**BASIC CONCEPTS ADVOCACY PROJECT**

**PHASE 2: FRANCES BAARD (2020-2021)**

As a result of Covid-19, the scheduled in-person training in Frances Baard district could not proceed, and we rapidly needed to find alternative methods of training. We therefore began to implement an online group-based training and have scheduled a comprehensive online training programme for the year. The 12 training sessions (2 sessions per domain) will be spaced out during the year allowing adequate time for implementation inside the classroom.

- Name of trainers and facilitator/s:

  Louis Benjamin (trainer)

  Diane Goldsmith (trainer)

  Gill Brand (facilitator)

- Date and Time:

  Session 1: 16 March, 14:00-16h00

  Session 2: 17 March, 14:00-16:00

- Main Foci of the sessions:

  Introduction to the Basic Concepts Programme, Mediation, How to implement the BCP in the Grade R classroom and the Conceptual Domain of Colour

- Register with names including all officials:
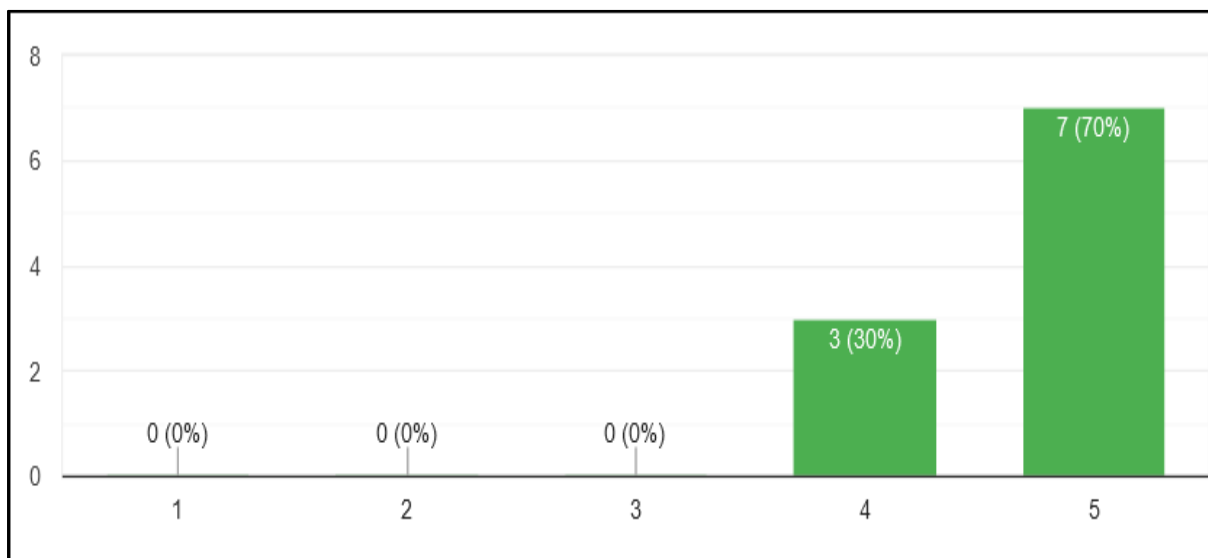
  Click here to access the GOOGLE SHEET

- Attendance Statistics:

| Session | Date | Present | Apologies | Absent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *1* | *16 March* | *41 (76%)* | *6 (11%)* | *7 (13%)* |
| *2* | *17 March* | *45 (83%)* | *7 (13%)* | *2 (4%)* |

*\*\*Number of catch-up views of the recorded session: Session 1 = 13 & Session 2 = 11*

