

Randolph County School System Request for Proposals (RFP) Procedures

The Randolph County School System's Research Review Committee is charged with maintaining a record of research conducted within the Randolph County School System and providing details of the research to district personnel. Individuals or institutions interested in conducting research in the Randolph County School System must submit a written proposal in compliance with the following procedure.

The Research Review Committee will review all proposals. Approval for implementation of the research project will be based on its relevance, quality, and merit, as well as whether or not the research and methodology are in the best interest of the Randolph County School System's students, staff, and community. All research must meet the standards for evaluation as established by the **Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation** (See Appendix). Inquiries regarding these standards must be directed to the Office of Testing and Accountability.

Research requiring approval

A research program that involves the collection of data from students, teachers, and administrators, through processes such as the examination and/or collection of information from files, records, direct observation, focus groups, or individual interviews, must submit a research proposal to the Research Review Committee. Examination and/or collection of information from students or teacher files will be governed by the regulations set forth in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1997), Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act, and applicable Randolph County School System policies and procedures.

If a Randolph County School System employee or intern seeks to conduct a research study involving students or teachers to fulfill the requirements for a dissertation, thesis, or university course, a proposal must be submitted in compliance with this procedure.

Research not requiring approval

Studies conducted by employees as part of their normal job responsibilities are exempt from this review process. Studies conducted by outside agencies contracted by the Randolph County School System to assess the district's needs or programs also are exempt from this review process.

Studies conducted by an institution that examine the effects of that institution's program within the Randolph County School System do not require approval through this process, except when information from student or teacher files is required and this information was not requested in the original program proposal. In this case, the institution is required to notify the Research Review Committee of its actions.

Research exempted from the requirements of the review process are still subject to applicable federal laws, state laws, and North Carolina Public School Laws as well as other relevant Randolph County Board of Education policies and procedures. The research project also must comply with ethical standards for research in education

Requirements for Presentation of A Research Proposal

The researcher(s) must provide the following documentation:

- A cover letter signed by the principal researcher(s) providing information on the research title, principal researcher(s), and contact details.
- A title page that provides the name of the project, the principal researcher(s), institutional affiliations of the principal researcher(s), and the date of preparation.
- An abstract of no more than 200 words which summarizes the research rationale, the proposed participants, and the potential for providing information to the educational community.
- A Research Application Summary Form (Form A) that describes pertinent facts, information, and procedures about the research project. This completed form must be presented to participants and parents/guardians of minor-age students when they are asked to give consent for student participation.
- A research proposal that presents the following information:

1. The Purpose of the Research (maximum of 3 pages):

This section must describe the motivation and rationale for the study. An in-depth literature review is NOT required. The section also must include a statement of the potential value of the study to the Randolph County School System and education in general.

2. Description of the Study:

This section must identify the participants in the research program. The researcher(s) must specify the number, grade level, and characteristics of the participants and/or schools to be involved. If students, teachers, or administrators are to be assessed in any manner (e.g., tested, interviewed, or surveyed), the process and the length of the process must be described. Descriptions of the sampling and the participant selection processes must be included. A description of the interventions, data collection analysis procedures, and methods to protect participants from risk / invasion of privacy to be used in the study also must be provided.

3. Requirements for conducting the research:

The researcher(s) must describe the amount of teacher, student, and administrator time needed as well as the physical resources required, such as classrooms and access to special facilities. If students and teachers are involved, the potential for classroom disruption must be detailed.

4. Instrumentation and other documents:

Information about any instruments, observation schedules, letters, or other documents to be used in the research must be provided to the Research Review Committee. If the instrumentation to be used is commercially available or has been reviewed and referenced in material such as The Buros Mental Measurement Yearbook, the researcher need only describe the instrument to be used and indicate the

reference information. If the instruments are peculiar to the research program or have not been referenced above, the researcher(s) must attach copies of the actual instruments.

The researcher(s) must present details for all instruments specifying the age/grade appropriateness and time required as well as the reliability and validity of the instrument if that information is available.

5. Consent Forms:

Written consent must be obtained from active student participants over the age of 18 (Form C) or from parents/ guardians of minor-age student participants (Form B) for studies involving identified students or access to student records. Where age-appropriate and task-appropriate, the individual student's written consent also is required, even for minors. No forms are required for studies involving observation of unidentifiable students engaged in normal school activities.

