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Evolving Inclusive Learning: From Retrofitting Disability to Designing for Variability

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Abstract

The problem of practice (PoP) addressed in this organizational improvement plan (OIP) is that curriculum is not currently interpreted, designed, and delivered to be inclusive of the range of learner variability present in Sursum Corda School Division (SCSD) classrooms. Although all students are physically included in SCSD classrooms, the learning of those who cannot assimilate to current instructional practices is generally supported through alternative, and often disconnected, practices and materials. Researched and experienced concerns with this approach include an increased potential to isolate, limit, or stigmatize targeted students and the inhibition of innovative instructional practices more generally. This OIP aims for a divisional shift toward curriculum and instructional beliefs, practices, structures, and resources that support all students to access, participate, and make learning progress within the general education classroom and curriculum. Current divisional structures and initiatives that aim to support inclusive education will be discussed. This plan was developed through a review of the literature on inclusive education, including the impacts of educator beliefs about learning and learners, and an examination of documents and materials produced and disseminated by the provincial Ministry of Education. A disability studies in education lens is used to understand current practices and beliefs for supporting learner variability and to present a vision of using the universal design for learning framework to inclusively extend quality instructional practices to a broader range of learners. Tools and tactics of adaptive and inclusive leadership are used to present a plan guided by research in the field of implementation science.

Keywords: disability studies in education, inclusive education, universal design for learning, adaptive leadership, inclusive leadership, implementation science

Executive Summary

The Learning Services department of Sursum Corda School Division (SCSD), a small Catholic school division in Alberta, has focused for several years on developing and implementing an inclusive continuum of supports and services model, grounded in an approach of responsively adding on supports and services (Buffman et al., 2009). That SCSD named this model as a continuum of supports and services rather than using the title for response to intervention that was more prevalent at the time it was introduced reflects the original intent of the model. A key principle of this model is that all students are first engaged at the universal level with supports and services added on responsively to ensure success within the inclusive context. This approach aims to counter exclusions and the resulting potential of lowered expectations, reduced learning and social opportunities, and increased levels of separation (Hart et al., 2004). The problem of practice (PoP) addressed in this organizational improvement plan (OIP) is that current teaching and learning practices do not consistently reflect the inclusive and responsive approaches intended within this model. Rather, they are more reflective of the traditional integrative approaches that existed before the introduction of the model.

Chapter 1 of this OIP will examine the context of the PoP and readiness for change of a range of stakeholders. This chapter will introduce the writer as a change agent, outlining her position, leadership lens, and agency. The writer's role in SCSD is currently that of an educational consultant focused on supporting the inclusion of k-12 students who face significant or complex access, participation, and progress challenges. Her leadership is dependent on relationships and influence as the consultant role is not a formal leadership or managerial one within the division. This role does, however, position the change agent to be continually engaging with all levels of stakeholders to recognize the existence of the PoP and advocate for and support change toward more inclusive practices. Through an examination of the writer's observations and provincial, divisional, and school documents, materials, policies, and practices, the PoP will be defined as adaptive and the shifts necessary to engage with adaptive challenges

will be used to examine change readiness (Heifetz et al., 2009).

Chapter 1 will also introduce the conceptual framework of disability studies in education (DSE) that reveals underlying beliefs and practices that contribute to the PoP and defines the adaptive and systemic elements that frame the development of this OIP. A fundamental objective of DSE is to promote an understanding of disability from a social model perspective that runs counter to the medical model lens that is often used in educational practice (Valle & Connor, 2019). The distinguishing feature between the social and medical model is that the medical model positions disability as being solely within a person while the social model recognizes that disability occurs at the intersection of a person and the environment, including the social, political, and historical context (Valle & Connor, 2019). In education this reveals a need to focus proactively on instructional approaches, relationships, and environmental factors rather than just on "fixing" a student to fit into what already exists. Based on an analysis of the problem through the DSE lens, universal design for learning (UDL) is introduced as a framework to target in supporting the inclusive vision of the OIP.

Chapter 2 will align leadership approaches with the PoP and context, present an analysis of the organization as it is now, introduce a framework for leading change, and discuss possible solutions and ethical considerations for the PoP. The grounding principles, tools, and tactics of inclusive (Ryan, 2006a; Rayner, 2007) and adaptive (Heifetz et al., 2009) leadership are used to outline a leadership approach that aims to build a collective culture of adaptability, learning, and critical consciousness through the change process. This culture-shifting aim is then used to guide the selection of a framework for change, complete a critical analysis of SCSD, and to explore possible solutions to the PoP. Given that universal design for learning is being targeted as a practice to implement to address the PoP, implementation science's formula for success and active implementation frameworks are combined to create the change framework (Duda and Wilson, 2018). This framework focuses the change work not only on the implementation of UDL but also on changing organizational structures and policies to better support implementation.

After extensive work to prepare for implementation, the implementation process engages the continuous learning cycles that are a hallmark of developing a learning culture (Fixsen et al., 2019). The chapter concludes by examining a range of foci for these continuous learning cycles and presenting an argument for creating a flexible framework that allows schools and teachers to engage in UDL-driven inquiries responsive to their own context.

The final chapter outlines the stages of the proposed change plan, monitoring and evaluation processes, and communication considerations. The change path is guided by five research-informed active implementation frameworks (AIFs) that provide the structure to clearly define the aim of the change and then engage data and feedback loops at all levels of the system to support the change (Fixsen et al., 2019). The plan outlined begins with the engagement of a division implementation team (DIT) to first explore and foster change readiness and then once general change readiness is achieved to focus more specifically on system readiness for implementation. A critical activity at this stage is that of generating an operational definition of UDL that will be used as a fidelity check throughout the process. Smith et al.'s (2018) essential components of UDL are used to frame this definition. As the process moves into implementation, school implementation teams (SITs) are engaged to support the school or teacher directed continuous learning cycles.

This OIP is grounded in a belief that inclusive curriculum practices, when deeply understood and properly cultivated, enhance both student and professional engagement and growth. In curriculum that is inclusive, active, and responsive to learner variability, students come to understand themselves and others better and develop the cognitive and social skills that support school and life success (Meyer et al., 2016). Flexible and responsive approaches in the classroom also better ensure that a student is never limited or stigmatized by deficit or fixed ability thinking (Hart et al., 2004). Finally, for educators, learner diversity presents the opportunity to enhance and expand their craft knowledge through collaboration, creative problem solving, and thoughtful experimentation.

Dedication

I dedicate this OIP, and my future practice, to the students who do not fit into education and society's current conceptualization of "normal" and the families, educators, and allies who envision, advocate, and act in solidarity with them toward policies and practices that include and support every student to thrive in all aspects of school and life free from any threat of stigmatization or othering.

Acknowledgments

Although my doctorate journey began only three years ago, the journey that drove this OIP began almost 30 years ago in the first professional development session I attended as a very enthusiastic and idealistic beginning teacher. I do not remember what the focus of the professional development session was, but I do remember that the presenter opened the day by playing the song “Flowers are Red” by Harry Chapin. I remember vividly the visceral response I had and how I walked away from that workshop praying that I would never be the one responsible for stifling a child’s uniqueness. A career full of experiences later has led me to doctorate work focused on learning environments that embrace diversity rather than homogeneity. So, I start by acknowledging the collective contribution of all those I have worked with and learned from through the years who have shaped my thinking and therefore shaped what is in this document.

In the more immediate time and environment of completing this degree I would like to thank first my son. COVID lock downs made this journey even more challenging than what it would have been for both of us. I appreciate your patience and resilience as we figured out how to balance it all. You’re a superstar and I’m looking forward to better life balance and our adventures beyond this degree and these lock downs.

To the faculty of Western University that taught, mentored, and supported me through this journey and to the members of our 2018 k-12 cohort from whom I learned so much. A special thank-you to Dr. MacKinnon for your insight and direction as we journeyed through the final year. I am deeply appreciative for all I have learned through this experience.

And finally, to my family and friends who provided me with support and encouragement, helped in times when balancing it all became a challenge, or engaged in conversations with me about my research and writing when I just had to talk it through. Words can’t express how blessed I am to have you all in my life. Thank you for keeping me going, each in your own unique way, and for believing in my ability to do this.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Acronyms

AIF (Active Implementation Framework)

CAST (Center of Applied Special Technology)

CPC (Collaborative Planning Circle)

DIT (Division Implementation Team)

DSE (Disability Studies in Education)

ELL (English Language Learners)

FMNI (First Nation, Metis, and Inuit)

ISP (Individual Support Plan)

MTSS (Multi-Tiered System of Supports)

NIRN (National Implementation Research Network)

OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)

PD (Professional Development)

PoP (Problem of Practice)

RtI (Response to Intervention)

SCSD (Sursum Corda School Division)

SIT (School Implementation Team)

SLII (Situation Leadership II)

UDL (Universal Design for Learning)

UDL-IRN (Universal Design for Learning Implementation Research Network)

Chapter 1: Introduction and Problem

Curriculum, consisting of a range of formal, informal, and hidden elements, offers insight into the conscious and unconscious values and beliefs of an educational organization (English, 2010). Important to this improvement plan is an understanding that in classrooms inclusion and exclusion happens within the interpretation, design, and delivery of curriculum. The problem of practice (PoP) being examined is situated in a small Catholic school division in Alberta in which all students are physically included in general education classrooms. In attempts to meet the diverse learning needs in these classrooms, there is an over reliance on retrofitted practices and structures that can unknowingly disempower, limit, or exclude (Boalar, 2019; Hart et al., 2004). Without critical analysis of the structures and mental models that drive these practices, it is challenging for administrators and educators to be motivated toward designing curriculum to be responsive to, and inclusive of, the range of diversity present in division classrooms. This chapter will examine the division's history of special and inclusive education, its current beliefs and practices, and its readiness for continued evolution. As well, the author will use a disability studies in education (DSE) lens to frame the PoP, the envisioned future state, and her leadership position and beliefs.

Organizational Context

This organizational improvement plan (OIP) emerges at the intersection of beliefs, understandings, and the history of special and inclusive education and the organizational context of Sursum Corda School Division (SCSD). Addressing this PoP requires first an understanding of the factors that shape it, including an understanding of the division and the historical and current beliefs, practices, and structures for supporting learner variability within it. This section will introduce SCSD and a range of factors that influence supporting its diverse learners.

Sursum Corda School Division

SCSD is a small Catholic school division in Alberta educating approximately 2600 students in nine schools within a single city. The division boasts high academic achievement and graduation rates, winning athletic teams, and a range of curricular and extracurricular

opportunities for students to pursue personal and career interests. The vision, mission, and values emphasize Catholicity, high-quality education, and partnership with family, Church, and community. Principles of practice expand upon these, highlighting equality of opportunity, Catholic traditions, educating the whole child, and supporting students and staff to reach individual and collective potential. In line with the mandated provincial quality assurance framework (Alberta Education, 2021a), locally elected board members and central administration engage parents, students, and staff each year in the process of setting annual strategic priorities. Current priorities include Catholicity, the well-being of staff and students, and quality teaching and learning practices.

Catholicity serves as the foundation for SCSD. The division prioritizes and communicates relationship with family and Church as well as living and developing faith for all stakeholders. Educational staff aim to permeate Catholic teachings in all they do, challenging themselves and their students to evaluate curriculum and their interactions through the lens of Catholic values (Halstead, 2014; Gleeson, 2015). In line with social teachings of the Catholic church, SCSD values charity and social justice (Ave Maria Press, 2015) and demonstrates this primarily through collections and acts of service at all stakeholder levels. Catholic education is rooted in a holistic vision of the student, acknowledging curriculum as being about more than just academic achievement (Patriarca & Valentini, 2020; Gleeson, 2015), resulting in SCSD staff committing to supporting and valuing student growth in multiple domains.

In the province of Alberta neoliberalism has played a dominant role in shaping educational policies that promote market-based reforms including standardization, accountability, provincial testing, and data-driven decision-making (Sharma & Sandford, 2018). To this end, the provincial Ministry of Education engages in, and appears to be driven by, data collection and reporting processes with a focus on accountability, improvement, and most recently “assurance”. Data is collected through annual surveys, provincial standardized testing for Grades 6, 9, and 12 students, high school completion rates, and assurance reporting that

includes locally developed measures. The data is collated into categories focused on perception of safety, academic achievement, learning opportunities, preparation for adult life, parental involvement, and continuous improvement and is reported to both school divisions and the public. An underlying belief associated with standardization and accountability processes is that there exist a standard set of practices and interventions that can be carried out in any situation irrespective of context that will ensure improvement (Portelli & Oladi, 2018). In practice, this translates to one-size-fits all approaches to classroom learning and intervention programs. In SCSD this influence is evident in the traditional, one-size-fits-all approaches in subject areas that require provincial achievement testing. More exploratory and individualized approaches are used in teaching other courses. Schools in SCSD generally offer a range of robust options for students to develop their individual interests and strengths parallel to the traditional teaching and learning practices in core subject areas. The engaging options and strong academic core are presented as two distinct components of the strong programming offered in the division.

The organizational structure of SCSD reflects a traditional hierarchical approach with central administration divided into Human Resources, Learning Services, and Business Services. Although the ultimate responsibility for all students lies with the superintendent, responsibility for central office departments, schools, and students is distributed to division and school administrators. Leadership practices in SCSD tend to be rooted in tradition, relationship, and service and are generally responsive to individuals and situations. The leadership style that would best reflect what is seen across the division is situational leadership (SLII). This leadership style appears to occur more as a situational response than a collective and conscious decision. Within the SLII framework, the leader enacts different levels of support and directive to either delegate, support, coach, or direct in response to the leader's perceived level of the follower's competence and commitment (Blanchard, 2008). Therefore, the enactment of division and school initiatives depends heavily on how leaders interpret and define the followers, the goal, and the competencies required to meet that goal. A factor in need of

consideration with this leadership style is SCSD's high level of staff retention. Many of those employed by SCSD, including its formal leaders, have worked their entire careers in the division. The use of a leadership style that begins first with the leader's perception of competence and commitment in a system that sees little fluctuation in staff strongly reinforces its institutional and traditional norms. Within any context, but particularly within a context with high levels of tradition and stability, norms become truths and those who threaten to destabilize them are generally resisted. Therefore, change that occurs within SCSD is cautious, slow, and adaptive.

Learning Services

The Learning Services department of SCSD is committed to an inclusive approach that aims to address the academic, wellbeing, and identity related challenges that students experience in the educational setting through a continuum of supports and services model. This model draws from both response to intervention (RtI) and a multi-tiered system of supports and services (MTSS) approaches (Fisher & Frey, 2010; Buffum et al., 2009). The aim of this model is to both support individual students and to increase the inclusive capacity of schools and classrooms through the implementation of universal, targeted, and individual strategies, supports, and interventions (Alberta Education, 2021b). An associate superintendent oversees the department that includes a coordinator of early learning, a divisional inclusive learning consultant (the writer's role), part-time categorical lead teachers that support English as a second language and Indigenous students, part-time facilitating teachers at middle and high schools, and administrators taking on facilitation responsibility in elementary schools. In addition, the department employs a range of mental health support workers and educational assistants and contracts consultative therapists and specialists. A learning service advisory committee consisting of administrators and learning services staff meets several times a year to discuss challenges, provide input and ideas into actions and structures, and ensure understanding and co-ordination of work being done under the umbrella of the department. These advisory members act as a communication bridge between central office and division classrooms to ensure that work is relevant and responsive to school and classroom needs.

Supporting Learner Variability

In 2011, after an extensive review of special education in the province, the Ministry of Education in Alberta acknowledged the inequities in current educational approaches and committed to moving toward a single inclusive education system, expanding its scope of focus to encompass all students rather than just those with "special needs" (Alberta Education, 2011). At the same time SCSD was engaged in an internal program review and a provincially driven regional service delivery pilot project that contributed, along with provincial direction toward inclusive education, to the division's decision to eliminate its congregated programs. Over a three-year period, all students who were receiving an education in congregated settings were integrated into general education classrooms. In the following years, through a capacity building lens, work has been done across the division to understand and develop a continuum of inclusive supports and services. Some significant successes have been realized with this model, but as with any change process, there are also areas that need continued focus. Important to understanding this PoP is the following analysis of how learner variability is currently situated and perceived politically, economically, socially, and structurally within SCSD and beyond.

In 2017, Williamson & Gilham analysed the inclusive education reform work that has been done in Alberta since 2008 and troubled the contradictory policies and documentation related specifically to students with provincially mandated special education designations. On the one hand they present documentation and policy that seems to create barriers to full inclusion for students with disabilities including the provision for segregated placement based on disability in the province's definition of inclusive education (Alberta Education, 2021b), support materials that focus on deficits and place pre-defined limits on student trajectories (Alberta Education, 2021c; Alberta Education 2021d; Alberta Education 2021e), and the continuation of special education standards as separate from the introduced inclusive education policy (Williamson & Gilham, 2017). Contrasting these materials that appear to define inclusive education in ways aligned with traditional special education approaches are inclusive education

principles of practice (Alberta Education, 2021b) and an indicators of inclusive schools document (Alberta Education, 2013) that present a picture aligned with more current inclusive education definitions and research. These principles and indicators focus on student strengths, reducing barriers to participation and learning, collaborative practices, and capacity building (Williamson & Gilham, 2017; Alberta Education, 2013). The most significant challenge associated with these conflicting provincial messages is that there exists no documentation including a clear definition and metrics of what inclusive education is in Alberta. As a result, there is a large range of approaches to meeting the diverse educational needs of students across the province. Although all students are physically included in general education classrooms in SCSD this lack of clarity in what that means also results in a significant range of approaches in how schools and classrooms support these students, creating a lack of educational and social continuity for some students.

Economically school divisions in Alberta receive a base education grant for each enrolled student. In addition to this money, are pooled grants for specialized supports, preschool learning, English as a second language, refuge, and Indigenous students (Alberta Education, 2021a). Divisions distribute this money in ways that are responsive to their profile and priorities. The Learning Services Department of SCSD conducts a divisional review each spring with each school submitting documentation outlining specific students and their support and resource needs for the following year. The aim of this review is to inform resource distribution and to ensure that each student's special education designation aligns with provincial guidelines (Alberta Education, 2021f). This is followed by consultation meetings resulting in decisions on resource distribution, which consists primarily of learning assistant support time. Although it is messaged differently, the focus on coding and individual students in this process creates the perception that learning assistants are assigned to specific students. In practice and combined with the division being in the early stages of including all students with disabilities in general

education classrooms this results to varying degrees in the belief by educational staff and parents that the learning assistant is responsible for that specific student.

Over the past several years during this process, administrators and teachers have been seeking out increased learning assistant time in the hopes of relieving pressures associated with perceived increases in class sizes and academic and behavioural diversity in classrooms. During these years, the number of students with special education designations and the total amount of learning assistant time within the division has remained relatively stable while class sizes have increased in response to managing decreased provincial funding. Giangreco et al., (2014) outlines how a learning assistant model like the one that SCSD is currently employing allows schools to include students with disabilities without significantly changing traditional special and general education practices. This is what has happened in SCSD in the years since disbanding congregated classrooms. Although classrooms for students with special education designations no longer exist, the special education beliefs and practices of those classrooms are still reflected in how students are supported and educated. Giangreco et al., (2014) cautions the detrimental effects of an inclusive model reliant on learning assistants to uphold traditional special education structures including interference with the student-teacher relationship, lower quality curriculum and instruction, social separation from and for peers, the development of learned helplessness, and in situations where students need personal care assistance, challenges with gender identity. The current special education lens and the perceived success of the students whose education is supported primarily by learning assistants limits the ability and motivation to imagine other ways of supporting learning variability in classrooms.

Socially, according to a 2015 study on the state of inclusion in Alberta, teachers feel challenged by the increasing proportion of students in classrooms they see as having exceptional needs (Alberta Teacher's Association, 2015). Teachers across the province who participated in this study reported "on average, 25 percent of students across all grade levels, and as many as 44 percent in the early years, required a high level of learning support or modification" (Alberta

Teacher's Association, 2015, p. 13). Although the number of students identified as having special education needs through the coding process has not changed significantly in SCSD in recent years, current teacher concerns related to increased level of challenge and diversity mirror those of the 2015 province-wide survey. Disrupted education because of COVID19 during the past two school years appears to be further contributing to these concerns and challenges.

