NCES is authorized to conduct ICILS under the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002 (ESRA 2002, 20 U.S.C. §9543). Information collected will help the U.S. Department of Education’s ongoing efforts to benchmark student achievement in the United States. Participation is voluntary. All of the information you provide may only be used 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 the data collection under OMB# 1850-0929 (Expires 8/31/2019). Individual responses will be combined with those from other participants to produce summary statistics and reports.
What is ICILS?

The International Computer and Information Literacy Study (ICILS) is an international assessment designed to measure computer and information literacy skills at the eighth grade, student experience with technology, as well as school and teacher policies, resources and practices related to the use of technology in the classroom. ICILS was developed internationally as a response to the increasing use of information and communication technology (ICT) in modern society and the need for citizens to develop relevant skills to participate effectively in the digital age. ICILS was first administered internationally in 2013 in 21 education systems and will be administered again in 2018. The United States will participate for the first time in spring 2018. In 2018, ICILS will involve students from about 15 countries.

ICILS is sponsored by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and conducted in the United States by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the U.S. Department of Education.

Why is ICILS important?

ICILS provides a unique opportunity to compare U.S. student skills and experience using technology with that of their peers in other nations, and to provide data on factors that may be associated with student computer and information literacy skills. The results inform national discussions about education, computer and information literacy, as well as international competitiveness.

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

What type of assessment is ICILS?

ICILS is a computer-based assessment that contains a mix of interactive computer tasks. The assessment is developed through an international collaborative process involving input from the United States, other participating countries, and international experts in computer and information literacy and measurement. In a final step, the assessment is endorsed as suitable by all participating countries. The assessment contains small discrete tasks that take less than a minute to complete, and large interactive tasks that take 15–30 minutes. These tasks ask students to create an informational product such as a poster, presentation, or web page using digital tools such as a website builder or online database. Examples of released ICILS items are available at http://www.iea.nl/icils-past-cycles.

Key findings from ICILS 2013

Findings from ICILS 2013 were published by the IEA in Preparing for Life in a Digital Age: The IEA International Computer and Information Literacy Study International Report in 2014.

Please go to this webpage to view an IEA infographic:


For more information, please go to:

nces.ed.gov/surveys/icils