



Dear Researcher:

The Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) receives numerous requests to conduct research each year. All requests are carefully considered with respect to their beneficial impact on and alignment with SCUSD's educational mission and priorities. The SCUSD's Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office is responsible for reviewing and facilitating approvals of all research requests.

The attached documentation provides an overview of the guidelines by which research requests are considered for approval, assurances required, and procedures for submitting a request. Please review the following procedures to ensure your request is complete. Only complete request forms will be processed and considered.

Procedures for Requests to Conduct Research

1. Familiarize yourself with the Research Request Packet (*Request to Conduct Research Form, Guiding Principles for Approving Research Requests, District Expectations for Research Requests, Protection of Student Rights and Human Subjects, and Study Proposal Guidelines*).
2. Carefully complete and return all required materials as listed under the "Checklist for Research Request Packet" on the *Request to Conduct Research Form*.
3. Please email copies of the completed forms and research documents to Ms. Robyn Mutchler at Robyn-Mutchler@scusd.edu. A single PDF combining all materials is preferred.
4. Notifications of the decision to approve or deny the research request will be sent to the researcher by mail. Please allow at least six to eight weeks to process your request.

If you have any remaining questions after carefully reviewing all documents, please don't hesitate to contact the Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office at 916-643-9420.

Sincerely,

Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office

Sacramento City Unified
Request to Conduct Research Form

Research Title: _____	
Researcher(s) List all: _____	
Affiliation/Organization: _____	
Address: _____	Phone: _____
_____	Email: _____

Checklist for Research Request Packet:

- Completed Request to Conduct Research Form (this form)
- Completed Research Study Abstract/Proposal (addressing all areas of the Research Proposal Guidelines)
- Copies of all data gathering instruments (questionnaires, etc.)
- Copies of IRB approvals, if necessary.
- Assurance below are signed

Assurances: (Please initial)

- ____ 1) No changes will be made in the scope and/or structure of the study, unless approved by the Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office.
- ____ 2) No study findings will be published or released that identify by name, the district, its schools, students, or staff without the written approval of the Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office.
- ____ 3) A copy of the final study will be submitted to the Superintendent's Office and to each school or department participating in the study.

Researcher's Signature _____ Date _____

FOR DISTRICT USE ONLY

Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office (study reviewed)

Additional Research Reviews/Approvals

Academic Office

Reviewer: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

Recommended: Yes No

Department: _____

Reviewer: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

Recommended: Yes No

Continuous Improvement and Accountability Office

Reviewer: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

Recommended: Yes No

Department: _____

Reviewer: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

Recommended: Yes No

Return Completed Forms to:
Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office
Sacramento City Unified School District
5735 47th Avenue
Sacramento, CA 95824

Guiding Principles for Approving Research Requests

The Strategy and Continuous Improvement Office is the Superintendent's designee responsible for approving requests to conduct research in the schools and offices of the district. All requests must be consistent with Sacramento City Unified School District Board Policy (BP 6162.8) and Administrative Regulations (AR 6162.8). In addition, the following guiding principles are used when deciding whether to approve or deny a request:

1. The study must (A) contribute to the profession of education and (B) be of benefit to the school district.
2. The study must be sound in terms of design, sample selection, instruments to be used, and statistical treatment. It must give details about participation of personnel, times, and dates. For higher education students, a letter of approval from the campus Human Subjects Committee must accompany the research requested. *Researchers wishing to conduct research in SCUSD should note that an Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval from an institution does not guarantee approval for the SCUSD internal review process.*
3. The research must not impose undue burdens on the school district, its administrative, clerical or teaching staff. It should not disrupt the process of education. The demands on the subjects should be reasonable and justified. The potential benefits to the school and/or district should be proportional to the time spent and the resources involved.
4. Researchers shall certify that they will not use school names or publish any findings without the approval of the Superintendent or designee.
5. A complete report of the results must be made available to appropriate district personnel before it is made public. The superintendent or designee is responsible for approving the public release of any information based on any research findings.
6. In accordance with long standing tradition in American education, the research worker must understand that research or data gathering motivated by or tending to advance special interests ordinarily will not be approved.

