

Administrative Directive Title: Guidelines for Requests to Conduct Research	AD Number: 4.503.1	Adopted: September 2007 Former Descriptors: BO9
Policy References: Board Policy 4.503 - Relations with Education Research and Service Centers	Revised: 12/10; 2/11; 7/14; 9/18; 7/19	

1 Murfreesboro City Schools recognizes the value of educational research to further the district’s
 2 mission and vision. Each proposed research request is reviewed according to district policy,
 3 sponsoring university protocol, and federal guidelines for the protection of human subjects.
 4 Educational research that is deemed beneficial for the district’s students, staff, and/or educational
 5 program may be approved to be conducted.

6 **REVIEW PROCESS**

7 Research requests are carefully considered based on the researcher's expectations of resources
 8 from the district, the intended target population(s), the potential risks and benefits to the district,
 9 and the degree of intrusiveness into the instructional program. Under no circumstances will the
 10 district allow research to be conducted that is for personal or for-profit use. Preference and priority
 11 will be given to school district employees seeking to complete research projects within the school
 12 district.

13 Any study that involves data collection through observation, interviews, surveys, tests, etc., from
 14 students and/or employees within Murfreesboro City Schools is defined as "research" and is
 15 subject to this approval process. This also includes any research conducted at any Murfreesboro
 16 City Schools facility or school campus.

17 The Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction shall screen all requests to conduct
 18 research studies in schools. Before any research is conducted, the following information must be
 19 submitted to Sheri Arnette at sheri.arnette@cityschools.net:

- 20 1. An abstract of the research, including the process by which data will be obtained;
- 21 2. A sample of any questionnaire used in the research, if applicable;
- 22 3. A sample of any survey used in the research, if applicable;
- 23 4. A sample parent consent form, if applicable; and,
- 24 5. Signed approval forms from the sponsoring university, including IRB approval, if
 25 applicable.

26 After reviewing the request, the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and instruction or
 27 designee will notify the applicant in writing of the district’s decision to approve or reject the
 28 proposal. If a project is approved, the applicant will be provided with an approval letter. This
 29 approval letter will constitute authorization for the applicant to conduct the research study,
 30 but does not obligate a school, department, or office to participate. Applicants will be required to
 31 sign a statement of confidentiality related to any data collected prior to conducting research.

32 The district reserves the right to rescind approval. Should this occur, notification will be provided
 33 in writing of the decision to rescind approval.

34 **CONDITIONS FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING STUDENTS**

35 Any surveys, analyses, and/or evaluations that are disseminated to students must comply with the
36 requirements of Board Policy 6.4001.

37 Explicit parental consent will be required in all studies which require researcher contact with
38 students. This document should include a statement that informs potential participants that their
39 engagement in the study is completely voluntary, and that they may choose to withdraw their
40 participation at any time.

41 Strict confidentiality must be maintained to protect all participants involved. No identifying
42 characteristics will be provided in any data request, nor can they be included in any report or paper
43 produced as a result of completion of any approved research study.

44 Any person involved in any research project which involves admission to any school, and/or
45 contact with any student, must successfully complete the district's volunteer screening procedures.

46 No action may be taken in any school without the approval of the principal.

47 **ACCESS TO DATA**

48 State and district websites provide access to a large array of district, school, staff and student data.
49 To reduce the burden on the district, data that is published and available on State and district
50 websites should be obtained directly from those sources and not requested of the school and/or
51 district.

52 Non-published data or individual student data/records requested as part of the research must be
53 clearly specified. If the research requires that the district compile or generate data specific to the
54 study, the applicant must submit a detailed description of the data sets requested, specifying
55 variables and the data elements needed. If the data or data files requested are not routinely
56 produced or published by the school/district, the requestor may be asked to pay for costs associated
57 with the additional work necessary to analyze, compile and produce the data.

58 The researcher's request for special analysis or file creation may be denied if the timeline or staff
59 resource requirements interfere with the department's schedule of work.



Statement of Confidentiality and Compliance with Board Policies and Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

As a condition for engaging in research within Murfreesboro City Schools, I understand and acknowledge the importance of protecting the privacy and confidentiality of student education records, as required by applicable Board policies and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), including but not limited to 34 CFR §99.31(a)(6).

By signing below, I agree to the following:

Compliance with Board Policies and Procedures: I affirm that I have reviewed and understand the applicable Murfreesboro City Schools Board of Education policies and procedures related to confidentiality, data security, and student privacy. I agree to comply fully with these policies and procedures as they pertain to my research activities within the school district.

Adherence to FERPA Requirements: I commit to adhering to all FERPA requirements concerning the access, handling, and use of student education records. I understand that I am permitted to access personally identifiable information (PII) from education records only as specifically authorized for my research and as allowable under 34 CFR §99.31(a)(6).

Limitation of Use and Disclosure: I agree to use student education records and PII solely for the purposes of my approved research and in a manner that ensures these records and information remain confidential. I will not disclose or share PII from education records with unauthorized individuals or entities.

Data Security and Privacy: I understand that I am responsible for maintaining the confidentiality and security of all education records and PII in my possession. I will take appropriate measures to prevent unauthorized access to or disclosure of any such information.

Reporting of Breaches: I agree to promptly report any unauthorized disclosure, loss, or breach of confidential information to the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction.

I understand that failure to comply with these confidentiality requirements may result in termination of my research privileges and may also have legal consequences.

Researcher Name: _____ E-mail: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____