The Retention of Francophone Beginning Teachers in British Columbia: A Cultural Perspective

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Abstract

This study is based on the understanding that there is a high turnover of francophone beginning teachers being hired every year at the Conseil Scolaire Francophone (CSF) of British Columbia. There is a need to retain francophone beginning teachers in British Columbia after their first years of teaching. This study explores the factors that appear to have an effect on the retention of francophone beginning teachers working for the CSF of British Columbia. A quantitative survey was conducted among francophone beginning teachers, with two years or less of experience teaching for the CSF, to determine the factors that contributed to their successes and obstacles during their first years of teaching, and, consequently influenced their decision to stay or leave the CSF. The survey combined with a literature review on induction programs and teacher retention, found that francophone beginning teachers related various induction programs offered by the CSF to their job satisfaction. The study found several factors linked to the uniqueness of the cultural situation of the CSF. The study also found that the factors influencing the decision of beginning teachers to leave the CSF were linked to family, high cost of living in British Columbia and the unique challenges of teaching for the CSF. The study concludes that in order to retain a higher number of beginning teachers every year, the CSF has to distribute its leadership in the schools in order to offer local induction programs that are sustainable. Recommendations for the distribution of support and resources for beginning teachers by the CSF and its school leaders are offered.
Acknowledgements

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My personal love and gratitude goes to my husband, Aubrey, who has supported, encouraged and sustained me unselfishly. His expert editing and statistical skills were invaluable. I am also thankful for my parents, Éric and Odile, who have helped me with the French editing of my survey and provided me with emotional support. Finally, my love and source of inspiration goes to my daughter, Gabriella, who has been a vital part of my journey as a new mother, student and educational leader.
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Chapter One: Problem to be Investigated

Purpose of the Study

There is a high turnover of francophone beginning teachers being hired every year at the CSF of British Columbia. Teacher retention is a current problem that needs to be addressed (P. Blouin, personal communication, November 27, 2008). There is a need to retain francophone beginning teachers in BC after their first year of teaching. The purpose of this study is to find out what factors appear to have an effect (positive or negative) on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the CSF of British Columbia.

By identifying these factors, recommendations to the CSF will be made to provide more support, especially local support, to improve the teaching experiences of francophone beginning teachers. In summary, this study will address the issue of teacher retention at the CSF and the types of support and resources being provided to francophone beginning teachers in their school community and how it can be improved.

Justification of the Study

Research demonstrates that beginning teachers face many challenges during their first year of teaching (Martin 2000). According to Wong (1998), the first year of teaching is the most crucial. Ironically, beginning teachers are often the most at risk of leaving the teaching profession after their first five years of their practice (Tapping the Potential, 2004). Why? In many cases, beginning teachers feel isolated, vulnerable, doubt themselves and are deeply concerned with how they will be perceived by their peers, yet they are afraid to ask for help (Wong). The primary reason explaining why beginning teachers “voluntarily leave the profession before reaching normal retirement age is stress and frustration, due largely to factors that prevent them from working with children in the way they thought they could, or feel they could” (Riel, 2004, p. 1). In a recent study, Stronge (2007) has argued that it takes from five to eight years to master the art
of teaching. Thus, beginning teachers need more support to become effective teachers during their first years of teaching and remain in the profession.

Attrition rates are very high and represent an ongoing problem for school districts and school administrators. Research indicates that Canadian schools could be losing up to 30% of beginning teachers within their first five years of their career (CTF EMSB, October 2005, p.1). In an attempt to solve the attrition problem, a wide variety of induction programs have emerged to improve the retention rates of beginning teachers in many countries (Howe, 2006). Several studies have evaluated these induction programs to analyse how beneficial they were to retain beginning teachers in the profession longer (Algozzine, 2007; Cherubini, 2007; Howe, 2006; Romano, 2006).

School districts and school leaders should plan for the retention of francophone beginning teachers and provide them with the appropriate resources to help them cope with the challenges of their first year. On average, the CSF employs 50 new beginning teachers every year, with 70% of these teachers originating from the province of Québec (P. Blouin, personal communication, November 27, 2008). To this day, no studies on teacher retention have been performed for the CSF. The results from this study will provide vital information about the working realities of francophone beginning teachers and how their teaching experiences can be enhanced to promote their retention at the CSF.

**Research Question**

What factors appear to have an effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the Conseil Scolaire Francophone of British Columbia?
Definition of Terms

Some key terms in the research question are defined as follows:

A. “Francophone Beginning Teacher”

According to the British Columbia School Act, a francophone teacher means a person holding a certificate of qualification who is employed by, or has a service contract with, a francophone education authority to provide francophone educational programs to francophone students in a francophone school, but does not include the general director of a francophone education authority, any assistant to that officer, a francophone principal, a francophone vice principal or a francophone director of instruction (BC School Act, 2009, ¶ 95). In the context of this definition, a “Beginning” Teacher is one who has only two years or less of teaching experience for the CSF in British Columbia. For the purposes of this study, therefore, beginning teachers are those who started teaching for the CSF in 2007 or later.

B. “Conseil Scolaire Francophone or CSF”

According to the Ministry of Education of British Columbia, the CSF is British Columbia’s only francophone education authority. It was established in 1995 to meet BC’s obligation under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms to enable francophone to manage their own education programs (CSF, History Section, para. 1). The CSF was officially integrated into the British Columbia School Act in July 1997 (CSF, History Section, para. 1). Since then, British Columbia has had an independent francophone school board, which has jurisdiction throughout the entire province. The CSF operates as a public school district administered from Richmond. Today, there are about 4200 francophone students and 310 contract teachers in the CSF province wide (P. Blouin, personal communication, November 27, 2008). It offers French education to 78 communities throughout the province of British Columbia. The program is offered in over 40 schools in the province (CSF, Home section, para. 1). Students enrolled in CSF
schools are taught the same standard curriculum as any other BC student; however, they receive their instruction in French, and have an added linguistic and cultural component. The mission of the CSF is to promote a sense of cultural identity among its students and their families, and to contribute actively to the development of French communities across British Columbia (CSF, Mission section, para. 2).

C. “Factors”

This term can refer to various professional challenges that are related to the duties of being a beginning teacher working for the CSF in British Columbia. These challenges can include cultural, social, political and emotional factors. These obstacles have to negatively impact the effectiveness, self-esteem, and sense of belonging and happiness of beginning teachers on a long-term basis and could be linked to teacher retention.

This term can also refer to various positive professional experiences that are related to the duties of being a beginning teacher working for the CSF in British Columbia. These successes can include cultural, social, political and emotional factors. These successes positively impact the effectiveness, self-esteem, and sense of belonging and happiness of beginning teachers on a long-term basis and could be linked to teacher retention.

