

Requests to Conduct Research in the Toronto Catholic District School Board

2012-2013

Application Process

Any person who wants to conduct research activities in the Toronto Catholic District School Board (TCDSB) must submit an application to the Board for approval. This includes people or agencies that plan to recruit research participants from schools and conduct the research off TCDSB premises. Send three copies of all documentation, as described below, to the attention of: Bruce Rodrigues (Director of Education), at the Catholic Education Centre, 80 Sheppard Ave. E., North York, ON, M2N 6E8. **For legal reasons, please submit paper copies of all documentation with your original signature; faxed or e-mailed applications cannot be accepted.**

The Director will inform applicants of the decision of the TCDSB Research Review Committee by mail. Applicants who receive approval at the Board level must then contact the Principal(s) of the school(s) in which they want to conduct research. *Principals have the prerogative to decide whether or not a research project will be conducted in their school. Approval of research projects by the Board, while mandatory, does not oblige the principal to accept the project in his or her school.* Applicants must present the letter of approval and a one-page summary describing the project to the principal prior to obtaining school approval.

Police Reference Check

As a result of changes in the Education Act, many researchers will be required to complete a Police Reference Check prior to commencing their research. This includes all those who will be in direct contact with students.

Applications from University/College Students

Usually, student applications are accepted only for Master's and Doctoral theses that have been approved by their supervising faculty. Students conducting other research, including undergraduates engaged in theses or independent research projects, may ask their supervising professor to submit the application on their behalf if the proposed project is part of the professor's ongoing research program. All such projects are to involve current, original research and must be signed by thesis advisors or supervising faculty members. A supervisor's signature constitutes acceptance of responsibility for the conduct of the research.

Modification of Approved Research/Extension of Time to Complete Research Projects

Permission may be granted to conduct the research as described in the application only for one school year. Multi-year projects require completion of a renewal form. Modifications to the approved research require permission from the Board, and may require a separate application. Inquiries regarding the above should be submitted to the Research Review Committee: research.review@tcdsb.org.

Study Completion

Upon completion of your research project within TCDSB, it is an expectation that you complete the study completion form (Appendix A). Additionally, we request that you submit a summary of your research or a copy of your report to the Educational Research Department at TCDSB.

Assistance from TCDSB Staff

Board staff cannot provide assistance in packaging and distributing materials or providing other technical and administrative help.

Translation

Because many of our students come from homes where English is not spoken information sheets, letters to parents/guardians and consent forms should be made available in the language spoken in the child's home (where applicable). This is the responsibility of the researcher.

Timelines

The TCDSB Research Review Committee meets three or four times a year to consider research applications. Deadlines for applications are **August 31, 2012**, **November 16, 2012** and **February 1, 2013**. Results of the review process will be communicated in writing within 4 months of each deadline. External research activities should not be conducted in the schools **before October 15th** or **after May 15th** (May 1 in elementary schools, because of the heavy testing schedule in May).

Application Materials

The Research Review Committee requires the following documents to support the review process. Please ensure that your application contains all of the following materials (**three copies** are required):

- A completed **Research Application** (attached).
- One-page summary.** A one-page summary of the proposed research including the title, rationale and relevance to education, logistic details (e.g., sample size, grades, teacher participation, parent participation, time requirements, location, etc.), description of procedures, instruments to be used, and proposed method of data analysis.
- Research Proposal.** This should normally not exceed 5 pages (*applicants may substitute a proposal submitted to an external funding agency, or a summary of a thesis proposal*). The proposal should include the following sections:
 - (a) statement of objectives and theoretical framework
 - (b) design and methodology (including hypotheses, participants, data collection procedures)
 - (c) proposed data analysis procedures
 - (d) school resources required
 - (e) educational relevance of the project
- Instruments.** Copies of all final versions of instruments, non-standard tests, protocols, surveys, consent forms, etc. to be administered to TDCSB students, staff or parents.
- Information letters and consent forms.**

Please ensure that information letters and consent forms:

 - are included for all participants (students, teachers, parents, etc.)
 - include a brief description of the proposed research project
 - address the following: anonymity, confidentiality, voluntary participation and withdrawal without penalty
 - are printed on institutional letterhead

Note: For students under 18 years of age, the information letter and consent form should be directed to the parents/guardians. Child assent will be required.
- Ethics Approval.** A copy of the approval of the Ethics Committee from your institution
- Police Check.** A copy of police check (if applicable)

Acceptance Criteria

Proposals are evaluated on the basis of the following criteria:

- Scholarship (literature review, rationale, references).
- Educational merit (relevance to education). Priority is given to projects that address: 1) instruction of students, 2) health and well being of students, 3) issues important to the school community. Research undertaken for commercial purposes is not accepted, with certain exceptions (e.g. to develop norms for standardized instruments). Research done for political reasons is not acceptable.
- Research design (methodology, procedures related to sampling, confidentiality, data collection, instruments, data analysis).
- Demands from schools (minimal disruption to classroom activities; moderate demands on student/staff time and school facilities).