District personnel, including teachers who participate in the research, also must give their consent. All prospective participants must be given adequate information that allows them to make informed decisions regarding participation in a proposed research project. Consent must be provided in written form for studies that involve identified personnel or access to personnel records.

Consent letters must include the following:

- The purpose of the research.
- The procedure and criteria for selecting the participant(s).
- The procedure to be followed, including a description of the participant's involvement.
- Anticipated benefits for general educational knowledge.
- Possible physical, legal, psychological, or other risks.
- Whether the participants will be personally identifiable, and to whom.
- To whom results will be available, and for what purposes.
- The person to whom inquiries must be addressed before, during, and after the project.
- That the school district is not conducting or sponsoring the research project.

The following information **MUST** be presented in writing to all research participants:

- The participant's right to withdraw consent at any time.
- The parent's or guardian's right to withdraw consent at any time.
- There will be no adverse consequences for students or parents (or guardians) for not participating in the study.

Other notes about Informed Consent

Please note that when informing students, parents, and teachers of the purpose(s) of the research, the written and oral language used must be clear, concise, and age- appropriate.

In cases where informed consent may negatively impact the results of any research program, the researcher(s) must submit a detailed rationale explaining why the requirement for informed consent must be waived.

If the researcher is affiliated with an institution (e.g., university) that maintains a Human Subjects Review Committee, that committee, before the research can be started in the Randolph County School System, must approve the proposed research.

1. Timeline:

The timeline must outline project dates for implementation and reporting of preliminary and/or final results to the Randolph County School System and participants.

2. Researcher(s) Background Information:

The principal researcher(s) must provide information that describes the background and qualifications, such as a resume' or curriculum vita, which must include a statement of related research along with the researcher's course work and experience. Background information on others assisting with data collection also must be included. In addition, contact information must be provided including the addresses and telephone numbers of the researcher(s) during the project.

3. Other Information:

The researcher(s) must present any other information they believe to be relevant to the review process. This must include details such as the amount of reimbursement to be paid (if any) to participants, or approval by any other research review committee (e.g., Human Subjects Review Committees or a granting body).

Review of Proposals

The Assistant Superintendent responsible for Curriculum and Instruction appoints the Research Review Committee Chair. The Chair selects a Research Review Committee that reflects the nature of the proposal being reviewed. Meetings are scheduled at the discretion of the committee Chair. The committee will make every effort to review and respond to each research proposal within one week (five business days) of receipt. If difficulties arise, the principal researcher(s) will be notified of the extension within one week.

The Research Review Committee will review each proposal using the general guidelines and criteria developed by the committee. The proposal shall be accepted or rejected by a majority vote of the committee. Any committee member may request, through the Chair, that the researcher(s) meet with the committee to discuss or provide additional information regarding the proposal. The researcher(s) also may request, through the Chair, a meeting with the committee to clarify or provide additional explanation regarding the proposal.

Implementation of Research

Committee approval does not constitute an establishment of a joint research program between the researcher(s) and the Randolph County School System. Committee approval only provides permission to access the schools, students, and personnel within the Randolph County School System.

Committee approval does not guarantee that a study can or will be conducted. If the proposal is approved, the Research Review Committee will notify the researcher. It is the researcher's responsibility to contact the particular schools or personnel that will be asked for cooperation in conducting the research. School principals have the final decision regarding the participation of a school in any research program.

Feedback to the Randolph County School System and Participants

To strengthen the relationship between schools and the research community, the researcher must provide opportunities for direct presentations to parents, teachers, and administrators of participating schools. Such presentations are a matter for consultation between the school(s) and the researcher(s). This may include live presentations or videos about the research project and results.

Participants must have access to tangible and easily assimilated materials describing the project findings, the implications for education, and the benefit(s) to the students and school(s).

A final report of the results must be submitted to the Research Review Committee and the principals of the schools involved. The Research Review Committee will be responsible for disseminating summaries of the research results to committee members and other appropriate school district personnel.

The Research Review Committee will keep a copy of all research proposals and final research reports on file. At the end of the school year a list of research studies undertaken for the year will be given to the Assistant Superintendent responsible for Curriculum and Instruction.

Publication of Results

The findings of the study must be shared with the Chair of the Research Review Committee before being released for publication, public access, or to the news media. If the Randolph County School System will be in any way identified in released oral or written findings (e.g., research paper, conference presentation, or newspaper report), the researcher(s) must obtain permission from the Randolph County School System for such identification.

