



Norfolk Public Schools

Request to Conduct Research

Overview

Norfolk Public Schools (NPS) encourages the pursuit of educational research by graduate students, and other qualified individuals and research organizations, which provides knowledge, or information, leading to the improvement of educational processes and professional growth of division personnel. Given the large number of requests to conduct research in NPS, a list of procedures has been established to coordinate all research conducted in NPS.

The process of reviewing research applications was designed to achieve the following goals:

- Protect instructional time by limiting excessive data collection demands of NPS students and staff
- Ensure that the proposed research does not interfere with the state-mandated testing schedule
- Certify that the proposed study does not replicate studies already conducted within NPS
- Confirm that the researchers adhere to all laws and policies governing student, staff, and division privacy
- Assess the potential of the proposed research to improve educational practices and procedures

All proposals for research must be submitted to the administration's research department. Researchers may not go to individual schools before submitting a proposal. This regulation is because a centralized administration of research will enable the school system to digest and disseminate information most efficiently.

Research Studies Requiring Approval

Requests to collect data regarding NPS students, parents, or staff requires formal approval. Exceptions include federal and state assessment initiatives as well as program evaluations, assessments, and research studies directed by the NPS School Board.

The Research Authorization Committee (RAC) is responsible for examining and evaluating all potential research requests within NPS. The signature of the RAC chairperson is required **before** the researcher(s) conduct the research. Research requests involving sensitive issues, or considerable commitment of NPS resources, may be referred to the appropriate department. The RAC may request revisions in the study before granting approval.

Participation in the study by students, teachers, administrators, and parents is voluntary and must be stated on the documents administered to the research subjects. All participants, the name of the school(s), and the name of the school division **MUST remain anonymous**.

Research Review Criteria

When reviewing research proposals, priority will be granted to studies that:

- Directly relate to instructional or educational practices and allow as little disruption of the daily routine as possible. Any research proposals which involve considerable time and equipment must have implications of sufficient importance to justify the use of resources.
- Address the needs of NPS and described how the study will be of value to NPS students and/or staff
- Have obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB)

In the past, the RAC has denied research requests that:

- Were a requirement for a post-secondary class project
- Requested personal information about NPS students, staff, and families
- Entailed considerable student and/or staff time, or a loss of instructional time
- Requested data for a Master's degree thesis for a graduate student not employed in NPS
- Did not include a completed application

Application Deadlines

Applications to conduct research in NPS will NOT be accepted from March 28th – June 16th. Research studies involving student participation may NOT be conducted from March 28th through September 30th. Research requests are reviewed three times a year and applications must be submitted in accordance with the dates in the table below. Researchers are highly encouraged to submit their proposals well in advance of these dates.

<u>Proposal Submission Dates</u>	<u>RAC Review Date</u>
February – March	August
August – October	November
November – January	February

Application Requirements

Applications for approval of research projects must include the following 8 required items:

1. Completed NPS Application to Conduct Educational Research (Appendix).
2. Dissertation: provide the first three chapters, approved by the dissertation committee
3. Verification of IRB Approval.
4. Written Confirmation from Institution: provide a letter from the college, university, or organization with whom the researcher is associated.
5. Letter of Support from NPS Staff: if an applicant has communicated with NPS staff about his/her research, and the staff member expressed support for the application, a letter must be submitted. If the applicant is employed by NPS, a letter of support from the principal must be submitted.
6. Proposed Schedule: an outline of the approximate dates when the research is to be conducted, the time required by people participating in the study, the place(s) where the study is to be conducted, and the personnel who will administer the study.
7. Benefit to NPS: please present a detailed discussion of the specific benefits of this research to NPS. Please note that the request to conduct research in NPS by individuals, private groups, and other agencies will not be approved except in instances where the benefit to NPS is significant or where such research is required by law.
8. Instruments: all instruments that will be administered to the participants must be included. These instruments must be paid for by the researcher.

Application Process

Research applicants must submit a completed Application to Conduct Educational Research form (Appendix) along with the required attachments. Once the forms and supporting material are completed, submit via e-mail or regular mail to:

Research Authorization Committee
Office of Assessment, Research & Accountability
Norfolk Public Schools
800 E. City Hall Avenue, 7th Floor
Norfolk, VA 23510
E-mail Addresses: Kbailey1@nps.k12.va.us (Dr. Karren Bailey)
taulenbach@nps.k12.va.us (Dr. Tressa Aulenbach)

NOTE: At the completion of the project, the researcher must send one copy of the final written study to the administration's research department.

Review Process

Every research request is reviewed by a panel of three to five highly qualified NPS administrative staff members who are knowledgeable about educational research, educational goals within NPS, instructional practices, and research methodology. The Research Authorization Committee confers shortly after each proposal submission deadline. Applicants are notified via email regarding the approval or denial of their research request.

