



SFUSD SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Research, Planning & Accountability Department

Application to Conduct Research in the San Francisco Unified School District (SFUSD)

SFUSD Research Application Submission Deadline:	For Research to be conducted in the 2012-2013 Academic Calendar Year		
March 15, 2012		August 2012	to June 2013

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Guidelines for Research Studies in SFUSD

All research conducted in SFUSD must follow these guidelines:

- 1. The research is aligned with district goals and initiatives:** The research must be aligned with goals and initiatives from our district’s strategic plan, and the research must add value to the district and contribute to the larger field of education. The following table highlights the district goals and initiatives. Check the district’s website for further descriptions (www.sfusd.edu).

SFUSD Goals and Initiatives, 2011-2012

Goal 1: Access and Equity: Make Social Justice a Reality	Goal 2: Achievement: Engage High Achievement and Joyful Learners	Goal 3: Accountability Keep our promises to students and families
Superintendent’s Zone, School Improvement Grant	Core Curriculum, Common Learning Assessments	Human Capital
Special Education Redesign	Restorative Practices	Parent Engagement
English Learners/Lau Plan	Early Learning	Partnerships/Resource Development
	Student Placement	
	College and Career Readiness	

- 2. The research does not interrupt district or school operations:** The research must not interrupt the operations of the district or a school, interfere unduly with instructional time, nor require effort, time, or resources from the participants that the district or the school considers to be disruptive. SFUSD charges a fee for projects that require extra effort and time by district personnel.
- 3. The research does not invade privacy:** The research may not invade the privacy of the participants and it must adhere to FERPA (Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act) guidelines. For instance, students cannot be asked about their own or their parents’ race, ethnicity, beliefs, nor practices regarding sex, family life, morality, or religion without explicit, written permission to do so from a child’s parent or guardian through district-approved consent forms. Participants may not be identified by name in any reports nor on any data-gathering documents, nor may students or their files be used to obtain information relating to their parents. Also, researchers may not have access to basic staff personnel records.
- 4. The researchers obtain district-approved consent/assent from participants:** Researchers must obtain active, informed consent from all participants or their guardians for all research studies. Copies of all consent forms must be submitted with the application and are subject to SFUSD review and approval. Student assent to participate in research must be obtained from students in grades 6 through 12. In most cases, research instruments and consent forms for parents must be translated into Chinese and Spanish, and the translated versions must also be submitted with the research application.
- 5. The research follows guidelines for interacting with schools and participants:** Researchers conducting research at school sites must be tested for tuberculosis and have a criminal background check. It is the responsibility of the research organization to keep documentation of this information on file, and such information must be made available to the district upon request. In addition, a SFUSD certified employee must be present at all times when non-district personnel are with students.
- 6. The researchers submit their research application on time and follow application agreements:** Please see next section for application procedures.

Research Application Procedures at SFUSD

Please note that this application is now a combination of what were formally the SFUSD Research Application, SFUSD Survey Application, and SFUSD Data Use Agreement Template. You will now need to fill out this application if you are applying to conduct any research in the district.

1. Complete forms and gather relevant documentation:

- a. All applicants need to fill out Form 1, "Application to Conduct a Research Study in SFUSD" and Form 2, "Agreement to Submit a Report of Research Findings Prior to Publication."
- b. All applicants ought to include supporting documentation that details your research project and describes the feasibility and relevance of your research study. You can also include letters of support for the research study.
- c. All applicants ought to include copies of any existing MOUs, DUAs or contracts with the district that pertain to the proposed study.
- d. If you are requesting access and/or the release of information on individually identified students, fill out Form 3.
- e. If you are applying to conduct a survey either by itself or as part of other data collection instruments, fill out Form 4.
- f. If you are planning to obtain primary data through interviews or focus groups, you must include interview and observation protocols for review and approval.
- g. If your research also includes a request for administrative data from SFUSD, fill out Form 5 and submit a completed Data Use and Confidentiality Agreement (DUA).
- h. If this is a research application that is part of a master's thesis or a dissertation, you must include a letter from your faculty advisor.

