

Research & Survey Request Guidelines

Assessment, Data, & Evaluation

The Assessment, Data, and Evaluation team is responsible for approving all research & survey requests and ensuring researchers comply with state laws and regulations around data collection and usage. This team is not responsible for feedback or design of a research project and recommend you work with your teacher or advisor on topic selection. Here are some common things that help determine the qualifications of your project for approval.

Iowa Senate File 496 - Surveying

Iowa Senate File 496 requires individuals surveying or interviewing students about their mental, emotional, or physical state to obtain active consent from each student's parent or guardian. An acceptable active consent form **must** include each of the following items:

- a description of the survey and its content
- the person who created the survey
- the person who sponsors the survey
- how information generated by the survey is used
- how information generated by the survey will be stored

How do I know if my research project falls under ISF496?

If your research topic involves mental, emotional, or physical state related questions, it falls under ISF496. Any social emotional learning topics are also likely to meet these criteria. The district level consent given to students at the beginning of the year does not extend to individual research projects.

<p>Examples of ISF496 questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How do you <u>feel</u> about school lunch?• What do you <u>think</u> about your school?• Do you <u>believe</u> you are a good student?• Do you <u>value</u> school attendance?	<p>Examples of non- ISF496 questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Of the school lunch options, which did you eat and which did you not eat?• Describe your school• What is your GPA?• How many days a week do you miss school?
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What type of research does not fall under ISF496?

Research that focuses on factual evidence and topics or is limited in scope to non-minor (18+) will not fall under the ISF496 guidelines. The data team may ask for a clear distribution plan to ensure that minors are excluded from data collection prior to project approval.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why does my project need approval?

The project approval process is required by board policy. The approval ensures that building administrators or department supervisors are aware of the work taking place and that a staff member may be taking on additional work outside of their assigned responsibilities. These approvals also offer a chance for all district stakeholders to ensure that research aligns with the curricular vision and direction of our Teaching and Learning Department to maintain the fidelity of academic offerings throughout the year.

How long will it take to approve my project?

Approval time varies from project to project. The approval timeline is dependent on response from the research requestor with their active consent form if it was not included in the original request and any data that the team must compile on behalf of the researcher. Building administrators are given 3 business days to notify the research team if the requested project is approved or denied. This notification of research will occur after active consent forms are on file if applicable. In general, researchers should anticipate 2-3 weeks to receive approval and accompanying materials.

Can I survey or recruit participants from the entire district?

Board policy prohibits any census (whole district) surveying for individual research projects. It is the researcher's responsibility to design, obtain contacts, and distribute their survey. The assessment, data, and evaluation (ADE) team will not distribute surveys or recruit participants on a researcher's behalf. The ADE team will arrange for approval and consent of building participation and a point of contact as needed.

Can I publish/present my Des Moines Public Schools Research?

We generally request removal of the DMPS district name or any names of schools within DMPS on any final reporting. If you wish to include these, we require you to obtain written approval prior to submitting abstracts/applications to publish or present. You may request this permission via email to research@dmschools.org

Other Considerations:

- Research requests should have a clear hypothesis that goes beyond fact collection.
 - Please see public records for fact collection: [Public Records - Des Moines Public Schools \(dmschools.org\)](https://dmschools.org)
- All research requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and DMPS reserves the right to prioritize internal research and requests that align to district strategic priorities
 - More information about district priorities: [Final Goals and Guardrails for Board 5.21.2024.pdf \(boarddocs.com\)](https://boarddocs.com).
- Approvals are dependent on volume and capacity of the team at time of submission.