Acknowledgement

Please read each of the following statements, and initial on the line, indicating your compliance.

_____ I understand that approval of this research does **not** obligate Norfolk Public Schools to participate in this study.

_____ I understand that approval of this research does **not** constitute a guarantee of resources, nor an endorsement of the study or its findings, by Norfolk Public Schools.

_____ I understand that requesting data, which are not publicly available, may require extensive time and effort by division personnel and I may be charged an hourly fee. I will be notified after the committee's approval and provided an estimate for the cost.

_____ I acknowledge that participation in my research study by students, parents, and staff is **voluntary**.

_____ I will not reveal the identity, nor any identifiable characteristics, of the division, school(s) and participants.

_____ If approval is granted, I will follow all policies and protocols of Norfolk Public Schools.

_____ If approval is granted, I will conduct the research within all stated conditions, provided by the Research Authorization Committee.

_____ I will provide Norfolk Public School's Research Authorization Committee with a copy of the final written study.

Applicant's Signature

Email

Date

NOTICE OF ACTION ON RESEARCH ACTIVITY REQUEST

To Be Completed By Chairperson of Research Authorization Committee

Clearance Recommendation:

___ Approval ___ Disapproval ___ Provisional Approval (approval contingent on modifications below.)

Remarks (Include specific modifications needed or reason(s) for disapproval, as appropriate.)

Signature, Chairperson of RAC

Date

For Internal Use Only: Processing Status

Date Forms Received ___/___/___ Date to RAC ___/___/___ Date from RAC ___/___/___
RAC Decision: __ Accept __ Revise __ Reject
Date Revisions Sent ___/___/___ Date Revisions Received ___/___/___
Final Decision: __ Accept __ Revise __ Reject



Norfolk Public Schools Application to Conduct Educational Research

1. Applicant Name: _____ Mr. _____ Mrs. _____ Ms. _____ Dr. _____

2. Title of Research: _____

3. Address _____
Street City State Zip

4. Telephone Number _____ - _____ - _____ Email: _____

5. Are you employed by Norfolk Public Schools? _____ No _____ Yes (specify Department/School) _____

6. Are you proposing this study in connection with the degree requirements of a college or university?

_____ Yes (Answer a, b & c below) _____ No (Skip to Question 7)

a) What degree requirements? _____ Master's _____ Doctoral _____ Other (specify) _____

b) Who is your advisor or committee chairperson?

Name _____ Phone _____ - _____ - _____

Institution _____ Department _____

c) What is the approval status of your proposal at your college or university?

_____ Formally approved _____ Approved by advisor but not committee _____ Not approved yet

7. Type of research site(s) required:

a) Check all that apply: _____ Elementary _____ Middle _____ High _____ Central Office

b) Do you want to work with a specific school or schools? _____ No _____ Yes (specify _____)

c) Are there other types of research sites required? _____ No _____ Yes (specify _____)

8. Desired time schedule for carrying out the research: From _____/_____/_____ to _____/_____/_____
Month Year Month Year

9. If your study involves human subjects (e.g. students, parents, and/or staff), you must have prior approval from your institution's human subjects review board. Have you received approval from your human subjects review board?

_____ Yes _____ No _____ Not Applicable

NOTE: All applicants must also include a copy of their institution's human subjects review board approval letter and a copy of the informed consent agreement detailing their subjects' voluntary participation.

10. Will data be collected from/on students?

___ Yes (Answer parts a, b & c of this question) ___ No (Skip to Question 11)

a) Total number of students needed for this study _____

b) Check and describe any specific criteria for selection of students to take part in the study.

___ Grade level _____

___ Gender _____

___ Enrollment in special programs _____

___ Other (specify) _____

c) Are students' test results required? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes," specify tests and types of scores needed _____

11. Will data be collected from/on school staff, parents, or former students?

___ Yes (Answer parts a, b & c of this question) ___ No (Skip to Question 12)

a) Are data on staff required? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes," specify which staff and how many _____

b) Are data on parents required? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes," specify which staff and how many _____

c) Are data on former students required? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes," specify which former students and how many _____

12. What tests, questionnaires, and other typed or printed instruments will be utilized?

Type of Instrument	Description of Instrument	Who will Complete or be Observed	Was Instrument Constructed by Researcher ?		Estimated Time to Administer
			Yes	No	
___ Individual Test	_____	_____	___	___	_____
___ Questionnaire	_____	_____	___	___	_____
___ Interview	_____	_____	___	___	_____
___ Observation	_____	_____	___	___	_____
___ Other	_____	_____	___	___	_____

13. Will teachers be asked to assist with the study? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes," specify amount of time _____

14. Will other school system personnel be asked to assist with the study? ___ Yes ___ No

If "Yes," specify who and amount of time _____