Structurally, despite an espoused shift to inclusive education, the division continues to rely heavily on special education structures and beliefs to serve its diverse learners. The field of special education has traditionally focused on diagnosing deficits that exist within a student and then providing and measuring progress through prescriptive interventions or separate programs altogether (Skrtic, 1991). The division's continuum of supports and services model consists of universal, targeted, and specialized tiers. Important to how a support and services continuum is enacted is how it is interpreted. In SCSD, despite an initial intention to focus the continuum on proactively addressing barriers through universal practices and then progressively adding on supports and scaffolds, the continuum is engaged in a way that almost exclusively focuses on traditional resource and ability-grouping approaches. The focus of intervention in the targeted and specialized levels are enacted separate from the universal level rather than in a way that supplements it. This does not align with research on enacting continuum or leveled models for supporting learning variability that consistently emphasize the importance of there being explicit and strong connection between the targeted and specialized levels to universal level practices (Fisher & Frey, 2010; Buffman et al., 2009).

Leadership Position and Lens Statement

I work within the Learning Services Department of SCSD as a divisional consultant, providing both short and long-term support for the inclusion of students in kindergarten through grade 12 who present schools and classrooms with multiple, and often complex, academic, medical and/or behavioural challenges. My responsibilities include conducting assessments and observations, generating understanding of a student's profile, working directly with teachers,

learning assistants, and parents in planning and implementing goals, strategies, and supports, collaborating and coordinating with team members, delivering professional development sessions, connecting parents to community support, and supporting the development and implementation of education, transition, regulation, safety, and medical plans. In addition to focusing on the inclusion of individual students, I support school-based administrators with learning service-related problem solving and procedures and consult regularly with the associate superintendent of the learning service department offering "from the ground" input and suggestions on presenting issues, procedures, planning, and resourcing.

I moved into the original version of this position from teaching a self-contained classroom for grade 1 through 12 students "with complex learning needs" when the division shifted to including all students in general education classrooms approximately ten years ago. The position focused initially on only those students who had been in my classroom but through the years has expanded to involve consulting on inclusive education more broadly. This role now positions me to be continually engaging with all levels of stakeholders to advocate, support, and collaborate toward more inclusive practices. The experience of the last years in this position have shaped my belief of leadership as an emergent and collective process. I subscribe to Leithwood's (2012) definition of leadership as "the exercise of influence on organizational members and diverse stakeholders toward the identification and achievement of the organizations vision and goals" (p. 3). Further, I believe that leadership can and should be enacted by more than just those who hold positions of formal authority. As an informal leader, my agency in this improvement plan must be exercised through relationships with a range of stakeholders including division and school administration, school staff, parents, and community partners. Informal leaders tend to have different interactions and networks than those in formal leadership roles (Pan et al., 2018). Thus, when formal and informal leaders work in partnership on change initiatives it creates the opportunity to effect change through a wider range of networks and interaction approaches. Collaborating with stakeholders at all levels of a system is particularly important when targeting systemic change like

that which will be presented in this OIP.

The work that I do has resulted in the weaving together of my philosophy for education and leadership. I believe the learning of every student should be at the center of what we do in education. To achieve this requires consideration of equal access to learning for all students. My leadership, grounded in an overriding principle of human and community potential and the values of inclusion and social justice, is motivated by a vision of an education system that benefits and celebrates all students equally. My work and research reveal not only the barriers but also the lack of enablers that currently exist to achieving this. Inclusive and adaptive leadership theories reflect the beliefs and strategic actions that I feel would serve to build the needed collective power to move toward a long-term goal of changing practices, structures, policies, and thinking to facilitate equitable access to learning for all students.

Inclusive Leadership: Enacting Social Justice

Inclusive education cannot be separated from social justice (Sapon-Shevin, 2003). Special education, and its associated laws, were originally designed to address the social justice issue of ensuring those with disabilities could get an education (Wehmeyer, 2013). Yet, "despite good intentions embedded within protective law, the experiences of and outcomes for students with disabilities signal a need for change" (Connor & Gabel, 2013, p. 114). In recent years there has been growing concern that traditional special education practices are reinforcing and perpetuating some of the challenges it was meant to address through the process of "othering" students (Spencer-Iiams & Flosi, 2021). In the work that I do, I have seen that what educators believe about students impacts both what students are able to demonstrate and what learning, social, and independence opportunities they are afforded. As a consultant in a small division, I witness students in a range of settings through the course of their education. Not only do their academic abilities appear to change based on setting but also their social abilities and their level of independence and autonomy. Of concern is the cyclical nature of perceptions driving the opportunities afforded and the impact of lack of opportunity on growth and development. Through a social justice lens, this

requires an understanding of the larger social, political, and historical elements that may be contributing.

Inclusive leadership provides a lens for those who recognize social injustices to act (Ryan, 2006a). There are a range of definitions of inclusive leadership. In the context of this OIP, the works of James Ryan and Steve Rayner will be used in defining inclusive leadership as each focuses specifically on the development of inclusive education. Ryan (2006a) sees the work of inclusive leadership as the development of critical consciousness to motivate intentional steps to break down barriers for students most at risk of exclusion. Practices of his interpretation of inclusive leadership include "educating participants, nurturing dialogue, emphasizing student learning and classroom practice, adopting inclusive decision and policy making strategies, and incorporating whole school approaches" (Ryan, 2006b, p. 9). Rayner (2009) takes a more pragmatic approach in his work, focusing on the professional learning practices that contribute to advancing inclusive classroom practice. He breaks the work of inclusive leadership into knowledge acquisition and management, the relational work of evolving praxis, and the operational elements necessary to achieve that goal. Rayner's work, concerned with developing and supporting learning communities at all levels of an organization, focuses on critically inclusive praxis, aiming to move theory to practice. This reflects the type of collective leadership work that I see as necessary to my current role in SCSD and the vision of this OIP. The work of Ryan and Raynor supplement each other well as Ryan's work focuses more strongly on the critical consciousness that motivates Raynor's work focused on praxis.

Adaptive Leadership: Addressing Complex Problems

Adaptive leadership defines leadership as the practice of building capacity to tackle adaptive challenges. Adaptive challenges, contrasted with technical challenges that can be solved with current resources and knowledge, are those that can only be addressed by collaboratively developing new approaches (Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive change is uncomfortable as it often involves challenging ingrained beliefs, requiring adaptive leaders to be able to anticipate and counter the responses related to this discomfort (Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive leadership focuses

on practices that "mobilize, motivate, organize, orient, and focus the attention of others" (Northouse, 2019, p. 258) through iterative and incremental cycles of awareness and action on self and the system (Heifetz et al., 2009). One of the distinguishing features of adaptive leadership is that it "requires the stakeholders themselves to determine and implement the solution" (Squires, 2015). Thus, the solution will align well with the specific context of the adaptive problem. As such, adaptive leadership does not always involve large scale transformation and masses of people. Instead, it focuses on the human side of change grounded in relationships and providing opportunities for personalized coaching, mentoring, training, and feedback (Arthur-Mensah & Zimmerman, 2017). Change happens through developing, implementing, assessing, and integrating "next" practices. Adaptive leadership relies on networking, collaboration, relationships, and requires structures and a culture that enable diverse stakeholders to collaborate. Adaptive leadership aligns well with the consultant role and the research that emphasizes the importance of social learning in achieving authentic inclusion (Florian, 2014; Ainscow et al., 2005).

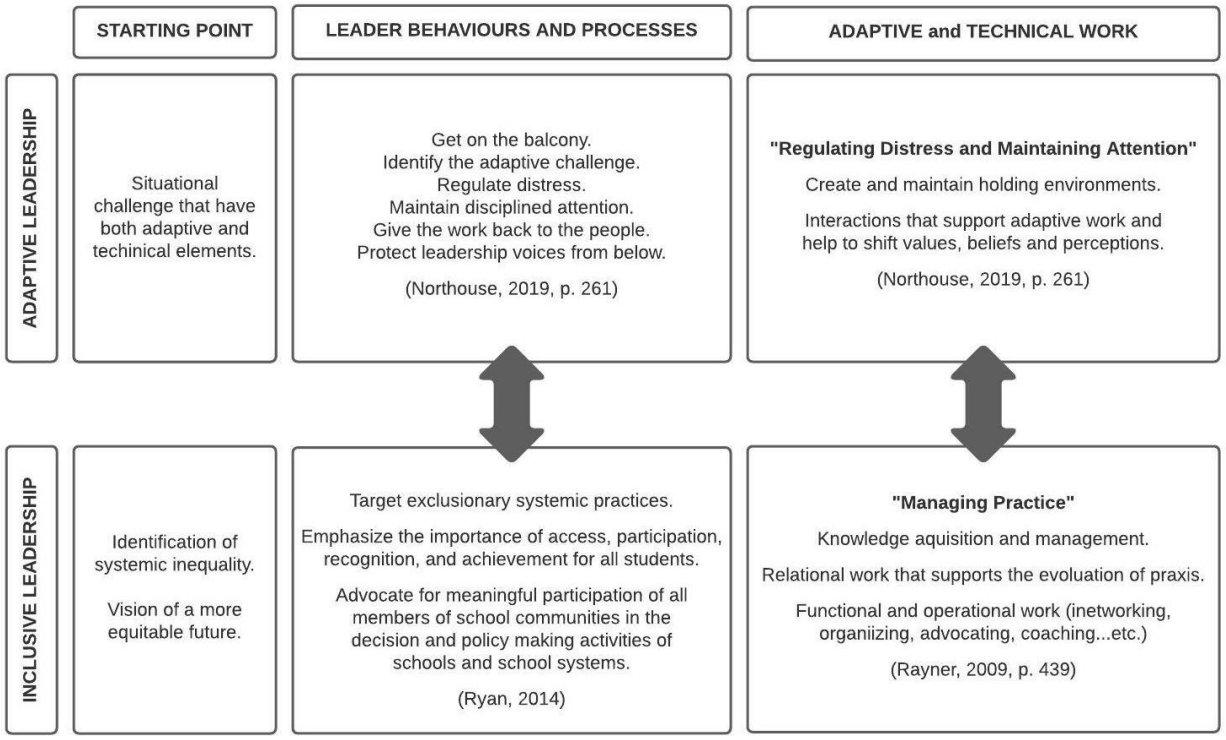
Pairing Adaptive and Inclusive Leadership

Adaptive work requires changing values, beliefs, or behaviours. Heifetz (1994) states that "ongoing adaptive capacity requires a rich and evolving mix of values to inform a society's process of reality testing. It requires leadership to fire and contain the forces of invention and change, and to extract the next step" (p. 34). This is essential in doing the social justice work of interrupting oppressive and limiting structures required in Ryan's (2006a) conceptualization of inclusive leadership which motivates the more pragmatic inclusive leadership work outlined by Rayner (2009). Figure 1 outlines the behaviour, processes, and work of both inclusive and adaptive leadership and how they complement each other. As mentioned previously and key to social justice action, adaptive leadership shifts the responsibility of change from those in authority to the stakeholders who are directly involved by "giving the work back to the people" (Heifetz et al., 2009). Inclusive leadership, in turn, provides clarity to what that work is in the context of working toward inclusive education. The holding environment in the adaptive leadership framework

provides a supportive structure for the stakeholder struggle that is often a part of inclusive change. The inclusive frameworks of Ryan and Rayner provide direction on what to change. Ryan (2013) specially defines inclusion with metrics of access, participation, recognition and achievement and Rayner (2009) provides a list of the specific work required to develop the learning organization necessary to enact inclusive education.

Figure 1

Pairing Adaptive and Inclusive Leadership



Note. The leadership descriptions in this figure are summarized from the work of Northouse (2019), Ryan (2014) and Rayner (2009).

Adaptive and inclusive leadership serve as a guidepost for the work that I currently do in supporting inclusive practices in SCSD. The evolution of my position within SCSD has involved moving from working solely with individual situations to becoming more involved and connected to the larger system level. Inclusive education is both an individual and system-level challenge. The system level, if it can be impacted, would take a significant amount of time to change. Therefore, there is an ongoing need to act in allyship to those who may currently be excluded or impacted

negatively by the system. Importantly, my experiences have shown me that there are situations in which this individual work can impact elements of the system. Both inclusive and adaptive leadership create space and direction to do the individual and system level work required to support the evolution of inclusive education. Additionally, the combination of the two reveals to myself and the organization the management tasks, including knowledge mobilization, advocacy, and movement building, needed to enact the leadership involved in this OIP.

Leadership Problem of Practice

Important to this PoP is understanding the difference between integration and inclusion. When a student with disabilities is integrated into a classroom, they learn alongside their peers without disabilities in generally unchanged classroom practices (Opertii et al., 2014). Extra supports and strategies are used to help the student adapt to a basically unchanged curriculum. When this is not easily accomplished, separate educational programming is developed to be delivered either within the classroom or through pull-out services. The goal of integration is for students with disabilities to socially be a part of the class (Opertti et al., 2014). Current SCSD teaching beliefs and practices generally align with an integrative approach, aiming to incrementally add on parallel supports and services when a student is unable to function within current classroom practices. In contrast, inclusion is grounded in the belief that all students will learn differently and should have full access to participate and learn within a common curriculum (Ainscow & Sandill, 2010). Students with disabilities are not expected to adjust to fixed curricular practice. Rather the curriculum is designed to be responsive and flexible so that all students have access and can engage in learning together, resulting in students being included socially and academically (Meyer et al., 2016; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004). In these classrooms, extra resources, supports, and strategies are focused on supporting access, engagement, and learning progress within a common curriculum.

As mentioned previously, to support a shift from integrative to inclusive practices, the learning services department of SCSD has focused for several years on developing and

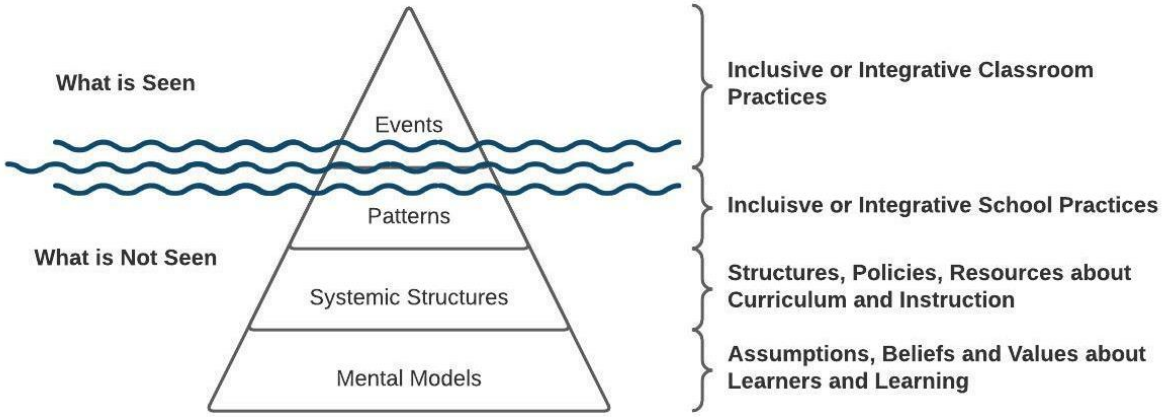
implementing an inclusive continuum of supports and services model. A key principle of this model is that all students should be engaged in accessible and universally designed classroom instruction before more targeted or specialized measures are taken (Fisher & Frey, 2010). Without implementing inclusive universal level instruction, students can be prematurely labeled, potentially resulting in lowered expectations, reduced learning and social opportunities, and an increased level of segregation (Hart et al., 2004). In addition, without a solid base of responsive instructional practices at the universal level, interventions, supports, and services at the targeted and individualized level are less effective because they stand alone rather than supplement practice on other levels of the continuum (Buffman et al., 2012). The PoP being addressed in this OIP is that divisional curriculum practices and the structures, resources, and policies that support them do not consistently reflect the responsive and inclusive approaches that are necessary to optimize student growth and success within the continuum of supports and services model the division has adopted.

That a shift from integrative to inclusive practices has not occurred in response to the often-noted growing range of learner diversity or the inclusive work done to date reveals a need to better understand what barriers to enacting inclusive curriculum practices exist. Senge (2006) proposes that failure to adopt new practice may be a result of people not being able to imagine different approaches due to unexamined mental models of the way things should be. His systems iceberg model provides a representation of how systemic structures are developed and maintained because of mental models and how those structures, in turn, impact practice (see Figure 2). Surfacing and examining the mental models that drive decisions to resource and enact integrative or inclusive practices will increase understanding of this PoP. Disability studies in education (DSE), a field of academic study that critically examines the intersection of disability and education, offers insight into the mental models and practices engrained in the history of a duo-track general and special education system that may be contributing to the tendency to enact integrative rather than

inclusive practices. These mental models and their impact on curriculum practices will be introduced and examined in the following section.

Figure 2

Integrative and Inclusive Practices and the Systems Iceberg Model



Note. This figure is adapted from *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* by P.M. Senge, 2006. Currency.

Framing the Problem of Practice

DSE defines inclusion as "a fundamental philosophy about how we perceive and respond to human difference" (Valle & Connor, 2019, p. xiii). It aims to challenge the belief that the general education curriculum can meet only the needs of a select segment of students. The work of DSE scholars contribute to the conceptual framework for this OIP because their aim is to figure out how to make education work inclusively for all students. This section will examine key tenets of DSE and how they impact the conceptualization of curriculum as either integrative or inclusive.

The Social Model of Disability

A fundamental objective of DSE is to promote an understanding of disability from a social model perspective that runs counter to the medical model lens that is often used in educational practice (Valle & Connor, 2019). The distinguishing feature between the social and medical model is that the medical model positions disability as being solely within a person while the social model recognizes that disability occurs at the intersection of a person and the environment, including the

social, political, and historical context (Valle & Connor, 2019). Table 1 presents Reiser's (2001) seminal comparison of the two models reflecting practices aligned with integrative and inclusive curricular approaches, respectively. Rather than considering these as reflections of right and wrong practice, these models reflect current disability-related tensions and concerns related to the medicalization of disability and the privileging of professional voice over disability voice (Baglieri & Sharpio, 2017). The use of these models does not negate necessary medical or therapy intervention. It challenges how it is conceptualized. The social model challenges the conceptualization of impairment as a justification for exclusion. Rather than acting on the person with the disability, the focus becomes first on identifying the physical, social, and political barriers within the environment and then on acting on them to ensure that all people can access, progress, and achieve within it. The social and medical model of disability highlight a key distinction of integrative approaches targeting the student while inclusive approaches target the environment and the curriculum.

Table 1

Comparing the Medical and Social Models of Disability

Medical Model	Social Model
• child is faulty	• child is valued
• diagnosis	• strengths and needs defined by self and others
• labeling	• identify barriers and develop solutions
• impairment becomes focus of attention	• outcomes-based programs designed
• assessment, monitoring	• resources made available
• segregation and alternative services	• training for parents and professionals
• ordinary needs put on hold	• relationships nurtured
• re-entry if "normal" enough or permanent exclusion	• diversity welcomed, child is welcomed
• society remains unchanged	• society evolves

Note. This table is adapted from Reiser, R. (2001). Count me in, Inclusion Now, 1(Spring), 8-9

Expanding Notions of Normalcy

DSE challenges the hegemony of normal (Valle & Connor, 2019). The quest for normal, or above normal, shapes much of the work done in education. The Gaussian normal distribution, bell-shaped curve has traditionally been used to measure both achievement and ability in education (Dudley-Marling & Gurn, 2010). This curve was initially validated as a statistical measurement tool for measuring the distribution of random events. Although its application to humans has been

heavily questioned (Dudley-Marling and Gurn, 2010), it is commonly used in education to promote the idea that in any group of students most will be average with a few falling into the above and below average ranges (Fendler & Muzaffar, 2008). Concepts of "disability", "special needs", and "learning difficulties" are constructed from the idea that there is a normal way and speed of learning. (Baglieri et al., 2011). This belief justifies curriculum that is designed and delivered to address the learning needs of those who sit within the "normal" range and the need for a parallel system for those outside that range (Florian, 2011). DSE scholars trouble research methods that include only those within this range of "normal" learners and the impact that has on the continued separation of special and general education (Baglieri & Sharpio, 2017). Shifting to inclusive practices requires shifting from seeing a dividing line between those who sit within and outside the range of "normal" toward seeing diversity as normal. It also requires disrupting the normative center of education by challenging the aim of creating the "normal child". The idea of disrupting the normative center expands inclusive education to focus on marginalized groups beyond just those with disabilities. When diversity is seen as the norm, a flexible curriculum that addresses the needs of range of diversity can be imagined. Level of flexibility is a second distinction between inclusive and integrative curriculum with an integrative curriculum being rigid and inclusive flexible.