Applicants whose research will require individual student participation:

- a. You must include a letter of approval for research with human participants (human subjects) from their institution's internal review board (IRB) for research with human subjects
- b. You must also obtain parental consent before you collect data. Please submit consent/assent forms with your research application for review. (We include samples in the Appendix.)

2. Submit your application:

Applications for research to be conducted in the 2012-13 academic year must be submitted to RPA for consideration by March 15, 2012. Please allow at least **six weeks** for processing of the application. Submit the complete application both via email as a PDF file and in hard copy.

Mail to:

Jan Link, Supervisor
Research, Planning and Accountability Department (RPA)
San Francisco Unified School District
555 Franklin Street, Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94102

E-mail to:

LINKJ@sfusd.edu.

For more information, please call (415) 241-6454

The Application Review Process

Once RPA receives the original hard copy , a research application will go through the following process:

1. An evaluator at RPA will review the application and will contact the primary researcher within six weeks.
2. If the application meets all the necessary district criteria, RPA will recommend the application for approval by a central office administrator (such as an assistant superintendent).
3. When an application is approved, RPA sends a letter of approval to the primary researcher.
4. After the primary researcher receives written approval from RPA, he or she may begin conducting research in the district.

Please keep in mind that for research taking place at a school site, final approval rests with the site principal or program administrator and impacted classroom teachers. The approval of the research application at the central office level does not obligate any site or individual to participate in any research.

Once You Have Received District Approval

Note that once research approval is granted, there can be no changes in research procedures, protocols, or instruments without prior written approval from RPA.

- a. Before starting any research activity, the study's primary researcher must submit a copy of their research approval letter from RPA to all participating school sites' administrators.
- b. Signed Consent Forms for Release of Pupil Information and/or Participation in Research and signed Student Assent Forms must be filed at the school site with the principal or his/her designated representative at least two weeks prior to collecting data for each student.
- c. Researchers must coordinate with SFUSD operations personnel to administer an approved survey.
- d. Researchers' data requests, once approved, will be fulfilled by Research, Planning, and Accountability department personnel.

Once Research is completed

A copy of the study's final report with findings and analysis must be submitted to RPA by the specific date agreed upon in writing by the primary research applicant and RPA. All charts included in reports must detail the source, date, and definition of the data used.

Attachments and Application Submission Checklist

Below is a list of all Forms and Appendices included in this application package. Please use this as a checklist of what you are including when you submit your application.

Form 1 Application to Conduct a Research Study in SFUSD

Form 2 Agreement to Submit Report on Findings Prior to Publication

Form 3 Agreement to Obtain Active Parental Consent to the Release of Student Data

Form 4 Request to Administer a Survey

Form 5 Request for Data to Use in Research Study

Appendix 1 Parent or Guardian Consent: Release of Pupil Information

Appendix 2 Parent or Guardian Consent: Participation in Study

Appendix 3 Student Assent Form

Appendix 4 Template of Confidential Data Exchange Agreement



For Internal Use Only	
Evaluator:	_____
Operations:	_____
Date Received:	_____
District ID Code:	_____
Title:	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

FORM 1

Application to Conduct a Research Study in SFUSD

Date of submission: _____

Title of Research Study: _____

Name and Title of Primary Researcher: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email Address _____

Grant Agency _____

Are you employed by SFUSD? **Yes No** If yes, please list your school or department: _____

Is this part of your master's thesis? **Yes No** Doctoral dissertation? **Yes No**

Description of the Research Study

If necessary, attach additional pages to answer the following questions:

1. What is the purpose of the study? _____

2. How will the study benefit SFUSD? Specifically, tell us how your research aligns with district goals and initiatives (outlined in Page 3 of this application and further described on the district website)?

3. What practice and policy implications do you expect that the study's findings will provide the district?

4. Briefly describe the study's procedures. _____

5. Is this a research application renewal? If so, please tell us the date of the original approval. _____

6. What are the proposed research study's start and end dates?

7. Have you contacted any district personnel about the research? If so, who and when? _____

The following three questions ask for specifics if you are requesting access to school sites:

8. If you are requesting access to specific school sites, please describe in detail your site selection criteria, including characteristics of participants.

