

RESEARCH PROJECTS AND PILOT PROGRAMS

Research Initiated by the School Division

The term "research project" is defined to mean any project which is designed to explore and/or determine the effectiveness of new instructional programs which have not been implemented elsewhere. All research projects must have the approval of the Board before they are implemented. In addition the parent/guardian shall be entitled to inspect all instructional materials which will be used in conjunction with such a project. Informed written consent by the parent/guardian will be required in those studies in which this is required by law.

Research projects must identify specific evaluation procedures, including data to be collected, methods for data collection, and personnel responsibilities. Such procedures shall be designed by qualified professional personnel prior to the approval of the project by the School Board.

Research Initiated by Outside Sources

The Albemarle County Schools receive requests from outside agencies/individuals to conduct research in the schools. These research projects differ from the above in that these studies involve only tested programs that have been successfully implemented elsewhere. Usually these requests are related to identifying successful instructional strategies/techniques in the classroom. All such requests shall be considered under the guidelines defined in the concomitant administrative procedure.

Pilot Programs

A pilot program is defined to mean a program which has been developed but has not been utilized in Albemarle County. The designation of any program as a pilot shall be made by the Superintendent/designee and shall be included in the *Strategic Plan for a Total School System Commitment to the School Improvement Process*. All new pilot programs will be communicated to the Board and must be consistent with the Mission, Goals, and Priorities of the Board. Before a pilot program is adopted for system-wide implementation, the pilot will be evaluated to determine its effectiveness.

Adopted: July 1, 1993
Amended: April 12, 1999; August 8, 2002

Legal Refs.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Sections 22.1-16.1, 22.1-78, 32.1-162.16-162.20
8 VAC 20-565-10 et seq.
45 C.F.R. 46.101 et seq.

RESEARCH PROJECTS INITIATED BY OUTSIDE SOURCES

The Albemarle County Schools receive numerous requests from individuals and organizations to conduct research in the schools. In order to protect the interests of staff and students, the following procedure will be followed for granting research requests:

1. A researcher will submit a detailed proposal to the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services/Designee that indicates the purpose of the study and how the results may be used. Each proposal will be evaluated by an ad hoc committee chaired by the Director for Curriculum Development & Program Analysis/designee and will include the Director/Coordinator/Specialist of the applicable program area, the principal(s) of the school(s) where research will be conducted, and any other staff members likely to be affected by the study.
2. Each proposal will be evaluated by the committee the basis of three criteria:
 - Will the research be useful to Albemarle County Schools?
 - How much instructional time will be affected?
 - How intrusive will the research be to students and staff?
3. The Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services/Designee will have final authority to approve or deny all applications after considering the comments and recommendations of the committee. Approved proposals will include the following caveats:
 - A letter to the affected principal(s) from the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services/Designee will precede any contact by phone or in person with school personnel by the researcher(s).
 - Participation of any school will depend upon the signed consent of the principal.
 - Participation by any Albemarle County staff member will depend upon the individual staff member's signed consent.
 - Participation by any students may depend upon the signed consent of their parents/legal guardians, as determined by the review committee.
 - No data collection or methods other than those specifically described in the approved proposal may be advanced by the researcher(s).
 - A copy of the study results shall be submitted to the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services.
4. By law (Virginia Code Section 32.1-162.17), informed consent is not required for "research or student learning outcomes assessments conducted in educational settings involving regular or special education instructional strategies, the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods, or the use of educational tests, whether cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, or achievement, if the data from such tests are recorded in a manner so that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects." All other types of

"human research" as defined by Virginia Code Section 32.1-162.16 involving students or others that are not specifically exempt under state or federal law shall require informed consent from the student and/or the student's parent(s) or other legal representative(s). Such informed consent shall comply in all respects with Virginia Code Section 32.1-162.18.

5. The School Board will be informed by the Assistant Superintendent for Instructional Services of any research projects being conducted in the School Division for which informed consent is required.

Adopted: April 12, 1999

Amended: August 8, 2002

Legal Ref.: Code of Virginia, 1950, as amended, Sections 22.1-16.1, 22.1-78, 32.1-162.16-162.20
 20 U.S.C. Section 1232h(a)
 8 VAC – 20-565-10 et seq.
 45 C.F.R. 46.101 et seq.

Cross Ref.: IGAH, *Family Life Education*
 IJ, *Guidance and Counseling Program*
 IL/IM, *Assessment/Testing/Program Evaluation*
 JHDA, *Student Submission to Psychiatric or Psychological Examinations, Testing, or Treatment*
 JO, *Student Records*