August 2015

**DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

**RESEARCH AND DATA MANAGEMENT**

**1915 Prospect Road**

**Des Moines, Iowa 50310**

INSTRUCTIONS FOR REQUESTING APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

OR CLASSROOM PROJECTS IN THE DES MOINES PUBLIC SCHOOLS

1. **DEFINITION**

Research activities that are locally or regionally sponsored, involving students and/or school personnel in at least one school require prior written approval. Generally speaking, research activities that are part of state or federal reporting requirements or those that are part of an internal evaluation design for a district program do not require approval.

1. **GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The Des Moines Public Schools receive many requests to provide administrative assistance, instructional time, and school records for external research and projects. So that we may quickly review and determine if the research or project will enhance the goals of education, the following procedures have been established.

Consideration will be given to all research proposals that meet all criteria. The primary responsibility of the school system is education of the students; any cooperation in research is in that context.

1. **PROPOSALS**

All research proposals should do the following:

1. Indicate careful planning in a written proposal including the following:
   1. Title of study
   2. Statement of purpose for which the research is being undertaken
   3. Description of problem; including hypotheses, methodology, and statistical analysis
   4. Specific data required
   5. Schools to be surveyed (if known)
   6. Number of pupils to be surveyed
   7. Number of teachers and other staff members to be surveyed
   8. Dates research will be conducted
   9. Estimated amount of staff and student time required
   10. A plan for protecting human subjects
   11. An outline of procedures you will follow in distribution, administration, and collection of instruments requiring staff or student response
   12. How the research will be used (thesis, advanced degree work, etc.)

2. Enhance education in the Des Moines Public Schools.

3. Respect prevailing value systems and standards of the school and community.

4. Require no serious interruption of the regular school program. Advance planning with involved building principals is required.

5. Avoid unreasonable demands on students and/or school personnel.

6. Avoid conflicts with scheduled school events, and with the opening and closing activities of school.

7. Treat information concerning pupils and staff personnel in strictest confidence. If collecting personally identifiable information, a plan for de-identifying data must be included.

8. Require only voluntary participation.

9. Require no expense to the Des Moines Public Schools beyond discretionary use of staff or pupil time.

10. Conducted by (or under the supervision of) personnel with adequate background to conduct sound research as deemed by the Des Moines Public Schools Research and Data Management Department.

1. **PROCEDUES FOR SUBMITTING PROPOSALS**

Forms for submitting proposed studies may be secured from:

David Roney, Program Evaluator

Des Moines Public Schools

1915 Prospect Road

Des Moines IA 50310

The following items must be included:

1. A copy of all instruments to be used in the study; the proposal will not be reviewed without these.
2. An outline of the procedures that will be followed in distribution, administration and return of any materials such as a student questionnaire. This is the sole responsibility of the researcher.
3. Copies of all contact letters, consent forms, and Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval forms (if applicable). IRB forms must be submitted prior to initiation of the study.
4. Any letters of endorsement from district administration.
5. Curriculum vitas/resumes of all research personnel with current contact information (research proposals only).
6. The signature of the researcher indicates agreement with and understanding of the established conditions.
7. **PROCEDURES FOR REVIEW, NOTIFICATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION**

The Superintendent has delegated the responsibility of research control in the Des Moines Public Schools to specified members of the administrative staff. The procedures for reviewing proposals to conduct research or classroom projects, method of notification, and procedures for implementation are as follows:

1. Designated staff in the Research and Data Management Department approve or disapprove all proposals. The Associate Superintendents or Executive Directors will be consulted as appropriate.
2. The applicant will receive written notification of the approval or disapproval of the request.
3. Upon approval, the researcher is responsible for contacting district personnel to schedule time with involved participants. Contact should be accompanied by a copy of the written authorization.
4. Within one year of the completion of data collection,
   1. Applicants will provide an abstract of findings to the Des Moines Public School Research and Data Management Department and one copy of the abstract to each principal of the building(s) where the project was carried out. This abstract may be posted to the Des Moines Schools website.
5. **FOR PROPOSALS NOT APPROVED, ALTERNATIVE COURSES OF ACTION**

1. Changes in design or procedures as specified and resubmit.

2. Written request or personal interview for more information about the proposed project.

3. Approval of the request, subject to specified conditions and limitations.

4. No alternative course of action. If this is the case, a letter will so indicate.

**Written authorization to pursue a research project in the Des Moines Public Schools must be received before the project begins.**