9. Please complete the following information about your site access request:

Total number of schools: _____ School Level: Pre-K K-5 K-8 MS HS

Total number of students: _____ Grade(s): _____

Total number of teachers: _____

Total number of administrators: _____

Others: _____

10. Please list the specific schools where you are requesting access.

11. Time requirements of the study.

Total time at each individual school: _____

(For multicycle research, indicate times for each cycle, e.g., year 1, year 2, year 3, for the following:)

Total time per student, per cycle: _____ Number of sessions: _____

Length of sessions: _____ Interval of sessions: _____

Total time with staff: _____ Number of sessions: _____

Addition explanations: _____

12. Are you translating materials when necessary for families and students who do not speak/read English?

I certify that the research project will be conducted as described above and that I have read and agreed to the provisions of the "Guidelines for Research in San Francisco Unified School District."

Primary Researcher's Name

Primary Researcher's Signature

Date

FOR OFFICE USE ONLY

DO NOT WRITE BELOW THIS LINE

APPROVAL

Reviewed by _____
Evaluator, RPA

Date _____

Approved by _____
Supervisor, RPA

Date _____

Approved by _____
Division of School Operations

Date _____

NONAPPROVAL

Reviewed by _____
Evaluator, RPA

Date _____

Rejected by _____
Supervisor, RPA

Date _____

Rejected by _____
Division of School Operations

Date _____



SFUSD SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Research, Planning & Accountability Department

For Internal Use Only

Evaluator: _____

Operations: _____

Date Received: _____

District ID Code: _____

Title: _____

FORM 2

Agreement to Submit a Report of Findings Prior to Publication

I promise to submit a report of my research findings to the Research, Planning, and Accountability Department at the San Francisco Unified School District 14 days prior to publication. I will make sure all charts including data from SFUSD include the source, date, and definition of the data described in the report.

I will submit the report by the following date:

Primary Researcher's Name

Primary Researcher's Signature

Date



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PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Research, Planning & Accountability Department

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Evaluator: _____

Operations: _____

Date Received: _____

District ID Code: _____

Title: _____

FORM 3

Agreement to Obtain Active Parental Consent to the Release of Student Data

SFUSD Board of Education Policy 5160 requires active Parental consent/assent. Consent forms must inform the parent/guardian:

1. of the purpose of the study;
2. of what existing data about the students are being requested and/or what new data about the students will be collected and how it will be collected;
3. how information about students will be used and disseminated;
4. that all research instruments are available for review including instruments for primary data collection such as surveys, focus groups protocols, interview protocols or observation protocols; and
5. of how to contact the researcher if the parent or guardian has any questions.

If parents or guardians do not read English, the form must be translated into a language they are able to read. Sample consent forms are provided as Appendix 1, 2 and 3. Please submit consent/assent forms with your research application if necessary.

I certify that I will obtain parental consent for the release of student data for all students whose data I am requesting to obtain from SFUSD. Plus, I will submit all consent forms with my application.

Primary Researcher's Name

Primary Researcher's Signature

Date



For Internal Use Only	
Evaluator:	_____
Operations:	_____
Date Received:	_____
District ID Code:	_____
Title:	_____

FORM 4

Request to Administer a Survey in SFUSD

Please attach a draft of the survey and any supplementary materials and documentation that will assist in assessing the validity and reliability of the survey or battery of surveys.

SURVEY ELEMENTS

The following elements ought to be standardized in all surveys administered at SFUSD:

1. SURVEY TITLE: All surveys must be clearly titled and include:
 - a. The name of the organization administering the survey
 - b. The survey title
 - c. Date/semester when survey is being administered

2. INTRODUCTION: All surveys ought to have an introduction that specifies
 - a. The name of the organization administering the survey and either SFUSD or the site where the survey is being administered (i.e., UCLA/SFUSD)
 - b. The title of the survey
 - c. The semester when the survey is being administered (i.e., Fall 2011)

3. FIDELITY: All survey items ought to align with the stated purpose of the survey and their construct ought to lend itself to meaningful tabulation and analysis. Therefore, all scales ought to be carefully constructed and validated.

