

# Elements of Informed Consent for Millard Public Schools

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## A. Types of Consent for Research:

1. **Signed parent consent (active/positive):** The researcher must have a signed parent permission slip for each student who is involved. **“Active/Positive Consent”** is used when; (a) using Special Education students, (b) the researcher is asking questions that infringe on family privacy, (c) the researcher is videotaping or photographing subjects, (d) there is potential of more than minimal risk, or (e) the researcher so chooses. These letters may be distributed by first class mail or, upon consent of the school, could be hand carried by students.
2. **Informed parent consent (passive/negative):** The researcher must adequately inform each parent of the research activities, but only obtain parent signatures for those students whose parents do not want them to participate. **“Passive/Negative Consent”** may be used when methods/procedures involve minimal risk.
3. **No parent permission:** The research activities are initiated/sponsored by Millard Public Schools and/or the research activities do not involve direct student participation and are considered part of the applicant’s district responsibilities. In some instances, this might apply to “on the shelf” data.

**Note:** While parental permission replaces or supplements the permission of the student participant who is under age 18, if the student appears capable of comprehending the research procedures the student should be provided with either a place to sign on the same form as the parent signs or be provided with a separate form to sign.

## B. Components of a Consent Form:

1. **Identification:** The researcher's name and the nature of the researcher's affiliation with Millard Public Schools and building/classroom location of the study should be stated in the first paragraph.
2. **Invitation:** An invitation for the person/student to become a research subject should be offered, not a request that is in the nature of a requirement or demand.
3. **Purpose:** A statement that the study involves research and a clear explanation of the overall purposes of the research.
4. **Procedures:** Give a description of specifically what the participation will involve.
5. **Risks or Discomforts:** A clear description of any reasonably foreseeable risks or discomfort to the subject. If there are no risks or discomforts, then include a statement to the following effect: "There are no anticipated risks in this study."
6. **Benefits:** A clear description of any benefits to the subject or to others that may reasonably be expected from the research. If no direct benefit to the subject, include a sentence to the

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following effect: "Although there will be no direct benefit to you for taking part in this study, the researcher may learn more about \_\_\_\_."

7. **Confidentiality:** A clear statement of how the confidentiality of private data identifying the subject will be maintained.
8. **Disclaimer:** A clear statement that participation is voluntary and the subject is free to refuse participation altogether or discontinue it at any time. The choice to participate or not to participate will not impact any relationship with the researcher nor the institution (In the case of a student, it will not impact the grades or status at school.)
9. **Signatures:** Dated signatures of participant and or parent/guardian.

**Hint:** Keep the language simple (8<sup>th</sup> grade terminology is typically recommended).

**Note:** If student participation is to be video-taped or photographs are to be taken active consent with an approval check allowing the photography shall be completed.

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## Sample: Passive/Negative Consent to Use Data

### Example Only---Do not copy verbatim.

*Note: Similar format should be used for adult subjects. Informed consent is part of the research application process. Your building administrator must approve the letter before it is part of the application. Once edited, the letter should be distributed on school or district letterhead.*

Date:

Dear Parent:

My name is **(teacher name)** and I am your student's physical education teacher at **(teacher's school)**. I am taking courses towards **(course or degree)** at **(college or university)**. As part of my coursework I am researching how music affects student participation in exercise.

As part of our regular class activities, students will listen to a variety of music types (classical, jazz, rock, country) for one week each as they complete exercises. The exercises that they will be participating in are a normal part of our physical education program in the Millard Public Schools. During their exercise I will be making observations. At the end of each week I will ask them to fill out a short survey on how they liked exercising to that type of music.

As part of my research study, I would like to use the survey results and student observations. Student names and identifying information will be removed from the data collected to protect confidentiality in my report. You may contact me by email **(your school email address)** if you have additional questions or if you would like to see a copy of the survey.

**[Helpful hint: Paragraph 2 informs parents about regular class activities. All students participate in the MPS curriculum and class activities. You are not asking for permission to have their student do regular classwork. In contrast, paragraph 3 seeks permission to use the results of regular classwork in your research.]**

The intended benefit for the students is to add rhythm to the exercises and to make the activity more enjoyable.

There are no expected risks, beyond normal physical education activity as a result of this study.