Ability-Based Beliefs and Practices

Closely aligned with hegemony of normal and particularly relevant to the context of this PoP are the ability-based beliefs that can serve to reinforce integrative practices. The view of ability as inborn intelligence has deeply influenced education (Boalar, 2019; Hart et al., 2004). According to this view, "ability is seen as a genetic inheritance, a given amount of innate, general cognitive power distributed according to the normal patterns of variation of a naturally occurring phenomena" (Hart et al., 2004, p. 6). Ability labels reinforce the belief that the educational difficulties that students experience are a consequence of deficit that exists within either them or their family (Hart et al., 2004). Compounding this is the perception that the program of studies dictates exactly what learning should be delivered at a specific grade level (Lawrence-Brown &

Sapon-Shevin, 2014). Thus, deterministic thinking compounded with how standardization is interpreted disempowers educators, leaving them with the impression that they have little room to be creative and responsive with curriculum.

Equally concerning to the impact of deficit and deterministic thinking on teacher beliefs and practice is the impact on student perception of themselves. Hart et al. (2004) examined the research on the unintended effects of judgements of ability and ability-based practices. Key findings of this literature review include students learning to measure themselves against others early in their education, students equating their moral worth with their perceived ability, student self-evaluation related to their ability level having a long-term impact on their sense of personal worth, and students attempting to find ways of achieving the lost dignity through oppositional means. In 1990, Holt (as cited in Hart et al., 2004) examined the coping strategies that students employ to avoid looking stupid in front of others. These included dependency on teachers and peers, perfectionism, and constantly trying to please the teacher. These kinds of behaviours can inhibit independence, learning, and healthy psychological development. The growing awareness of the negative impact of deficit and deterministic thinking has resulted in a growing body of research into how to meet the educational needs of diverse students in inclusive classrooms without stigmatizing difference (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004; Rose & Meyer, 2002). These studies reflect a key difference between inclusive and integrative curriculum.

Improving the Lives of People with Disabilities

The goal of DSE is to generate understandings of disability that shift society and institutions toward social and political change and the improvement of the lives of people with disabilities (Pearson et al., 2016). The social model of disability emphasizes the student as an actor on their life and learning while the medical model sees the student as a recipient of professional actions and decisions (Brantlinger, 2005). Further, the language of “needs” can result in assigning passivity and helplessness to the student and to teachers perceiving that this alleviates them of the responsibility to educate the student (Dalkillic, 2020). Thomas and Loxley (2007) state that “difference and

identity are constructed in and through social relations. Whether difference is seen positively, as diversity, or negatively as deviance depends on the mindset of the person or group of people who observe the difference" (p. 93). The pedagogical decisions made by educators impact student voice, identity, and the acceptance of their unique ways of knowing and doing. When education privileges certain ways of knowing and doing it can result in limiting the view that a teacher has of a student. Further, and more concerning, it can also limit the view the student has of themselves (Iannacci, 2018). When a student is seen primarily through the lens of a disability label it creates a deficient identity. In addition, the classroom community loses the opportunity to experience diversity in ways of knowing, doing, and being (Iannacci, 2018). Schools and curriculum informed by DSE must not only reflect awareness of these concerns but also ensure students are in liberating positions to impact their environments to make it work for them.

Universal Design for Learning

The current conceptualization of inclusive education in SCSD is the education of students with disabilities in regular classroom settings with supports and accommodations that tend toward separate provision. Within this conceptualization are a standard list of accommodations that will be employed or attempted to support access to current curriculum practices. If a student is unable to adequately participate with these accommodations, supports are used to provide separate parallel learning. While this may be appropriate in some circumstances, the premise of this PoP is that the thinking behind the overreliance on this approach must be deconstructed. Scholars in the field of DSE aim to shift the focus away from attempts to fit students with disabilities into education designed for a mythical "norm" and toward designing curriculum that benefits all students equally (Valle & Connor, 2019). There exist several pedagogical approaches that align with this view of curriculum including inclusive pedagogy (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011), the transformability model (Hart et al., 2006), and universal design for learning (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Universal design for learning is the most extensively developed and researched of these models and thus will be explored in framing the difference between inclusive and integrative curriculum in this PoP.

Universal design for learning (UDL) recognizes the variability of all learners and focuses on clarifying goals in ways that ensure all students can make learning progress, teaching methods and materials that reduce barriers in the learning environment, and empowering students to own their learning (Rose & Meyer, 2002). UDL acknowledges the unfairness of integrative approaches that privilege one type of learner through an over reliance on having one discrete goal, one teaching approach, one set of learning materials, and one form of assessment. Rather than expecting students to adapt to an inflexible curriculum, UDL aims to design flexible curriculum and supports that better ensures access for everyone (Meyer et al., 2016). UDL also acknowledges that the barriers that are perceived to be faced only by students with disabilities are faced by other students to varying degrees, locating UDL as a general education, rather than special education framework. UDL opens possibilities for enhancing the learning of all students through an understanding that each student will benefit from mediating learning through personalized supports and scaffolds (Bray & McClaskey, 2017).

To define the operational difference more clearly between inclusive and integrative curriculum requires an understanding of what constitutes UDL in practice. Smith et al. (2018) propose three essential and non-negotiable components that must all be present for UDL-aligned instruction as goal clarity, recognizing and designing for variability, and expert learning for all. Clearly defining goals requires deconstruction of the standards outlined in the ministry-prescribed curriculum to ensure relevant and meaningful goals for the range of variability that exists in learners. A foundational component of UDL is that of separating the goal from the means to ensure access to learning through multiple pathways to achieving the goal (Rose & Meyer, 2002). Recognizing and designing for learner variability requires understanding of learner and class profiles so that learning can be flexibly and responsively designed (Meyer et al., 2016). Flexibility in instructional practices, instructional materials, the kinds of supports students have access to, and assessment practices must all be considered. The Center for Applied Technology (CAST) has designed a set of guidelines that outline practices that are designed to activate the three brain

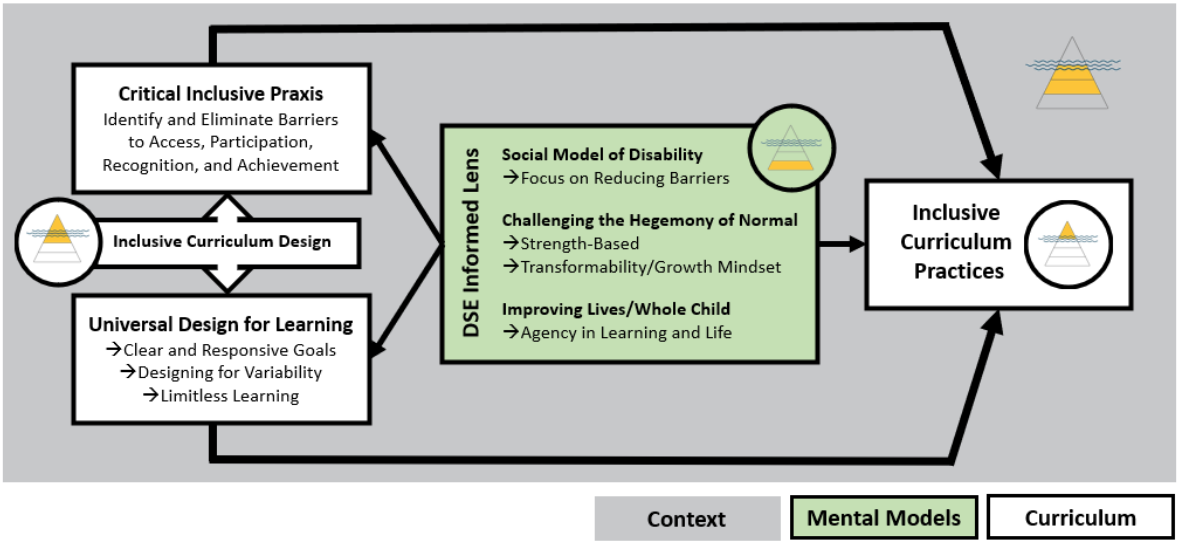
networks they outline as necessary for learning. These guidelines provide flexible means of engagement, representation, and expression to ensure that curriculum is responsive to how each brain is uniquely activated (CAST, 2021). The final component of expert learning for all emphasizes learning as an active process in which students have the awareness and agency to engage with the supports aligned with their personal learning profile and background to better ensure students are never limited in their learning.

Framework for Comparing Inclusive and Integrative Curriculum Practice

DSE scholars challenge a curriculum that is designed in ways that leave out entire groups of students (Valle & Connor, 2019). UDL proposes a framework to include all students in classroom learning. Referring to the iceberg model previously presented (see Figure 2), UDL reflects the envisioned curricular practices above the surface of the iceberg while the tenets of DSE reflect the mental models at the bottom of the iceberg. Senge (2006) proposes that these mental models impact the systemic structures and context of the PoP, which in turn impacts curriculum practices. Figure 3 graphically represents how DSE-aligned mental models inform UDL-aligned curriculum planning to result in the inclusive educational practices that align with the goal of this OIP. The mental models associated with DSE are located at the center of the context of the PoP impacting both the design of the curriculum represented on the left and delivery of curriculum on the right. Figure 4 provides a contrast of the same framework placing more traditional disability mental models at the center. The concern with making a dichotomous comparison such as this must be noted. The aim of this OIP is not to eliminate all practices associated with the medical model or special education. The gains that people with disabilities have made because of these structures cannot be negated (Wehmeyer, 2013). The now well-documented concerns of unknowingly stigmatizing, limiting, and excluding students when these practices are enacted requires consideration for ways to provide equivalent supports without locating difference as deficit. A DSE and UDL informed vision of inclusive curriculum aims to explore how curriculum can be designed and delivered to meet the needs of every student without limiting or stigmatizing anyone.

Figure 3

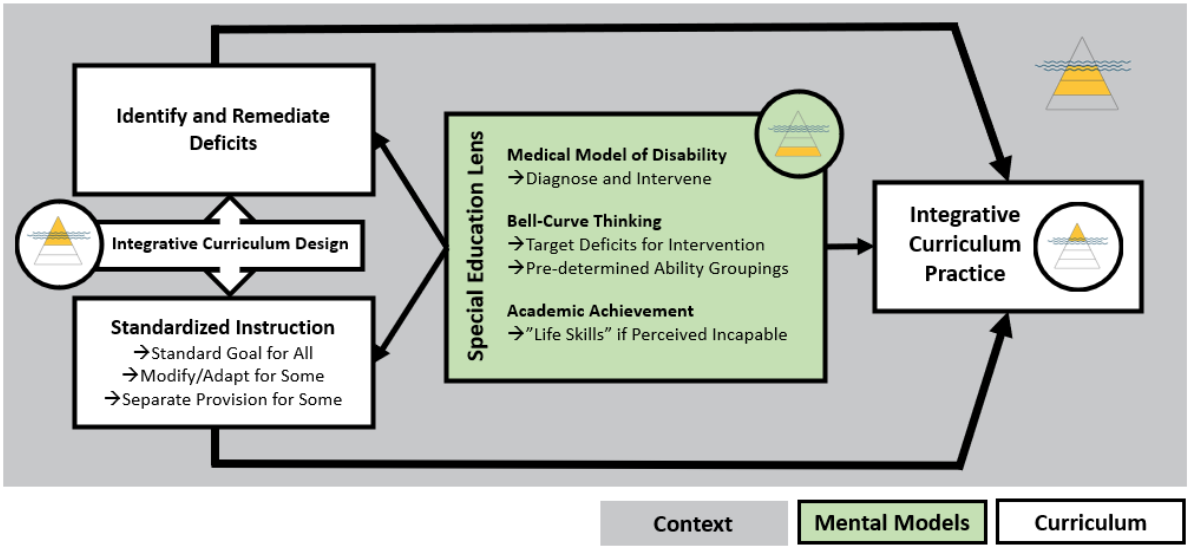
Inclusive Curriculum Practice Framework



Note. This figure displays the relationship between Senge's (2006) system iceberg model, DSE-informed elements of inclusive curriculum, and universal design for learning.

Figure 4

Integrative Curriculum Practice Framework



Note. This figure contrasts the inclusive elements in Figure 3 with elements aligned with an integrative approach.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

The shift from integrative to inclusive teaching and learning practices associated with this PoP requires consideration for how to shift teaching and learning practices across SCSD to UDL-aligned practices. The field of implementation science offers insight into effective practices for implementing an innovation like UDL. Fixsen et al. (2005) completed an extensive review of the research on managing these types of complex shifts and concluded that achieving intended outcomes requires attention not only to what the proposed innovation is but also to how it will be implemented and the context that it will be implemented within. Figure 5 introduces the formula for successful implementation that was developed through this research. Continued research on implementation using the elements in this formula revealed that the components are compounding, explaining the multiplication rather than addition signs (Duda & Wilson, 2018). It has also been demonstrated that all three of these components must be attended to at all levels of an organizational system to achieve the best outcomes (Fixsen et al., 2019). Below, the three components in the implementation science formula for success are used to frame the guiding questions associated with this PoP.

Figure 5

Implementation Science Formula for Success

Note. This figure is adapted from *Implementation Science 101: A Brief Overview* by M.A. Duda & B.A. Wilson. Perspectives on Language and Literacy (Fall 2018).

Effective Innovation

To achieve success in reaching the intended outcome of inclusive teaching and learning practices will require defining and applying an innovation. According to Fixsen et al. (2019), the innovation "must be articulated so that it is teachable, learnable, doable, and assessable in practice" (p. 70). According to the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) (2013), usable

interventions must include a clear description of the innovation and its essential functions, an operational definition, and a practical fidelity assessment. Inherent to a fidelity assessment is defining the intended outcomes. This level of clarity is necessary so that stakeholders at all levels will be able to make intentional decisions to support the implementation of the innovation. As mentioned previously, UDL provides a potential framework to support a shift from integrative to inclusive practices. Thus, the first questions that must be considered in developing this OIP are if and how UDL meets these four criteria, including defining desired student outcomes.

Effective Implementation Methods

Once an innovation is clearly defined, the next set of questions relate to what is needed to engage and sustain stakeholders in implementing that innovation (Fixsen et al., 2019). Considerations include who to engage, what processes and actions to focus on at what times, and what are the factors that will support effective implementation. Fixsen et al. (2019) have developed four active implementation frameworks that can be used at any level of a system to support implementation work. These frameworks are focused on implementation teams, stages, drivers, and improvement cycles. In the context of this OIP, these frameworks give insight to a second set of questions related to the implementation process that must be considered.

Enabling Context

As is evident from the experiences of trying to foster inclusive practices to this point in SCSD, when an innovation is put into place in a system "as is" it will most likely not get implemented with fidelity. Rather, it will be changed to fit into the current system. To achieve the envisioned change, it will be important not only to consider implementation methods but also how the existing system needs to change to support the innovation (Fixsen et al., 2019). All the elements under the surface of Senge's (2006) systems iceberg model (see Figure 2) represent factors that need to be considered in developing a context that supports the innovation. In keeping with Senge's systems thinking approach this will require consideration of both technical factors known as hard systems and human factors known as soft systems (Kirk, 1995). Particularly important to the soft

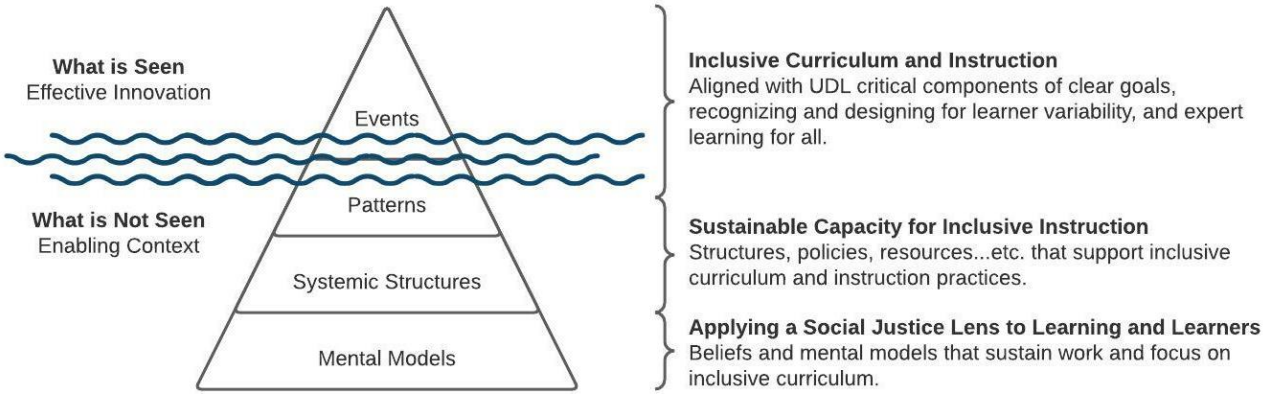
systems will be consideration of how fostering the mental models associated with DSE will enable the shift from integrative to inclusive practices.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The envisioned future state of this OIP is enhanced curricular inclusion, not through assimilation or normalization, but in ways that extend and enhance teaching and learning practices to be accessible and engaging to an increasing range of learners and avoid, as much as possible, the damaging impacts of deterministic and deficit thinking (Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004). As mentioned previously, achieving this requires not only targeting changes in pedagogical practices but also changes in the environment that support those practices and changes to the mental models that impact how environments are set up and practices are enacted. Over time, this OIP aims to impact all of these elements. Figure 6 visually connects the elements of the change vision to the iceberg previously introduced. In line with systems theory, there is continuous interaction and feedback between levels with components at any one level influencing components at all other levels (Senge, 2006). Thus, the vision for change is coherance between the components at each level to ensure fidelity and sustainabilty of the end state of this change.

Figure 6

Mapping Leadership-Focused Vision for Change onto the Systems Iceberg Model



Note: Adapted from *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* by P.M. Senge, 2006. Currency.

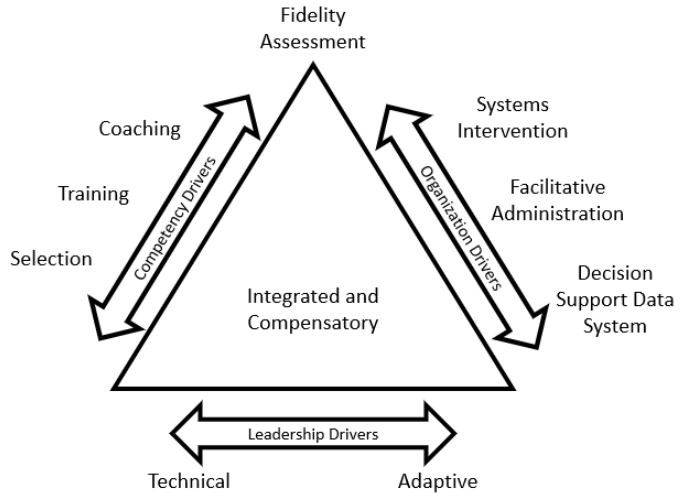
School divisions in Alberta are in the process of shifting from an accountability structure to an assurance framework structure. This framework blends accountability to the Department of Education with building public confidence in the education system. It aims to nurture a culture of continuous improvement through evidence-informed decision making, broad stakeholder engagement, and capacity building (Alberta Education, 2021a). Each spring, school divisions engage stakeholders to set strategic priorities for the upcoming year. A requirement in documentation for the assuarance framework using these strategic priorities is to demonstrate alignment and coherance across the division between goals, actions, and resources (CASS, 2020). At the time of writing this OIP, SCSD has just established inclusive teaching and learning as one of its strategic priorities for the upcoming school year. The associated objectives, established by the SCSD Learning Services Department, for the first year of focusing on this strategic priority reflect an initial exploratory year to establish longer term processes, outcomes, and metrics.

In establishing a vision it is also necessary to consider broadly the factors and stakeholders that need to be engaged to drive it forward. The review of implementation practices previously mentioned that Fixsen et al. (2005) completed revealed a set of drivers for effective implemenation that fit into three broad categories of competency drivers, organization drivers, and leadership drivers. Continued research into these categories resulted in the model presented in Figure 7 outlining a deeper understanding of specific considerations and the importance of their integration for success (Fixsen et al., 2019). Competency drivers support the professional growth necessary to implement an innovation with fidelity. Organization drivers represent the administrative and management work necessary in the change process. Leadership drivers include balancing adaptive and technical leadership techniques to “initiate the uses of innovations, support the constant changes required to align organization components with intended outcomes, and constructively cope with unintended outcomes, adaptive challenges, and wicked problems that arise” (Fixsen et al., 2019, p. 114). Although all of these change driver categories need to be intergrated, each one of

them connects strongly to a component of the change vision. Following is a discussion of the change vision along with the change drivers that must be considered in achieving that vison.

Figure 7

Implementation Drivers



Note: Adapted from *Implementation Practice and Science* by D.L. Fixsen, K.A. Blase, & M.K. VanDyke, 2019. Active Implementation Research Network.

