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**Memorandum of Understanding:**

**Conducting Research in the Lower Merion School District**

This Memorandum of Understanding applies to, and represents an agreement by and among, the Outside Research Entity (“ORE”) named in the approved research proposal and the Lower Merion School District. “You," "your," and “ORE” means the Outside Research Entity and “the District” refers to the Lower Merion School District.

If you fail to comply with the terms, conditions and limits set forth in this agreement, the District may hold you in default of this agreement, and, if you fail to remedy the alleged breach or default in not later than five (5) business days, the District has the right to (a) terminate this agreement or (b) seek a remedy to compel you to comply with this agreement. You acknowledge and agree that the data contains sensitive information, and based on this fact, the District may seek the expedited legal and equitable relief in the event you breach any term set forth in this agreement.

The District will specify the expiration date of this agreement. The District may terminate this agreement if you breach it or for other good cause. If you have not published your research by the date this agreement expires, you may not thereafter use the data in your research. Not later than two (2) weeks after the expiration date you shall either destroy the data or return the data to the Lower Merion School District (you may not keep a copy of the data in any form or format).

The following terms and conditions apply to all research conducted in the Lower Merion School District:

1. **Voluntary participation.** Participation in studies conducted by outside research entities must be voluntary. The approval to conduct research in the Lower Merion School District does not in any way obligate its staff members, students, or families to participate.
2. **Time commitment.** Research activities should not interfere with instructional time nor impose a commitment of time that would significantly detract from staff members’ professional responsibilities. Recruitment materials directed to LMSD staff should clearly describe participation as a voluntary experience that occurs outside of the normal work day.
3. **Federal Law.** All state and federal laws must be observed, including, but not limited to, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) and the Protection of Pupil Rights Amendment (PPRA).
4. **Institutional Review Board Approval.** Institutional Review Board (IRB) review for all research with human subjects is required. IRB approval may come from either university IRBs or independent IRBs.
5. **Research by District Employees.** In most circumstances, research conducted by an ORE who is also a District employee may not involve the collection of data from other employees assigned to the same school in which the researcher works. Special exceptions may apply, depending on the purpose and nature of the research design. Requests for special exceptions must be submitted in writing to the chair of the Research Review Panel for formal approval.
6. **Approval Documentation.** Research may not be conducted in any school without an official letter of approval from the Lower Merion School District Office of the Superintendent, which will contain your research approval ID number and expiration date. All communication and documentation distributed by the ORE must contain the LMSD Research Approval ID number provided in the letter.
7. **Changes to Study.** Once the approval letter has been issued, no changes in the scope of the research (e.g., timeframe of study, number of schools included, number of participants, etc.), procedure, or instrumentation may be made without authorization. Requests to amend the study must be submitted in writing to the chair of the Research Review Panel and approved before proposed changes are enacted.
8. **Letterhead and Logos.** All invitations to participate in research (i.e. recruitment materials and consent, assent and information forms) must be printed on the ORE’s stationary. The use of the Lower Merion School District letterhead or logo is strictly prohibited.
9. **Data Format.** When approved research requires the District to provide data to you, data will be provided as a .csv or .xlsx file and will contain only the raw data specifically requested in the proposal. Student identifiers will be removed from files, or, if a unique identifier is necessary for analysis, the District will apply a confidential formula to generate unique student identifiers for the purpose of data analysis.
10. **Approved Use of Data.** Data received from the Lower Merion School District may only be used by the ORE for approved research studies. Unauthorized use or transfer of the data to another entity is a violation of the Lower Merion School District policy.
11. **Clearances.** Researchers collecting data on school grounds who are not LMSD employees must obtain and submit background clearances. Please see the [LMSD Website for Obtaining Clearances](http://www.lmsd.org/community/obtaining-clearances) for instructions.
12. **Participant Confidentiality.** Strict confidentiality must be maintained to protect all participants involved. Identifiable data are not to be shared outside of the ORE research team members who have been listed on the approved research proposal. If researchers are approved to acquire existing data, datasets will be de-identified by the District before provided it to the researcher.
13. **Disclosure of District Identity.** Unless explicitly approved in writing, the researcher may not disclose the name of the District when reporting findings from the study.
14. **Reporting.** Upon completion of the study, the ORE will submit a summary of the findings and conclusions of the study. In addition, the ORE will notify the District of any presentations or publications that result from the study.

**Please complete the information below to indicate your agreement to all the above terms**. Submit this form and any other requested information to Dr. Kristina Ayers Paul, Chair of the Research Review Panel, Lower Merion School District, 301 E Montgomery Ave., Ardmore PA 19073 or [paulk@lmsd.org](mailto:paulk@lmsd.org).

**Name of Principal Researcher/Outside Research Entity Representative:** Click here to enter text.

**Phone:** Click here to enter text.

**Email:** Click here to enter text.

**Study Title:** Click here to enter text.

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Signature Date