

WeatherBlur Research Parent Permission Form

Study Title: WeatherBlur: Computational Thinking Through Citizen Science in the Classroom

Principal Investigator: Ruth Kermish-Allen, Ph.D. | rkermishallen@mmsa.org

Dear Parent,

Your child is being asked to participate in research conducted by Dr. Ruth Kermish-Allen about the WeatherBlur program. WeatherBlur is an online community of citizen scientists that develop their own investigations to help solve a local problem. The purpose of the project is to design methods and supports for teachers to use when teaching computational thinking and data analysis. The program is administered by the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance (MMSA). The purpose of the research is to evaluate the program. This research program is funded by the National Science Foundation.

Computational thinking is a problem-solving skill in which activities are broken down into computational steps (small steps) in a way that allows people to solve problems.

The purpose of this study is to explore if there is an improvement in math learning and computational thinking skills, by studying design elements and teacher supports used by rural educators and youth. Your child's classroom is participating in the WeatherBlur program this year and we would like to get your permission for your child to participate in research activities about the program's impacts.

This is what we are asking them to do: This study will include approximately 1500 student participants across Maine, Mississippi, and Alabama. As a participant in the research study, your child will participate in a short survey (approximately 10 minutes) during class at the beginning of the year and again at the end of the year regarding their knowledge of computational thinking and graphing and their experience in the program over the course of the year. We will also be conducting an observation of your child's classroom and monitoring their activity on the WeatherBlur website.

What are the risks/harms of this study? There are no anticipated harms associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life. There is a risk of loss of confidentiality. We have taken certain steps to protect your child's confidentiality. The researchers will keep the data files in a locked file cabinet or a password-protected computer filing system. Any notes from the observations will be made anonymous and confidential. Only the research team listed above, their fellow research staff at MMSA, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and other regulatory, auditing, and monitoring agencies will have access to the study files. All identifying information about your child will be removed and replaced with a study ID after it is collected so it is deidentified. All data will be kept as confidential as possible and no one will know which answers are your child's except for our research team. The data will be kept for a period of up to ten years. However, within a year of completion of the study, all identifiers will be removed from the data. After 10 years all data will be destroyed.

What are the benefits to your child’s participation? There will be no direct benefit to your child for participating in this study. This study may help individuals who are concerned with creating, facilitating, and promoting citizen science programs that integrate computational thinking and data analysis.

Financial Considerations:

Participation in this study will involve no cost to you or your child. Your child will not be paid for participating in this study.

Who can I contact if I have questions or want to report a problem?

If you have any comments, concerns, questions, feel your child may have been harmed by participating in this study or would like to offer input regarding the conduct of this research, please contact the researcher listed at the top of this form. If you are unable to reach the researcher listed at the top of the form and have general questions, or you have concerns or complaints about the research, or questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact MMSA by phone at 207.626.3230, by e-mail at info@mmsa.org, or by mail to MMSA, 219 Capitol Street, Suite 3, Augusta, ME 04330.

If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you may also call Ethical and Independent Review Services, the IRB that reviewed this study, at 800-472-3241 or by email at subject@eandireview.com. Reference study # 20104.

Your child will also be asked if they want to participate. Participation is voluntary and you and/or your child are free to withdraw participation at any time. Your child is free not to answer any single question, or series of questions if they choose. If you choose not to allow your child to participate or decide to withdraw, there will be no penalty or loss of benefits to which your child would otherwise be entitled. Participation in this study will not affect their school grades.

By signing below, you are indicating that you have read this permission form, and you agree to allow your child to participate in this study. Please contact us if you would like to receive a signed copy of this consent form.

Child’s Name (printed):

Teacher Name

Parent Name (printed)

Parent Email Address

Parent Signature

Date

WeatherBlur Program Parent Permission Form- Online Activities and Videos

Your child will have the chance to work with other elementary and middle school students in Maine, Mississippi, and Alabama to collect and analyze data about your area. They will enter that information in an online program to share it with scientists and other experts from your community. The online platform will collect and record information about your child so that we can tailor the WeatherBlur experience for your child. None of this information will be displayed on the WeatherBlur website unless your child is logged in and on their own profile page. You, your child, and the WeatherBlur staff are the only people who will be able to see the profile page. Your child's work will never be attributed back to this personal information. As part of this program, we wish to collect the following information as part of your child's profile: **name, gender, teacher, town, school, email, date of birth, and grade.**

During the course of your child's involvement in WeatherBlur we or other participants may take your student's photograph which may be uploaded on the WeatherBlur website. They will not be identified in that photograph. WeatherBlur and MMSA are also seeking your permission to be able to use those photographs for promotion of the project and MMSA in perpetuity.

If you agree to have your student create a profile page, you will be welcome to login to your child's account (www.weatherblur.com) and see, change or delete their profile information at any time or by emailing weatherblur@mmsa.org. You may contact us or your child's teacher for their login information. You can read our full privacy and child privacy policies at www.mmsa.org.

By completing the form below, I acknowledge that my child will be participating in the WeatherBlur program administered by the Maine Mathematics and Science Alliance (MMSA) and that I have been informed of the collection of my student's personal data and photographs/video/audio recordings for that purpose.. I am aware of MMSA's privacy and child privacy policies on the MMSA website (www.mmsa.org). I give permission for my child's photographs/video/audio to be used for the project and MMSA in perpetuity.

Parent Name (printed)

Parent Signature

Student Name (printed)

Date