



## Administrative Procedures Memorandum

**#: APC 031**

### **Guidelines for Conducting Educational Research**

**DATE OF ISSUE:** March 1, 2005  
**Revised:** June 2005, May 2007, December 2009, September 2011

**MEMO TO:** Principals/Vice-Principals, Planning & Priorities, Learning Services

**FROM:** Director of Education

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#### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this document is to outline the procedures for conducting educational research within the Waterloo Catholic District School Board.

#### **REFERENCES**

*Sharing Our Journey*  
*The Education Act*  
*Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*

#### **FORMS**

- APC031-01 Permission to Access System Request Form
- APC031-02 External Research Request Form
- APC031-03 Internal Research Project Form

#### **COMMENTS AND GUIDELINES**

##### **BACKGROUND**

All individuals who are interested in conducting research within the Waterloo Catholic District School Board must abide by the procedures within this document.

The objective is to ensure that research conducted within the Waterloo Catholic District School Board meets appropriate professional and technical standards, while adhering to established ethical practices.

##### **PROCEDURES**

1. Individuals who are interested in conducting research within the Waterloo Catholic District School Board (WCDSB) must first obtain permission to access the school system from the Associate Director of Education. Complete Form APC031-01 WCDSB Permission to Access Request Form. It is advisable that permission for access be sought prior to writing the research proposal. Research proposals will not be reviewed unless accompanied by a signed 'WCDSB Permission to Access

Request Form'. Permission to access the system is separate and distinct from the Research Review Process.

2. Once permission to access the system has been granted, individuals should review the "Conducting Educational Research" procedures and complete Form APC031-02 External Research Request Form.
3. All Research Request Forms must be signed and typed – **handwritten forms will not be accepted.**
4. Two copies of the research proposal and all related and supporting documents, including sample consent letters and copies of any surveys, questionnaires, interview schedules or focus group guides that will be used in the research, must accompany the Research Request Form. In all cases, the Lead Investigator must have demonstrated expertise and experience in professional research in the substantive area(s) of the proposed study.
5. Before being initiated within the schools all research proposals must be reviewed and approved by the Board's designated Research and Advisory Committee. Ethics approval must be obtained before research can be initiated in the schools. If ethics approval has already been obtained before the Research Request Form is submitted, a document certifying the approval, such as an approval letter, should be attached to the Research Request Form.
6. Researchers will require a criminal reference check before being granted permission to conduct research in the schools.
7. The Waterloo Catholic District School Board's Research Advisory Committee is comprised of the Associate Director of Education and appropriate personnel, as warranted, will be invited to attend (i.e. Privacy and Record Information Management Officer). The committee meets four times a year: September, November, February, and May. Researchers will receive a written response from the Committee approximately three weeks after each deadline.
8. Approval does not guarantee participation of a particular school in the research study. If the project interferes with the educational process in a school, the principal may request that his or her school be excluded from the study.
9. Written student permission is required prior to any participation in a study. Where the participants are over 16 years of age, researchers requesting student permission must provide each student with a written explanation describing the study in order to assure that permission reflects informed consent.
10. Written parental permission is required when students participating in the study are under the age of sixteen. Researchers requesting parental permission must provide each parent with a written explanation describing the study in order to assure that permission reflects informed consent.
11. All persons conducting research within the Waterloo Catholic District School Board must guarantee anonymity of the individual students, schools and school personnel in reporting the results, unless written approval is obtained from parents of students (for those under 16), students, the school principal, the school staff involved and the Associate Director of Education.
12. Researchers must submit a copy of their written report (including an executive summary) to the Associate Director of Education within two months of its completion.

13. Researchers should offer feedback to participating schools in the form of workshops, written material or other means.
14. Research activities conducted by WCDSB employees that are **not part of their ordinary job responsibilities and authority (including all Additional Qualifications (AQ) action research projects, pilot studies, survey, focus groups)** require Committee approval. See Form APC031-03 Internal Research Project Form. All other WCDSB employee based research activities must be brought to the attention of the appropriate Supervisory Officer and the Associate Director of Education. This includes any surveys that are distributed to students and staff in the Waterloo Catholic District School Board. A Waterloo Catholic District School Board Internal Research Project Form should be completed and forwarded to the Associate Director of Education.

Applications will be circulated to members of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board Research Advisory Committee. Shortly after the meeting, researchers will be informed of the status of their project. If a project receives approval, a letter will be sent to principals on the researcher's behalf. Names of the principal(s) will be provided in order for researchers to contact them for permission to proceed and to provide further details. Principals may refuse the project in their schools. If they approve, arrangements must be made with them to conduct the research.

### **Review Process**

This Administrative Procedures Memorandum will be reviewed not earlier than April 2012 for implementation in September 2012 and every three years thereafter.



**WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**PERMISSION TO ACCESS SYSTEM  
REQUEST FORM**

**Personal Information**

Name of Applicant(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_ Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Is this study part of an academic degree requirement? \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, check the following: \_\_\_\_\_ PhD \_\_\_\_\_ Masters \_\_\_\_\_ Undergraduate \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Institutional Affiliation \_\_\_\_\_

Advisor's Name and Title (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_

Academic Department \_\_\_\_\_ Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate below any school where you would like to conduct your research.

Name of School \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate by way of signature that this research request has been approved by one of the Superintendents.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Superintendent

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Superintendent



**WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

**EXTERNAL RESEARCH REQUEST FORM**

**PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION**

**Title and purpose of study.**

**Anticipated duration of school's involvement in project.**

**Type of participants (e.g. elementary school students, high school students, special education students, teacher, staff member).**

**Will school staff be involved in planning and carrying out any part of the project (and if so, in what capacity)?**

**Names of individuals visiting the school in connection with the project.**

**What practical implications does your study have to the Waterloo Catholic District School Board system or its students?**

**Briefly describe your plans, including anticipated timeline, for providing feedback regarding your research results to the participating school(s)**

**Describe the procedures you will use to obtain the informed consent of the appropriate individuals and the procedures you will use to ensure that their participation is voluntary. (A copy of the consent form must be attached).**

**When will the participants be informed about the objectives and aims of the research? Explain the nature of how this will be conducted.**

**Expected Outcomes of Project (deliverables)**

**Have you conducted previous research in the Waterloo Catholic District School Board? If yes, please identify research project.**



WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD

INTERNAL RESEARCH PROJECT FORM

PLEASE PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Researcher(s): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Project: \_\_\_\_\_

Expected Outcomes: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Data Sources Required: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Process: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Principal: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

RETURN TO
Associate Director of Education
Waterloo Catholic District School Board
35 Weber Street West, Unit A
P.O. Box 91116
Kitchener, ON
N2G 4G2

Superintendent Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

## **RESEARCH ADVISORY COMMITTEE WATERLOO CATHOLIC DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD**

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The Waterloo Catholic District School Board has established a Research Advisory Committee that considers proposals submitted by those who wish to conduct research projects in schools with the board. The Committee meets four times a year: September, November, February, and May. Deadlines for applications are: September 1 \* November 1 \* February 1 \* May 1

### **THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE ARE TO:**

- Support and encourage research that contributes to educational knowledge;
- Standardize the approval process for research applicants;
- Study and review all requests for non-board-initiated research to be conducted in the Waterloo Catholic District School Board;
- Judge the relevance of each request to the educational objective and policies of the Waterloo Catholic District School Board;
- Monitor the quantity and topics of research to ensure a fair distribution of research studies throughout Waterloo Catholic schools;
- Protect Waterloo Catholic schools and their staff and students from invasion of privacy and from unwarranted and excessive demands of their time by external researchers;
- Recommend approval for those requests seen as being beneficial in accordance with Administrative Procedure No. 031 Conducting Educational Research

### **THE COMMITTEE CONSISTS OF:**

- Associate Director of Education
- Appropriate personnel as required (i.e. Privacy and Information Management Officer)

The Administrative Procedure *Conducting Education Research Permission to Access Request Form* and *External Research Request Form* have been prepared to assist those who are asking for Committee approval for board participation in research projects. Note that **all** non-board-initiated projects emanating from individuals and agencies must proceed through the Waterloo Catholic District School Board Research Advisory Committee.

All internal research projects must be brought to the attention of the Associate Director of Education. In addition, an *Internal Research Project Form* should be completed and forwarded to the Associate Director of Education.

### **EXTERNAL RESEARCH**

1. A request from a non-Board employee or a Board employee collaborating with a non-Board agency or educational institution.
2. A request from a Board employee wanting to do research outside his/her own area of responsibility for the purposes of completing a professional course or program of study (this includes all Action Research Projects conducted in the Board).

### **INTERNAL RESEARCH**

1. A school or classroom project related to board or regional initiatives. These may be projects carried out by teachers, administrators or school council members.
2. Surveys, focus groups, pilots and collection of any student or staff data for the purposes of reporting is considered research internal to the Waterloo Catholic District School Board