

Wyoming's Legislators Back to School Program



Instructions for Teachers of Control Classes

This research project is designed to assess the effectiveness of the America's Legislators Back to School Program, which means only the program's materials will be evaluated, not schools, teachers, students, or legislators. The National Conference of State Legislatures has contracted with consulting firm TPACT, Inc. to conduct the study. Your participation in the study is highly valued. Thank you for your willingness to help in distributing and collecting parental consent forms and administering the pre- and post-tests.

Teachers of control classes (classes that will not be visited by a legislator until after the pre- and post-test are administered) are asked to use the following procedures:

1. As soon as you receive copies of the parental consent form, distribute the form to students in the class and instruct students to:
 - a. Have the form signed by a parent that evening;
 - b. Sign the form themselves in the space provided if they wish to participate;
 - c. Return the form to you the following day.

The form contains check boxes for granting or withholding permission to participate and a parent's signature line. If a parent does not want the student to participate, he or she should check the "No" box and sign the form. TPACT would very much like every student to participate, but they do not have to participate in the study if their parents do not want them to do so or if they do not want to take the tests and have their scores included in the study. Regardless of their intention to participate, they should return the form with their parent's signature.

You may require that all students be present in class during the legislator's visit, regardless of parental approval of their participation in the study. "Participation in the study" means inclusion of a student's pre- and post-test scores in the data TPACT will analyze. The researchers will ensure that pre-test and post-test data of students without parental consent will be excluded from all analyses.

In talking with students about the form, please stress the importance of returning the form with a parent's signature, even if their parents do not want the student to participate in the study. Please persist in asking students to return the signed form to school the next day. If forms are missing, please continue to do this until the day you administer the pre-test.

2. Administer the pre-test two weeks before the legislator's visit to your classroom. Please distribute the test booklet and the answer sheet to your class. Encourage every student to take the test, but inform them that they do not have to do so. No time limit should be imposed, but the test is designed to be completed by most students in approximately 12 minutes. Please ensure that students are given sufficient time to read and respond to all items; that students do not discuss the items or their responses during the testing period; and that distractions are minimized throughout the testing period.

3. Please help protect students' right to confidentiality by placing students' answer sheets in the envelope provided as soon as they are submitted, without examining the completed answer sheets.
4. As soon as possible after administering the pre-test, use the envelope provided to send the pre-test booklets and completed answer sheets to Kathleen Sullivan, a TPACT associate, at: 253 County Road 325, Oxford, MS 38655.
5. Please refrain from using any materials associated with the America's Legislators Back to School Program until after your students have taken the post-test.
6. Administer the post-test the week before the legislator's visit to the classroom. As in the case of the pre-test, students are encouraged, but not required, to take the test.
7. As in the case of the pre-test, please help protect students' right to confidentiality by placing students' answer sheets in the envelope provided as soon as they are submitted, without examining any of the completed answer sheets.
8. As soon as possible after administering the post-test, use the envelope provided to send the post-test booklets and completed answer sheets to Kathleen Sullivan, a TPACT associate, at: 253 County Road 325, Oxford, MS 38655.
9. After administering the post-test, please feel free to use the materials associated with the Back to School program (more information can be found on Wyoming's Back to School Program Web site at: <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/2006/BackToSchoolProgram/backtoschoolmain.aspx>) before the legislator's visit to your classroom.