Family name, Given name

Irwin, Rita

Summary of Proposal

The summary of your proposal should indicate the challenges or issues to be addressed; the overall goal and objectives of the proposed partnership; and the breadth of the partnership, and the meaningful engagement of the partners involved.

Issues and challenges: Teacher mentorship matters because research consistently shows that teacher quality is the most important school-related determinant of student success (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Moir, 2009). Research shows that teacher mentorship has a positive impact on accelerating new teacher growth, improving student learning, and increasing the quality of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2012; Karsenti & Collin, 2013). Without high-quality teacher mentorship, efforts to improve teacher quality are often prevented by the high rates of turnover. The consequences of high teacher turnover rates are diminished school capacity, attrition of competent teachers, loss of education dollars, and most importantly, significant negative impact on student learning outcomes (Kelly, 2004; Hong, 2010; Renard, 2003). In order to facilitate a Canada-wide data-driven conversation on teacher mentorship, more empirical studies that examine mentoring models and approaches are needed to inform programmatic decision-making.

Goals and objectives of the partnership: We intend to create a Pedagogical Assemblage, a network of supports from multiple stakeholders, to develop and advance a province-wide teacher mentoring program in BC with the goal of building and sustaining teacher capacity. The research will:
1) Provide insights into the ways that teacher mentoring programs can help teachers be more effective.
2) Produce and synthesize insights into strategies for supporting the growth of early career teachers.
3) Provide insights into how teacher knowledge is developed, supported, exchanged, and mobilized through teacher mentoring opportunities.

Research questions guiding this study are:
1) How do teacher mentoring programs help mentors and mentees exchange professional knowledge? How does this collaboration support high-quality teaching?
2) How can technology-enhanced professional development resources be utilized to create a culture of collaboration through teacher mentorship across British Columbia?
3) How can a partnership among educational stakeholders provide insights into strategies and policies related to a province-wide teacher mentoring program that attends to the educational landscape in British Columbia?

Through Pedagogical Assemblage, professionals in policy, practice, and research communities are poised to produce evidence-informed educational research and professional development resources focused on strengthening teacher quality that is so critical to successful student learning. Central to this partnership is the proposition that effective mentorship is vital for creating a strong culture with a shared understanding of high-quality teaching among education practitioners. We envision a vibrant array of multimedia exhibitions, public forums and workshops to disseminate research findings that will engage scholars, graduate students, educators, parents and the public.

Breadth of the partnership and engagement of partners: The initial development stage brings together the Teacher Education Office at UBC, British Columbia's Ministry of Education, the British Columbia School Superintendents' Association, and the British Columbia Teachers' Federation to establish a leadership network focused on creating strategies and policies to support new teachers and complement the BC Education Plan's aim to enhance teaching and learning. Long-term benefits of our partnership include improving new teacher practice, offering a systematic vision to achieve school excellence, and enhancing public discourse by bringing accounts of sustained support of new teachers to the foreground, thereby making the case that comprehensive mentoring programs are an effective and efficient public investment to advance the quality of teaching and learning.

Personal information will be stored in the Personal Information Bank for the appropriate program.

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