



GUIDELINES FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH AT EMSB

THE EMSB RESEARCH COMMITTEE

The English Montreal School Board (EMSB) is often approached by professionals and students from institutions of higher learning who wish to conduct research and studies. The EMSB is a learning organization committed to the use of research data in establishing educational goals and strategies, recognizes that such requests contribute to the knowledge base of the network and promotes the use of directed research in all areas that will benefit the advancement of learning.

The English Montreal has established a Research Committee to screen research projects to be carried out in schools or centers within its jurisdiction and to expedite the completion of those studies when they are accepted.

The role of the Research Committee is to support and encourage research that contributes to the goals and educational knowledge of the EMSB, more broadly, while keeping in mind that our first priority is to the education of our students.

The Research Committee receives, reviews, and approves research projects submitted by EMSB departments, external organizations or by university students who are fulfilling requirements for a degree, and ensures that proposals are in accordance with EMSB guidelines, based on sound research methodology, have demonstrable educational value, and cause minimum disruption to the schools.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

1. To initiate and/or facilitate relevant research in the teaching and learning process within the EMSB;
2. To recommend or reject research projects received from external sources on the basis of their benefit to the educational community of the Board;
3. To promote the development of directed research projects determined to be pertinent to the mission of the Board;
4. To encourage and promote a high quality of research activities that will enhance teaching and learning in the Board and the community at large;
5. To communicate to stakeholders, published research findings that relate to student performance/attitudes and success.



The Committee considers the following:

1. Feasibility of the proposed research in terms of funds, resources, available facilities, and the probability of bringing the undertaking to a successful conclusion.
2. Appropriateness of the problem statement – rationale to be investigated and merit of the problem as a scholarly/creative endeavor.
3. Ensure that all research projects conducted within the EMSB community are sanctioned by an Ethics Review Committee
4. The person or persons conducting a research study must maintain a situation that is free from any conflict of interest.

COMMITTEE PRACTICES

The Research Committee is composed of representatives from the following: The Education Services Department, the Student Services Department, and school Administrators.

The Research Committee meets every month from September to June. Proposals should be submitted at least two (2) weeks prior to a meeting to allow Committee members adequate time to study the proposal. Researchers will be invited to present a synopsis of their research to the members of the Research Committee and possibly respond to questions or concerns to inform their approval of the study.

The Committee's chairperson ensures that discussions are respectful and covered with an inclusive tone and allows adequate time for deliberation, during which only Committee members participate, and decisions are made only by those who were present during the entire discussion.

The Chairperson is responsible for the decision-making process for determining when consensus is needed to achieve the decision. Decisions are arrived at through a majority vote and when no member considers the decision unacceptable.

FIELD OF APPLICATION

These guidelines apply to all research projects involving the network (youth and adults) within the larger educational community served by the Board.



PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES for RESEARCH PROPOSALS

The purpose of these procedures is to provide guidelines for researchers wishing to conduct studies in areas under the jurisdiction of the English Montreal School Board.

GUIDELINES

External agencies, university students, administrators and/or teachers are requested to note the following procedures for submission and approval of research projects:

1. *All research projects which involve EMSB students and/or staff must be approved by:*
 - a. *the Research Committee;*
 - b. *the Education Policy Committee (when teachers are involved)*

2. All research proposals must be submitted to the EMSB for: “Application to Conduct Research in Schools” (Appendix A). It is essential that each section of this form be completed. Incomplete proposals cannot be considered by the Committee. In addition, one copy each of the following, if applicable, should be appended to the application:
 - a. Standardized tests that may be a part of the data collection procedures;
 - b. Questionnaires or surveys to be distributed to research participants;
 - c. All information / materials to be distributed to participants, students, parents, or staff;
 - d. Parental permission letters;
 - e. All consent forms (staff, students, participants, parents of students, etc.)/assent forms;
 - f. Ethics Committee approval (containing dates).

3. Applications *including documents and payments* from external agencies should be directed to:

Chairman, Research Committee
English Montreal School Board
6000 Fielding Avenue, Room 234
Montreal, Quebec, H3X 1T4



4. In the case of research originating in an EMSB school, the Principal or Centre Director is responsible for submitting, after consultation with the School Council and when appropriate, with other staff members and the Governing Board, the research proposal to the Regional Director. For a project originating from or in collaboration with an EMSB department, the director associated with the project is responsible for forwarding the proposal to the Research Committee. This EMSB representative should assist the research team in their presentation to the Committee in order to further explain the extent of the collaboration.
5. Receiving approval from the Committee does not guarantee that your research will be accommodated in the EMSB schools. The final decision for any EMSB school to participate in the research is subject to the School Principal. When requesting a school's participation in research, the research team should be prepared to present a copy of your approval letter/email to the School Principal as proof that the research has been approved. Schools should minimally be provided with a one-page description of the overall research, the timeline, and the parameters of the participation.
6. Written parental permission is required for access to student's report cards and for students to participate in studies which seek information beyond the regular school curriculum.
7. The EMSB Research Committee should be provided a report of the research when it is completed. All such reports shall respect the anonymity of all participants. It is contrary to professional ethics to identify any student or school in any publication.

The researcher is not required to give a report to participants or their parents, if he/she does so, however, any such report should contain aggregate data only.

In no circumstances shall a researcher reveal individual scores to participants or parents without Board approval.

8. Applications shall not be approved from researchers who do not comply with the proper guidelines. (e.g., failure to submit questionnaire, ethics approval, etc.)
9. Research applicants who make amendments to their project MUST re-submit an application with the changes made, prior to implementation. The study can only begin once the full approval has been granted, in writing, from the Research Committee.



10. Active, informed consent (i.e., written permission) must be sought out when conducting research with EMSB students, staff, and/or families.

Researchers should note that:

- Parental consent is required for all students 18 years of age and younger.
- Additional consent, beyond consent to participate, must be sought when audiotaping, videotaping, or photographing participants is a component of your research methodology.
- The collection of personal information that is extraneous to the provision of consent (e.g., birth date, telephone number, report card, email address) is not permitted on consent forms.

11. The privacy and confidentiality of EMSB students, staff or their family's responses and data participating in research conducted, must be assured. Neither individual participants nor participating schools may be identified in the presentation or reporting of your research results.

12. Researchers must inform participants about:

- What information will be collected and how it will be used?
- Who will have access to their information?
- The protections in place to ensure their privacy and confidentiality; and
- Any circumstances where their privacy and confidentiality cannot be assured.

13. Where research methodology involves only partial disclosure of the true purpose of your research or deception, participants must be debriefed. Participant debriefing must include: an explanation about the true purpose of your research, why this research approach was used, and an explicitly stated opportunity for the participant to withdraw their consent for you to use their data in your research.

14. All contents within documentation provided to schools should be inclusive and reflect EMSB's commitment to the fact that diversity is integral to its mission, values, and culture.

15. In general, researchers shall not be allowed access to students in May and June because of the large number of activities in schools at that time of year.



16. A current Police Check (within the past 6 months) is required for all researchers and assistants who will be conducting research in-person with EMSB students, staff and/or families on school property. This includes any research personnel joining the research team once approval from the Committee to conduct research has been obtained.

17. Researchers must make research findings available to the EMSB prior to their release or publication.