

**Case Studies of Current and Former Grantees Under the Title  
III National Professional Development Program (NPDP)**

**Focus Group Protocols**

**Participants (Pre-Service Teachers, In-Service Teachers, and  
IHE/District Staff)**

# Participant (Pre-Service Teacher) Focus Group Protocol

Draft 5/14/12

<b>Grantee:</b>	<b>Interviewer:</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Date/Time:</b>

**Note to Interviewer:**

- *Instructions to interviewers appear in italics.*
- *Numbered and lettered questions are all meant to be asked. Bulleted items are possible responses and may be used as probes—the interviewer would not necessarily ask about all of these.*
- *Because of the open-ended nature of some questions, the respondent may answer a later question in the course of answering an earlier question.*

## Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group today. Just as a reminder, this focus group is for a study of the National Professional Development Program (NPDP), which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The Department is interested in learning more about the approaches being used by grantees to improve the preparation of pre- and in-service teachers to work with English Learners (ELs). The purpose of the study and this focus group is to gain more details about how the project is being implemented, what has been successful, and what has been challenging. We will ask you questions about your experiences in the program and its effects on your teaching.

You signed a consent form which stated that our reports will associate your responses with your funded project but not with you as an individual. In addition, to capture the large amount of data your responses will provide, this focus group will be recorded. The audio record may be shared with others within our study team for purposes of analysis but will not be shared outside the study team. All data that we collect from you will be stored on a password-protected computer network and destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

This focus group will take about 60 minutes, including time for follow-up. We don't expect every person to answer every question, though you certainly are welcome to if you have input to provide. You also may respond to other participants, to indicate your agreement or disagreement as appropriate. Whenever possible, please provide concrete examples or explanations – this is extremely helpful for us in understanding your program. Do you have any questions before we begin?

## **Warm-Up / Role of the Respondents**

1. Let's begin by going around the room and having each person introduce him or herself. Tell us how at what stage you're at in your teacher education program and how long you've been participating in the [*insert name of*] project. [*indicate with whom to start*]
2. How did you learn about [*project name*] and how did you become involved?

*[Note to interviewers: keep track of particular respondents, as they may be referencing different schools, districts or contexts. Ask for clarification that you understand the reference point when necessary.]*

## **Structure and Content of the Program**

3. What different activities do you participate in through the project? Please describe them and what they entail. [*Follow-up on any activities identified by the project director that are not mentioned by participants.*]
4. [*If not answered in the previous question, for each activity*] What topics were covered as part of [*activity*]?
  - Example/prompts for general categorization: language acquisition and development, subject matter acquisition, best practices for ELs, cultural sensitivity/awareness, foreign language, etc.
  - Example/prompts for specifics: Is there training with models or approaches that have been shown to be effective with ELs (e.g., modeling, using graphic organizers, contextualizing, using multiple modes of communication, using SIOP)? What instructional strategies are emphasized as important for ELs acquisition of subject matter? Is data-based assessment of learner needs covered? Differentiated instruction? Are materials of relevance to ELs incorporated?
5. [*If not answered in the previous question, for each activity*] How was that content delivered, or what was the format of the activity?
  - Examples/prompts: coursework, seminars/classes, summer institutes/workshops, research opportunities, study/discussion groups, professional learning communities, mentoring/coaching, etc
  - a. Could you tell us a little more about [*name*] method? For example, when and for how long does the activity occur? Who is involved in the delivery? Are they stand-alone? If not, how does the different methods relate?
6. [*If more than one activity*] Which of these activities has been most helpful to you and why? Are there any activities that you participated in that were less helpful than they could have been? Which ones and why?

7. Have you had any practical experience working in schools with ELs? If so, please describe those experiences.
  - a. Could you describe the challenges, if any, you faced in working with ELs during these experiences?
  - b. Do you think this is true for other pre-service teachers or newly practicing teachers?
  - c. Do you think the activities of [*insert name of*] project are helping address these issues? If so, please describe how. If not, please describe what you think is missing.

### ***Grant Outcomes***

8. How has the project affected or influenced your preparation to teach ELs?
  - a. What have you learned through participation in the program?
  - b. Have you shared what you've learned with other pre-service teachers or newly practicing teachers? How (e.g., formally, informally)?

### ***Wrap Up***

9. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

That's all the questions I have. Thank you very much for participating in the study.

Thank you so much for your time!

# Participant (In-Service Teacher) Focus Group Protocol

Draft 5/14/12

<b>Grantee:</b>	<b>Interviewer:</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Date/Time:</b>

**Note to Interviewer:**

- *Instructions to interviewers appear in italics.*
- *Numbered and lettered questions are all meant to be asked. Bulleted items are possible responses and may be used as probes—the interviewer would not necessarily ask about all of these.*
- *Because of the open-ended nature of some questions, the respondent may answer a later question in the course of answering an earlier question.*

## Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group today. Just as a reminder, this focus group is for a study of the National Professional Development Program (NPDP), which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The Department is interested in learning more about the approaches being used by grantees to improve the preparation of pre- and in-service teachers to work with English Learners (ELs). The purpose of the study and this focus group is to gain more details about how the project is being implemented, what has been successful, and what has been challenging. We will ask you questions about your experiences in the program and its effects on your teaching.

You signed a consent form which stated that our reports will associate your responses with your funded project but not with you as an individual. In addition, to capture the large amount of data your responses will provide, this focus group will be recorded. The audio record may be shared with others within our study team for purposes of analysis but will not be shared outside the study team. All data that we collect from you will be stored on a password-protected computer network and destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

This focus group will take about 60 minutes, including time for follow-up. We don't expect every person to answer every question, though you certainly are welcome to if you have input to provide. You also may respond to other participants, to indicate your agreement or disagreement as appropriate. Whenever possible, please provide concrete examples or explanations – this is extremely helpful for us in understanding your program. Do you have any questions before we begin?

## **Warm-Up / Role of the Respondents**

1. Let's begin by going around the room and having each person introduce him or herself. Tell us how long you've been working as a teacher and how long you've been participating in the [insert name of] project. [indicate with whom to start]
2. How did you learn about [project name] and how did you become involved?

*[Note to interviewers: keep track of particular respondents, as they may be referencing different schools, districts or contexts. Ask for clarification that you understand the reference point when necessary.]*

## **Structure and Content of the Program**

3. What different activities do you participate in through the project? Please describe them and what they entail. *[Follow-up on any activities identified by the project director that are not mentioned by participants.]*
4. *[If not answered in the previous question, for each activity]* What topics were covered as part of [activity]?
  - Example/prompts for general categorization: language acquisition and development, subject matter acquisition, best practices for ELs, cultural sensitivity/awareness, foreign language, etc.
  - Example/prompts for specifics: Is there training with models or approaches that have been shown to be effective with EL (e.g., modeling, using graphic organizers, contextualizing, using multiple modes of communication, using SIOP)? What instructional strategies are emphasized as important for EL's acquisition of subject matter? Is data-based assessment of learner needs covered? Differentiated instruction? Are materials of relevance to ELs incorporated?
5. *[If not answered in the previous question, for each activity]* How was that content delivered, or what was the format of the activity?
  - Examples/prompts: coursework, seminars/classes, summer institutes/workshops, research opportunities, study/discussion groups, professional learning communities, mentoring/coaching, etc
  - a. Could you tell us a little more about [name] method? For example, when and for how long does the activity occur? Who is involved in the delivery? Are they stand-alone? If not, how does the different methods relate?
6. *[If more than one activity]* Which of these activities has been most helpful to you and why? Are there any activities that you participated in that were less helpful than they could have been? Which ones and why?

7. In general, could you describe the challenges you face in working with ELs in your school?
  - a. Do you think this is true for other teachers in your school? District?
8. Are these issues addressed through the *[insert name of]* project? If so, please describe how. If not, please describe what you think is missing.

***Grant Outcomes***

9. How has the grant affected or influenced your work in teaching ELs?
  - a. What have you learned through participation in the program?
  - b. Have you shared what you've learned with other teachers? How (e.g., formally, informally)?

***Wrap Up***

10. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

That's all the questions I have. Thank you very much for participating in the study.

Thank you so much for your time!

