

Research Proposal Submission Information and Requirements

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RESEARCH PROPOSAL SUBMISSION PROCESS: KEY INFORMATION

Edmonton Public Schools welcomes researchers to submit project proposals to conduct research and evaluation with Division staff and students, providing the research project submissions meet the criteria outlined in this document. We value the opportunity to support research and evaluation that furthers the Division's priorities and goals. If prospective researchers have questions regarding the criteria or submission procedures outlined, they are welcome and encouraged to contact research@epsb.ca.

Research is defined as any process that gathers information for the purpose of dissemination of findings through publications, presentations, collegial sharing or fulfillment of degree requirements for the improvement of practice that enhances teaching and learning.

Evaluation is the systematic assessment of the design, implementation or results of an initiative for the purposes of learning or decision-making.

Proposals must address the criteria outlined in this document and adhere to EPSB [Administrative Regulation IQ.AR Conducting Research within the Division](#). All research or evaluation proposals must receive Division approval before researchers contact any Division staff to recruit for or commence research activities. Upon approval, applicants will receive a letter granting permission to commence their research. This also applies to Division staff who are conducting research.

Division approval does not bind any Division staff to participate in an approved research project. Principals in Edmonton Public Schools have the final decision-making regarding involvement in research projects for their school community.

Please note that meeting the requirements outlined in this document does not guarantee approval of research project proposals. Our Division receives many research proposals each school year. Decisions around research project proposals are made with consideration of a variety of factors including alignment with the Division's [Strategic Plan, priorities and goals](#), risk assessment, justification of school and program interruptions, timelines and time required of school staff to support the project, applicability and the overall benefit of the research to the Division and study participants.

Research project submissions may be denied or deferred based on the number of projects currently underway across the Division, contextual conditions at any location that may prohibit their ability to participate, research that overlaps or duplicates with other projects or incomplete proposal applications. While a project may receive Division support, individual school leaders retain decision-making around whether or not an approved research project will take place within their school.

HOW TO SUBMIT A RESEARCH PROPOSAL AND EXPECTED TIMELINES

There are different submission processes and timelines for researchers who are not affiliated with the University of Alberta and for researchers who are affiliated with the University of Alberta. The following section addresses these two unique scenarios.

Researchers not affiliated with the University of Alberta please note the following process:

- 1. Submit research proposal documents electronically to the Division:** Please send research project submissions to research@epsb.ca. If you are unable to submit electronically, please contact research@epsb.ca to discuss alternative methods of submission.
- 2. Submission panel review by Edmonton Public Schools:** Submissions will be reviewed by a panel of Division research staff five times during the 2023-2024 school year. Below are the submission deadlines and review dates for Edmonton Public Schools:

Division Submission Deadline	Division Panel Review Date
September 6, 2023	September 26, 2023
November 6, 2023	November 22, 2023
January 26, 2024	February 9, 2024
March 8, 2024	March 22, 2024
May 31, 2024	June 19, 2024

- 3. Panel review follow-up and final decision:** Researchers may be contacted to provide further information and clarification or to consider revisions to their application based on the initial findings of the panel review. We aim to provide a final decision for approval or denial to the researcher **eight to twelve weeks** from the date of the panel review. This may be extended should the researcher require additional time to address feedback.

We highly recommend applying as early as possible to ensure that a final decision can be made well in advance of your planned research start date. If it is essential that your work falls within a specific timeframe, please clearly indicate this in your application for the review panel's consideration. If your preferred start date falls within the review period, we will do our best to accommodate your desired timeframe but cannot guarantee approval within the desired timeline.

Upon approval, applicants will receive a letter granting permission to commence their research.

Researchers affiliated with the University of Alberta

- 1. Follow the University’s Cooperative Activities Program (CAP) online application process:** All research projects initiated by, or in collaboration with, the [University of Alberta](#) must first complete the required steps for submitting a CAP application through the online CAP application system. Information and links to the CAP online application system can be found on the [CAP website](#).

In addition to the criteria outlined by the University of Alberta’s CAP processes, researchers from the University of Alberta are also encouraged to review and consider the criteria described in this document.

- 2. Submission panel review by Edmonton Public Schools:** The University of Alberta’s CAP process has different submission deadlines for applications than the submission deadlines set by Edmonton Public Schools. See the chart below to understand how these timelines align so that you may estimate the processing timeline that your application will be subject to.

