

Human Subject Survey Projects **Guidelines for School IRB Committees**

Due to the enormous number of Human Subject Survey Projects submitted over the past several years, NEFRSEF's SRC/IRB committee can no longer continue to read and return this type of project in a timely manner. Schools will be required to appoint their own IRB committees **ONLY** for ***human subject projects involving surveys, questionnaires, or tests that are psychological, educational and/or opinion studies.*** All other type of human subject projects, which includes physical activity, behavioral observations, data review projects that include identifiable data, and studies in which the researcher is the subject of the research are to be submitted to the NEFRSEF SRC/IRB committee prior to the start of the project. If you have any questions, please email Susan Biehler, director@nefrsef.org for clarification.

School IRB Committees must consist of:

1. Science Teacher
2. School Administrator
3. A professional who is qualified to evaluate psychological risk. Acceptable professionals include psychiatrists, psychologists, licensed social workers or licensed clinical professional counselors.

Guidelines for School IRB Committee members

1. Read the International Science and Engineering Fair Guidelines, found at www.societyforscience.org/isef/document/index.asp for Human Subjects on pages 13-16.
2. Read each required form (1, 1A, Research plan, 1B, 4, and if applicable, forms 1C and 2).
3. On form 4, question #2-Must be answered completely. Remember, there is always risk, even if only of embarrassment. On question #3, please start the answer on the front of the form and finish on the back side of the form. Do not answer on a separate piece of paper. Tell how you will keep the data confidential, state that subjects will not be identified by name. You must state that subjects may be able to stop participating in the project at any time and may refuse to answer any question. Make sure IRB signs in the appropriate box. Make sure no one signs in the bottom two boxes until IRB has checked, approved, and signed the box above.
4. It is NEFRSEF's policy to require informed consent on all projects involving minors.
5. Please read survey questions very carefully, make sure surveys do not include questions related to personal experience, such as racism, or sexual, physical, or child abuse. Divorce and/or psychological well-being must be considered more than minimal risk. These projects must come to NEFRSEF IRB/SRC.
6. In the research plan, the procedure must identify the study group (i.e.: middle boys, the track team, church group, etc.) and exactly how the survey will be distributed and collected, and how anonymity will be maintained.
7. The bibliography must contain a reference on the ethical treatment of human subjects (see page 16, #1).