Brief Overview of Study

This study examines the factors that appear to have an effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the CSF of British Columbia. At the end of the study, the researcher makes concrete, realistic recommendations that will positively impact the teaching experiences of francophone beginning teachers during their first years. These recommendations indicate various types of local support being provided to beginning teachers during their first years of teaching for the CSF. These recommendations help provide more
knowledge about teacher retention for the CSF. Thus, this information may enable the CSF to support beginning teachers and retain them longer in the teaching profession.
Chapter Two: Background and Review of Related Literature

Studies Directly Related

As noted in Chapter One, there has been much discussion about the relationship between teacher retention and the obstacles that beginning teachers face during their first year of teaching. There has, however, been little direct, empirical study of this relationship. This review of the literature considers research that may shed light on the relationship between beginning teachers’ perceptions of their first year of teaching and the inductions programs that are put in place to enhance teacher retention. In particular it will focus on studies examining questions relating to the efficacy of these inductions programs and the reflections of beginning teachers in relation to their obstacles and successes that they face during their first year of teaching.

The review begins with an examination of related research about beginning teachers’ perceptions of their induction program experiences and how effective these programs are in preventing attrition and promote teacher retention. Although these findings cannot be generalized directly to all school districts that are offering induction programs to beginning teachers, they do provide directions for study and possible explanations for what types of support can promote teacher retention and what attributes successful inductions programs have in common. The review then summarizes a research study of a beginning teacher’s reflections on the first year of teaching. These findings provide specific knowledge about a beginning teachers’ successes and struggles during the first year, and illustrates the problem of teacher attrition and how crucial it is to understand the issues beginning teachers face in order to best support them during their initial years of teaching. The review then summarizes a research study that focuses on how beginning teachers relate principal leadership and professional learning communities to their job satisfaction. The review then summarizes another study that examines the effects of school and organizational characteristics on teacher turnover. Finally, the review summarizes a study that
identifies the effects of induction and mentoring programs on beginning teacher turnover.

Overall, the reviewed empirical research provides some support for the understanding of the relationship between teacher retention, successful induction programs and the types of obstacles and successes that beginning teachers face during their first year.

Perceptions of Beginning Teacher

In this Canadian study, Cherubini (2007) examined the perceptions of 173 beginning teachers in Ontario who participated in selected exemplary induction programs. Four main categories emerged that illustrated differences in how beginning teachers understood their induction experience: 1) Induction exceeds expectations. 2) Appreciation of the support. 3) Recognition of teacher leadership. 4) Disconnect between in-services and practice. The study was based on the premise that beginning teachers who are well supported by their professional school cultures create a more successfully learning environment for their students. In the introduction, the researcher demonstrated from the literature that teacher effectiveness is directly correlated to student learning. Overall, Cherubini assumed that nurturing school cultures can improve retention rates for beginning teachers.

The purpose of this study (Cherubini, 2007) was clearly related to the problem of teacher retention in Ontario. As for the method, the study employed a qualitative research design using triangulation as an instrument to examine the induction experience of beginning teachers. In the method section, the subjects of the study were clearly articulated in terms of numbers but it lacked information on the “how” they were selected and “why” their dispositions and personalities were never taken into consideration as external factors when collecting the data. Both school boards involved in the study offered provincially recognized induction programs. Some other instruments used by the researcher included learning logs, field notes and indicator statements as well as a qualitative anonymous survey. As for the results, the majority of responses
from beginning teachers’ testimonials demonstrated that induction programs increased their confidence level, decreased their anxiety, and made them feel more competent and valued as professionals. Cherubini found that induction could make you want to stay and commit longer to your career goals. In some cases, induction was perceived as negative because it represented extra work for beginning teachers who were already dealing with a lot of challenges. The author of the study also provided an in-depth discussion section, which contributed positively to the understanding of the findings of the study and stimulated critical thinking and reflection for the reader.

Overall, this study directly supports this research project as it represents a Canadian perspective of beginning teachers that have experienced an induction program. The study makes a contribution to the field of teacher induction and offers induction providers with some recommendations to make induction programs more successful in meeting the needs of Canadian beginning teachers. In conclusion, Cherubini clearly explains that we cannot generalize the results of the study. Cherubini suggests that duplicating this study in other provinces and territories would be beneficial for the field of induction and to better understand the perceptions of beginning teachers in relation to their induction programs.

Beginning Teachers and Their Induction Program

Another study in the field of teacher retention was undertaken collaboratively by Algozzine, Gretes, Queen and Cowan-Hatchcock (2007) who investigated the perceptions of a group of beginning teachers relative to the effectiveness of induction activities, assistance, and support provided within their school districts. The study focused on a selected group of beginning teachers from North Carolina during their first two years of employment. The problem linked to the topic of this article is yet again related to teacher shortages and the high rates of attrition in the United States. In the introduction, the researchers demonstrate from the literature that to
reduce attrition, school district administrators across North Carolina have to focus their energies on addressing difficulties faced by beginning teachers. The hypothesis of the study suggests that high-quality education, induction and mentoring programs are needed to keep beginning teachers in schools longer.

As for the method and procedures, Algozzine et al. (2007) used a sample of all third-year teachers in fourteen school systems of North Carolina. Of those beginning teachers, 80 percent were female and 20 percent were male. The authors also specified that 83 percent were white, 15 percent were black and 2 percent others. Originally, the cross-sectional survey used in the study was designed to be primarily quantitative in nature, but provided some qualitative responses through open-ended questions. Of the 1318 surveys distributed, only 470 were returned to the researchers. Some instrumentation methods utilized during the study included an analysis of induction to develop each item on the questionnaire. Some of the instruments used to collect and analyse the data were not clearly explained. The authors did refer to an internal consistency estimate but it was very hard to get a firm and empirical understanding of the scales used for this particular study.

The conclusions reached by Algozzine et al. (2007) were well presented in a detailed discussion at the end of the study. Finally, Algozzine et al. obtained descriptive statistics and frequency counts to examine the demographic information about the sample of beginning teachers. Overall, 69 percent of the participants indicated induction program activities were effective. They used tables to reflect their results throughout the study. Of the top five types of induction assistance received, two received the highest ranking in terms of effectiveness: 1) Locating resources 2) Incorporating learning outcomes and performance standards. In conclusion, the authors provide positive and negative outcomes for each item on the survey. In their final discussion, the authors claim that there are three categories to classify the literature written about
beginning teachers: 1) Reflections of beginning teachers 2) Advice from mentors and experts 3) Examination of beliefs, experiences and perceptions of learning to teach and teaching. In summary, the authors believe that this study offers a frame of reference for decisions about what to offer in attempts to build, implement and continue effective induction programs.

*Beginning Teacher Successes and Struggles*

In this article, Romano (2006) examined the reflections of an elementary beginning teacher during her first year of teaching using both quantitative and qualitative research methods. She hypothesized that understanding the issues that beginning teachers face during their first year of teaching is paramount to finding proactive measures for retaining them in the teaching profession. She examined the types of successes and struggles that were faced by a particular beginning teacher in her first year of teaching. More specifically, the author was interested in finding out how those successes and struggles changed or continued over time. The study looked at the types of knowledge, expertise and resources that were available or needed for effective teaching experiences. A unique twist to this approach lies in the motivation of Romano to write a study that focused on the positive aspects of the first year of beginning teachers. The reader can appreciate this refreshing, yet brave approach because so much of the literature on beginning teachers has been overly focused on the negatives, the dark obstacles of their teaching journey, rather than focusing on their strengths and positive experiences.

