

# Trisha L. Renken-Sebastian

Speaking Across Barriers 2022

PO Box 28049, RPO Westshore

Victoria, BC V9B 6K8

+1 (236) 314-3444

[tlrenkensebastian@uvic.ca](mailto:tlrenkensebastian@uvic.ca) ✉ [trishalynn@renken-sebastian.ca](mailto:trishalynn@renken-sebastian.ca)

13 January 2023

Dear Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers within the Sooke Schools District 62 Community,

I hope all is very well with you today, and I greatly appreciate you taking the time to read this recruitment letter.

My name is Trisha L. Renken-Sebastian and I'm a third-year grad student in the Community Development program at the University of Victoria (UVic). As a recent permanent resident who is living and studying on lands which were the traditional territory for many Coast Salish peoples including the W̱SÁNEĆ, the Esquimalt, the Songhees, and the Sc'ianew, I am very grateful to living here in Langford while I begin my career as a community developer in Canada.

For the capstone project for my Master's degree, I have received approval from both the UVic Human Research Ethics Board (Application #22-0136) and from Superintendent of Schools Scott Stinson to conduct a Non-Board Initiated research project within the Sooke Schools District 62 (SD62) community. The project is titled *Speaking Across Barriers: How Parents in a Canadian Public School System Learn About Their Children's Diversity Education*, and I am inviting all parents, guardians, and caregivers of students who were enrolled in SD62 schools in the 2021-2022 or are currently enrolled in the 2022-2023 school year to participate in this project as participants and prospectively, as co-researchers and co-presenters.

## Research Purpose and Goals

Through conducting this research, my (Renken-Sebastian's) goals are to:

- Learn about the methods by which the leadership within a public school district communicates with parents, guardians, and caregivers about their strategic plan objectives;
- Discover how parents, guardians, and caregivers find out what their children are learning in public schools that is related to the concepts of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility (IDEA);

- Provide recommendations on how school communities can continue to foster clear lines of communication about the progress they are making on their strategic planning objectives; and ultimately,
- Ensure that Canadian public school students are more likely to develop empathy and understanding for people who hold different beliefs and values than their own.

## Meet the Supervisory Team

The principal supervisor is Dr. Evert Lindquist of UVic's School of Public Administration. Dr. Sarah Marie Wiebe is my co-supervisor and my second reader is Dr. Lyndze Harvey of UVic's Faculty of Education (Curriculum & Instruction). I am excited to be working with them to bring this research to SD62 as it can help close a gap in the academic understanding of how the public administration and education disciplines can work together to support parents, guardians, and caregivers who are raising children within the province.

## Data Collection

This study includes two (2) data-collection phases for parents, caregivers, and guardians. This recruitment letter covers Phase 1, the Survey.

The Survey is a questionnaire which can take between 10 minutes and 30 minutes to complete. After submitting the Survey, participants can opt into a drawing to win one of two (2) gift certificates worth \$45.00 each to the retail outlet of their choice as means of compensating participants for any inconvenience related to their participation.

## Eligible Participants

You are eligible to participate in this research if you:

- Are at least 18 years of age, and
- Are the parent, guardian, or caregiver of a student who either attended an SD62 school in the 2021-2022 school year or whose child is currently attending an SD62 school in the 2022-2023 school year, and
- Possess the ability to speak with confidence about your experiences as a parent/guardian in the SD62 community, and
- Have an interest in the improvement of how IDEA is taught in public schools, and

- Have some amount of Interest in the results of the current cycle of strategic planning for SD62 from September 2021 to June 2025.

## How to Participate

To participate in this Survey, parents, guardians, and caregivers will click on a link to the Survey; this link will be published on the project website: <https://renken-sebastian.ca/speaking-across-barriers-2022>.

Please be advised that the Survey for this phase of the research project will be conducted through an online service called SurveyMonkey that has been licensed to the University of Victoria where the implementation has been created to UVic' specifications; this is known as an instance. Under the conditions of the licensed instance, all information collected by the Survey will be stored on Canadian servers until removed during the closure of this phase of the research project.

