

Tulsa Public Schools
Program Management Office
EXTERNAL RESEARCH REVIEW BOARD (RRB) GUIDELINES
2014-2015
As of July 28, 2014

Individuals or institutions external to TPS interested in conducting research in the District must be in compliance with the following:

1. The RRB acts on the behalf of the Superintendent to review research proposed by external and internal sources. The RRB is comprised of members from various TPS offices and is coordinated by the Program Management Office. To prevent undue disruption to the educational process, to protect the privacy rights of students and staff and to ensure compliance with state and federal law the following research restrictions shall apply:
 - a. There must be minimal interference with school instruction and operations and relationships between students, parents and school and district staff. Personal, social, psychological or medical research that may be in conflict with the rights of individuals or groups will not be approved.
 - b. The approval of an application is valid for a specific period of time which shall not exceed a period of one year (12 consecutive calendar months from date of approval).
 - c. A fingerprint/background check procedure is required of all researchers and all members of the research team who will have contact with students or staff when conducting/completing a one on one confidential interview/test.
 - d. No TPS staff time or resources (i.e. TPS email or mail run) will be used to solicit participation in a research study.
 - e. TPS staff shall not solicit or coerce participants for research. School staff may not be used to collect data.
 - f. Any compensation provided for participation in research must be described. It is acceptable for proposals to include compensation for TPS students who participate in research projects. However, it is against TPS Board policy for TPS staff to receive compensation for their participation in research projects during school hours. TPS staff participating in research projects or staff development provided by the primary researcher outside of contract hours may be provided reasonable compensation as approved by the RRB.
 - g. Researchers may not request data directly from schools or departments. All data requests must be submitted to the RRB for handling and disposition. Researchers may not receive personally-identifiable student level data unless the Researcher also provides the RRB with written evidence that the parent or student, as appropriate, has consented to the release of student records.
 - h. Research conducted by a TPS employee is considered external research if:
 - I. It occurs outside of the assigned responsibilities of the employee i.e. the completion of a master's thesis or dissertation. Data Collection cannot occur in the same school in which the employ has authority.
 - II. May not include research on individuals known to the researcher. Researchers must use independent research subjects in their studies. For example, principals cannot collect data from staff in their schools because this would present a conflict of interest. Similarly, teachers cannot collect data from their current or former students.
 - III. To avoid any perceived coercion, the invitation to participate in research is to be printed on the researcher's stationary, and not on that of any office or school of the Tulsa Public Schools. Consent forms and verbal assent may not state TPS support or approval of the research study.

- IV. Research projects requesting access to students, staff or school sites which occur in the first four weeks, the last four weeks of a school year or designated testing periods will not be approved.

2. Inquiries regarding these standards must be directed to the Office of Program Management at 918-746-6309.

3. The Program Management Office or designee will serve as chairperson of the RRB. The PMO is authorized to review and approve research applications which are considered to be expedited or routine. The RRB is comprised of members representing the following offices: Program Management Office, Teacher Leader Effectiveness, School Accountability Instructional Technology, Communications, and an invited representative(s) from all schools and specific research populations (e.g. school library staff) affected by the proposed research/survey. , .

- a. Research proposals shall be accepted or rejected by a majority vote of the committee members present at the scheduled meeting to consider approval of a proposal.
- b. Meetings are scheduled within 30 business days of receipt of a completed application.

4. Notification of RRB approval for research does not constitute an endorsement. Approval of the principal must be secured before voluntary cooperation of staff and students can be engaged if the research activities occur during the school day. Disruption to school routine must be kept to a minimum. Approval reflects only permission to request voluntary cooperation of TPS staff.

5. The submittal of the items listed below, in an electronic PDF format shall constitute the official external application for outside researchers who are not university affiliated. External research applicants who are affiliated with a university may instead submit their Institutional Review Board (IRB) application or approved plan.

The application for non-university applicants shall, at a minimum, include the following components in an electronic PDF format:

- a. Researcher status and title
- b. Purpose of the research (limited to 200 words)
- c. Description of the direct benefit to the Tulsa Public Schools Board of Education of Tulsa Public Schools district and/or profession of education
- d. Research question, hypothesis and methodology (timeline of research)
- e. Description of school/student/staff involvement
- f. Copy of any survey or other instruments to be used
- g. TPS Conflict of Interest Disclosure Form
- h. Must contain a description of the plan made to provide parents/guardians access to the surveys of materials that does not utilize TPS staff or resources
- i. All external research survey, assessments, analyses or evaluations require prior written and active informed consent of a parent or legal guardian on behalf of a minor student before data collection commences.
- j. Non-refundable application fee as described in Board Regulation 9102-R

6. Informed parent consent form must be written in easily understood language and shall contain the following:
- a. Title of the study and identification of the researcher(s) conducting the study (e.g. doctoral candidate at University of Oklahoma)
 - b. The purpose(s) for collecting data (e.g. to learn about foreign language acquisition in primary schools)
 - c. Description of what participants will be asked to do (e.g., complete a written survey)
 - d. Amount of time required of participants
 - e. Notice that participants will be audio-or videotaped (if applicable) with an explanation of how the recordings will be used and what happens to the tapes after the research is completed
 - f. Description of any individually-identifiable student data to which the researcher seeks access (e.g., test scores, attendance records) and how and when data will be destroyed
 - g. There must be a separate yes/no check box referring to the release of student level data.
 - h. Notice that all information will remain confidential
 - i. Notice that participation is entirely voluntary and participants may withdraw from the study at any time, without negative consequences
 - j. Notice of any reasonably foreseeable risk or benefits to the participant
 - k. A local or toll free telephone number of researcher(s), so that the parent/guardian or participant may call if there are questions or concerns
 - l. Space and lines for the students' name and parent/guardian signature
 - m. There must be a check-off for either consent or refusal to participate and the parent/guardian signature must refer to "Yes, I agree to have my child participate" or "No, I do not give my consent for my child to participate".
 - n. Active consent form as evidenced by guardian signature of students under majority age, student verbal assent if under age of majority and/or signed student consent if over age of majority are mandatory.
 - o. If the consent form is longer than one page, a summary of what participants will be asked to do and/or the student level data to be requested from TPS must appear immediately above the parent signature.
 - p. In addition, the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) passed under the No Child Left Behind legislation requires that parents/guardians have access to the materials that will be used in school with their children. Therefore all consent forms must include the following text:

Parents please be aware that under the Protection of Pupil Rights Act 20 U.S.C. Section 1232© (1) (A), you have the right to review a copy of the questions asked of or materials

that will be used with your students. If you would like to do so, you should contact [INSERT APPROPRIATE CONTACT] at (XXX) XXX-XXXX to obtain a copy of the questions or materials

7. Research projects if approved are not permitted during the following: 1) the first four weeks of school, 2) the last four weeks of school, and 3) during the official state/district testing windows.
8. The RRB shall specify the continuing review process for proposals that are approved, shall address a process for requesting a change to a previously approved proposal change request, conditions under which an adverse event notification is required to be made to the RRB, and requirements and timelines for submittal of a Final Report.
9. A formal notification process will be established documenting the decision reached regarding proposed research projects and how the decision is communicated to the primary researcher, Superintendent/designee, the Area Superintendent, Principal, and ESC Department head, if applicable.
10. The Tulsa Public Schools District reserves the right to use the information in the research report or summary for educational programming or services, planning, solicitation of grants, staff development and any other purposes to improve instruction or services to students of the Tulsa Public Schools.

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