EDUCATION RESEARCH IN K-12 SCHOOLS

- Students should be the age of consent, which is 18 years old. If under 18, parental consent is required and an assent form must be completed by the participant. (Some research may qualify for waiver of consent/assent).
- When research activities are not part of the required class activities, the instructor should arrange to have the data collected by an independent third party, so that the instructor does not know who participated and does not have access to the identifiable data or identity of participants for any purpose until grades have been assigned and entered.
- Researchers should not mandate that an entire class of students participate.
- Benefits or compensation for participation should extend to the entire class, regardless of how many children agreed to participate. This prevents scrutiny or peer pressure on the students who decline to participate.
- For research with students who are minors, a letter of permission from the principal on school letterhead should be attached to section 11 (attachments). This letter should express that the PI has permission to conduct research at the school and that the principal understands the goals and details of the study.
- Passive consent is when an individual does not actively consent but also does not object to participation. Passive consent is not acceptable for research, especially with children. Active consent is when there is a clear, affirmative statement of consent to participate.

EDUCATION RESEARCH ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES

- When classroom activities extend beyond the purpose of learning into creating generalizable knowledge, it is considered research.
- Students should be of the age of majority, which is 18 years old. Subjects under 18 need parental consent and must fill out an assent form.
- Care should be taken to eliminate or reduce the risk that undue influence of faculty or coercion affects student participation in research.
- When research activities to be done by the students are not part of the required class activities, the instructor should arrange to have the data collected by an independent third party, so that the instructor does not know who participated and does not have access to the identifiable data or identity of participants for any purpose until grades have been assigned and entered. For instructors using pre- and post-tests to determine efficacy of a particular curriculum, a colleague or third party should obtain the consent forms and distribute the tests when the instructor is not present.
- In instances where investigators can provide a good reason for involving their own students in their research, the IRB generally requires that someone other than the investigator (instructor) obtain informed consent and collect the data. When this is not possible, the IRB will consider other methods for obtaining consent and collecting data that would not reveal to the instructor whether or not a specific student participated in the research project until after final grades have been determined.
- Generally, researchers may not access classroom performance evaluations, grades, and information in a (current) student’s records without prior written permission from the student.
- When course credit or extra credit is given to students who participate in research as part of a course requirement, students are to be given other options for fulfilling the research component. This should be stated in the informed consent.
- Like other research volunteers, students who become research participants must be allowed to withdraw from the study at any time. The informed consent statement should make clear the consequences of withdrawing from a project prior to completion. They should still receive partial compensation, usually in the form of extra credit points, even if they withdraw from the study prematurely.
- If the research activities are such that data are collected from a group project or perhaps a videotape of a group interaction, each student’s consent is necessary for the use of that data in the instructor’s research. If one student in the group does not consent, the data may be used only if the non-consenting student’s data can be effectively excluded.