Bellingham Public Schools
a collective commitment

Research and survey requests and guidelines

Updated March 2022

In Bellingham Public Schools, we consider research in the context of our ability to continue to provide excellent teaching and learning to our students and avoid interruptions to their educational process.

We prioritize research and surveys that are:

- Directly connected to our daily work with students, staff and families.
- Of benefit to our employees' continued education and professional development.
- Focused around research that helps our state and local community better know our students' and families' needs (e.g. Healthy Youth Survey) or are required by law for local, state or federal funding (e.g. Family Income Survey in some schools).

On occasion, we share research opportunities from outside, non-profit partners that have direct benefit to our community. All such requests are processed through the Department of Communications and Community Relations.

Our research and assessment team collaborates with our communications and community relations team on districtwide climate and teaching/learning feedback forms, and other annual surveys, such as the senior/CTE exit survey, Healthy Youth survey, Title IV survey, and professional development surveys.

To balance the inquiries and demands made on the time of our students, staff and families, research and assessment maintains an annual survey and testing calendar, which is posted on the research and assessment webpage.

Current Bellingham Public Schools employees or students who wish to conduct research or surveys in their schools or department must get their principal or supervisor's prior approval. Please make sure all research questions are in alignment with policy and procedure 3232, Parent and Student Rights in Administration of Surveys, Analysis or Evaluations.

Principals may collect routine and/or informal student, staff or family feedback in their schools without going through an approval process.

District directors/leaders may conduct research or surveys on routine topics of grade levels, grant-related surveys, entry plans or small groups without prior approval.

Employees do not need prior approval for data collection related to self-evaluation, registration, assessment or professional development.

When contacting or surveying families, please work with Communication and Community Relations, who will provide support for best practices and prior protocols (e.g. entry plan feedback forms).

BPS students, staff or committees/groups who want to conduct research at a scale beyond their own school

must submit their request with at least one week's notice to Communications and Community Relations. Requests should include:

- Purpose of the research
- How the results will be used/shared
- Proposed subjects/audience
- Timeline

Requests will be evaluated based on the above factors as well as the potential effects on workload, instructional time, organizational impact and timing.

Outside agencies, institutions or students:

Research requests from external higher education students, community members or organizations are considered by the Department of Teaching and Learning. We ask each researcher to provide information about their proposal at least 30 days in advance of the proposed research activity. Proposals may be submitted to Dana Smith, Assistant Director of Communications and Community Relations.

When submitting research proposals, please include the following, or link to a proposal that contains the following elements:

1. Purpose of research and intended products
2. Sponsoring organization and class/professor/program
3. Anticipated research timeline
4. Proposed subjects and audience
5. Anticipated scope and time commitment for subjects
6. Number of participants and methodology for choosing
7. Process used to secure and de-identify any personally identifiable information that may be acquired during the research or publishing
8. Other school districts contacted to participate, and existing school district partners in your research (if any)
9. Documentation of approval of research proposal by your university's Institutional Review Board or equivalent