

**PCS Research Guide:
Guidelines for Conducting Research in Pinellas County Schools
Department of Assessment, Accountability, and Research**

Introduction:

Pinellas County Schools (PCS) recognizes the value of educational research and its contribution to the field of education. The District also acknowledges the benefit of research in planning for the needs of students, measuring the effectiveness of programs and instruction, developing curriculum and instructional programs, and improving educational practice. Pinellas County Schools frequently receives requests from government agencies, private organizations, institutions of higher education, and independent researchers to conduct research studies with students and/or their families, teachers, principals/administrators, and other school-based staff. As the district receives many requests to conduct research, a formal process to review these requests has been developed. The PCS Institutional Review Board (IRB) within the office of Assessment, Accountability, and Research must review and approve any research involving primary data collection or secondary data conducted in the District including, but not limited to:

- any research with PCS stakeholders (students, families, school staff, non-school based staff, or staff of organizations contracted by PCS);
- any research conducted in a PCS school or other physical or virtual PCS site;
- any evaluations (even if they do not constitute human subjects research) that involve students conducted by an external organization, even when initiated by PCS

The primary purpose of the PCS IRB is to protect the well-being of PCS stakeholders and assess the burden of participation in research studies. The PCS IRB may approve research studies, while ensuring that research activities do not compromise the privacy of our students, parents, and staff, or disrupt teaching/learning for students, teachers, and administrators.

Study investigators interested in conducting research in the District *may not* contact individual schools, District departments/offices, or PCS staff requesting research participation prior to PCS IRB approval.

Please note that **no** study is exempt from PCS IRB review, even if the IRB of record for the researcher/study investigator has made that determination. Federal regulations stipulate that certain research activities may be exempt from regulatory requirements of the Common Rule (45 CFR 46), resulting in an exempt determination by the study investigator's institution. However, the exempt categories set forth by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP), does not mean that the research activities are exempt from state laws, institutional policies, or the requirements set by the PCS IRB.

To receive approval, researchers/study investigators must submit an application packet to the office of Assessment, Accountability, and Research, which includes documentation of approval from their IRB of record. The PCS IRB serves as the IRB of record only for PCS affiliates or research carried out on behalf of District. The PCS IRB may require external researchers to modify research proposals approved by their IRB of record. These required modifications, including, but not limited to, any/all changes to consent procedures or documents, must also be reviewed and approved by the external researcher's IRB of record.

Types of Research

To be considered by the PCS IRB, research must fit into one of three categories: 1) professional research; 2) PCSB contracted or grant funded research; 3) research to meet degree seeking requirements*¹

¹ *Studies designed to meet requirements for receiving credit in high school, undergraduate, or graduate courses, seminars, practicums, or training workshops are not eligible for the review process.

Research is defined as a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or contribute to generalizable knowledge. Research comprises various measurement and inquiry activities that include both quantitative and qualitative study activities and may include any one or a combination of the following:

- Interviews, surveys, focus groups;
- Attitude, attribute, experience, interest skills and abilities, and personality inventories and scales;
- Observations and questionnaires designed to collect data on classroom procedures, interaction patterns, teaching/learning behaviors, methods and materials of instruction in use, or use of classroom and building facilities;
- Case studies, ethnographic analysis;
- Analysis of written materials or other artifacts, including student work products;
- Secondary analysis of data;
- Experimental designs to examine causal relationships;
- Cost/benefit analysis or return on investment;
- Development and validation of instruments and procedures intended to describe status or progress and to evaluate outcomes;
- Assessment in connection with projects and research-oriented activities;
- Studies of staff organization, staff utilization, or staff reaction to organizational patterns or to instructional programs and materials for students, staff, and the adult community not conducted by administrators as part of ongoing management activities;
- Studies of the effectiveness of different approaches to instruction, of different instructional materials, or of instructional aides and devices;
- Studies involving the gathering of data on the reaction of staff, students, parents, or the general public to features of the educative process and to issues in education;
- Studies requiring or seeking information about PCS stakeholders

Any research that involves human subjects requires IRB approval. A human subject is defined as: A living individual about whom an investigator conducting research obtains 1) data through intervention or interaction with the individual or 2) identifiable private information.

