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| APS_CLOGOXS | Arlington Public Schools  **Research Study Application** |

## Overview

Arlington Public Schools (APS) recognizes that well-designed research and evaluation studies can provide a basis for major curriculum and instructional improvements. As a result, during any given academic school year, numerous studies - both internal and external - are being planned and conducted throughout the school system.

As a large, innovative school district, APS receives many more requests to conduct research than the school district can accommodate. Thus, a set of procedures has been established to coordinate the research conducted in APS.

This application packet outlines the process to seek approval for conducting research in Arlington Public Schools. The research application review process is designed to accomplish the following goals:

* Protect APS students and staff from excessive data collection demands, thereby protecting instructional time
* Ensure that the proposed research does not violate laws and policies governing student privacy
* Assess the quality of the proposed research and its potential to improve educational practices
* Ensure that the research does not replicate or interfere with research and evaluation studies already being conducted in APS or the state-mandated testing schedule

### Research and Evaluation Studies Requiring Approval

In general, any request to collect data from or about APS students, parents, or staff requires approval. Exceptions include testing and assessment initiatives mandated by the state as well as program evaluations, assessments, and research studies that are prescribed by the APS School Board.

### Review Criteria

Each research or evaluation project request will be considered on its individual merits. The approval decision will consider the following criteria:

* Clarity of the study’s purpose(s), objectives, and expected outcomes
* Soundness of the study design
* Potential value of the study for APS
* Inherent value of the study, if it is pure research
* Probable effect on students, teachers, principals, parents, and community, as appropriate (e.g., time required of students, time required of teachers, APS resources required, etc.)
* Relative inconvenience imposed by the study
* Processes ensuring the protection of students, teachers, principals, or parents from invasion of privacy, exploitation, undue burden, or danger of stigma
* Guarantee of anonymity where desirable
* Guarantee that parents shall be informed of research projects in which their children are participating when the project is not a part of the regular school curriculum

During the review process, priority will be given to studies that (1) directly relate to instructional or educational practice, (2) address the needs of APS, (3) already have obtained IRB approval, and (4) meet advance degree thesis or dissertation requirements for graduate students who are employed by APS and who have received faculty/review committee approval.

Past review cycles have typically denied studies that:

* encompass data collection activities that are a requirement for a post-secondary class project
* require large amounts of teacher and/or student time or loss of instructional time
* include data requests for personal information about students or their families
* meet master’s degree thesis requirements for graduate students not employed by APS

### Application Process

Complete and submit an *Application for Approval of Research Project* cover sheet (appendix A) along with the required supporting documentation listed below. Once the forms and supporting material have been completed, submit via e-mail or regular mail to:

Research Review Committee

Department of Planning and Evaluation

Arlington Public Schools

2110 Washington Boulevard

Arlington, VA 22204

E-mail Address: [research.applications@apsva.us](mailto:research.applications@apsva.us)

### Application Deadlines

Requests are reviewed on a semi-annual basis. Applications should be submitted in accordance with the deadlines stated below.

* **June 30th** for research that is to begin during the fall semester (September – December)
* **November 15th** for research that is to begin during the spring semester (January – June)

### Review Process

Each request is reviewed by a panel of three to six APS staff members knowledgeable about educational research processes, APS instructional goals, curriculum/subject area instructional practices, and school-based administration. The review panel confers shortly after each submission deadline. Applicants are notified in writing about the acceptance or denial of their request prior to the start of the following semester. In some cases, a request may be accepted conditionally dependent on certain stipulations or revisions.

## Application Requirements

Applications for approval of research projects must include the following six required items, and may include one optional item:

1. Completed Cover Sheet (appendix A)
2. Study Description (appendix B)

Provide a written description of the proposed study. The description should follow the Study Description Outline in appendix B and should address all items listed in the outline.

1. Verification of IRB approval

If IRB approval has not been obtained by the research application deadline, proof of an IRB application may be submitted. Applications may be approved on the condition that final IRB approval be submitted prior to the start of the study in APS.

