Between October and November of 2021, your child’s school will be one of about 250 nationwide taking part in PIRLS 2021. Within each school, 5th-grade classrooms were selected randomly to represent the nation’s students. All students from selected classrooms are invited to participate, and your child was among those students selected to take part in PIRLS 2021.

**What is PIRLS?**

PIRLS (Progress in International Reading Literacy Study) is an international assessment that measures student learning in reading. Every five years since 2001, PIRLS documents worldwide trends in the reading knowledge of students. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the U.S. Department of Education conducts U.S. participation in PIRLS. Along with more than 50 other nations, the U.S. will take part in the 2021 PIRLS cycle as we did in 2001, 2006, 2011, and 2016. For the first time, PIRLS will be completely digital and administered on a tablet with a keyboard. Some students will take a paper and pencil assessment in order to bridge the digital version of PIRLS to the previous paper and pencil version.

**Who administers PIRLS?**

The entire assessment is administered by trained staff from Westat, a research organization under contract to the U.S. Department of Education’s National Center for Education Statistics.

All of the information collected is protected as required by law. NCES is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543), and to collect students’ education records from educational agencies or institutions for the purpose 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). All of the information provided by schools, staff, 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). Students and schools are never identified in any reports. All reported statistics refer to the United States as a whole.

**What is involved?**

PIRLS staff will visit the school and administer the study. The main assessment will take approximately 2.5 hours (including time for the directions and two breaks) and will include a questionnaire that asks students about themselves and their educational experience.

**What are the benefits?**

The nation as a whole benefits from PIRLS by having a greater understanding of how the reading knowledge and skills of U.S. students compared with students from other countries. Schools that participate in PIRLS will receive $200, and each student who participates will receive a small gift.

**Where can I find out more about PIRLS?**

More information about PIRLS is available at the PIRLS website at [http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/PIRLS](http://nces.ed.gov/surveys/PIRLS) or the PIRLS International Study Center website at [https://pirls.bc.edu/](https://pirls.bc.edu/). Or if you would like to contact a PIRLS staff member directly, please feel free to call the PIRLS U.S. Help Desk at 1-855-951-1215 or email us at PIRLS@westat.com.