Events and Patterns: Inclusive Curriculum and Instruction

Framing the PoP through a DSE lens, which considers challenges that exist outside the learner, expands curriculum possibilities. When it is understood that a student's learning capacity is dependent on the interplay between environmental and internal factors, teachers are empowered to be creative and innovate in the way they design curriculum (Ashby, 2012; Hart et al., 2004). This requires that curriculum be conceptualized in ways that ensure all students have the opportunity for meaningful engagement (Thomas, 2012; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004; Rose & Meyer, 2002). The first change priority is one of developing educator knowledge and skills to design learning that engages and creates learning opportunities for students with a wide range of learning profiles. The essential components of UDL previously discussed present the beginnings of an operational definition of the aim of inclusive curriculum practices. The gap between current practices, that are generally more integrative, and the future state of this OIP exists on an

individual continuum for every educator. It is important to consider that it also exists, in some cases, not in the knowledge of pedagogical practices that teachers currently have but rather in the way the practices are applied. Florian and Black-Hawkins's (2011) research on educator training and professional development related to inclusive curricular practices has consistently revealed the need to focus on what they frame as teacher craft knowledge associated with enacting often already known pedagogical practices in ways that are inclusive rather than integrative.

Consideration for professional learning, in alignment with Fixsen & Blase's (2008) competency drivers, and integrated with organizational and leadership drivers discussed later, will be necessary to drive these changes in instructional practice. Fixsen et al. (2019) list four drivers that support the learning required to implement a new practice. The first is a fidelity assessment which requires a common operationalized definition of the practice that will be implemented so that all stakeholders can ensure implementation is properly executed and supported. The other three competency drivers of staff selection, staff training, and staff coaching are linked directly to a professional development plan and involve selecting enthusiastic first adopters, providing training of the necessary knowledge and skills, and providing ongoing support for implementation beyond the initial training. Research on these competency drivers demonstrates that the use of less than all four of them together creates the risk of practices being modified during implementation process to align with current familiar approaches (Fixsen et al., 2019). Therefore, all four will need to be considered to drive the change proposed in this OIP.

Systemic and Process Structures: Sustainable Capacity for Inclusive Instruction

This priority is grounded in the concept of seeing difficulties in learning as opportunities to support professional practice and guide resource allocation rather than solely as deficits to be fixed in learners. (Swann et al., 2012; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hargreaves & Braun, 2011; Ainscow et al., 2006; Skrtic, 1991). The goal is alignment of inputs and processes, including such things as policy, resources, leadership practices, collaborative structures, and school and classrooms practices, in a way that facilitates continuous movement toward designing and

delivering inclusive curriculum (Loreman, 2014). This change priority is grounded in the technical and management elements of creating environments that will support teachers to implement inclusive instructional practices but also requires a leadership lens that considers equity and access in addition to the traditional management foci of effectiveness and efficiency.

Fixsen & Blase (2008) categorize the change drivers associated with this part of the vision as organizational. Therefore, those in formal division and school leadership roles will need to be engaged to enact these drivers. The first driver in this category of data systems to support decision making is aligned closely with new provincial assurance framework requirements introduced previously. A system of collecting and communicating a range of relevant data supports evidence-based decision making. The learning service department is currently in the process of introducing a new virtual form system that creates more flexibility in collecting data on the work done within the department. This has the potential to serve as one element of a data system. Creating clear communication pathways will be another component that needs to be considered (Fixsen et al., 2019). The remaining two drivers in this category are related to school and division administrative actions. Principals supporting teachers in the use of the innovation reflect practices in line with facilitative administration. System intervention is about addressing larger systemic barriers that may exist to enacting the innovation. In this context this may involve working with a range of stakeholders including the school board, community partners, and the Ministry of Education. These drivers highlight the importance of engaged formal leaders at all levels to address this PoP.

Mental Models: Applying a Social Justice Lens to Learners and Learning

In education, social justice is concerned with the equitable distribution of resources, opportunities, and social privileges. The social model of disability brings a social justice lens to education. Research in inclusive education change consistently demonstrates a need to focus on both changed practice and changing thinking (Ainscow, 2005; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004). To change thinking requires recognizing and analyzing assumptions about learners and leaning that a duo-track special and general education systems have been built from.

Skills in this type of critical analysis can be developed and DSE scholars argue that without this activity as an element of the vision and change process inclusive education cannot be achieved (Valle & Connor, 2019; Baglieri & Sharpio, 2017). Targeting this requires attending to the human side of change to impact habits, values, and culture. These are sometimes referred to as "soft elements" (Kirk, 1995). In this way, DSE becomes a critical framework to inform addressing this PoP. In a more practical sense, there exists a growing body of research that demonstrates that embedding DSE tenets into preservice training and professional learning for teachers impacts the enactment of inclusive over integrative practices (Baglieri & Sharpio, 2017).

The leadership drivers are situated at the bottom of Fixsen & Blase (2008) driver model. This is because leadership holds up all the other drivers. Fixsen et al. (2019) in their implementation research attend strongly to the distinction between adaptive and technical problems and the need for leaders to respond in alignment with the type of problem that arises. Thus, the leadership drivers for this PoP are grounded in adaptive leadership. Additionally, inclusive leadership adds a social justice lens that serves to embed throughout the process critical analysis of the mental models that are driving how curriculum is designed and delivered. This leadership must be expanded to others over the course of the change. To achieve socially significant outcomes like the aim of this OIP, leadership in line with adaptive and inclusive tents much be continually "identified, nurtured, and developed" (Fixsen et al., 2019, p. 187).

Organizational Change Readiness

For a shift from integrative to inclusive practices to occur and take hold, the full range of stakeholders in SCSD will need to be motivated to make it happen. As already presented, there are structural forces and embedded mental models in the education system that create barriers to movement toward a DSE-informed paradigm. These forces include the perpetuation of the separation of general and special education practices, perceptions of learners and learning, and neoliberal influences enacted through a standard curriculum and accountability agenda that aims to homogenize students toward a "the norm" (Ryan, 2012). These dominant beliefs and structures

foster the integrative approach this OIP proposes to change. These integrative practices then get reinforced through student progress in targeted, and often isolated, skills that are seldom measured in more functional ways and in the perceived efficiencies of these approaches. When teachers cannot see or design more inclusive teaching and learning practices the separate provision provided does generate better results than those from the student trying to learn within an environment that has not been designed for their specific learning needs. This demonstrates why disrupting integrative practices through messaging that it would be better for students to be included in environments that are perceived to be unchangeable is ineffective. Motivation to change will require being able to envision inclusive curricular practices through a different lens than the current integrative lens that is used by many in SCSD and education more broadly.

There exists little debate amongst SCSD stakeholders of the need to respond to increasing levels of diversity in classrooms. This has recently been recognized through the targeting of inclusive curricular practices as one of the strategic priorities decided upon by wide stakeholder engagement. The division being structured without self-contained programs resulting in the full range of learner diversity present in classrooms further highlights this need. Evaluating SCSD's readiness for change requires first an understanding of the type of problem that is being addressed. Viewing the problem of increased learner diversity through an integrative or inclusive lens presents two different problems, two different responses, and two different sets of considerations for change readiness. An integrative approach to education would see these increasing levels of diversity as a technical challenge leading to a leadership focus on discovering a response that aims to address the disruption in overall efficiency and effectiveness caused by variability. Likely the solution through this lens would be consideration for how to group students into more homogenous ways. Alternatively, an inclusive approach to education would see the growing level of diversity as an adaptive challenge requiring changed educational practices to address the barriers to learning that an increasing number of students are experiencing. A key tenet of adaptive leadership is the recognition that before an adaptive challenge can be engaged with, stakeholders must make

interpretation shifts from technical to adaptive, benign to conflictual, and individualistic to systemic (Heifetz et al., 2009). These shifts have not yet been made in SCSD. Adaptive leadership proposes to take time to understand the problem before moving into action. In the case of this OIP, the processes engaged in before action will need to serve to enhance change readiness through encouraging and supporting stakeholders to make the shifts previously mentioned. This will need to be part of the change plan. Therefore, change readiness will be evaluated through an examination of where stakeholders, practices, and policies are in relation to these shifts and what the leverage points may be to enhance change readiness within them.

Technical to Adaptive

Distinguishing features of adaptive challenges are a lack of clear agreement on the definition of the challenge and solutions that generally cannot be found within current knowledge and ways of working (Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive challenges require new learning and struggle that often comes with feelings of loss and incompetence. Perceiving increased levels of diversity through an inclusive rather than an integrative lens shifts the problem to adaptive and increases the possibility that heightened emotion will be present in the change process. The goal of adaptive leadership is to keep the change process moving forward while surfacing and dealing with the issues and emotions that arise (Heifetz et al., 2009). Adaptive leadership proposes a "productive zone of disequilibrium" in which "stress levels are high enough that people can be mobilized to focus on and engage with the problem they would rather avoid" (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 30). This clearly requires consideration for what is necessary to leverage readiness for change without creating disequilibrium beyond the range of productivity.

Ainscow (2005) completed a review of an extensive body of inclusive education research carried out by the members of the understanding and developing inclusive practices in school research network in multiple countries across ten years to summarize the key levers for effective inclusive change in education. He found that a clear and agreed upon definition of inclusion that includes elements that can be measured was the most predictive lever for effective inclusive

change. A lack of specificity in a change vision not only makes it hard to implement but also increases the level of anxiety that will inhibit change engagement (Blase et al., 2015). Engaging stakeholders in defining what inclusive education is in a way that supports operationalization is one way to advance readiness for change. When the goal is clearly known, anxiety is reduced. Within this communication there are also opportunities to foster a common understanding of how inclusive curriculum benefits all students, helping to enhance awareness of the need for and motivation toward change.

This PoP aims for reorienting change as it exists within long-term divisional movement toward inclusive practices. Cawsey et al. (2016) characterizes reorienting change as "frame-bending shifts (that) are designed to provide new perspectives and directions in a significant way" (p. 22). In preparation for the strategic priority of focusing on inclusive curriculum, SCSD is in the process of developing and introducing new individual support plan (ISP) templates. These new templates are designed to draw explicit attention to connecting individualized goals and programs to classroom curriculum. As well, concepts and language of UDL are embedded into the templates. Professional learning for the use of these templates has already begun, creating opportunities to dialogue in ways that aim to enhance change readiness. This process also aims to situate change recipients to be actors in creating the change as the plan is for the ISP implementation to be an iterative process involving data tracking and feedback from involved stakeholders including teachers, administrators, parents, and students themselves. Although this work is not officially part of the change work, the alignment of focus does create opportunities to nudge people toward readiness.

Benign to Conflictual

This second shift is one related to creating an environment in which productive conflict can be surfaced and worked through. Scholars who study effective inclusive education change express that change focus must be on both teaching practice and raising critical consciousness (Valle & Connor, 2019; Ainscow, 2005). Raising critical consciousness by its nature of deconstructing unconscious thoughts can be conflictual. From an adaptive leadership stance, it is important to

ensure that this conflict is productive, manageable, and creates the opportunity to identify negotiable and non-negotiable losses (Heifetz et al., 2009). A challenge to change readiness for this PoP in SCSD is that the combination of a traditional culture, a history of overall high achievement results, and unconscious mental models rooted in the medical model can result in believing that current instructional practice and methods for supporting students who struggle are non-negotiable. There will need to be consideration for how to bring these conversations to the surface throughout the change process.

Dym and Hutson (2004) propose that readiness for change exists in three different states and that leveraging each of these states requires a specific response. Further, they recommend possible actions to take is situations of rigidity when none of these leverage points seem to exist. Each of these, if managed well, could create the opportunities for the explorations and dialogue associated with shifting toward readiness to engage in exploring inclusive curricular practice. These states are located along a continuum with response suggestions ranging from engaging and highlighting exploratory practices to providing information and guidance to reframing. Many of these responses have been implemented by learning service staff in the quest to move toward more inclusive practices for several years now. This OIP proposes that the effectiveness of these approaches has been inhibited by not having the understood and agreed upon definition of inclusive education that Ainscow (2005) states a critical lever for change. In addition to presenting a continuum of approaches to leverage readiness, Dym and Hutson (2004) suggest disrupting patterns of thinking or behaviour when faced with states of rigidity. The ISP shift mentioned previously creates opportunities to do this as well as opportunities for all the other responses on this continuum dependent on individual states of readiness. It will be important to consider Dym and Hutson's work to ensure effective and individualized responses throughout the change process.

Individual to Systemic

The last shift recommended to enhance change readiness reflects much of what has been presented in this introductory chapter. Adaptive problems are inherently systemic. To make a shift

from integrative to inclusive curriculum practices requires equal attention to each of the levels of Senge's iceberg (see Figure 2). Focusing only on the events levels presents the problem as technical with an implied message that teachers are the problem. The technical solution would then be focusing solely on professional development and holding teachers accountable to implement. While professional development is an essential component of addressing this problem, any practice learned will get modified to fit into the context in which it is being implemented (Fixsen et al., 2019). Therefore, the context needs to be considered in the change so that inclusive practices that are learned in professional development sessions do not get modified to make them fit into integrative structures and mental models. Supporting a shift from individual to systemic not only depersonalizes the problem but also reveals a much broader scope of what to target in the change process.

A possibility to leverage readiness within this conceptual shift involves engaging stakeholders in dialogue about these larger systemic barriers in a structured and productive manner. Heifetz et al. (2009) stress the importance of not moving too quickly into action when addressing adaptive problems. Rather, they propose taking time to "get on the balcony" and "diagnosis the system". Although some of this work has been done through this OIP, revealing the adaptive elements of the problem must be done as a collective process both before and while engaging in the work of changing teaching and learning practices. The focus of this work throughout will be to review data and programs collectively to reveal both current strengths and emerging adaptive challenges (Blase et al., 2015). It will be important to this process to apply the other shifts discussed in this section to dig deeper than the current technical responses of there not being enough resources and not having the knowledge to do it. While these are legitimate concerns, addressing change readiness will require an understanding of what sits underneath these beliefs. It will be important to balance managing distress and raising critical awareness in doing this to ensure productive results of discussions that potentially move from benign to conflictual.

Conclusion

Teachers and administrators within SCSD are aware and voicing concern for the growing level of learner variability in schools and classrooms. This growing diversity reveals a question of whether current teaching and learning practices are responsive to these changing class profiles. When education, disability, and curriculum are deconstructed through a DSE lens it reveals a need to engage stakeholders in developing a more inclusive and equitable approach to teaching and learning. DSE and UDL offers a vision for designing curriculum to meet this need that aligns with provincial inclusive education policy (Alberta Education, 2020b) and the vision presented here. In this chapter, change readiness was assessed and change drivers were identified. These assessments revealed an awareness that the change process will need to begin by engaging a range of stakeholders to develop a higher level of readiness before new practices are implemented. Chapter 2 will explore the application of adaptive and inclusive leadership in the planning and development of this OIP.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

Special education was historically designed to either provide supplemental or segregated education to students who struggled to meet the demands of general education (Wehmeyer, 2013). “In recent years, the appropriateness of separate systems of education has been challenged, both from a human rights perspective and from the point of view of effectiveness” (UNESCO, 2009). This resulted in a move toward integrative approaches to supporting these student’s education which generally did not include significant changes to general education organization, curriculum, or teaching and learning practices (Graham, 2020). Chapter 1 explored how in SCSD this historical and social context has resulted in an integrative and refitted, rather than an inclusive and designed, approach to supporting learner diversity in classrooms. Current conceptualizations of inclusive education rooted in social and human rights models of disability call for reducing barriers to learning by enhancing and extending pedagogical practices to engage a broader range or learner variability (Florian, 2014; Ainscow, 2005; Meyer et al., 2016). Chapter 2 will explore the organizational context of SCSD and present a change framework and leadership approaches that can support a shift to a more inclusive and equitable approach to curriculum. Also included in this chapter are a list of possible solutions, an outline of the solution that will be developed in the final chapter of the OIP, and the ethical issues that must be considered in OIP development and implementation.

Leadership Approaches to Change

Change can begin anywhere in an organization but sustaining, broadening, and institutionalizing the change proposed in this OIP will require building collective focus toward a long-term mindset shift from integrative to inclusive. Schein (2010) proposes that both what must be learned and what must be unlearned should be considered in the change process. Additionally, he notes that what needs to be unlearned is often supported by and embedded into current organizational structures, routines, and beliefs. Therefore, the leadership approach for this change process must support both an initial engagement with evolving teaching and

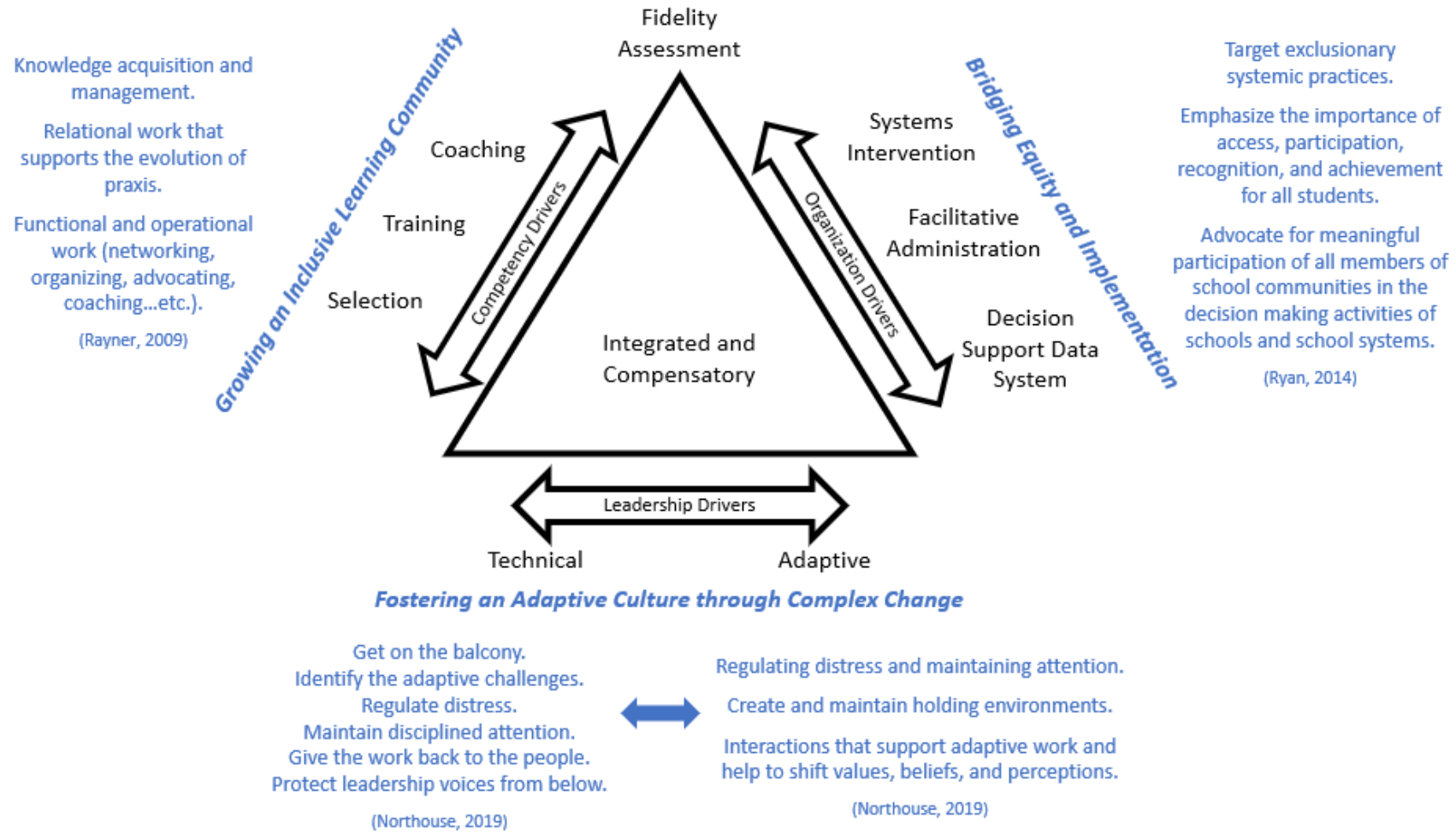
learning practices and a more expansive goal of eventually impacting organizational components and mental models. The competency and organizational drivers introduced in chapter 1 (see Figure 7) offer insight into the necessary management work associated with supporting the proposed pedagogical and organizational changes. The leadership approach taken up in this OIP will be critical to impacting whether this work ends up shifting mental models and culture from integrative to inclusive. Both inclusive (Rayner, 2007; Ryan, 2006a) and adaptive (Heifetz et al., 2009) leadership represent collective approaches that aim to impact specific elements of an organization's culture. This OIP proposes that overlapping these leadership styles onto Fixsen and Blase's (2008) change drivers is necessary to guide and create feedback loops toward the goal of inclusive practices, structures, and mindsets. Inclusive leadership specifies the work of leadership as that of building awareness and collective action toward inclusion. Raynor's (2007) conceptualization of inclusive leadership focuses on the development of a learning culture that supports the evolution of inclusive educational practice while Ryan's (2006a) conceptualization focuses on fostering critical consciousness and social justice related action at all levels of the education system. The combination of the two aim to direct and support the movement necessary for this change. Important to moving in this direction is the adaptive culture that is the aim of adaptive leadership (Heifetz et al., 2009. Figure 8 outlines how the change drivers introduce in Figure 7 and leadership actions introduced in Figure 1 overlap to frame leadership thought and action for this OIP. Following is a discussion of what must be considered in each of these interconnecting areas.