# Participant (IHE or District Staff) Focus Group Protocol

Draft 5/14/12

<b>Grantee:</b>	<b>Interviewer:</b>
<b>Participants:</b>	<b>Date/Time:</b>

**Note to Interviewer:**

- *Instructions to interviewers appear in italics.*
- *Numbered and lettered questions are all meant to be asked. Bulleted items are possible responses and may be used as probes—the interviewer would not necessarily ask about all of these.*
- *Because of the open-ended nature of some questions, the respondent may answer a later question in the course of answering an earlier question.*

## Introduction

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this focus group today. Just as a reminder, this focus group is for a study of the National Professional Development Program (NPDP), which is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. The Department is interested in learning more about the approaches being used by grantees to improve the preparation of pre- and in-service teachers to work with English Learners (ELs). The purpose of the study and this focus group is to gain more details about how the project is being implemented, what has been successful, and what has been challenging. We will ask you questions about We will ask you questions about your experiences in the program and its effects on your responsibilities for preparing teachers to work with ELs.

You signed a consent form which stated that our reports will associate your responses with your funded project but not with you as an individual. In addition, to capture the large amount of data your responses will provide, your interview will be recorded. The audio record may be shared with others within our study team for purposes of analysis but will not be shared outside the study team. All data that we collect from you will be stored on a password-protected computer network and destroyed at the conclusion of the study.

We know that you are very busy, so we've made an effort to collect as much information as possible through available documents. We'll sometimes reference that information during the course of the interview to confirm that our information is correct.

This interview will take about 60 minutes, including time for follow-up.

Do you have any questions before we begin?



## **Warm-Up / Role of the Respondents**

1. Let's begin by going around the room and having each person introduce him or herself. Tell us how long you've been working [in the university or district] and how long you've been involved in the NPDP grant-funded activities, which we'll refer to as [*insert name provided by others in the project*]. [*indicate with whom to start*]
2. How did you learn about [*project name*] and how did you become involved?

*[Note to interviewers: keep track of particular respondents, as they may be referencing different universities, districts or contexts. Ask for clarification that you understand the reference point when necessary.]*

## **Structure and Content of the Program**

3. What different activities do you participate in through the project (e.g., on the recipient side rather than the delivery side)? Please describe them and what they entail. *[Follow-up on any activities identified by the project director that are not mentioned by participants.]*
4. *[If not answered in the previous question, for each activity]* What topics were covered as part of [*activity*]?
  - Example/prompts for general categorization: strategies for helping teachers learn about language acquisition and development, subject matter acquisition, best practices for ELs, cultural sensitivity/awareness, or foreign language; state policies and legal issues related to ELs; state standards and curricula for ELs; etc.
  - Example/prompts for specifics: Did you learn about models or approaches that have been shown to be effective with ELs (e.g., modeling, using graphic organizers, contextualizing, using multiple modes of communication, using SIOP)? Did you learn about how teachers can support assessment of EL needs? Differentiated instruction? Did you learn about or identify materials of relevance to ELs?
5. How was that content delivered, or what was the format of the activity?
  - Examples/prompts: seminars/classes, summer institutes/workshops, research opportunities or independent study, study/discussion groups, web-based instructional sessions, etc.
  - a. Could you tell us a little more about [*name*] method? For example, when and for how long does *the* activity occur? Who is involved in the delivery? Are they stand-alone? If not, how do the different methods relate?
6. *[If more than one activity]* Which of these activities has been most helpful to you and why? Are there any activities that you participated in that were less helpful than they could have been? Which ones and why?

7. How would you characterize the needs of the pre-service or in-service teachers with whom you work [in the teacher education program or in your district]?
  - Examples/prompts: need or desire knowledge and skills in language development, content acquisition, cultural sensitivity, etc.
8. How would you characterize your own needs related to better preparing pre-service or in-service teachers to work with ELs?
9. Are these issues addressed through the [*name of IHE*] project?
  - a. [*If yes*] Please describe how.
  - b. [*If no*] Please describe what you think is missing.

### **Grant Outcomes**

10. How has the project affected or influenced your preparation to prepare pre-service or in-service teachers to work with ELs?
  - d. What have you learned through participation in the program?
  - e. Have you shared what you've learned with other [*faculty or district instructors*]? How (e.g., formally, informally)?

### **Wrap Up**

11. Is there anything else you'd like to tell me?

That's all the questions I have. Thank you very much for participating in the study.

Thank you so much for your time!