My observations will not become part of your student's school record. They will be kept in a locked file cabinet and destroyed at the end of my study.

In the space at the bottom of this page, please indicate if you **do not** want your student's data included in my report and send this letter back to the school. No response is required if you are permitting your student's data to be used for my coursework.

\_\_\_ I DO NOT want my student's data used in this study.

Student Name:

Parent/Guardian Name:

Date:

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## Sample: Passive/Negative Parent Consent for Student Participation

### Example Only---Do not copy verbatim.

*Note: Similar format should be used for adult subjects. Informed consent is part of the research application process. Your building administrator must approve the letter before it is part of the application. Once edited, the letter should be distributed on school or district letterhead.*

Date:

Dear Parent:

My name is **(teacher name)** and I am your student's physical education teacher at **(teacher's school)** I am taking courses towards **(course or degree)** at **(college or university)**. As part of my coursework I am researching how exercise affects student heart rate.

For this study, students that participate will wear heart monitors as they complete exercises. The exercises that they will be participating in are a normal part of our physical education program in the Millard Public Schools. During their exercise I will be making observations and collecting the heart monitor data. At the end of the study I will ask participating students to fill out a short survey on how they felt about wearing a heart monitor during exercise. You may contact me by email **(your school email address)** if you have additional questions or if you would like to see a copy of the survey.

The intended benefit is for the physical education teaching profession. There are no planned direct benefits to the student. There are no expected risks, beyond normal physical education activity as a result of this study.

Your student's participation in the heart monitor research is completely voluntary. You may decline to have your student participate, if you wish. If you do decline your student will be participating in the physical education exercises without a heart monitor.

If your student participates the heart monitor data and my observations will not become part of your student's school record. They will be kept in a locked file cabinet and destroyed at the end of my study. Student names and identifying information will be removed from the data collected to protect confidentiality in my report.

In the space at the bottom of this page, please indicate if you **do not** want your student's data included in my report and send this letter back to the school. No response is required if you are permitting your student's data to be used for my coursework.

\_\_\_ I DO NOT want my student's data used in this study.

Student Name:

Parent/Guardian Name:

Date:

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## Sample: Active/Positive Parent Consent for Student Participation

### Example Only---Do not copy verbatim.

*Note: Similar format should be used for adult subjects. Informed consent is part of the research application process. Your building administrator must approve the letter before it is part of the application. Once edited, the letter should be distributed on school or district letterhead.*

Date:

Dear Parent:

My name is **(teacher name)** and I am a science teacher at **(teacher's school)**. I am taking courses towards **(course or degree)** at **(college or university)**. As part of my coursework I am researching how outdoor environmental student research affects student inquiry skills.

For this study, students that participate will be designing and completing science experiments on campus, but outside the school building. The content that will be studied is part of the Millard Public School Curriculum. At the end of the study they will be taking an assessment to measure their understanding of inquiry. I will also ask them to fill out a short survey on how the outdoor classroom worked for them as science students. You may contact me by email **(your school email address)** if you have additional questions or if you would like to see a copy of the survey.

The intended benefit for the student and the teaching profession is an understanding of how the outdoor classroom contributes to student inquiry skills. The potential direct benefit to the student is a better understanding of inquiry and how the outdoor environment affects living organisms. The potential risks are the same as any outdoor activity would have, such as an impact on outdoor allergies.

Your student's participation in the outdoor environmental student research is completely voluntary. You may decline to have your student participate, if you wish. If you do decline your student will be participating in indoor inquiry activities with **(co-teacher's name)**. The content studied and inquiry assessment will be the same for both groups of students.

If your student participates, the assessment data and survey answers will be kept in a locked file cabinet and destroyed at the end of my study. Student names and identifying information will be removed from the data collected to protect confidentiality in my report.

In the space at the bottom of this page, please indicate if you **do** or **do not** want your student to participate in the outdoor classroom experience. Please send this letter back to the school whether or not you wish your students to participate by **(date)**. Only students with signed permission will participate in the outdoor classroom **(window of time for study)**.

\_\_\_ Yes. My student may participate in the outdoor classroom.

\_\_\_ No, I DO NOT want my student to participate in the outdoor classroom.

Student Name:

Parent/Guardian Name:

Date: