that some areas of school readiness, such as teacher-rated literacy and mathematics skills, may be improving (Bassok and Latham 2017). The ECLS-K:2024 can provide new evidence about school readiness to evaluate changes across time.

#### **A.2.1.3 Technology and Learning**

Technological advances, improved Internet access, and the importance of technological proficiency in modern society are changing how and what students learn. Broadband Internet is now available in most classrooms, the price for technology is lower than in the past, and teachers are being trained to use technology before they begin teaching (U.S. Department of Education 2017). Teachers are using personalized learning to address individual students’ needs, help students improve skills, and have experiences such as virtual field trips and interactions with other students around the world. Many schools also use blended learning—the combination of in-person instruction and technology. A growing number of schools have a computer or tablet for each student and assess students online. However, there are inequalities in what technology resources communities have and challenges with implementation of technology (U.S. Department of Education 2017). This has become especially evident during the coronavirus pandemic. Access to wi-fi connections and computers or tablets is varied across districts and schools, complicating the implementation of online learning that became necessary in the spring of 2020 in much of the country. While some schools were able to move seamlessly to teaching students virtually, other schools had a patchwork of resource availability, meaning that some

students' learning ended when schools were closed due to the pandemic in the spring of 2020. The ECLS-K:2024 is designed to capture current uses of technology, support for teachers for the technology in their classes, and issues with technology implementation. These issues are especially relevant in this current age.

#### **A.2.1.4 Demographic Changes**

The United States has been experiencing demographic shifts in its population, becoming an increasingly diverse society (Child Trends 2016; Colby and Ortman 2015). Recent analyses of decennial census data show that from 2000 to 2010, the growth in the nation's child population was due primarily to increases in the Hispanic, Asian, and other groups who are not White, Black, or American Indian or Alaska Native (Frey 2011). The demographic shift is especially evident in the school-aged population. The percentage of public school students in the United States who were English language learners was higher in school year 2012-13 (9.2 percent, or an estimated 4.4 million students) than in 2002-03 (8.7 percent, or an estimated 4.1 million students) (U.S. Department of Education 2015). More recently, it has been reported that about a fourth of U.S. children speak a language other than English at home and live with at least one foreign-born parent (Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics 2017).

English language use is not the only challenge for many of these children, particularly those born outside the United States. Many children, especially those with parents from Mexico and Central America, come from households with parents with a lower level of education, larger families, and lower family income than their native-born peers (Grieco et al. 2012; Larsen 2004). However, households with parents born in foreign countries are more likely than those with parents born in the U.S. to be headed by married couples (Grieco et al. 2012). Also, families with different cultural backgrounds and from other countries may have different normative expectations for how they should interact with schools and teachers. The ECLS-K:2024 will enable researchers to examine how schools and teachers are meeting the needs of these students and their families and to measure the effectiveness of the efforts of schools to educate all students.

### **A.3 Use of Improved Information Technology**

#### **A.3.1 Web-Based Surveys**

The ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test will employ web surveys to collect data from schools, teachers, and parents. The use of technology is pervasive in education today. Parents of sampled students are likely to be brought up within an environment of digital technology (making them "digital natives") and will expect an option to communicate electronically. Such parents are increasingly unlikely to spend time completing a survey on paper or with an interviewer via telephone. Additionally, many of the school personnel will also be familiar with using online methods of communication. By offering a web survey, the ECLS-K:2024 will provide flexibility for respondents to choose when to participate using a mode that they are likely most comfortable engaging with. Particularly on the ECLS-K:2024, where the school-based data collection is packed into an increasingly challenging school schedule.

Finally, web surveys have usability advantages over paper forms, including that the resulting survey data are expected to require less quality review and editing by ECLS-K:2024 staff. Response rates ranging from 45 percent to 96 percent have been achieved on NCES studies that have been developed for or transitioned to web-based data collection, including the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), the International Early Learning Study (IELS), the Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), and the Program for International Student Assessment (PISA). The response rates provided here for the web mode are consistently higher than the response rates for paper or interviewer modes for the same study. Similarly, web-based surveys may have some advantages over telephone interviewing. Specifically, they may eliminate interviewer effects and reduce social desirability bias. While it is expected that most respondents will choose to complete the web version of the instruments, paper versions of the school staff surveys will be provided to respondents who do not respond to the web-based activities, or to those who request them. For parents who choose not to respond on the web, field data collectors will conduct the survey via telephone.

#### **A.3.2 Usability Testing**

Prior to the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test, in early 2021 selected web surveys underwent usability evaluations to test whether respondents understand the questions, whether there are points in the survey where respondents become confused or frustrated, what kinds of errors respondents make, how respondents correct mistakes, whether help text is used, and other potential issues. A request to conduct this usability testing was approved by OMB (OMB #1850-0803

v.280). Revisions to instruments based on the findings from the usability testing have been made to the instruments included as part of this submission.

## **A.4 Efforts to Identify Duplication**

The ECLS-K:2024 will not be duplicative of other studies. The ECLS-K and the ECLS-K:2011 are the only other studies to collect as detailed and extensive information as the ECLS-K:2024 for a cohort of young children and to follow them throughout elementary school. The ECLS-K:2024 extends the information obtained by the ECLS-K and the ECLS-K:2011 to a new cohort, opens up possibilities to investigate new research questions, and allows important comparisons to be made between three kindergarten cohorts attending school over a period of more than 25 years.

Other studies contain similar components of the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test but differ in study design. For example, in terms of the parent survey, the National Household Education Surveys program surveys, while cross-sectional, cover similar topics, including early care and education, early childhood school readiness, before- and after-school care options, and parent and family involvement in education; however, these studies do not provide longitudinal data. As another example, the Head Start Family and Child Experiences Survey (FACES), which is similar to the ECLS-K:2024 in terms of the content and respondents included (e.g., children, parents, teachers, and center-directors, who could be considered similar to school administrators), has followed several cohorts of children from preschool through early elementary school, with its newest cohort being conducted from 2019 through 2022. However, the FACES samples are limited to children served by the Head Start program. The ECLS-B was a longitudinal study that followed a cohort of children from approximately 9 months old (2001-02) through the start of kindergarten that collected data from children's parents, their early care and education providers, and in the kindergarten rounds their teachers. However, the ECLS-B did not continue data collections through the elementary grades. The Middle Grades Longitudinal Study of 2017–18 (MGLS:2017) focuses on similar components (e.g., children and their parents, teachers, and school administrators) and development outcome areas to the ECLS program studies, but for a cohort of middle grades students, rather than kindergartners. The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Study of Early Child Care and Youth Development, which ran from 1991 through 2007, included similar study components (e.g., children and their parents, teachers, and school administrators) to collect data on child development outcome areas (social, emotional, intellectual, and language development; health; and physical growth). However, the NICHD sample was recruited from hospitals shortly after the birth of the children and the study's main focus was on early child care, including maternal care and the relationship between that care and children's developmental outcomes. No new cohorts are currently planned for the NICHD. Within the United States, the International Early Learning Study (IELS) conducted in the fall of 2018 focused on 5-year-olds enrolled in kindergarten and also included similar study components (e.g., students, their parents, teachers, and school administrators) to collect data on child development outcome areas. However, the IELS was not representative of all kindergartners and was not longitudinal in nature.

## **A.5 Burden on Small Businesses or Other Small Entities**

The field test does not involve data collection from small businesses or entities. The same is true of the national sampling and recruitment activities discussed in this submission.<sup>17</sup> Burden for all respondents (i.e., children, parents, teachers, and school administrators) will be minimized wherever possible; for example, the recruitment letters and study materials are designed to be clear, brief, and informative.

## **A.6 Frequency of Data Collection**

This submission describes the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test, recruitment for which will occur in spring 2022, with field test data collection in fall 2022. Within the K-1 field test instruments, sampling, and operational procedures will be tested to ensure successful data collection in the national study. The K-1 field test is the second in a series of field tests conducted for the ECLS-K:2024, preceded by the preschool field test which launched in 2020.

District and school recruitment for the national study will begin in August 2022 and will provide the sample of schools where national data collection activities will occur. Data collections will occur in fall 2023 and spring 2024 for the national kindergarten data collections, spring 2025 for the national first-grade data collection, spring 2026 for the grades 3-5 field test, spring 2027 for the third-grade data collection, and spring 2029 for the fifth-grade data collection.

<sup>17</sup> Note that some private or charter schools could be considered small businesses, but these types of schools are not expected to have any additional burden beyond what is asked of public schools. In addition, due to the voluntary nature of the study, they are able to decline participation.

Collecting ECLS-K:2024 data less frequently would impede the longitudinal analyses that are the primary goal of this study.

## **A.7 Special Circumstances of Data Collection**

No special circumstances for this information collection are anticipated.

## **A.8 Consultants Outside the Agency**

NCES consulted with a range of outside agencies for the ECLS program kindergarten cohort studies. Consultations for the previous studies as well as for the ECLS-K:2024 have and will continue to inform the ECLS-K:2024 study design and instrumentation. During the early development of the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011, study staff met with representatives from a wide range of federal agencies with an interest in the care and well-being of children (see Table A-1). The goal of these activities was to identify policy and research issues and data needs. Similarly, consultation with federal agencies occurred for the ECLS-K:2024 (see table A-1), including, for example, with colleagues in the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture and the National Endowment for the Arts. Historically in the ECLS program, consultations with government agencies resulted in interagency agreements funding questions, sections of or full study instruments, and components of the child assessments (specifically, the hearing evaluations in the national study). Federal agency partners will continue to be consulted during the span of the study.

