

## COMMUNITY RELATIONS

### Guidelines for Conducting Research in the Central Kitsap School District

Central Kitsap School District recognizes that the systematic study of the educational process and related variables can contribute significantly to the development and implementation of high quality curriculum and instructional programs. The following guidelines and procedures have been adopted to ensure the appropriateness and integrity of research conducted in the District, and the protection of privacy and other rights of participants. These guidelines are intended for all non-District research activities. Projects conducted under the auspices of the Central Kitsap School District in collaboration with another agency/organization must be of the highest quality, but may be exempt from these regulations.

All research conducted by a non-District employee, or by a District employee for personal reasons (e.g., degree requirement), must be approved by the Superintendent. Before receiving the Superintendent's approval, all requests for conducting research will be reviewed for content and technical merit by the Director of Research and Evaluation. The Superintendent's Cabinet, and relevant principals, will then serve as a Human Subjects Review Board, reviewing the proposal for ethical and legal considerations.

Projects conducted by District staff members that involve no cost to the District, are limited to a single school, and involve only minor changes in the instructional program require only the approval of the principal and the appropriate Director of Teaching and Learning.

Projects conducted by students as part of a class assignment that involve no cost to the District, are limited in nature, and involve only minor changes in the instructional program, require only the approval of relevant principals and the appropriate Director of Teaching and Learning.

#### Procedures:

Applicants are encouraged to meet with the Director of Research and Evaluation prior to submitting their final proposal to clarify District requirements, resources, and constraints. The complete application will include:

1. A Request to Conduct Research in the Central Kitsap School District.
2. A Summary of Proposed Research not to exceed five pages which includes:
  - Name and affiliation of each investigator.
  - Title of proposed project.
  - Statement of the problem.
  - Research hypotheses, questions, or objectives.
  - A description of the population to be sampled, sampling design.

- A description of methodology--designs and procedures, data collection procedures, and analysis.
  - A timeline for completion of the study.
  - An explanation of why the project would be of value to CKSD and/or education in general.
3. A copy of all questionnaires, forms, tests, instruments, and/or curricular materials to be used.
  4. A copy of all consent forms and other communications that will be distributed to participants.
  5. A signed Ethical Principles for Research in the Central Kitsap School District.
  6. A signed Research Contract Guidelines for the Central Kitsap School District.

Approval of a research project may take up to four weeks for processing. Proposals may be approved, approved pending revisions, or disapproved. If a proposal is disapproved, the applicant may request an appeal.

Two sets of guidelines must be agreed to by each applicant before his/her Request to Conduct Research in the Central Kitsap School District is approved.

1. Ethical Principles for Research in the Central Kitsap School District.
2. Research Contract Guidelines for the Central Kitsap School District.

In reviewing an application to conduct research, the fiscal impact of the District's involvement, the impact on staff and student morale, and other projects that the District is involved in will be considered. In addition, priority will be given to projects that:

1. Do not reduce instructional time.
2. Have direct application to the educational program or decision-making process of the Central Kitsap School District.
3. Have a high degree of technical merit.
4. Do not require an inordinate amount of administrative, staff, or student time.

### 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 what he or she is consenting to, and any risks that may be involved. If minors are the subjects of research, the informed consent of the parent or legal guardian is required. In addition, the assent of the student must be secured.

Subjects and/or their families should be assured that there will be no penalties for declining to participate, and that they are free to withdraw from the research at any time after they have given their initial consent. Informed consent can occur only if the person being asked to consent understands what he or she is consenting to, and feels free to agree or not agree to participate without any penalty.

The requirement for informed consent is ordinarily fulfilled by telling the subject in writing:

- The general nature of the research.
- The procedures in which the subject is being asked to participate.
- That the subject's privacy will be respected.
- That participation is voluntary and that the subject is free to withdraw from participation at any time.
- Whom the subject may contact for more information on the study.

Explicit consent is required for:

- Experimental studies with students or staff.
- Survey research involving students.
- Access to identifiable data records.

(Student assent occurs when students agree willingly to participate in the study following parental consent.)

Implicit consent may be considered for:

- Observational studies which do not change the instructional/learning setting for students or staff.
- Surveys of adults (consent is implicit in the completion of the survey).
- Data which is not identifiable at the individual level.

There are situations in which a potential subject's privacy might be invaded simply by being identified as a qualified participant for a study. People may belong to groups being studied, but may not wish to have such group membership known, e.g., parents of gifted children. In such situations, researchers may be required to ask persons who already have access to the necessary information to approach subjects for them.

Explicit informed consent must be documented by a signed consent form approved by the Central Kitsap School District. Two copies must be provided to the participant or the participant's legal representative—one to be signed and returned to the investigator, and the other to be kept by the participant.

The consent form and related correspondence with participants must be written on Central Kitsap School District stationery. The basic elements of the consent form are listed below, in the order in which they usually appear.

1. A heading, identifying the research with the Central Kitsap School District and with the investigator by title and affiliation.
2. Nature and purpose of the research, in language suitable for the participants involved. Writing should be straightforward, avoiding jargon and technical language.
3. A description of what the subject will be asked to do, the setting of the research, how much time will be required, and the duration of the project.
4. A description of the consequences of the procedures and any risks or discomforts that may reasonably be expected to occur.
5. A description of the benefits of the research to the subject or to education in general.
6. An assurance that the subject's confidentiality will be respected. The subject should be told who will have access to the data, and should be assured that public reports will not contain any information that will identify individual subjects.
7. An assurance that participation is voluntary, and that the subject may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty of any kind.
8. The approximate number of subjects in the study.
9. A written statement, to be signed and dated by the subject, indicating that the study has been explained, that the subject has had the opportunity to ask questions, and that the subject consents to the research.
10. The availability of the researcher to respond to questions at any time prior to or during the study, including a phone number.

If a study is being carried out under the auspices of other agencies or institutions, those institutions may have additional requirements for informed consent. Irreconcilable differences in requirements should be brought to the attention of the Superintendent or his/her designee.