

### 3.11 EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH POLICY

Scholars Academy will allow individuals and organizations to engage in research, including surveys and evaluation projects, in the school if the research is professional in quality and has the potential to improve student outcomes, staff effectiveness, program effectiveness, conditions for learning or the advancement of the field of gifted education. This provision applies to individuals and agencies who are not associated with Scholars Academy and to Scholars Academy employees who are conducting such research outside of the scope of their employment with Scholars Academy.

The goals and objectives of the proposed research must be consistent with the overall programmatic goals and objectives of Scholars Academy. Accordingly, each research project must clearly describe its potential for positive impact, allow for orderly administration, meet confidentiality and other guidelines for treatment of human subjects, meet common standards for scientific rigor, comply with law, ordinance, Scholars Academy policy and procedures, and meet designated time constraints. The Executive Director or his/her designee will determine whether a proposal meets the requirements outlined above.

Persons interested in conducting research in Scholars Academy must have prior approval to conduct the research. The Executive Director shall develop procedures detailing the process by which researchers may obtain approval to conduct their research. The procedures must include rules regarding confidentiality of information and informed consent.

#### I. DEFINITIONS

- Applicant (Researcher) - Any person who wishes to collect or use data generated by, or pertaining to, persons in Scholars Academy and completes a "Proposal for Conducting Research" form to request approval for the project. Qualified persons may include (but are not limited to) graduate level students, professional researchers, or persons from organizations employing the assistance of persons with credentials as experts in research and/or evaluations.
- Research Review Panel - A panel of Scholars Academy community members who review research and evaluation proposals, using criteria approved by the Executive Director, which makes recommendations for the acceptance or rejection of proposals. Panel members may be selected from among a broad range of persons and shall include at least one person with expertise in the academic research process.
- School Research- The collection (via survey/questionnaire, interviews, focus groups, tests, observations, data file extractions or other similar methods) and analysis of quantitative or qualitative data to determine conditions, facts or opinions related to improving the effectiveness of our education processes or the advancement of gifted education.

#### II. PROJECT APPLICATION AND REVIEW

A. Applicants must submit their formal applications to the Executive Director, on the appropriate form entitled, "Proposal for Conducting Research", or approved equivalent.

B. The Executive Director shall make the final decision to approve or disprove proposals. Prior to making the decision, a Research Review Panel will review the proposal and make recommendations regarding approval to the Executive Director.

C. Applications shall be reviewed upon receipt. Applications should be acknowledged by a representative of Scholars Academy within ten working days of being received. The Executive Director will make every effort to reach a decision on a proposal within thirty working days of receipt.

D. Approved projects will be reviewed annually to assess progress and status if research is ongoing.

### III. CONFIDENTIALITY AND INFORMED CONSENT

#### A. Confidentiality

Student and staff data which identify or permit the identification of individuals may be confidential. Treatment of data provided to the applicant shall be as follows:

1. When possible, data shall be provided without Scholars Academy employee, parent, or student names;
2. When names or Scholars Academy identification numbers are required, they must be maintained separately as confidential information with restricted access; and
3. If student names are required, parental consent must be obtained prior to the data being provided.

#### B. Affirmative Consent Required

Parents and students who are emancipated minors or who are 18 years old ("eligible students") must affirmatively consent before students are required to submit to a survey funded in whole or in part by a program of the U.S. Department of Education that concerns one or more of the following protected areas:

1. Political affiliations or beliefs of the student or student's parent;
2. Mental or psychological problems of the student or student's family;
3. Sex behavior or attitudes;
4. Illegal, anti-social, self-incriminating, or demeaning behavior;
5. Critical appraisals of others with whom respondents have close family relationships;
6. Legally recognized privileged relationships, such as with lawyers, doctors, or ministers;
7. Religious practices, affiliations, or beliefs of the student or parents; or
8. Income, other than as required by law to determine program eligibility.

#### C. Passive Consent Allowed

In studies other than those that fall under Section B, above, passive consent is acceptable.

#### D. Applicant Procedures

The applicant's procedures must meet the following standards:

1. Guarantee confidentiality and control of access to data;
2. Be verifiable;
3. Be explicit with respect to the data requested and the length of time the data is requested;
4. Be agreed upon by Scholars Academy.

### IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

Applicants must agree to share research results with the Executive Director or his/her designee upon completion of the research project.

V. STANDARDS OF PROFESSIONALISM

Researchers are expected at all times to practice the highest standards of professional responsibility and integrity. Researchers may expect the same from Scholars Academy staff members. The professional obligations and independence of both parties will be protected and respected by both parties.

VI. RESERVED RIGHTS

Scholars Academy reserves the right to refuse and withdraw participation, for cause, for any project at any time. Scholars Academy will be under no obligation to make reimbursement of, nor held liable for, costs incurred by the project. Notification of refusal or withdrawal of approval and termination of the project will be made in writing.

Adopted: November 28, 2016

**Appendix: Form for Use by Scholars Academy Research Review Panel**

Researcher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Organization(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Proposed Research \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date Received \_\_\_\_\_

Do the applicant's procedures meet the standards below?

|  | YES | NO | Notes |
|--|-----|----|-------|
| Procedures guarantee confidentiality           |     |    |       |
| Procedures guarantee control of access to data |     |    |       |
| Procedures are verifiable                      |     |    |       |
| Data requested is explicit                     |     |    |       |
| Length of time data is requested is clear      |     |    |       |

This research proposal is RECOMMEDED / NOT RECOMMENDED for approval by the Scholars Academy Research Review Panel.

Scholars Academy Proposal for Conducting Research

Researcher(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Email address \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Organization(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Title of Proposed Research

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Define how your procedures guarantee confidentiality.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Define how your procedures guarantee control of access to data.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Are your procedures verifiable?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Specifically, what data will be collected?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What is the proposed length of time for data collection? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree to practice the highest standards of professional responsibility and integrity? \_\_\_\_\_

Do you agree to share results of your research with Scholars Academy? \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide a full research proposal or any additional information as needed with this form.