Similar to its predecessors, the ECLS-K:2024 represents a collaborative effort by education and health and human services agencies. NCES supports the development of the core design of the ECLS-K:2024. Partner agencies supporting the inclusion of the supplemental questions or sections of the study instruments that will enrich the ECLS-K:2024 by providing expert input and/or funding have included: the Economic Research Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA); the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSE) and the National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) in the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education (ED); the Administration for Children and Families in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS); the National Endowment for the Arts (NEA); and the National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders (NIDCD), the National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), the National Eye Institute (NEI), and the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), all at the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in DHHS. Table A-1 lists the federal agency consultants for the ECLS-K, ECLS-K:2011, and ECLS-K:2024 and table A-2 lists other organization consultants for the ECLS-K:2024.

ECLS study staff have also consulted several other organizations (see table A-2) that have an interest in the care, well-being, and education of young children. The goal of such consultations is to obtain additional perspectives on policy and research issues and data needs. While most of this consultation occurred during the design and conduct of the ECLS-K and ECLS-K:2011, there has also been such consultation during the design of the ECLS-K:2024. For example, ECLS study staff have consulted with staff involved with the Early Learning Network, a network funded by IES and located within the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families & Schools at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln.

In preparation for the early rounds of ECLS-K:2024 data collection, Westat assembled expert panels (one Technical Review Panel (TRP) and two Content Review Panels (CRP)) to review and comment on issues related to the development of the study and survey instruments. The members of the panels included experts in research, policy making, and practice in the fields of early childhood education and development; elementary education; parenting and children's learning; children's language, literacy, and mathematics development in the home context; research methodology; special populations; and assessment. Additional expert panels will be assembled to provide input throughout the course of the study.

Table A-1. Federal agency consultants for ECLS-K, ECLS-K:2011, and ECLS-K:2024

Katrina Baum <sup>1</sup> Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics	Tim D’Emillio U.S. Department of Education OELA
Michael Planty, Jenna Truman U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics	Christy Kavulic, Meredith A. Miceli U.S. Department of Education Office of Special Education Programs
William Murphy, Christa Themann Centers for Disease Control National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health	Cathie L. Martin <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education OIE
Diane Schilder <sup>1</sup> Government Accounting Office	Scott Brown, <sup>1</sup> Louis Danielson, <sup>1</sup> Glinda Hill, <sup>1</sup> Lisa Holden-Pitt, <sup>1</sup> Kristen Lauer, <sup>1</sup> Marlene Simon-Burroughs, <sup>1</sup> Larry Wexler
Cindy Prince, <sup>1</sup> Emily Wurtz <sup>1</sup> National Education Goals Panel	U.S. Department of Education OSEP
Tom Bradshaw, <sup>1</sup> Doug Herbert, <sup>1</sup> Sunil Iyengar, Melissa Menzer National Endowment for the Arts	Lisa A. Gorove <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education OUS, Budget Service, ESVA
Jeffrey Thomas <sup>1</sup> National Endowment for the Humanities	Elois Scott <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education OUS, PES, ESED
Andy Hartman <sup>1</sup> National Institute for Literacy	Richard Dean <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education OVAE, Adult Literacy
Mary Queitzsch, <sup>1</sup> Larry Suter <sup>1</sup> National Science Foundation	Ivelisse Martinez-Beck, Pia Divine, <sup>1</sup> Esther Kresh, <sup>1</sup> Ann Rivera U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Administration for Children, Youth, and Families
Michael Ruffner, <sup>1</sup> Bayla White, <sup>1</sup> Brian Harris-Kojetin <sup>1</sup> Office of Management and Budget	Gerry Hendershot, <sup>1</sup> John Kiley, <sup>1</sup> Michael Kogan, <sup>1</sup> Mitchell Loeb, Patricia Pastor U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services National Center for Health Statistics
John Endahl, <sup>1</sup> Joanne Guthrie, Jeff Wilde <sup>1</sup> Victor Oliviera, <sup>1</sup> Mark Nord, Alisha Coleman-Jensen, Matthew P. Rabbitt U.S. Department of Agriculture	Mary Frances Cotch U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services National Eye Institute, National Institutes of Health
Don Hernandez <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Commerce Bureau of the Census Marriage and Family Statistics	Christine Bachrach, <sup>1</sup> Jeff Evans, <sup>1</sup> Sarah Friedman, <sup>1</sup> Peggy McCardle <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services NICHD, Center for Population Research
Naomi Karp, <sup>1</sup> Dave Malouf, <sup>1</sup> Ivor Pritchard, <sup>1</sup> Marsha Silverberg <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Education IES	Regina Bures, Jim Griffin U.S. Department of Health and Human Services NICHD, National Institutes of Health
Lauren Angelo, Jon Jacobson U.S. Department of Education IES, NCEE	Howard Hoffman U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders, National Institutes of Health
Jacquelyn Buckley U.S. Department of Education IES, NCSER Caroline Ebanks U.S. Department of Education IES, NCER	



Table A-1. Federal agency consultants for ECLS-K, ECLS-K:2011, and ECLS-K:2024—Continued

Patricia McKee U.S. Department of Education OESE Compensatory Education Programs	Martha Moorehouse, <sup>1</sup> Anne Wolf <sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning & Evaluation, Children and Youth Policy
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<sup>1</sup> Consultant for the ECLS-K only. All other consultants provided input on one or both of the most recent ECLS program kindergarten cohort studies, the ECLS-K:2011 and ECLS-K:2024.

NOTE: Affiliation listed is the affiliation at the time input on the study was provided.

Table A-2. Other organization consultants for ECLS-K, ECLS-K:2011, and the ECLS-K:2024

Lynson Bobo Project Associate Resource Center on Educational Equity Council of Chief State School Officers	Keith W. Mielkek Children’s Television Workshop
Susan Bredekamp, Barbara Willer National Association for the Education of Young Children	June Million, Sally McConnell, Louanne Wheeler National Association of Elementary School Principals
<i>Jane Clarenbach</i> <i>National Association for Gifted Children</i>	Evelyn Moore, Erica Tollett National Black Child Development Institute
Mary Jo Lynch American Library Association Office of Research and Statistics	Thomas Schultz Director, Center for Education Services for Young Learners
	National Association of State Boards of Education <i>Larry Suter</i> <i>Independent Education Consultant, Formerly of NSF and NCES</i>

NOTE: Affiliation listed is the affiliation at the time input on the study was provided. Italicized text used for consultation that occurred for the ECLS-K:2011. All other consultations occurred for the ECLS-K.

Table A-3 lists the ECLS-K:2024 TRP members that participated in a 2-day meeting held in April 2019. The meeting focused on the design of the preschool, kindergarten, and first-grade rounds of the ECLS-K:2024, although input on later rounds was also provided. Panel members recommended study constructs and specific items for the parent, child, teacher, and school administrator surveys, and provided guidance on the child assessments.

Table A-3. ECLS-K:2024 TRP members for April 2019 meeting

Daphna Bassok, Ph.D. University of Virginia	Rolf Grafwallner, Ph.D. Center on Enhancing Early Learning Outcomes (CEELO) and The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)
Karen Bierman, Ph.D. The Pennsylvania State University	Stephanie Jones, Ph.D. Harvard Graduate School of Education
Robert Crosnoe, Ph.D. The University of Texas at Austin	Megan McClelland, Ph.D. Oregon State University
Douglas Downey, Ph.D. The Ohio State University	Paul Morgan, Ph.D. The Pennsylvania State University
Linda M. Espinosa, Ph.D. University of Missouri – Columbia	Lynne Vernon-Feagans, Ph.D. The Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute

NOTE: Affiliation listed is the affiliation at the time input on the study was provided.

In addition, two virtual CRP meetings were held, gathering experts for more targeted discussions. The first CRP meeting was held on May 22, 2019. This meeting was about the preschool parent survey and panelists provided input on which constructs and measures should be prioritized for that round of the study. The second CRP meeting was held in two parts, with reading experts convening on June 13, 2019 and math experts on June 14, 2019. These two meetings contained discussion on the direct and indirect child assessments and panelists provided input on the assessment specifications and items to be included in kindergarten and the first-grade rounds of the study. Table A-4 lists the ECLS-K:2024 CRP members.

Table A-4. ECLS-K:2024 CRP #1 (preschool parent survey) and CRP #2 (child assessments) member list

Preschool parent survey panel	Child assessments panel
Heather Bachman – University of Pittsburgh	Carol Connor <sup>1</sup> – University of California, Irvine
Stephanie Curenton – Boston University	Lizanne DeStefano <sup>2</sup> – University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign
Vivian L. Gadsden – University of Pennsylvania	Doug Frye <sup>2</sup> – University of Pennsylvania, Graduate School of Education
Mariela Páez – Boston College	Donna Hafner <sup>2</sup> – Independent consultant, assessment development, math facilitator, elementary teacher
	Alba Ortiz <sup>1</sup> – University of Texas at Austin
	Julie Sarama <sup>2</sup> – University of Denver, Morgridge College of Education
	Rebecca Silverman <sup>1</sup> – Stanford University
	Barbara Wasik <sup>1</sup> – Temple University

<sup>1</sup> Reading CRP

<sup>2</sup> Mathematics CRP

NOTE: Affiliation listed is the affiliation at the time input on the study was provided.

