

## CCSD Administrative Guidelines Regarding Educational Research

- I. **Purpose:** The overall purpose of these procedures is to establish a standard manner of application review for either individuals or external agencies wishing to conduct research in the Cherokee County School District (CCSD). Standard procedures protect staff and student time from unnecessary data collection and allow the District to review applications that can contribute significantly to the development and/or implementation of high-quality instructional programs. While encouraging quality research to improve professional practice, district staff members have a responsibility to protect students, parents and staff from invasion of privacy; physical, psychological, social and emotional injury; and substantial distraction from teaching and learning.
- II. **How does CCSD define research?** Research is any data collection from or about CCSD's students, parents or staff. Research includes; but, is not limited to: data collection for the purposes of fulfilling the requirements of a thesis, dissertation, publication in a journal or book or completion of higher education course work.

**Internal Research**– Any research initiated by a CCSD employee as related to their roles, responsibilities and job duties; or research initiated and commissioned by CCSD and conducted under the direction of CCSD staff.

**External Research** – Studies initiated by a CCSD employee for the purposes of degree fulfillment or program requirement. Studies initiated by an outside agency or non-CCSD employees for the purpose of contributing to educational theory and/or educational practice. External studies may also include either national or statewide studies mandated by the state.

### III. **What is the research application process?**

The Supervisor of Research Services must provide approval before a research project may be conducted in the District.

Such research approval will consist of the following:

- Initial contact with the Research Services Department to obtain a research approval application form and data confidentiality statement (Attachments A and B).
- Answer and complete all questions in the application. Incomplete requests will not be reviewed. CCSD will not edit nor make changes in the application form for the researcher.
- Attach copies of any survey questions, interview protocols and data collection instruments that will be used in the requested study.
- Degree-seeking researchers must submit a letter from his/her supervising professor indicating support of the research request or demonstrated proof of higher education endorsement of your study (e.g., IRB approval from the college/university).
- Applicants requesting access to confidential testing data must complete the supplemental request for access to confidential assessment data. All completed

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requests must be forwarded to the Director of Student Assessment for appropriate approvals and/or denials. Researchers are encouraged to consider publicly available data files through sites such as [www.gadoe.org](http://www.gadoe.org) or [www.gosa.georgia.gov](http://www.gosa.georgia.gov) before making a request to CCSD Student Assessment. Access to confidential data is a supplemental request and required of ALL research application requests that include the use of CCSD assessment data (Attachment C).

- Prepare and attach participant consent forms. If data will be collected from or on individual students, parents or staff, permission to participate will be required in most cases, and a copy of the participant agreement must be included with the research application. The consent must permit the parents, students, and/or staff member to give full and knowing consent. Consent may not be passive (Attachment D).
- Signature of the participating school's principal is required for all research application requests. Administrative leadership approval does not establish approval for the study to be conducted.
- Summaries of research study findings and/or data collection must be made available to the Research Services Department upon District request. If the study is reported in a journal or other format, the researcher will provide CCSD with a copy.

**IV. CCSD Research Priorities:** Research requests related to topics of interest for CCSD will receive priority for approval. Researchers are encouraged to contact the Supervisor of Research Services prior to completion of theses or dissertation plans to ensure coordination between the District and researcher. Discussing a specific project with Research Services regarding research method and details may also assist a potential researcher in creating a feasible research design (Attachment E).