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and you are under no obligation to participate. If you do not have a computer of your own and/or a stable Internet connection with which you can take the Survey and/or you do not wish for your information to be gathered via SurveyMonkey, a paper copy of the complete Survey, a copy of the Incentive Drawing form, and a postage-paid, return-addressed envelope can be sent to your mailing address by leaving a voicemail message or sending a text message to principal researcher Trisha L. Renken-Sebastian at +1 (236) 314-3444 with your name and mailing address. Voicemails and text messages will be responded to within 2 to 3 business days.

## Providing Your Informed Consent

The Informed Consent letter and the complete details of the study will be located both on the first page of the Survey and [the project's website](#). By submitting a completed survey, you are indicating that YOUR FREE AND INFORMED CONSENT IS IMPLIED and indicates that you understand all the conditions of participation in this study. You are also indicating that you have had the opportunity to have your questions about the study answered by the researchers.

## Potential Benefit to Families in SD62

All the objectives and outcomes in *SD62 Strategic Plan (2021-2025)*, if achieved, would be of great and direct benefit for increasing the awareness and understanding of the importance of IDEA

competency for SD62 students. With this research project, I hope to make recommendations which will help SD62 district leadership make further progress on their objectives and engage SD62 parents, guardians, and caregivers more fully into helping those objectives become a reality for their children who may have different social identities than those of their peers.

## Potential Risks to Families in SD62

A risk which families may face if they choose to become research participants is that they will be asked about their understanding of the human rights concepts of inclusion, diversity, equity, and accessibility and whether they feel it should be taught in the public education system. Participants will also be asked to provide information about social identities with which they identify that can be considered a minority population within the SD62 community. These topics can be very divisive and may result in feelings of extreme emotions such as vulnerability and hurt. If at any time, you experience any of these emotions while taking this Survey, you are free to skip the questions or begin the survey again at a time when you feel safer.

## Privacy, Anonymity, and Confidentiality

During the Survey phase of data-collecting activities, great care will be undertaken to preserve and respect the privacy, anonymity, and confidentiality of Survey participants. All data which identifies a participant in this phase will be kept separate from the rest of the Survey data and will only be utilized to contact participants whose name has been drawn as a winner of one of the two \$45.00 gift certificates.

The opt-in form for the Incentive Drawing will be conducted through a UVic-licensed instance of SurveyMonkey under the authority of the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, RSBC 1996, c 165](#) ("FIPPA"). On this Form, you will be asked for your full name, your email address, your residential address, and/or your phone number; this identifying information will be used to contact you if you have been chosen at random to win one of the two gift certificates.

All research data from the Survey and personal information submitted for the incentive drawing will be removed from SurveyMonkey upon the formalized closing of Survey phase of data collection. Data which has been collected via a paper-copy of the online Survey and Incentive Drawing form will be transferred to an electronic spreadsheet that will be stored on servers controlled by UVic; the paper copies will then be destroyed. Additional information on these

measures can be found in the Informed Consent letter for Parents, Guardians, and Caregivers on the project website.

## Feedback and Further Information

If you have questions about myself or the research project, you may contact me any time by email at [tlrenkensebastian@uvic.ca](mailto:tlrenkensebastian@uvic.ca) or by phone at by leaving a voicemail or sending a text to +1 (236) 314-3444 between 9:00 am and 7:00 pm on weekdays and between 12:00 pm and 7:00 pm on weekends. Emails and phone calls will be returned within 2 to 3 business days. Thank you very much for your consideration.

With my greatest appreciation,



Trisha L. Renken-Sebastian

[tlrenkensebastian@uvic.ca](mailto:tlrenkensebastian@uvic.ca)

[trishalynn@renken-sebastian.ca](mailto:trishalynn@renken-sebastian.ca)

Project Website: <https://renken-sebastian.ca/speaking-across-barriers-2022>