CAP Application Submission Deadline	Division Panel Review Date
August 21, 2023	September 26, 2023
October 23, 2023	November 22, 2023
January 8, 2024	February 9, 2024
February 20, 2024	March 22, 2024
May 13, 2024	June 19, 2024

- 3. Panel review follow-up and final decision:** Researchers may be contacted to provide further information and clarification or to consider revisions to their application based on the initial findings of the panel review. We aim to provide a final decision for approval or denial to the researcher **eight to twelve weeks** from the date of the panel review. This may be extended should the researcher require additional time to address feedback.

We highly recommend applying as early as possible to ensure that a final decision can be made well in advance of your planned research start date. If it is essential that your work falls within a specific timeframe, please clearly indicate this in your application for the review panel’s consideration. If your preferred start date falls within the review period, we will do our best to accommodate your desired timeframe but cannot guarantee approval within the desired timeline.

Upon approval, applicants will receive a letter granting permission to commence their research.

REVIEW CRITERIA

General Submission Information for all Researchers

The Division values lifelong learning and evidence-based practices. As such, the Division recognizes the importance of schools supporting research and evaluation projects. The Edmonton Public Schools review panel takes into account a range of considerations when reviewing submissions, including the following key criteria:

- Educational benefit, relevance and value to Edmonton Public Schools, including how the research or evaluation would inform or support the Division's priorities and goals as outlined in the Division's [2022-2026 Strategic Plan](#).
- The potential impact on regular school and classroom activities and demands on staff and/or students during and outside of regular school hours.
- Intended study participants, including number and age or grade of students, numbers of teachers, Division leaders, other Division employees, parents/guardians of students and potential school sites if applicable.
 - Proposals for research in schools with first-year principals will be considered on a case-by-case basis, with consideration to transition, capacity and time demands for first-year principals.
- Clear procedures for obtaining **active** informed consent from participants. Active informed consent is required for all research participants who are members of the EPSB community. The process for obtaining active informed consent must include procedures for participants who wish to withdraw at any point during the study.
 - Passive/opt-out/negative consent processes will not be approved.
 - Written parental/legal guardian consent is required for any research that requires participation of students under the age of 18. Where participants are under the age of 18, an assent form should be included.
 - Information sharing, participant recruitment and obtaining consent should be conducted through methods that ensure minimal impact to the workload of school staff.
- The anticipated timeline, start date and completion date of the research project.
 - Typically, approval will not be granted to conduct research activities in Edmonton Public Schools during the months of September, May and June. Should these timelines be critical to the nature of the research, discussion and consideration will take place between the Division and the researcher.
- Appropriate, feasible and valid data collection tools and protocols, for example: surveys, questionnaires, details of evaluative measurements, interview protocols and questions, and when available, references to validation studies.
- Appropriate and secure usage and storage of data, including procedures and timeframes for the secure use, retention/storage, disclosure and disposal. Data containing personal information must be stored, used and destroyed in a manner that maintains the confidentiality of the information, in alignment with Alberta's [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#).
 - Typically, storing data for future use and storing data on servers outside of Canada will not be accepted.
- Ethics Board approval from the post-secondary institution (for post-secondary affiliated researchers) or [TCPS 2 Tutorial Course on Research Ethics \(CORE\)](#) completion (for researchers not associated with a post-secondary institution).

- Agreement by the researcher to submit a final research report to the Division at research@epsb.ca upon the conclusion of the research project.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR RESEARCHERS WHO ARE ALSO DIVISION STAFF MEMBERS

The Division is pleased to support staff members who are preparing a research or evaluation project as a part of their post-secondary education. All research conducted within the Division requires approval through the Division's Research Team using the review process outlined in this document. Please note that Division approval does not bind any Division staff to participate in an approved research project. Principals determine and have final say if a research project is a good fit for their school community.

Division staff planning to submit a research proposal are encouraged to consider the following:

- To avoid potential infringement on issues of bias, conflict of interest or coercion, proposals requesting participation from students and/or staff in a researcher's current work setting (e.g. classroom and/or school) will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
- The approved research project activities must not impede on the employment duties of the staff member who submitted the research project proposal. Research proposals must clearly demonstrate that the research does not receive priority over Division employment duties.
- Consideration of ethical and fair access to potential research participants, data and other Division related information for research must be outlined in the research proposal. Division staff who wish to conduct research in the Division must receive prior approval through the Research Proposal process before initiating any steps in support of their research.
 - Access to Division data **will be provided** to the staff member through Division processes upon research approval; staff conducting research should not access data through their regular work functions.
 - Accessing staff, student or family participants supporting the research must follow Division processes after principal or decision unit approval has been received. The research approval process includes a step that will identify eligible staff for the project being proposed.
- Division staff conducting research must use the address associated with their post-secondary institution and not their Edmonton Public Schools email address or other Division communication channels to carry out activities relating to their research project.