



This form **MUST** be completed and approved by the Office for Accountability, Research, and Measurement **PRIOR** to collecting data and conducting research with Pasco County Schools.

Instructions

1. Read the instructions enclosed in this document.
2. Sign and date the section titled IRB Applicant Agreement.
3. Include two (2) paper copies of the completed document and one electronic copy (Flash drive) in the package that contains the application

Note: Email applications will NOT be accepted.

Mail the complete document to

Rebeca Arndt, Ph.D.
Pasco County Schools
Office for Accountability, Research, and Measurement
7227 Land O'Lakes Blvd.
Land O'Lakes, FL 34638

IMPORTANT: When referencing an approved research study, use the researcher's name from the application AND the PCS IRB assigned number.

For questions about the application process, contact Rebeca Arndt at rarndt@pasco.k12.fl.us or

813-794-2337

Instructions for Conducting Research in Pasco County Schools And IRB Applicant Agreement

1. Introduction

All individuals and entities/organizations seeking to conduct research in the Pasco County Schools or to obtain student/staff data from the district must have their proposals reviewed by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) within the Department of Accountability, Research, and Measurement (ARM). Interested research investigators should receive their IRB approval prior to communicating with district or school staff regarding their study or participation.

Any research that involves human subjects requires IRB approval. Even if IRB approval is obtained, it does not guarantee that the research will be allowed within a particular school. It is under the principal(s)'s purview to accept or decline participation in the study. Participation of teachers and students/families is voluntary.

2. Institutional Review Board Guidelines

The IRB committee will review research proposals that meet, but not limited to, the following approval criteria:

1. The research is consistent with Pasco County Schools' policies and must protect the privacy of all participants.
2. The research aligns with the district's mission, initiatives, and strategic plan.
3. The content of the research is not considered to be controversial or inflammatory and aligns with the district, state, and federal laws and policies.
4. The research is valuable to the district or will significantly contribute to the field of education.
5. The research design and methodology of the study including all data collection instruments is sound and uses valid and reliable techniques.
6. The research does not interfere with the educational programs of the district or other existing research and abides by strong educational practices.
7. The benefits of the research outweigh the costs.
8. The expectations for district, schools, staff, and potential participants' tasks are clearly defined, particularly in terms of time.
9. PCS staff serving as facilitators will not assume responsibility for study recruitment, completion of any project, and/or for providing technical assistance.

10. The research does not interfere with instructional time or disrupt school activities.

3. Institutional Review Board Process

Application to Conduct Research in Pasco Country Schools can be submitted yearlong however, the reviews will be held at the times listed below:

IRB	IRB Submission Due Date	Projected Response
Spring	March 1	April 15
Summer	May 15	July 1
Fall	September 1	October 15
Winter	December 1	January 15

** While the District will strive to communicate an application decision by the dates listed above, there may be delays due to unforeseen circumstances. Data requests that take more than one hour to fulfill are charged an hourly rate of \$125.*

The IRB Process include the following steps:

1. The applicant completes and submits the Application to Conduct Research in Pasco Country Schools, the IRB Applicant Agreement, and all attachments listed on the Research Application Checklist.
2. Internal District Reviewers and the IRB Committee will formally review the request.
3. The applicant receives an email of the decision (approval, approval with conditions or denial).
4. The approval is pending the execution of the district data agreement.
5. The district's data use agreement is valid for the duration listed in the IRB approval letter received by the IRB applicant (e.g., 1 year).
6. No research activities are allowed until the data use agreement is executed.
7. At the end of the study, a summary of the findings must be submitted to the ARM department.

4. Consent

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) are based on the argue that information about an individual student is private and confidential and generally may only be accessed with parental consent.

The Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) is a federal law that affords definite rights to parents of minor students in relation to surveys that ask questions of a personal nature. The law requires that schools obtain written consent from parents before minor students are required to participate in any U.S.

Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) has strengthened privacy safeguards of education records through this law, refining and clarifying family rights and agency responsibilities to protect those rights. FERPA gives parents the right to review and confirm the accuracy of education records. These rights transfer to the student when the student turns eighteen (18) years old or attends a post-secondary institution. At this time, the student is designated as an “eligible student” and holds the same rights as his or her parents held with respect to education records.

This and other United States privacy laws ensure that information about citizens collected by schools and government agencies can be released only for specific and legally defined purposes. The primary rights of parents and eligible students under FERPA include the right to:

- Inspect, and review education records.
- Seek and amend education records.
- Have some control over the disclosure of information from education record

Research requiring student participation may require written parent/guardian consent prior to study activities commencing. Some research requiring the participation of district staff may require written consent. The IRB will determine if consent/assent is required and whether passive or active consent is necessary.

5. Participant Incentives

Student/participant incentives must be clearly described in the application and application attachments. Researchers are allowed to offer incentives of less than \$50 in the form of gift cards provided directly. Individual instances of district vendors providing incentives to participants in research studies must be reviewed by the district’s IRB committee and aligned to the district’s board rules and regulations.

6. Applicant Agreement

The IRB applicant submitting a research application and proposal to be reviewed by Pasco County Schools’ IRB Committee must acknowledge and abide by the following rules and regulations:

1. No contact with potential participants, schools and departments can be made until IRB approval is granted by Pasco Country School.
2. No records and reports of Pasco Country Schools shall be released to any party unless such release is in strict accordance with the provisions, and to the entities identified in, Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) 20 U.S.C. §1232g; 34 CFR Part 99, chapter 119 and section 1002.22, Florida Statutes, Section 1002.22, Florida Statutes, 45 CFR part 46, subpart D, Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), Parents' Bill of Rights, and Pasco County Schools Board Policies.
3. Data for which access is granted by Pasco Country Schools will be used solely for the research for which IRB approval was obtained.
4. Consent forms and student assent are required for research involving staff, students, or families in Pasco Country Schools.
5. IRB approval received from Pasco Country Schools does not constitute an endorsement for the research project. Approval reflects only permission to request the voluntary cooperation of PCS staff, students, or families.
6. All research investigators requesting access to students, their families, or other district staff must complete fingerprinting and a background check before initiating any research activities. Study investigator(s) will be responsible for the costs.
7. No study findings will be published or released that identify by name, the district, its schools, students, or staff without prior approval.
8. For research applicants who received approval for their IRB, data retention is available only for the time period listed in the data use agreement signed and dated by the IRB applicants which is the same as the time period listed in the IRB approval letter.
9. Data received from the district by research applicants who obtained IRB approval will be destroyed as explained in the signed and dated data use agreement.

Applicant Signature:

Date: