Guidelines of an Application for the
Conduct of Research Involving Human Subjects

University policy requires that all research involving human subjects be reviewed by the Institutional Review Board. In completing the application, be aware that the persons reviewing it may be unfamiliar with the field of study involved. Present the request in typewritten form and in non-technical terms. **Data collection may not begin until written approval is received from the IRB.** Submit signed proposal to the IRB Administrator, College of Graduate Studies and Research, Minnesota State University, Mankato, 115 Alumni/Foundation Center, Mankato, MN 56001. Incomplete proposals will be returned without review. Please be advised that what follows is an outline for an IRB proposal. Please use as much space as necessary when you submit the proposal. The proposal must include the following sections:

I. General Information

a. Principal Investigator(s)
For the purposes of the IRB any research under the auspices of Minnesota State University, Mankato must have an MSU faculty member or MSU professional employee as the responsible person.

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b. Secondary Investigator (Student)
Persons who will be the primary researchers conducting the research (e.g., graduate students for thesis or alternate plan paper research).

None

c. Whom should the IRB contact regarding this proposal?
Candace F. Raskin
d. Project Title: MCA-II Study: Longitudinal study of schools that are performing two standard deviations above projected Math and Reading MCA-II scores based on demographics

e. Proposed study dates: December 2009 – December 2010

f. Location of project
Identify the actual site where human subjects will be participating. Note: Include a letter indicating permission of the institution to allow the research to be conducted there. Letters attached to e-mail.

Focus group data and survey data will be collected from administrators, teacher leaders and staff who volunteer to participate.

Data will be collected from the following sites:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 3 School Name &amp; Address</th>
<th>District Name /Address/Contact</th>
<th>Principal Contact</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brandon Elementary 306 West Third Street Brandon, MN 56315</td>
<td>Superintendent Mark Westby Brandon Public Schools 206 West Third Street Brandon, MN 56315 <a href="mailto:mwestby@brandon.k12.mn.us">mwestby@brandon.k12.mn.us</a> 320-524-2263</td>
<td>Superintendent/Elementary Principal: Mark Westby <a href="mailto:mwestby@brandon.k12.mn.us">mwestby@brandon.k12.mn.us</a> 320-524-2263</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maple River East Elementary 126 Higbie Avenue SW Minnesota Lake, MN 56068</td>
<td>Superintendent Willis Schoeb 101 6th Avenue NE Mapleton, MN 56065 <a href="mailto:wschoeb@isd2135.k12.mn.us">wschoeb@isd2135.k12.mn.us</a> 507-524-3918</td>
<td>Principal: James Bisel <a href="mailto:jbisel@isd2135.k12.mn.us">jbisel@isd2135.k12.mn.us</a> 507-462-3348</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southside Family Charter School 4500 Clinton Avenue South Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>Southside Family Charter School 4500 Clinton Avenue South Minneapolis, MN 55419</td>
<td>School Director: Tania Montgomery (612) 872-8322</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Grade 7 School Name &amp; Address</th>
<th>Location/Address</th>
<th>Principal Contact</th>
<th>Student Population</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
<td>Southside Family Charter School 4500 Clinton Avenue South Minneapolis, MN</td>
<td>Southside Family Charter School 4500 Clinton Avenue South Minneapolis, MN 55419</td>
<td>School Director: Tania Montgomery (612) 872-8322</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luverne Middle School 709 N Kniss Luverne, MN 56156</td>
<td>Superintendent Gary Fisher Luverne Public Schools ISD 21284 709 North Kniss Avenue Luverne, MN 56156 <a href="mailto:g.fisher@isd21284.net">g.fisher@isd21284.net</a> (507) 283-8088</td>
<td>Principal: Donna Judson <a href="mailto:djudson@isd21284.net">djudson@isd21284.net</a> 507-283-4491 Ext. 2020</td>
<td>255</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barton Open School 4237 Colfax Avenue S Minneapolis, MN 55409</td>
<td>Director of Research, Evaluation and Assessment, David Heistad 807 NE Broadway Rooms 300, 301, 302 Minneapolis, MN 55413 <a href="mailto:david.heistad@mpls.k12.mn.us">david.heistad@mpls.k12.mn.us</a> (612) 668-0571</td>
<td>Principal: Steve DeLapp <a href="mailto:steven.delapp@mpls.k12.mn.us">steven.delapp@mpls.k12.mn.us</a> 612-668-3580</td>
<td>752</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair School Crystal 3915 Adair Avenue North Crystal, MN</td>
<td>Superintendent Jett Daniel West Metro Education Program District #6069 10 South 10th Street Minneapolis, MN 55403 <a href="mailto:Daniel_Jett@wmep.k12.mn.us">Daniel_Jett@wmep.k12.mn.us</a> 612-752-7203</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Kevin_Bennett@wmep.k12.mn.us">Kevin_Bennett@wmep.k12.mn.us</a> 763.971.4502</td>
<td>986</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
II. General Purpose of the Research Project

Why are you doing the project and what do you hope to find out?

