



PARENT / GUARDIAN INFORMATION & OPT-OUT FORM

April 17, 2017

Your child is invited to participate in a research study conducted by Dr. Marilyn Olson, from the University of Oregon, College of Education, as part of a grant funded through the U.S. Department of Education titled *Academic Wellness and the Common Core: Where Teaching and Learning Intersect*. In this Project we hope to learn how teachers and students can work together to identify and develop students' *Vital Signs of Learning*. Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because one or more of your student's teachers is participating in the training offered by this Project.

Unless you choose to opt out, your student will have the opportunity to complete the Vital Signs of Learning (VSOL) Survey and get a personalized CheckPoints Report that indicates potential strength and risk factors, depending on their responses. The 15-20 minute survey is completed through an on-line link and can be taken as provided by the teacher (typically early in the school year, mid-way through the year, and at the end of the school year) as a way of monitoring consistencies and/or changes in students' perspectives about their school experiences. Unless you as a parent or guardian choose to opt out, students may join in this study at any time during the 2016-17 school year. The resulting CheckPoints Report provides a single snapshot of a student's self-perception of their school experience and can be used as a way to initiate conversations between teachers and students to better understand and support students' unique learning needs. There is nothing definitive or conclusive about the results, but to the extent that the student has entered accurate information, the report can prove useful for helping teachers and students work together to improve or sustain "*academic wellness*."

The CheckPoints Report has no bearing on a students' permanent record or grades, though attention to the patterns reflected could facilitate highly useful conversations with teachers (and parents) to better serve students learning needs. When taking the survey, students may ask teachers for clarification of a question, and the survey can be taken at the student's own pace. There are no right or wrong answers except those that do not accurately reflect the student's actual school experience. The Survey offers the student opportunity to give voice to how they are experiencing school and learning. Throughout the year, participating teachers may continue to identify and explore ways for students to develop their Vital Signs of Learning in ways that will help prepare them for more challenging forms of learning for life and work. While discrepancies between students' responses and actual school data may occur, these can serve to clarify important aspects of the students' school experience for which the teacher may be unaware.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child will remain confidential in the same ways that results from a physical check-up are confidential between professionals and their clients. Computerized data from the Survey Monkey Program is available only to the researcher, and CheckPoints Reports generated from the data are provided only to the student and teacher for reference during the 2016-17 school year, since it references only points in time during that one year. Any use of the data or results from this study for dissemination will not identify students, teachers, schools, or districts by name except in situations related to mandatory reporting (e.g. risk of personal injury, abuse, etc.).



To the extent that the information is provided by individual students and used to provide an individual snapshot, the results could have individual value to a teacher and student. A list of the *Vital Signs of Learning* is enclosed for your reference.

The CheckPoints Report contains only points of reference to reflect strengths or risks related to academic performance so that the participating teacher and student possibly have a clearer picture in how to enhance a students' academic experience – in much the same way that a doctor might have information as to how to best treat a patient's symptoms.

As with most research, there is a small chance that information about your child will be seen by someone outside of the study. Additionally, there is a small risk that your child will become bored or uncomfortable answering survey questions. Your student's participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to let your student participate will not affect relationships with the teacher or the school. If you decide not to opt out of the study, and thereby allow your student to participate, you (and the student) are free to withdraw consent and discontinue participation in the Vital Signs of Learning Survey at any time without penalty. Likewise, if you opt out but choose to request participation in the VSOL Survey at a later day, you are free to do that, as well.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your student's teacher and/or Dr. Marilyn Olson (541-346-2881), College of Education, 1244 Walnut, Suite 220B, Eugene, OR 97403. If you have questions regarding your child's rights as a research subject, contact Research Compliance Services, University of Oregon, Eugene, OR 97403, (541) 346-2510.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided, and that **you prefer that your student NOT participate at this time**. You may withdraw this option at any time and proceed with participation as arranged with your student's teacher and/or the Academic Wellness Project Director.

**Return the bottom portion of this Opt-Out Form
ONLY if you do NOT want your student to participate.**

I hereby choose to OPT-OUT of the Vital Signs of Learning Survey & CheckPoints Report

Print Parent/Guardian Name _____

Parent/Guardian Signature _____

Date _____

Print student Name: _____ Grade _____ School _____

**Please return this form to the teacher or school who issued the invitation
within two weeks of notice date if you do NOT want your student to participate.**



VITAL SIGNS OF LEARNING

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE (Facts, Concepts, Principles & Applications)

- How well am I learning how the world works (e.g. science), how humankind works (e.g. math, humanities), what humankind has done and thought (e.g. history, literature)?
- How well am I learning about how and where these facts, concepts, and principles are used in the world around me?

RECEPTION (Resources and Symbols/Systems)

- How well do I find and use sources of information, including my own memory bank?
- How well do I decode various sources of information or recognize how symbols and systems work help make sense of the world?

REASONING (Comprehension and Inquiry)

- How well do I process information in order to comprehend how it makes sense?
- How well do I use questions and problems to sort out and work to see relationships and understand complexity?

MANAGEMENT (Managing Self and Managing Tasks)

- How well do I manage my moods, emotions, relationships with others, and give myself good advice when I am tired, frustrated, angry, or lonely?
- How well do I manage to work through tasks to complete them well and on time?

PRODUCTION (Fresh Ideas and Quality of Effort in the Form of Products Others Use or See)

- How well do I think through and shape what I want to say, do, show, or write for display?
- How well do I edit, refine, craft what I submit as something that reflects my best efforts?

As students check and monitor their own learning efforts and experiences against these Vital Signs, they become increasingly conscious of how their brains process information: what is easy, what is difficult, and where they get “stuck.”

Teachers can’t always tell what is easy or difficult for students, so they need students to help them understand when material is too easy and why, too difficult and why, and where they got off track during a lesson or assignment. All students learn similarly but differently; the teacher’s job is to help students find the ways their brains work best. The student’s job is to help teachers know what would help them learn better.

Learning is highly personal – and unlimited. Teachers cannot make anyone learn; they can only encourage learning. Students become authentic learners when they discover their own unlimited power to develop knowledge, skills, and behaviors that build competence and confidence.