Fostering an Adaptive Culture through Complex Change

Key to the Fixen & Blase's (2008) leadership drivers is matching leadership response to the type of problem that arises. Within Fixen & Blase's (2008) change driver model this is represented by overlapping the concept of adaptive and technical problems from Heifetz's et al. (2009) adaptive leadership theory. The cynefin framework, developed by Dave Snowden offers further insight in productive engagement approaches for a range of adaptive and technical

Figure 8

Mapping Inclusive and Adaptive Leadership Actions to Implementation Drivers



Note: Note this figure combines work adapted from Fixsen et al., (2019) with leadership descriptions summarized from the work of Northouse (2019), Ryan (2014) and Rayner (2009)

problems. Snowden & Boone (2007), categorize situations into the domains of obvious, complicated, complex, and chaotic. Obvious and complicated align with technical problems while complex and chaotic align with adaptive. Obvious problems are rule-based and grounded in a simple cause and effect relationship, assuming that the same result will be achieved every time a practice is implemented. Complicated problems still rely on known and repeatable cause and effect relationships but generally require expertise and analysis to choose which practice should be applied. This approach aligns with the medical model and integrative practices in which problems are diagnosed and interventions are enacted. As presented previously, this approach also aligns with the neoliberal philosophy that frames accountability, standardization, and improvement (Sharma & Sanford, 2018). With complex problems cause and effect is generally only seen in retrospect, thus resulting in emergent practices. Addressing complex problems requires engaging in inquiry and social learning processes that incorporate cycles of feedback between teachers and students. Guidelines and frameworks serve as ways to add structure and manage distress when engaging with complex challenges. With chaotic problems, there seems to be no known relationship between cause and effect. Principles of practice assist with managing distress here.

The leadership required to support a shift to inclusive curriculum practices exists in the collective ability to understand, and engage with, teaching and learning as complex, rather than as obvious or complicated. In other words, teaching and learning are social processes. In this view, students take on more active and liberatory roles in their learning. The distress created through challenging entrenched views of curriculum as purely technical is a critical leadership consideration for this OIP. One of the distinguishing features of adaptive leadership is that it "requires the stakeholders themselves to determine and implement the solution" (Squires, 2015). In line with responding to complex challenges, change happens through developing, implementing, assessing, and integrating "next" practices. Adaptive leadership challenges traditional perceptions of leadership, making a distinction between authority as a formal

position of power and leadership as influencing and facilitating change. Heifetz & Linsky (2002) state that people look to authority to minimize tension and maintain system stability. To exercise leadership toward the full implementation of inclusive curriculum practices will require helping people to overcome a tendency to maintain the status quo.

Heifetz et al. (2009) identify five organizational characteristics that support the adaptive work reflected in addressing this PoP. Each of these will be important considerations in developing the adaptive culture necessary for initiating and sustaining this change. These include not avoiding tough issues, fostering shared responsibility for the organization's future, expecting independent judgement, developing leadership capacity, and institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning (Heifetz et al., 2009) These characteristics exist to varying degrees across SCSD. Institutionalizing reflection and continuous learning are both the most challenging and most necessary for this OIP. Uncovering and analyzing the assumptions that frame how curriculum is designed and delivered is important in shifting from integrative to inclusive practices. Inclusive leadership, as discussed next, will be critical to this aspect of the change process.

Growing an Inclusive Learning Community

Research indicates that inclusive pedagogical change happens through collaborative and iterative professional learning focused on engaging in, and reflecting on, practices for inclusively meeting the specific learner diversity challenges that a teacher is presented with (Ainscow et al., 2006; Florian & Black-Hawkins, 2011; Hart et al., 2004). Research has also demonstrated that when educators experience success in implementing inclusive practices, both practice and beliefs shift (Mukhopadhyay, 2014; Somma & Bennett, 2020; Grierson & Gallagher, 2009). The challenge associated with this PoP are the systemic beliefs and structures in education that create and uphold barriers to learning for students who are believed to sit outside the realms of "normal" (Capper, 2019; Connor et al., 2008; Williamson & Gilham, 2017). As discussed previously, these barriers are often invisible and normalized, embedded in the history and broader culture of education (Valle & Connor, 2019). This reflects the adaptive elements of this

change process that "can only be addressed through changes in people's priorities, beliefs, habits, and loyalties. Making progress requires going beyond any authoritative expertise to mobilize discovery, shedding certain entrenched ways, tolerating losses, and generating new capacity" (Heifetz et al., 2009).

To accomplish this level of critical awareness inclusive leadership will be overlapped onto the competency drivers previously discussed. Research developed on inclusive leadership reveals a broad range of frameworks. This OIP draws specifically from the research of Rayner (2007) and Ryan (2006a) whom have both focused their work on inclusive leadership in the education setting. Ryan's work will be discussed in the next section. Rayner's work focuses on the pragmatic work involved in facilitating professional learning and knowledge creation. Knowledge creation "is a social process involving human agency within a social context" (Lee & Oguntebi, 2012). Overlapping Rayner's conceptualization of leadership on the competency drivers extends the work from offering and supporting professional development to that of building a knowledge-generating learning community. Inclusive education definitions often include a tenet of collective responsibility for students, acknowledging that tapping into the expertise of colleagues when designing learning can serve to extend perspective and curriculum (Swann et al., 2012.; Hargreaves & Braun, 2011; Ainscow, Booth & Ainscow, 2011; Skrtic, 1991). This extension of perspective and curriculum represents the knowledge creation Raynor aims for. Raynor sees the role of the learning community as continually seeking to improve not only practice but also provision, emphasizing the importance of more than just focusing on practice in a single classroom. Therefore, a framework for change will need to consider both opportunities for collective knowledge creation as well as communication pathways for what is being learned to impact support structures, resources, and policy.

Bridging Equity and Implementation

While Rayner's inclusive leadership work focuses on the pragmatic work of building a learning community, Ryan's work focuses more on the theoretical, aiming at ensuring an

inclusive lens for policy and practice. Much of Ryan's work directly aligns with the work of DSE scholars, reinforcing the theoretical framework that grounds this OIP. Ryan's work is about raising equity consciousness. "Equity consciousness refers to how aware or mindful people are as to whether others around them are receiving fair and equitable treatment, how well they understand the phenomenon of inequity, and how willing they are to become involved in solutions" (McKenzie & Skrla, 2011, p. 12). The defining feature of equity strategies in education is that they are planned and focus on a range of teaching and learning processes including curriculum, instruction, assessment, learning relationships, school environment, and culture (McKenzie & Skrla, 2011). The overriding themes of Ryan's work include targeting exclusionary practices and ensuring the inclusion and liberation of all students.

Creating capacity for extending inclusive learning to a wider range of learner variability requires not only supporting the development of individual and collective pedagogical practices but also fostering the ability to identify, understand, and address arrangements that are limiting, marginalizing, and exclusionary (Valle & Connor, 2019; Williamson & Gilham, 2017; Connor et al., 2008). This must be considered in the work within the organizational drivers category. Data collected should be analyzed not only for average gains in achievement but also for populations of students who are not engaged, do not have access, are not making progress, or are not recognized. Being able to analyze these things may require shifting what data is collected. Additionally, framing this process in inclusive leadership means the need to engage the full range of stakeholders in functions such as "information seeking, problem solving, advocacy, and conflict resolution" (Hollander, 2012, p. 67) creating both upward and downward influence for vision and action (Ryan, 2006a). As leadership is aimed to be in the collective there must also be consideration for how enacting this element of inclusive leadership overlaps with the aim of this OIP. Engaging stakeholders in curriculum design shifts curriculum to a dynamic process that is shaped not only by the teacher but also by the students and potentially their families as they

contribute with their deep understanding of their children. In this way, the learning community proposed in the previous section expands beyond just the staff of SCSD.

Framework for Leading the Change Process

Inclusive education is not an outcome that will ever be perfectly achieved. Rather, it is an iterative process that requires ongoing analysis and intentional action. At times, it may even require "rewinning" what seemed to have been previously won (Williamson & Gilham, 2017). In 2011 SCSD began focusing intentionally on developing an inclusive continuum of supports and services model. As mentioned previously, this model aims to match supports and services flexibly and responsively to student profiles with the universal level serving as a foundation to the targeted and specialized levels (Buffman et al., 2009; Fisher & Frey, 2010). This OIP proposes that integrative mental models that aligned with support practices from before the introduction of this model have remained in place and have resulted in compartmentalized tiers that are not as flexible, responsive, and connected as the continuum was meant to be. Additionally, these mental models result in there being little consideration for how teaching and learning practices themselves fit into the continuum. The aim of this OIP is to reorient toward the intended inclusive and flexible approach to the continuum model. In this conceptualization, instructional practices themselves are a flexible support that exists along the entire continuum.

This OIP calls for a perceptual shift about learners and learning and of the continuum model itself. Therefore, this organizational change would be categorized as anticipatory bringing a reorienting element to broader continuous development. Anticipatory as it aligns with the recent release of SCSD's strategic priority aiming to enhance inclusive curriculum practices. Continuous because SCSD has been engaged in a shift toward inclusive practices for several years. Reorienting in the aim of shifting from integrative to inclusive curriculum practices. The deeply entrenched integrative beliefs and practices reveal the need for a highly strategic change model that targets both pedagogical practice and deeper systemic issues. As Cawsey et al., (2016) states, "redirecting and reorienting involves major, strategic change resulting from planned progress. These frame-

bending shifts are designed to provide new perspectives and directions in a significant way" (p. 22). This PoP requires a change framework that supports implementation of new practices in a way that protects them from being modified to fit into entrenched integrative mental models and the structures that may currently be upholding them.

Formula for Success and Active Implementation Frameworks

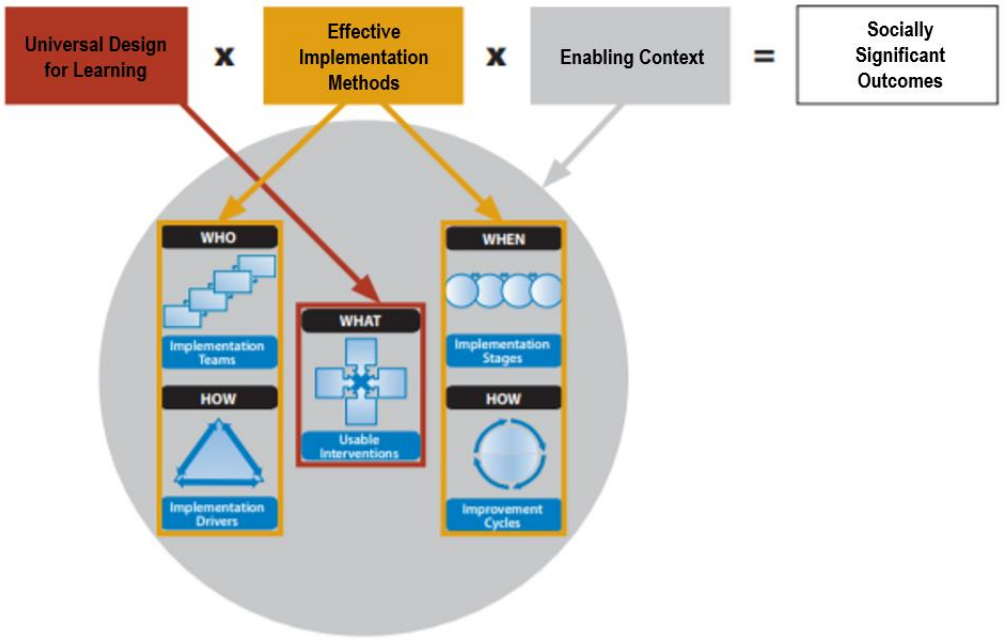
The field of implementation science is based on research on the elements of effective implementations that result in the successful use of new practices to achieve the intended outcomes (Fixsen et al., 2019). In line with the systemic nature of this PoP, implementation science attends to aspects of the organizational context of the system to enable the effective implementation of a targeted practice. The aspects that should be considered are illustrated in the formula for success previously introduced (see Figure 5). Important to note in this formula is the target of socially significant outcomes (NIRN, 2016). This aligns with the definition of inclusive education that Ainscow (2005) proposed in his literature review to discover the levers for inclusive educational change. In this work he included the goal of increased access, participation, and progress for all students, offering potential for the observable social impact that this formula calls for. The formula provides insight into the need for leadership work to attend to the selection and adoption of an effective innovation, methods to effectively install the innovation, and the context in which the work is done.

In 2005, the National Implementation Research Network (NIRN) released a monograph synthesizing implementation research findings across a range of fields (Fixsen et al., 2005). In this document they introduced five active implementation frameworks (AIFs) to guide effective implementation work. These frameworks offer researched direction to answer the questions of what, who, when, and how of implementation. In the years since 2005, the continued research of NIRN into these frameworks highlight the importance of integrating all five frameworks across all levels of system to effectively implement an innovation (Fixsen et al., 2010; Duda et al., 2013; NIRN, 2013). To clarify the need for integration, the NIRN mapped the five AIFs onto the formula

for success to create the model depicted in Figure 9. This figure presents the change framework for this OIP with universal design for learning recorded as the usable innovation that will be implemented.

Figure 9

Formula for Success with Active Implementation Frameworks



Note. This figure is adapted from *Implementation Science 101: A Brief Overview* by M.A. Duda & B.A. Wilson. Perspectives on Language and Literacy (Fall 2018).

Usable Innovation: Universal Design for Learning

The first variable in the formal for success is the usable innovation. In the case of this OIP, this innovation would be what implementation science terms a "system intervention" (Fixsen et al., 2019). The system intervention is chosen based on research and evidence of its ability to impact the targeted problem of practice (Metz et al., 2015). As previously introduced, universal design for learning (UDL) provides a framework for designing flexible curriculum that ensures equitable access to learning opportunities without stigmatizing learner difference (Rose & Meyer, 2002). This framework, if implemented intentionally across SCSD aligns with the change vision and has the potential to bring coherence to teaching and learning practices that are inclusive of all learners. An

important consideration in implementing UDL is that it is not a single practice. The UDL guidelines encompass a range of practices that overlap classroom teaching and learning practices to ensure access and to optimize learning for each student (Meyer et al., 2016). Clarity related to this complexity will need to occur early in the change process.

Placing this variable first in the formula for success reflects the importance of clearly articulating "what" educators are being asked to do before implementation begins. Clarifying the "what" will be challenging with a complex multi-component innovation like UDL. Recognizing this implementation related challenge, the universal design for learning implementation and research network (UDL-IRN) was established to expand and clarify the UDL implementation research base (UDL-IRN, 2021). Smith et al. (2018) as a special interest group of this research network, developed a document outlining essential components of UDL introduced previously. These components, related to goal clarity, flexible practice, and not limiting any student's learning through focusing on their development as expert learners align well with the vision of inclusive curriculum design for this OIP. The usable innovation AIF recommends consideration for four specific elements in defining the "what". These include a clear definition, list of essential components, an operational definition, and a performance or fidelity assessment (Duda & Wilson, 2018). Fixsen et al., (2013) summarizes that the definition must be specific enough that it is "teachable, learnable, doable, and observable".

Effective Implementation Methods

The second variable is effective implementation methods. The work at this level is focused on capacity building with an aim of engagement and sustainability (Blase et al., 2015). The remaining four AIFs combine and overlap to create coherence and an enabling context for the targeted practice. The implementation driver AIF has already been presented and discussed in this OIP. This framework describes leadership, competency, and organizational drivers necessary for successful implementation (Fixsen et al., 2019). Following is an introduction and exploration of the other three AIFs that aim to facilitate movement toward the change vision.

Implementation Teams

Implementation teams consist of individuals who come together to develop and foster the enabling environment (Duda et al., 2015). They pay particular attention to alignment of components. It is important that the implementation team collectively has the knowledge, commitment, and authority to make, support, and if necessary, enforce the decisions the team makes. Therefore, this team will need to include formal leaders at both the division and school levels. The implementation team will also need to be able to come together regularly to ensure the system properly supports the implementation of the innovation (Duda & Wilson, 2018). As is reflected in the implementation drivers, this team focuses on developing both organizational factors and developing the knowledge and skills necessary to implement the program. Research into effective implementation has revealed that, when possible, the implementation team should build on strengths that already exist in the system to support the innovation to better ensure sustainability (Fixsen et al., 2019). Another critical responsibility of implementation teams is facilitating communication with the range of stakeholders that impact or are impacted by the targeted innovation (Metz et al., 2015). This potentially overlaps well with the established pathways for communication embedded in the district-level strategic priority and assurance framework.

It is also recommended to link implementation teams vertically with an aim of aligning policy and practice (Duda et al., 2015). In the context of this OIP this may involve a division level team supporting a school level team. Through clear communication, these teams locate and respond to implementation barriers at both levels of the system. Additionally, this connection informs the divisional level team to potentially impact regional or provincial levels above them. This approach emphasizes shared responsibility and acknowledges the connected roles that different levels of the system should play in the change process and aligns with the established systemic nature of the PoP presented in this OIP.

Implementation Stages

Important to a change framework is a staged plan. The implementation stages AIF outlines

key components and processes in four stages of implementing a new practice (Fixsen et al., 2019). Tasks associated with the first stage of exploration include identifying the need for change, learning about the targeted innovation, considering what would be required to implement the innovation, engaging stakeholders, assessing and creating readiness, and making a collective decision either to proceed or not (Metz et al., 2015). Given the consultative position of the writer and change agent as well as the previously mentioned need to enhance readiness, this phase of the change process aligns well with the context it exists within. It both creates the time to enhance readiness and the provision to decide to move forward only at the point that it can be well-supported by the formal leaders necessary for the remainder of the plan. The second stage is installation which involves establishing the organizational and competency resources required to implement and use the targeted practice (Blanchard et al., 2017). This is followed by an initial implementation stage in which first adopters begin to use the targeted practice. Important to this stage is to acknowledge that both the teachers implementing and those who are supporting the implementation will be new to the work. To address this, the improvement cycle framework introduced in the next section will be used to create the feedback cycles that will move the work forward (Fixsen et al., 2019). The final stage is full implementation at which point the practice is effectively integrated across the division.

The stages are not linear and the beginning and ends of each will overlap. Research suggests the process can take from two to four years (Blase et al., 2015). A stage framework is important as is helps to ensure appropriate actions are taking place at the appropriate time in the process. This framework also creates time to develop the clarity that can reduce anxiety and resistance later. The work in the initial stages of the process lays the groundwork to ensure the ability to make data-based decisions to guide the implementation steps of the process. The fidelity measures that come from the initial clear definition help to ensure that the practice doesn't get shifted to align with an integrative rather than an inclusive approach. Importantly, if implementation is begun before a clear definition and establishing organizational and competency supports there will be little way of intervening if implementation happens in an integrative way.

Implementation Cycles

The learning and un-learning required to achieve the aim of this OIP requires a continuous improvement approach (Senge, 2006). A key process of continuous improvement is the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycle (Langley et al., 2009). PDSA cycles provide a structure for iterative engagement with and evaluation of the targeted practice. Within the context of implementation science, both the teachers who are engaging directly in the cycles and the implementation teams who are tasked with creating the enabling environment use the feedback from these cycles to inform the next step in their respective responsibilities (Metz et al., 2015). Repeating, documenting, and communicating these cycles not only creates the necessary environment for the targeted program but also builds the learning and adaptive cultures that are leadership aims of this OIP. While this change framework lays out a significant portion of the change plan, the focus and structure of the PDSA process will need to be established in the installation stage.