The Research Review Committee also must be provided any documentation (written or otherwise) for review prior to release to protect the rights, image, concerns, and integrity of the Randolph County School System.

Inquiries

All communications regarding research in the Randolph County School System must be addressed to:

Research Review Committee, Chairperson
Office of Testing and Accountability
Randolph County School System
2222-C S. Fayetteville Street
Asheboro, NC 27205
Telephone: (336) 318-6044
Fax: (336) 318-6126

RANDOLPH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM

RESEARCH APPLICATION SUMMARY FORM A

Project Name _____

Sponsoring Organization(s) _____

Timeline: Beginning Date _____ Completion Date _____

Purpose of Research _____

Procedure/Methodology _____

Number of Participants _____

Type of Participants _____

Role/Expectations of Randolph County School System _____

Intended Use of Outcomes/Results _____

**RANDOLPH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
GUARDIAN/PARENT RESEARCH CONSENT FORM B**

To be completed by the parent/legal guardian and school-aged participant under 18 years.

Project Name _____

Sponsoring Organization _____

Principal Researcher (s) _____ Telephone _____

Project Location (s) _____

Student's Name _____

Home Address _____ Telephone _____

Student's School _____ Grade _____ Age _____

Participants/Parental Rights and Assurances

I have received a copy of the approved Randolph County School System Research Application Summary Form for the aforementioned research project. Having read the application, I am familiar with the purpose, methods, scope, and intent of the research project.

I am willing/not willing (circle choice) for my child to participate in the research project.

I understand that during the course of this project my child's responses will be kept strictly confidential and that none of the data released in this study will identify my child by name or any other identifiable data, descriptions, or characterizations. Furthermore I understand that my child may discontinue his/her participation in this project at any time or refuse to respond to any questions to which he/she chooses not to answer. My child is a voluntary participant and has no liability or responsibility for the implementation, methodology, claims, substance, or outcomes resulting from this research project. I also am aware that my child's decision not to participate will not result in any adverse consequences or disparate treatment due to him/her.

I fully understand that this research is being conducted for constructive educational purposes and that my signature gives consent for my child to voluntarily participate in this project.

Student's Signature _____ Date _____

(required if age and task appropriate)

Parent's Signature _____ Date _____

RANDOLPH COUNTY SCHOOL SYSTEM
RESEARCH CONSENT FORM C
(NON-STUDENTS AND STUDENTS 18 AND OVER)

To be completed by non-student participant or student participant aged 18 years and above.

Project Name _____

Sponsoring Organization _____

Principal

Researcher _____ Telephone _____

Project Location (s) _____

Participant's Name _____ Position _____

Home Address _____ Telephone _____

Participants Rights and Assurances

I have received a copy of the approved Randolph County School System Research Application Summary Form for the aforementioned research project. Having thoroughly read and reviewed the application, I am familiar with the purpose, methods, scope, and intent of the research project.

I am willing/not willing (circle choice) to participate in the research project.

I understand that during the course of this project my responses will be kept strictly confidential and that none of the data released in this study will identify me by name or any other identifiable data, descriptions, or characterizations. Furthermore, I understand that I may discontinue my participation in this project at any time to refuse to respond to any questions to which I choose not to respond. I am a voluntary participant and have no liability or responsibility for the implementation, methodology, claims, substance, or outcomes resulting from this research project. I also am aware that my decision to not participate will not result in any adverse consequences or disparate treatment towards me.

I fully understand that this research is being conducted for constructive educational purposes and that my signature gives my consent to voluntarily participate in this project.

Participant's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix

The Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation, Program Evaluation Standards

(Second-edition)

Utility Standards

The utility standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will serve the information needs of intended users.

U1 Stakeholder Identification Persons involved in or affected by the evaluation should be identified, so that their needs can be addressed.

U2 Evaluator Credibility The persons conducting the evaluation should be both trustworthy and competent to perform the evaluation, so that the evaluation findings achieve maximum credibility and acceptance.

U3 Information Scope and Selection Information collected should be broadly selected to address pertinent questions about the program and be responsive to the needs and interests of clients and other specified stakeholders

U4 Values Identification The perspectives, procedures, and rationale used to interpret the findings should be carefully described, so that the bases for value judgments are clear.

U5 Report Clarity Evaluation reports should clearly describe the program being evaluated, including its context, and the purposes, procedures, and findings of the evaluation, so that essential information is provided and easily understood.

U6 Report Timeliness and Dissemination Significant interim findings and evaluation reports should be disseminated to intended users, so that they can be used in a timely fashion.

U7 Evaluation Impact Evaluations should be planned, conducted, and reported in ways that encourage follow-through by stakeholders, so that the likelihood that the evaluation will be used is increased.

Feasibility Standards

The feasibility standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will be realistic, prudent, diplomatic, and frugal.

F1 Practical Procedures The evaluation procedures should be practical; to keep disruption to a minimum while needed information is obtained.

F2 Political Viability The evaluation should be planned and conducted with anticipation of the different positions of various interest groups, so that their cooperation may be obtained, and so that possible

attempts by any of these groups to curtail evaluation operations or to bias or misapply the results can be averted or counteracted.

F3 Cost Effectiveness The evaluation should be efficient and produce information of sufficient value, so that the resources expended can be justified.

Propriety Standards

The propriety standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will be conducted legally, ethically, and with due regard for the welfare of those involved in the evaluation, as well as those affected by its results.

P1 Service Orientation Evaluations should be designed to assist organizations to address and effectively serve the needs of the full range of targeted participants.

P2 Formal Agreements Obligations of the formal parties to an evaluation (what is to be done, how, by whom, when) should be agreed to in writing, so that these parties are obligated to adhere to all conditions of the agreement or formally to renegotiate it.

P3 Rights of Human Subjects Evaluations should be designed and conducted to respect and protect the rights and welfare of human subjects.

P4 Human Interactions Evaluators should respect human dignity and worth in their interactions with other persons associated with an evaluation, so that participants are not threatened or harmed.

P5 Complete and Fair Assessment The evaluation should be complete and fair in its examination and recording of strengths and weaknesses of the program being evaluated, so that strengths can be built upon and problem areas addressed.

P6 Disclosure of Findings The formal parties to an evaluation should ensure that the full set of evaluation findings along with pertinent limitations are made accessible to the persons affected by the evaluation and any others with expressed legal rights to receive the results.

P7 Conflict of Interest Conflict of interest should be dealt with openly and honestly, so that it does not compromise the evaluation processes and results.

P8 Fiscal Responsibility The evaluator's allocation and expenditure of resources should reflect sound accountability procedures and otherwise be prudent and ethically responsible, so that expenditures are accounted for and appropriate.

Accuracy Standards

The accuracy standards are intended to ensure that an evaluation will reveal and convey technically adequate information about the features that determine worth or merit of the program being evaluated.

A1 Program Documentation The program being evaluated should be described and documented clearly and accurately, so that the program is clearly identified.

A2 Context Analysis The context in which the program exists should be examined in enough detail, so that its likely influences on the program can be identified.

A3 Described Purposes and Procedures The purposes and procedures of the evaluation should be monitored and described in enough detail, so that they can be identified and assessed.

A4 Defensible Information Sources The sources of information used in a program evaluation should be described in enough detail, so that the adequacy of the information can be assessed.

A5 Valid Information The information-gathering procedures should be chosen or developed and then implemented so that they will assure that the interpretation arrived at is valid for the intended use.

A6 Reliable Information The information-gathering procedures should be chosen or developed and then implemented so that they will assure that the information obtained is sufficiently reliable for the intended use.

A7 Systematic Information The information collected, processed, and reported in an evaluation should be systematically reviewed, and any errors found should be corrected.

A8 Analysis of Quantitative Information Quantitative information in an evaluation should be appropriately and systematically analyzed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered.

A9 Analysis of Qualitative Information Qualitative information in an evaluation should be appropriately and systematically analyzed so that evaluation questions are effectively answered.

A10 Justified Conclusions The conclusions reached in an evaluation should be explicitly justified, so that stakeholders can assess them.

A11 Impartial Reporting Reporting procedures should guard against distortion caused by personal feelings and biases of any party to the evaluation, so that evaluation reports fairly reflect the evaluation findings.

A12 Metaevaluation The evaluation itself should be formatively and summatively evaluated against these and other pertinent standards, so that its conduct is appropriately guided and, on completion, stakeholders can closely examine its strengths and weaknesses