

RESEARCH PROJECTS, STUDIES, EXPERIMENTS AND SURVEYS

The Colorado Springs School District 11 Board of Education (the Board) recognizes that requests will be made on occasion to conduct research projects, studies, experiments, and surveys (hereinafter referred to as “project” or “research project”) in schools. The Board also recognizes that these projects have educational and social benefit. However, because such projects invariably involve school personnel and interrupt class instructional time, it is necessary to evaluate the merits of each project before permission is granted.

All research requests should be initiated and completed through Education Insights. Requests will be furnished electronically so that coordination with the appropriate District personnel can be expedited. Request forms to be submitted with the proposals may be obtained at the Education Insights office or from the District website.

All researchers shall be required to explain in writing the purpose, provide research questions and study content, risks, benefits, organizations that have access to the data, procedures, results and intended uses of the project in understandable terms in coordination with the most appropriate district-level subject matter expert. Information about the project shall be provided to parents/guardians in advance in stakeholder friendly language. Upon receipt of written consent, students will be provided details and information related to the project. All completed survey data collected on an identifiable student must be presented to the parents/guardians by the end of the semester.

No student shall be the subject of any research project without the prior written consent of the student's parents or guardian or the student if the student is 18 years of age or older. No “passive consent” (stating that consent is assumed unless the document is returned) will be authorized. A student's or parent's/guardian's decision not to participate in a research project shall be kept private and respected in all cases.

The following guidelines pertain to all research projects:

1. A minimum of six weeks must be allowed between submission of the proposal and the time the research is to begin.
2. All instructional and supplementary materials used in connection with any research project, study or experiment shall be available for review by the student's parents or guardian or student involved in the project.
3. The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) will be strictly adhered to in handling of data. In addition, the joint standards for research of the American Education Research Association and the American Psychological Association will be followed.
4. In reporting the findings of the study, the names of the research subjects, the school and the District will be kept anonymous.
5. The importance of the research information to District priorities as well as the time involved to conduct the study will be of major significance in judging a proposal.

Prior written consent from a parent/guardian is required before a student shall be given a survey, analysis or evaluation that reveals information concerning:

1. Political or religious affiliations
2. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the student or his family
3. Sex behavior and attitudes or topics that infringe on student privacy
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior
5. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
6. Legally-recognized privileged and analogous relationships such as those of lawyers, physicians and ministers
7. Income other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation in a program or for receiving financial assistance under such program

The Board recognizes the District will wish to submit surveys to gain feedback from students regarding their experience as a student in District 11. A majority of the Board may give permission to conduct such surveys as an opt out option to families if the above listed topics are not included in survey questions. The above guidelines of informing parent/guardians of the purpose, content/survey questions, organizations that have access to the data, and intended use of the information in advance of administering the survey still apply.

“Getting to know you” surveys do not require parental consent or prior notification and must not include any of the topics listed above.

Current practice codified 1994
Reviewed May 1995
Revised November 2011
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LEGAL REFS: 20 U.S.C. 1232h

CROSS REFS.: GCS, Professional Research and Publishing
JLDAC, Screening/Testing of Students
JRA/JRC, Student Records/Release of Information on Students