Romano (2006) found that an alarming 20% of teachers leave the profession within the first three years of teaching. The purpose of this study was to address the problem of teacher attrition and how crucial it is to understand the issues beginning teachers face in order to best support them during their initial years of teaching. In the introduction, the Romano demonstrated from the literature that teachers who feel successful with students and whose schools are organized to support them in their teaching are more likely to stay in the schools and the
profession in general. As for the method and procedures, Romano employed monthly open-ended interviews as well as a qualitative questionnaire distributed three times during the academic year. Romano’s study was also part of a larger investigation examining the successes and struggles of six beginning teachers in the same school district. Romano used descriptive data and inductive analysis throughout the study and clearly explained who their subject was; Maria is a 22 year old female teacher of first grade. Some other instruments used by Romano included the teacher’s reflections in a notebook, and triangulation was used to examine the results of the questionnaire and the interviews concurrently.

As for the results, Romano (2006) identified a total of 58 successes and struggles, with an equal number of each type by the end of the investigation. The successes and struggles resulted in a total of seven different categories for this particular beginning teacher as follow: 1) External Policy 2) Inclusion and Special Needs 3) Classroom Management 4) Personal Issues 5) Content and Pedagogy 6) Parents 7) Teacher Evaluation. Finally, the largest category of struggles dealt with External Policy issues. Romano also included a clear graph comparing two frequency polygons and this tool enriched the study as it illustrates the various patterns and changes over the years in a number of successes and struggles.

In conclusion, research findings have various implications for teacher education and the professional development of teachers in the induction phase of practice. Romano (2006) suggested that the seven categories of successes and struggles might be used in teacher preparation programs. In general, findings suggested that teacher education and professional development provided valuable assistance to beginning teachers. Romano’s study makes an important contribution to advancing knowledge in the field of professional development of teachers in the induction phase of their practice.
Principal Leadership and Beginning Teachers

According to Wynn and Brown (2008), beginning teachers in the United States continue to exit the classroom in alarming numbers, despite numerous recruitment and retention strategies. High turnover rates negatively affect instruction and, ultimately student achievement (Wynn & Brown, 2008). The purpose of Wynn and Brown’s empirical inquiry of beginning teacher retention issues was to better understand what beginning teachers value in a school leader within the context of professional learning communities. Twelve schools with low beginning teacher attrition rates were identified, and focus group interviews were conducted with four to six beginning teachers in each school. Findings indicated that beginning teachers related principal leadership, mentoring, and professional learning communities to their job satisfaction.

Wynn and Brown (2008) have found strong links between organizational conditions and employee motivation, commitment, and turnover. The article suggests that when it comes to the retention of beginning teachers, school leaders have an essential role in supporting them and favourably affecting school site conditions. The researchers demonstrated in detail the character traits of effective school leaders. They believe that they have to foster collaboration and create opportunities for teachers to learn from one another. In other words, the researchers argued that learning communities would create an open and positive environment for teachers to grow and learn. Wynn and Brown also demonstrated successfully that beginning teachers’ decision to remain at their school was strongly influenced by principal leadership and school climate.

The issue of teacher retention is directly related to this research project at the CSF. The results from this quantitative study will allow the researcher to assess what factors appear to have an effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the CSF in British Columbia. The researcher values Wynn and Brown’s (2008) argument that the need for induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers has been recognized as a method for stemming
the attrition rates. In summary, the results of the study found that those beginning teachers who experienced induction and mentoring support in their first year of teaching were less likely to leave teaching. In conclusion, Wynn and Brown clearly explained that the findings from this study added to the body of knowledge related to teacher retention, especially as they related to principal leadership, professional learning communities and beginning teachers.

*Teacher Turnover and the Organization of Schools*

This article examined the effect of school and organizational characteristics on teacher turnover, and in turn, school staffing problems. The methods used for the analysis were divided into three stages. In the first stage, Ingersoll established the overall magnitude of teacher turnover and its role in teacher demand and school staffing problems. The second stage presented an exploratory regression analysis of the predictors of teacher turnover. Finally, Ingersoll (1999) focused on the effects of four organizational conditions: organizational conflict, employee input into decision-making, administrative support and the teacher’s salary. The data showed that the amount of turnover accounted for by retirement is relatively minor when compared to that resulting from two other causes, namely teacher job dissatisfaction and teachers pursuing better jobs or other careers. The results of the study suggested that school staffing problems were not solely a result of shortfalls driven by increasing retirement levels, but also a result of low retention due to organizational conditions.

An important finding from this study that has direct implications to this research project is that teachers’ decisions to stay or leave the teaching profession were highly influenced by their age. According to Ingersoll (1999), younger teachers have very high rates of departure. From a theoretical perspective, Ingersoll argued that school staffing problems cannot be fully understood without examining the culture of the organization and the schools in which turnover and staffing problems are embedded. Similarly, the intention of this researcher is also to better understand the
culture of the CSF school district and find out what are the factors that appear to have an effect on the retention of francophone beginning teachers. In conclusion, Ingersoll’s discussion raised other questions for further research such as what impact do high rates of teacher turnover have on schools? Overall, Ingersoll’s analysis has focused on the effects of school and organizational characteristics on teacher turnover.

*Mentoring on Beginning Teacher Turnover*

In this article, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) have documented from a number of studies that 50% of new teachers leave within the first 5 years of entry into the teaching profession (p.682). To remediate this attrition issue, there has been an increase in the number of programs offering support, guidance, and orientation for beginning teachers during the transition into their first teaching job. This study examined whether such programs—collectively known as induction—have had positive effect on the retention of beginning teachers. The objective of this study was to address the need for empirical evaluation of the effects of induction of beginning teacher turnover. The data used in the analysis was from the nationally representative 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey. The results indicated that beginning teachers who were provided with mentors from the same subject field and who participated in collective induction activities, such as planning and collaboration with other teachers, were less likely to move to other schools and less likely to leave the teaching occupation after their first year of teaching.

In conclusion, Smith and Ingersoll’s (2004) research provided general support for the use of mentor teachers and collaborative activities for new teachers in reducing turnover. Smith and Ingersoll’s analysis found a strong link between participation in induction programs and reduced rates of turnover. Their data also showed that there were large variations among types of schools in the number and types of induction-related activities. Some appeared to be more effective than others in reducing turnover. This finding is particularly relevant to the context of this research.
project at the CSF. Different support services are examined in this study including a Mentorship Program and a New Teacher’s Conference. Recommendations to the CSF will be drawn from the effectiveness of either of these support programs and the overall profile of my participants.
Chapter Three: Procedures & Methods

Research Design

This study seeks to find out what factors appear to have an effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the CSF of British Columbia. The most appropriate research design for this type of question is inevitably survey research. The major purpose of a survey is to describe the characteristics of a population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). A sample of the population of beginning teachers was surveyed and a description of the population was inferred from what the sample was revealing. For the purposes of this study, a cross-sectional survey was performed on a pre-determined population. The questionnaire was collecting information at just one point in time. The author of the present study believed that the problem to be investigated was sufficient to motivate beginning teachers to respond to the questionnaire. The questionnaire was collected by mail by November 1st of 2009.