## A.9 Provision of Payments or Gifts

Obtaining high response rates is critical for all longitudinal studies. At the start of a longitudinal data collection, it is essential to establish the good will of respondents and to demonstrate that their participation in the study is valued. While good will can be established by using well-designed respondent materials that inform respondents about the goals of the study and their role in it, the field staff establishing a rapport with the respondents, and professionalism among the field staff, incentives play a large role as well.

As seen on other NCES studies such as the MGLS:2017 and High School and Beyond (HS&B), response rates across education-centric studies have dropped since data from the last cohort of the ECLS were collected. Perceived burden on their staff, parents, and students will be one of the most critical factors considered as school administrators consider participation in the study. By offering both monetary and non-monetary incentives, the ECLS-K:2024 recognizes respondents’ commitment to the multi-year study and any associated burden. The study’s incentive plan builds on the successful incentive strategies employed by other NCES studies, including the ECLS-K:2011.

A review of the literature supports the need for incentives, especially monetary incentives. Singer and Ye (2013) concluded that “incentives increase response rates to surveys in all modes, including the web, and in cross-sectional and panel studies” and that “monetary incentives increase response rates more than gifts, and prepaid incentives increase them more than promised incentives....” More recently, Mercer et al. (2015) reviewed both published and unpublished research pertaining to incentives from the preceding 21 years and concluded that in mail and telephone surveys “consistent with prior research, the analysis found that prepaid incentives are more effective than promised incentives” (web surveys were not included in the review). See section A.9.5.1 below for additional literature reviews regarding the use of incentives.

To deepen understanding of participants perspectives on the study experience in general, the ECLS-K:2024 plans to include an area on the MyECLS website for field test participants to provide feedback about their study experiences. Along with an open-ended section for comments, the ECLS-K:2024 will include targeted questions to solicit opinions

on the use of monetary and non-monetary incentives, as well as the amount of the incentive payments. This feedback will be valuable when consideration is given to the incentive amount and types proposed for the national data collection.<sup>18</sup>

Table A-5 displays the monetary and non-monetary incentives NCES proposes to provide to the ECLS-K:2024 field test sample members in 2022, along with the monetary incentives offered in the ECLS-K:2011 for comparison. Table A-6 displays the monetary incentives proposed for the ECLS-K:2024 national sample members. During the national district and school recruitment phase, district and school personnel will be informed of the incentives that will be offered to schools and school staff for their participation during the data collection rounds. More details about these incentives are described in the sections below.

Table A-5. ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test incentives

Field Test Respondent Type	ECLS-K:2024 Monetary Incentive	ECLS-K:2024 Non-Monetary Incentive	ECLS-K:2011 Incentive
Schools	\$10 per participating child (check at the conclusion of the field test data collection phase)	For schools with explicit consent and 100 percent returned forms: Food event at school (e.g., pizza, bagels, ice cream) sponsored by the study  Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Associate Commissioner	\$7 per participating child in the 2013 field test (check at the conclusion of the field test data collection phase)
School Coordinators	\$65 (check with the welcome letter)	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Associate Commissioner	\$25 (check with the welcome letter)
School Administrators	\$25 (check with the welcome letter)	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Associate Commissioner	\$25 (check with the welcome letter)
Teachers	\$20 + \$7 per child-level survey <sup>1</sup> (check with the welcome letter)	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Associate Commissioner	\$20 + \$7 per child-level survey
Parents	\$0 or \$15 (prepaid Mastercard® with the welcome letter)	Pad of sticky notes with the U.S. Department of Education logo	\$0

<sup>1</sup> This incentive will be distributed only if the district or school agrees that school staff can be paid. Some districts will prohibit the use of teacher incentives and thus all district guidelines will be followed.

<sup>18</sup> Proposed incentives for teachers, school administrators, and parents in the national data collection will be included in the OMB request to conduct the 2023 kindergarten and 2024 first-grade data collection rounds. This submission is planned for late 2022.

Table A-6. ECLS-K:2024 K-1 national kindergarten and first-grade respondent incentives

National Respondent Type	ECLS-K:2024 Monetary Incentive, by Round	ECLS-K:2024 Non-Monetary Incentive	ECLS-K:2011 Incentive
Schools	(Separate incentive not planned for fall kindergarten round)	For schools with explicit consent and 100 percent returned forms: Food event at school (e.g., pizza, bagels, ice cream) sponsored by the study (fall kindergarten round)	\$200 (check at the conclusion of the spring kindergarten round)
	\$300 (check at the conclusion of the spring kindergarten round)		
	\$300 (check at the conclusion of the first-grade data collection round) <sup>1</sup>	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Commissioner (at the conclusion of the spring kindergarten round)	\$200 (check at the conclusion of the spring first-grade round)
School Coordinators	\$65 (check with the welcome letter in the fall kindergarten round)	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Commissioner (at the conclusion of the spring kindergarten round)	\$25 (check with the welcome letter in the fall kindergarten rounds)
	\$35 (check with the welcome letter in the spring kindergarten round)		\$25 (check with the welcome letter in the spring kindergarten rounds)
	\$35 (check with the welcome letter in the spring first-grade round)		\$25 (check with the welcome letter in the spring first-grade round)
School Administrators	(Data are not collected from school administrator in fall kindergarten round)	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Commissioner (at the conclusion of the spring kindergarten round)	\$25 (when data were collected in spring kindergarten and spring first-grade rounds)
	\$25 (check with the welcome letter in the spring kindergarten round)		
	\$25 (check with the welcome letter in the spring first-grade round)		
Teachers	\$20 + \$7 per child-level survey <sup>2</sup> (check with the welcome letter in the fall kindergarten round and spring kindergarten and first-grade rounds)	Certificate of Contribution signed by the NCES Commissioner (at the conclusion of the spring kindergarten and first-grade rounds)	\$20 + \$7 per child-level survey

Table A-6. ECLS-K:2024 K-1 national kindergarten and first-grade respondent incentives—Continued

National Respondent Type	ECLS-K:2024 Monetary Incentive, by Round	ECLS-K:2024 Non-Monetary Incentive	ECLS-K:2011 Incentive
Parents	\$15 (prepaid Mastercard® with the welcome letter in the fall kindergarten round)	Pad of sticky notes with the U.S. Department of Education logo (with the welcome letter in the fall kindergarten round and spring kindergarten and first-grade rounds)	\$0
	\$15 (prepaid Mastercard® with the welcome letter in the spring kindergarten round) <sup>3</sup>		
	\$15 (prepaid Mastercard® with the welcome letter in the spring first-grade round) <sup>1</sup>		

<sup>1</sup> This incentive will be distributed only to participating original base-year schools and destination schools (transfer schools into which four or more sampled children from the same original school have moved).

<sup>2</sup> This incentive will only be distributed if the district or school agrees that school staff can be paid. Some districts will prohibit the use of teacher incentives and thus all district guidelines will be followed.

<sup>3</sup> In other studies conducted by NCES, parents have been given the option to donate their incentive to the school. The school is then given a check at the end of the data collection round for the total amount of the donated parent incentives. This option was well-received by parents. While this is more difficult to do in the ECLS-K:2024 because the incentive is pre-paid, the study will consider adding a question to the end of the fall kindergarten and spring kindergarten parent interviews asking respondents if they would prefer that their incentive from the next round be donated to the school instead. If this strategy is enacted, details will be included in the relevant national data collection OMB packages.

As was done in the ECLS-K:2011, children will not receive any significant incentive, monetary or otherwise. As in the past, children will be given child-friendly pencils (e.g., pencils with a picture or a design on them, not specific to the study) that they use for the math portion of the assessment. This token of appreciation will be provided as a small gesture in an effort to maintain enthusiasm for and a positive attitude about the study.

### A.9.1 School Incentives

High levels of school participation are integral to the success of the study. Without a school’s cooperation, there can be no school, teacher, or child data collection activity at that facility. It is important to provide schools with an incentive because the study asks a lot of them, including allowing field staff to be in their schools for several days; providing a contact person and space for the children to be assessed; removing children from their normal classes while they are assessed; and obtaining information about the school, the teachers, the children, and the parents. Given the many demands and outside pressures that schools face, it is essential that they see that the burden being placed on them is recognized and that their participation is valued.

For the K-1 field test, NCES proposes to recognize the effort associated with participation with \$10 per assessed child. Although some schools will have far fewer sampled children, it is estimated that field test schools will contain about 60 sampled children. If all children participate, this would result in an incentive of \$600. This incentive amount is in line with what was used in the main study base year of the MGLS:2017. For the MGLS:2017, schools were given incentive checks of either \$400 or \$600, depending on the type of school.<sup>19</sup> Schools that participate in the ECLS-K:2024 agree to allowing field staff into the school for 4-5 days of data collection, with children assessed across three different grades. The number of children that will be assessed in the ECLS-K:2024 field test schools is higher than in the ECLS-K:2024 national study. While every effort will be made to reduce burden on the school and school personnel, the logistics and commitment to the assessments justify the higher incentive amount. A check will be mailed to schools at the conclusion of field test data collection in fall 2022.