Researchers/Study Investigators include:

- Individuals not employed by PCS or agencies not contracted with PCS requesting to conduct research;
- Pinellas County Schools (PCS) staff requesting to conduct research for purposes or uses beyond their District role;
- Pinellas County Schools (PCS) staff planning to conduct research within their District role that involves collaboration with non-PCS partners or funding agencies;
- External partners including, agencies, private organizations, or institutions contracted by PCS or partnered with PCS requesting to conduct grant-funded research

Information for Pinellas County Schools Employees

Action research NOT conducted to fulfill educational requirements:

Student/school-based research activities to improve instructional practices are not subject to PCS IRB review if all the following conditions are met:

- The person conducting the action research project is a PCS teacher, principal, or District office staff member
- The PCS staff member will be working in their assigned work location(s)
- The PCS staff member will be working within their regular contracted job responsibilities and assigned content area
- The PCS staff member will be working with their assigned students in their regular classroom/school environment

If all the above conditions are met, the action research project only requires the approval of the principal and/or direct supervisor. If any of the above conditions are not met, or the action research project is part of the PCS staff member's degree or educational requirements, the action research study must be submitted to the PCS IRB for review.

Examples of Action Research Activities

- Using exams to study the effectiveness of small group vs. whole group instruction in the classroom
- An observational study of frequency of the use of flexible seating in the classroom
- Examining various approved instructional strategies without modifying the curriculum

Examples of Activities that are NOT Action Research

- Administering a survey to students
- Students, parents/caregivers, or staff participating in focus groups or interviews
- Administering a survey to families, teachers, or other PCS staff

Please note that teachers may gather and analyze data at any time if the data are being used solely for the improvement of their own professional practice and if the collection of such data would be part of ordinary instructional procedures for their own students. Research of this nature should have the approval of the school principal, but does not require PCS IRB review or approval.

Research conducted as part of a college or university degree program:

Research conducted by PCS employees that is part of a requirement for a degree program; involves a systematic investigation, including research development, testing and evaluation, designed to develop or to contribute to generalizable knowledge; or is necessary to fulfill requirements for a master's thesis, doctoral dissertation, or other research requirements of a College or University requires PCS IRB approval.

Academic study, presentation, or publication (peer-reviewed journal or academic text):

Research conducted by PCS employees that is not contracted, funded, or commissioned by Pinellas County Schools requires PCS IRB approval.

Review Process

All research proposals should be designed to answer informed research questions of educational importance using appropriate methodologies. Fundamentals of the research design, including the theoretical framework, hypotheses, sample selection, instruments, and proposed analyses are expected to support the goals of the research. It is the responsibility of the researcher to communicate these elements clearly in the proposal. Even research that imposes no risks may be rejected by the IRB if they judge it to be poorly designed, described, or justified.

The PCS IRB will review research proposals that meet the following approval criteria:

- The proposed research is compatible with PCS policy and must protect the privacy of all participants and ensure compliance with state and federal laws, including FERPA and PPRA;
- The research is consistent with PCS IRB requirements;
- The proposed research has high value to a particular school or the school system as a whole, or will significantly contribute to the field of education, and/or benefits educators;
- The research design and methodology of the study including all data collection instruments is sound and uses valid and reliable techniques;
- The proposed research does not interfere with the educational programs of the District and is compatible with sound educational practice;
- The proposed research cannot be considered a burden to students, families, or staff. The benefits of the research must outweigh the costs, which include staff/student time and other resources. Evaluating whether the burden is considered excessive is the responsibility of the PCS IRB. However, what is considered burdensome has very different values in different contexts, and ultimately participants will decide whether the cumulative

burden on them is acceptable even if the study is IRB approved;