Enabling Context

The final variable in the formula for success is the enabling context. This variable has significant crossover with the others as without them an enabling context would be impossible. Attending to the five AIFs that are situated within those variables creates the level of predictability that increases the chance of effective implementation. Attending to all of these will aid in building an enabling context but the enabling context needs to also be considered more broadly. Before implementing change, it is important to understand the context it will be implemented within. This requires examination of a broad range of organizational and human components including things like resources, culture, support structures, policies, procedures, and practices. These should be analyzed in relation to whether they would enable or inhibit the proposed change and responded to accordingly. The next section will analyze the current context of SCSD using the lenses of enabling and inhibiting contextual factors to target what needs to change in the aim of shifting from integrative to inclusive curriculum practices.

Critical Organizational Analysis

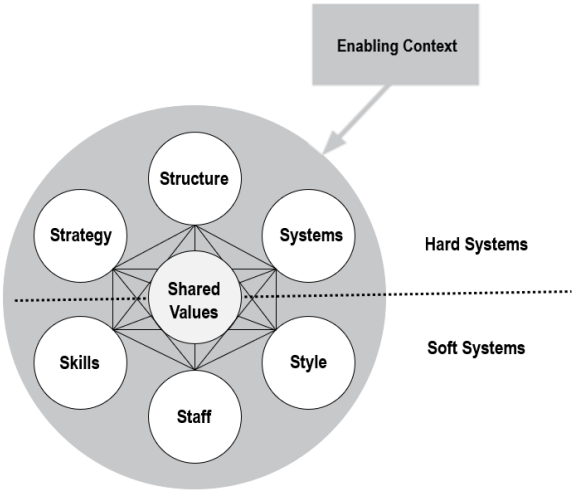
Improvement in education can only be understood through the examination of the values that schools, divisions, and provincial ministries aim to operate from. Developing inclusive practices in schools involves defining inclusive values and then intentionally working to align actions with those values (Booth & Ainscow, 2011). Alberta Education's inclusive education policy recognizes the importance of values to inclusive development and explicitly defines inclusive education as being "built on a values-based approach to accepting responsibility for all children and students" (Alberta Education, 2020a). Whether consciously or not, in education values inform and drive interactions, decisions, plans, practices, and policies. Therefore, values also underpin the enabling environments introduced in the last section. Given this centrality of values, the McKinsey 7S Framework (Peters & Waterman, 1982) depicted in modified form in Figure 10, which centers around values and how they are aligned to other elements of the organization, will be used as a framework to complete a critical analysis to better understand the current context of SCSD.

The McKinsey 7S model "was designed to summarize the main factors within an organization which contribute to it achieving its strategic objectives particularly in relation to change" (Cox & Pinfeild, 2018). These elements include strategy, structure, systems, style, staff, skills, and shared values (Peters & Waterman, 1982). Strategy, structure, and systems are defined as "hard" elements and are more easily measured and managed. These elements would be reflective of those that would be considered for the technical or organizational elements of a change process. Many of them align with the organizational change drivers previously presented. The other elements, labeled as "soft" require leadership to shape them in way that will end up impacting organizational culture. These soft elements are sometimes referred to human elements and reflect work that is critical to adaptive change (Heifetz et al., 2009). Many of these elements align with previously introduced competency drivers. The seven elements are depicted as being interconnected with each impacting the other and values being placed at the center. The model emphasizes that effective practice is a result of alignment of the elements with each first aligning

with values and then aligning with others. The remainder of this section will examine the seven elements as they relate to an enabling context for the implementation of inclusive curriculum practices in SCSD. This section will conclude with a summary of the gaps between the current and future state that have been revealed.

Figure 10

Enabling Context Using the McKinsey 7S Framework



Note: Adapted from *In Search of Excellence: Lessons from America's Best-Run Companies* by T.J. Peters & R.H. Waterman, 1982. Harper & Row.

Shared Values

Alberta Education's inclusive education policy explicitly references inclusive education as being values driven. The indicators of inclusive schools document (Alberta Education, 2013) is modeled after a larger widely used indicators document designed by Booth and Ainscow (2011). The front matter of Booth and Ainscow's document proposes a list of values that support inclusive development. They organize these into values that emphasize structures, values that focus on character and relationship, and values that are concerned with "nourishing the human spirit" (Booth & Ainscow, 2011, p. 21). The five most emphasized values are equality, participation, community, respect for diversity, and sustainability. Hart et al. (2004) also propose an approach to enacting inclusive curriculum that is grounded in the values of capability, co-agency, everybody,

and trust. An examination of the values and commitments espoused in SCSD's recent annual education reports and three-year Education plans show a high level of alignment between the division's values and the values outlined in current literature on inclusive education reform. Further, SCSD explicitly states a commitment to the value of inclusivity in its documentation.

Although inclusion itself is highly values-based, completing this analysis must begin with narrowing in on the specific values that should be aligned with each of the hard and soft systems in the framework. The definition of inclusion that this OIP is concerned with in one that would encourage the design and delivery of inclusive curriculum. Inclusive curriculum aims to ensure all students participate and learn together without stigmatizing the natural differences that exist among them. To define the values that drive inclusive education "rather than imagine curriculum as a stock set of practices that can become accessible by making 'special' accommodations and modifications, it is useful to envision curriculum as flexible and able to be crafted for diverse needs from the beginning" (Baglieri & Shapiro, 2017, p. 180). In this way, every student's learning needs are valued equally from the start. Therefore, each of the remaining elements will be considered in relation to their ability to support either a proactive inclusive approach or a reactive integrative one to curriculum design and delivery.

Hard Elements: Strategy, Structure and System

This section will discuss strategy, structures, and systems and how they reflect supporting learner diversity in SCSD. Although hard elements are generally referenced as elements that management can directly influence, within the context of a school division these elements also include provincial regulations that school divisions must adhere to. In SCSD strategy, structures and systems related to responding to learner diversity overlap and are grounded in the continuum model of supports and services, assessment practices, provincial ministry guidelines and regulations, and the organizational structure of the division.

As discussed previously, SCSD currently uses a continuum of supports and services model to address the learning, regulatory and social-emotional needs of students and to

organize the work, resources, and community partnership connections of the learning services department. The mental model lens that this continuum is viewed through impacts how it gets enacted. The previous discussion on the medical and social model of disability is particularly relevant here as it impacts both what is targeted and what is considered in supporting learner variability. The medical model sees students as passive receivers of supports and services delivered by specialists targeted at curing or managing the student. On the other hand, the social model sees students as active agents who work in partnership with those around them to be successful. This model targets the intersection of the system and individual (Reiser, 2018). Therefore, a medical model lens results in considering only formal or paid supports and services while a social model lens sees both paid and natural supports with a bias toward natural supports (Connor et al., 2008).

The idea of natural supports is premised on the understanding that every student, regardless of whether they have a disability or not, will need support to be successful. Natural supports are those supports that exist in the classroom and are available to every student (Giangreco et al., 2011). In the process of supporting struggling students, a continuum of supports and services that considers natural supports would include intervention possibilities that exist within the design and delivery of classroom curriculum (Howard, 2009). This would involve the proactive inclusion of degrees of learning, scaffolds, and supports for all students rather than just targeted students. The continuum in SCSD is not currently perceived and enacted in this way. Rather, the focus is primarily on formal and paid supports that leave classroom practices unchanged. When curriculum is not perceived as part of the continuum the number of natural supports available to students is significantly reduced (Baglieri & Sharpio, 2017). The continuum model itself is one that is designed to support an inclusive approach but the way it has been interpreted and enacted currently results in an integrative approach.

As mentioned previously, SCSD went through a process of eliminating its continuum of separate provision placements including resource rooms and congregated classrooms several

years ago. The intention during this shift was to bring supports and services to the student rather than have the student leave the inclusive setting for them. At the same time, it was decided that there was also a need for students to be able to responsively use common and designated spaces. Thus, each school currently has at least one designated space for students to use for regulatory or support purposes. When the designated spaces were initially designed there was a high level of intentionality in considering a balance between ensuring universal level change at the same time as responding to individual needs. Over time, this balance has moved away from the universal components. In some schools this is resulting in students feeling a greater sense of belonging in these separate spaces as they spend increasing amounts of their day in them. In addition, these spaces are increasingly being used to have learning assistants work with those students who are unable to keep up with unchanged classroom curriculum delivery, reflecting integrative rather than inclusive practices.

The intention of the model used by the learning service department is to focus on supports and services rather than placement. In line with provincial structures, services in SCSD tend to categorically address areas of mental health, English language learners (ELL), Aboriginal learners (FMNI), and students with either mild, moderate, or severe disabilities. Collaborative structures have been put in place at the divisional and school levels which aim to break down these definitive lines and support students more holistically. All these roles and structures have been designed with an intention to balance consideration for individual responses and the universal elements that would ensure effectiveness and sustainability of those responses. Although the universal level it is part of the organizing continuum of learning services, division staff generally access this department when universal practices are not working for a student expecting individual responses to fix the situation and are generally unresponsive to targeting universal level practices to align better with the range of learner diversity in the classroom. This reflects again a belief in an integrative rather than inclusive approaches (Burello et al., 2013; Thomas & Loxley, 2007; Ainscow et al., 2006).

In addition, the communication, documentation, and assessment processes carried out by the Learning Services department are driven by the standards for special education (Alberta Education, 2004). The special education requirements from Alberta Education have changed little in the time since the provincial focus has shifted to more inclusive approaches (Williamson & Gilham, 2017). Within SCSD this contributes to an understanding of inclusive education being more integrative than inclusive as many of these structures focus in on deficit within the student and reinforce the separation of general and special education. Further, required individual support plans currently focus the work on narrow outcomes and targets rather than inclusive teaching and learning conditions (Ainscow et al., 2006). Students who present with ongoing needs or challenges in Alberta schools are a assigned a special education code (Alberta Education, 2021f). Historically, these codes were associated with dedicated funding but that is no longer the case. Codes do continue to be used for provincial tracking and as an indication of which students require an individual support plan (ISP). Within the division, students who are labeled with “severe codes” are considered each year as part of the process for distributing learning assistant time across the division. This communicates that learning assistant are assigned to students rather than schools or classrooms and has resulted often in learning assistants taking on a level of responsibility for students that creates the inclusion barriers previously discussed (Giangreco et al., 2014).

Finally, it must be noted that success of the system is measured primarily through provincial or standardized accountability measures. These do not include measures of inclusion, specifically those of placement, participation and learning for marginalized groups that a synthesis of research on inclusive education concludes is a driver for inclusive development (Ainscow, 2005). Another inclusive values concern with relying almost completely on standardized measures is that they have been shown to be biased toward the dominant culture, revealing intersectionality concerns (Iannacci, 2018; Hart et al., 2004; Gould, 1996). This way of measuring success along with the analysis of other hard elements reveals strategy, structures,

and systems in SCSD have strong potential to be enacted in ways that support inclusive curriculum practices, but many are currently enacted through a more traditional special education lens, resulting in integrative curriculum practices.

Soft Elements: Style, Staff and Skills

Soft elements include leadership style, staffing, and the skills of those working for the organization. These elements reveal information about organizational culture and mental models and give insight into the lower levels of the systems iceberg (Senge, 2006). These elements are often more difficult to impact and reflect the need to balance in consideration of adaptive change. These will be discussed as they relate to supporting and valuing learner variability in SCSD.

In line with inclusive values, leadership within the learning services department is distributed and grounded in the value of trust. Although there is a divisional vision of inclusion and a support and services model to frame the work being done, administrators are responsible for enacting these in ways that are responsive to their school profiles. This gets enacted in different ways based on the mental models that each administrator is starting from. An advisory committee, consisting of administrators and learning service staff, meets regularly during the year to discuss arising challenges and work together to set procedures and direction as needed. The focus of these meetings tends to be on the management elements related to supporting individual students and seldom focus on universal level practices. Rather, universal level practices are focused on during separate divisional leadership meetings and professional development sessions. The concern with this way of dividing focus is that it reinforces an approach that separates consideration for educational provision of students with “special education needs” from those without.

SCSD has a high level of staff retention, resulting in a high percentage of teachers with a large amount of experience. This also means that many teachers who teach for SCSD received their education degrees at a time when inclusive education would not have been included in their course work, generally resulting in understandings in line with integrative rather than inclusive approaches. Important to having a high staff retention rate is that there is a significant amount of

"craft knowledge" across the division. Work done around inclusive pedagogy both at the school and teacher training level by Florian (2014) has revealed this to be an important element of enacting inclusive curriculum as this can be as much about how teacher enact pedagogy as it is about the pedagogy itself. It should also be noted that teachers and administrators in Alberta are expected to adhere to professional practice standards that include teachers creating inclusive learning environments and administrators supporting them through instructional leadership that result in all students having access to learning within the provincial curriculum (Alberta Education 2020).

Learning services staff within the division consists of facilitators and categorical support teachers who focus primarily on supporting classroom teachers with strategies for individual students. Learning assistants make up a large portion of the staff employed through the learning services department. Many of these learning assistants are highly passionate and, like the teaching staff, have a high amount of experience and craft knowledge. Of concern in reference to this PoP is the level of responsibility for individual student programming that some of the learning assistants across the division are tasked with. There exists a large body of research on the damaging impact of over-reliance on learning assistants related to social and educational outcomes for students and on inclusive practice more generally (Giangreco et al., 2014). Current approaches in which learning assistants take on this responsibility often results in a focus on segregated attainment associated with an integrative approach rather than on universal access associated with an inclusive approach.

Finally, there is a tendency for teachers in the division to rely heavily on ability-based practices. This can be understood by the history of special and general education, the impacts of neo-liberalism on education, and through the discussion of how hard elements function within SCSD. Referencing back to inclusive values, it is also important to understand that both equity consciousness and high-quality teaching skills are necessary to enact authentically inclusive education (McKenzie & Skrla, 2011). Professional learning across the division for many years has focused on the later but not on the former. Recently, there has been minimal introductory equity work done in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's call to action

(2015) and the addition of enacting this awareness in the professional practice standards (Alberta Education, 2020).

What Needs to Change?

In the process of trying to support learner diversity in SCSD, there has not historically been an explicit divisional focus on the inclusive universal instruction practices component of the continuum of supports and services model. It has been assumed that teachers will develop this in response to the level of diversity in their classroom. Effort and resources have been mainly put into supporting individual or small group challenges as they arise. While there will always be a need for this, the premise of a continuum of supports and services model is rooted in the idea of making available to all what is necessary for some to ensure being as proactive as possible and to reduce the negative effects of targeting difference as deficient (Florian, 2014; Katz, 2012; Hart et al., 2004; Rose & Meyer, 2002). The gap is not that there is not an effort being made to support all student in SCSD so much as it is being done from an integrative rather than an inclusive lens. The focus is on the individual rather than the system which reinforces a separation of those the curriculum system works for and those that it does not work for. This approach sees diversity as a problem rather than an asset.

SCSD stakeholders have varying definitions and understandings of inclusive learning and teaching practices. This appears to be grounded at least partially in whether each stakeholder ascribes to a medical or social model of disability. The interpretation of Alberta Education's information on special and inclusive education can appear to be conflicting and further adds to this confusion, particularly given the long-standing history of special education as being separate from general education (Williamson & Gilham, 2017). This belief that there is a separation between special and general education also leads to teachers feeling they lack the skills and resources to teach all students inclusively. Adding further to this stress is that this is an adaptive change and requires engaging and learning in the process rather than having all the answers before one begins (Ainscow, 2005; Swann et al., 2012).

Critical to the process of shifting from integration to inclusion is acting from a human-rights lens. This involves developing an understanding of what can limit learning including systemic barriers, disability-related challenges, environmental factors, and challenges that exist in how students view themselves, others, and learning (Hart et al., 2004). A human rights lens also involves attending to ownership and agency as it shifts the focus to doing with rather than doing to or for. Ownership and agency are necessary conditions for creating the culture of learning that would facilitate the change needed for this PoP (Fullan & Gallagher, 2020; Hart et al., 2004). SCSD has already done a significant amount of work toward inclusive education and as noted in this section, there are elements that could shift forward through revisiting and realigning what grounds inclusive education.

In conclusion, although the classrooms and schools in the division are structured to physically include students and value diversity, many of the practices and beliefs are still rooted in traditional special education medical-model approaches. An examination of the SCSD's mission and values as outlined in recent reports reveals a commitment to inclusive education. An analysis of McKinsey's hard and soft elements reveals a gap in alignment of beliefs and practices necessary for teachers to demonstrate a true valuing of diversity and deliver an inclusive curriculum. The change model previously introduced targets not only the individual elements addressed in this section but also the alignment of those elements. This alignment is perhaps the most important component in achieving the goal of this OIP.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

The change framework chosen for this OIP guides many aspects of the change process that will be further outlined in chapter 3. The AIFs outline the details of the change process including the target of the work, the process, the people involved, and the actions that will be taken. Considerations for professional learning and coaching is embedded in the change driver AIF. The aspect of the change plan that needs further consideration and clarification is the focus and process of the improvement cycles. The improvement cycles, which occur after stakeholders

have engaged in initial professional learning, should aim to effectively embed UDL into teaching and learning practices across the division. Smith et al.'s (2018) three essential elements of clear goals, flexible instruction, and reducing limits to learning through positioning the student to make learning support decisions rather than predetermining them provide a vision of what the improvement cycles should work toward. This section presents three possibilities for organizing these improvement cycles, each privileging one of Smith et al.'s (2018) essential elements.

Solution 1: Build a Curriculum Planning Pyramid Database

The first essential component of UDL is clear goals (Smith et al., 2018). When curriculum planning is done through a UDL lens, goals move beyond their traditional role as static content or performance markers. A UDL approach to effective learning goals first requires separating the means from the goal (Rose & Meyer, 2002). When the desired outcome is made explicit and separated from the means of achieving it the range of flexible materials, methods, and assessment options for achieving that goal are revealed. This creates the possibility of eliminating the barriers that may currently exist for many students. A second critical consideration in establishing goals is to ensure they will address the full range of learner variability in classrooms (Meyer et al., 2016). This requires consideration for defining goals in a way that supports unit and lesson planning that will position students to work toward individualized responsive objectives within the context of whole class instruction. The change framework for this OIP includes provision for the professional learning that would expose teachers to these concepts. The PDSA cycles would aim to iteratively put that learning into practice. A leverage point that exists with focusing the PDSA cycles on goal clarity is an expected new curriculum that will be implemented beginning in the 2022-23 school year. This solution proposes overlapping exploration of this new curriculum with unpacking goals in ways that will support inclusively designing and delivering curriculum.

This solution would bring grade level teacher teams together before they implement new curriculum units to unpack the curriculum goals with a focus on learning access for all students.

The first task would be to identify which curriculum goals are and are not connected to methods. The second task would be to unpack the curriculum unit using Schumm et al.'s (1994) planning pyramid. Although this model was proposed quite some years ago, it continues to be referenced in current inclusive education literature (Valle & Connor, 2019). The pyramid has two primary dimensions. The first consists of the vertices of the pyramid representing five "points of entry" including teacher, topic, context, student, and instructional practices. A list of questions for each of these serves to get teachers thinking about the learning barriers that may exist for some students. For example, in the topic domain questions focus on things like how new the material is to students, what prior knowledge is needed, and the concepts that need to be clearly understood to engage with the goal. The understandings developed through this discussion would be recorded as things to consider when planning this unit. They could also be used for considering the second dimension of the pyramid, which is the vertical division of the pyramid into three tiers. These tiers correspond with degrees of learning outlining what all students will learn, what most students will learn, and what some students will learn. Using the information generated during the beginning discussion of the process, teachers would add objectives to each of the tiers, creating awareness of learning scaffolds for all students. Going back to the example of on the topic dimension questions, this may result in teachers placing prior knowledge or key concepts within the planning pyramid signalling the scaffolds and support materials that should be considered in curriculum planning.

The PDSA component of this possible solution would involve teachers evaluating the impact of unpacking curriculum units before teaching them. The documents produced would be compiled into a data base so that other and future teachers can access them. These would be dynamic, factoring in the opportunity to add what is learned through their use. Important to the change plan is that the PDSA cycles are not only intended to inform the next iteration of teaching practice but also inform the formal leaders who are focusing on developing an enabling environment (Fixsen et al., 2019). Therefore, this work may reveal a need to consider

curriculum resources differently. One of the biggest barriers to enacting inclusive curriculum is that one-size-fits-all textbooks are not responsive to the range of learner diversity in classrooms (Schumm et al., 1994). Consideration for degrees of learning may spark consideration for a range of content materials that better align with the diversity in a classroom. Of note to this strategy is that even with this planning there may remain a very small number of students who need more individualized planning around curriculum access points which would be considered in the more targeted and specialized levels of the continuum of supports and services.