Faculty members from the Department of Educational Leadership at Minnesota State University, Mankato have conducted an analysis on existing Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment - II (MCA-II) data in an effort to identify the following:

1. What demographics are significantly related with school performance?
2. How accurately can we predict school performance using demographics?
3. Are there schools that are performing significantly higher than their demographics would suggest?

The first phase of the study used public data from the Minnesota Department of Education web site http://education.state.mn.us/MDE/Data/Data_Downloads/Accountability_Data/Assessment_MCA_II/MCA_II_Excel_files/index.html

The MCA-II is an assessment taken by Minnesota students, which gives parents, educators, administrators, and state education officials an indication as to how students are performing in math and reading. The MCA-II math assessments are yearly taken by students in grades 3 – 8, and 11. The MCA-II reading assessments are yearly taken by students in grades 3-8, and 10.

A regression analysis was conducted to generate projections of test scores based on key demographic variables. Through the regression analysis answers to questions 1-3 were generated. Also identified was a subset of schools that are performing two standard deviations above projected MCA-II scores.

As a second phase principal investigators will investigate the phenomena of schools that score significantly higher on the MCA-II Math and Reading tests than their demographic profile might predict. The research question is as follows:
• Can commonalities be identified for the subset of schools that are scoring significantly higher on the MCA-II Math and Reading tests than their demographic profile predict?

The purpose of the second phase is to study a subset of schools that are performing two standard deviations above projected MCA-II scores and identify relevant practices and programs that can be replicated in schools with similar demographics.

III. Project Description

What are you going to do?

Step 1: Conduct an open-ended semi-structured interview for the purpose of identifying the school’s structure and culture.
  • Principal investigators will contact the school principal and conduct an open-ended semi-structured interview
    Note: Interview protocol attached in e-mail

Step 2: Deploy Learning Community Culture Indicator Surveys to all certified staff and teacher leaders (LCCI 4.0)
  1. Electronically implement (LCCI 4.0) Teacher version to all certified teachers in identified schools
  2. Electronically implement (LCCI 4.0) Principal version to all building principals in identified schools
    Note: Surveys attached

Step 3: Conduct Focus Groups
  • Principal investigators will conduct a focus group for the purpose of gaining greater insight on results of the survey. Focus group participants will be identified by the school building principal. Participation in the focus group is voluntary.
  • Focus group will consist of 4 to 6 individuals and will include
    • School leadership (i.e. Building principal and assistant principal)
    • Teachers

Step 4: Review Document
  • Conduct a Document Review of any public documents that might provide insight into the data collected from the survey and focus group.

How will data be obtained?

Data will be collected through electronic surveys, individual interviews, focus group interviews and document review. Interviews will be recorded via electronic audio file. Electronic files will be transcribed by a professional transcriptionist and will be sent to the interviewee for review.

What will happen to subjects and the data they provide?

Any information obtained during this study which could identify participants will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in 115 Armstrong Hall, Minnesota State University, Mankato. The data will only be seen by the principal investigators during the study. The data will be secured for three years following the study after which the data will be destroyed.
How will subjects be selected or recruited?

All certified teaching staff and school leadership who work in a school within the identified subset of schools that are performing two standard deviations above projected scores will be invited to participate. Participation in the study will be voluntary.

IV. Description of Subjects

a. Ages of subjects:
   All of the participants are adults

b. Number of subjects
   All certified staff members of schools identified in section f. location of the project
   Approximately 200 staff members

c. Characteristics of subjects
   All participants are licensed educators practicing in the State of Minnesota.

V. Protection of Subjects’ Rights

Confidentiality:

Any information obtained during this study will be kept strictly confidential. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in 115 Armstrong Hall, Minnesota State University, Mankato. The data will only be seen by principal investigators and professional transcriptionist during the study. The professional transcriptionist will sign a confidentiality agreement.

Opportunity to Ask Questions:

Participants will have the opportunity to ask questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study.

Freedom to Withdraw:

Subjects are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting their relationship with the investigators, the Minnesota State University, Mankato or their school. Their decision will not result in any loss or benefits to which they are otherwise entitled.

Risks/Discomforts:

There are minimal risks for participation in this study. However, you may feel some emotional discomfort when answering questions about your perceptions of the school’s culture and leadership practices. This discomfort should be minimized since the data will be analyzed only by the investigators, and your individual responses will remain anonymous.

Consent, Right to Receive a Copy:

Subjects are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. All participants will sign an informed consent prior to participating in the study.

NOTE: Informed Consent Form - Attached
Dated signatures of Principal and Student Investigators:

November 25, 2009

Attachments

1. Learning community culture indicator survey - Teacher version
2. Learning community culture indicator survey - Principal version
3. Open-ended semi-structured interview protocol
4. Focus group interview protocol
5. Informed consent form for focus group
6. Informed consent form for principal interview
7. Informed consent form for survey – used for both teacher and principal versions
8. Signed letters of consent from the following districts:
   a. Brandon Public Schools
   b. Maple River East
   c. Twin Cities Academy High School
   d. Lakeview
   e. Fair School Crystal
   f. Luverne Middle School
   g. Barton Open School – Pending approval of IRB
   h. Southside Family Charter School