Appendix E

Parent Consent Letter

February 22, 2013

Dear Parent of \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I know I have met a handful of you but I would like to take another moment to introduce myself. My name is XX, and as your child’s teacher I would like to invite him or her to participate in a research study conducted by myself, as part of the UNIVERSITY OF PORTLAND School of Education Program. Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because he or she is in XXX 9th grade World History class at XXX High School.

In this study I hope to learn whether or not the use of the Twitter social network is a resourceful tool in advancing student understanding in social studies. Twitter is a social network similar to that of Facebook. However, Twitter is a micro-blogging site that enables its user to send and read messages known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters displayed on the author’s profile page and delivered to the author’s subscribers. If you decide to allow your child to participate, your child will use Twitter as a means to access homework, stay up-to date with calendar deadlines, read fun historical facts, be directed to online educational videos, link to educational websites, maps, historical pictures of artifacts, architecture, paintings, and more.

The risks of this research project are minimal as it is not necessary for your child to sign up for a Twitter account. To participate in this project it is only necessary for the student to have access to the internet and visit the site as he or she would our online class website. However, the student does have the option to join the Twitter social network and participate in the online social community, but *it is not required and not mandatory for this study for your child to join Twitter*. If your child does, however, choose to participate in the social network, as with Facebook, there are a variety of privacy settings that can be chosen to keep his or her identity protected. Therefore, there are no foreseeable risks associated with this study. There are no costs associated with this project either. It will be conducted in hopes that your child will be able to approach social studies through an additional resource to help him or her better understand and enjoy the subject. Moreover, I cannot guarantee that your child personally will receive any benefits from this research. But I can guarantee that all mandatory class work and information that is posted on Twitter will be accessible in-class or on our class school homepage. Twitter is simply a supplement that will allow extra, above-and beyond, material to be located.

I will be handing out a survey in class to gain students’ opinions before and after this project. Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Student identities will be kept confidential by using numbers for student identity coding.

Your child’s participation is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to allow your child to participate will not affect your or your child’s relationship with XXXXX or their academic success in this class. If you decide to allow your child to participate, you and/or your child are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue use of your data at any time without penalty.

If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact XXX at 503.XXX or XXX@up.edu, or Dr. Jacqueline Waggoner, Research Professor at the University of Portland at 503.943.8012 or waggoner@up.edu. If you have questions regarding your child’s rights as a research participant, please contact the IRB (irb@up.edu). You will be offered a copy of this form to keep.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to allow your child to participate, that you and/or your child may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation use of your data without penalty, that you will receive a copy of this form, and that you are not waiving any legal claims

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I \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_understand the implications of this Twitter research project and **allow / do not allow** (circle one) my child, \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ to participate in this study.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_