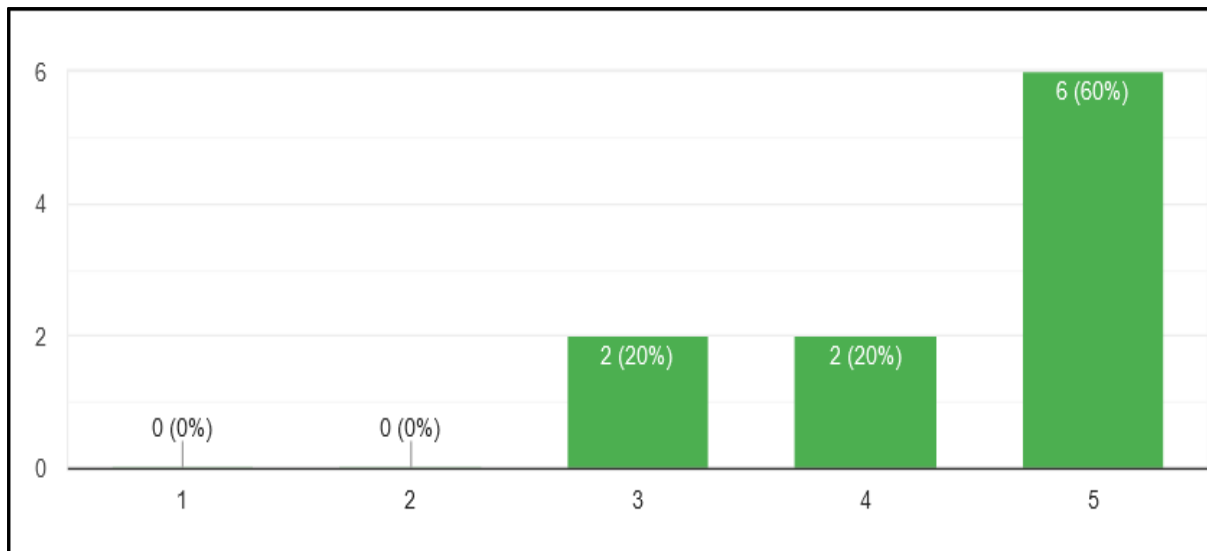- Evaluation of training: (The results are based on a sample of 23% and representative of all 6 teacher clusters.)

i) Rate the training sessions: -



*Scale:  1= very poor | 2 = poor | 3 = average | 4= good   | 5= excellent*

**100%** of the teachers rated the overall training as either *excellent* (**70%**) or as *good* **(30%)**.
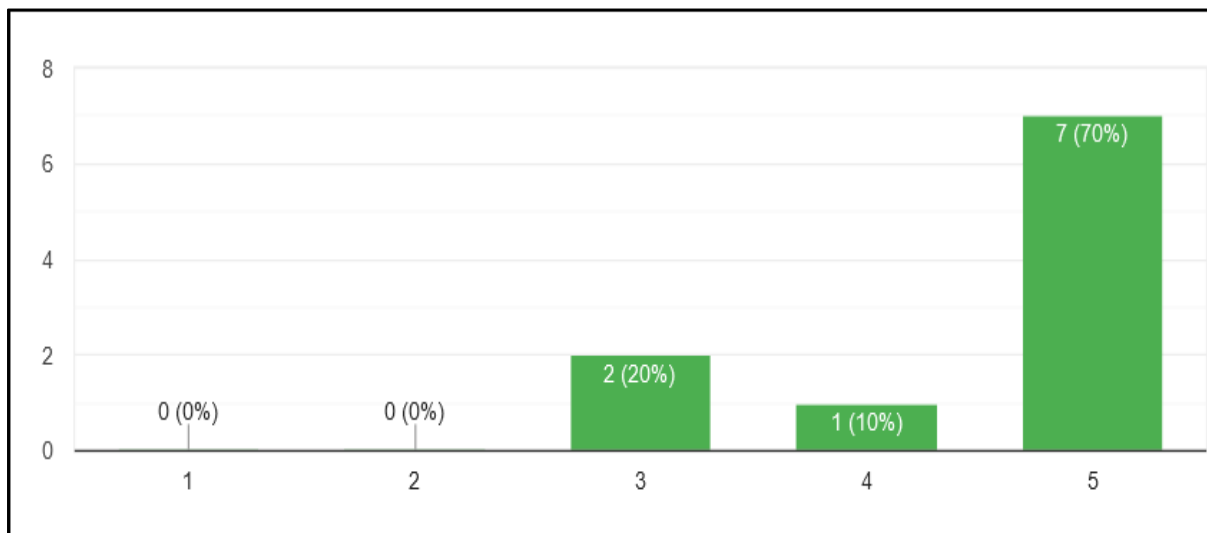
ii) Rate the quality of the information presented:-



