



Children & Families Commission
 930 15th Street, Modesto, CA 95354
 Phone: 209.558.6218 Fax: 209.558.6225

Dear Principal,

MEMBERS:

Vicki Bauman
 School Representative

Denise Hunt
 Behavioral Health &
 Recovery Services

Patrick Loschke
 Chair
 Community
 Representative

Bill O'Brien
 Supervisor

Nelly Paredes-
 Walsborn
 Community
 Representative

Ken Patterson
 Community Services
 Agency

George Skol
 Community
 Representative

Dan Souza, LCSW
 Community
 Representative

John Walker, MD
 Public Health Officer

John Sims
 Executive Director

We would like to invite you and the children in your school to participate in a research project examining the effectiveness of the Stanislaus County School Readiness Initiative. Please read the following information carefully and sign this form if you wish to participate.

Description of research. The goal of this project is to examine the effectiveness of the county's efforts, through the School Readiness Initiative (SR), to improve the ability of families, schools, and communities to prepare children to enter school ready to succeed. Each year for four years, children from 3 kindergarten classrooms in your school will be asked to participate. These same children will participate each year for four years (through the third grade).

As part of this evaluation, parents of kindergarten children will be asked to complete the **Family Background Survey (FBS)** in order to provide us with information about the school readiness activities in which they have participated. Kindergarten teachers will test the children in their classroom using the **Adapted Desired Results Developmental Profile (ADRDP)**. The ADRDP is a checklist of developmental skills developed for the statewide evaluation of kindergarten readiness. Children's responses will be made available to the Kindergarten teachers who test them.

In Kindergarten, First, and Third Grade, children whose parents have agreed to participate in this research project, will be asked to complete the **Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS)**. DIBELS are short (3 minutes each) literacy activities that will be presented by CSU Stanislaus Students trained in Assessment. Prior to administering these assessments, the CSU Stanislaus students will familiarize themselves with the adults and children in each relevant classroom. The DIBELS are currently used in many classrooms to inform teachers about their student's literacy development. Children's scores on these measures will also be made available to their teachers. At the time of the DIBELS testing, teachers will be asked 6 questions about each child's classroom behavior. These questions comprise the **Student Social Skills Questionnaire (SSSQ)**.

Refusal and withdrawal rights. You should feel absolutely free to refuse our request for your participation in this project. Whether or not you participate in this project will have no bearing on you or your students' status with respect to any program, department, or service in Stanislaus County, your child's school or CSU, Stanislaus. Your participation in this project is completely voluntary. Even if you provide consent to participate, you are under no obligation to participate. You are free to terminate your participation at any time without any negative consequences. Usually children enjoy participating in these types of activities,

but if you, a teacher, a parent, or a child is uncomfortable at any time we will stop the activities immediately. We will only resume the project if everyone involved is freely willing to continue participation.

Benefits and risks. The information gathered through this research project will be used to promote the development of programs and policies for children 0-5. While no direct benefits to you or the children in your school should be expected, it is anticipated that the children will enjoy the experience and complete the project feeling good about themselves. It is expected that results from this research will provide important information about the effectiveness of various school readiness activities. Since the experience of participating in this project should be similar to everyday experiences in the classroom, there are no foreseeable risks to you or the children.

Safeguarding your child's responses. Children's names and any identifying information will be kept separate from the recorded responses in order to ensure their confidentiality. Children's responses will only be discussed and examined by their teacher and members of the Stanislaus County School Readiness Evaluation and Leadership Teams. With the exception of information provided directly to a child's teacher, the information will only be examined in terms of groups of children. At no time will individual children be identified by name. All identifying materials will be securely stored at the University and under no circumstances will any personal information about the children be revealed to any person not involved in this project.

Contact details. If you have any questions or would like more information about this research project, please feel free to contact Jamie McCreary, PhD and the School Readiness Evaluation Team at 667-3825. If you have any questions about your rights or the rights of your students as a participant, you may contact Dr. Suzanne Burns, Director of the CSUS Office of Sponsored Research at 667-3493. If you have any questions about the school readiness initiative please contact Luis Molina, School Readiness Coordinator for the Stanislaus County Children and Families Commission at 558-4839. In the unlikely event that you or a child in your school reacts negatively to participation, you should contact the local school readiness coordinator. The school readiness coordinator will make the appropriate referral for you and/or the child.

Thank you for your time and consideration. If you agree to participate in evaluating the School Readiness Initiative in Stanislaus County, please sign below.

Thank you,

The Stanislaus County School Readiness Evaluation Team

I have read and received a copy of the research project described above, and I agree to the participation of my school, _____, in the project *Evaluating the School Readiness Initiative in Stanislaus County*.

Principal's Name

Principal's Signature Date