

REGULATION

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Related Entries: IEA

Responsible: OFFICE OF ACCOUNTABILITY

RESEARCH

A. PURPOSE

To provide guidelines and procedures that will ensure that all requests to conduct research in Anne Arundel County Public Schools (AACPS) are specifically linked to the improvement of instruction within the school system and sensitive to available time and resources of students and staff. This will ensure that all research conducted is in accordance with Board of Education of Anne Arundel County (Board) policy.

B. BACKGROUND

AACPS receives frequent requests from individuals, government agencies, and various organizations to participate in numerous research projects. Well-defined procedures are required to ensure the confidentiality of any participants involved, to avoid involvement in personal values, attitudes, and beliefs, and to minimize any intrusions upon the delivery of instruction while encouraging the use of research projects that contribute significantly toward improving student achievement.

C. DEFINITIONS

1. **Research** – includes any surveys, questionnaires, national norming studies, or other methodologies that involve students, parents/guardians, or school system staff. This includes memoranda of understanding, grants, and other agreements that require AACPS data.

D. PROCEDURES

1. Application Process

- a. Survey data involving students or staff in AACPS that is collected by Central Office staff for use in a specific instructional program, office, or division requires the approval of the Chief Accountability Officer on behalf of the Superintendent.

- b. Research studies or surveys undertaken shall conform to local, State, and federal policies, laws, and regulations and, as appropriate, college and university institutional review boards (IRB).
- c. The Chief Accountability Officer or the Chief Accountability Officer's designee shall be responsible for implementing the following procedures for reviewing and evaluating all such requests in accordance with Board policy.
- d. Research requests shall be reviewed by a Research Review Committee (Committee) chaired by the Chief Accountability Officer or, in the Chief Accountability Officer's absence, the Senior Manager of Research. This Committee shall be comprised of at least three members:
 - i. Applicants shall submit research requests in writing to the Senior Manager of Research to begin the review process.
 - ii. Research requests shall include a completed *Internal Application to Conduct Research* or *External Application to Conduct Research* including the following information:
 - a) Purpose of the study;
 - b) Potential benefits, both immediate and long-term, to improving the delivery of instruction to students in AACPS;
 - c) Contributions to the overall body of knowledge or instructional pedagogy in the discipline;
 - d) A sample of all instruments to be used;
 - e) A timeline for implementation of the study, particularly if it involves students, parents/guardians, and employees;
 - i) Specific attention should be given to the impact of the study upon the instructional day for both students and teachers.
 - ii) It is the position of AACPS that no students or employees may participate in any research, study, or survey unless they agree to participate. Prior written parental/guardian permission must be obtained for student participation unless the student is over 18 years old and can sign on the student's own behalf. The only exception to this research requirement involves studies or surveys conducted by AACPS to improve its internal operations and services.
 - iii) Research involving human subjects must have an approved IRB to

conduct such research.

2. Research Review Committee

- a. The Committee shall review all research requests using the following criteria:
 - i. Usefulness to AACPS and the educational profession;
 - ii. State and federal laws and regulations;
 - iii. Board policy and regulations;
 - iv. Demands upon staff, students, and parents/guardians;
 - v. Acceptable research design and methodology;
 - vi. Access to confidential information; and
 - vii. Feasibility and costs to AACPS and the researcher.
- b. The Committee shall review and approve a letter of notification to a student's parent(s)/guardian(s) regarding the student's participation in the study. As appropriate, a similar letter of notification shall also be reviewed and approved by this Committee for staff participation in the study.
- c. Correspondence between the researcher and parents/guardians shall be reviewed and approved by designees of the Chief Accountability Officer before it may be submitted to parents/guardians. Such correspondence shall include:
 - i. The purpose of the instrument;
 - ii. A sample of the instrument's content;
 - iii. Pertinent background information concerning the instrument; and
 - iv. A statement to the parent(s)/guardian(s) indicating that the parent(s)/guardian(s) or student has a right to participate.
- d. Each Committee member shall provide a brief rationale for the decision to approve or deny each request.
- e. The Committee shall vote whether to approve or deny a research request. The Senior Manager of Research, on behalf of the Committee, shall make the recommendation to the Chief Accountability Officer.

3. Other Research Requests

Research requests involving data that is publicly available via other resources will not be considered by the Committee.

Regulation History: Issued 09/01/10; Revised 12/12/18; Technical Edit 07/02/25

Note Previous Regulation History: Replaces AR 604.01, issued 06/17/81 and revised 01/17/90

Legal Reference: None