

## ***Superintendent File: JRCB-R-1***

### **EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH**

Agencies or individuals desiring to conduct external research studies involving either district students or staff members must complete an application form and submit a written prospectus to the Douglas County School District - Assessment and System Performance Office for approval prior to initiation of the study.

"External research" is defined as any research study that is not owned in its entirety by Douglas County School District, including academic research for universities or colleges, research for private organizations and companies, research for degree fulfillment (e.g., masters, doctoral), and research for publication outside of Douglas County School District publications. Analysis of existing student data by Douglas County School District teachers and other staff in order to advance instruction and district achievement is not considered external research unless such analysis will be published, presented, or shared in a forum external to Douglas County School District.

The Assessment and System Performance Office will read, review, evaluate, and determine the appropriateness of all external research studies, and will make available, via the Assessment and System Performance website, information about the application procedures and research study criteria to colleges, universities, and research organizations. The following process will be used:

1. Applicants submit application form, application fee, and proposal.
2. Application is checked for completeness prior to committee review. Review process will not begin until application is complete.
3. Assessment and System Performance Office defines and uses criteria to review application and accepts or rejects the study.
4. Letter of preliminary approval/initial review with conditions/non-approval is sent to applicant, summarizing comments.
5. If initial review with conditions is issued, applicant must satisfy all conditions before preliminary approval will be granted.
6. If final approval by superintendent and/or designee or is granted, research study is implemented and completed.
7. Researcher submits written report of study to Douglas County School District – Assessment and System Performance Office for archiving.

### **Application Procedures**

Any individual or organization wishing to conduct external research involving students or staff of the Douglas County School District must submit a written or electronic application to the Assessment and System Performance Office. These application forms and procedures are available on the Douglas County School District web site.

### **Review Process**

When applications are first submitted, the Assessment and System Performance Office will initially check them for completeness. The review process will not begin until the application is complete. Once the application is complete, the Assessment and System Performance Office and such other personnel as may be necessary to evaluate the feasibility of conducting the proposed study will read and evaluate it using the following criteria and additional criteria as specified by the Assessment and System Performance Office:

### **Significance**

- The project addresses an important issue or need.
- The research has the potential to improve academic performance or educational practice.
- The results will have value to either the district as a whole or to a unit within the district.
- The project demonstrates potential for dissemination to or adoption by other schools or districts.

### **Feasibility**

- Data collection procedures represent an appropriate response to the issue or need addressed.
- The applicant is capable of carrying out the project as evidenced by the quality of the research design, objectives, approaches, and evaluation plan.
- The project is not unduly disruptive or time consuming to the normal educational process.
- Employee and student time can be reasonably devoted to the request. (Note that release of student records is subject to approval. A minimum fee will be required to generate records.)

### **Appropriateness**

- The dignity and personal rights of those who would be involved in the study are protected per federal guidelines for protection of human subjects (45 CFR).
- The data and information of students meets the standards and requirements of Board Policy JRCB and Colorado Student Data Transparency and Security Act (HB 16-1423)
- Invasion of privacy is unlikely and procedures have been outlined to protect against a security breach.
- The instruments and/or instructional materials are not intrusive and are appropriate for use in the school setting.
- The research has been approved or determined exempt by the Institution's Human Subject Committee or Institutional Review Board.
- The informed consent letter(s) provides a clear and accurate description of the research, including the time required to participate in the study, any risk involved to the participants or the school district, confidentiality of the data, and permission(s) required for the observation/taping of students and/or release of student records. The letter also states that participation is voluntary and there will be no penalty for withdrawing at any

time. The district generally requires active consent rather than passive consent by subjects.

### **Approval and Monitoring Procedures**

A letter will be sent to the applicant with preliminary approval, initial review with conditions, or disapproval of the study for implementation in Douglas County School District. This letter will include a summary of the comments based on the criteria listed in the previous section.

If the application is not approved, the letter will clearly outline why the application did not meet district criteria. If the application is initially reviewed with conditions, the letter will list the additional materials or changes to the application that will be required before preliminary approval can be granted. If the project is preliminarily approved, the following steps will be taken:

- The Assessment and System Performance Office will contact principals and/or program managers in the schools/programs where the study will be conducted.
- The written description of the project and other supporting materials will be sent by the applicant to the principal(s)/program manager(s) for review.
- Schools or programs interested in participating in the project will then meet with the researcher to arrange for implementation of the study. No school or department will be forced to participate in a preliminarily approved study.

For each school year, applications for external research will be accepted on a rolling basis.

The researcher will conduct the study in accordance with the procedures outlined in the approved proposal. If the researcher makes any changes to the study, the researcher must submit those changes in writing to the Assessment and System Performance Office.

The researcher is expected to regularly communicate with the superintendent and/or designee and keep the Assessment and System Performance Office and principal/program manager informed regarding the progress of the data collection and to submit a written report of the project to the Assessment and System Performance Office when it is completed.

Adopted: December 21, 2017