

INSTRUCTION

Research Projects

Requests

All research projects conducted by the school district shall be submitted to the Manager of Assessment with the appropriate information. The request must include the Request to Conduct Shoreline Research with a copy of:

1. a summary of the proposal;
2. all questionnaires or surveys;
3. all tests, instruments, and curricular materials for participants;
4. all consent forms and other communications that will be distributed to participants;
and
5. a signed Shoreline Research Contract Guidelines.

Summary of the Proposal

The summary shall include a statement of the problem, the research hypotheses/questions/objectives, the methods for sampling and design, the analyses, the validity and reliability assurances, and the anticipated project completion date.

Consent Guidelines

Human subjects asked to contribute their time and effort to research should consent to do so freely. In most cases when minors are the subjects of the research, parents or guardians may be asked to sign an informed consent form to have their students “opt out” of the research. The process must include sharing the purpose of the research, the procedures to be used, the privacy protections, assurance of voluntary participation, and whom to contact for more information about the study.

Research Contract Guidelines

Approved research projects must be considered as contracts with the Shoreline School District. The assessment administrator and the Superintendent’s Staff as described must approve any deviation from procedures. Unapproved procedural changes will be considered grounds for termination of the study.

A Shoreline certificated employee must supervise all activities involving non-district personnel with students. Investigators, upon request, must meet with interested staff, parents, community, and/or student groups to explain the purpose, methods, and possible implications of the proposed activities.

Upon completion of the study, investigators must submit a written summary of the project findings to the assessment office within thirty days of completion of the project.

All data, data collection instruments, reports, publication, and results related to this study will be available to the district without charge, unless otherwise agreed upon in writing.

INSTRUCTION

Research Projects (continued)

Research Contract Guidelines (continued)

No research activities will be conducted in the schools the first two weeks or the last two weeks of the school year. No research activities may be scheduled while subjects are involved in state testing. Sensitivity to staff impact will be considered.

The superintendent/designee shall work with the buildings and district to manage any special problems that occur as a result of this procedure.

Guidelines for Securing Consent

Human subjects asked to contribute their time and effort to research should consent to do so freely. The consent should be given only after the subject understands that which he or she is consenting to, and any risks that may be involved. If minors are the subject of research, the district shall consider asking parents or guardians to sign an informed consent form to have their students "opt out" or "opt in" to the research project. (This recommendation shall be made by the district's Research Council with final approval by the Superintendent's Staff.) The consent process must include sharing the purpose of the research, the procedures to be used, the privacy protections, assurance of voluntary participation, and whom to contact for more information about the study. Whenever possible, the informed consent or other communications with parents will have a district or building cover letter from the responsible administrator.

Explicit informed consent is required for all experimental and observational studies involving staff, students, and their families whenever a personal or sensitive issue is considered. Access to extant records also requires explicit informed consent, unless there are no identifying markers in the data. Research involving only surveys may be approved with procedures securing implicit consent (willingness to complete the survey), if the respondents are adults. Student survey consent shall be implied if a student chooses to complete the survey.

Situations in which a potential subject's privacy might be invaded simply by being identified as a qualified participant for the study shall be carefully considered. People may belong to groups being investigated, but may not wish to have such group membership known, e.g. parents of gifted children. In such situations, investigators may be required to ask people who already have access to the necessary records, groups, or other information, to approach subjects for consent.

Signed explicit informed consent forms from staff and students should be kept on file by the building administrator for the duration of the research project/or the school year, whichever is longer.

INSTRUCTION

Research Projects (continued)

Research Council and approval of request

The superintendent/designee shall appoint a Research Council comprised of administrators in assessment, professional development, the curriculum and assessment. All research projects shall be submitted to the Research Council to obtain its recommendations before being submitted to the Superintendent's Staff for final approval.

The district shall always receive in the assessment office a copy of the results of any research projects that have been approved by the district.