District Expectations for Research Requests

1. Educational research in the district is considered a privilege, not a right, and proposals must conform to general standards issued by the district. The district reserves the right to revoke research permissions at any time, without notice and without cause. Any one of the following common faults may be sufficient to result in refusal or revocation of permission to conduct a study.
 - 1.1 *Plan contains vague, inadequate, unclear design procedures or hypothesis.*
 - 1.2 *Project demands for too much time on the part of students, teachers, or staff.*
 - 1.3 *Project is too trivial or has too little educational value.*

- 1.4 *Project includes use of invalid or inappropriate instruments.*
- 1.5 *Instruments contain personal questions, beyond those provided for by law.*
- 1.6 *Plan includes too much interference with the educational programs.*
- 1.7 *Research does not coincide with district goals and/or is of inadequate benefit to the district*

The district expects that the researcher...

- 2.1 *is acquainted with the federal and state laws and district regulations relative to student rights and privacy.*
 - 2.2 *Will obtain district approval prior to beginning a research study.*
 - 2.3 *Will conform to provisions of law and district regulations relative to the use of student records.*
 - 2.4 *Will provide teachers and other personnel with adequate guarantees against invasion of privacy.*
 - 2.5 *Will use personal information from subjects in a responsible and professional manner.*
2. It is highly recommended that requests for (a) fall research be submitted for approval by May 1 of the prior year; (b) for spring semester by October 1; and (c) for summer by March 1. Requests to begin research must be of such a nature as to not interfere with the educational programs of the schools.
 3. Projects are approved for a period of one school year or less. To extend a project into a second year, the researcher(s) must submit a new Research Request Packet for approval.

Research Proposal Guidelines

Research study abstract/proposal must address all of the elements below.

1. Researcher and organization credentials to perform the proposed research.
2. Description, purpose and scope of project (*Abstract, justification or need, significance, objectives, expected outcomes, methodology, statistical procedures, etc.*)
3. Research Questions and Data Collection Procedures and Instruments (*Attach all*).
4. Population/Unit of Study (*include specifics on target population and sample being requested – grade levels, schools, persons, etc.*)
5. IRB Approvals, Consent/Assent Protocols, maintenance of confidentiality and data.
6. Intended use for proposed research (*e.g., thesis, publication, presentation, program evaluation, etc.*).
7. Benefits to the school(s) and the district.
8. Timetable

PROTECTION OF STUDENT RIGHTS AND HUMAN SUBJECTS

Research studies must not invade the privacy of students, their families, teachers or other district staff. Students cannot be asked questions related to their or their parent's beliefs or practices regarding sex, family life, morality, religion, or possible illegal behavior or activities.

Parents of students who will participate in research or evaluation studies that collect information about their child must be provided with informed consent and give written permission for their child to participate.

Superintendent's Office responds to legislation and regulation from several sources. The principal source of policy and procedure regarding the protection of human subjects is the Department of Health and Human Services (formerly the Department of Health, Education and Welfare). These regulations are set forth in Title 45, Part 46 of the Code of Regulations (45 CFR 46).

Human Subject: "Human subject" means a living individual about whom an investigator conducting research obtains data through intervention or interaction with the individual, or obtains identifiable private (personal or confidential) information (45 CFR 46, 102 (f)).

Informed Consent: The manner and circumstances of obtaining truly informed consent to participate as a subject of research are very important and must meet the following criteria: (1) The subject must have an opportunity to consider whether or not to participate; (2) The study should be explained in a straightforward, simple, clear manner; (3) The subject must be capable of understanding the information when it is presented. (4) A signature must be obtained.

The following information must be provided on the consent form:

1. **Procedures.** An explanation of the purposes of the research and the expected duration of the subject's participation, a description of the procedures to be followed, and identification of any procedures which are experimental;
2. **Risks.** A description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomforts to the subject;
3. **Benefits.** A description of any benefits to the subject or to others which may be reasonably expected from the research;
4. **Confidentiality.** A statement describing the extent, if any, to which confidentiality of records identifying the subject will be maintained; research subjects' rights;
5. **Right to Refuse or Withdraw.** A statement that participation is voluntary, refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled, and the subject may discontinue participation at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which the subject is otherwise entitled.
6. **Offer to Answer Questions.** An explanation of whom to contact for answers to questions about the research.