*Scale:  1= very poor | 2 = poor | 3 = average | 4= good   | 5= excellent*

**80%** of the teachers rated the quality of the information as either *excellent* **(60%)** or *good* **(20%)**, while **20%** rated the quality as average.
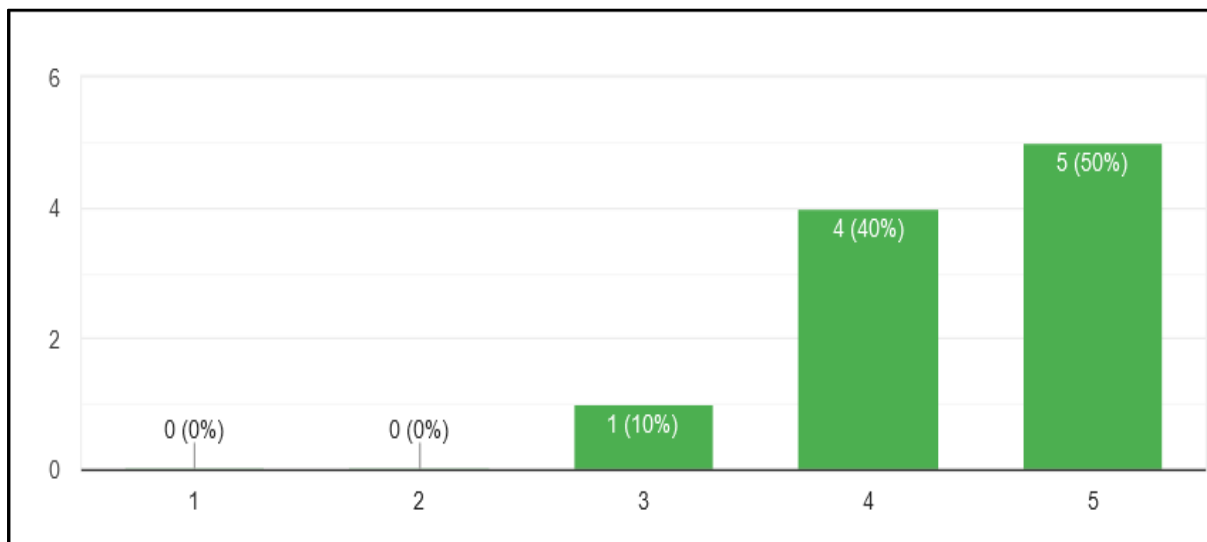
iii) Rate your interest in the Basic Concepts Programme:-



*Scale:  1= very low | 2 = low | 3 = average | 4= high   | 5= very high*

**80%** of the teachers rated their interest in the BCP as *high (10%) or very high (70%)*, while **20%** rated their interest as *average*.
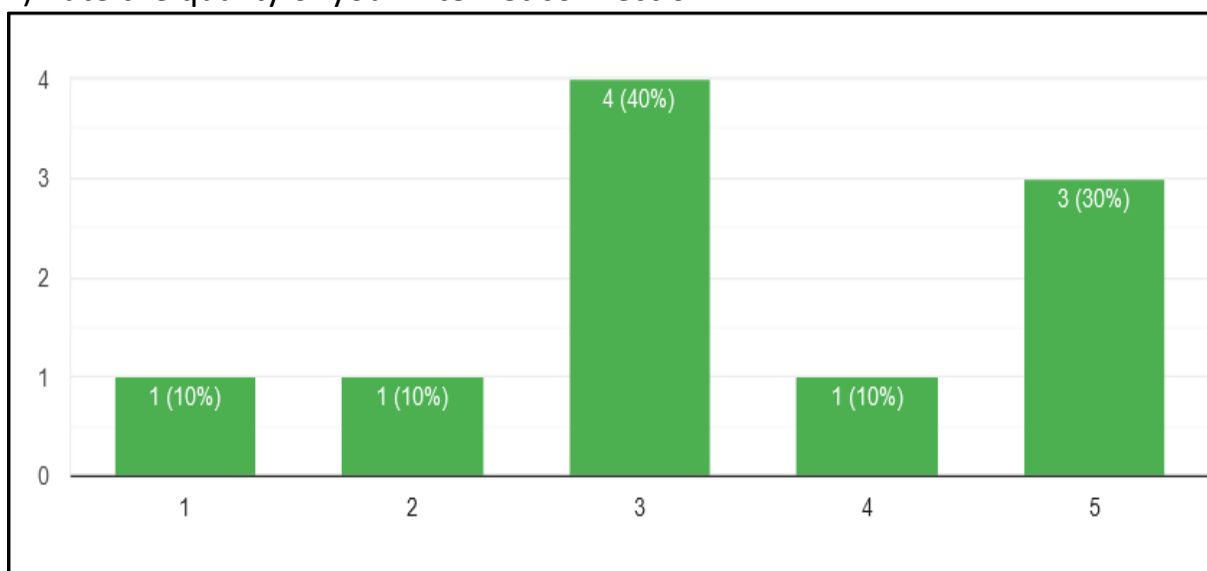
iv) How motivated are you to implement the Basic Concepts Programme in your class?