- The District/school/staffs' tasks are clearly defined and delineated from the responsibilities of the researcher/study investigator. PCS staff, while serving as facilitators, will not assume responsibility for study recruitment, completion of any project, and/or for providing technical assistance;
- Subject/content is not considered to be controversial or inflammatory;
- The proposed research does not unduly interfere with instructional time or disrupt school activities, including local and state assessments. There must be minimal interference with school instruction/operations and relationships between students, parents, and school and District staff;
- The proposed research must document that the researcher or organization has the capacity and experience to successfully complete the project

Once a proposal is submitted, an initial screening is conducted to ensure completeness ([PCS Research Application](#)). If the proposal is incomplete or unclear the researcher is notified by email of needed modifications or additional information. Only complete proposals are reviewed by the PCS IRB according to the posted review schedule (three times per year). After the review, the researcher will receive communication indicating next steps. Next steps could involve modifications to the submitted proposal, submission of additional documentation, and/or clarification of questions/concerns noted by the committee. The next steps process allows the study investigator an opportunity to respond to the IRB before a decision is rendered.

The PCS IRB will make one of the following determinations after reviewing submitted applications:

- **Conditional Approval:** Applicant(s) may receive a conditional approval when the PCS IRB reviews a study proposal and determines that the study would be approved based on federal regulations, institutional policies, and PCS IRB requirements with the exception of one or more specific conditions. When making this determination, the committee will outline the conditions required for final approval and provide the study investigator with a timeline for meeting the conditions. Upon receipt of all items identified in *the conditional approval notice*, the PCS IRB committee will issue a Final Approval that allows data collection for the study to begin.
- **Final Approval:** The research proposal, as submitted, meets all criteria for approval. The date of approval is the date on which the IRB reaches an approval determination with the expiration date noted.
- **Exempt:** The research proposal, as submitted, is considered exempt from PCS IRB oversight; any changes to the submitted protocol would require additional review from the PCS IRB committee prior to implementation. Although the research study is determined as exempt, the PCS IRB may set requirements for study investigator compliance to complete the study activities, particularly, for PCS employees conducting research in the District. Any conditions will be outlined in the decision letter, and the committee will give the applicant an opportunity to respond.
- **Declined:** The PCS IRB makes this determination when the research proposal, as submitted, does not meet the approval criteria, the District cannot accommodate the request, or the PCS IRB cannot describe modifications that might result in approval. When making this determination, the PCS IRB will provide the reasons for the decision. The study investigator shall not conduct any research activities that have been declined in writing by the PCS IRB. If the research proposal is declined, there is no appeal process; however, applicants may request a meeting with the PCS IRB to discuss the reasons for the decision.

The research applicant will be notified by email once a decision has been made.

Please note that researchers/study investigators may begin study activities only after receiving approval by the PCS IRB. Recruitment of a site or use of recruitment materials may not be put into effect until the project is PCS IRB approved. Non-compliance with the requirements set by the PCS IRB will result in suspension or termination of the study; and may also result in suspension of research privileges at the District.

Please be advised that PCS IRB approval does not mandate school/staff/student/family participation in the proposed study; participation in the study remains at the discretion of the PCS contact and *must be voluntary* for any intended participants. PCS IRB approval does not impose any obligation on any person, school, or office to cooperate with researchers/study investigators. An approval letter indicates that the proposal has met the IRB requirements; however, it does NOT commit school(s), staff, or students/families to participate. Principals(s) of designated schools (or Administrators of specific departments) will ultimately accept or decline to participate in accordance with the procedure of the study. All research in schools must be done in cooperation with the principal or their appointed representative to ensure that the research is not disrupting existing school activities.

Researchers must provide the PCS IRB a copy of each report or product developed as a part or outcome of the research project. Researchers may not charge PCS for any of these reports or summaries. AAR reserves the right to provide input that the author will consider prior to dissemination of the results. In addition, if the anonymity of participant(s), school(s), or the District is compromised, AAR reserves the right to restrict dissemination of the results. Any publications resulting from the research including journal articles, book chapter, or dissertation must be submitted to AAR promptly. Researchers/study investigators may be requested to report detailed research findings to interested school personnel at a meeting arranged by AAR.

