

## GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN HWDSB

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Hamilton-Wentworth District School Board (HWDSB) supports research activities in its schools and departments that align with its *System Priorities*. Individuals interested in conducting research involving HWDSB schools, staff, students or parents must follow the processes detailed in this guide. These processes apply to:

- All research activities that take place *on* school/board premises during the school day; and/or
- Recruitment of any study participants from HWDSB school communities (e.g., teachers, students, staff) for research activities that occur *off* HWDSB sites

Although HWDSB is proud to collaborate with and support both internal and external researchers, we are also mindful that our priority is to students' education, welfare and well-being. Research activities must not compromise or interfere with students' access to high quality academic programs, welfare or well-being. Due to the high volume of applications received, only a select few will be accepted.

Individuals interested in accessing HWDSB schools/departments are asked to carefully read over these guidelines and submit the appropriate documentation. All requests to conduct research with HWDSB are reviewed by the HWDSB Research Ethics Board (REB).

### Applications must include:

- Statement of how research aligns with one or more of HWDSB's system priorities
- Lead Investigator's C.V. or background experience in the research topic
- Recruitment materials, information letters and consent forms, surveys/questionnaires, interview questions, and/or focus group scripts.
- If the project has been granted approval by another REB, the application and the approval letter must be attached
- Readability of recruitment material and information / consent letters

### Online Application Process:

Please click on the following link to access the online application form on Survey Monkey

<https://www.surveymonkey.ca/r/X8ZNRR5>

### Approval Process

After the application and all supplementary materials are received, the REB will conduct a thorough review and communicate issues that need clarification or modification to the Lead Investigator.

The review and approval of the study will consider such factors as:

- Compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans ([http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique\\_tcps2-eptc2\\_2018.html](http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2018.html))
- Alignment with one or more of HWDSB System Priorities
  - *Positive Culture and Well-Being*
  - *Student Learning and Achievement*
  - *Effective Communication*
  - *School Renewal*
  - *Partnerships*
- Appropriateness of the study for HWDSB staff/students/community stakeholders
- Cost benefit for students, teachers, community stakeholders, schools and departments
- Amount of staff and/or student time required
- Appropriateness of the timing of the request

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- Conflicts with any ongoing studies or programs

In order to facilitate a streamlined process, the REB will coordinate contact between researchers and HWDSB staff and stakeholders (e.g., principals, teachers, trustees, central office staff, students, parents, etc.). Researchers are asked to refrain from directly contacting HWDSB staff and stakeholders until their research application has been approved and coordinating efforts have been established with the REB.

The REB will notify the Lead Investigator of the final decision. If the study receives approval the REB will also notify the Principal or Manager of the opportunity to participate in the Research Project and will encourage staff to contact the Lead Investigator if interested.

Any activities related to a research project may NOT commence without prior review by the REB. Once the REB has approved a research project, school Principals and/or Department Managers must be *willing* to accommodate the study in their setting. If Principals and Department Managers agree to participate, their staff, students and/or parents will be notified about the opportunity to participate. Please be aware that individuals recruited for research projects are under no obligation to participate.

### Post Approval Process

The Researcher is expected to:

- Gather and handle data and research materials in a manner consistent with the highest standards of ethical and scholarly practice (fraud, falsification of data or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in immediate revocation of permission to conduct research);
- Notify the REB of the schools/departments involved in the study (if not already mentioned in the application)
- Notify the REB of any changes to the research protocol;
- Notify the REB of any issues that may impact schools, students and staff
- Submit a copy of research findings (copies are to be made available to the REB and participating schools/staff and parents)

Future requests to conduct research at HWDSB will not be reviewed until final reports of completed studies have been received.

Please contact the HWDSB Review Ethics Board (REB), of the HWDSB Research & Analytics Department, for any questions or concerns regarding the guidelines and the application process.

- Email: [reb@hwdsb.on.ca](mailto:reb@hwdsb.on.ca)
- Telephone: 905-527-5092 x2120 (Administrative Assistant, HWDSB REB - Research and Analytics Department)

**Note: The submission of incomplete application packages will increase the duration of the ethics review process. To avoid common errors/omissions, and to minimize the potential for required revisions, applicants should ensure their application and attachments are complete.**