Research Request Guide

Thank you for your interest in requesting an opportunity to conduct research in Orange County Public Schools (OCPS). This guide is meant to help you through the research request process and give you an idea of how you should communicate with OCPS throughout the process.

1. Before Submitting a Research Request

OCPS is committed to approving research with a clear, direct benefit for the district. We are also committed to ensuring that all research is of high-quality, all appropriate measures are taken to ensure the safety of participants, all appropriate measures are taken to ensure the confidentiality of participants and that participants are able to meet the demands of their responsibilities while participating in a research request. Before initiating a research request, think carefully about the following:

1. Does my research have a clear, direct benefit for the district? How can I explain this?

2. What have I done to ensure that my research questions, research methods and any instruments used to gather data are of high quality?

3. Do I have a clear plan that meets stringent guidelines to keep all data secure?

4. Am I able to receive security clearance and be fingerprinted if access to a school site is applicable to my project?

5. Does my research respect the responsibilities and roles of all participants (e.g. students, teachers, administrators) and not place undue burdens on their time and focus?

6. Is my project timeline appropriate? Will I be able to wait until the appropriate monthly review of requests and have sufficient time to secure participation by school sites, if needed? Do I have a contingency plan if one or more school sites are unable to participate for any reason?

7. Does my research timeline take into account holidays, testing calendars (particularly FCAT 2.0 testing in April), and other seasonal demands on schools?

If you are able to answer these questions comprehensively, you are ready to begin gathering the materials needed to submit a research request.
2. Gathering Information for a Research Request

Before you begin to fill out a Research Request Form, you should gather materials you will need to complete the form. These materials include:

1. Institutional Review Board approval from your institutional affiliation (if applicable).
2. An approved proposal, grant or research project document.
3. Completed survey and/or interview instruments, when applicable, including any information on the reliability and validity of the instruments.
4. Contact information for your advisor or project director.

If you do not have these materials, please gather them before completing the Research Request Form. You will find this information critical to submitting the form correctly. We are unable to approve incomplete applications. The materials above must be submitted with your application in order to consider your research request for approval.

3. Filling Out the Research Request Form

This section will guide you through entering the information at each stage of the Research Request Form. Please note that research requests will receive district review on the last full week of every month. For your research request to be considered for the monthly decision process, your completed form with all additional attachments must be submitted by the 15th of the month. The decision on approval of the request will be communicated to requesters on the first Wednesday of every month. Any deviation from the response date due to project complexity or additional support needed to make a final decision will be communicated to the requester as soon as possible.

For the 2013 – 2014 school year, these dates are:

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<tr>
<th>Submission Deadline</th>
<th>Evaluation Week</th>
<th>Response Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>September 15, 2013</td>
<td>Week of September 23</td>
<td>October 2, 2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 15, 2013</td>
<td>Week of October 21</td>
<td>November 6, 2013</td>
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<td>November 15, 2013</td>
<td>Week of November 18</td>
<td>December 4, 2013</td>
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All monthly submissions in December will be added to the January submission cycle.

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<tr>
<th>Submission Deadline</th>
<th>Evaluation Week</th>
<th>Response Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 15, 2014</td>
<td>Week of January 27</td>
<td>February 5, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 15, 2014</td>
<td>Week of February 24</td>
<td>March 5, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 15, 2014</td>
<td>Week of March 24</td>
<td>April 2, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 15, 2014</td>
<td>Week of April 21</td>
<td>May 7, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>May 15, 2014</td>
<td>Week of May 19</td>
<td>June 4, 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>July 2, 2014</td>
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All monthly submissions in July will be added to the August submission cycle.

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<th>Submission Deadline</th>
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<th>Response Date</th>
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Revised 9.30.13
General Information

This section of the form requests background information on the requester and institutional support. Please carefully check contact information so that OCPS can reach you if needed as quickly as possible.

Degree Program

If you are completing this form to complete the requirements of a degree program OR you are requesting data while completing a degree program, check the appropriate box. Please note that research requests will not be approved for papers or research for normal work over the course of a degree program, such as course papers or non-thesis projects.

Direct Contact with OCPS Students and/or Personnel

If your research involves any visits to a school site, visits to the district office or any direct contact with OCPS personnel or students, you must specify this contact in detail. Your Research Request Form provides the strict parameters under which your research will be conducted. You must describe in detail the number and type of participants needed, the amount of time each participant will be needed and how you will gather data from the participant.