*Scale: 1= very low | 2 = low | 3 = average | 4= high | 5= very high*

**90%** of the teachers rated their motivation to implement the BCP as either *very high (50%) or high (40%)*, while only **10%** rated their motivation as *average*.

v) Rate the quality of your internet connection:-



*Scale: 1= very poor | 2 = poor | 3 = average | 4= good | 5= excellent*

**80%** rated their connection as *average (40%) to excellent (30%)*, while **20%** rated their connection as either *very poor* **(10%)** or *poor* **(10%).**

- General Comments: -

i) While the Project Team attempted to ensure that the internet connections were tested before the first training session, we were not able to fully resolve connectivity issues at all schools. Notwithstanding this, tremendous progress was made with connecting a majority of the teachers. A technical assistant was utilized to assist those schools where there was no other support available at the school. It should be noted that most of the teachers were using these technologies for the first time.

ii) Dramatic improvements in attendance (from 76% to 83%) and a sharp drop in absenteeism (13% to 4%) were found from the first to the second session and this is attributed to the systematic follow-ups made by the project team in conjunction with the District Officials.

iii) The first two training sessions were a revision of the training conducted early last year, however, this gave the training team the opportunity to include new teachers (9) in the project.

iv) The total number of project teachers has in fact increased from 50 to 54. This includes an attrition of 5 teachers from last year and an increase of 9 teachers this year. The main reason for teachers leaving the project was that they had not been reappointed to their positions or had resigned.

v) There is however a need to ensure that all the project teachers and particularly the new teachers still have the required project materials. (A material list was created during the current training). This might entail providing additional materials to approximately 4 teachers.

vi) The project teachers have been divided into 6 clusters of approximately 8-10 teachers per cluster with a cluster leader in each group. The 3 district officials are each responsible for two clusters. These arrangements have been made to ensure that teachers can meet safely in smaller groups during the COVID-19 pandemic.

vii) There were several Heads of Department who requested to be part of the training as well as additional Grade R teachers who had been appointed at some of the project schools. We were also pleased that so many principals assisted with technical matters to ensure teachers could have access to the internet.

viii) The training team was informed shortly before the training that the District Officials would not attend the training because of a National Department of Education training event. All the officials have however previously been trained. One of the district officials did attempt to attend the sessions and other officials were able to view recordings of the sessions.

- Conclusion

The first set of six training sessions was successfully implemented using a live, virtual training method. The project team was satisfied that we were able to run two training sessions, of 2hrs' duration each, within the current context, considering the enormous technological challenges and limitations. In addition, it is worthwhile to note that at the time we were running these sessions, the country was experiencing extensive, rolling electricity outages. We were somehow able to overcome what seemed an insurmountable

array of challenges  to run the training sessions; moreover, based on the feedback of the participants, it seemed that the first set of training sessions was well received and participants found the sessions interesting and motivating. All teachers are required to send a set of videos of their work inside their classes. We have already begun to receive videos of best practice as well as visual evidence from the classrooms.