



Examining the relationships between documented curriculum, classroom tasks, and the learning of mathematics

PRINCIPAL INFORMATION LETTER

I am writing to seek your approval for a research project to be conducted in your school.

I am the principal researcher. My contact details are:

Peter Sullivan
Professor of Science, Mathematics and Technology Education
Monash University, Clayton 3800, Victoria, Australia
Tel: (03) 9905 5924
Email: peter.sullivan@education.monash.edu.au

The research is part of a collaborative agreement between Monash University, the Department of Education, and the Melbourne Catholic Education Office. The research will investigate the ways to best engage students in learning mathematics. We believe that all children can learn mathematics successfully, and we are trying to find out the best ways for teachers to support children in their learning. Our focus will be on the type of mathematics tasks that teachers ask in the classroom.

There will be initial teacher professional learning sessions that will include some data collection, and subsequent teacher development meetings (at least two per term). The data to be collected will include surveys, interviews, and possibly observations of lessons. The teacher learning will focus on the nature of the respective task types, the associated pedagogies, ways of addressing key constraints, such as diversity in culture and language background and readiness to learn, and student assessment.

The project will also involve all students completing up to two surveys. The questions are related to aspects of their experience when learning mathematics. Some students will be interviewed, and some classes of willing teachers will be observed. The students will only be doing activities that are part of their usual program and will therefore not be at any risk.

I attach a more detailed description of the project.

Faculty of Education

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Your confidentiality, that of the school, the teachers, and the children will be maintained at all times. Reports of the project may be published in professional journals and in other publications. No publication will identify the school, you, the teachers, or any students. Data will be stored at Monash University, Clayton in locked cabinets. Mr Richard O'Donovan will be undertaking a PhD within the project.

Your participation is voluntary. You may withdraw consent at any time without adverse consequences.

If you have any questions regarding this project please feel free to contact me. I will provide the school with a copy of any reports written arising from the project.

If you have a complaint concerning the manner in which this research (SCERH No.CF07/606-2007/0173) is being conducted, please contact:

Human Ethics Officer
Research Office Building 3D
MONASH UNIVERSITY VIC 3800
Tel: 03 9905 2052

If you agree to participate in the project, could you please complete the attached form, keep one copy and return the other to me.

Yours sincerely



Peter Sullivan

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