



REGULATION: Research Involving Students for External Purposes

REFERENCE NO: R-AD-24

Since the Board occasionally receives more requests for permission to do research in the system than can be granted, some system of priorities is necessary. The Board represents a public educational institution and therefore priority will be given to those research endeavours which are likely to be of practical benefit to the Greater Essex County school system, or to education in general. In order to minimize disruption to the learning environment of our students, no research involving students will be allowed to be conducted during the months of September, May or June.

CONDITIONS REGARDING THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH

Principal researchers are reminded that the very nature of a public school system imposes a number of limits upon the conditions and circumstances under which research may be conducted. The activities of the Board are limited and controlled by provincial statutes and regulations. In the best interest of students and staff, only a limited number of studies will be approved in any school year. Those given priority will be studies conducted by Board staff fulfilling the research requirement of a degree program, or studies which specifically examine components of instructional approaches or curriculum related to understanding the learning skills of students. These areas of learning may include academic, social, emotional, or behavioural factors which relate to students' functioning at school. General surveys of students/families will not be approved and those researchers are advised to utilize public mailings, or other systems to elicit children's participation directly from parents/guardians.

- (a) Research involving students shall be reviewed by the Research Review Committee, unless undertaken by Board staff as part of their job requirements.
- (b) Any researcher wishing to deal directly with students in the school system must obtain the written permission of the students' parents/guardians in advance of the period of time he/she has contact with such students. The researcher will be required to submit information to the parents/guardians to allow informed awareness and consent, including but not limited to the nature of the research and its implications to their child and the community generally.
- (c) No research will be undertaken in any elementary or secondary school without the researcher obtaining the written approval of the principal of that school.
- (d) At this time, and until some ruling to the contrary is made by the Ministry of Education and/or the courts, researchers not employed by the system and/or

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researchers employed by the system who are acting independently may not have direct access to any official student records.

- e) At no time shall a person conducting research within the system be provided by school personnel with personal information regarding a student, without consent of the student's parent/guardian.
- f) Anyone undertaking research in the system must agree to protect the anonymity of the students and the institutions involved both in formally published reports of the research, contacts with the news media, personal conversations, or other forms of communication.
- g) A researcher may not employ procedures which unduly or unnecessarily invade the privacy of a student or his/her family or which disturb or threaten his/her sense of well-being or morale. To this end, any measures/questionnaires/procedures judged to be overly intrusive will significantly reduce the likelihood of approval of the study by the Committee.
- h) Whenever research procedures involve asking students questions that have the potential, in the view of the Committee, to reveal that a student is experiencing serious emotional distress (e.g.: depression, suicidal ideation/intent, risk of violence, etc.), the research methodology must have certain procedures built in. This may include, but is not limited to, a written explanation on the consent form and verbal introduction to participants, that in such circumstances identification of a student will be possible and notification of the student's parents/guardians will be immediately undertaken by the researcher. Thus, a coding system/master list will be required which will both protect anonymity and facilitate such follow-up when appropriate. Further, a list of community mental health services providers must also be provided to all parents within the consent form package.
- i) No submitted research proposal or design may be altered in any form once approved unless it is resubmitted to the Research Review Committee.
- j) Students or trainees conducting research as part of their educational program must only submit requests to the Board through the appropriate supervisor or administrative official at the institution in which they are enrolled. The request must be addressed to the Chair, Research Review Committee, The Greater Essex County District School Board, 451 Park Street West, P.O. Box 210, Windsor, Ontario, N9A 5V4.
- k) All researchers who are not employees of the Board must provide with their application a copy of a current police clearance, as well as a record of freedom from tuberculosis.

RESEARCHER'S RESPONSIBILITY TO THE BOARD

The researcher is required to supply at least one copy of any reports/publications resulting from his/her work to the Chair of the Research Review Committee. Whenever feasible, the researcher also is expected to convey, either through written documents or verbally, the results of his/her findings to persons who have been most closely associated with the study. Whenever possible the researcher should endeavour to indicate the implications of his/her findings for educational practice.

FUNCTION OF THE RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTEE

All research proposals conducted within the Board which involve students shall be approved by the Research Review Committee. Where the Committee has denied a request, the researcher may reapply in writing once the concerns of the Committee have been addressed. The Committee may refer research proposals which contain sensitive components to the Board for its consideration. If the researcher disagrees with the Committee's final decision, the researcher may apply to the Superintendent of Education – Special Education Programs and Services, for consideration. Any research that does not require student participation is submitted directly to the Superintendent of Program.