All researchers/study investigators must agree to maintain the anonymity of individual students, staff members and schools in any report(s) and in any presentations, publication(s), e.g., journal article(s), book(s), etc., which incorporate any information derived from the research conducted within Pinellas County Schools, unless expression permission from the Pinellas County School Board is otherwise provided.

Research Application

Each research proposal must include:

- Abstract: (max 250 words): Please provide a brief, comprehensive summary of your research proposal indicating the purpose of the research, research questions, hypotheses (if applicable), description of research participants, research method(s), & analytic plan.
- Rationale for the study: - state clearly the objectives of the research.
- Literature review/Theoretical framework: Please provide a brief statement of the theoretical basis for the proposed study from prior published research (include reference citations in APA format) and what contribution the findings are expected to make to the field.
- Research questions/hypotheses: Please state briefly the research questions you plan to address, along with any necessary hypotheses.
- Sampling procedures (if applicable): Please describe, in detail, the target population (i.e. grade level, number of schools, specific schools, etc.), sampling frame, and selection procedures for the proposed research.
- Recruitment procedures (if applicable): Please provide details of how study participants will be recruited for participation in the proposed research. To avoid any perceived coercion, any recruitment materials to participate in research/invitation to conduct research are to be printed on the study investigator's letterhead and may not indicate PCS sponsorship of the research study.
- Incentives (if applicable): The research proposal will include a statement of how research participants are to be compensated for their involvement, if at all. Please note that PCS does not permit the use of incentives with students or families (refreshments or token items such as a keychain are permitted). The use of drawings or a lottery system is prohibited for all research participants. Incentives for PCS staff are considered on a case-by-case basis (see p. 9 of this document for more information regarding incentives).
- Data collection methodology Please describe the method of data collection and procedures you plan to use
- Detailed secondary data request (if applicable): Please provide a detailed description of the variables you wish to include in your study, be as specific as possible. Please avoid broad or generic statements such as "demographic information" or "test results." Be sure to include schools, special programs, or departments, where applicable.

- Measures (if applicable): Please describe the instruments of measurement you plan to use. Please include results from pilot testing and/or other evidence for the validity of the instruments. For all research instruments that are not part of the District’s existing assessment program, submit copies of the instruments.
- Analytic plan: Please describe your anticipated analysis plan, including specifics regarding your treatment of the data, statistical or otherwise.
- Timeline: Please provide a chronological sequence of research activities.
- Data procedures: Please detail the data security and data disposal plan. Data security plans should outline how all hard copy and electronic data are securely stored to prevent unauthorized access, disclosure, or loss. Data disposal plans should outline when and how data collected in a study will be destroyed. Federal regulations require that research data and related documents such as consent forms be kept in a secure location for a minimum of three years.
- Human subjects protections (if applicable): Researchers/Study Investigators must provide detailed information explaining how the researcher will address privacy and confidentiality issues, any potential risks to participants, and how those risks will be mitigated.
- Current education on human subject research certificate: (For example <https://phrp.nihtraining.com/users/login.php>)
- Burden to the District: Please describe the burden that your research will have on the District – this applies for research with human subjects and secondary data requests. Depending on the research design, substantial time and effort may be required for staff to provide requested data with the appropriate selection and matching of records and concealment of personal identities. For proposals concerning human subjects research, the proposal will provide a clear rationale for the number of participants, the number of contacts, and the total time required by each participant. The research proposal will clearly state the number of participants, specifying the role of each group of participants. For example: Twenty math teachers in four schools will be observed, six principals will be interviewed, and forty students from five classrooms will be surveyed. The research proposal will clearly state the amount of time to be requested from each participant and when the interaction will occur. For example: Math teachers will be observed for four class sessions during the first two weeks in March.
- Benefit to the District: The proposal must identify the benefits that the research is expected to provide to the District.
- Copies of informed consent – forms must comply with Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) guidelines when applicable.
- Draft copies of any forms, letters, and/or other documents that will be provided to participants or their parents/guardians when applicable.
- Draft copies of a letter of invitation to principals/administrators to conduct research in their schools (or with their departments) when applicable (see procedures for conducting research document page 7 for specifics). This is for IRB review and should not be sent to principals/administrators prior to receiving approval.
- University or Agency IRB approval letter*: Please provide the appropriate IRB documents or evidence that IRB review is not required. Please submit a copy of the IRB application if study is currently under IRB review. Applicants may submit an initial application without University IRB approval attached to begin the review process, but an approval cannot be provided without college/university/agency IRB approval or exemption notification.

Application (Research Proposal) Submission Requirements

The research applicant must submit a completed research application packet for review. The application is available online at [PCS Research Requests](#). The completed application, research proposal, and any required documents should be attached to an email addressed to irb@pcsb.org.

Completed applications and all requested documents must be received and approved by the IRB prior to any research being conducted. Any changes must be approved prior to being implemented. The researcher must provide a copy of all communication with principals, teachers, staff, families, and students throughout the study. Any adverse or unexpected events related to the research must be reported immediately to AAR (727-588-6253).

An application should be submitted well in advance of the proposed research start date (see deadlines - <https://www.pcsb.org/Page/2787>). This ensures adequate time for review, possible modifications, contacting principals and/or other PCS staff, and obtaining final approvals from PCS and the research applicant's IRB. The proposed research start date, listed in the application, must allow for the IRB processing time.

Continuing Review Process

The PCS IRB requires continuing review at intervals appropriate to the specific research, but at least once during the period of approval. Revisions, modifications, and continuing review applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, in the order they are received. Applicants can expect a decision within 30 days after materials are received. Materials should be submitted at least 45 days prior to anticipated commencement of modified research activities, or 45 days before the current approval to conduct research expires.

Consent

The Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA) are based on the premise that information about an individual student is private and confidential and generally may only be accessed with parent consent. Proposed research requiring student participation may require written parent/guardian consent prior to study activities commencing. Research requiring student participation may require written student assent in addition to written parent/guardian consent. Some research requiring staff participation may require written consent. The IRB will determine if consent/assent is required and whether passive or active is necessary.

Written consent is required in, but not limited to, the following circumstances:

- From active participants or from parents/guardians of students under the age of 18 years participating in research projects involving identified students or access to student records
- For student surveys or interviews if they include questions that reveal information referenced in Policy 2416 (see pp. 8-9 for further information)
- From PCS staff, including teachers, who participate in research pursuant to PCS policies and or administrative procedures
- For studies that involve identified personnel or access to personnel records

If consent is required, all consent forms must:

- Use a conversational format that is easily understood by parents/guardians/participants;
- Identify the researcher(s) conducting the study (e.g., graduate student at a local University; National Evaluator, etc.) and include contact information so that the parent or participant may call if there are questions or concerns;
- The purpose(s) for collecting data;
- Information regarding confidentiality;
- A statement regarding participation being entirely voluntary and that participants may withdraw from the study at any time without consequence(s);
- The activities participants will be asked to complete (e.g., participate in a focus group with five other students, complete a survey online, complete a short reading assessment, etc.);
- If the participant will be audio- or video recorded and how privacy will be protected;
- The individual data requested of participants;
- The total amount of time required of the participant;
- Space for either consent or refusal to participate with signature line and date.
- Name, title, and telephone number of the Chair of the Institution's IRB, along with an invitation for participants to call regarding any concerns they have regarding participation in the research;
- Consent and assent forms may not indicate PCS sponsorship of the research study.

I. CONSENT FORM PROCEDURES - STUDENTS

The PCS IRB will determine if passive or active consent is required.

