



APPLICATION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Pajaro Valley Unified School District (PVUSD) recognizes the value of high-quality research in advancing the field of educational practice. All researchers interested in conducting research in PVUSD will be required to submit a proposal describing all required elements as requested in this application. Any individual or entity seeking to conduct research in PVUSD must adhere to the regulations set forth by federal regulations, relevant District Board Policy, and the requirements described within this application. Only proposals that are deemed to be well-designed, relevant to educational practice, and aligned to district priorities will be considered for approval.

Considerations for Approval

The following elements will be used in the consideration of approval to conduct research in PVUSD:

1. *The research is aligned with PVUSD's Guidelines for Research:* The research must be aligned with three guidelines for research: 1) the research must be connected to PVUSD's priorities as outlined in District LCAP Goals (www.pvUSD.net/lcap); 2) the research must require low resources – time, money, effort from the district; and, 3) the research must have potential for positive impact. Check the district's website for further details of the district's priorities (www.pvUSD.net).
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, or require effort, time or resources from the participants that the district or the school considers to be disruptive. Data collection activities in schools must take into account schools' primary instructional mission and conflicting demands upon schools that may arise at certain times of the year (e.g., state-mandated testing). If a request will require extra effort and time by district personnel to accomplish data compilation, extraction, or programming to produce the record, PVUSD will charge a fee and the requestor shall bear the costs.
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, beliefs, or practices regarding sex, family like, 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 or 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 that collect new data. Copies of all consent forms must be submitted with the application and are subject to PVUSD review and approval. Student assent to participant 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 Spanish and the translated versions must be submitted with the research application.
5. *The research follows guidelines for interacting with schools and participants:* Researchers conducting research at school sites must complete a tuberculosis test and have a criminal background check. It is the responsibility of the research organization conducting the research to keep documentation of this information on file and such information must be made available to the district upon request. In addition, a PVUSD 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 sections for research application types and procedures.

Guidelines for Research Project Applications

I. RESEARCH IN MULTIPLE SCHOOLS

The following guidelines are directed to persons requesting permission to conduct research involving multiple schools within PVUSD. The district approves a limited number of studies annually.

Two broad categories of persons are eligible to conduct research studies: graduate students and persons already holding an earned doctorate or representing a research agency.

A. GRADUATE STUDENTS

1. The study must be the master's thesis or doctoral dissertation, or the particular university's equivalent of these major research undertakings (graduate students only).
2. The PVUSD division/department head most closely associated with the topical area of research must endorse and sponsor the proposed study. This endorsement and sponsorship must be obtained prior to submission of application materials.
 - Endorsement consists of a strong written statement of support certifying that the study provides information the division/department vitally needs and actively seeks, and that the applicant possesses the requisite skills and resources to carry the study through successfully.
 - Sponsorship includes ensuring that research is done as proposed, as well as the drafting of a binding Memorandum of Agreement upon approval of the research project, spelling out the respective responsibilities of the district, the sponsor, and the researchers.
3. The study's methodology shall minimize demands on students and/or staff.
4. Schools targeted for study shall not be heavily committed in other research studies and/or in special efforts to correct students' achievement deficit.

B. PERSONS ALREADY HOLDING AN EARNED DOCTORATE OR REPRESENTING A RESEARCH AGENCY

Criteria are the same as those in Items I. A. 2-4.

II. RESEARCH IN A SINGLE SCHOOL

Official district approval is also required of requests to conduct research in a single district school. Students and professional researchers considering research in a single school should first contact the principal of the school, present and discuss the proposed research with the principal, and obtain preliminary approval from the principal.

Action Research Exception. A different process applies for "action research" done by student teachers in a classroom with a supervising teacher who has completed district training, under the auspices of a university-run teacher preparation or education program with current student teaching partnership agreements between the district and local universities. In such cases, the student teacher should first discuss a possible action research plan with the trained supervising teacher; agreeing on the action research plan, the student teacher and supervising teacher should present the plan to the principal or the principal's designee for consideration or approval.

Research Application Procedures

These applications combine previous versions of the PVUSD Research Application and PVUSD Data Use Agreement Template. Please complete the relevant forms electronically in the spaces provided. Reference any and all attachments clearly by name.

- PVUSD Employees for Advanced Degrees (Single or Multiple Schools)
 - Form 1: Executive Summary
 - Form 2-AD: Application Packet for Advanced Degrees
 - Form 3: Request to Conduct a Survey, Interview, Observation, or other Assessment
 - Form 4: Memorandum of Data Use and Confidentiality Agreement

- Non-district Agencies and Professional Researcher (Single or Multiple Schools)
 - Form 1: Executive Summary
 - Form 2-A&R: Application Packet for Agencies & Researchers
 - Form 3: Request to Conduct a Survey, Interview, Observation, or other Assessment
 - Form 4: Memorandum of Data Use and Confidentiality Agreement

Applications must be submitted and approved prior to the commencement of the study. Submissions must follow these requirements:

- Submit completed application by email in PDF format; and,
- Submit one hard copy with ORIGINAL SIGNATURES in blue ink.

Mail to:

Frances Basich Whitney
Research, Accountability & Assessment
Pajaro Valley Unified School District
294 Green Valley Road
Watsonville, CA 95076

E-mail to:

Frances_Whitney@pvusd.net

For more information, please call
(831) 786.2100, x 2577

Once the application is received, a confirmation email will be sent to the primary contact listed. Once the application is reviewed, the primary contact will be notified of the decision by email. Please allow at least **six weeks** for processing of the application.