

REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Blue Valley Schools

2020-2021



REIMAGINING learning | CHANGING the world

Overview

The Blue Valley School District receives numerous requests from all over the world to conduct research within our schools. As a district, we have the responsibility to protect the rights of our staff, students, and patrons and ensure that the research process does not interfere with the learning process for our students and staff. The following protocols has been established to aid individuals and organizations seeking permission to conduct research with our district. These protocols also apply to staff members who desire to do research within their classes/schools for professional, personal, and academic reasons (e.g. degree programs).

All research/data collection must comply with all aspects of the Kansas Student Data Privacy Act (SB 367), which prohibits certain types of data collections without parental/guardian consent. With respect to this bill, assume that any survey collection, student observation, or collection of student data requires parent/guardian consent. Data collected may NOT include any identifiable information about the student, staff, school, or district. Research must also comply with all provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Research projects involving programs that receive funding from the U.S. Department of Education must adhere to the provisions of the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) which afford rights to parents of students and eligible students (those who are 18 or older) regarding administration of any student surveys. Specifically, parents/guardians or eligible students have the right to inspect any survey created by a third party before it is administered or distributed to students in the school. This means that parents or guardians of minors must be notified and given the opportunity to see the survey. And, if the survey is federally funded (in whole or in part), schools must obtain written parental/guardian consent before minor students may be required to participate in any survey.

Researchers should consult BOE Policy 3905 regarding Student Privacy; this policy provides specific guidance regarding data that may be used and types of surveys that are prohibited.

Requests will be reviewed by the BV Research Review Board on a quarterly basis. Each request is evaluated to determine the research's alignment to district initiatives, strategic plan, and participant responsibilities. Considerations are made regarding the nature of the request, the type of research it entails, the time commitment necessary, and potential impact of not only the research, but the communication of the research required. **All approved researchers will be expected to provide a copy of the results to the Director of Academic Achievement and Accountability within three months of the conclusion of their research.**

Allowable Types of Research

Note: Research requests should be limited to educational topics related to teaching and learning.

- Research conducted by individuals seeking advanced degrees (e.g. Doctoral research)
- Surveys conducted by individuals or organizations
- Requests for existing data from individuals or organizations
- Other University research or organizational research project
- Assignments/action research associated with University course work
- Note Blue Valley Employees may use the University Assignment Requests protocol and procedures outlined below.

Additional Considerations

- Approval of a request does not constitute an endorsement for the research project. Approval reflects only permission to request the voluntary cooperation of staff and students/families.
- If research will involve staff and/or students during the school day, approval from the principal must be secured, after district approval is granted, before voluntary cooperation of staff and students/families is sought. Principals have the right to deny any and all research requests involving their staff, students and community.
- Data requests may only be sought for information that is not confidential in nature. No identifying student, building, or district information may be used. The collection of data must not interfere with the district's routine schedule of work.
- Any references to research in the district should be made in generic terms (i.e., a suburban district, an elementary school in a suburban school district, building A and B in a suburban school district, etc.).
- Proposals should show evidence of careful planning including a current synopsis of the review of literature and purpose for the research.
- Proposals should provide for the protection of human subjects under the law (45-CFR 46) and must respect the rights of privacy of personal data concerning students and staff.
- Research requests must include a copy of the IRB approval. If the request is approved before the IRB approval is available, the applicant must submit a copy of the approval as soon as it is received. **Request approvals will not be considered final until the IRB is received.**
- Proposals must not make undue demands on the time of students and staff and must respect the right of individuals to refrain from participation.

Frequent Problematic Issues

- Surveys sent to an entire staff or multiple staffs.
- Any request to modify or delineate from a students' individualized education program (IEP).
Note: these requests will not be approved.
- Any data collection involving anonymous, self-reporting of detrimental and harmful thoughts or behaviors (due to the nature of the anonymity, it is not possible for staff to respond).
- Any request that requires a significant amount of time impacting student learning, employee job functions, and professional learning. Note: Blue Valley Schools highly values professional learning. Requests for research should not impede staff members' professional learning goals by distracting during professional learning times.
- The safety and confidentiality of students and staff members takes precedence over any and all research requests. Requests for videos and recordings will be highly scrutinized by the Review Board and typically denied.
- Studies involving treatment and control groups or treatment/non-treatment design.
- Studies requiring non-staff members to conduct observations in our schools.
- Studies requiring any additional work or time commitment during or outside staff contract time.
- Studies that do not provide a valued return on the investment to Blue Valley Schools.

