

**BERC'S MISSION** is to conduct and disseminate rigorous long- and short-term strategic data analysis and research for the benefit of the children and families of Baltimore City. BERC research projects address questions of critical importance to research and practice so that school system leaders, partners, and other stakeholders will then be well positioned to use findings to move conversations forward, design strategic and practical responses to challenges that may be highlighted by the research, advocate for resources and capitalize upon promising practices or levers for positive change identified by the research. BERC has developed its data archive for the sole purpose of supporting research and analyses that allows it to execute its mission. BERC does not grant access to the data archive nor does it approve research for any other purpose.

## **Research Findings Review Process**

This document outlines the process by which investigators will update BERC and City Schools on the substantive findings of their research projects in a way that supports the BERC mission and adheres to the principle of *No Surprises*. To this end, researchers are expected to maintain on-going and substantive engagement with their City Schools Sponsor in order to ensure this principle is upheld. Researchers should err on the side of sharing early and often rather than waiting for a final version of the research product.

BERC requires that all investigators submit a draft of the research findings in the form of a working paper to the director of research operations (DRO) at least 35 days prior to any public discussion of the findings. A working paper constitutes a written narrative of the research study that includes the following components: rationale, data, method, findings and conclusions. It does not need to be a full-length manuscript but should include a preliminary narrative for the findings and all tables/figures of findings that will be discussed or made public. The working paper will be reviewed by the DRO for compliance prior to submission to City Schools for review. They will need at least 5 business days to review the material before passing it on to the district. Researchers are encouraged to have findings reviewed as soon as they are ready so that there can be time for revisions if necessary. At this time the DRO and the researcher will also discuss the plan for creating a report of the findings for a public audience that can be shared on the BERC website.

The internally approved working paper will be sent to the City Schools review. At a minimum this group will include the Sponsor, the Director of Research and the Chief Accountability and Achievement Officer. The working paper may be more widely circulated for review within City Schools as needed or deemed necessary by City Schools. This group must have at least 30 days to review the findings before they are presented in any public manner. A public discussion includes, but is not limited to, first submission to a journal or periodical, a conference presentation, or a presentation to anyone outside of the approved research team. Internal working group discussions do not require notification, but when in doubt the PI should discuss the details with the DRO. The 30-day review clock starts when the DRO sends the document to the district, not when the researcher first submits it to BERC. The project PI will be copied on communications.

Researchers should submit a new white paper when there have been major substantive changes to the empirical findings. Minor changes and revisions during the publication process do not need review by BERC or the district. Researchers should contact the DRO if they have questions about the extent of their revisions and the need for further review.

The final public research product, such as a journal submission, should be sent to the DRO as soon as it is ready. Copies will be provided to CEO, CAO, CAAO, Chief of Staff, Director of Research, and Sponsor at City Schools for their records. Links to the open access pre-prints and final publication will be posted on the BERC website.

### **Non-public Presentation of Research Products**

In some projects there will be a need to share research products (e.g. findings, methodological summaries, project overview) with others outside of the research team, BERC and/or City Schools. Examples include but are not limited to dissertation committees, institutional discussion groups, etc. In these cases, the researcher is expected to communicate with the City Schools sponsor to discuss the scope and content of the presentation and to secure the sponsor's agreement and approval of the presentation. Researchers will provide the BERC DRO with a summary of the proposed presentation, acknowledgment of the sponsor's approval, and coordinate suppression review and transfer of elements from the analytic environment.