

ERIE'S PUBLIC SCHOOLS
RESEARCH REQUEST APPLICATION AND PROCEDURES

Surveys and research that take place within Erie's Public Schools requires prior approval. To obtain approval, a research application including all required documentation must be submitted to the Assessment Coordinator for review.

Research requests must:

- Connect to Erie's Public Schools Strategic Plan
- Provide benefits to the students and/or policies
- Provide a copy of the final research report or summary of the survey to the District
- Be accompanied by a Human Subjects Review Committee/Internal Review Board approval or exemption

Research requests **must not**:

- Disrupt the work of the students, teachers, or administrators
- Compromise the privacy of the students and families
- Begin prior to written approval from the District
- Be connected with a for profit activity

PROCEDURES FOR PROPOSAL SUBMISSION AND REVIEW

1. Complete the Research Application and provide required documents
 - A written application with all requested final documents must be submitted to the Assessment Coordinator for review prior to the approval of any survey or research project.
 - Final copies of surveys or data collection instruments must be included. Instruments and procedures must be consistent with all federal and state statutes and regulations that relate to student information release, data collection, and use of human subjects.
 - Copies of informed consent forms for teachers, staff, or other adult interviews or questionnaires must be included if needed for the research.
 - Parental permission slip, including informed consent language (e.g. voluntary participation, no penalty for not participating) for student interviews and surveys must be included if needed for the research. Opt out forms will not be permitted for parental consent.
 - A copy of your approval or exemption from the Human Subjects Review Committee/Internal Review Board must be provided.
2. The proposal will be reviewed by the Assessment Coordinator and any relevant Administrators.
 - Appropriate district departments, schools, and programs affected by the survey or study may be asked to review the proposal for merit, costs in staff and student time, and value to the district.
 - The proposer will be contacted if there are any questions or modifications needed.
 - Depending on the request, application reviews can take two weeks or longer. Please note: applications will not be reviewed the last two weeks of August to the third week of September or in April or May.
3. The Assessment Coordinator will provide a written approval or denial of the survey or research request.
 - Approval may be contingent upon the agreement of the proposer to certain limitations or modifications or to provide specified information to the district.
 - If the proposed survey or research study is denied, the proposer may contact the Assessment Coordinator to determine what might be done to make the proposal acceptable.
4. If the survey or research study is approved by the Assessment Coordinator, the proposer may proceed with the next steps provided to them.
 - Clearances and other required documentation must be provided to the Human Resources Department if admittance to the school is necessary prior to beginning the study.
 - Written permission from parents or guardians will have to be demonstrated prior to any release of information, survey, or research activity that requires parent permission prior to student participation or the release of student information. Opt out forms will not be permitted for parental consent.

5. When the survey or research study is completed, a copy of the final research report or summary of the survey results must be provided to the Assessment Coordinator. The district reserves the right to use the information in the research report or summary for planning, solicitation of grants, and staff development.

Applications can be mailed or emailed to:
Paulette Zagorski (pzagorski@eriesd.org)
Assessment Coordinator
Erie School District
148 West 21st Street
Erie, PA 16502

The following are examples of survey or research requests that will not be approved:

1. Survey or research requests, submitted by outside researchers or organizations that contain opt out forms.

Parent consent is required if the survey asks students anything about the following:

- a. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parents
- b. Mental or psychological problems of the student or the student's family
- c. Sex behavior or attitudes
- d. Illegal, antisocial, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior
- e. Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships
- f. Legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers
- g. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent
- h. Income

In addition to this list, the District requires written parental consent for all surveys and research requests.

2. Survey or research requests that ask for student records, or personal identifiable information in these records.

Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) provides that the district may not release student records or personal identifiable information in these records without written consent from the parents. The district cannot approve requests from outside researchers or organizations that seek student personal identifiable information because the district would have to receive written permission from the parent to release the information and does not have the staff to do this. Student personal identifiable information may include:

- The student's name
- The name of the student's parent or other family members
- The address of the student or students' family
- A personal identifier, such as the student's social security number or student number
- A list of personal characteristics that would make the student's identity easily traceable

3. Survey or research requests that are not connected to the District's Strategic Plan.

4. Survey or research requests that are incomplete.