<sup>19</sup> The higher incentive was paid to schools associated with districts that initially declined to participate and that had one or more schools that were designated as having “higher” counts of students in the focal disability groups

Additionally, NCES proposes to offer field test schools requiring explicit consent a food-related event,<sup>20</sup> such as a pizza, bagel, or ice cream party for the kindergarten, first-grade, and second-grade students, if 100 percent of consent forms are returned to the school coordinator (electronically or on paper). The event would be offered to all children in these grades, both participants and non-participants, and will be offered regardless of whether consent is obtained or refused on the forms. Food events were also used in the MGLS:2017 to acknowledge schools' efforts to support participation. The hope is that this opportunity will encourage school coordinators to follow up with parents to return consent forms. ECLS field staff will purchase and bring the food to the school on the date selected by the school, possibly providing an additional opportunity for field staff to follow-up with the school coordinator or other school staff on study-related tasks.

Finally, at the conclusion of the field test, participating schools will receive a certificate of contribution, signed by the NCES Associate Commissioner. Although the study name cannot be referenced, the certificate will recognize the school's contribution to the United States Department of Education's research efforts. The certificate will include the U.S. Department of Education and/or IES logos and will be suitable for display in the school if so desired.

For the national study base year in 2023-24, NCES proposes to recognize schools' efforts associated with participation with \$300 per school. In both the base years of the ECLS-K, conducted during the 1998-99 school year, and the ECLS-K:2011, conducted during the 2010-11 school year, schools were offered a \$200 honorarium. A higher incentive is proposed for the ECLS-K:2024 for several reasons. First, the recruitment experience on the ECLS-K:2011 demonstrates that the \$200 incentive was not entirely persuasive in convincing schools to commit to the study. The ECLS-K:2011 school recruitment phase had to be extended by several months in order to build adequate response rates and to recruit a sufficient number of schools from which to sample children. The study recruited schools throughout the base-year fall round and into the base-year spring round. As a result, child sampling for roughly 60 of the 951 schools was not conducted until the spring kindergarten round, meaning that no fall kindergarten data were collected from these children and their teachers and parents. Secondly, the more recent experience of other longitudinal education studies, such as the MGLS:2017, suggests that the challenges to obtaining district and school participation are increasing. As mentioned above, the MGLS:2017 offered schools an incentive of \$400 or \$600 (depending on the school type) in a check or in goods and services and still it proved challenging to reach an acceptable school response rate. The IELS study recruited schools using a \$200 incentive in 2018. However, a higher incentive of \$800 was also approved and offered to schools that had initially refused. While this second tier incentive approach is not proposed for the ECLS-K:2024, the high dollar value of the IELS incentive helps justify an increase in the ECLS:2024 school incentive.

A higher school incentive amount for the ECLS-K:2024 (compared with the prior ECLS-K:2011), combined with a longer planned school recruitment phase, will hopefully convince the schools of the value of their participation and lead to higher response rates during the scheduled school recruitment phase. A check in the amount of \$300 will be mailed to each school at the end of each spring data collection along with a thank-you letter thanking the school for its participation.

Depending on the experience with and feedback from the field test schools, a food event for kindergarten classrooms in explicit consent schools and the certificate of contribution will also be offered in the national study.

## **A.9.2 School Coordinator Incentives**

School coordinators act as the study liaison between study staff and their school and, as such, they play a very important role in the ECLS-K:2024. They help to enroll children in the study, communicate necessary information to parents, notify teachers and school staff of their role in the study, and arrange the assessment logistics (e.g., space to conduct the assessments). For this reason, school coordinators will be offered a \$65 incentive. The \$65 checks will be attached to the welcome letters mailed to the coordinators at the start of fall data collection, for both the field test and the national study. In subsequent rounds of the national study, beginning with spring kindergarten, school coordinators will receive \$35. School coordinators were offered a \$25 incentive during each round of the ECLS-K:2011. NCES proposes increasing this amount to \$65 in the fall kindergarten round because the school coordinator is being asked to play a more significant role in the ECLS-K:2024 data collection activities, specifically using the study website to upload the list of children for sampling and to record school, child, parent, and teacher information directly in the website. Additionally, the school coordinator is being asked to actively encourage the participation of school staff and

<sup>20</sup> It is acknowledged that shared food events may be less appealing to schools in light of the coronavirus pandemic, so NCES will evaluate how these perform in the field test and may reconsider offering these for the national study depending on the experience.

to follow up with parents on providing consent for their children’s participation and with teachers and parents to complete their surveys. In the IELS study, the school coordinator, who had similar responsibilities to the ECLS-K:2024, was offered \$200: \$100 after he or she submitted the list of children and \$100 mailed with a thank-you letter at the end of data collection. Similarly, the MGLS:2017 offered the school coordinator \$150: \$50 after the child roster was uploaded and \$100 at the conclusion of data collection activities. These incentive amounts are in line with what is proposed for the ECLS-K:2024; school coordinators will receive a total of \$100 after the fall and spring kindergarten rounds, with an additional \$35 after the spring first-grade round.

### **A.9.3 School Administrator Incentives**

To build response rates, NCES proposes to remunerate school administrators in appreciation for their completing the school administrator survey. For the K-1 field test, the school administrators will be offered a \$25 incentive check along with the welcome letter at the start of fall 2022 data collection. For the national study, school administrators will be offered a \$25 incentive check along with the letter introducing the school administrator survey in spring 2024. Because the ECLS-K:2011 was able to achieve high response rates for the school administrator questionnaire (88.2% in spring fifth grade), the same incentive amount is again proposed for the ECLS-K:2024.

### **A.9.4 Teacher Incentives**

In the kindergarten, first-, and second-grade rounds of the ECLS-K:2011, primary and special education teachers received \$7 per child-level questionnaire because they were asked to provide a significant amount of information about each study child based on their observations of these students. Teachers received no remuneration for the teacher-level questionnaires. For the spring third-, fourth-, and fifth-grade rounds of the ECLS-K:2011, OMB approved a change in the incentive structure. Primary classroom teachers were given \$7 per subject-specific child-level questionnaire, along with an additional \$20 associated with the teacher-level questionnaire. Special education teachers received \$7 for each child-level questionnaire and \$20 for the teacher-level questionnaire. A check for the incentive was attached to the package of instruments the teacher received each round. The high questionnaire response rates achieved in the fifth-grade ECLS-K:2011 collection (teacher-level questionnaire at 93.8%; child-level reading questionnaire at 90%, special education teacher questionnaire at 93.1%, child-level special education questionnaire at 89.2%) are attributed in part to the provided incentives. This incentive structure, with the same amounts, was also used successfully on IELS and the MGLS:2017.

NCES proposes to continue this incentive structure for the ECLS-K:2024 field test and national data collection because teachers are again being asked to provide a significant amount of key information about the study children’s school experiences and outcomes. NCES proposes that teachers receive \$20 per completed teacher-level survey plus \$7 for each child-level survey. The same incentive structure for all teachers, regardless of the specific surveys (e.g., general education versus special education) they are being asked to complete, will be used to protect against any perception of unfairness that might result if teachers within a school talk to one another about the amount they have received for a specific survey.

Based on what occurred in the ECLS-K:2011, it is expected that teachers will have on average six sampled children linked to them, resulting in a total remuneration of \$62 (\$7 for each child-level survey and \$20 for the teacher-level survey). Results of the field test can be used to evaluate the teacher incentive amounts. An alternative model of \$15 per teacher-level survey plus \$10 per child-level survey could be considered if the field test suggests that the current amounts were not successful. A change memo would be submitted in this event. Incentive checks will be attached to the welcome letter each teacher receives.

### **A.9.5 Parent Incentives**

Similar to the MGLS:2017, the HSLs:09, and the planned HS&B, the ECLS-K:2024 proposes introducing a parent incentive. Over the course of the ECLS-K:2011, the parent response rates were consistently lower than desired (between 68 percent and 78 percent). No monetary incentive was used, although parents were provided with a paper bookmark with crayon icons in early rounds, and then a pad of sticky notes with the ECLS-K:2011 sun logo in later rounds. Given the acknowledged difficulty in recruiting respondents and the precedent set by other recent studies, NCES would like to investigate providing a monetary incentive to parents in the ECLS-K:2024. An incentive experiment, described in detail in Section A.9.5.1, is proposed for the 2022 K-1 field test to evaluate the effect of an incentive on response rates. For the field test, half of the parents will receive a prepaid Mastercard® loaded with \$15

along with their invitation to complete the parent survey, while half of the parents will receive no incentive. The prepaid card will be white or green, with white or green “Thank you!” text, along with the card’s number, expiration date, and a note that the card is only valid in the United States. The card will not display the study name. Schools will be assigned to each experimental group, so that all parents within a school will receive the same incentive. NCES will propose a parent incentive for the national study based on the results of the field test incentive experiment.

In addition to this monetary incentive, NCES proposes providing all parents with a pad of sticky notes. They will be white with the U.S. Department of Education’s logo. The sticky notes would be delivered in the parent packets with the parent welcome letter each study round. While only a small non-monetary incentive, the sticky notes will hopefully remind the parents of the study throughout the course of the study.

### **A.9.5.1 Parent Incentive Experiment**

Research has shown that incentives, especially prepaid cash incentives, improve response rates (e.g., Mercer 2015). The literature is also very consistent that prepaid incentives and monetary incentives are more effective than promised incentives or gifts (e.g., Singer et al. (2000), Mercer (2015)). While a majority of this literature is based on household studies, some of these findings may be extrapolated to school-based studies such as the ECLS-K:2024, for instance because in both household studies and school-based studies, parents are being contacted to provide information on their backgrounds and family context. For example, the National Household Education Surveys (NHES) program has done several incentive experiments in household education surveys (e.g., Williams et al. (2016); Jackson, Mcphee, and Lavrakas (2020)).