1. Abstract of the Proposed Study

Provide an abstract of the proposed study that describes the study in layman’s terms. The abstract should be approximately one page in length, and should cover the time frame for the study, including the start date and end date; and a description of the groups of staff and/or students who will be invited to participate in the research.

1. Study Description for Website (appendix C)

Provide a brief description of the study, which will be posted to the Approved Research page upon approval of the study. The description will include the title of the study, the invited participants, and the methodology.

1. Written Confirmation of Authenticity

Provide a letter of authenticity from the college, university, or organization with whom the researcher is associated.

1. (Optional) Letter of Support from APS staff

In cases where an applicant has communicated with APS staff about their research and the staff member wishes to express support for the application, an optional letter of support may be submitted.

If the applicant is employed by Arlington Public Schools and wishes to conduct research at their own work site, a letter of support from the principal or department head should be submitted.

A copy of the documents requested above should be submitted to:

Research Review Committee

Department of Planning & Evaluation

Arlington Public Schools

2110 Washington Boulevard

Arlington, VA 22204

E-mail Address: [research.applications@apsva.us](mailto:research.applications@apsva.us)

If the application is approved:

* Planning and Evaluation will post the Study Description and the Abstract of the Proposed Study on the Approved Research web page. All subsequent communication from the researcher to invited study participants or to other APS staff must note the approval and provide a link to the webpage.
* A copy of any resulting publications should be provided to the Office of Planning and Evaluation.

APS_CLOGOXS **ARLINGTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

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**Application for Approval of Research Project**

**Cover Sheet**

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| Title of Study: |  | | | |
| Name of Applicant: |  | | | Date: |
| Address: |  | | | |
| Telephone Number: |  | E-mail Address: |  | |
| Name and Title of Person(s) Responsible for the Conduct of the Study: | |  | | |
| Number of Students Involved in the Study: |  | Number of Staff Involved in the Study: | |  |
| Grade Levels Involved in the Study: |  | Number of Schools Involved in the Study: | |  |
| Are you a member of APS staff? |  | If you are submitting a letter of support from an APS staff member, please provide the staff member’s name: | |  |

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| For Internal Use Only | | |
| Date Application Received: |  | |
| Abstract Submitted: | Yes [ ] | No [ ] |
| Written Confirmation of Authenticity Provided: | Yes [ ] | No [ ] |
| Date of Review Decision: |  | |
| Date Study Completed: |  | |
| Date Final Abstract of Study Submitted: |  | |

**Study Description Outline**

1. Statement of the Problem
   1. Purpose – State clearly and briefly exactly what you are trying to determine.
   2. Justification
      1. Tell why you feel this problem is one of significance.
      2. State the potential worth of the study to the Arlington Public Schools and other relevant audiences.
   3. Hypothesis – State the questions to be answered or the hypotheses to be tested.
2. Methodology
   1. Sampling – Identify the population from which the sample will be drawn and how many subjects will be included in the sample. Give these numbers in terms of students, classes, grades, teachers, and/or schools to be involved. Describe the process by which the sample will be drawn.
   2. Collection of Data – Describe the data to be collected. Identify type(s) of data collection procedures (e.g., standardized test, questionnaire, observation, etc.). Provide information on the validity and reliability of instruments and amount of time required by subjects in completing any instruments. Attach a copy of any surveys, interview, or observation schedules.
   3. Analysis of Data – Describe methods to be used in analyzing data.
3. Resources
   1. Personnel – Identify the person(s) who will conduct this study.
   2. Time – Provide a time schedule outlining when data collection and analysis will occur. Estimate the amount of time required for each phase of the study. Also specify the time required of students, teachers, other staff and parents who are involved in the study.
   3. Facilities – List any facilities that you have or that are required for the study.
4. Budget

Provide an estimate of the costs required to conduct this study. Indicate the funding sources that will be used for the required funding.

**Study Description for Website**

Please provide a brief description of the proposed study, which upon approval will be posted to the Approved Research page of the APS website, along with the Abstract of the Proposed Study.

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| Name of Study: |  |
| Invited Participants: | *Example: High school AP teachers* |
| Methodology: | *Example: interviews and observations* |