

Informed Consent Form: RET Site: Research Experience for Teachers in Polymer Engineering

Introduction: A program to increase teachers' knowledge of engineering research and enable them to effectively disseminate this knowledge in their high school classrooms is being conducted by The College of Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering at The University of Akron. The objective of this RET site is to bring ten high school science teachers from local schools to The University of Akron to participate in an eight week program focused on polymeric engineering in summer 2016-2019. The primary result of this work will be the teachers learning about engineering and engineering research and effectively disseminating this knowledge in their high school classrooms through new curriculum developed during the summer RET experience. You are invited to participate in this research program being conducted by Prof. Kevin Cavicchi, a faculty member in the Department of Polymer Engineering at The University of Akron.

Purpose: The purpose of this research study is to determine the impact of the program on the teachers understanding of engineering, evaluate the teachers' experience in the program, and the effects of their participation on their students.

Procedures: You will receive a stipend of \$8000 for participating in this program. This includes research and professional development activities during the summer and execution of the developed lesson in your classroom the following school year. This will be paid in four \$1750 increments during the summer and is contingent on participation in the summer RET research and professional development activities. This final \$1000 increment of the stipend will be paid after completing the execution of your lesson plan in your classroom.

Your participation in the evaluation of this program will include the following: participating in focus groups and completing surveys. In some cases an independent evaluator will visit your classroom to observe your lesson plan. These activities will take place during the summer you are participating in the RET program and the following school year. You will receive no additional remuneration for participation in the evaluation of the RET site.

Risks and Discomforts: There are no known risks associated with this evaluation.

Benefits: The benefits for you for participating in this evaluation may be improved knowledge of engineering principles and their dissemination. You may also receive no benefit from participating in this evaluation.

Right to refuse or withdraw: Following your consent, participation in this evaluation remains voluntary. You can also refuse to answer any questions and may withdraw from the evaluation at any time without penalty.

Anonymous and Confidential Data Collection: Data collection will be completed without the use of names to keep the participants from being identified with evaluation responses. Signed consent form will be kept separate from the data so no one will be able to link their responses to the forms. The data will be used in a report to the funder of the project and may be used in future conference presentations and/or publications. Any publications associated with the evaluation of this project will present data in aggregate and will contain no information that would identify specific participants.

Who to contact with questions: You may direct questions about this study to Kevin Cavicchi, Department of Polymer Engineering, The University of Akron, 330-972-8368 or via email at kac58@uakron.edu. This project has been reviewed and approved by The University of Akron Institutional Review Board. If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may call the IRB at 330-972-7666.

Acceptance & signature: I have read the information provided above and all of my questions have been answered. I voluntarily agree to participate in this study. I will receive a copy of this consent form for my information.

Participant Signature

Date

Disclaimer: Participation in this research is voluntary, and the findings from this study in no way represent the philosophy and beliefs of the school district of the involved teacher.