



OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY
Rochester City School District
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*ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD GUIDELINES*

External Research and Evaluation Projects

The Rochester City School District may allow qualified individuals and/or organizations to conduct research, surveys, and evaluation projects that are aligned with school division goals and objectives and that have the potential for improving teaching and learning, for providing immediate, practical implications for improving educational outcomes for children, and for improving staff and program effectiveness. This provision applies to researchers who are not employed by Rochester City School District and to Rochester City School District employees who are conducting research outside of the scope of their position responsibilities (i.e., as part of the requirements for a course or degree program).

It is important to note that applications received after **March 1st** will be considered for the following school year.

Types of Research Projects

- If your research **does not involve human subjects**, and instead exclusively relies on the use of **non-confidential Rochester City School District data**, you will need to submit a brief scope of work (4 pages maximum) and a list of your data needs electronically to DataResearch@rcsdk12.org .

The scope of work should include:

- A statement of the research objectives and the purpose of the study
- The research hypotheses and methodology
- A timeline that describes key research activities and an estimated completion time
- A statement of the risks and benefits of the research
- A description of how the data will be used and the intended audience(s) for the findings
- A list of specific data needs, separated by school year and grade level
- Justification of how each requested data element is connected to the research objectives

Non-confidential external data requests are reviewed on or about the ***fifteenth of every month*** for approval and prioritization. In order for a request to be reviewed, it must have been received by the deadline. Approval of requests will be based on the completeness of the data request, expected educational value or benefit provided to the Rochester City School District education community as a result of the study, the availability and regulations governing access to data, and the amount of staff time and other Rochester City School District resources required to execute the request. Processing time will vary depending on the complexity of the request and competing priorities. Researchers who have received data from the Rochester City School District are **expected to provide final reports of all research projects back to the Rochester City School District.**

- If your research **does involve human subjects** but **does not require access to confidential student data**, please review the policies below and submit an **External Research Proposal Request Application**
- If your research requires access to **confidential Rochester City School District student data**, please follow the confidentiality requirements of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, and specify the confidential data elements needed for your study in the following application.

Requirements for Conducting Research in Rochester City School District

1. All proposals for conducting research projects must be submitted to the Office of Accountability (email: DataResearch@rcsdk12.org) for review and all applicants must sign a research contract. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that proposals are free from factual, grammatical, spelling, and typographical errors. Proposals containing such errors will not be accepted for review.
2. If studies are submitted to individual schools, other central office or building staff, they should forward the request to The Office of Accountability before any other action is taken. Please notify those who request, of this protocol.
3. The proposed research project must be in the best interest of students and the schools. Research studies that have the potential for misinterpretation or misuse of data or studies requiring invasive physical examinations will not be approved. In all cases, intrusion on student and staff time and disruption of normal routines in classrooms and schools must be minimal.
4. The time of staff and students required by the project must be fully justified by the expected educational benefits to staff and students.
5. Research projects must not be conducted during local or state testing windows.
6. In accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) regulations, personally identifiable information from a student's educational record will not be disclosed without prior parental consent or approval of a confidential data request.
7. Staff members may not be asked to conduct/manage the administration of informed consent for external research projects.
8. Surveys of students which ask students to reveal information concerning the following categories should abide by the requirements of the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) and Rochester City School District Board Policies.
 - a. Political affiliations
 - b. Mental and psychological problems potentially embarrassing to the students, their families, their schools, or the school division
 - c. Sex behavior and attitudes
 - d. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating and demeaning behavior
 - e. Critical appraisals of individuals with whom the students have close family relationships
 - f. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers, etc.
 - g. Income
9. The research project must be approved by the Institutional Review Board of the investigator's own institution. A copy of the approval letter must be submitted before implementation can begin.

10. Pseudonyms must be used for the school division, schools, and any individuals participating in the study in all reports, articles, or presentations about the study or its findings.
11. Results of the research project must be submitted in writing **within 60 days** of the conclusion of the project.
12. The Rochester City School District must be notified **60 days prior** to the publication of any results of, or data from, the research project.

Privacy and confidentiality of data

Applications must meet certain security, data destruction, data dissemination and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provisions, among others. The Office of Accountability will also evaluate the request relative to available resources and render a decision as to whether or not the request can be filled or if the request can be filled in the timeframe requested.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. Parents and students put their trust in the stewards of education data to ensure students' personal information is properly safeguarded and is used for legitimate purposes and only when absolutely necessary. The Office of Accountability deeply values this trust and strives to ensure it is doing all it can do to protect the privacy of our students as the uses of their data to improve education increase.

