

Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) Frequently Asked Questions

PISA 2025 (Spring 2025)

Information for Schools

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

A Publication of the National Center for Education Statistics at IES

PISA is an international assessment of students nearing the end of compulsory education that measures how well students apply their knowledge and skills to solve problems related to science, reading, mathematics, and a newly developed component about learning in a digital world (LDW). In PISA 2025 students will be assessed in mathematics, reading, science, LDW, or some combination of these subjects. PISA 2025 will be administered in the spring 2025.

What does participating in PISA entail?

Each school is asked to designate a school coordinator to work with Westat and to submit a list of all students born in 2009. Up to 52 students in each school will be sampled to participate in the PISA assessment, which takes about 3 and a half hours of total time, including instructions, breaks, and a questionnaire. The principal of each school will also be asked to complete an online questionnaire about school and student body characteristics and policies.

Why should my school and students participate?

We rely on school and student participation to ensure the results are complete and accurate. We cannot do that without the support of schools like yours.

As a token of appreciation for participating, schools will receive \$250, the school coordinator will receive \$200, and students who participate will each receive \$25 as well as 4 hours of volunteer service time.

Your school was selected so that the overall U.S. sample would be representative of the overall U.S. school population. The participation of selected schools in the United States is vital to ensuring an accurate representation of the overall population of students nearing the end of compulsory education across the country—including U.S. public and private schools.

What are the benefits to participating?

Schools participating in PISA receive a school-level report (pending sample size and response rate requirements). The school report presents comparisons of your school's average scores with the average scores of participating education systems. The report also provides comparisons of your school with other similar U.S. schools based on specific school-level characteristics. The school report is provided only to your school and any published reports from PISA 2025 will not identify participating schools.

Will all of our students be asked to participate?

Probably not. In each school, all students born in 2009 and enrolled in grade 7 or higher will have an equal chance of selection. Up to 52 students in each school will be selected to participate. Only in very small schools will the student sample likely include all eligible students. In addition, some students with disabilities or limited English proficiency may be offered a limited set of accommodations to enable their participation; otherwise, they may be excused from the assessment.

How is the school questionnaire administered?

The school questionnaire is administered online from a secure website. The school questionnaire, which looks at school characteristics such as enrollment and school practices, takes less than an hour to complete.

Do teachers or other school staff need to help administer the assessment?

No. Westat PISA staff will visit the school on the day of the assessment, bringing with them all the materials and equipment required, and will handle the entire administration of the assessment. There is no requirement for school resources such as school computers or access to the internet. All that is required is adequate space to set up the equipment and assess the students.

When will PISA be conducted?

PISA will be conducted between March 17 and May 9, 2025. Westat will work with schools to identify an assessment date convenient for the school in that time period.

How long does PISA take?

All assessment activities will take place in one day. Students will take a computer-based assessment. This approximately 3 and half hour session includes time for instructions, the assessment, breaks, and a questionnaire that students complete about themselves.

What will happen with the collected data?

The data collected for PISA will be used to report on students' knowledge and skills as group descriptions at the national level. 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). The U.S. Office of Management and Budget has approved this data collection under OMB# 1850-0755. Reports of the findings from PISA will not identify participating districts, schools, students, or individual staff. Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.

Who conducts the PISA assessment?

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), within the U.S. Department of Education, conducts this study as authorized by the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543) and with the approval of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget under OMB# 1850-0755. The assessment process will be undertaken by trained staff from Westat, a research organization under contract to NCES. In compliance with standard protocols, Westat PISA staff undergoes FBI background checks.

Where can I find more information?

Visit the PISA website at <https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/pisa/>.

For additional questions about PISA 2025, contact the PISA U.S. home office at 1-888-638-2597 or email PISAHelp@westat.com.