While these household incentive test experiments may provide some insight on what to expect in the ECLS-K:2024, findings on the efficacy of incentives in a household survey model may not be directly applicable to use of incentives with parents identified in a school-based survey of kindergarten children such as the ECLS-K:2024. Also, a new data collection approach being taken in the ECLS-K:2024 may make these household incentive findings less relevant to the current study. This approach that is being proposed for the ECLS-K:2024 field test involves asking school coordinators to initiate contact with parents of sampled students rather than having the first contact come from the study’s staff. The goal of this approach is to improve parent survey response rate by enhancing the legitimacy of the survey by using a member of the participating school’s own staff, that is, the school coordinator, make initial contacts to prospective respondents. Additionally, due to increased concerns with privacy, it is anticipated that schools will be unlikely to share parent names or contact information. The model of asking school coordinators to distribute the initial survey invitation along with introductory study materials, as well as to conduct follow-up outreach with non-responders as needed, was used successfully on IELS. If this model also works well on the ECLS-K:2024, then the applicability of the household incentive test results may be further decreased, as initial contact of study participants no longer closely mirrors what is done in household studies.

Existing literature on the use of incentives in school-based studies may be more relevant to the ECLS-K:2024; however, school-based incentive studies are not as prevalent in the research literature. While some school-based studies have experimented with incentives, such work has not been conducted in the base-year of the study when the sampled parents are first introduced to the study, which is the goal of the current ECLS-K:2024 experiment. For example, the High School Longitudinal Survey of 2009 (HSL:09) experimented with incentives in the field test of the its second follow-up round. Also of note is that this incentive test was a test of student, not parent, incentives.

In addition to studies on the effect of incentives on increasing response rates, a set of experiments have been conducted on the effect of incentives on measurement properties, especially in terms of item nonresponse and satisficing effects. The literature in this area is still emerging, but so far indicates that there is no consistent relationship between providing an incentive and data quality. Medway and Tourangeau (2015) conducted three experiments on the effect of a \$5 prepaid incentive on measurement quality. They concluded, “Overall, our results should be reassuring for survey practitioners considering the use of prepaid cash incentives—there is little reason to believe that response quality will be negatively affected as a result of this decision.” Some other studies have recently looked at data quality when varying incentive amounts in web panel studies and non-probability samples. This literature is less pertinent, but also points to a lack of evidence of incentives affecting response behavior. Stanley et al. (2020) examined incentives’ effects on quality in a web panel survey and “found that larger incentives were associated with increased interview completion rates with minimal impact on data quality or bias.” Spreen, House, and Gao (2019) examined varied incentive amounts in a web panel study (the incentives went from \$0.50 to \$3) and did not find evidence of improved data quality with the higher incentive levels.



The parent survey is a critical component of ECLS program studies, and it has traditionally had response rates below NCES standards (e.g., the ECLS-K:2011 fall kindergarten parent interview response rate was 74 percent). As noted in the literature cited above, incentives are an effective method of increasing response rates in various types of studies and evidence suggests they may be offered without a negative effect on resulting data quality. Given the lack of a strong research base exploring the use of parent incentives in the base year of a school-based study, it is important for the ECLS-K:2024 to include its incentive experiment in the 2022 K-1 field test.

Two levels of parent incentives will be tested for all children sampled in the field test, with 1,500 sampled parents randomly assigned to each level of the incentive. The two levels of incentive are (1) \$0 (no incentive) and (2) a \$15 prepaid Mastercard®. Given the sample size available, a simple test of two conditions for the incentive amount is most appropriate for the field test. Introducing more than two conditions would compromise the power to detect effects of the different experimental conditions. Other options could be considered for experiments in the main study.

The incentive will be prepaid in the sense that the initial invitation to complete the parent survey will contain the incentive if the parent is assigned to the \$15 level. The two levels of the parent incentive (\$0 and \$15) were chosen to be as different as possible within reason and budget constraints to assess the potential for improving the response rate.

For the field test, schools will be assigned randomly to one of the two experiment groups. All parents of sampled children within a particular schools will receive the same amount, either \$0 or \$15. The benefit of this approach is that all of the parents in the same school will received the same incentive (or none at all); there is no potential for within-school contamination of the test conditions. That is, there will be no backlash or negative reaction to the study that could result from parents in the \$0 incentive group discovering that other participating parents in their school received a \$15 incentive.

Parents that are in the \$15 group will receive the incentive in their welcome packet. The packet will contain:

- a welcome letter with the MyECLS website address and instructions for accessing the site to provide consent and complete the survey,
- the parent fact sheet,
- the \$15 prepaid Mastercard® in a separate sealed envelope, and
- their unique MyECLS PIN needed to securely logon to MyECLS in a separate sealed envelope.

The envelope with the prepaid card will contain information about the use of the card (that it is valid only in the US and the expiration date), the help desk phone number, and text thanking the respondent. The envelope will also include text explaining how the respondent may activate the card.<sup>21</sup> The study name will not be included on the envelope or the card. Parents in the \$0 group will also receive the parent welcome packet, but there will be no mention of an incentive.

All parents, regardless of the incentive group to which they have been assigned, will also receive a pad of sticky notes, printed with the U.S. Department of Education logo. Other non-monetary incentives were considered for the field test but were eventually decided against because of evidence of their poorer performance in gaining initial cooperation in surveys. Non-monetary incentives have been used in school settings (pizza parties for teachers, for example), but non-monetary incentives like explanatory brochures and school supplies have not been shown to be effective for parents in the current research literature.

The parent welcome packets will be assembled at Westat and sent via FedEx to the school coordinator, along with distribution instructions. Each packet will be labeled “Parent of <child’s name>” to indicate who should receive the packet. The school coordinator will place the appropriate packets in the backpacks of the sampled children. They will also email each parent to notify them that the packet is on its way so that parents can be sure to check their child’s backpack.

## **A.10 Assurance of Confidentiality**

The ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test data will be used internally by study staff to evaluate study procedures, and will not be publicly released. The national sampling plan and recruitment response rates will be published in future methodology reports; however, individual district and school names will never be released publicly.

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<sup>21</sup> The instructions on the envelope to activate the prepaid card will be: “To activate the enclosed \$15 prepaid Mastercard®, please visit the study website and enter your unique PIN from the sealed postcard that was sent with this informational packet. The prepaid card will be ready for use approximately 24 hours after the PIN is entered. Completion of the parent survey is not required to activate or use the cash card.” This text will also appear in Spanish and Mandarin.

Confidentiality and data security protection procedures have been put in place for the ECLS-K:2024 to ensure that the contractor and its subcontractors comply with all privacy requirements, including:

1. The Statement of Work of the ECLS-K:2024 contract;
2. *Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) of 1974* (20 U.S.C. §1232(g));
3. *Privacy Act of 1974* (5 U.S.C. §552a);
4. *Privacy Act Regulations* (34 CFR Part 5b);
5. *Computer Security Act of 1987*;
6. *U.S.A. Patriot Act of 2001* (P.L. 107-56);
7. *Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002* (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9573);
8. *Cybersecurity Enhancement Act of 2015* (6 U.S.C. §151);
9. *Foundations of Evidence-Based Policymaking Act of 2018*, Title III, Part B, Confidential Information Protection;
10. The U.S. Department of Education General Handbook for Information Technology Security General Support Systems and Major Applications Inventory Procedures (March 2005);
11. The U.S. Department of Education Incident Handling Procedures (February 2009);
12. The U.S. Department of Education, ACS Directive OM: 5-101, Contractor Employee Personnel Security Screenings;
13. NCES Statistical Standards; and
14. All new legislation that impacts the data collected through the contract for this study.

Furthermore, the contractor will comply with the Department of Education’s IT security policy requirements as set forth in the Handbook for Information Assurance Security Policy and related procedures and guidance, as well as IT security requirements in the Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA), Federal Information Processing Standards (FIPS) publications, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circulars, and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) standards and guidance. All data products and publications will also adhere to the revised NCES Statistical Standards, as described at the website: <https://nces.ed.gov/statprog/2012/>.<sup>22</sup>

By law (20 U.S.C. §9573), a violation of the confidentiality restrictions is a felony, punishable by imprisonment of up to 5 years and/or a fine of up to \$250,000. The ECLS-K:2024 procedures for maintaining confidentiality include notarized nondisclosure affidavits obtained from all personnel who will have access to individual identifiers; personnel training regarding the meaning of confidentiality; controlled and protected access to computer files; built-in safeguards concerning status monitoring and receipt control systems; and a secure, staffed, in-house computing facility. The ECLS-K:2024 follows detailed guidelines for securing sensitive project data, including, but not limited to: physical/environment protections, building access controls, system access controls, system login restrictions, user identification and authorization procedures, encryption, and project file storage/archiving/destruction.

Additionally, the contractor will take security measures to protect the web data collection application from unauthorized access. The web server will include an SSL certificate and will be configured to force encrypted data transmission over the Internet. All files uploaded to the website will be stored in a secure project folder that is accessible and visible to authorized study staff only. NCES has a secure data transfer system, which uses SSL technology, allowing the transfer of encrypted data over the Internet. The NCES secure server will be used for all administrative data sources. All data transfers will be encrypted.