4. RELEVANCE, AUDIENCE, AND LENGTH: When considering your survey for approval, we will carefully consider the relevance of your survey within the context of your research and its relevance to the audience (respondents). Consider carefully the length of your survey, the appropriateness for your audience, and limit your questions to what is going to provide actionable findings.

Please note that all surveys that involve interviewing students in elementary and secondary schools must adhere to the requirements of the *Protection of Pupil Rights Act* and related amendments (see 20 US Code Section 123h and amendments included in Section 1061 of the No Child Left Behind Acts of 2002).

Specifically, without written consent from a student's parent, questions may not be asked about the following:

- Political affiliations or beliefs of the students or the student's parent;
- Mental or psychological problems of the students or the student's family;
- Sex behavior or attitudes;
- Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- Critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or the student's parent; or
- Income (other than that required by law to determine eligibility for participation or for receiving financial assistance under such a program).

When answering the following questions, refer to the specific goals and objectives of your research and the context in which this survey or surveys fit within your overall goals and objectives of your research study.

1. Purpose and Justification

a) Why is this survey being administered?

b) What are the goals and objectives of this survey?

c) What are your expected findings?

d) How are the participants likely to benefit from completing this survey?

2. Survey Sample

Who is being surveyed?

What is the sample size and how did you determine it?

4. Survey Occurrence

Please submit an outline of your survey cycle, including administration procedures and dates.

5. Survey Use

Include a reporting plan that identifies how and to whom the survey findings will be presented and disseminated.



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Title:	_____

FORM 5

Request for SFUSD Administrative Data to Use in a Research Study

According to the Education Code, people who can receive SFUSD data for the purposes of research are:

Organizations conducting research for SFUSD for the purpose of developing, validating, and administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction. These organizations must also have gone through the research application process and received approval to do research from SFUSD’s Research, Planning and Accountability Department, SFUSD’s area superintendent, and school site principal (if necessary).

If your request for secondary or “administrative” data used for the purposes of research fits within the above parameters, please fill out Form 6 and fill out and submit the data use and confidentiality agreement template in Appendix 4 included in this research application.

Please include any supplementary materials that will assist in understanding what data is being requested.

1. Purpose for Data Request

Please provide a short description of the purpose of this data request.

2. Use of the Data

Please provide a short description of how you will use these data.

3. Reporting of findings

Please provide a short description of how you plan on reporting the findings from your work with the data.

4. Do you plan to publish the findings from your analyses of this data to the wider public? (Circle one)

YES NO

5. Years of data being requested: _____

6. Timeline for receiving data:

When do you need this data request fulfilled by: _____

7. If you are an external organization, you will need to establish a Data Use and Confidentiality Agreement between your organization and SFUSD. Please draft this agreement and submit it with your application. See Appendix 4 for a draft template meant to guide the crafting of your agreement.

8. List of data variables

Please use the space below to list the specific data elements you are requesting. Please attach and reference a separate list if you need more space.

[Empty box for listing data variables]

APPENDIX 2

Parent/Guardian Consent Form for Pupil Participation in Research Study (SAMPLE)

Dear Parent:

I am conducting research in your child's school and would like to include your child in my study. My study is about _____

_____.

The information from the study will be used to _____

_____.

Your child's participation in the study will involve [describe procedures, out of class time, total time requirements, release of student information, any potential benefits or risks associated with participation].

Your child's participation in the study is strictly voluntary. Agreeing or not agreeing to have your child included in the study will not affect your child's school status in any way. In addition, your child may withdraw from the study at any time.

[Description of extent and means of assuring confidentiality.]

Please let me know, by checking the appropriate box below, whether or not you wish the school to allow the release of your child's information for this study.