Participants

The sample of participants for this study does not involve vulnerable populations. The sample was comprised of all francophone beginning teachers that had two years or less of teaching experience with the CSF of British Columbia. Respondents were recruited from all 40 francophone schools across the province of British Columbia. Beginning teachers varied in position and location, some teaching in elementary schools and others in high schools. It was expected that most beginning teachers originated from outside of the province, generally from Québec, and would be twenty-five to thirty years old. Recruitment for this study was largely done with the collaboration of Mario Cyr, Directeur Général of the CSF. Monsieur Cyr provided a list to the researcher of all francophone beginning teachers eligible for the study in the fall of 2009.
Instruments Used

The most common type of instrument used in survey research is the questionnaire (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). This study uses a hierarchical approach when designing the survey questions, starting from the most general question and ending with the most specific. As mentioned earlier, the mode of data collection was a mailed survey written in French by the author of the present study. The questionnaire was sent to each beginning teacher on October 1st, 2009, with a request that it be completed and then returned anonymously by November 1st, 2009. This four week period, gave each respondent sufficient time to give thoughtful answers and return back the questionnaire to the researcher. The questionnaire was short and clear, with a maximum of two pages. Questions were easy to answer, uncluttered and spread out (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2008). Preferably, the conditions under which the questionnaire was administered were as similar as possible for all respondents. The researcher planned to use close-ended questions and a Likert scale to score the results. A “pre-test” of the questionnaire was performed to reveal any ambiguities. A cover letter was sent along with the questionnaire to all respondents explaining the objectives of the study (see Appendices A and C)

Procedures

Potential participants were recruited in the fall of 2009 with the help of the Human Resources Department of the CSF and the collaboration of the principals from all 40 Francophone schools across British Columbia. The Directeur Général of the CSF, Monsieur Mario Cyr, provided a list of eligible participants to the researcher by September 21st, 2009. The researcher mailed individual sealed envelope to each respondent to his or her assigned school by October 1st, 2009. The individualized package included the consent form, the cover letter explaining the objectives of the study, the survey as well as a pre-paid returned envelope addressed to the researcher’s school. Surveys were kept in a locked filing cabinet in the
principal’s office. Only the principal and the researcher had access to the paper questionnaires. Respondents had until November 1st, 2009 to complete and mail back the survey to the researcher. Participants were informed of the estimated completion date of the study and contact information for getting in touch with the researcher. After the answers to the survey questions had been collected using SPSS, the researcher summarized the responses in order to draw some conclusions from the results.

Validity

In order to be valid, questions both from the questionnaire and the focus group interview cannot be leading or insensitive because it may cause individuals to respond differently. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2008), there are four main threats to internal validity in survey research: mortality, location, instrumentation, and instrument decay. Location was addressed and the researcher recommended to respondents to complete the survey at home, not at school.

Justification of the Methods of Analysis

The quantitative data collected from the questionnaire was examined using a descriptive analysis. The analysis consisted of examining the results from the closed-ended questions of the survey and the Likert scale scores using split variables from question 11 in the survey. Question 11 asked francophone beginning teachers if they planned to stay in British Columbia and teach for the CSF in the future. The data was then recorded using SPSS v.17 statistical software. Data was then put into tables and one bar graph to illustrate the factors that appeared to have an effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the CSF in BC.
Chapter Four: Results

Chapter Four contains the presentation of results utilizing the statistical methods described in Chapter Three. Of the 128 Francophone beginning teachers with less than two years of experience working for the CSF and who were sent surveys, 84 did not respond. This analysis is therefore based on 44 completed surveys from different francophone schools across British Columbia. Of the 44 respondents, 15 were male teachers and 29 were female teachers. In terms of age, 57% of beginning teachers were between 25 and 34 years of age. In terms of teaching assignments, the majority of respondents, 59%, were teaching at the elementary level. In terms of origin, 68% of the beginning teachers who responded were born in Québec, 13% were from other provinces or territories and 11% were from other countries. Only 4% of the respondents were born in British Columbia.

All data were analysed using split variables from question 11 of the survey. Question 11 asked francophone beginning teachers if they planned to stay in British Columbia and teach for the CSF in the future. Table 1 shows that 33 of the 44 respondent (75%) answered yes when asked if they planned to pursue their teaching career with the CSF. These respondents were considered to form the “Retention Group” in further analyses. Table 1 also shows that of the 44 respondents, only 4 answered no to the same question; making them members of the “Non-Retention Group”. It is worth noting that 7 people did not respond to the question and were thus considered to be undecided on the issue. The findings of the study were organized and presented according to the one research question as outlined in Chapters One and Three. All data were analysed using SPSS v.17 statistical software.
The research question sought to determine what factors appear to have an effect on the retention rates of Francophone beginning teachers working for the Conseil Scolaire Francophone of British Columbia. For the purposes of this study, respondents were asked to reveal if they participated in the Mentorship Program, which is offered each year by the CSF to beginning teachers. Table 2 indicates that within the retention group, only 27% of beginning teachers participated in the Mentorship Program. On the other hand, none of the beginning teachers from the non-retention group participated in the Mentorship Program. While one might assume that a Mentorship Program might be a factor that can have a positive effect on the retention rates of beginning teachers, it is clear that the CSF did not succeed in enrolling the majority of its beginning teachers in this program. Possible reasons for this will be discussed in Chapter Five.

### Table 1

**Summary Data for Beginning Teachers who will be Either Retained or Not Retained by the CSF**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention Group</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Non-Retention Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>33 (75%)</td>
<td>7 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4 (9%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2

**Mentorship Program Participation as a Variable for Retention of Beginning Teachers**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention Group (n=33)</th>
<th>Non-Retention Group (n=4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mentorship Program</td>
<td>No Mentorship Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 (27%)</td>
<td>24 (73%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 summarizes the impressions of the 9 beginning teachers who participated in the Mentorship Program. Table 3 indicates that 55% of the respondents agreed that the Mentorship Program helped them to successfully integrate to their school milieu.

**Table 3**

*Begning Teacher Evaluation of the Mentorship Program*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Undecided</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Program helped school integration</td>
<td>5 (55%)</td>
<td>3 (33%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Program helped relationship with mentor</td>
<td>5 (55%)</td>
<td>4 (44%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the purposes of this study, respondents were asked to reveal if they had participated in the New Teachers’ Conference which is organized by the CSF for its beginning teachers and is offered every year in the month of August. Table 4 indicates that within the retention group, more than half of the beginning teachers attended the New Teachers’ Conference. On the other hand, all of the non-retention group teachers also attended the New Teachers’ Conference. One can argue that the New Teachers’ Conference is not a factor that influences the non-retention group’s decision to leave the CSF. Other possible factors influencing their decision to leave will be analysed in Table 6.