Procedures for Conducting Research in Rochester City School District

Submission of Proposals

Requests to conduct research in the Rochester City School District must be submitted electronically to the Office of Accountability at DataResearch@rcsdk12.org. Application forms, policies, and procedures may be obtained on the Rochester City School District's website at www.rcsdk12.org

The researcher must submit **1 signed copy** and **1 electronic** copy of the information cover sheet, the signed research contract, the written proposal, and all data collection instruments/interview protocols. **Requests must be submitted at least eight weeks prior to the time the research is expected to begin to allow time for review of the proposal by Accountability staff and other appropriate school system personnel.** Please plan accordingly for your research. The Review Board will review applications on, or about, the 15th of each month.

Review and Decision

The research proposal will be reviewed and evaluated by a research review committee composed of Office of Accountability staff members and appropriate personnel in the administrative and instructional area(s) to which the research relates. If information beyond that submitted in the application is necessary to the review, an interview with the researcher may be requested. The review committee may suggest revisions to the proposal prior to a final decision on its acceptability. Approval will be granted or denied on the basis of the utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy standards of the American Evaluation Association¹ and the following criteria:

- Alignment with the goals and objectives of the Rochester City School District and relevance to the instructional program of the division
- Expected benefits to students, staff, and the division
- Quality of the research
- Resources required of staff, students, and the division

¹ Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation with James R. Sanders, Chair. (1994). *The program evaluation standards* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Following a decision on the proposal, the researcher will be notified by letter. If the project is approved, the letter will specify:

- Procedures to be followed by the researcher to secure permission for actual implementation of the project in specific schools (e.g., school personnel to contact, sources of further assistance, how implementation will be monitored, etc.)
- Special conditions or constraints, if any, which may apply to the project (e.g., requirements for obtaining parental consent, conditions under which students may be interviewed, etc.)

Receipt of data or a report is dependent on a number of factors, such as: 1) staff availability to pull the data; 2) if responses to follow-up questions are needed; 3) complexity of the data request; 4) number of agencies that need to be consulted/become involved; and 5) the negotiation of fees associated with the data pull, if applicable. School Accountability will notify the requestor when the data is ready to be delivered.

Research approval must be obtained prior to any research study with data collection commencing.

Reports and Dissemination

The researcher must submit one copy of the final report for the project within 60 days of completion to the Office of Accountability. Copies should also be provided to principals of the schools in which the study was implemented. The Rochester City School District must be allowed by the researcher to make non-commercial use of the project results for the benefit of the school and district.

External Research Proposal Request Application Information Cover Sheet

Directions: Complete and submit to the address listed on the cover sheet. (NOTE: If you are completing the application electronically, simply “tab” between fields.)

Date of Request _____ School Year: _____

I. Researcher’s Contact Information

Name (Last, First, MI): _____

Mailing Address: _____

No. & Street *City* *State* *Zip*

Telephone Numbers: (Day) () - Ext. (Evening) () - _____

e-mail Address: _____

II. Researcher’s Educational or Business Affiliation

University/College: _____

Academic Department: _____

Location (City & State): _____

Business Organization: _____

Address (No. & Street): _____

City, State, Zip: _____

III. Researcher’s Position (Check all that apply)

Student Faculty Member Other: _____

IV. Proposal Information

Study Title: _____

Is the study part of work for a degree? Yes No

If yes, type of degree: Ph.D. Ed.D. M.A./M.S. Other: _____

The anticipated start date: _____ The anticipated completion date: _____

In what form will you share the results/findings with RCSD? _____

V. Institutional Review Board/Protection of Human Subjects Committee Decision (NOTE: Approval by the IRB/Protection of Human Subjects Committee of your own institution is REQUIRED. Please submit a copy of the IRB approval letter.)

Approved

Pending

Disapproved

Other (Please explain):

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

External Research Proposal Request Application Proposal Description

Directions: Complete the form and submit to the address listed on the cover sheet. (NOTE: If you are completing the application electronically, simply “tab” between fields.)