The researcher/study investigator will coordinate with school(s)/study site(s) and arrange for distribution and collection of parent/guardian consent forms;

The parent/guardian consent form must be signed and collected prior to any involvement of a student in research; Failure to return the signed parent/guardian consent form will exclude the student from participating; Verification of parent/guardian signatures collected by the researcher or designated staff will be the responsibility of the school principal or research sponsor at study sites. The principal/sponsor will identify for PCS staff the students permitted to participate in the study;

A copy of the signed parent/guardian consent form is to be filed in the student's cumulative folder; Parent/guardian consent forms must be made available in the parent's native language if the parent is not fluent in English. It is not acceptable to rely on the student to translate the information provided in the consent form to their parent/guardian(s).

The researcher/study investigator will provide parent/guardian(s) with a copy of the signed consent form; The PCS IRB may request copies of signed consent forms from the researcher/study investigator at any time to ensure compliance.

II. CONSENT FORM PROCEDURES – STAFF/FAMILIES

The researcher/study investigator will coordinate with school(s)/study site(s) and arrange for distribution and collection of staff or family member consent forms;

The consent form must be signed and collected prior to any involvement of staff or families in research; A copy of the signed consent form is to be filed with the principal/research sponsor;

Parent/guardian consent forms must be made available in the parent's native language if the parent is not fluent in English. It is not acceptable to rely on the student to translate the information provided in the consent form to their parent/guardian(s);

The researcher/study investigator will provide parent/guardian(s) with a copy of the signed consent form; The PCS IRB may request copies of signed consent forms from the researcher/study investigator at any time to ensure compliance.

Policy 2416

Researcher(s) must include in the application (proposal) a statement as to whether the research seeks to elicit information from students regarding any of the following eight areas specified in PCS Policy 2416. Written consent from parent/guardian must be obtained prior to eliciting the information for students under the age of 18. If the student is 18 years of age or older, the student may provide his/her own written consent before providing the information. Some studies may require parent/guardian consent and student assent.

- political affiliations or beliefs of the student or the student's parent;
- mental and psychological problems of the student or the student's family;
- sexual behavior or attitudes;
- illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
- critical appraisals of other individuals with whom respondents have close family relationships;
- legally recognized privileged or analogous relationships, such as those of lawyers, physicians, and ministers;
- religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
- Income (other than that required by law to determined eligibility for participation in a program or before receiving financial assistance under such program).

Researchers/Study Investigators must include the following with their recruitment/consent materials if the proposed research seeks to elicit information from students regarding any of the eight areas specified in PCS Policy 2416.

Participation Voluntary

No student shall be required to participate in such a survey if the student (or the student's parent, if the student is less than eighteen (18) years of age), objects to participation.

Right to Inspect

A student (or the student's parent, if the student is less than eighteen (18) years of age), has the right to inspect any such survey instrument before the survey is administered or distributed to students if a request is made within a reasonable period of time. Parents also have the right to be advised of arrangements that will be made to protect student privacy. Student survey instruments and teacher directions for administering the survey will be available at each participating school within a reasonable period of time prior to the survey administration.

Failure to comply with all federal, state, and District policies, and PCS IRB requirements around privacy and consent will result in an investigation by PCS and other appropriate authorities. The outcome of the investigation may lead to corrective action, suspension or termination of research, or other disciplinary actions.

Research Incentive Guidelines

Students

Students may not receive direct compensation, rewards, or other incentives for participation in research conducted in Pinellas County Schools. Students may not earn extra credit or participation points for participation in research. Students may receive a small token for their participation such as a keychain. Refreshments may be provided.

Parent/Guardian/Families

Parents, guardians, and family members of PCS students may not receive direct compensation, rewards, or other incentives for their participation in research conducted in Pinellas County Schools. Parents, guardians, and family members are permitted to receive a small token for participation such as a book. Refreshments may be provided.

