



Focus Group Consent Form

The following document will be available for all prospective participants to view on the project website. After they have been recruited, participants will fill out a “demographic information form” – this consent form will appear as the first page of that form. Participants will read and then check the boxes at the end to consent, at which point they will move on to fill out the demographic information form and subsequently participate in a focus group.

CASLT Project: Identifying Requirements and Gaps in FSL Teacher Education - Recommendations and Guidelines

You are invited to participate in a research study examining Canadian French-as-a-second language (FSL) teacher education. The study investigates the present standards and practices in Canadian K-12 FSL education with regard to the preparation of FSL teachers (i.e., pre-service teacher education); the provincial/territorial certification criteria of FSL teachers; and the hiring of FSL teachers (i.e., school district requirements and expectations).

Who is funding this study?

The research study is funded by the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers (CASLT) through funding from Heritage Canada and is being conducted by an FSL Teacher Education Consortium with researchers at the University of Ottawa, the University of New Brunswick, and the University of British Columbia. The certificates/letters of approval for this research are: UBC = H20-02724; uOttawa = S-08-20-5993; UNB = REB 2020-126.

Who are the researchers and what is the research about?

We are a group of researchers and teacher educators from across Canada who work with FSL teachers and teacher candidates. Dr. Stephanie Arnott is Principal Investigator and works with Dr. Mimi Masson at the University of Ottawa, Dr. Meike Wernicke and Dr. Valia Spiliotopoulos at the University of British Columbia, and Dr. Joseph Dicks, Dr. Paula Kristmanson, Dr. Karla Culligan, Dr. Josée Le Bouthillier, and Lisa Michaud at the University of New Brunswick.

The goal of the study is to document what key stakeholders identify as strengths, challenges, and opportunities regarding FSL teacher preparation, mentorship, and retention. Based on these findings, we hope to offer recommendations for ongoing FSL teacher preparation and professional support across Canada.

What type of data are being collected?

Your participation involves taking part in a 75 minutes online focus group with others working in the same position as you in the field of FSL education (in this case, either Faculty of Education representatives, school district representatives, or FSL teachers).

A focus group is a group discussion ‘focused’ on a particular topic or theme - in this instance, FSL teacher education and professional development. One of the purposes of focus groups is to closely replicate how we express our views, ideas, and opinions in real life. This means that you will be expected to talk to each other, as well as to the moderator, and to indicate when you agree and disagree with each other. We are interested in your views and opinions about issues in FSL teacher education, and we’d like the focus group to be a lively discussion; there are no right or wrong answers to the questions you will be asked to discuss. In



other words, this study is not a program evaluation. We are producing research about the issues in FSL education in Canada and that includes all perspectives and opinions.

What will participation in the focus group involve?

This particular focus group will involve around 4-8 participants and one moderator, and will be audio-recorded. It should last around 75 minutes. In the group, you will be asked to talk about issues in FSL teacher education from your particular perspective (e.g., as a teacher, director, coordinator, etc.). The questions will relate to your perspectives and views and to your own individual experiences and practices related to FSL teacher education.

The focus group will be recorded using the online platform. Video recordings will be used solely for the purposes of facilitating transcription of the focus group discussion. However, video recording will only be used if focus groups on Zoom/Teams cannot be audio recorded only. If video recording must also be engaged, then these focus group discussions will be video recorded as well.

When is the focus group scheduled for?

The focus groups will be led by one of the researchers named above and will take place virtually via Zoom/Teams. Each focus group interview will be scheduled at the collective convenience of focus group participants, outside of their respective working hours. The focus group will run for around 75 minutes. Prior to the focus group, you will be contacted by email to indicate your informed consent and fill in a demographic information form.

What will happen on the scheduled day?

Once everyone has connected via Zoom/Teams, the moderator will discuss briefly what is going to happen in the group and you will be given an opportunity to ask any questions that you might have. The moderator will make sure everyone is familiar with the Zoom/Teams functions (e.g, chat, how to raise your hand) and then ask everyone to agree on some ground rules for the group (e.g., avoiding speaking over other people, being respectful and considerate of other people's feelings). You are welcome to mute your microphone when not speaking, however, we kindly request that you keep your video activated at all times as this enhances the conversational dynamic of the group discussion. It also will help us with the transcription of the data later on. Once everyone is happy for the group discussion to begin, the moderator will switch on the recording devices and ask the first question! You will be given another opportunity to ask questions at the end of the group discussion.

What are the benefits of participating in this study?