- The number of participants needed will be a count of the total number of persons you intend to sample or receive research participation. For some projects, your sampling design will set the guidelines for the maximum number of participants. For other projects, a target number of interviews or classrooms may be relevant. This information must be described in detail.

- The type of participants must be described in detail. If data will be collected from students, you must specify the grade levels, background characteristics desired or any other relevant information that will be used to determine eligibility for participation. The same detailed information is needed for data to be collected from instructional personnel or administrators. Specifically identify classes of personnel (e.g. guidance counselors, school psychologists) whenever applicable.

- The time required for participation should be specified in detail. The time required must include the frequency of contact and whether or not partial participation will satisfy the needs of the project.

- Provide the methods that will be used to gather data from participants. The information presented about your methods in this section should be a brief description of how this research will be implemented on a school site.

- Describe how you will collect and store data to protect the privacy and confidentiality of participants. You must also describe how individuals will have the ability to see and edit (if desired) material collected from interviews, focus groups or other similar data collection processes. All relevant consent and assent forms should be described in this section.

- You must have a completed consent forms for all participants in your project. Teachers, administrators and district personnel cannot provide consent for students to participate in the project. Your consent form must specify if additional information, besides that directly collected, will be part of the research project including assessment history, demographic information or any other background information on the research participant.
Student Archival Data

If you intend to request data files provided by the district, select the appropriate box on the form. Then, provide the data fields required and a brief description of the field. Detailed descriptions and a complete list of variables are critical in gathering your data and providing an accurate timeline for data retrieval upon approval of your Research Request Form. This will also ensure that OCPS can contact you if we are unable to retrieve certain variables due to legal or privacy concerns. Unless otherwise noted, OCPS will assume that the unit of analysis is students. If this is not the case, please specify this in the summary section.

Summary of Research Project

The summary of your research project must be a one-page description of your project that identifies your research question(s), the relevance of your project and your research methods. Copying and pasting your proposal or project in this section will not meet this requirement. This section is critical in providing an informative description that you will use to showcase your project and potentially encourage participation.

Benefit for Orange County Public Schools

This section must describe the specific, direct benefit to Orange County Public Schools from this research. OCPS supports the advancement of educational knowledge through research conducted in our organization only when there is a benefit to the participants and the district. In particular, we are looking for ways in which the research supports student achievement.

4. Finalizing Your Form

After you complete the form in full please attach the requested information. Sign and date this form under the section labeled ASSURANCE. As described on the form, please note that approval of this form by the district does not obligate any person associated with Orange County Public Schools to participate in this research project. Any person, including but not limited to students, parents, teachers and administrators, can refuse participation at any point in the research process. School and district administrators may make the decision to refuse participation for their entire school or for a group of schools.

5. Submitting Your Form

Upon completion, please send a copy of the form to the address on the first page. You may also send an electronic copy of the form and associated information to Mary Ann White (mary.white@ocps.net). Please note that the date the form is received will reference receipt of the paper copy only. You will receive a confirmation of receipt by email when the paper copy is received. At this time, you will also be told when your receipt will be read and when you can expect a response.

6. Approval Status

Your form will be read carefully to determine if your research meets the guidelines set by OCPS.

- If your research request meets these guidelines and your research request has been completed in full, you will receive a response of Approved.
- If your research request contains one or more elements that must be clarified or are missing, but the request has the potential to be approved, you will receive a response of **Conditionally Approved**. Please make these changes within two weeks and resubmit the entire Research Request Form. Attachments do not have to be resubmitted if there is no change requested in the attached.

- If your research request contains significant omissions and/or does not meet OCPS requirements, you will receive a response of **Rejected**. The reasons for the rejection will be provided.

After your research is approved you may be asked to complete fingerprinting and other district security procedures when appropriate. These procedures will be described on the status page of your form.

**Contact Information**

If you have questions or concerns about the research request process, please contact Mary Ann White by phone at (407) 317-3201 or by email at mary.white@ocps.net

Though we welcome questions about the process, please remember that the timelines for receipt, review and contact of status are firm. We are unable to expedite the process at any point. Questions concerning the timelines will be answered with the information presented in this guide.