I would like your approval for your child to participate in this study. If you would like to review a copy of the research instruments or have other questions you would like to discuss, please feel free to call me at: _____.

Sincerely,

Researcher
Organization and Address

I give my consent for my child _____ to participate in the research study being conducted by _____.

I do not give my consent for my child _____ to participate in the research study conducted by _____.

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

APPENDIX 3

Student Assent to Participate in Research Study (SAMPLE)

[Appropriate for use with students in grades 6 through 12.]
[Student must be allowed to keep a copy of this Assent Form]

I agree to participate in the study about [topic].

I understand that my participation in the study will involve [describe procedures, time requirements, release of student information, any potential benefits or risks associated with participation].

I understand that my participation in the study is strictly voluntary. Agreeing or not agreeing to participate in the study will not affect my school status, grades, or opportunities in any way.

I understand that I may withdraw from the study at any time, even after I begin participating.

I understand that my privacy will be protected in the following way: [Description of extent and means of assuring confidentiality.]

I understand that if I have any questions about this study or my participation in it, I can contact [RESEARCHER] at [organization and phone number].

I agree to participate in the research study about [topic] being conducted by [researcher/ organization]

I do not agree to participate in the research study about [topic] being conducted by [researcher/ organization]

Student Signature

Date

Student Name (please print)

APPENDIX 4

Agreement for Confidential Data Exchange Between SFUSD and Research Organization

This Data Exchange and Confidentiality Agreement (“Agreement”) between San Francisco Unified School District (hereinafter referred to as SFUSD), and _____ (“Research Organization”) describes the research project proposed by Research Organization, and the means to be used by Research Organization to ensure the confidentiality and security of information and data exchanged between SFUSD and Research Organization.

I. GENERAL TERMS

The Family Education Rights Privacy Act permits the release of personally identifiable student data without prior written parental consent if the release is to “organizations conducting studies for, or on behalf of, educational agencies or institutions for the purpose of developing, validating, or administering predictive tests, administering student aid programs, and improving instruction, if such studies are conducted in such a manner as will not permit the personal identification of students and their parents by persons other than representatives of such organizations and such information will be destroyed when no longer needed for the purpose for which it is conducted.” 20 USC 1232g(b)(1)(F).

A. PURPOSE

[Summarize the purpose of the research.]

B. SCOPE

[Describe the scope of the research. Who is being studied, which school(s), grades, what year(s), what topics, what type of access (data or surveys or interviews) etc.]

C. NATURE OF DATA

To accomplish the purpose described above, Research Organization will seek to answer the following research questions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

To address these questions, Research Organization requests the specific SFUSD records or data listed in Attachment A. *[Each requested record or data field must be listed with specificity.]*

D. TRANSFER OF DATA

SFUSD and Research Organization shall use a secure, mutually agreed upon means and schedule for transferring confidential information. At no time will data be sent electronically to or from the parties.

[Describe method of exchanging data and schedule for the exchange]

E. PERIOD OF AGREEMENT

This Agreement shall be effective when signed by both parties, and will terminate on _____ unless terminated earlier by either party pursuant to Section H.

F. RESEARCH ORGANIZATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Research Organization agrees to the following confidentiality statements:

1. Research Organization acknowledges that these data are confidential data and proprietary to SFUSD, and agree to protect such information from unauthorized disclosures and to comply with all applicable District, Local, State and Federal confidentiality laws and regulations including but not limited to the California