Proposal Requirements

The following information should be submitted for all formal research proposals including those associated with degree-seeking research projects:

- Lead Researcher contact information
- Purpose of the Research Study
- Description of Research Study
- Data Collection Methods & Instruments
- Synopsis of Review of Literature
- Return on Investment for Blue Valley

To **submit a research request**, please complete the form located at:

<https://tinyurl.com/bvresearchrequest>.

You can also access the form on the Blue Valley Schools' district website under [Professional Development](#).

Note: If the researcher is a Blue Valley employee and the research is limited to one University-level assignment, please see the section of this document titled University Assignment Requests. All others must use the requirements below.

Key Dates & Deadlines

Research requests are reviewed on a quarterly basis by Blue Valley’s Research Review Board. This board is comprised of district and building level administrators and educators familiar with the research process. The Review Board will evaluate each request through the lens of responsibility we have to protect the rights of our staff, students, and patrons and ensure that the research process does not interfere with the learning process for our students and staff. Meeting dates and when requests are due to be included on the agenda for that meeting are as follows:

Meeting Date	Request Due Date
September 22, 2020	September 9, 2020
November 17, 2020	November 4, 2020
February 23, 2021	February 10, 2021
April 27, 2021	April 14, 2021

If a request is received after the due date for that quarter, it will be added to the agenda for the following meeting. For example, if a request is received on September 10th, it will be included on the agenda for November 17th. As a result, responses can be delayed. Researchers can expect to hear a response within 10 business days after each quarterly review board meeting.

Requests to conduct research while school is not in session during the summer, or at the beginning of the 2021-2022 school year, must be submitted by April 14, 2021 to be included on the agenda for the April 27th meeting.

University Assignment Requests

Blue Valley employees engaging in advanced coursework with a University assignment to conduct a short-term research project/observation within their class may complete the following short form request. This form is available online:

Assignments conducted at the secondary level:

<https://tinyurl.com/bvassignmentrequest-mshs>

Assignments conducted at the elementary level, in special education, or K-12:

<https://tinyurl.com/bvassignmentrequest-es-sped>

Upon submission of the form, staff members can expect to receive a response within two weeks.

Please note: This form does not apply to long-term master's thesis or doctoral dissertation work. Research requests of that nature need to follow the request to conduct research process and go before the Review Board.

University Assignment Request Confirmations

Researcher must agree to all before being considered:

- I have read and will comply with all guidelines regarding student privacy; I will adhere to all applicable privacy laws.
- My assignment/research/project does not alter the district curriculum or use of district-approved resources.
- My assignment/research/project does not use a treatment/non-treatment design model (this model may NOT be used).
- My principal is aware of my assignment/project/research that will be conducted.
- I will notify and receive consent in writing from all parents/guardians regarding the academic assignment/research/project. Parents/guardians will be provided with an opportunity to decline participation. Reminder: participation must be voluntary.
- I will notify and receive consent in writing from all students involved regarding the academic assignment/research/project. Students will be provided with an opportunity to decline participation. Reminder: participation must be voluntary.
- I will not use any identifying information about students, staff and families in the conclusions/reporting of the assignment/research/project.

- Any references to the building/district/classroom will be removed or replaced with generic terms (i.e., a suburban district, etc.)
- I will provide a brief description of the research and the reporting methods.

Contact Information

Questions may be directed to Adam Wade, Director of Academic Achievement and Accountability and Kelly Wessel, Director of Professional Learning.

Please direct questions regarding University Assignments to Adam Wade.

Adam Wade

Director of Academic Achievement & Accountability

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