The primary resources needed for this solution are time and expertise. Teachers would need to be either trained on or supported through the process before they could do it themselves. In addition, documents to guide the process would need to be developed. After that, time would need to be made available for grade level teachers to meet. In grade k-6 in most cases this involves teachers from different schools working together. Increased comfort with online meetings due to COVID disruptions may make this more doable than in the past. The division also has dedicated professional development (PD) days in its calendar almost every month that could potentially be used for this work. The work that is being done with implementing the new curriculum would also need to be considered, perhaps finding some efficiencies in how to implement this solution. In addition, ways to share information laterally to inform each other's teaching and vertically to inform resourcing, professional learning needs, and other organizational elements would need to be developed. If the teams AIF is used as intended, this could also lead to the division team trying to impact provincial curriculum, support documents, and recommended resources.

Solution 2: Equip Principals as UDL Instructional Leaders

The second essential component of UDL is recognizing and designing for learner variability (Smith et al., 2018). This proposed solution aims to position school administrators as the instructional leaders that would help with the implementation of this essential component. In Alberta, provincially mandated leadership practice standards (Alberta Education, 2020) state

instructional leadership as an expectation for school administrators. The challenge inherent to applying this approach to the context of this OIP is that the training that most school administrators take in preparation for their roles does not include a focus on inclusive curricular practices (Edmunds et al., 2009). Therefore, this solution would require both professional development opportunities for administrators and providing administrators with easy-to-use frameworks and instructional tools that will facilitate changed teacher practice. Two possible structures that could be used are principal walk-throughs focused on UDL and embedding the plus-one approach (Tobin & Behling, 2018) into the collaborative planning time that is currently worked into school schedules by all administrators in the division. There already exist several tested UDL look for forms for walk throughs that are publicly available from research institutions and other school divisions. After initial administrator training on UDL any one of these could be either adapted or adopted by principals for use in their schools. The walk-through process, which involves observations and follow up with teacher to target practices, is an already familiar concept to administrators in SCSD.

The plus-one approach aims to support teachers in incrementally expanding the range of ways they provide access to learning (Tobin & Behling, 2018). This approach begins by having teachers identify “pinch points” in their teaching. These are the places where student historically struggle. Once these points are identified teachers evaluate if they are currently offering only a single approach to materials, presentation, technology, or interactions in teaching the pinch point. They then pick one more way to support student learning of that pinch point. The UDL guidelines (CAST, 2021) can be used to generate ideas for what the addition might be. This could be used in practice by having teachers work together during one of their collaborative learning times to brainstorm together and share how well it works. These are two examples of simple structures that could be used for administrators to support teachers toward the goal of recognizing and designing for learner variability. Beyond these, the writer, as a divisional consultant, could work with principals to align other structures to their context.

The PDSA component of this solution would be built into the processes that administrators use. Administrators, as instructional leaders, could engage in dialogue throughout the process. In line with the change framework, the aim of the dialogue would be both to impact practice and to impact the environment in which the practice is occurring. Both the administrator and teacher would potentially act from what was learned from the PDSA cycle. Resource-wise this solution would require professional learning opportunities for administrators so they could support teachers in implementing UDL in their classrooms. Engaging the structures themselves beyond this point would not require added resources for the process. What is learned and what teachers choose to engage with as a result may result in formal leaders needing to consider what resources are needed to support flexible curriculum design and delivery as it would be difficult for teachers to imagine flexible teaching approaches if flexible teaching materials are not potentially available.

Solution 3: Position Students as Drivers of Change

The final essential element of UDL is expert learners for all (Smith et al., 2018). In the context of this OIP, this is being worded as limitless learning to reflect the underlying aim of developing expert learners. When students are positioned to know themselves as learners and make support decisions to optimize their learners it increases the potential of countering the potential negative impacts of deterministic and deficit thinking (Hart et al., 2004). This solution would involve a pilot group of teachers who voluntarily engage in exploring frameworks that aim toward self-determined learning. Being self-determined means “acting or causing things to happen by setting and taking steps necessary to achieve one’s goal” (Raley et al., 2018, p. 63). Workshops would be offered on different structures that support self-determined learning and teachers could choose to attend them. If they did attend them, support would be given afterwards to implement the structure within a PDSA cycle. Two examples of structures that could be used include the self-determined learning model of instruction (SDLMI) (Raley at al., 2018) and the process to become an expert learner framework (Bray & McClaskey, 2017). The

SDLMI is a model that is intended to be integrated into curriculum that supports students to "set goals related to core content, develop action plans, and evaluate progress toward goals" (Raley et al., 2018). The focus of the framework aligns with UDL guidelines and supports students toward being able to make and enact decisions that optimize their learning. The process to becoming an expert learner supports students through a process of developing a learner profile, a personal learning backpack, and personal learning plan (Bray & McLaskey, 2017). The learner profile in this model is arranged to align directly with the UDL guidelines. The intention of this solution is that as students develop the skills in understanding and advocating for their learning needs, teachers evolve their instructional practice to better meet the expressed needs.

Resource wise, this would require someone who could do the professional development sessions followed by coaching style work to support teacher implementation. The role of the writer in SCSD would allow for this. Additionally, there would need to be resources to free teachers up for the initial learning session and potentially any meetings in the implementation process. A challenge with this solution is that it would be difficult to scale up beyond the teachers who voluntarily engage with it. This may be challenging as a starting point as it requires releasing a significant amount of control. Of note, the structures proposed in this solution were traditionally more aligned with special education approaches, but inclusive movement is resulting in bringing them into the general education context to the benefit of all students.

Chosen Solution: A UDL Approach to Adult Learning

The first and third solutions have a significantly higher demand for teacher time than the second. The time for solution 1 might be gained by overlapping onto any structures that support the implementation of new curriculum. Solution 1 therefore also aims to counter initiative overload. Solution 2 disrupts current ways of doing things very little while solution 3 could prove to be a large shift. Solution 1 and 2 aim to engage all teachers while solution 3 has teachers engaging voluntarily. There could be extensively more comparison done between these

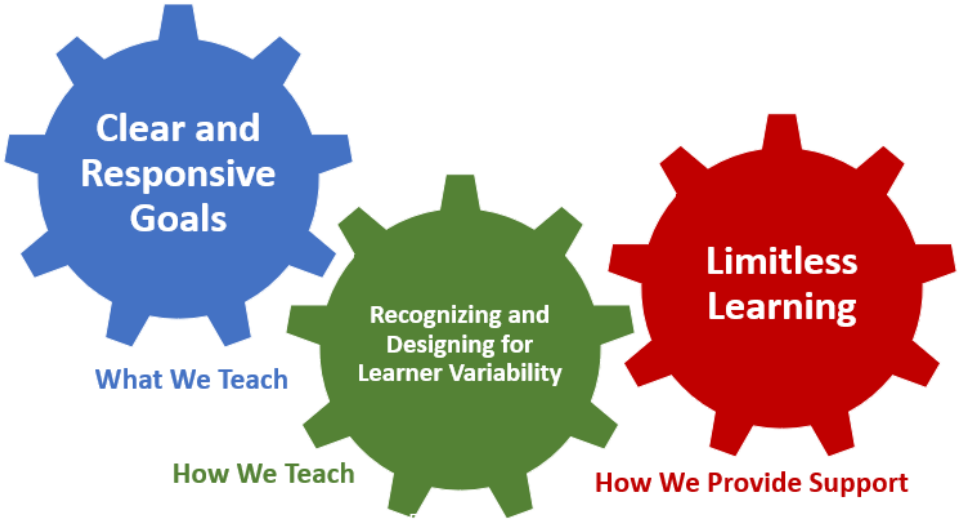
solutions, but it must also be considered that just as there is a range of student variability across SCSD so too is there a range of teacher and school variability. Just as there is no one approach to curriculum that will support all students, there is no one change solution that will work for all schools and teachers. Engaging multiple approaches with embedded choice would be responsive to this diversity and serve to create a stronger enabling environment for this OIP. Additionally, each of the proposed solutions focuses on only one of the essential components of UDL and to fully implement UDL all essential components must over time be present (Smith et al., 2018). Thus, the chosen solution is to create flexibility and choice within the improvement cycle AIF rather than direct a single approach that everyone is required to engage with.

At the core of UDL is design. It is not a specific set of pedagogical practices but rather a way of thinking while designing classroom learning. The essential components that are used to define UDL for this OIP reflect key considerations for planning. The first component, clear goals, defines what to teach. The second component of recognizing and designing for variability reflects how to teach. How the first two components are perceived and designed will impact how students are supported. Factoring in flexibility and variability in the first two components create the conditions to support students in an inclusive rather than integrative manner. This aims to counter the predetermined limits placed on students through integrative approaches. Figure 11 displays the cascading effect of each of these components within the curriculum design process. The design question at the core of UDL and this PoP is how these essential components can be designed in ways that provide students with the supports and scaffolds they need without stigmatizing or limiting them. Addressing a question of design is inherently context specific, involving inquiry and prototyping action. Therefore, the proposed solution to addressing this question, and therefore this PoP, is for schools or groups of teachers to consider their own context and develop and engage in responsive improvement cycles aimed at developing over time each of the essential components and their intersections. The change framework used in

this OIP, which will be further explained in chapter 3, will create the structures to ensure that this process aligns with the change vision.

Figure 11

Mapping UDL Essential Components to Teaching and Learning Practices



Note. This figure shows the connection and interconnectedness of UDL essential components.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

Education systems are made up of dynamic and layered networks of human beings existing and interacting across a wide range of social and political contexts (Desautels & McKnight, 2016). Any change that occurs within these systems can have effects that ripple out in many directions. This complexity speaks to the importance of developing a change plan that considers the range of ethical challenges that may arise in attempting to address the PoP. Many of the framing theories for this OIP are grounded in ecological understandings. “Adaptive leadership is specifically about change that enables the capacity to thrive” (Heifetz et al., 2009, p. 14). Given the focus of this PoP, from an ethical lens both collective and individual capacity to thrive must be considered, with a particular emphasis on those who face the most challenges to that end. Consideration for human thriving cannot happen without also considering human dignity and human rights (Kleinig & Evans, 2013). Grounding this discussion of ethics

associated with this PoP in the idea of supporting individuals and communities to thrive draws connections to the social model of disability that grounds DSE, requiring an examination of the interactions and environmental factors that inhibit thriving.

Inclusive leadership is inherently connected to thriving and aims to uphold the autonomy and voice of all stakeholders (Ryan, 2006a). In complex systems, ethical issues can arise in the tensions of ensuring voice and autonomy for all stakeholders. This PoP brings to light the ethical issues associated with system-centered versus person-centered decision-making. An added ethical issue that must be considered in this PoP is the position and agency of the writer. As an informal leader, the writer's work has been focused on individual students for many years, and thus positions her at times as an advocate for a person-centered approach with those in formal leadership roles who have system-level responsibilities. In his seminal work on inclusive and special education, Skrtic (1991) contends that special education emerged to serve the needs of organizations and professionals rather than of the individual students that it is designed for. The OIP must consider the ethical tensions that may arise related to stakeholder responsibilities and foci. Both inclusive and adaptive leadership position leadership as collective action rather than as something that exists within an individual. Using these as frames for developing this OIP better ensures that the perspective and responsibilities of stakeholders at varying levels of the system and community are engaged and considered.

Negotiating the ethics of change at all stakeholder levels requires consideration for the prevention of harm and attention to ensuring stakeholder's autonomy and voice. Further, it requires consideration for how to ensure thriving, collectively and individually, and how these two get balanced. In their work on Adaptive Leadership, Heifetz et al. (2009) consider three overriding ethical issues to be explored when enacting adaptive change. These are the potential damage of any action or inaction taken, managing competing values, and being intentional about keeping the whole picture of the problem in sight. Following is an examination of each of these ethical issues as they apply to this context and OIP.

Potential Damage to Self and Others

Change is hard. Adaptive changes often involve a process of loss for stakeholders (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002). An important ethical consideration for inclusive change is the level of distress that stakeholders may feel when long-standing beliefs and practices appear to be challenged. The special education system has been built and solidly reinforced on beliefs that students with disabilities require a different education supplied by those who are specially trained to educate them (Wehmeyer, 2013). Both parents and those who work in education may feel a high level of distress around students not getting what they need when presented with the idea of educating them through extending what is naturally available to all other students. It may be perceived as the student not being individually served. Further, success with this approach may result in feelings of guilt and shame related to past practice. Pacing, dialogue, evaluation of what is essential, and holding environments must be implemented in ways that are supportive, collaborative, and open rather than isolating, coercive, and dismissive.

Adaptive change is not quick and often involves challenging long-standing beliefs and practices. These stem from mental models that impact the individual way everyone interprets the world (Meadows, 2008; Senge, 2006). Pushing practice that does not align with one's mental models can lead to diverting attention or displacing responsibility, playing out as narrowing in on only technical elements, denial, creating conflict, redefining the problem to fit into what is already known, marginalizing or attacking the change agent, and pushing to delegate the problem to someone else (Heifetz et.al. 2009). These avoidance responses reflect disequilibrium and are particularly prevalent when enacting change grounded in social justice issues (Theoharis, 2007). Moving through the change process, it will be important to those driving the change process to recognize and respond to these types of actions. As well, addressing the ethical issue of not creating unmanageable levels of distress through a change process requires attention to building, and ensuring stakeholder agreement, of a common

vision, definitions, and language (Ainscow, 2016; Heifetz et al., 2009). These considerations will be important in establishing the pace of the change process.

Managing Competing Personal and Institutional Values

Managing complex change will inevitably involve managing competing values. This is particularly relevant to this PoP in a province and division that strongly value tradition and within a broader neo-liberal educational culture. Starratt (1991) proposes a framework for evaluating ethical issues that arise in education that involves looking at the issue through ethics of critique, justice, and care. An ethics of critique aligns with DSE as it serves to uncover "which group has advantage over the others, how things got to be the way they are, and to expose how situations are structured and language used to maintain the legitimacy of social arrangements" (Starratt, 1991, p. 189). The ethics of justice is grounded in the interplay between citizenship and community and requires many of the skills needed to develop the conditions for social learning both in the classroom and professional community required for this OIP. From this lens, creating just schools and implementing just practices requires "ongoing critique of those structural features of school that work against human beings" (Starratt, 1991, p. 194). Finally, the ethics of care recognizes that what is just for everyone may be different. It acknowledges and supports diversity and personalization.

These ethical lenses can reveal long-standing educational mental models and systemic structures that need to be considered in addressing this PoP. Importantly, some of these systemic structures may be mandated at a level in which they need to be integrated, managed, or reframed rather than changed or eliminated. Ethical issues may arise within this process. Is it possible to meet standardization requirements while also making learning and assessment responsive when teaching classes with significant learner variability (Kluth & Straut, 2003)? How do educators support struggling students free from the damaging impact of ability-based practices (Hart et al., 2004)? Further, what role does what we measure in education play on where our focus is and needs to be and how does this create tension with enacting inclusive

values (Ainscow, 2009)? The destabilizing questions associated with this OIP reflect that "the ways in which disability has been taken up in education has been dominated and fueled by unquestioned beliefs that have served to forward deficit thinking and pathologizing" (Iannacci, 2018, p. 2). The ethical challenge associated with this is how differently stakeholders may perceive what students labeled with disabilities need educationally.

Maintaining a View of the Whole Picture

The final area for ethical consideration that Heifetz et al. (2009) propose connects to understanding the larger systemic picture of the PoP. Schools are complex interrelated systems. Any change initiative will have impact on other people and aspects of the system (Kinsella & Senior, 2008). This dynamic requires several ongoing ethical considerations. One question that must be examined when asking teachers to change practice is if the means justifies the end (Heifetz et al., 2009). Important to this, as stated previously, is having a common understanding of the end. Visions of inclusive education generally involve more than achievement, recognizing the potential damaging impact of having this sole focus (Hart et al., 2009; Ainscow, 2014). Connected to this, there must also be consideration for what is being uprooted in a change process (Heifetz et al., 2009). A human tendency to move toward polarization may have impact here. In the provincial, division, and school contexts of this PoP, much has been invested in medical-model approaches that focus on assessment and remediation of deficits. Proposing a shift toward practices grounded in the social model of disability, if looked at from a polarizing perspective, can be interpreted as eliminating intentional learning scaffolds to meet the varying learning levels in a classroom. Building common understanding of the purpose of these models to inform more inclusive approaches will be necessary.

The proposed vision of this OIP is a values-based one, and thus some elements of measuring success will be subjective. Additionally, supporting a shift to a strength-based approach involves processes of examining what is good and working. Thus, the potential for self-deception and rationalization in measuring the success of the change exists (Heifetz et al.,

2009). Depending on desire to see the initiative to succeed or not, stakeholders may see only the parts that are working or the parts that are not and decide to proceed or discontinue work based on these perceptions. Complicating this picture is the complexity of the definition of inclusive education. Countering this will require having an agreed upon definition that includes metrics as well as ensuring a range of stakeholder involvement in evaluation (Ainscow et al., 2016).

Conclusion

Student diversity in SCSD classrooms is currently being addressed through a retrofitting and integrative approach. The aim of this OIP is to shift to a design and inclusive approach. The author, in collaboration with the learning services department of SCSD, is proposing a plan to engage stakeholders in shifting toward more inclusive instructional practices. Central to the plan is the idea of emergence and coherence with the aim to build a level of understanding and ownership that creates sustainability in enhancing inclusive learning. The next chapter will apply the background information generated in these first two chapters and outline the author's proposed plan for addressing the PoP.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

Important to this improvement plan is an understanding that the aim is to address exclusions that currently happen within the interpretation, design, and delivery of classroom curriculum. To this point work focused on the academic elements of the supports and service continuum has been done on an individual school basis, primarily focusing on responding to literacy and numeracy benchmarks through separate targeted interventions. Little intentional work has been done that focuses on universal level teaching and learning. This final chapter uses implementation science to frame a process of self-review and development focused on moving toward designing and delivering curriculum that embeds a continuum of flexible scaffolds, supports, and services to address learner variability. An implementation plan for this process, along with monitoring, evaluating, and communication considerations will be discussed.

Change Implementation Plan

As outlined in Chapter 2, the combination of the formula for success and the active implementation frameworks (AIF) will be used as a framework to implement inclusive curricular practices informed by universal design for learning (UDL) in SCSD. Within this framework, after initial exploration and preparation work, SCSD will engage in continuous improvement cycles. In chapter 2 several ideas for these cycles were proposed. These included unpacking curriculum goals, developing administrators as UDL instructional leaders focused on recognizing and designing for learner variability, and empowering students through self-determined learning structures to drive the change. Each of these possible solutions was aligned with one of the three essential components of UDL (Smith et al., 2018) that represent the aim of the change process. Given that all three of these components must be present to define practice as UDL it was determined that the change plan would include provision for all of them. The aim of the change plan extends beyond changed pedagogical practices to include changed structures to support those practices and a changed culture rooted in an inclusive mindset. Adaptive and inclusive leadership, with their aim to develop a combination of an adaptive, learning, and

critically conscious culture, will be instrumental in guiding these changes. As mentioned previously, the writer's role in SCSD is that of a divisional consultant focused specifically on inclusive education. Therefore, the writer's role throughout the process will be to work in consultation and collaboration with the range of stakeholders involved in the process. The most critical and well-established relationship to move the plan forward initially will be with the Associate Superintendent of Learning Services as this is the divisional department that would drive the change and oversee the work related to the aligned specific strategic priority focused on expanding inclusive curricular practices.

