



SAN DIEGO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of Research and Development

Guidelines for Research Project Applicants

- I. These guidelines are directed to persons requesting permission to conduct research involving multiple schools within the San Diego Unified School District.

The district approves a limited number of studies annually. Stringent qualifying criteria have been set regarding eligibility to conduct research, the quality of the research proposal, the importance of the study topics to the district, how much time is required of students and/or staff, and in what schools the studies may take place.

Two broad categories of persons are eligible to conduct research studies:

A. **Graduate Students**

1. The study must be the master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, or the particular university's equivalent of these major research undertakings.
2. The school district division/department head most closely associated with the topical area of research must endorse *and* sponsor the proposed study.
 - a. Endorsement is provision of a strong written statement of support for the proposed study, certifying that:
 - (1) The study provides information the division/department vitally needs and actively seeks, and
 - (2) In the endorser's opinion, the applicant possesses the requisite skills and resources to carry the study through successfully.
 - b. Sponsorship includes:
 - (1) Attending the review of the proposal by district staff;
 - (2) Preparing a Memorandum of Agreement between the researcher and the district upon approval of the research;
 - (3) Providing necessary help and guidance to the researcher during the research; and
 - (4) Ensuring that research is done as proposed.

3. The study's methodology shall minimize demands on students and/or staff.
4. Schools targeted for study shall not be heavily committed in other research studies and/or in special efforts to correct students' achievement deficit.

B. Persons Already Holding an Earned Doctorate or Representing a Research Agency. Criteria are the same as those in Items I.A.2–4.

- II. These guidelines supplement Procedure 4930, which provides additional information regarding district policies, limitations on research topics, applicant responsibilities, and other provisions.

A panel of central office staff will review and decide once a month (see schedule below) on those written proposals and endorsements received in the Research and Evaluation Department at least *two weeks prior to the meeting date*. In most instances, applicants will be expected to present their projects orally to the panel and respond to questions at the review sessions. The Research and Evaluation Department will inform each applicant whether s/he will be called upon for such a presentation. Each person submitting a proposal should be prepared to reserve 3–5 *p.m.* on the review date set for discussing his or her project with the review panel.

Researchers whose studies are approved by the panel are required to complete a Memorandum of Agreement prior to beginning research activities in the district. Upon completion of research, researchers are expected to submit an electronic copy of their results for posting on the district web site.

Contact Ron Rode in the Research and Evaluation Department at (619) 725-7190 for clarification of these guidelines.

Research Proposal Review Panel Meeting Schedule

The meeting schedule is provided on the Research and Evaluation Department [website](#).

San Diego Unified School District
 Request for Approval to Conduct Research in Multiple Schools
 (For Advanced Degree Purposes)

Applicant's Name	Mailing Address	e-Mail Address	Daytime Phone No.
Employer		University	Degree Sought
Work Location		Title of Proposed Study	
Position/Job Title			
District Sponsor		Position of Sponsor	
Brief Description of the Study			
<p>With this completed form, submit the following to the Research and Evaluation Department, 4100 Normal Street, Room 1008A, San Diego, CA 92103:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Letter endorsing the proposed study from the school district division/department head most closely associated with the topical area of this research. (See Guidelines which accompanied application materials from the district.) 2. Thesis or Dissertation Chairperson's Affidavit (fully completed). 3. Family Education Rights and Privacy Act compliance form (with applicant's signature). 4. The research proposal—six (6) copies. Note the reverse side of this form concerning the district's expectation regarding the content and compositional presentation of the proposal. <p>Usually, proposals are reviewed the third Wednesday of each month. The deadline for submitting proposals is <i>ten working days</i> before the review date, typically Wednesday, two weeks before the review. The Research and Evaluation Department will notify applicants by email of the district's decision concerning proposals.</p>			
For District Employees Only			
<p>If the proposed study is to be conducted at the San Diego Unified School District site or office where you work, discuss the project with your supervisor and have him or her sign this form. This only indicates that he/she has been made aware of the proposal. It does not denote approval or disapproval.</p>			
_____		_____	
Supervisor's signature		Applicant's signature	

Elements of a Research Proposal

Complete information concerning the proposed research activity *must* be provided so that district personnel can make informed judgments about it. Elements outlined below are typically included in a *narrative* presentation of the proposal. This is a general outline; any particular research proposal might not include all items. However, the proposal must be presented coherently and contain whatever elements are essential to describe a scholarly investigation of an educational matter. District reviewers will consider the written presentation of the proposal as a sample of the quality to be expected in the final report of the study.

1. Title of the study.
2. Statement of the educational problem and its theoretical base.
3. Review of related literature or analysis of previous research important to proposed study.
4. Significance of the problem and the study to the educational services provided San Diego Unified School District students or to other aspects of the district's operations.
5. Objectives of the study, hypotheses to be tested, or research questions to be investigated.
6. Assumptions and limitations.
7. Definition of important terms.
8. Procedures of the project:
 - a. Starting date, duration, and expected date of final report.
 - b. Student population, number and characteristics (e.g., grades, gender).
 - c. School(s) and classes—or departments—in which data are to be collected.
 - d. Method and criteria for study sample selection
 - e. Time required of students, teachers, and others for
 - treatment or instructional procedures, if applicable, and/or
 - data collection.
 - f. Designation and definition of variables, as appropriate
 - g. Data to be collected, data collection plan and schedules
 - h. Instruments to be used. Include a near-final copy of each, including an interview protocol if interviews are to be used.
 - i. Means by which principals and teachers are informed of the research project and their willingness to host/participate in the study is sought. If by letter, submit a draft.
 - j. Means by which parents will be informed of research project, or parental written permission, if required, will be sought for students' participation in the study. If by letter, submit a draft which the *principal* or other district *manager* could use. The letter to parents *must* come from one of these officials, not the researcher.
 - k. General procedure (what will be done by the investigator, teacher, pupils, others).
9. Research design
10. Method of data analysis, statistical treatment to be given, decision criteria.
11. Disposition to be made of research results.

Note: Proposal narratives should not exceed ten pages in length; copies of instruments, letters informing subjects/parents of study, consent forms and other protocols (8.h.–j.) do not count toward that ten-page limit.

**ASSURANCE OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS
OF THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT OF 1974**

_____ (hereinafter called the "Applicant")
Name of applicant

HEREBY AGREES TO COMPLY with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974, and all requirements imposed by or pursuant to regulation of the Department of Education and the San Diego Unified School District (including but not limited to Administrative Regulation and Procedure Nos. 6525 and 6527) to the end that the rights and privacy of the students enrolled in the San Diego Unified School District and their parents are not violated or invaded.

THIS ASSURANCE is given in consideration of and for purposes of obtaining approval to conduct research under the provisions of district Administrative Regulations and Procedure No. 4930. Such research may require access to individual student data. The provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 include, but are not limited to, ensuring that:

- No identification of students or their parents by persons other than representatives of the Applicant is permitted.
- The individual student data will be destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which they were obtained.
- No access to individual student data shall be granted by the Applicant to any other person, persons, agency or organization without the written consent of the pupil's parent, except for sharing with other persons within the district or representatives of the Applicant engaged in work specifically entailed by the research activities approved by the district.

The Applicant recognizes and agrees that such approval and access to individual student data will be extended in reliance on representations made in this assurance, and that the district shall have the right to enforcement of this assurance, or revocation of such approval and access immediately upon evidence of noncompliance by the Applicant. This assurance is binding on the Applicant and such persons as may be employed by the Applicant to assist in any phase of the research effort.

_____ Date _____
(Applicant's signature)

(Applicant's mailing address)