Note: In some cases, external research requests will not be accepted because of ongoing research activities or Board and/or Ministry initiatives.

For inquiries regarding research please contact: research.review@tcdsb.org

Toronto Catholic District School Board Research Application 2012-2013

This form must be completed, signed and sent to the Director of Education.

Identifying Information

Name of Primary Investigator:	
Institution/Agency:	
Mailing Address:	
E-Mail Address:	Fax:
Home Telephone:	Business Telephone:

Name(s) of Collaborative Investigators: _____

1. Is your project a(n):

Doctoral thesis	Master's thesis	Institutionally funded project	
Contractual project	Externally funded project	Ministry transfer grant project	

2. Do you have permission to conduct research from your university/institution, including ethical review?

- Yes (please attach)
- In progress (please provide details, including expected date of approval/amendment)

3. Are you applying to other school boards?

Please specify: _____

4. Do you have sufficient funds to conduct the study (if required)?

If yes, indicate the funding agency. _____

5. Title of the proposed research

6. Requirements from the school system

School facilities required:
School personnel assistance required:
Information required from school or board records:

7. Data collection instruments. Please list the questionnaires and other instruments to be used and attach final copies of **all** non-standard measures to this application.

8. Participants:

- a. How many students will directly participate? List by grade. Indicate the amount of time required, and whether the students participate individually or as a group.

Number of Students	Grade	Time required	Individual / group

- b. If your research involves direct contact with students on TCDSB premises, will a TCDSB staff member be present in the room when you collect your research data? Please describe.

- c. How many teachers will directly participate? List by grade. Indicate the amount of time required.

Number of teachers	Grade	Time required	Individual / group

- d. How many other school personnel will directly participate? Indicate the amount of time required.

Number of staff	Grade	Time required	Individual / group

- e. How many schools will you need to conduct your study? Indicate names of preferred schools or criteria for school selection.

9. Timelines

	Month / Year
When will you start collecting data in the schools?	
When will you finish data collection?	
When will you submit a report to the TCDSB Research Department?	
If you propose to collect data on multiple occasions, please describe and indicate dates.	

10. Describe the procedures for informing schools and parents and for providing feedback.

a. Informing the principal.

b. Provisions for preparing and debriefing participants.

c. Method of obtaining informed parental consent.

11. Describe the direct benefit to students and/or staff or school board, for example, through presentation, materials, feedback etc.

Student Applicants

Please have your sponsoring professor OR department chair sign below:

This is to certify that the above described research proposal has been evaluated for its academic soundness. We have also given consideration to **ethical, legal and moral** questions arising from the proposal and where necessary, ethical review has been completed.

Sponsoring Professor (please type name and sign) _____ Date: _____

Chair of Department (please type name and sign) _____ Date: _____

Your endorsement indicates that you would be willing, with the principal investigator, to attend a meeting to discuss the conduct of this research, if requested.

Research Agreement

This agreement is made between the researcher (insert name) _____
and the Toronto Catholic District School Board (the Board).

The researcher has requested access to the following records containing personal information in the custody of the Board:

The researcher understands and promises to abide by the following conditions:

1. The researcher will not use the information in the records for any purpose other than the following research purpose, unless the researcher has the Board's written approval to do so. (Describe research purpose below.)

2. The researcher will give access to personal information in a form in which the individual to whom it relates can be identified only to the following persons: (Name persons below.)

3. Before disclosing information to persons named above, the researcher will enter into an agreement with them that they will not disclose it to anyone other person.

4. The researcher will keep the information in a physically secure location to which access is given only to the researcher and the persons named above.

5. The researcher will remove all identifiers in the information by: _____

6. The researcher will not contact any individual to whom personal information relates, directly or indirectly, without the prior authority of the Board.

7. The researcher will assure that no personal information will be used or disclosed in a form in which the individual to whom it relates can be identified without the written authority of the Board.

8. The researcher will notify the Board in writing immediately upon becoming aware that any of the conditions set out in this agreement has been breached.

Signed at _____, this _____ day of _____, year _____

Signature of Researcher _____

Please provide typed/printed name of researcher, address and phone number.

Signature of TCDSB Official _____

Please provide typed/printed name of official, address and phone number.

APPENDIX A: TCDSB Research Application - Study Completion Form

Identifying Information

Name of Primary Investigator:	
Institution/Agency:	
Mailing Address:	
E-Mail Address:	Fax:
Home Telephone:	Business Telephone:

Title of the research project

How many research participants were involved in the study?

- a. Students _____
- b. Teachers/staff _____
- c. Parents _____

Study start date: _____

Study completion date: _____

My signature certifies that my research at TCDSB is complete. Proper safeguards to ensure anonymity and confidentiality of participants, schools and school board will be maintained.

Signature of Principal Investigator _____

Date: _____