**Table 4**

*New Teachers’ Conference Attendance as a Variable for Retention of Beginning Teachers*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Retention Group (n=33)</th>
<th>Non-Retention Group (n=4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Conference</td>
<td>Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No Conference</td>
<td>No Conference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 (61%)</td>
<td>4 (100%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 (39%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5 summarizes the impressions of the 20 beginning teachers who attended the New Teachers’ Conference. The majority of the retention group teachers agreed that the conference helped facilitate their integration to their school milieu. Similarly, the same number of retention group teachers found the conference helpful in providing them with useful resources to help them cope with the obstacles of the first years. The non-retention group also mostly felt that the conference helped them integrate more successfully to their school milieu and provided them with useful resources. One respondent of the non-retention group chose not to answer that section of the survey.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Retention Group (n=20)</th>
<th>Non-Retention Group (n=3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Undecided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference helped teacher integration</td>
<td>15 (75%)</td>
<td>3 (15%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference provided useful resources</td>
<td>15 (75%)</td>
<td>1 (5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reviewed literature on retention illustrates that the obstacles and successes of beginning teachers are linked to 5 common factors: school integration, classroom management, curriculum planning, student’s learning and parental communication (Roy, 2002). In the survey respondents were asked to rank their experience for each of these factors using a Likert scale (Strongly Agree = 5, Strongly Disagree = 1). In reporting the results, those respondents who scored their answers high on the Likert scale were grouped together in Table 6 under the column “Agree”. Respondents who scored answers low on the Likert scale, were grouped together under
the column “Disagree”. The data for responses indicating a status of undecided for a given question were omitted from the summary table. It is worth noting however that for some questions the undecided response was chosen on up to 40% of the surveys.

Table 6

Effects of Five Variables on the Retention of Beginning Teachers by the CSF

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Retention Group (n=31)</th>
<th>Non-Retention Group (n=4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Agree</td>
<td>Disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received principal support</td>
<td>25 (81%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received teacher support</td>
<td>24 (77%)</td>
<td>6 (19%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Received staff support</td>
<td>27 (87%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Classroom Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First days of school successful</td>
<td>25 (81%)</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conflict resolution effective</td>
<td>22 (71%)</td>
<td>3 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivated students to speak French</td>
<td>18 (58%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curriculum Planning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time management effective</td>
<td>22 (71%)</td>
<td>5 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French resources available</td>
<td>15 (48%)</td>
<td>10 (32%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional development effective</td>
<td>14 (45%)</td>
<td>7 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IEPs supported successfully</td>
<td>17 (55%)</td>
<td>8 (26%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adapted and modified programs successfully</td>
<td>22 (71%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taught combined classrooms successfully</td>
<td>12 (39%)</td>
<td>7 (23%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developed effective system</td>
<td>24 (77%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent-teacher interviews successful</td>
<td>27 (87%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comfortable using English Language</td>
<td>19 (61%)</td>
<td>4 (13%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The data presented in Table 6 shows some results that have negative effects on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. It is indicated that almost half of the beginning teachers who were part of the retention group struggled to motivate their students to speak French.
in the classroom. Similarly, half of the non-retention group also experienced this factor as an obstacle during their first year. Table 6 indicates that both retention and non-retention groups felt that it was difficult to access French resources and that consequently beginning teachers had to work harder to create their teaching material in French. Table 6 shows that almost half of both groups felt that they did not receive enough professional development around the issue of Assessment for Learning. Finally, both groups agreed that they were not well prepared nor had the skills or knowledge to teach split-grade classes. Possible reasons for these low results will be discussed in Chapter Five.

The data collected in Table 6 also shows results that have positive effects on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. Table 6 suggests that both the retention and the non-retention groups felt that their principal welcomed them at the beginning of the year and offered them adequate support during their first year of teaching. It was shown that both groups felt confident in the area of classroom management and were able to successfully resolve conflicts with students as well as install an effective management plan during the first days of school. Table 6 also shows that beginning teachers in both groups were successful at managing their time to plan for instruction and felt that they knew the differences between adapted and modified programs. Finally, both groups felt strongly that they were using an effective system to communicate with parents of their students and that they were satisfied with the outcomes of their parent-teacher interviews. Possible reasons for these high results will be discussed in Chapter Five.

For the purposes of this study, respondents of the non-retention group were asked to rank both personal and professional factors that might have an influence on their decision to leave the CSF in the future. When the data was collected, respondents were asked to rank their experience for each of these factors using a Likert scale (Least Important Factor = 5, Most Important Factor
In reporting the results, those respondents who scored their factors between 1 and 2 on the Likert scale were grouped together in Figure 1 to indicate how many respondents rated a given factor as “Very Important”. Respondents who scored their factors as a 3 on the Likert scale, were interpreted as those who found a factor “Sometimes Important”. Finally, respondents who scored their factors between 4 and 5 on the Likert scale were grouped together in Figure 1 and counted as those who rated factors as “Not Important”.

Figure 1 shows that the factors having a high influence in the decision of the non-retention group to leave the CSF are related to 3 main issues. First, Francophone beginning teachers felt strongly that their decision to leave the CSF was based on a desire to relocate closer to family
members living outside of British Columbia, mostly in the province of Québec. Second, their
decision to leave was affected by the high cost of living in the province of British Columbia.
Third, non-retention teachers’ decision to leave the CSF was strongly related to the overall
challenges of teaching for the CSF. Those in-school challenges negatively affecting the retention
rates of beginning teachers have previously been discussed and were summarized in Table 6.
Possible reasons for these highly influential factors will be discussed in Chapter Five.

On the other hand, Figure 1 also demonstrates that there are two factors that do not
influence the decision to leave the CSF. First, non-retention teachers were not associating the
challenges of teaching as a member of a cultural and language minority with their decision to
leave the CSF. Second, non-retention teachers are also not associating the overall challenges of
the being a first year teacher with their decision to leave the CSF. Possible reasons for these
factors of low influence will be discussed in Chapter Five.

The analysis of data presented in this chapter has found significant results that help to
answer the research question. These findings will be discussed further and their implications
addressed in Chapter Five.
Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

Summary

This study began by asking what factors appeared to have an effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers working for the Conseil Scolaire Francophone of British Columbia. This research is based on the premises that there was a high turnover of francophone beginning teachers among those being hired every year by the CSF, and that teacher retention was and still is a current issue. The most appropriate research design for this type of question was inevitably a survey research. The questionnaires were mailed to all francophone beginning teachers on October 1, 2009. Respondents with two years or less of experience were recruited from all 40 francophone schools across the province of BC. The results from the questionnaires were mailed back to the researcher for a quantitative analysis. Of the 128 francophone beginning teachers, which were sent surveys, 84 did not respond. This analysis was therefore based on 44 completed surveys. Of the 44 respondents, 33 were part of the retention group and 4 were part of the non-retention group.

The survey asked beginning teachers from both groups to assess their participation and appreciation of two major support services being offered to beginning teachers by the CSF. First, the Mentorship Program was examined as a possible factor that might positively affect the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. The results of the study demonstrated that less than one third of beginning teachers from the retention group participated in the Mentorship Program. Overall though, those beginning teachers who did participate found the program helpful and they appreciated their meetings with their mentors. Second, the New Teachers’ Conference was also examined as a possible factor positively affecting the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. Interestingly, all of the non-retention group teachers participated in the New
Teachers’ Conference and found the information useful and beneficial to their school integration during their first year of teaching. This suggests that attending the conference was not a factor contributing to the teachers’ decision to stop working for the CSF.

