

Dear Parent and Student,

The National Radio Astronomy Observatory (NRAO) and West Virginia University will be sponsoring an out-of-school science experience this year at your child's school, the Pulsar Search Collaboratory (PSC). Students can join PSC clubs, learn about radio astronomy and pulsar searching through online educational experiences provided by NRAO, and search for pulsars. Pulsars are rare astronomical objects that emit intense bursts of energy and may be the key to fully understandings Einstein's theories. We hope this activity allows students to contribute to science and to begin to see themselves as scientists. As part of evaluating the project and fulfilling the educational research mission of the National Science Foundation which funds the project, we hope to understand students' ideas about themselves as scientists and their plans for their future careers and how these relate to science. To allow comparison of students participating in the PSC with students in general, your child will be given a short survey (less than 15 minutes) in (Teacher's Name) class.

This form asks for your consent to use your child's responses to this survey in a research study evaluating the PSC and out-of-school science clubs like it. Your child will receive bonus points towards his or her grade if the signed consent form is returned with either "Yes" or "No" circled. If "Yes" is circled, we will use your child's responses, if "No" is your child will not be given the surveys. Participating in the survey is completely voluntary and your child may stop without consequence at any time. There are no known risks in participating in this study. Your child's grades will not be affected, and all responses are confidential – we won't share them with anyone else. For information regarding your child's rights as a research subject, to discuss problems, concerns, or suggestions related to the research, to obtain information or offer input about the research, contact the Office of Research Integrity & Compliance at (304) 293-7073.

To participate, please sign the attached consent form and return to (Teacher Name) by (Date).

Thank you for your help with this important research study!

Sincerely,

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