By participating in this study, you will get a chance to share your perspectives and play an active role in informing ongoing national discussions and strategizing related to FSL teacher education in Canada. It is an opportunity for you to reflect on your role in supporting the preparation and ongoing professional development of FSL teachers. Speaking to what is lacking/needed will position you as an active agent in efforts to optimize strategies related to enhancing FSL teacher education. In addition, as part of focus groups you will also benefit from hearing about the perceptions and experiences of other people working in similar positions, but in different contexts. Finally, for participating in a focus group you will be compensated with a \$10 gift card from the business of your choosing (i.e., Starbucks, Tim Hortons, or Indigo Books and Music).



How will your privacy be maintained?

You will be assigned a pseudonym during the transcription of the focus group interview. Wherever possible, the geographical origin of focus group participants will be excluded from the reporting process (however, if geographical location emerges as a differentiating factor in the findings, this information will be shared in relation to direct quotations or themes that emerged from focus group interview data). All raw electronic data collected during this study (i.e., focus group recordings) will be stored electronically on a laptop computer and are password protected and encrypted following the information security standards from University of Ottawa accessible only by the principal investigator, co-researchers or the hired research assistants. Following submission of the final research report, all electronic data will be transferred to a portable hard drive and kept indefinitely in a locked cabinet in each respective team leader's office at their respective university. All computers that had housed the electronic data will be wiped clean. Any physical data will be stored in the same cabinet.

Findings from the analysis of the transcribed focus group data will be used to write a final report for the Canadian Association of Second Language Teachers. The final report for this project will be housed on CASLT's website and will be available free and fully open access to participants and the public. The data may also be used to present research findings at academic conferences and in academic publications. Participants will not be identified by name in any publications or report following the research study. All audio recorded interviews will be transcribed before data analysis and only presented in the form of transcribed excerpts, never as raw data. All information which might directly or indirectly reveal a participant's identity will be deleted or altered and will not be released or published.

Your name and email are collected for the purposes of contacting you to organize a day/time for your focus group and to award you a \$10 gift card of your choosing and will be kept confidential and then destroyed once the card has been awarded.

Is there any way being in this study could pose a risk for you?

While each participant will be attributed a pseudonym to protect their identity during the dissemination of findings, taking part in a focus group means that other participants might be able to identify the comments/quotations shared during dissemination. Researchers can therefore not guarantee that other members of the focus group will maintain confidentiality. However, participants will be asked not to reveal any information disclosed during the focus groups. Other than this, there are no anticipated risks for participants. You do not have to answer any questions if you do not want to and you can opt-out at any time with no repercussions and you will still be entitled to full compensation.

Who can you contact if you have questions about the study?

If you have any questions or concerns about what we are asking of you, please contact the principal investigator: Dr. Stephanie Arnott, by phone at 613 562-5800, ext. 4382 or email at sarnott@uottawa.ca.

Please keep this consent form for your records. A downloadable copy of this consent form is posted on the project website. You can refer back to the informed consent details at any time.



Who can you contact if you have complaints or concerns about the study?

If you are in Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan:

If you have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, you may contact the Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research, University of Ottawa, Tabaret Hall, 550 Cumberland Street, Room 154, Ottawa, ON K1N 6N5.

- Tel.: 613 562-5387
- Email: ethics@uottawa.ca

If you are in British Columbia, Alberta, Yukon, Northwest Territories:

If you have any concerns or complaints about your rights as a research participant and/or your experiences while participating in this study, contact the Research Participant Complaint Line in the UBC Office of Research Ethics at 604 822-8598 or if long distance e-mail RSIL@ors.ubc.ca or call toll free 1 877 822-8598.

If you are in New Brunswick, Newfoundland & Labrador, Nova Scotia, Nunavut, Prince Edward Island:

If you have any questions about the study or any ethical concerns and you wish to speak with someone who is not directly involved in the project, please contact Dr. Ellen Rose, Associate Dean Graduate Programs, Faculty of Education, University of New Brunswick, at erose@unb.ca.

By consenting to participate in the study, I acknowledge that:

- I am over 16 years of age and agree to participate in this research.
- I have read the description of the research project and of the nature of my participation in this project above.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary and I have the right to withdraw from the research at any time, without giving a reason and without penalty.
- I understand that any information I provide will be kept confidentially (where possible).
- I understand that anonymised extracts of my responses may be quoted in journal articles and conference presentations and in other academic outputs.
- I agree to the collection of demographic data that will be compiled into a table and reported in any publications or presentations arising from the research.