Education Code and the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

2. Research Organization shall designate _____, [title], as the person responsible for the security and confidentiality of the data and will notify SFUSD immediately in writing of any change in designee.
3. Research Organization will use appropriate safeguards to prevent the use or disclosure of the information other than as provided by this data use Agreement.
4. Research Organization shall instruct all staff with access to confidential information about the requirements for handling confidential information, and require each person who will have access to confidential information to sign an agreement to comply with the confidentiality provisions of this Agreement, and any other confidentiality requirements of the Research Organization.
5. Research Organization shall not assign this Agreement or any portion thereof to a subcontractor or other third party without the prior written consent of SFUSD, and any attempted assignment without such prior written consent in violation of this Section shall automatically terminate this Agreement.
6. Research Organization agrees that the research shall be conducted in a manner that does not permit personal identification of parents and students by individuals other than representatives of the Research Organization that have legitimate interests in the information.
7. Research Organization will report only aggregate data and will not report any individual data, nor will data be reported in a manner that permits indirect identification of any individual.
8. Research Organization will not contact the individuals included in the data sets without obtaining advance written authorization from SFUSD.
9. Research Organization shall obtain advance written consent from parents and SFUSD prior to distribution of surveys to students. Parents shall receive notice of the opportunity to review the surveys prior to distribution. [Attach surveys to Agreement].
10. Research Organization shall not re-disclose any individual-level data with or without identifying information to any other requesting individuals, agencies, or organizations without prior written authorization by SFUSD.
11. Research Organization shall use the data only for the purpose described in Section A above. These data shall not be used for personal gain or profit.
12. Research Organization shall keep all information furnished by SFUSD in a space physically and electronically secure from unauthorized access. Information and data shall be stored and processed in a way that unauthorized persons cannot retrieve nor alter the information by means of a computer, remote terminal, or other means. No data will be stored on laptop computers or other portable computing devices or media, e.g., flash drives, etc.
13. Research Organization shall permit examination and on-site inspections by SFUSD upon reasonable advance notice for the purpose of ascertaining whether the terms of this Agreement are being met.
14. Research Organization agrees that the confidential data shall be destroyed when no longer needed for the purposes for which the study was conducted.
15. Research Organization agrees that SFUSD shall not be named or otherwise identified in the study.

G. LIABILITY

Research Organization agrees to be responsible for, and assumes all liability for, any claims, costs, damages or expenses (including reasonable attorneys' fees) that may arise from or relate to the Research Organization's intentional or negligent release of personally identifiable student, parent or staff data ("Claims"). Research Organization agrees to hold harmless SFUSD and pay any costs incurred by SFUSD in connection with any Claim. The provisions of this Section shall survive the termination or expiration of this Agreement.

H. TERMINATION

1. This Agreement may be terminated as follows, after notification via the United States Postal Service (certified mail or registered mail) or recognized overnight delivery service (e.g., UPS, DHL or FedEx):
 - a. By either party immediately in the event of a material breach of this Agreement by another party.
 - b. By either party after 30 days advance written notice to the other party, for any reason or no reason.

2. The confidentiality provisions of this Agreement shall survive the termination of the Agreement. If this Agreement is terminated by either party for material breach or for any other reason with 30 days written notice, the confidential information shall be returned or destroyed within 7 days of the termination. If the Agreement terminates at the end of the term described in Section D, Research Organization shall return or destroy all confidential information when it is no longer needed for the study. Such return or destruction shall occur within 7 days after it is no longer needed for the study.

3. Destruction of the confidential information shall be accomplished by utilizing an approved method of confidential destruction, including shredding, burning or certified/witnessed destruction for physical materials and verified erasure of magnetic media using approved methods of electronic file destruction.

I. GENERAL UNDERSTANDING

1. This Agreement contains the entire understanding of the parties and may only be amended in writing signed by the parties.

2. This Agreement shall be governed by and construed under the laws of the State of California.

3. Any waiver by any party of the violation of any provision of this Agreement shall not bar any action for subsequent violations of the Agreement.

Signed:

FOR SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Research Department

FOR RESEARCH ORGANIZATION

Name and Title

Name and Title

Date

Date

Signed:

FOR SAN FRANCISCO UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Legal Department

Name and Title

Date

ATTACHMENT A: SPECIFIC RECORDS OR DATA ELEMENTS

[Each specific requested record or data element must be listed with a rationale explaining its purpose and use. It is not sufficient to list categories of data such as “student demographic data.” Each requested data field must be listed with specificity (i.e., student name, date of birth, ethnicity, gender, primary language, etc), and have its purpose and use defined.]