This study identified six in-school factors that may have a positive effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. First, results showed that francophone beginning teachers felt that their principal welcomed them at the beginning of the year and offered them adequate support during their first year of teaching. Second, results showed that both groups felt confident in the area of classroom management. Third, beginning teachers were also able to successfully resolve conflicts with students. Fourth, results showed that both groups were successful at managing their time to plan for instruction. Fifth, beginning teachers also felt confident and knew the differences between an adapted and modified programs. Sixth, both groups felt strongly that they were using an effective system to communicate with the parents of their students and that they were satisfied with the outcomes of their parent-teacher interviews.

This study identified four in-school factors that may have a negative effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. First, results showed that francophone beginning teachers found it challenging to motivate their students to speak French inside and outside of the classroom. Second, results showed that it is very difficult for francophone beginning teachers to access French resources in order to plan their lessons and consequently teachers had to work harder to create their teaching material in French. Third, results showed that francophone beginning teachers felt that they did not receive enough professional development around the issue of assessment for learning. Fourth, both groups agreed that they were not well prepared and did not have the skills or knowledge to teach combined classrooms effectively.

Finally, this study identified three other factors that operated outside of the school classroom and had an influence on beginning teachers’ decision to leave the CSF in the future.
They were the desire to live closer to family, the high cost of living in BC and the overall challenges associated with their teaching assignment with the CSF.

Discussion

There is extensive research showing that a high level of participation in quality mentorship programs are linked to the retention of beginning teachers and reduced rates of attrition (Smith and Ingersoll, 2004). Surprisingly, a very low number of beginning teachers participated in the Mentorship Program being offered every year by the CSF. One can conclude that the CSF did not succeed at promoting and enrolling more beginning teachers in the program. On the other hand, results showed that for those who participated, the Mentorship Program was useful and positive, but for the purposes of this study the Mentorship Program cannot be considered as a significant factor having an effect on the retention rates of beginning teachers. Possible recommendations to improve this program and make it more sustainable will be discussed later in this chapter.

Research showed that professional learning communities can empower teachers in working together to gather information about the needs of their learners, teaching strategies and specific aspects of the curriculum (Kaser and Halbert, 2009). Within professional learning communities teachers can discuss, share and critique new ideas (Kaser and Halbert, 2009). That is, in essence, precisely the goal of the New Teachers’ Conference which targets beginning teachers as the audience. For the purposes of this study, the New Teachers’ Conference was examined as a possible factor that has positive effects on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. Surprisingly, all of the non-retention group teachers participated in the New Teachers’ Conference and found the information both useful and beneficial to their school integration during the first year of teaching. More than half of the retention group attended the conference making it a significant factor that has a positive effect on the retention rates of francophone
beginning teachers working for the CSF. On the other hand, the CSF could potentially recruit the other 40% of the beginning teachers who did not participate, by doing more to encourage them to attend the conference in August.

Research literature has shown that teachers who feel successful with students and whose schools are organized to support them in their teaching, are more likely to be retained in the profession (Romano, 2006). It is important to note that the results of this study identified several positive factors for retention that normally would have fallen under the umbrella of challenges and obstacles for beginning teachers. More precisely, this study identified six in-school factors that may have a positive effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers.

Surprisingly francophone beginning teachers felt very confident in the areas of classroom management, conflict resolution, time management and parental communication. One may ask oneself if the respondents were being fully honest and self-critical while answering the survey.

On the other hand, this study also identified four in-school factors that have a negative effect on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. Interestingly, the results of this section of the survey were not related to the typical struggles of a beginning teacher described in the research literature. Rather the results were linked to cultural factors unique to the challenges of teaching for the CSF in a minority environment. Such factors having a negative effect on the retention rates of beginning teachers are described as follows: teachers having to motivate students to speak French inside and outside of the classroom, the difficulty of accessing French teaching resources, the lack of professional development being offered in French around the issue of Assessment for Learning and finally the challenges related to teaching in combined classrooms. The cultural components of these factors will play a key role in the recommendations being proposed to the CSF.
The origins of francophone beginning teachers are pivotal in understanding the factors that contributed to the non-retention group’s decision to leave the CSF. As demonstrated in Chapter Four, 68% of beginning teachers were born in Québec, 13% in other provinces and territories, 11% in other countries and only 4% were born in British Columbia. This study identified three other factors that operated outside of the school classroom and had an influence in the beginning teachers’ decision to leave the CSF in the future. Since the majority of beginning teachers were born outside of British Columbia and moved here on their own, their decision to leave is strongly associated with their desire to relocate closer to family after their first few years of teaching and being faced with a culture shock. As well, beginning teachers that moved to British Columbia to work for the CSF found the cost of living in this province very high in comparison to their previous hometowns. The third factor contributing to their decision to leave is associated with their overall teaching experience for the CSF.

One must keep in mind that the non-retention sample is quite small and does not necessarily represent the rest of beginning teachers who did not return the survey and will potentially also leave the CSF in the future. One can only hypothesize and predict that the CSF will not easily control the first two external factors. However, it is worth noting that the last factor that had a negative effect on the retention rates is the organization itself. This last finding shows the amplitude of the cultural obstacles faced by francophone beginning teachers working for a school district that clearly needs to reflect on its teaching practices in order to retain more teachers and be more sustainable.

Limitations

The quantitative methodology employed meant that the survey instruments defined the concepts under study. The questionnaire only measured some aspects of teacher retention at the CSF. Other aspects of the perspectives of francophone beginning teachers may also have an effect
(positive or negative) on their retention rates. Respondents were also limited to Likert scale answers and were not given the opportunity to elaborate on their successes and obstacles as beginning teachers. Ideally, if given more time, the researcher would have organized focus-group interviews with selected beginning teachers to collect qualitative data on teacher retention. It would be of interest to this field of study to compare the findings from the interviews to the factors having an effect on teacher retention found in this study.

Many beginning teachers wrote short comments in any blank spaces they could find when asked to assess the Mentorship Program at the CSF. One theme dominated these unsolicited comments. Numerous teachers commented on the need for local mentors in their designated schools. They criticized the current CSF model of mentorship for pairing beginning teachers with mentors from different schools, often requiring beginning teachers to travel long distances to have face-to-face meetings with their mentors. Frustrations expressed in these comments were palpable and follow up research may be able to take advantage of this apparent concern.