Staff Members/Schools

PCS staff may receive incentives for their participation in research activities, amounts are considered on a case-by-case basis. The incentive must be offered to all persons recruited for the study. PCS teachers are not permitted to receive incentives for research participation during instructional time.

Random drawings, raffles, sweepstakes, or lottery schemes as incentives are not permitted for any PCS stakeholder.

In-kind service to the school(s), or monetary donations to school funds are also acceptable forms of research incentives. Compensation and/or incentives must be clearly stated in the research application and must be IRB approved prior to research activities being conducted.

Methods used to recruit and compensate research participants must be free from coercion or undue influence, respect the privacy rights of prospective participants, and provide for their fair and unbiased selection. As with the informed consent process, research applicants/study investigators and the PCS IRB must consider the content, comprehensibility, and voluntariness of the methods used to recruit and compensate participants.

Letter of Invitation to Principals/Administrators (If applicable)

Approval by the PCS IRB does not guarantee access to any particular school, individual, or data source. Principal(s), or other PCS staff dependent on the research proposal, may choose that their school/program/staff/students not participate in the research, or may withdraw their school/program from participation at any time without any consequence. The letter of invitation should be included with the research application and will be reviewed by the PCS IRB committee as part of the review process; the letter of invitation should not be sent to any PCS stakeholder without PCS IRB approval.

The principal is entitled to review the complete research application on file with AAR and to contact the department to discuss the proposed research.

The letter of invitation to the principal should outline the research design/methodology and provide enough information to assist the principal to make an informed decision about their school's participation. This would include what is most pertinent to the impact of the research on the school (including burden and benefits to students and staff), as well as the following:

- The researcher/study investigator's credentials;
- Rationale for selecting particular school(s);
- How research participants will be identified/recruited;
- Plan(s) for how to schedule data collection activities so as to not interfere with instructional time;
- Procedures for managing time commitment involved for staff and students;
- Detailed explanation regarding the use of school equipment (e.g., computers for taking surveys);
- Procedures for obtaining consent;
- Human subjects protections concerning confidentiality and anonymity and any possible risks/benefits of participation for research subjects;
- Intended uses of the research findings;
- If a study involves a randomized control trial (RCT), principal approval should be requested after randomization has taken place; principals should be informed of whether their school will be in the control or treatment group.

Compliance

Research conducted in PCS must comply with all federal, state, and District policies and PCS IRB requirements. All research activities, including data collection from or about individual students, parents, or staff, must comply with the following:

- The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) (20 U.S.C. § 1232g; 34 CFR Part 99) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records. The law applies to all schools that receive funds under an applicable program of the U.S. Department of Education.
<https://www2.ed.gov/policy/gen/guid/fpco/ferpa/index.html>
- Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA). The PPRA applies to the programs and activities of a State educational agency (SEA), local educational agency (LEA), or other recipient of funds under any program funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It governs the administration to students of a survey, analysis, or evaluation that concerns one or more of eight protected areas.
<https://studentprivacy.ed.gov/resources/protection-pupil-rights-amendment-ppra-general-guidance>
- Florida Legislation regarding student records. See §§ 1002.22, 1002.221, and others, F.S.
http://www.leg.state.fl.us/statutes/index.cfm?App_mode=Display_Statute&URL=1000-1099/1002/Sections/1002.22.html
- State Board Rules (6B-1.001 & 6B-1.006, F.A.C.) <https://www.flrules.org/gateway/RuleNo.asp?ID=6B-1.001>
<https://www.flrules.org/gateway/ruleno.asp?id=6B-1.006>
- Florida Department of Education Rules regarding the release of student records
<http://info.fldoe.org/docushare/dsweb/Get/Document-5134/releaserecords.pdf>
- Florida Jessica Lunsford Act as described in Florida Statutes. See §§ 1012.465, .467, and .468, F.S.
<http://pcsb.schoolwires.net/Page/2781>
- Pinellas County School Board Policy 2416 – please see “Student Code of Conduct”
<https://www.pcsb.org/Page/3946>