

Key Informant Focus Group Consent Form

Title of Project: Developmental Evaluation of the Implementation of the Inclusive Education Policy in Nova Scotia

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Invitation to Participate: I am invited to participate in the abovementioned research project conducted by Jess Whitley and Andy Hargreaves. This three-year developmental evaluation of Nova Scotia's inclusive education policy is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD).

Purpose of the project: The purpose of this project is to evaluate the implementation of Nova Scotia's new inclusive education policy.

Participation: I will be asked to share my thoughts and feelings about, and experiences with, the inclusive education policy in schools in Nova Scotia during a 45-60 minute focus group led by a member of our team. The focus group will be held virtually (Teams or Zoom). The focus group will be organized on a day and time that works best for everyone. The focus group will be audio recorded.

Risks: There are no risks associated with involvement in this project aside from those experienced in everyday life. I have received assurance from the researcher that every effort will be made to minimize these risks. I have also been assured by the researcher that even though the interviews will be recorded and pertinent quotes may be used in publications, my identity will not be divulged and, if selected, my quotes will be attributed to a pseudonym.

Benefits: There are many benefits to this study. This is an opportunity to have my voice and experiences heard, and to reflect on my experience with inclusive education in the province of Nova Scotia. My participation will play an important part in potential changes to educational policy and pedagogy as well as future professional learning and development.

Confidentiality: I have received assurance from the researcher that the information I will share will remain strictly confidential. However, because there will be other people in the focus group, they will know what I have said. I agree to keep everything that was said in the group private, and not to share who was in the group. I understand that the information collected during this research may be used for educational purposes, and/or become part of a published report. I understand I will be offered a copy of the results.

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Anonymity: My identity will remain anonymous throughout the study. No names will ever be published. No information will be reported or released that would allow anyone to be identified individually. However, given the role that I hold within my organization and/or community, there is potential for those reading reports and publications produced through the study to believe that they know my identity. Data will be presented in general terms, to identify individuals only in a very broad way (e.g. an elementary principal) and to choose quotes that do not uniquely identify individuals.

Conservation of data: All digital interview data and transcripts will be coded with a number. They will be kept in a locked filing cabinet in the office of the lead researcher and electronic files will be stored on a password-protected computer belonging to the lead researcher. The data and transcripts will be kept for five years, beginning at the completion of the study (October 31, 2022) and then deleted and/or shredded.

Compensation: I will receive a \$15 gift card from Tim Hortons as a small thank you for my time.

If I have any questions about the study, I may contact the lead researcher by email at jwhitley@uottawa.ca.

If I have any questions regarding the ethical conduct of this study, I may contact:
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

Please print or save a copy of this consent form for your personal records.

I have read and understood what is involved and agree to take part in the above study lead by Jess Whitley and Andy Hargreaves of the Faculty of Education at the University of Ottawa.

THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF OUR TEAM.