

RESEARCH/SURVEY GUIDELINES

In order for ANY ONE to do any research/surveying in the district, the district has to agree that the research/survey is for the district's benefit or, at least, will not be to the district's (or the students') detriment. If ANY ONE asks students to take instructional time to complete a survey, we need to ensure that the principal investigator has met minimum requirements. If you are unfamiliar with the Human Subjects Review process at WWU, they have a website and a detailed process that they require for research to be approved. We use their protocols, as needed. Please see <http://www.wvu.edu/depts/rsp/humanpp.html>

In order to do any research in the Bellingham School District, we require a complete proposal, including a research design description that includes purpose and benefit. This item may help us to decide if we see some value in the research for us or see only value and time investment for the researcher. In the case of the latter, we have never approved the research proposal, even when the request came from UW and Harvard. The research description should include the number of subjects, amount of time, amount of intrusion, and a copy of parent permission slip. Note that subjects under the age of 18 will always require this, as long as they are being asked to participate during class time. Research proposals that are unduly intrusive into the instructional time of students have not routinely been approved. We take seriously the responsibility for determining what students do during school time. Parents need to know that we take this responsibility seriously and do not open the classrooms to just anyone without a thorough review. The proposal documents must include copies of the interview protocol and some information about the use or and planned publication of the results of the study. We must have a guarantee of confidentiality of subjects and a promise - and follow-through - that the district will receive a copy of the written report prior to release to the general public.

Over the last few years, we have had contact with several students who have created culminating projects involving student interviews or other student-involved activities. Most of them were well-conceived and enacted. In all cases, we have proceeded based on nationally-recognized protocols for research design and development.

Please send all requests/documentation to:

Bellingham School District
Deputy Superintendent
1306 Dupont Street
Bellingham, WA 98225