**Parent Cover Letter**

Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:

I am requesting permission for your child to participate in a research study evaluating the influence of motor skills (such as run, jump, kick, and throw) on physical activity participation among children with visual impairments attending the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. This research study has been approved by the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired and the Texas State University-San Marcos Institutional Review Board, whose purpose is to assure we conduct a responsible research.

As part of the study, participants will be assessed on 12 motor skills, including: run, jump, gallop, skip, leap, and slide. In addition, participants will wear a pedometer-like activity monitor known as accelerometer. Accelerometers will allow us to track your child’s day-to-day physical activity levels in a non-invasive manner. That is, accelerometers will be attached using a neoprene belt and worn by your child (waist-level, at right hip) for an entire week, both at home and at school. Accelerometers are water resistant, but not waterproof so your child will not wear monitor when bathing or swimming.

Your child’s participation in this study is completely voluntary. In addition to your permission, your child will also be asked if he or she would like to take part in this project. Only those children who have parental permission and who want to participate will do so, and any child may stop taking part at any time. You are free to withdraw your permission for your child’s participation at any time and for any reason without penalty. Your decision whether to allow your child to participate will not affect the services normally provided to your child by the school and your child will not lose benefits to which he or she is otherwise entitled. We do not anticipate any risks to your child from participating in this study. After the study is complete, we would be happy to share our findings with parents and the schools’ superintendent. We hope to use what we learn from the study to help children with visual impairments attain skills that would enable them to participate and maintain a physically active lifestyle, leading to improved overall quality of life.

Enclosed you will find the parental consent form, which also includes detailed information about the study. If you consent to your child’s participation in the study, please complete and return the enclosed consent form to us as soon as possible. You can send the completed form with your child to school (we will collect it personally) or you can use the stamped envelope enclosed in this letter and send it via mail. You may also fax the form to us. You may keep this letter for your records. We look forward to working with your child. We think this project will be enjoyable for your child. Should you have any questions or desire further information, please feel free to contact any of the researchers.

Sincerely,

Carlos M. Cervantes, Ph.D., CAPE Ting Liu, Ph.D.

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