Another factor to consider in any survey research is whether the number of non-respondents is high, which might affect the results. Of the 128 francophone beginning teachers that were sent surveys, 84 did not respond. The researcher considers this number to be very significant. It is recommended that the mailing out of surveys be done differently in the future. The researcher had to discard several surveys that were received after the deadline given to enter new data for statistical analysis using SPSS software. Ideally, allowing respondents one full month to answer and mail back their surveys should have been sufficient time, but perhaps two months would have been better to collect a larger sample of surveys.
Recommendations for Future Research

The research question of this study was exploratory by design and the findings point to further research possibilities of a qualitative and quantitative nature. A comparative analysis with another francophone school district would also be worthwhile to determine what district and school practices enable beginning teachers to be successful during their first years. A comparison of retention rates and factors having an effect on attrition rates would be of interest to determine similar cultural factors that could possibly have a direct influence on the non-retention groups’ decision to leave their school district. These comparative analyses could be investigated using a range of qualitative and quantitative techniques including ethnographic surveys or focus group interviews.

Further qualitative analysis could be performed with a selected group of beginning teachers to give them the opportunity to orally share their concerns and successes about their first years. Focus group interviews could take place at least three times during the year with the same group of selected beginning teachers. These meetings would assess the changes in the beginning teachers’ perspectives on the realities of the first years and the effect of leadership practices on their desire to stay or leave the teaching profession.

Action research could also be done to learn more about the relationship between principals’ leadership styles and beginning teachers’ perspectives. Such research has the potential to begin to establish some sense of causality between leadership practices and teacher retention.

Recommendations for Practice

The present study has found significant factors that may have both positive and negative effects on the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers. The researcher posits that the CSF should continue to offer its Mentorship Program to beginning teachers. The ways in which the program is offered could benefit from the following changes. The CSF should promote its
Mentorship Program vigorously in order to recruit more beginning teachers and mentors as participants. It is desirable that the CSF allows principals and vice principals to find local mentors for beginning teachers in their own school. The results and the research have demonstrated that school leaders play an important role in the retention rates of beginning teachers. Research demonstrates that developing distributed leadership “may require an initial emphasis on structural changes, especially in externally generated or top-down initiatives” (Bennett, 2003, p. 4). Concrete recommendations such as having in school mentors or a welcoming committee can build capacity and provide beginning teachers with more opportunities to have conversations about practices and insure that the Mentorship Program will be sustainable over time. Follow up meetings with the principal, mentor and beginning teacher should take place on a regular basis allowing them to build trust and reflect on their learning goals.

Research on trust suggests that the work of informal leaders is pivotal in sustaining a culture where staff feel valued and respected (Kaser and Halbert, 2009). This is particularly true when it comes to the issue of beginning teachers’ retention as it is the beginning teacher who often feels vulnerable and afraid to ask for help. In their study, Wynn and Brown (2008) observed that beginning teachers are more inclined to ask for guidance from a teacher mentor or school administrator if they have been welcomed by them early on in the year and have previously established a relationship with them based on trust and respect. Trust is a matter of human effort and requires active listening and true dialogue. Active listening is one of the first requirements of effective dialogue (Kaser and Halbert, 2009). Therefore, the CSF has to distribute its leadership to train teacher mentors and school principals to use those skills to model effective dialogue to beginning teachers in order to build the trust and to best support them in their educational journey. The researcher suggests that leadership in the CSF schools be distributed not by delegating more work to beginning teachers, but by “weaving together people, the appropriate
resources, materials, and organizational structures in a common goal, thus providing support to
beginning teachers and ensuring their success beyond their first year” (Lashway, 2003, p. 3).

As for the New Teachers’ Conference, the CSF must continue to offer it to every
beginning teacher but should consider offering it at a different time during the school year. More
beginning teachers might attend the conference if it was offered in October, rather than during the
late summer vacation in August. Offering the conference during the school year would also allow
beginning teachers to reflect on their recent teaching experiences and build on what they already
have experienced in their classrooms from the previous months.

The results of this study also revealed a number of cultural factors associated with the
unique challenges of teaching for the CSF. It is paramount for the CSF to address the issue of
language motivation and inform beginning teachers of the challenges of working in a minority
language. School administrators and informal leaders wishing to have a direct impact on the
retention rates of beginning teachers must simultaneously work together to create professional
learning communities that offer more French resources and knowledge on the issue of
Assessment for Learning. Finally, the challenges of teaching a combined class can also be
addressed by regular meetings with a local mentor and principal, both providing support that
nurture beginning teachers through their obstacles and successes.

This study identified three factors that operated outside of the school classroom and had
an influence in the beginning teachers’ decision to leave the CSF in the future. Francophone
beginning teachers that are born outside of British Columbia will always be faced with the
dilemma of moving back home closer to family and therefore they have to display strong
adaptation characteristics in order to survive and be fully immersed in an Anglophone
environment. The researcher believes that this external factor is fixed and cannot be changed by
the CSF practices. The high cost of living is another external fixed factor that will continue to
have an influence on the beginning teachers’ decision to leave the CSF, and consequently have an effect on the retention rates. Last but not least, the only factor that can be altered and changed over the years is the CSF organizational structure itself.

The researcher posits that the leadership in the schools also has to be sustainable in order to increase the retention rates of francophone beginning teachers at the CSF. This model suggests that sustainable leadership must be a shared responsibility (Hargreaves, 2004). By offering more local support to its beginning teachers, listening to their concerns, distributing the leadership among the schools and its school leaders, and by creating professional learning communities that address the cultural components of teaching French in BC, the CSF can ensure the sustainability and future of its learning organization by investing in the individuals that could become the pioneers and ambassadors of the francophone culture.
References


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FORMULAIRE D'INFORMATION POUR LE SONDAGE
«OBSTACLES ET RÉUSSITES DES NOUVEAUX ENSEIGNANTS DU CONSEIL SCOLAIRE FRANCOPHONE DE LA COLOMBIE-BRITANNIQUE»

Octobre 2009

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(But) Je suis une étudiante à la maîtrise en éducation à l’Université de l’Île de Vancouver à Nanaimo. Ce projet de recherche action a pour but d’identifier les obstacles et les réussites auxquels font face les nouveaux enseignants du Conseil Scolaire Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

(Description) Dans cette recherche, la participation demandée consiste à remplir un sondage qui a pour but de cibler les facteurs contribuant à une meilleure insertion professionnelle lors de la première année d’enseignement. Le sondage devrait être dûment retourné à la chercheure, par la poste, avec le formulaire de consentement avant le 1er novembre 2009.

(Inconvénients et avantages potentiels) Mis à part le temps consacré pour répondre au sondage, aucun inconvénient n’est associé à la participation à ce projet de recherche. Les avantages personnels de la participation à cette recherche résident principalement dans la satisfaction d’avoir collaboré au partage d’informations qui reflètent les différentes réalités (obstacles et réussites) des nouveaux enseignants francophones de la Colombie-Britannique. Une telle participation à un projet de recherche action pour les nouveaux enseignants du CSF, engendre une valorisation personnelle par la préoccupation du bien-être professionnel de jeunes collègues qui vivent des situations similaires.


(Participation) La participation à cette recherche est volontaire. Une fois le sondage complété et retourné par la poste à la chercheure, le participant n’aura pas besoin de fournir d’autres informations. La chercheure aura seulement accès aux données anonymes du sondage.

