

Florida Department of Education

Unit Record Data Request Packet Instructions

Introduction

Effective July 1, 2011, the Florida Department of Education (FLDOE) published a Research Agenda consistent with the assurance areas of Race to the Top and intended to assist in the achievement of Florida's student achievement goals. Researchers wishing to access data from FLDOE's Education Data Warehouse must clearly show how the request will support the needs outlined in this agenda. FLDOE's Research Agenda can be found here:

<http://www.fldoehub.org/Research/Pages/default.aspx>.

Research requests should be focused and demonstrate a direct relationship between the data elements requested, the research questions posed, and at least one of FLDOE's Research Agenda topics. While the Department collects a vast array of information at all levels of education, data provided for a single research request is limited to the extent possible to maintain the confidentiality and integrity of the data.

Some research topics may require data that is not collected by the FLDOE and/or may require the combination of FLDOE data with data from other sources. Researchers are encouraged to incorporate qualitative components into the research proposal, if appropriate.

FLDOE will utilize several criteria to determine whether to approve a request for access to the data including, but not limited to the following:

- *Timeliness* – Requests will only be accepted per the schedule and instructions listed in this document.
- *Relevance* – Requests will be evaluated to determine how well they support the needs outlined in FLDOE's Research Agenda. This also includes an evaluation of the research methodology.
- *Capacity* – Requests will be considered within the context of the work effort required to fulfill it and FLDOE resource availability.

FLDOE, at its discretion, may defer consideration of a researcher's packet to the next evaluation period if there are insufficient staff resources to fulfill the request but it is otherwise acceptable. Requests may roll to one (1) subsequent evaluation period before either being approved or denied.

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Packet Submission

Researchers must submit a complete Unit Record Data Request Packet per the guidelines outlined below. The Unit Record Data Request Packet and/or Additional Years Request Form must be submitted electronically to data.request@fldoe.org with an original copy of signatures sent to:

Florida Department of Education
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 844
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
Attn: Data Request Team

Approved requests will not be fulfilled unless the original copy of signatures has been received.

Due Dates

New proposals or requests for additional years of data will only be accepted on **October 1, February 1, and June 1** of each year. Researchers will receive notification of the status of their request within four weeks of the submission date.

Data Access

Once a request is approved, FLDOE will work to fulfill the request. However, this duration can vary depending on other staff workloads and whether additional data permissions are required. Approval of a research proposal by FLDOE is the first in a multi-step process before research can actually commence. In some instances, FLDOE must obtain permissions to provide certain data from external data providers. This process can range from a few weeks to many months depending upon the nature and status of data sharing agreements between the FLDOE and the external data providers. Therefore, the Department may not be able to meet the expectations proposed in the request timeline.

Unit Record Data Request Packet Forms

A Unit Record Data Request Packet consists of six sections: (I) project information, (II) statement of benefit, (III) project description, (IV) timeline, (V) data element crosswalk, and (VI) security and access agreement. These sections are described below. The packet can be downloaded from <http://www.fldoehub.org/Research/Pages/default.aspx>.

- I. **Project Information**. Project Information contains basic information including, but not limited to, the requestor's name, organization, project title, and research funding.
- II. **Statement of Benefit**. The Statement of Benefit demonstrates how the research supports one or more of the FLDOE's Research Agenda items. The Statement of Benefit also specifies how FLDOE can use the publication/research being proposed.

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III. **Project Description**. The project description contains the following information in detail:

- A summary/abstract of the topic to be researched;
- A list of the research questions to be answered by the proposed project;
- Definition of the cohort(s) requested;
- List of any specific characteristics for the cohort(s);
- Description of any comparison groups requested;
- Indication of matching datasets with information provided by you; ***NOTE: Please do not submit your matched dataset with the request. If approved, you will be sent instructions regarding the format required and how to submit the data.***
- Statement of why published data and reports readily available on FLDOE's Web site are not sufficient to answer the research questions posed; and
- Description of the methodology planned for this analysis.

IV. **Timeline**. A detailed timeline, including month/year, of the entire research project must be included. We may or may not be able to meet the expectations proposed in your timeline.

V. **Data Element Crosswalk**. List each data element requested, the years and grades requested for the element, and how it relates to one or more of your research questions.

VI. **Security & Access Agreement**. The Security and Access Agreement explains the legal obligations of anyone receiving data from FLDOE. The Security and Access Agreement must be completed, signed by all persons who will be using the data, and notarized. The signed and notarized original should be sent to the address listed in the *Packet Submission* section of these instructions.

Additional Years

Researchers with a previously approved Unit Record Data Request that would like access to additional years of data may submit an Additional Years Request Form. This form is to request access to additional years of the same data in the approved Unit Record Data Request. Complete Additional Years Request Forms will only be accepted as indicated in the *Packet Submission* and *Due Date* sections of these instructions.