

RESEARCH STUDIES

Background

The Division recognizes its responsibility to share educational experiences and provides opportunities for individuals to interact with the system and its schools. One important interaction is through research projects/studies by individuals associated with post-secondary institutions or other groups/organizations. It is also recognized that research is very serious business, especially when involving human subjects, and it must be conducted in a manner that is aligned with the universally accepted principles of ethical research practice. Such principles address important matters relating to informed consent and voluntary participation, mitigating the risk of harm to participants, protection of privacy through confidentiality, and responsible management and use of data in the spirit of doing no harm. The procedures below help to ensure ethical assurances with all research pursuits within the Division.

Procedures

1. All applications to undertake research projects or studies within the school system, or to obtain assistance from the system with respect to projects/studies, shall be submitted to the Superintendent's office. This includes requests to undertake graduate-level research for a particular course or to meet the research component requirements for the program of study. The application process will be guided by the completion of the Research Request Checklist (See Administrative Procedure 290 - Appendix A – Research Request Checklist)
2. After due consideration and applying the criteria identified in this Administrative Procedure, an application will be approved or denied, and the decision will be communicated to the applicant through the completion of the Research Request Approval Form (See Administrative Procedure 290 – Appendix B – Research Request Approval Form).
3. Research projects undertaken by or for the system shall be conducted and/or coordinated by the Superintendent or designate.
4. The Secretary Treasurer shall be responsible for the financial arrangements for research projects undertaken by the Division.
5. Externally initiated research projects may be terminated at any time if, in the judgment of the Superintendent or designate, the guidelines established for the study have been violated.
6. Requests to conduct research will be processed according to the following specific procedures.
 - 6.1 All applications shall be satisfactorily completed and submitted to the Superintendent's office at least one (1) month in advance of the desired start time for the study. Timelines shorter than one (1) month will be considered if extenuating circumstances exist.
 - 6.2 As part of the application process, all applicants must complete the Research Request

Checklist (See AP 290 – Appendix A) which provides clarity on what is to be included in the application package.

- 6.3 Once the application is reviewed, the principal researcher (applicant) will receive a signed and dated Research Request Approval Form (See AP 290 – Appendix B) which either indicates the project is not approved or approved with a list of identified conditions to be adhered to.
 - 6.4 For projects that are approved, if the identified conditions are agreed to, the principal researcher will sign and date the Research Request Approval Form (AP 290 – Appendix B) and return it to the Superintendent or designate who will then share the form with the target schools to inform principals of the division’s approval of the project/study. Research cannot proceed until the Research Request Approval Form (AP 290 – Appendix B) is signed and dated by both the division-level representative and the principal researcher.
 - 6.5 Final approval to conduct the project/study will rest with the principal of each target school and the targeted group of teachers/students where applicable.
 - 6.6 Upon completion of the study, the principal researcher must submit a copy of the research findings and resulting papers/reports and abstracts that describe the study and the findings to the Superintendent’s office and to any schools and/or individual participants who request them.
 - 6.7 The following criteria will be used by the Superintendent or designate in considering requests to conduct research studies:
 - 6.7.1 The study shall have recognizable value to the Division and/or to education in general;
 - 6.7.2 The content of any proposed questionnaire or survey instrument must not be objectionable to staff, students or parents;
 - 6.7.3 The involvement of students or teachers does not require an unreasonable amount of time, and does not negatively impact instructional time;
 - 6.7.4 The likely willingness of schools or individuals to participate; and
 - 6.7.5 The number of research studies planned or underway in the Division at the time. In situations where there is a significant number of requests, preference for approval will be given to Division staff and system-level projects.
7. The Superintendent or designate shall, when necessary, ensure that the contents of a study are held in confidence.

Adopted/Revised: JUN 2016/NOV 2019/MAR 2022

Reference: Section 11, 33, 52, 53, 68, 196, 197, 204, 222, 225 Education Act