

CHARLESTON COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT

Procedures for Conducting Research in the Schools

The Charleston County School District welcomes and encourages outside organizations and individuals to conduct school-based research, which is designed to contribute to improving the educational process.

All proposals for doing research within the District are to be submitted to the Research Review Committee administered by the Department of Assessment and Accountability. Please submit proposals at least six weeks prior to the time the study is to be conducted. **Most proposals are reviewed within four weeks.** The Research Review Committee consists of a chair and two or more other members from the District. Each committee member independently reviews research proposals according to the following criteria:

- The proposed study's benefit to the District
- The soundness of the proposed study's research design
- The amount of time required of participants and extent to which participation interferes with the ongoing instructional program
- The number of participants required
- The extent to which participation is matter of whether participants should be compensated
- The legal, physical or psychological risks to which subjects are exposed
- The extent to which the participants will be informed about the study

Participation in research studies is voluntary. **Schools, principals, teachers and students who do not wish to participate have a right to refuse.** Pressure shall not be applied to promote participation. No research may be conducted during statewide or districtwide testing. Parents or authorized guardians of students or emancipated students participating in research studies should receive and sign an informed consent form that acquaints them with the study. Parents of students asked to participate in research studies and the students themselves, when appropriate, should be informed of the following:

1. the project's purpose
2. how the student was selected
3. the procedure to be followed, including an easily understood, precise description of the child's involvement
4. anticipated benefits for general knowledge, the student, and the District
5. possible physical, psychological, legal or other risks
6. whether students will be personally identifiable and to whom
7. to whom results will be available and for what purpose
8. participants' or parents' right to inspect materials before consenting and to withdraw consent at any time
9. the person to whom inquiries should be addressed before, during, and after the project
10. that the school is neither conducting nor sponsoring the project, if that is the case
11. the lack of adverse consequences of failure to participate.

Informed consent forms must also contain the following sentences:

- “I do not wish (my child) to participate” option on the form.
- The school district is neither sponsoring nor conducting this research.
- There is no penalty for not participating.
- Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

Submission of Research Proposal

Along with a research proposal, submit a cover letter stating the name and address of the institution/individual for which the research is being conducted, the nature of the research effort, i.e., whether it is a dissertation requirement, a grant, etc., qualifications of the researcher, contact information (i.e., daytime phone number, fax number, e-mail address, and any other pertinent information related to the study.

The research proposal must contain the following:

- Purpose of the study
- Procedures that will be used in the District:
 - Data collection schedule
 - Impact on instructional time at the schools, if any
 - Selection method for participants/schools
 - What participants will be asked to do
 - Potential risks and benefits to the participants
 - Informed consent form
 - Written materials participants receive (e.g., surveys)
- Type of data collected and general overview of how the data will be used and/or analyzed

Students working on their thesis/dissertation must also submit an approval letter from their ethic committee and a letter of support from their research advisor.

Bring or send three copies of your cover letter and proposal to:

Janet S. Rose, Ph.D.
Department of Assessment and Accountability
75 Calhoun Street
Charleston, South Carolina 29401

The District would appreciate a copy of your report/write-up from this research to be shared with the Research Review Committee.

If you need further assistance, please contact Dr. Rose at (843) 937-6433 or at Janet_Rose-Baele@charleston.k12.sc.us