The Department has established a policy regarding the personnel security screening requirements for all contractor employees and their subcontractors. The contractor must comply with these personnel security screening requirements throughout the life of the contract including several requirements that the contractor must meet for each employee working on the contract for 30 days or more. Among these requirements are that each person working on the contract must be assigned a position risk level. The risk levels are high, moderate, and low based upon the level of harm that a person in the position can cause to the Department’s interests. Each person working on the contract must complete the requirements for a “Contractor Security Screening.” Depending on the risk level assigned to each person’s position, a follow-up background investigation by the Department will occur.

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<sup>22</sup> This website lists the current standards as of the drafting of this document. If new standards are enacted during the course of the study, those will be adhered to in place of the ones currently noted on this website.

Furthermore, all contractor staff members working on the ECLS-K:2024 or having access to the data are required to sign an Affidavit of Nondisclosure. As required by IES, relevant ECLS-K:2024 staff also complete the federal Electronic Questionnaires for Investigations Processing (e-QIP) program. They also are required to complete mandatory training on data confidentiality and the safe handling of data. The contractor will keep the original notarized affidavits on file and submit PDF copies of all affidavits to NCES. In addition, as required, relevant contractor staff will complete background screening in compliance with ACS Directive (OM:5-101).

NCES will assure schools and individuals participating in ECLS-K:2024 that all of the data provided by schools, staff, parents, and students 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). The laws pertaining to the collection and use of personally identifiable information will be clearly communicated in correspondence with states, districts, schools, teachers, students, and parents. Letters and informational materials will be sent to parents and school administrators describing the study, its voluntary nature, and the extent to which respondents and their responses will be kept confidential. This information will also be included in any research applications required by school districts. A list of students will be requested from school districts and/or schools under the FERPA exception to the general consent requirement that permits disclosures to authorized representatives of the Secretary for the purpose of evaluating Federally supported education programs (34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35). This information will be securely destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes specified in 34 CFR §99.35.

The following language will be included, as appropriate, in respondent contact materials and on cover pages and login webpages of the data collection instruments:

- NCES is authorized to conduct the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2023-24 (ECLS-K:2024) by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) [and to collect students' education records from education agencies or institutions for the purposes of evaluating federally supported education programs under the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 34 CFR §§ 99.31(a)(3)(iii) and 99.35)]. The data are being collected for NCES by Westat, a U.S.-based research organization. All of the information [*respondent type*] 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). [The collected information will be combined across respondents to produce statistical reports.]
- According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this voluntary information collection is 1850-0750. Approval expires MM/DD/202Y. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average approximately [x] minutes per response, including the time to review instructions[, gather the data needed,] and complete and review the information collection. If you have any comments concerning the accuracy of the time estimate, suggestions for improving this information collection, or any comments or concerns regarding the status of your individual submission, please write directly to: The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 2023-24 (ECLS-K:2024), National Center for Education Statistics, PCP, 550 12th St., SW, 4<sup>th</sup> floor, Washington, DC 20202.

NCES understands the legal and ethical need to protect the privacy of the ECLS-K:2024 survey respondents and, with the contractor, has extensive experience in developing data files for release that meet the Government's requirements to protect individually identifiable data from disclosure. While no K-1 field test data will be publicly released, relevant procedures will be followed for the national files and appropriate steps for data file preparation and release will be outlined in future ECLS-K:2024 data collection OMB packages.

## A.11 Sensitive Questions

The ECLS-K:2024 is a voluntary study, and no persons are required to respond to the surveys or to participate in the assessments. In addition, respondents may skip or decline to answer any question they are asked. This voluntary aspect of the survey is clearly stated in the respondent letters, study fact sheet, and MyECLS website.

The following describes the general nature of the field test data collection instruments.

**School administrator surveys.** These are not of a sensitive nature and should not pose a problem to respondents.

**Primary teacher child-level surveys, rating scales.** The information collected in these scales could be regarded as sensitive, because the teacher is asked to rate each sampled child's social skills and classroom behaviors, including the

ability to control or regulate his/her behavior in the classroom, problem behaviors (e.g., anger, impulsivity, anxiety), and learning disposition (e.g., curiosity, self-direction, and organization). Because schools often emphasize different skills and concepts, teachers will also be asked to rate the child's performance in the curricular areas and domains that are included in the cognitive assessments (e.g., language and literacy skills and mathematical thinking). Teachers will also be asked to rate children's understanding of science.

The purpose of the teacher ratings of children is both to extend the range of domains assessed (e.g., by gathering information about socioemotional development and adaptation to school) and to deepen understanding of children's performance in various domains by tapping them in multiple ways (e.g., by gathering information on cognitive development that will complement results of the direct assessments).

Teacher assessments of children's socioemotional skills will provide several kinds of information. First, teachers will supply information about children's social skills and classroom behaviors, including the ability to regulate their behavior in classroom contexts, problem behaviors (e.g., fighting, bullying, arguing, anger, depression, low self-esteem, impulsiveness, anxiety); learning dispositions or "approaches to learning" (e.g., curiosity, self-direction, organization), and experiences with peer victimization, both as a victim and as the aggressor. A study of bullying by the National Institute for Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) found that 16 percent of middle school students reported being bullied (Nansel et al., 2001). Fewer studies have been done with younger children, but those that have been published suggest that bullying is experienced by many children and is related to negative outcomes. Glew et al.'s (2005) study of third- through fifth-graders found that 22 percent of children were classified as victims, bullies, or both. Victims, and children who were both bullies and victims, had lower achievement scores and were more likely to feel like they did not belong at school compared to bystanders (Glew et al. 2005). Kochenderfer and Ladd (1996) found a relation between victimization and school adjustment outcomes, with victimization related to children's loneliness and desire to avoid school. The ECLS-K:2011 included questions about peer victimization starting in second grade. Having the ECLS-K:2024 collect information about peer victimization about children in earlier grades in this national sample of elementary school children would be useful.

Teachers will also be asked about the child's relationships, including relationships with peers as well as the child's relationship with the teacher. These data will provide information about relationships with adults and peers that may act as protective factors to support child development. In addition, teachers will be asked to provide information about cognitive skills and development of children related to academic skills, including both expressive and receptive aspects of language, quantitative skills, planning/problem-solving skills, and knowledge of the physical, social, and biological worlds. These data will provide additional information about children's academic development and supplement findings from the direct child assessments.

**Special education teacher child-level surveys, rating scale.** Special education teachers are asked about children's special education services and disabilities. In addition, they will be asked about their relationship with the child. These data are necessary to provide information about the support and services provided to children in special education classes, the history of children's experiences with special education or related services, children's disabilities, and education goals for the future. These data will also provide information on teachers' relationships with children that may act as protective factors for children's development.

**Direct cognitive assessments.** The direct cognitive assessments are essential in determining children's performance levels at the time they enter school and changes in their performance as they progress through school. These questions are voluntary and children will be told that they do not have to answer them.

Because schools often use different standards in their own assessments of children, a uniform set of assessment instruments and procedures is needed for the ECLS-K:2024. The items to be included in the direct cognitive assessments are not themselves sensitive in nature. However, direct assessments of children do raise certain concerns about the assessment procedures to be used. Of primary concern is the length of the assessments.

The cognitive assessments are designed to be administered within a 45-minute time period, on average. NCES has developed instruments appropriate to the ages of the participating children, and every effort will be made to staff the study with field assessors who have prior experience in working with children to conduct the direct assessments. Issues specific to working with children will also figure prominently in assessor training.

**Parent surveys.** Several topics that will be addressed in the parent survey are sensitive in nature. Questions about family income, household food sufficiency, child-rearing and disciplinary practices, parental depression, life stress, discrimination, peer victimization, and adverse child experiences will be included in the parent survey.

Prior research indicates that each of these topics is correlated with children’s achievement and helps to predict children’s preparedness for and success in school. Collecting data on these topics will allow researchers to go beyond descriptive analyses of variation in children’s performance by basic background characteristics such as race/ethnicity and sex. Researchers will be able to test hypotheses about how a wide range of family characteristics relate to early success in school. Therefore, it is important to include questions on the sensitive topics listed above in the parent surveys. All questions can be skipped, or answered as refused or don’t know, if the respondent chooses not to answer them.

Results from previous rounds of data collection showed that there were very low levels of missing data in the parent interviews. For example, response rates for sensitive items such as parent income in the ECLS-K:2011 round 2 (i.e., the spring kindergarten wave) and life stress in the ECLS-K:2011 round 9 (i.e., the spring fifth-grade wave) were both above 90 percent (90.5 percent and 90.9 percent, respectively).

Additionally, because it is imperative that respondents can be found at a later date for follow-up collections in a longitudinal study, the ECLS-K:2024 survey asks for locating information from parents to be used to contact them for later rounds of the study. The locating information includes telephone numbers, addresses, email addresses, and the names of individuals who would always know the whereabouts of the respondents.

## **A.12 Estimated Response Burden**

Burden estimates for all activities associated with the K-1 field test, including recruitment of field test districts, schools, and parents are shown in this section. This section also summarizes the burden estimate for the recruitment of the schools for the national data collection.

**Kindergarten-first grade (K-1) field test.** The K-1 field test recruitment portion of table A-7 shows the expected burden for the recruitment activities, including time needed to review study materials and to share child lists for sampling and child-level data such as accommodations and teacher names. The estimate also includes time for parents to review study materials and provide consent for their children’s participation. As discussed in Part B, in the spring of 2022 it is anticipated that 90 schools will be contacted for a yield of approximately 50 schools that agree to participate in the K-1 field test.<sup>23</sup> Approximately 3,000 children from these schools (about 60 per school) will participate in the field test.

