

**Examining the Factors that are Contributing to or Detracting from the
Implementation of the Five Year Instructional Strategies Institute in North
Vancouver School District.**

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Abstract

This paper reports the results of a study conducted in year two of the implementation of the Five Year Instructional Institute in North Vancouver School District. This innovative educational change initiative is designed to build teachers' knowledge and skill base in the use of instructional strategies, thereby improving student achievement and enhancing curriculum delivery. With many initiatives being introduced to improve teaching and learning in the education system it is important to examine what factors allow for successful implementation of educational reform.

The purpose of this study was to research what the literature says about factors that contribute to or detract from program implementation and examine them in the context of the implementation of the Instructional Institute. The literature framework for this research encompassed the following three themes: 1) factors affecting implementation with an emphasis on shared vision, 2) contributions of collaborative environments during the implementation phase and 3) professional development during the implementation phase and drew on the educational research of Duke, Fullan and Leithwood. A research survey was conducted with over 100 teachers and administrators in 30 elementary schools and 7 secondary schools. Interviews with district personnel, administrators and teachers and one outside consultant were also conducted.

Findings which emerged from the data as critical factors affecting the success of the initiative during the implementation phase included 1) the need for a well-designed and communicated implementation plan and the recommendation that a district leadership position be created to oversee the new innovation; 2) collaboration among stakeholders and the recommendation that an infrastructure be created to provide time for educators to collaborate, reflect and plan; and 3) formal and job-embedded professional development and the recommendation is that districts continue to be proactive in planning for both formal and job-embedded professional development.