

RESEARCH IN SCHOOLS POLICY

DM Approval:

Effective Date: July 1, 2013

GENERAL INFORMATION

Yukon Education recognizes that research in education can be beneficial to educators, students, and society as a whole.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide procedures and standards that apply to external researchers who request to conduct research in Yukon schools, in order to ensure the appropriate and ethical conduct of research in Yukon schools.

DEFINITIONS

'Parent' means the biological parents, the adoptive parents by custom or otherwise, the persons legally entitled to custody, or the persons who usually have the care and control of the child.

'Research' means data-based investigation involving individuals or groups of individuals that adheres to the empirical principles of: systematic design and process; freedom from bias (or declaration and mediation of bias); structured analysis which yields interpretation that is consistent with findings; and quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-method methodology. Research activities may include the use of tests or other forms of assessment, checklists, surveys or questionnaires, document reviews, interviews, and observation.

'School Community' means everyone in a community who has contact with a school, including students, families, Yukon Education staff, School Councils, First Nations and other partners in education.

'Security Clearance' means a police records check, including disclosure of pardoned sexual offences in accordance with the *Criminal Records Act*.

POLICY STATEMENT

Proposals for research in Yukon schools must be approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Schools or their designate, and each school administrator will decide whether to permit a person to conduct research in their school.

Yukon Education may suspend approval of a research proposal at any time if it has reasonable grounds for doing so.

A. Procedures

Research Proposals

All proposals for research to be conducted in a Yukon school must be submitted in writing to the Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Schools or their designate, normally in the form of a research proposal approved by the researcher's academic institution and/or research supervisor.

The research proposal must clearly describe the methodology and details of the proposed research, the required participants, any assistance that is required from a school or other part of Yukon Education, and the proposed time frame for conducting the research.

Any research proposal must first be approved by the Research Ethics Board (REB) of the student's academic institution, and a copy of the REB approval letter must be provided to Yukon Education. When the REB first requires approval of the research proposal by Yukon Education, the research cannot commence until a copy of the REB approval letter has been provided to Yukon Education.

Evaluation of Research Proposals

All research proposals will be reviewed by appropriate Yukon Education staff, and the criteria that the reviewer(s) will take into consideration in evaluating a research proposal includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. The relevance of the research, and whether the information generated will contribute to the improvement of education and student learning.
2. The proposed methodology, and whether there are clearly outlined research steps and a process for identification and selection of participants.
3. The scope of the proposed research, including the individuals or groups identified to participate in the research.

4. The extent to which the proposed research will cause disruption for students, staff, and the operation of the school (including any need for special arrangements).
5. The risks and benefits associated with the proposed research – a favourable balance must exist in which risks are minimized and benefits are maximized.
6. The sensitivity of the proposed research, including the nature and sensitivity of the research topic and questions.
7. The amount of time required for the research, including the time required to conduct the fieldwork.
8. Any confidentiality issues, including any infringement on personal or family privacy as a result of the research and the procedures for guaranteeing the anonymity and confidentiality of participants and the secure storage and eventual disposal of research fieldwork notes, data, or other records.

Research proposals approved by Yukon Education will be forwarded to the school administrator of any school in which the research is proposed to be conducted. The school administrator will then decide whether to permit the person to conduct the research in their school.

Security Clearance

When a research proposal specifies any contact with students and the person who will conduct the research is not a Yukon Education employee, the person who will conduct the research must provide Yukon Education with an up-to-date security clearance. The results of the security clearance must be acceptable to Yukon Education before the research project can begin.

Yukon Education will retain a copy of the security clearance for one year or for the duration of the research project if the research project exceeds one year.

Research Results

The person conducting the research must provide Yukon Education with a copy of the research project, thesis, or dissertation as well as a full report of the results of the research once the research is completed.

Upon request and subject to the access to information and protection of privacy requirements that apply, Yukon Education will make copies of the report available to those who participated or were otherwise involved in the research project, and to other interested parties.

If requested by Yukon Education or a school in which the research took place, the person who conducted the research will be expected to discuss and present the research findings to Yukon Education or the school community.

B. Standards

Research that is conducted in a Yukon school must follow the guidelines set out in the *TCPS2: Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (2010)*.

An external research request that is initiated by a Yukon Education employee who is a member of the Yukon Teachers' Association must also follow the guidelines established in the *Yukon Teachers' Association Code of Ethics*.

Consent to Participate

No student may participate in approved research being conducted in a school without the permission of the student and the student's parent.

Students participating in approved research and their parent must be fully informed of the nature and purpose of the research and may, upon request, review any of the research materials.

Students participating in approved research in a school and their parent must be informed that their participation in the research is voluntary and that they may withdraw from the research at any time without consequence.

Any photography, filming, videotaping or audio taping of students as part of the research requires the written consent of the student's parent, in addition to any such consent that may already be on file at the school.

Protection of Privacy

Persons conducting research in a Yukon school must adhere to all access to information and protection of privacy requirements that apply to Yukon Education, and the anonymity and confidentiality of participants in the research must be maintained at all times to the greatest extent possible.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Any person conducting research in a school is responsible for ensuring that all of the requirements of this policy are met prior to, during, and following any research conducted in a school.

The Assistant Deputy Minister of Public Schools is responsible for approving proposals for research in Yukon schools.

School administrators are responsible for deciding whether to permit a person to conduct research in their school.

Yukon Education staff are responsible for reviewing, evaluating, and deciding whether to approve proposals to conduct research in a Yukon school in accordance with the requirements of this policy, and for ensuring that approved research is conducted in accordance with the requirements of this policy.

APPLICATION

This policy applies to all external research requests that are not initiated by Yukon Education, and applies to all staff of Yukon Education, members of the School Community, and persons proposing and conducting external research in Yukon schools.

EXCEPTIONAL CIRCUMSTANCES

In situations where the individual circumstances of a case are such that the provisions of this policy cannot be applied or to do so would result in an unfair or an unintended result, the decision may be based on the individual merits and justice of the situation. Such a decision will be considered for that specific case only and will not be precedent setting.

EFFECTIVE DATE

This policy is effective July 1, 2013.

LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY REFERENCES

TCPS2: Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
(http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/pdf/eng/tcps2/TCPS_2_FINAL_Web.pdf)

Yukon Education Policy 'Agencies in the School'

Yukon Teachers' Association Code of Ethics

HISTORY

Research in Schools Policy, effective July 1, 2013.