

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY

GUIDELINES FOR THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH ACTIVITIES IN THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF LEE COUNTY DISTRICT APPROVAL PROCESS

Educational research, when carefully planned and conducted, provides a promising approach to the solution of many contemporary educational problems and issues. The School District of Lee County encourages the conduct of meaningful research which is aimed at the advancement of education or fields of study closely associated with the administration of educational programs. This also acknowledges that the training of educational researchers should include practical experience in the conduct of well-planned, meaningful research in school settings. These guidelines have been developed to govern research requests which mainly concern thesis, dissertations, and course requirement research.

Research activities conducted in Lee County schools must be designed to promote, enhance, or contribute to the educational experiences of students and staff. **The District views the research review process as a service provided to prospective researchers and reserves the right to reject research proposals which would result in exploitation of students or staff, unnecessary interruption of school and instructional activities, breach of confidentiality of sensitive information, or otherwise do not conform to the criteria described in these guidelines.**

Timeline: The District Research Committee meets every other month throughout the year, with additional meetings scheduled for follow up reviews. While it is the intent of the District to complete the review process in a timely manner, occasionally it may take several months for a study to be reviewed by the District Committee, modified by the candidate, resubmitted, reviewed again, and approved.

The researcher agrees to cover any expenses incurred by the district as a result of the implemented research activities (e.g. photocopies, staff time, etc.). Furthermore, parent permission is usually required for student participation in research activities.

PROCEDURES

- I. The applicant(s) will present to the Department of Accountability, Research, and Continuous Improvement a Research Permission Request Form along with other written documentation describing the scope and significance of the study, its proposed design, and the planned use and distribution of information and findings.

NOTE: The Request Form should contain the signature of the college advisor (if applicable) and the signature of a school-level principal if the study requires activities at particular schools in the district (e.g. student or staff surveys, student or staff interviews).

- II. Proposals generally fall into the following categories:

1. Proposals requesting information routinely published by the District.
2. Proposals requesting group summary data not routinely published.
3. Proposals requesting information about and/or participation of individual students or staff.

In category 1, the Director of Accountability, Research, and Continuous Improvement or his/her staff will provide this information to the researcher.

Proposals in categories 2 and 3 shall be submitted to the District Research Committee consisting of the Director of Accountability, Research, and Continuous Improvement, the Chief Academic Officer, the Director of Grants and Program Development, and the Executive Director of Curriculum and Staff Development. Other district administrators are invited to review requests as appropriate. The research proposal will be reviewed to determine the extent of compliance with the criteria outlined below. If the study is approved, the District administrator(s) will cooperate with the investigator to the fullest extent possible and assist in the conduct of the study whenever possible.

III. The School District of Lee County will require a copy of the research report resulting from any study approved by the district. A copy will be maintained in the Department of Accountability, Research, and Continuous Improvement and may be made available to district employees.

CRITERIA

The following criteria will be employed in the review of requests for research or information gathering studies:

NOTE: Items marked with * are REQUIRED.

I. General Significance of the Study:

Study focuses on educational problems of high priority for The School District of Lee County; or, more generally, the public schools of Florida.

II. Design Adequacy

Study clearly explains purpose, procedures, and expectations and conforms to acceptable research practices.

* Study provides for confidentiality of information.

III. Logistics

* Study avoids use of student instructional time.

Study minimizes disruption of other school activities.

* Study specifies that participation of school personnel and/or students is voluntary.

Study minimizes the amount of information which must be directly provided by school personnel.

IV. Instrumentation:

* Study utilizes surveys and other types of data collection instruments that are appropriate for an educational environment.

V. Feedback to School District Personnel

Study collects data that is of direct value to the ongoing school programs.

* Study provides for the communication of results to district personnel.

**Contact: The Department of Accountability, Research, and Continuous
Improvement**

Tel. (239) 337-8647 Fax (239) 337-8664