



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

NATIONAL CENTER FOR EDUCATION STATISTICS

[DATE]

[PRINCIPAL NAME]

[SCHOOL NAME]

[ADDRESS 1]

[CITY, STATE ZIP]

Dear [PRINCIPAL]:

I am writing to inform you about the upcoming Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) 2009, in which the United States will participate along with more than 60 other countries. PISA provides international comparisons of student performance in reading, mathematics, and science among 15-year-old students throughout the world. We are notifying you now because your school has been selected to take part in the field test this spring.

New reading assessment questions have been developed for PISA and they will be tested this spring to ensure that they accurately measure our students' knowledge and skills. Field testing the new questions is necessary to eliminate wording or topics that would put U.S. students at a disadvantage in answering relative to other countries.

I encourage your school's participation in the PISA field test. In appreciation for your time and efforts, if your school participates, the school will receive a \$200 honorarium, a school-level coordinator will receive a \$100 stipend, and participating students will receive \$20.

PISA, described in more detail in materials enclosed with this letter, is sponsored in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics in the U.S. Department of Education and conducted by the Windwalker Corporation of McLean, VA and Westat of Rockville, MD. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved the data collection under OMB # 1850-0755.

Information about districts, schools and students sampled for the PISA field test is protected by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (PL 107-279). Reports based on the field test will not identify participating districts, schools, students, or individual staff.

Within the next few days, a representative of Westat will call you to discuss any questions that you may have and to discuss the procedures for obtaining your permission. In the meantime, if you have any questions about the PISA field test or your school's participation, please feel free to call 1-888-270-6227 or send an email to PISA2009@westat.com. More information about PISA is also available at the NCES website at: <http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/>.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Mark Schneider
Commissioner