(Consentement) J’ai pris connaissance de ces informations et de ces déclarations. En remplissant et retournant le sondage à la chercheure, j’accepte librement de participer à ce projet de recherche.
Appendix B

Nanaimo, septembre 2009

Aux directions des écoles du CSF

**OBJET : Recherche universitaire auprès des nouveaux enseignants du CSF.**

Madame, Monsieur,

Je fais partie du personnel enseignant du CSF à l’école Océane de Nanaimo. De plus, je poursuis des études en maîtrise en éducation à l’Université de l’Île de Vancouver à Nanaimo. Mon projet de recherche action a pour but d’identifier les obstacles et les réussites auxquels font face les nouveaux enseignants du Conseil Scolaire Francophone de la Colombie-Britannique.

Dans le cadre de mon projet de maîtrise, je désire vous informer de ma démarche de recherche qui ciblera les nouveaux enseignants francophones au sein de votre école. Ils recevront, par la poste, dans la semaine du 1er octobre 2009, le sondage écrit que j’ai préparé avec la collaboration des Ressources Humaines du CSF. Le sondage devra être complété de façon volontaire et retourné à la chercheure avant le 1er novembre 2009.

Un simple rappel pour compléter le sondage dans les délais auprès de vos nouveaux enseignants serait très apprécié. Si des informations additionnelles étaient nécessaires, n’hésitez pas à communiquer avec moi.

Merci de votre précieuse collaboration.

Sincèrement,

Louise-Andrée Soucy
louise_andree@csf.bc.ca
(250) 740-2536
Appendix C

SONDAGE AUPRÈS DES NOUVEAUX ENSEIGNANTS DU CSF

1.Votre groupe d’âge :
   □ 20-24
   □ 25-29
   □ 30-34
   □ 35-39
   □ 40 et plus

2.Votre sexe :
   □ M
   □ F

3.Votre tâche d’enseignement cette année :
   □ Maternelle à 7e année
   □ Secondaire
   □ Autres _________________________________

4. Le genre de communauté scolaire dans laquelle vous enseignez cette année :
   □ Rurale
   □ Urbaine
   □ Semi rurale et semi urbaine

5. Durée de votre expérience comme enseignant au CSF :
   □ Moins de 6 mois
   □ De 6 mois à 1 an
   □ 1 an et plus

6. Votre lieu de naissance :
   □ Colombie-Britannique
   □ Québec
   □ Autres provinces ou territoires _________________________
   □ Autres pays _________________________

7. Vous résidez en Colombie-Britannique depuis :
   □ 0 à 6 mois
   □ 6 mois à 1 année
   □ 1 à 2 années
   □ 3 à 5 années
   □ 5 années et plus
8. Votre arrivée en Colombie-Britannique s’est effectuée :

☐ Seul
☐ Avec ma famille
☐ Avec un conjoint
☐ Avec un ami
☐ Autres ________________________________

9. Personnes en soutien à vos débuts comme enseignant au CSF :

☐ Collègues
☐ Direction
☐ Personnel du CSF
☐ Amis
☐ Autres ________________________________

10. Votre niveau d’anglais parlé et écrit :

☐ Débutant
☐ Intermédiaire
☐ Avancé

11. Vous prévoyez poursuivre votre carrière d’enseignant au CSF :

☐ Oui
☐ Non

12. Si OUI, vous planifiez enseigner au CSF pendant :

☐ 1 an
☐ 2 à 4 ans
☐ 5 ans et plus
☐ Ne sait pas

13. Si NON, les facteurs personnels et/ou professionnels qui influencentraient votre décision de quitter le CSF : (choisir par ordre d’importance, 1 étant le plus important et 5 le moins important)

1 = Très important 5 = Moins important

**Facteurs personnels :**

_____ Difficultés liées à l’éloignement de la famille.

_____ Adaptation à une culture différente et à un nouvel environnement linguistique.

_____ Coût élevé de la vie en Colombie-Britannique.

**Facteurs professionnels :**

_____ Défis reliés au contexte d’enseignement au CSF.

_____ Difficultés relatives au début de carrière comme enseignant.
LE CSF OFFRE DEUX FORMES DE SOUTIEN À SES NOUVEAUX ENSEIGNANTS : LE PROJET MENTORAT et LA FORMATION

Projet mentorat :
14. Vous avez déjà participé au Projet Mentorat offert par le CSF :

- Oui
- Non
- Je ne connais pas ce projet.

15. Si oui, après chaque énoncé, encerclez le choix qui reflète le mieux votre opinion.

   Code de pointage :
   - 5 = Entièrement en accord (EA)
   - 4 = En accord (A)
   - 3 = Indécis (I)
   - 2 = En désaccord (D)
   - 1 = Entièrement en désaccord (ED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Le Projet Mentorat a facilité mon insertion professionnelle dans mon milieu scolaire lors de ma première année d’enseignement au CSF.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Les rencontres avec mon mentor m’ont aidé à surmonter les obstacles de ma première année d’enseignement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>5</td>
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</table>

Formation aux nouveaux enseignants :

16. Vous avez déjà participé à la Formation des nouveaux enseignants offerte annuellement par le CSF en août :

- Oui
- Non
- Je ne connais pas cette formation.

17. Si oui, après chaque énoncé, encerclez le choix qui reflète le mieux votre opinion :

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>La formation aux nouveaux enseignants du CSF a su répondre à mes besoins et a facilité mon intégration à l’école, en septembre.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>La formation aux nouveaux enseignants m’a donné confiance et m’a fourni des ressources utiles au cours de ma première année d’enseignement.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EA</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. Après chaque énoncé, encerclez le choix qui reflète le mieux votre vécu à titre de nouvel enseignant au CSF :

**INSERTION AU NOUVEAU MILIEU SCOLAIRE :**

A. J’ai été accueilli par la direction de mon école en début d’année.

B. J’ai reçu de l’aide d’un professeur de façon spontanée en début d’année.

C. J’ai réussi à m’intégrer à mes collègues et à ma direction en début d’année.

**GESTION DE CLASSE :**

D. Je suis parvenu à bien gérer ma classe en début d’année.

E. Je connais les ressources nécessaires pour résoudre un conflit avec un élève.

F. Je réussis à motiver mes élèves à parler français en classe.

**PLANIFICATION DES COURS :**

G. Je gère bien mon temps pour couvrir la matière; ce qui m’évite du stress.

H. Je dispose facilement de matériel didactique nécessaire en langue française pour mon enseignement, m’évitant de créer continuellement du nouveau matériel.

I. Je reçois suffisamment de formation continue pour mieux évaluer mes élèves selon les objectifs du programme.

**APPRENTISSAGES DES ÉLÈVES :**

J. J’ai les outils pour répondre aux besoins des élèves qui ont des niveaux d’apprentissages différents (PAP).

K. Je connais la différence entre un programme adapté et un programme modifié.

L. Je suis bien préparé pour enseigner à une classe à niveaux multiples.

**COMMUNICATION AVEC LES PARENTS :**

M. J’utilise un système efficace pour communiquer avec les parents de mes élèves.

N. Je gère bien mon stress lors des rencontres parents enseignants.

O. Je communique facilement en anglais avec certains parents de familles exogames.