

Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX

PARENT PERMISSION FOR MINOR TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Building an Engaging Place-Based Geography Learning Community in Metro Houston

Velvet Nelson, Ph.D. Kent State University, M.A. East Carolina University, BS West Liberty University from the Department of Environmental and Geosciences at Sam Houston State University (SHSU) is the lead investigator conducting a research study.

Your child was selected as a possible participant in this study because they will be invited to attend an activity or talk on geography education and opportunities. Your child's participation in this research study is voluntary.

Why is this study being done?

The purpose of this study is to assess student and teacher perceptions of geography and geographic education before and after participating in project events.

By doing this study, we hope to learn how more students and teachers can improve geography education and become more involved in future geography opportunities. Your student's participation in this research will last up to 15 minutes for each of the pre- and post-surveys.

What will happen if my child takes part in this research study?

If you decide to allow your child to participate, you will need to return this signed consent document via hard copy or email to your students' teacher. If you decide you do not allow your child to participate, you will not need to do anything, and your child will not be sent a link or contacted to participate. We will keep a record of this, and you can keep a copy of this consent for your records. If your child participates, they will:

- Take a confidential, encrypted online pre-survey on their education experience and their perceptions of geography and geography education;
- Participate in a National Geographic Society-funded geography talk or activity with Sam Houston State University faculty;
- Take a confidential, encrypted online post-survey on their education experience and their perceptions of geography after taking part in a project talk or activity.
- Be part of a small focus group where we ask questions about geography and geography education.

These activities and survey responses will take place in your student's high school classrooms. Your child may also choose to take the online surveys at home. You may choose to opt your student out of participation at any time during the study.

How long will my child be in the research study?

Participation in surveys will take a total of up to 15 minutes for the completion of each of the two surveys (pre- and post). The pre-survey will be taken approximately one week prior to the in-class activity. The post survey should be completed within 24 hours of the activity that students participated in. Focus groups could last up to one hour as a one-time discussion event.

Are there any potential risks or discomforts that my child can expect from this study?

- The only minor risks expected are that confidential student responses and comments about their school district could result in discomfort in the future. However, all efforts will be made to keep responses confidential. All collected data will be downloaded from secure, online survey platforms within one year of the survey response and kept only on password-protected devices by SHSU project personnel. Any recordings will be kept on password-protected devices that only SHSU project personnel have access to. No name-linked information will be accessible online. Once survey responses are downloaded, individual survey responses will be de-identified to remove any links between survey responses and names and schools of participants. No names will be included in any publications or information that is disseminated.

Are there any potential benefits to my child if he or she participates?

Your child may benefit from the study by being introduced to new career paths and opportunities related to geography.

The results of the research may result in more integration and student and teacher participation in geography-related projects in the local area, region, and state.

Student responses may also help improve geography education for future high school students.

Will my child be paid for participating?

- Your child will not receive any compensation for taking or completing the pre- or post-surveys in this study or participating in a focus group discussion.

Will information about my child's participation be kept confidential?

Your child's survey responses will be kept confidential to the extent of the technology being used. Qualtrics collects IP addresses for respondents to surveys they host; however, the ability to connect survey responses to IP address has been disabled for this survey. That means that we will not be able to identify responses other than through responses your child chooses to provide. You should keep in mind that answers to specific questions may make respondents more easily identifiable. The security and privacy policy for Qualtrics can be viewed at: <https://www.qualtrics.com/security-statement/>. Any identifying information provided will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law. Upon collecting online surveys, we will download all responses within one year, and code the individual survey responses with a

combination of numbers to remove all names and other identifying information from digitized data. A password-protected key that links respondents to the survey codes will be kept separately from individual survey responses. Only senior personnel on the project will have access to the key to identify the survey participants should we need to follow up. All focus group responses will also be coded with all identifying information for students being removed. All identifying information and related survey records will be destroyed three years after the *Building an Engaging Place-Based Geography Learning Community in Metro Houston* project has ended.

What are my and my child's rights if he or she takes part in this study?

- You can choose whether or not you want your child to be in this study, and you may opt your student out or discontinue your child's participation at any time.
- Whatever decision you make, there will be no penalty to you or your child, and no loss of benefits to which you or your child were otherwise entitled.
- Your child may refuse to answer any questions that he/she does not want to answer and still remain in the study.
- Your decision whether or not to opt your child out of participation in this study will not affect your current or future relations with Sam Houston State University or your child's high school. If your child participates, you are still free to withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this study?

- **The research team:**
If you have any questions, comments or concerns about the research, you can talk to the one of the researchers.

Please contact:

Velvet Nelson, Professor and Principal Investigator
Department of Environmental and Geosciences
Box 2148, Sam Houston State University, Huntsville, TX 77341
Phone: (936) 294-4065 **E-mail:** vnelson@shsu.edu.

Co-PI John Strait Professor, Department of Environmental and Geosciences Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX 77341 Phone: (936) 294-4077 E-mail: jbs008@shsu.edu	Co-PI Ross Guida Assistant Professor, Department of Environmental and Geosciences Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX 77341 Phone: (936) 294-1233 E-mail: ross.guida@shsu.edu	Co-PI Ava Fujimoto-Strait Instructor and Lab Coordinator, Department of Environmental and Geosciences Sam Houston State University Huntsville, TX 77341 Phone: (936) 294-2355 E-mail: axf011@shsu.edu
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SHSU Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP):

If you have questions about your child's rights while taking part in this study, or you have concerns or suggestions and you want to talk to someone other than the researchers about the study, please call Sharla Miles, Research Compliance Administrator at (936) 294-4875 or write to:

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
Institutional Review Board
ATTN: Sharla Miles, CIP
ORSP-SHSU Box 2448
Huntsville, TX 77341-2448

DOCUMENTATION OF CONSENT

If you decide would like to allow your child to participate, you will complete a short 3 question survey to allow your student to receive the emailed survey link or participate in a focus group.