

Denver Public Schools
External Research Request Handbook:
Procedures and Application



Department of Planning & Innovation

2007-2008

Denver Public Schools
Department of Planning & Innovation
Procedures for Requests to Conduct Research
In the Denver Public Schools

Please return forms to:

Joshua Ikemire – DPS Planning & Analysis– 900 Grant Street – Suite 402 – Denver, CO 80203;
or via e-mail: Joshua_Ikemire@dpsk12.org

Introduction

The Denver Public Schools, District No. 1, fulfills an important and responsible role in public education in Colorado. The district, therefore, should lead the way in encouraging valid and meaningful research whenever possible. The first responsibility of the district is the education of children in Denver, and any cooperation with research must occur within the context of this primary obligation.

The Denver Public Schools is supportive of research projects and pilot programs conducted in the district. These projects may include any systematic study of present practices or proposed improvements, must be designed soundly, and must be consistent with the overall philosophy and policies of the school district. The aim of the procedures that have been developed for research requests is to maintain an open attitude toward cooperative research, while, at the same time, ensuring that it will not interfere with instruction and the efficient operation of the school district.

Improvement of educational practices includes (1) the assessment of current operational procedures in relation to predetermined objectives, (2) the making of informed decisions concerning possible modifications of the practices, and (3) the encouragement of staff members to become informed of recent instructional developments. Therefore, the Denver Public Schools recognizes a responsibility for initiating or participating in research activities to carry out these tasks.

Principals and other staff members of the Denver Public Schools receive requests from teachers or from persons outside the school district for cooperation in many research projects. Such requests come from foundations, universities, governmental agencies, graduate students, and interested citizens.

General Policies

The Denver Public Schools Policy Handbook, Policy No. 2001C, applies to conducting studies to improve instruction. In attempting to implement this policy, guidelines for conducting research projects and pilot programs are as follows:

1. The study must have the potential for making a definite contribution to the educational profession in general and/or to the programs of the Denver Public Schools in particular.
2. The study must be pedagogically sound. Also, it must be feasible to carry out in terms of the amount of time involved, the numbers of teachers and students participating, and the possible expense to the district. It must not impose undue burdens upon students or staff.
3. There must be a reasonable certainty that no child in the Denver Public Schools will suffer educationally as a result of the research.
4. The overall design of the study must be sound and have the potential for successful completion.

The policies and guidelines are not intended to discourage the development of creative projects, but are set forth to ensure the greatest benefit from the time and resources expended.

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Administration

The administration of research programs in the Denver Public Schools is the responsibility of the Department of Planning & Innovation. The responsibilities of this area include: stimulation of new proposals, supervision of projects until they are fully operational in the district, coordination among the various projects, and the dissemination of research findings to staff members. Personnel in this area will seek approval, advice, and assistance from the assistant superintendents of the divisions involved, as well as executive directors, and directors.

Procedures

There are two general categories of research projects or pilot programs. These include studies being conducted by

1. An individual or group not part of the staff of the school district, and
2. A staff member of the school district.

In both cases, the procedures to be followed by an individual or group are described in the sections below.

I. Preparation

In preparing a proposal for a research project in the Denver Public Schools, the following topics are to be fully addressed:

1. The idea for improvement or solution to a problem situation should be stated clearly.
2. Additional information relating to the proposed project should be reviewed.
3. The feasibility and value of the project to education and /or the school district should be examined carefully.
 - **Staff Members** should confer with their building principal and the subject prior to submission of the proposal.
 - **Researchers from outside of the district** must receive written approval through the Department of Planning & Innovation to explore the feasibility or the value of the proposed study before contacting district personnel.
 - **Graduate Students** must have written approval of their supervising professor and department chairman.
4. The proposal to be submitted to the Department of Planning & Innovation must include:
 - A statement of the problem and its importance.
 - A statement of the hypotheses to be investigated.
 - The procedures to be followed in conducting the study (time needed, number of students, grade levels, procedure for notifying parents, procedure for selecting the sample, etc.).
 - Copies of all instruments to be administered, including a copy of the parental (or other) consent form, if appropriate.

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- The method to be used for analyzing or evaluating the results.
 - The cost to Denver Public Schools.
 - A statement of the potential value of the study to the instructional program of the district.
5. In addition to the proposal, a brief summary statement (no more than three pages in length) should be submitted describing the
- **rationale** for the study.
 - **procedures** the researcher plans to use.
 - **numbers** (by grade level, gender, etc.) of students or staff needed.
 - **brief description** of the method(s) to be used to analyze the results.

Please note: This statement is necessary so that persons unfamiliar with the research will be able to understand, in a short time, what the researcher is proposing to do.

II. Submission

After the proposal has been prepared, the following steps should be followed:

1. The form, **Request to Conduct Research**, must be completed.
2. The proposal and the brief summary statement should be attached and submitted to the Department of Planning & Innovation. All requests must be submitted at least one month in advance of the date that research is to begin and must allow ample time for conducting the study.

Please note: No research may be started during the last month of the school year, by ruling of the Board of Education.

3. Each proposal will then be reviewed by the staff of the Department of Planning & Innovation and submitted for action to the appropriate administrative staff. The final decision concerning any proposal will be one of the following:
 - Conditional approval of the request as submitted (and referral for Board of Education action where appropriate). Final approval for a study to be conducted in a school is with the principal of the building.
 - Conditional approval of the request, with inadequacies identified; permission for the study to be conducted may result if these are corrected.
 - Rejection of the request.

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III. Processing

After the proposal has been approved, the researcher must comply with the following:

1. The procedure must be carried out according to the original proposal, as approved.
2. Any major deviation from the approved proposal must have prior clearance.

IV. Conclusion

Once the study has been conducted, the researcher must submit a report of the findings to the Department of Planning & Innovation for distribution to the appropriate departments.

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**Denver Public Schools
Department of Planning & Innovation
Request to Conduct Research: Application**

Date _____

I. Background

Title of the Study _____

Name of Researcher _____ Phone (work) _____

Street address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail address: _____

Agency or Institution Sponsoring Study _____

Signatures:

Principal Investigator Recommending Study (if different than above)

Signature of Department Chairman (if applicable)

DPS Employee: YES NO If YES, School or Department _____

II. Description

Please ensure that your full proposal includes the following, in addition to that specified in the *Procedures* document:

- Nature of the Study—attach abstract of research proposal or brief description.
- Procedures—attach abstract of research proposal or brief description.
- Analysis of Results—attach brief description of techniques to be used.

III. Study Commitments and Timelines

Please provide estimates for the following:

- Total subject counts and time required Students _____ Teachers _____ Other (specify) _____
- Cost to the Denver Public Schools _____
- Date for the beginning of district involvement _____
- Date of conclusion for district involvement _____
- Date that data and study results are delivered to district _____

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IV. Agreement

If granted permission to conduct this research in the Denver Public Schools, District No. 1, I agree to the following conditions:

1. Persons and places used in the study will remain anonymous except by prior approval.
2. A report of the findings will be provided to the district at the conclusion of the study.
3. Release of the results to the district shall be through Planning & Innovation.
4. Before any modification of the approved plan is made, it must be submitted and approved.

Signature of Research Applicant

Please send all application materials to:

Joshua Ikemire
Planning & Analysis
Denver Public Schools
900 Grant Street, Room 402
Denver, Colorado 80203

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