

Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) 2023



Frequently Asked Questions

TIMSS 2023 will occur in the spring of 2023.

What is TIMSS?

The Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) is an international assessment and research project designed to measure trends in mathematics and science achievement at the fourth- and eighth-grade levels as well as school and teacher practices related to instruction. Since 1995, TIMSS has been administered every 4 years. TIMSS 2023, the eighth study in the series, will involve students from approximately 65 countries, including the United States. TIMSS 2023 will be administered digitally.

Why was my school selected for participation?

Your school was randomly selected to participate and represent our country in the study. The U.S. sample includes both public and private school representative of the nation at grade 4 and grade 8. One or two classrooms per school will be selected where feasible. In schools containing only one class, this class will be selected.

Why should my school and students participate?

TIMSS provides a unique opportunity to compare U.S. students' math and science knowledge and skills at the fourth- and eighth-grade levels with that of their peers in countries around the world. TIMSS complements what we learn from national assessments by identifying the strengths and weaknesses of student performance relative to students around the world. The results inform national discussions about education as well as international competitiveness.

TIMSS provides valuable benchmark information on how U.S. students compare to students around the world, allows educators and policymakers to examine other educational systems for practices that could have application to the United States, and contributes to ongoing discussions of ways to improve the quality of education of all students.

Will all our fourth- or eighth-grade students be asked to participate?

It depends on the number of fourth- or eighth-grade classrooms in the school. In schools with only one or two such classrooms, all students will be asked to participate. In schools with more than two such classrooms, only students in the one or two randomly selected classrooms will be asked to participate. In addition, some students with special needs or limited English proficiency may be excused from the assessment.

Who conducts the TIMSS assessment?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, is authorized to conduct this study under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543), and approval of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget under OMB# 1850-0695. The entire assessment process will be administered on behalf of NCES by trained staff from RTI International, a research organization under contract with NCES.

How are the school and teacher questionnaires administered?

The teacher and school questionnaires are administered online from a secure website. Teacher questionnaires take about 35 minutes to complete, and ask teachers questions about their experience, available resources, and instructional practices. School questionnaires take about 30 minutes to complete and ask about school practices and resources.

Do teachers need to help administer the assessment?

No, RTI International field staff will visit the school on the day of the assessment, bringing with them all the materials required. These field staff will administer the assessments to students.

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Do schools need to provide computer equipment for TIMSS?

No, RTI International field staff will bring all the equipment needed for the study, including tablets and keyboards.

When will TIMSS be conducted?

TIMSS 2023 will be conducted in March through May 2023. RTI International will work with schools to identify an assessment date convenient for each school in that time period.

Where will TIMSS be conducted?

The student session will be conducted in the schools that are selected to participate.

How long does the student session take?

The session will take approximately 2 ½ hours to complete. This includes time for directions, the assessment, and a questionnaire that students complete about themselves.

What will happen with the collected data?

All of the information provided by school 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). Reports of the findings from the study will not identify participating districts, schools, students, or individual staff. Individual responses will be combined with those of other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Where can I find more information about TIMSS?

Visit the TIMSS 2023 website at <https://surveys.nces.ed.gov/TIMSS>.

For additional information about TIMSS 2023, contact the TIMSS U.S. home office at 833-870-0485 or email TIMSS@rti.org.

