



RESEARCH
PROCEDURES

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PROCEDURE

Introduction

The professional advancement of an educational institution depends to a significant degree upon the design and management of research, and the adequate application of its findings. Improvements of both management and instructional functions require knowledge of prior and current research studies and their implications for teaching and learning.

In recent years an increased awareness of the values of research, and an improved understanding of research techniques and processes, have paralleled the development of education as a profession. An adequately supported school system will provide staff and material resources for coordinating, guiding, directing, and stimulating educational research.

Frequently District employees receive requests to conduct research in the Seattle Public Schools. To assure that these studies are not disruptive to the educational process, are well designed, and are compatible with established policies and procedures, the following process for research review is to be followed for these requests.

Identification

Definitions

1. Research Study - Any project other than a Management Information Survey that includes the systematic collection of data or information from or about Seattle Public Schools' students, employees, or activities.
2. Management Information Survey - A study conducted by District employees that yields information necessary for short-range management decisions, (i.e., less than one year duration). This may be administered only within one's area of supervision.

Procedures

1. For a request to conduct research study (applies to all research studies that are conducted in any District school, program, or administrative office):



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- a Individuals wishing to conduct any study in Seattle Public Schools must submit to the Evaluation Office four typed copies of the following:
- (1) The application form.
 - (2) All questionnaires, forms, tests, and communications that will be given to participants and to their parents in the proposed study.
 - (3) A brief synopsis of the proposed study (if appropriate).
 - (4) A copy of the University's Approval of Research on Human Subjects (if applicable).

NOTE: Application forms can be obtained from the Research, Evaluation and Assessment Department,

- b. Submit applications to:
- Seattle Public Schools
Supervisor - Research, Evaluation, Assessment
MS 32-159
PO Box 34165
Seattle, WA 98124

2. Conditions for Acceptance for Review

- a. All research applications must have the signature of the principal researcher, and the signature and title of the researcher's supervisor or study advisor, if appropriate. Because of the length of time involved in processing research applications, those researchers who are Ph.D candidates may submit applications prior to the approval of their prospectus with the understanding that final District approval is contingent upon committee approval.
- b. No test, questionnaire, or survey containing any questions about a student's personal beliefs or practices concerning sex, family life, morality, or religion, or any questions about his parent's or guardian's beliefs or practices in the same, shall be administered to any student in the public schools of Seattle unless the parent or guardian gives written permission for the student to complete such test, questionnaire, or survey. A list of students whose parents or guardians



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have signed consent forms must be submitted to the Evaluation Office before the study may begin. The researcher shall maintain a file of signed consent forms, available to the Evaluation Office or to the appropriate principals or program managers upon request.

- c. In compliance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, adequate safeguards must be taken to ensure that no personal rights of students will be violated in any way as a result of the research, or the publication of its findings. Similar precautions will protect the rights of District staff.
 - d. If the applicant is affiliated with an institution where specific approval for research in human subjects must be obtained, a copy of such approval must be forwarded to the Evaluation Services Department before final District approval will be granted.
 - e. To avoid undue inconvenience to building personnel and students, no surveys will be allowed in a school or program:
 - (1) Three weeks after the opening of school, and three weeks prior to the closing of school.
 - (2) The week before or after winter and spring vacations.
 - (3) Where there are already a number of surveys under way.
 - (4) Where a number of surveys have recently been conducted.
 - f. Research applications will not be accepted during the last seven weeks of the school year in which the study is to be conducted.
 - g. All principals and program managers may refuse to allow surveys to be conducted in their school or program except for those studies mandated by the School Board or by the Superintendent.
3. Review of request to conduct study.
- a. The Evaluation Office will review the request and submit the proposed study for review by District specialists in the area of the proposed study.



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- b. The application and recommendations of District specialists are forwarded to the Assistant Superintendent for General Administration and District Relations. The study and recommendations are then distributed to the appropriate administrative supervisors. The Assistant Superintendent for General Administration and District Relations then grants or denies permission, based on the recommendations of the others consulted. This entire process (a. and b.) will take approximately four weeks to complete.
 - c. The notification of permission, or the denial of permission, to conduct the study will be sent to the researcher. If the study is approved, the Evaluation Office will notify principals or program managers and administrative supervisors in whose schools or programs the study will be conducted.
 - d. The researcher will contact the appropriate principals or program managers to gain approval and complete arrangements for conducting the study.
 - e. The researcher will supply the Evaluation Office with one copy of the final report and the abstract of the final report.
4. The following may occur without review by the Evaluation Office:
- a. Principals or program managers conducting surveys in their own schools for internal information.
 - b. Principals, program managers, or school organizations conducting parent or community surveys in their school community. (However, a copy of such surveys should be sent to the Evaluation Office and administrative supervisors for perusal before they are distributed in the community.)
 - c. Assistant principals, student services workers, and teachers conducting studies that have been approved by the principal or program manager in their own schools as a normal part of their work responsibilities.
 - d. Management Information Surveys (as previously defined).