The total response burden for schools in the field test recruitment phase is based on the following:

- At the district level, we estimate that it will take 20 minutes on average for district personnel to review the materials and either agree or decline to participate. The total response burden estimate for district IRB approvals (in the special handling districts that require completion of a research application before they will allow schools under their jurisdiction to participate in a study) is based on an estimated 120 minutes for IRB staff approval and 120 minutes per panelist for approval by the district’s IRB panel, which is estimated to average 5 panelists.
- At the school level, we estimate that it will take 20 minutes on average for school administrators to review the materials and either agree or decline to participate. We estimate an hour will be needed for school coordinators to provide school-level information and three hours for child rosters (including information about children for sampling, contact information for the sample children’s parents, and sample children’s teachers), for an estimated total of four hours.
- For the sampled children’s parents, it is estimated that it will take up to 10 minutes to review the recruitment materials and either consent or refuse to participate (on behalf of their child and themselves). Based on the 2009 ECLS-K:2011 field test, we expect about 43 percent of parents will provide consent for their child to participate.

The K-1 field test data collection portion of table A-7 shows the expected burden for the field test data collection. The burden time estimates are based on the maximum reasonable expected burden per respondent:

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<sup>23</sup> The 90 schools that will be contacted for field test recruitment includes replacement schools for originally-sampled schools that refuse participation.

- The school administrator survey will take approximately 40 minutes to complete and 5 minutes to complete the questions soliciting feedback on the ECLS participation experience. As described more fully in Part B, half of the school administrators from the 50 field test schools will complete the spring kindergarten version of the survey and half will complete the spring first-grade version of the survey. All of the school administrators will be asked to complete the feedback questions.
- As described in Part B, the primary teacher of each sampled child will be asked to complete a teacher-level survey containing questions on his/her background and teaching experience. Primary teachers will also be asked to complete a child-level survey for each of the sampled children they teach. Special education teachers will be asked to complete a teacher-level survey and child-level surveys. All of the teachers will also be asked to provide feedback on their experience with the ECLS. It is expected that data will be collected from four kindergarten teachers, four first-grade teachers, and two special education teachers from each school during the field test. Across the targeted 50 schools, this will result in a total of 500 teachers (200 kindergarten teachers, 200 first-grade teachers, 50 special education teachers for the kindergarten sampled students and 50 special education teachers for the first-grade sampled students). In each school, we estimate that six children will be linked to each teacher, and two children linked to each special education teacher.

Of the 200 kindergarten teachers, half (100) of the primary teachers will be asked to complete the fall kindergarten teacher-level survey and half (100) will be asked to complete the spring kindergarten teacher-level survey. Therefore, table A-7 presents fall kindergarten and spring kindergarten as separate rows. All of the primary teachers of the sampled children in first grade will be asked to complete the spring first-grade teacher-level survey.<sup>24</sup> It is estimated that the fall kindergarten teacher-level survey will take approximately 19 minutes to complete. It is estimated that the spring kindergarten and spring first-grade teacher-level surveys will each take approximately 27 minutes to complete. The feedback questions are expected to take an additional 2 minutes to complete. The special education teacher-level surveys, both the spring the spring kindergarten and spring first-grade versions, are expected to each take approximately 18 minutes to complete. Again, the feedback questions are expected to take an additional 2 minutes to complete.

The version of the child-level surveys teachers are asked to complete will follow the same pattern described above for the teacher-level surveys. All of the child-level surveys are estimated to take 16 minutes for completion. The special education child-level surveys, both the spring the spring kindergarten and spring first-grade versions, are also expected to each take approximately 7 minutes to complete.

- As described in Part B, we expect approximately 3,000 children to participate in the field test (1,200 in kindergarten, 1,200 in first grade, and 600 in second grade). Half (600) of the parents of the sampled children in kindergarten will be asked to complete the fall kindergarten parent survey and half (600) will be asked to complete the spring kindergarten parent survey. Therefore, table A-7 presents fall kindergarten and spring kindergarten as separate rows. All of the parents of the sampled children in first and second grade will be asked to complete the spring first-grade parent survey. The fall kindergarten parent survey is expected to take approximately 45 minutes to complete, while the spring kindergarten survey is expected to take approximately 39 minutes to complete. The spring first-grade parent survey is expected to take 45 minutes to complete. Parents will also be asked to complete feedback questions on their ECLS participation experience. These questions are expected to take an additional 2 minutes to complete.
- The school coordinators from the 50 field test schools will spend, on average, up to 2 hours per day, per assessment day, supporting study activities. The burden estimates for the K-1 field test assume four assessment days. As with other respondents, the school coordinators will be asked to provide feedback on their ECLS participation experience. These questions are expected to take approximately 5 minutes to complete.

**National study.** This package also requests clearance to conduct the national district and school recruitment. Estimates of burden for parent recruitment, child sampling, and data collection for the national study will be provided in a future OMB package, planned for submission in early 2023.

The national study portion of table A-7 shows the expected burden for districts and schools during the recruitment phase which will occur between August 2022 and September 2023. The targeted sample for national data collection is about 200 private and 800 public schools, for a total of approximately 1,000 schools. As described in Part B, an overall school participation of 57 percent for private schools and 59 percent of public schools is expected. Thus, about 1,710

<sup>24</sup> As noted previously, second-grade primary and special education teachers may be asked to participate to meet sample size targets dependent on response rates during the field period. If needed, they will be asked to complete either kindergarten or first-grade versions of the surveys, depending on for which surveys the response rates are running low.

schools (350 private schools and 1,360 public schools) will be contacted in order to yield the target number of cooperating schools. If replacement schools are needed to supplement the original sample of schools in order to reach the target sample of approximately 1,000 participating schools, based on recruitment experiences in the ECLS-K:2011, it is expected that an approximately additional 195 replacement schools (all public schools) will be contacted.<sup>25</sup>

As in the field test estimates described above, it is estimated that it will take 20 minutes on average for district personnel to review the materials and either agree or decline to participate. The total response burden estimate for district IRB approvals (in the special handling districts that require completion of a research application before they will allow schools under their jurisdiction to participate in a study) is based on an estimated 120 minutes for IRB staff approval and 120 minutes per panelist for approval by the district’s IRB panel, which is estimated to average 5 panelists.

At the school level, it is estimated that it will take 20 minutes on average for school administrators to review the materials and either agree or decline to participate. It is also anticipated that 60 minutes is needed for the school coordinator to provide the school information and to set an assessment date. (School coordinators will be asked to provide the child list for sampling in the fall of 2023, prior to the fall kindergarten assessments. Burden estimates for that effort will be included in the kindergarten and first-grade national data collection OMB package, scheduled for submission in late 2022.)

The estimated respondent time burden cost across all the K-1 field test recruitment activities for which clearance is being sought is \$66,850 for 1,958 burden hours. For the K-1 field test data collection activities, the total estimated respondent time burden cost is \$85,905 for 2,989 hours. The total estimated respondent time burden cost for the national study recruitment is \$507,791 for 10,652 hours.

Table A-7. Estimated respondent burden for the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test sampling, recruitment, and data collection and national study sampling and recruitment

ECLS-K:2024 Activity	Sample Size	Expected Response Rate	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses	Average Burden Time per Response (minutes)	Total Burden (hours)	Estimated Respondent Average Hourly Wage <sup>1</sup>	Estimated Respondent Burden Time Cost
<b><i>K-1 Field Test Recruitment</i></b>								
District recruitment	90	.70	63	63	20	21	\$49.52	\$1,040
District IRB staff study approval	45	1.0	45	45	120	90	\$49.52	\$4,457
District IRB panel study approval	225	1.0	225	225	120	450	\$49.52	\$22,284
Nonparticipating schools	90	.45	40	40	20	13	\$49.52	\$644
Participating schools		.55	50	50	20	17	\$49.52	\$842
School coordinators	50	1.0	50	50	240	200	\$29.96	\$5,992
Parent recruitment	7,000	1.0	7,000	7,000	10	1,167	\$27.07	\$31,591
<b>K-1 Field Test Recruitment Total</b>	—	—	<b>7,473</b>	<b>7,473</b>	—	<b>1,958</b>	—	<b>\$66,850</b>
<b><i>K-1 Field Test Data Collection</i></b>								
School administrators	50	.80	40	40	45 <sup>2</sup>	30	\$49.52	\$1,485
Kindergarten teachers (fall K teacher-level survey)	100	.90	90	90	21 <sup>2</sup>	32	\$31.45	\$1,007
Kindergarten teachers (fall K child-level survey)	100	.80	80	480 <sup>4</sup>	16	128	\$31.45	\$4,026

<sup>25</sup> Replacement schools will be added to the sample as originally-sampled schools refuse participation. Overall, it is expected that 1,910 schools (1,710 originally-sampled schools, plus 200 replacement schools) will be contacted to reach the 1,000 target sample yield.