I. Study Title

II. Statement of the Problem

Type of Study

- Quantitative Qualitative Mixed-Method Survey Research
 Evaluation (Please explain): Other
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Questions to be Answered/Hypotheses to be Tested/Goals of the Study

Variables (List and define variables if applicable)

Background (Summarize relevant theory and relevant research; include references)

Justification for the Study (Explain its importance and describe the intended use of the findings)

Alignment with District’s Initiatives Outlined in District’s Path Forward plan (Explain its alignment with goals and initiatives outlined in the District’s Path Forward plan)

III. Research Method(s)/Design of the Study

Subject Population & Sampling Design (Describe the subject population; identify and justify the criteria for selection; describe the sample and how it is to be selected)

Recruitment Plan (Describe how subjects in the sample will be recruited for participation including ; include a discussion of procedures for obtaining informed consent and attach a copy of the informed consent document)

District School Buildings (Describe the buildings included in participation including; grade levels, staff titles, and other pertinent school info. i.e., School XYZ, 3rd graders and 3rd grade ELA teachers)

Data Collection Plan (Describe the data to be collected for each variable and the procedures, including instruments to be utilized in data collection; supply copies of each instrument that will be used. For qualitative studies, include copies of interview protocols/observation tools)

Data Analysis Plan (Describe the methods to be used in analysis of the data)

Implementation Time Line (Provide a time schedule for implementation of the study)

Benefits (Describe the study’s benefits to the Rochester City School District. Be as specific as possible.)

IV. Data Storage Plans & Plans to Protect Identities of Study Participants (Describe how data will be stored and how participants’ identities will be protected.)

V. Resources Required to Implement the Study

Rochester City School District Personnel (Identify the amount of time which may be required of district staff)

Estimate the total number of teacher work-hours: _____

Estimate the total number of student work-hours: _____

Estimate the total number of administrator work-hours: _____

Personnel (List by name and function all non-RPS personnel who will be implementing the study, e.g., principal investigator, research assistants, etc.)

Facilities (Describe equipment or space, other than regular classroom space, which may be required for the study, e.g., space for interviews, etc.)

VI. Reference List

ROCHESTER CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT

External Research Proposal Request Application Research Contract

In accordance with State and Federal law and Rochester City School District policies, Rochester City School District may only allow disclosure of personally identifiable information from students' educational records to organizations or individuals conducting research and/or may approve requests to conduct research in the school division if the following conditions are met:

1. The research is being conducted either by an educational agency or institution or by an organization on behalf of an educational agency or institution for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, or improving instruction; or the study is to be conducted by the staff of a college, university, or laboratory which is sponsoring or which has otherwise approved the research.
2. The information requested is necessary for the research project or study.
3. The organization and/or researchers have obtained parental consent for the release of personally identifiable information from student educational records.
4. The organization and/or researchers agree that no pupil, parent, staff member, school, or the Rochester City School District will be identified by name or in any other manner, either in the information submitted for research or by any other means.
5. The organization and/or researchers agree that all information, including any personally identifiable information will be destroyed when it is no longer needed for the purpose for which it was collected.

It is hereby agreed that the organization and/or researchers are eligible, under Paragraph 1 above, to conduct the research, and that the further conditions of Paragraphs 2, 3, 4, and 5 will be met.

The organization and/or researcher hereby certify, by execution of this contract, that research staff having direct contact with Rochester City School District students have not been convicted of a felony or any offense involving the sexual molestation or physical or sexual abuse or rape of a child or crime of moral turpitude.

If the conditions of this contract or the attached policy and procedures for conducting research are not met, or are broken at any stage of the project, Rochester City School District reserves the right to deny future access to all its records, personnel, facilities, etc., and to revoke permission for use of all records and data previously obtained. It is further agreed that a copy of the results or completed study will be furnished to the Rochester City School District at the conclusion of the study.

Title of Study

By _____

Organization/Agency/University

Researcher/Investigator (Type or Print Name & Sign)

Date

Advisor/Committee Chair (Type or Print Name & Sign)

- No, student data information is requested
- Yes, student data information is needed

Data Requested: Check data elements requested.

- Aggregate Data Specific Student Data

- Assignments
- Attendance Data
- Demographic
- English Language Learner (ENL) status
- Grade Point Average
- Grades
- IEP Status (student having an Individual Education Plan)
- Interim Results
- Local Exams
- ParentCONNECT (*this provides all academic information*)
- Results from assessments: NYS 3-8 ELA, Science, Regents Exam Scores
- Results from assessments: NWEA MAP(K-8), AIMSweb, or Scholastic Reading
- Student Schedule
- Suspension data
- Transcript
- Other,
please specify: _____

If an MOA/MOU is required, please provide the following:

1. Name of Authorized agent (Who at your company handles any questions pertaining to the MOA) Legal Notice regarding this MOA) _____
2. Title of the Person _____
3. Contract Contact Information: (Who at your company handles any questions pertaining to this MOA)Please include name, telephone number, e-mail address

- Approved
- Not approved, reason _____

	By	
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Date

Dr. Genelle Morris
Deputy Superintendent of
Teaching and Learning

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Date