

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH INVOLVING DISTRICT STUDENTS

The Richland School District's Board of Directors values academic research to improve educational programs, practices, and in fostering innovation in education. It is also in the Board's best interest to establish a policy in support of research endeavors when the findings and results of these studies will be shared with the Richland School District to advance public education. This policy establishes the requirements for requesting authorization to conduct research in the Richland School District and/or to receive District data for research purposes and also establishes protocols to comply with federal and state laws regarding privacy of student records and the protection of pupils.

General Prohibition

The Richland School District does not collect, use or disseminate personal information about students for marketing or commercial purposes.

Protection of Student Privacy

The Superintendent will be responsible for ensuring that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that student privacy is protected when surveys are administered or personal information about students is collected, disclosed or used pursuant to a research project.

Definitions

External Researcher: (1) independent research conduct by individuals, organization, or agencies not affiliated with the Board; (2) educational product research conducted by a company or entity to study an educational product's effectiveness for potential sale to the Richland School District;

Internal Researcher: research conducted by District employees for personal purposes outside of their work duties during non-work hours, (e.g. research for the completion of a master's thesis or doctoral dissertation or for any other personal purposes). Internal researcher does not include work done by District employees as part of a work assignment or as part of their general job responsibilities.

Research: various evaluation, measurement and inquiry activities that include, but are not limited to any of the following or any combination thereof: (1) the systematic investigation, including research development, testing and/or evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to general knowledge; (2) collecting and analyzing of information aimed at discovering new facts and their correct interpretation to draw conclusions, and (3) quantitative and qualitative student activities such as observations, interviews, case studies, ethnographic analysis, analysis of written materials, secondary analysis of data, achievement testing, surveys, experimental designs to examine causal relationships, product testing and analysis of cost and management records.

Student data: includes (1) personally-identifiable student level data, (2) de-identified student level data, and (3) aggregate level student data.

Staff data: includes (1) personally-identifiable staff level data, (2) de-identified staff level data, and (3) aggregate level staff data.

Authorization for Research Projects

Internal Researcher(s) – The Superintendent will approve or deny research requests by staff with notification to the Board.

External Researcher(s) – The Superintendent will approve or deny research requests by outside researcher(s).

The Superintendent may approve the proposed project for a period of one school year or less. To extend any project into a second year, the researcher(s) must again obtain approval.

Data Security Agreement

To receive District-held student or staff data, researcher(s) must sign a Data Security Agreement or other agreement approved by the District that identifies requirements for storage, use, maintenance, protection, dissemination and destruction of data provided hereunder. The Data Security Agreement must be signed by the researcher(s) for each project approved by the Superintendent.

Parent Notification

Approval of parents of students under the age of eighteen or of students eighteen or older is necessary when required by federal or state law or Board policy.

Reference:	RCW 28A.320.110	Authority to contract with information and research services of other public bodies.
	20 U.S.C. § 123h	Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act
	34 C.F.R. 98	Protection of Pupil Rights Act

Approved: August 23, 2011