Table A-7. Estimated respondent burden for the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test sampling, recruitment, and data collection and national study sampling and recruitment—Continued

ECLS-K:2024 Activity	Sample Size	Expected Response Rate	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses	Average Burden Time per Response (minutes)	Total Burden (hours)	Estimated Respondent Average Hourly Wage <sup>1</sup>	Estimated Respondent Burden Time Cost
Kindergarten teachers (spring K teacher-level survey)	100	.90	90	90	29 <sup>2</sup>	44	\$31.45	\$1,384
Kindergarten teachers (spring K child-level survey)	100	.80	80	480 <sup>4</sup>	16	128	\$31.45	\$4,026
First-grade teachers (spring 1 teacher-level survey)	200	.90	180	180	29 <sup>2</sup>	87	\$31.45	\$2,736
First-grade teachers (spring 1 child-level survey)	200	.80	160	960 <sup>4</sup>	16	256	\$31.45	\$8,051
Special education teachers (spring K teacher-level survey)	50	.90	45	45	20 <sup>2</sup>	15	\$31.15	\$467
Special education teachers (spring K child-level survey)	50	.80	40	80 <sup>5</sup>	7	9	\$31.15	\$280
Special education teachers (spring 1 teacher-level survey)	50	.90	45	45	20 <sup>2</sup>	15	\$31.15	\$467
Special education teachers (spring 1 child-level survey)	50	.80	40	80 <sup>5</sup>	7	9	\$31.15	\$280
Parents (fall K survey)	600	.80	480	480	47 <sup>2</sup>	376	\$27.07	\$10,178
Parents (spring K survey)	600	.80	480	480	41 <sup>2</sup>	328	\$27.07	\$8,879
Parents (spring 1 survey)	1,800	.80	1,440	1,440	47 <sup>2</sup>	1,128	\$27.07	\$30,535
School coordinators	50	1.0	50	50	485 <sup>2</sup>	404	\$29.96	\$12,104
Kindergarten direct child assessment <sup>3</sup>	2,800	.43	1,200	1,200	45	900	—	—
First-grade direct child assessment <sup>3</sup>	2,800	.43	1,200	1,200	45	900	—	—
Second-grade direct child assessment <sup>3</sup>	1,400	.43	600	600	45	450	—	—
<b>K-1 Field Test Data Collection Total</b>	—	—	<b>450<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>5,020</b>	—	<b>2,989</b>	—	<b>\$85,905</b>
<b>National Study Recruitment</b>								
Original sample district recruitment	1,607	.70	1,125	1,125	20	375	\$49.52	\$18,570
Original sample district IRB staff study approval	643	1.0	643	643	120	1,286	\$49.52	\$63,683
Original sample district IRB panel study approval	3,214	1.0	3,214	3,214	120	6,428	\$49.52	\$318,315



Table A-7. Estimated respondent burden for the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test sampling, recruitment, and data collection and national study sampling and recruitment—Continued

ECLS-K:2024 Activity	Sample Size	Expected Response Rate	Number of Respondents	Number of Responses	Average Burden Time per Response (minutes)	Total Burden (hours)	Estimated Respondent Average Hourly Wage <sup>1</sup>	Estimated Respondent Burden Time Cost
Nonparticipating original sample schools	1,710	.42	718	718	20	239	\$49.52	\$11,835
Participating original sample schools		.58	920 <sup>6</sup>	920	20	307	\$49.52	\$15,203
Original Sample school coordinators	920	1.0	920	920	60	920	\$29.96	\$27,563
Replacement sample district recruitment	188	.70	132	132	20	44	\$49.52	\$2,179
Replacement sample district IRB staff study approval	75	1.0	75	75	120	150	\$49.52	\$7,428
Replacement sample district IRB panel study approval	376	1.0	376	376	120	752	\$49.52	\$37,239
Nonparticipating replacement sample schools	195	.54	105	105	20	35	\$49.52	\$1,733
Participating replacement sample schools		.46	87 <sup>7</sup>	87	20	29	\$49.52	\$1,436
Replacement sample school coordinators	87	1.0	87	87	60	87	\$29.96	\$2,607
<b>National Study Recruitment Total</b>	—	—	<b>8,402</b>	<b>8,402</b>	—	<b>10,652</b>	—	<b>\$507,791</b>
<b>TOTAL FOR THIS SUBMISSION</b>			<b>16,325</b>	<b>20,895</b>		<b>15,599</b>		<b>\$660,546</b>

<sup>1</sup> The average hourly earnings of parents derived from May 2020 Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Occupation Employment Statistics is \$27.07, of elementary school teachers is \$31.45, of elementary school special education teachers is \$31.15, of education administrators is \$49.52, and of educational guidance counselors is \$29.96. If mean hourly wage was not provided, it was computed assuming 2,080 hours per year. Source: BLS Occupation Employment Statistics, [https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes\\_nat.htm](https://www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_nat.htm) Occupation codes: All employees (00-0000); elementary school teachers (25-2021); elementary school special education teachers (25-2052); Education Administrators (11-9032); and Educational guidance counselors (21-1012); accessed on May 27, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> The burden listed includes the time to complete the relevant survey instrument as well as the feedback questions. These estimates match the burden estimates provided on the MyECLS portal pages seen by respondents. Note that on the covers of the hardcopy instruments, the burden estimate listed is for completion of the survey instrument only and does not include time to complete the feedback questions which appear only on the web.

<sup>3</sup> The total number of respondents contains no duplication in respondent count, and in this case the total estimate here adds only the teachers to the numbers of unique respondents. That is, parents, school administrators, and school coordinators are only counted once, as all will be asked to review the respondent materials, with a subset also expected to complete the surveys. These respondents are included in the count of respondents participating in the K-1 field test recruitment, but not counted again in the count of respondents participating in the field test data collection. Teachers are also all counted once, although they will be asked to complete two types of surveys (teacher-level and child-level). The number of students participating in the direct child assessment are not included in the total number of respondents, nor are the hours they spend doing the assessments included in the total number of burden hours, because assessments are not subject to Paperwork Reduction Act reporting.

<sup>4</sup> The number of child-level surveys estimates approximately six students per primary teacher in each school.

<sup>5</sup> The number of child-level surveys estimates approximately two students per special education teacher in each school.

<sup>6</sup> This number reflects the 58 percent expected response rate, plus an approximate 7 percent ineligibility rate. These rates are based on the ineligibility rate for originally-sampled schools in the ECLS-K:2011.

<sup>7</sup> This number reflects the 46 percent expected response rate, plus an approximate 3.5 percent ineligibility rate. These rates are based on the response rate and the ineligibility rate for replacement schools in the ECLS-K:2011. It is not known why the response rate and the ineligibility rate were lower for replacement schools in the ECLS-K:2011; this will need closer study for the ECLS-K:2024.

## A.13 Estimates of Cost to Respondents

There are no costs to respondents to participate in the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test or national district and school recruitment phase beyond the time needed for individuals to complete study-related activities. No equipment, printing, or postage charges will be incurred by the participants.

## A.14 Cost to the Federal Government

The sampling, recruitment, and data collection activities for the K-1 field test, as well as the national study sampling and recruitment activities, are being carried out under NCES contract number 91990019C0002 with Westat. The period of performance for this ECLS-K:2024 contract runs from January 4, 2019 through January 3, 2029. This contract includes all field test and national data collections for the ECLS-K:2024 except for the fifth-grade national data collection. The total cost to the federal government for contractor and subcontractor costs for this contract as of August 2021 is \$74,726,607.<sup>26</sup> This cost estimate includes all data collection activities, design enhancements, and data file delivery and documentation for the noted rounds. Table A-8 provides costs to NCES for the K-1 field test.

Table A-8. Costs to NCES for the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test and national sampling and recruitment

<b>K-1 Field Test</b>	
NCES salaries and expenses	\$187,500
Contract costs	\$8,222,024
<i>Instrumentation and materials</i>	\$2,639,036
<i>Sampling, Recruitment, and Data Collection</i>	\$4,709,379
<i>Systems and data processing</i>	\$873,609
<b>National Study Sampling and Recruitment</b>	
NCES salaries and expenses	\$150,000
Contract costs- <i>Sampling and Recruitment</i>	\$3,169,635
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,391,659</b>

## A.15 Reasons for Changes in Burden

This request is a reinstatement under the ECLS kindergarten cohorts data collection program and as such all requested estimated burden shows as an increase in burden.

## A.16 Publication Plans and Time Schedule

Information relevant to the K-1 field test data collection will be summarized in a field test report. The data will be analyzed and used to inform the operational procedures and instrument design of the national kindergarten and first-grade data collections. Data files from the K-1 field test will not be shared with the public. Current field test and national data collection, data release, and report release schedules are provided in table A-9.

Table A-9. ECLS-K:2024 data collection, data release, and report release schedules

Data collection round	Dates of field work	Anticipated first release of data, associated technical documentation, and first findings report
Preschool field test	January-November 2020	N/A
Kindergarten-first grade field test	August-November 2022	N/A
Fall kindergarten national collection	August-December 2023	July 2025
Spring kindergarten national collection	March-July 2024	July 2025
Spring first-grade national collection	March-July 2025	July 2026
Third-fifth grade field test	March-June 2026	N/A
Spring third-grade national collection	March-July 2027	July 2028
Spring fifth-grade national collection	March-July 2029	July 2030

<sup>26</sup> As of August 2021, several optional tasks have also been exercised on this contract, at a total additional value of \$1,164,153.

## **A.17 Approval for Not Displaying the Expiration Date for OMB Approval**

No exemption from the requirement to display the expiration date for OMB approval of the information collection is being requested for the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test or the national district and school recruitment phase.

## **A.18 Exceptions to the Certification Statement**

No exceptions to the certification statement apply to the ECLS-K:2024 K-1 field test or national district and school recruitment phase.