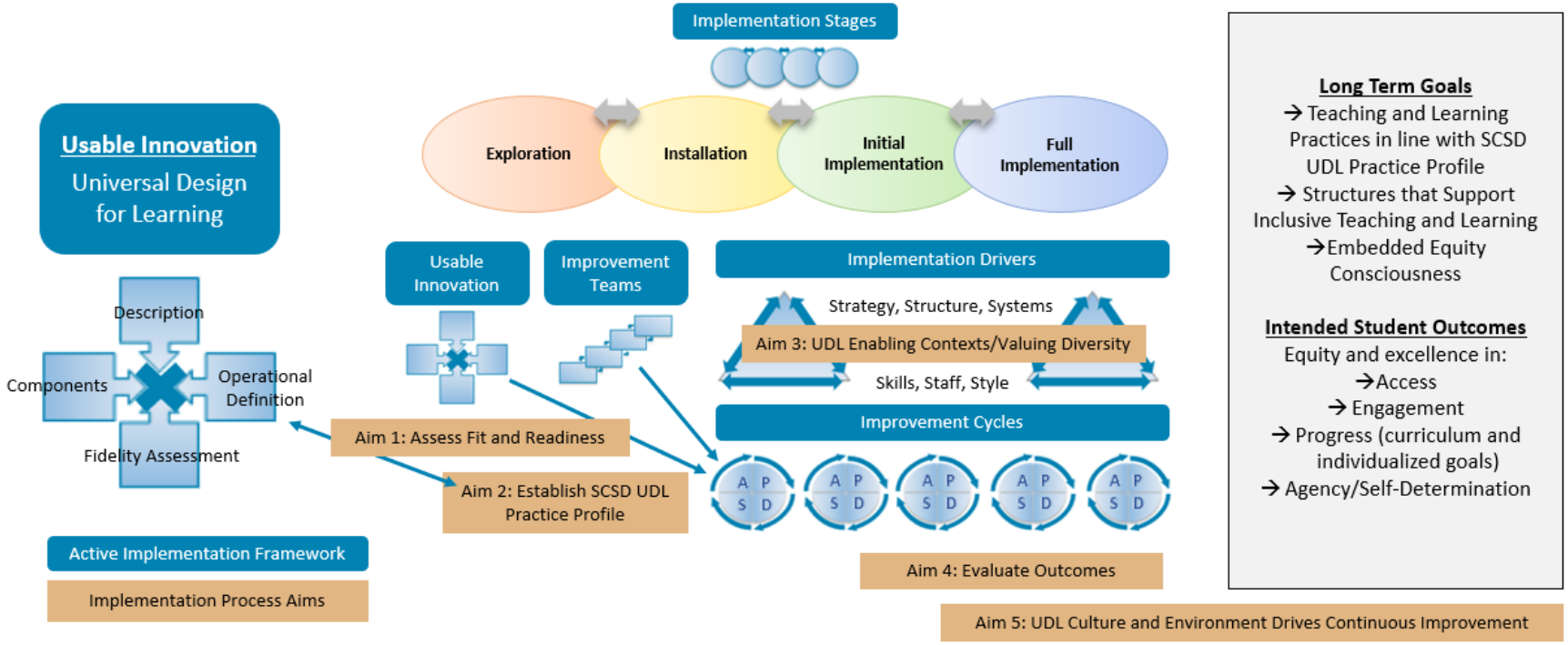
The change process incorporates the five AIFs described in chapter 2. These encompass the critical factors that have been found broadly necessary for effective and sustainable implementation (Duda & Wilson, 2018). The implementation stages AIF presents the pathway with the other AIFs providing direction within relevant stages. These frameworks serve not only to inform the work done throughout the process, but also create the conditions for evidence-based decision making and facilitate the development of a language of practice to ensure productive communication. Figure 12 outlines how each of the AIFs fit into the change process along with specific aims at the various stages of the process. The aims initially move through assessing fit to defining UDL and then into a continuous improvement process focused on both implementing UDL and creating the enabling environment. Important to note is that student outcomes do not start to be measured until late in the process. This is because it takes time to develop the environment and capacity necessary to be able to measure student outcomes (Fixsen et al., 2019). Student data is used before this time to inform implementation teams on how to enhance implementation drivers.

Useable Innovation: Universal Design for Learning

Before UDL can be effectively implemented in SCSD classrooms, it must first be well defined. The application of the useable innovation AIF introduced in chapter 2 guides defining

Figure 12

SCSD UDL Implementation Process Overview



Note. This figure is adapted to the context and aims of this OIP from C. Blanchard, M. Livet, C. Ward, L. Sorge, T.D. Sorensen, M Roth-McClurg (2017) The active implementation framework: a roadmap for advancing implementation of comprehensive medication management in primary care. Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy 13 (2017) 922-929.

UDL to ensure that it is understood in a way that it can be implemented, supported, and assessed. Essential to the usable innovation AIF is that UDL be defined to include "the philosophy, values, and principles that underlie it, clear descriptions of the essential functions, operational definitions of essential functions, and practical assessments of performance" (Metz, 2016, p. 2). Both the work of Ainscow (2005) and Alberta Education's Inclusive Education Policy aid in framing the inclusive philosophy, values, and principles that underpin UDL. Ainscow (2005) identifies a common and agreed upon definition of inclusion as a necessary precondition to inclusive change. Further, through a review of the research on inclusive change, he recommends the inclusion of four key elements in the definition. These are outlined in the left column of Table 2. Alberta Education includes six principles in its definition of inclusive education, outlined in the right column of Table 2. The combination of these two lists provides a starting point to define the inclusive philosophy and values associated with UDL. One of the action steps that will be taken in the exploration stage of the process is that of using the information in Table 2 to work toward a clear definition of UDL. This will be outlined later.

Table 2

Inclusive Education Definition and Principles Underpinning UDL Implementation in SCSD

Inclusive Education Definition (Ainscow, 2005)	**Principles of Inclusive Education (Alberta Education, 2021b)**
▪ Inclusion is a process. ▪ Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers. ▪ Inclusion is about the presence, participation, and achievement of all students. ▪ Inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion, or underachievement.	▪ Anticipate, value, and support diversity and learner differences. ▪ High expectations for all learners. ▪ Understand learners' strengths and needs. ▪ Remove barriers within learning environments. ▪ Build capacity. ▪ Collaborate for success.

Note. This table presents key information from Ainscow (2005) and Alberta Education for consideration in defining the usable innovation of UDL.

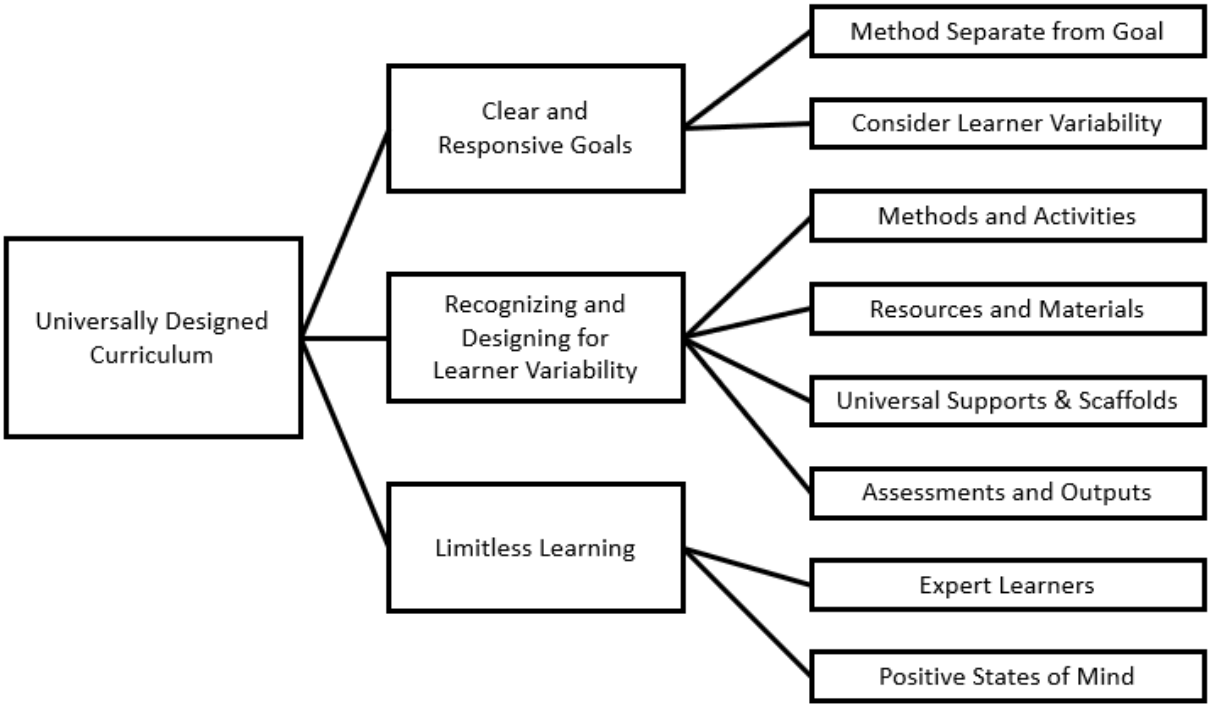
The second criteria of defining a usable innovation is to define its essential components (Fixsen et al., 2019). For this OIP, these have been previously discussed and include clear goals,

recognizing and designing for learner variability, and limitless learning. UDL-IRN, as the original source of outlining these three specific criteria, state that the components may require some revision to ensure they align with the context they will be used within (Smith et al., 2018). The purpose of clearly defining these components is to ensure fidelity of implementation. For a starting point for this OIP the components have been unpacked into UDL-aligned sub-components to provide increased clarity (see Figure 13). The third criteria of defining a useable innovation is connected to the second criteria and requires attaching operational definitions to each of these essential UDL components (Fixsen et al., 2019). An operational definition, when applied to data collection, is a clear, concise detailed definition of a measure. As will be expanded on later in this chapter, the definition of UDL will need to be discussed, understood, and agreed upon early in the process to give guidance to the remainder of the work.

The final criteria recommended is to include practical performance assessments. Practice profiles, often discussed in implementation science research, match well with this need in the context of this OIP. A practice profile is "a performance-based method of operationalizing and assessing fidelity of (an) implementation" (Smith et al., 2018). Practice profiles are meant to be research informed and locally created to ensure a match to context. A practice profile is often depicted in a table with the first column listing the essential components of the innovation. Subsequent columns include an explanation of the component's contribution to the aimed-for outcome, specific practice indicators outlining what the innovation would look like at a range of implementation levels, a list of competency and organizational drivers that support the component, and the desired outcome or area of impact. An initial draft version of a practice profile that reflects all elements necessary to define the innovation is included in the Appendix. It is important to recognize that this is not a final copy as practice profiles should be agreed upon by all implementation team members and may be modified based on learning from improvement cycles later in the process. The practice indicators represent one possible element to use in assessing implementation fidelity. Other elements will be discussed in later sections.

Figure 13

SCSD UDL Essential Components and Sub-Components



Note. This figure lists the essential components and sub-components to be used to develop an operational definition of UDL for this OIP.

Integrated Stage-Based Framework for Implementation

In 2015, Metz et al. completed a research brief on the implementation stage framework to discover the core elements that are "threated through and important in each stage of implementation" (p. 5). They discovered three main core elements that frame the work that needs to be done at each stage. These are

1. building and using implementation teams to actively lead implementation efforts;
2. using data and feedback loops to drive decision-making and promote continuous improvement; and
3. developing a sustainable implementation infrastructure that includes general capacity and innovation-specific capacity (Metz et al., 2015, p. 5).

These core elements and the work outlined in this research brief, along with broader research literature on implementation science, will be used to frame and inform the actions in each of the change stages for this OIP. Figure 14 provides an overview of actions aligned with the stages and core elements. These will be discussed in further detail in the sections to follow.

Exploration Stage: Building and Gaining Support

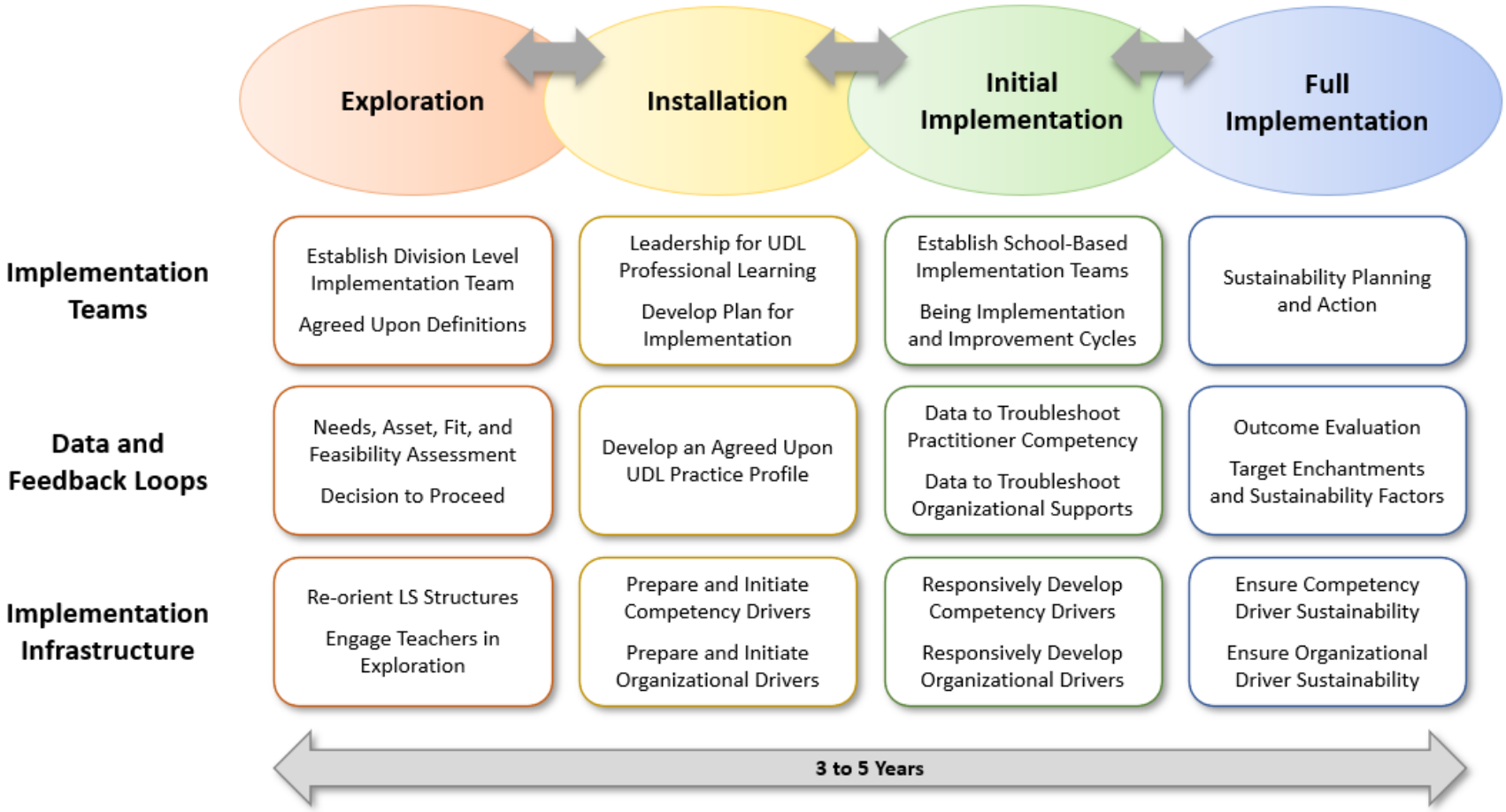
Heifetz et al. (2009) emphasizes the importance of a thorough evaluation of the system, the problem, and the political landscape before engaging in action as a key tenet of adaptive leadership. Critical to both an adaptive leadership and an implementation science informed approach is to not rush too quickly into action (Heifetz et al., 2009; Fixsen et al., 2019). The exploration stage takes place long before UDL will be implemented in division classrooms. The overall goal of this stage is to engage an implementation team in analyzing the potential match between UDL, the division's need to respond to the growing levels of learner diversity, and its resources (Duda & Wilson, 2018). This will require engaging the broader community including school staff, students, and parents. Tasks at this stage will include establishing a clear and measurable definition of UDL to focus the work of the implementation team, engaging teachers to explore UDL, and examining fit and feasibility of UDL in SCSD. Important to the context of this OIP, in which there is a significant need to further develop readiness before implementation, an extended amount of time may be needed for the work associated with this stage of the process. The plan that is outlined here would dedicate one school year to the exploration stage. Toward the end of the school year, when it comes time to consider strategic priority goals of the next year, the implementation team will need to make the decision to proceed with UDL implementation or not.

Implementation Teams

The implementation team framework was introduced in chapter 2. The first

Figure 14

SCSD Implementing UDL Stage Specific Actions



Note. This figure outlines activities across three domains at each stage of the change process.

implementation team to be established in this change plan is the division implementation team (DIT). In later stages other teams will be established. Throughout the process, and in alignment of the scope of the implementation team, these teams are "accountable for assuring the AIFs are used as intended in organizations and systems in support of effective innovations" (Fixsen et al., 2019, p. 228). Metz et al. (2015) recommends that the initial team contains one or more member of the team who has a significant level of knowledge about the targeted intervention as well as a balance or practice, supervisory, leadership and policy perspectives. As mentioned previously, this change plan aligns with a division level strategic priority for which the learning service department is responsible and there currently exists a learning service advisory team that includes central office staff, school administrators and learning service support teachers. Given that there is already time and interaction protocols for this team established, that this work aligns with the role of the advisory team, and that the team meets the representation criteria suggested by Metz et al. (2015) this would be the proposed initial implementation team. This team becomes the link from the change agent's role as a consultant to those in the division who have the positional power to enact a plan that requires significant organizational work.

To be effective, the implementation team will need to have or develop practice, process, and change knowledge. In this change process, this constitutes the initial focus for this team. As discussed previously, a well-researched lever for inclusive change is to begin with an agreed upon definition that includes metrics (Ainscow, 2005). This definition then serves as a reference for all other work that is done. Table 3, discussed previously, reflects some of the essential elements of a definition focused on inclusion rather than integration. This discussion also creates an initial opportunity to embed Heifetz et al. (2009) strategies on building the adaptive culture necessary for this change process. Given the many entrenched integrated structures and beliefs in the education system it will be important to make space for the tough issues that are generally avoided in conversations about inclusion. A potential way to bring forward these

issues is to frame the discussion in case study examples and non-examples, reflecting the conflicts between current practices and the definition and principles.

Beyond defining inclusion, the implementation team will need to develop a deeper understanding of UDL. During the year leading up to this change process, in anticipation of the addition of this strategic priority the members of the implementation team have taken part in professional development that introduces them to UDL. Presenting and defining the essential components of UDL would be the next step to developing understanding. To ensure understanding, implementation team members could be asked to find examples of each of the essential components in practice across SCSD and bring these back to the team for discussion. Finally, in addition to laying this groundwork in developing practice knowledge, this team will need to have both process and change knowledge specific to this change. These are more objective and therefore presentation would be an effective way to achieve this.

The long-term goal with DIT would be for them to adopt inclusive and adaptive leadership actions that will support this change plan. The initial hard discussions proposed in this section is a first step in that direction. In longer-term practice, this equates to taking active roles developing, or further developing as there are elements already in place, the adaptive, learning, and critically conscious cultures previously presented as important to achieve the work of this OIP. Without embedding work that aims to shift culture, the risk that practices implemented will be modified over time to fit into traditional integrative approaches is high. This culture-level work will need to extend beyond this team. Suggestions for a process to engage school staff in conversation and activities that aim to develop the adaptive culture necessary for this change will be discussed in the infrastructure section.

Data and Feedback Loops

This change process aims to use a range of data both to support decision-making and to better ensure effective communication and feedback loops between the range of stakeholders that must be involved in the aim of systemic change. Important to the social nature of inclusive

change, implementation science values both quantitative and qualitative feedback data (Damschroder et al., 2009). The work framed under this category in each stage of the change process serves to facilitate the development of the reflective culture aimed for when enacting inclusive leadership (Ryan, 2006a; Rayner, 2007). As Damschroder and her colleagues concluded after reviewing implementation frameworks, "dedicating time for reflecting and debriefing before, during, and after implementation is one way to promote shared learning and improvement along the way" (Damschroder et al., 2009, p. 11). The work in this area in this phase of the change involves assessing needs, assets, fit, and feasibility related to using UDL to address the growing concern of increased learner variability in division classrooms. As inclusive curriculum practices has already been set as a strategic priority for SCSD the answer that is being sought is if UDL is the right approach to doing this.

Ralabate & Berquist (2020), in the work that they have done on UDL implementation using an implementation science lens, have compiled survey resources developed and used by school divisions. Three of these resources align well with the SCSD context and the aim of this stage of the change process. Permission to copy and utilize the resources with the CAST copyright statement is included in their work. Within this change plan, it would be the responsibility to the DIT to review these resources and make decisions on how to proceed with using them or something different to gather the data necessary at this point of the change process. The first one is the UDL implementation willingness and interest survey. This survey consists of 5 questions that use a Likert agreement scale to assess if stakeholders believe that the knowledge, skills, resources, value-connection, and confidence exist to support implementing UDL. It also includes specific short answer style questions that create opportunity for feedback on stakeholder views on the risks and benefits of UDL. This document could be used either as a survey or a discussion framework to both get a better understanding of how UDL is currently viewed across the division and to do the work discussed earlier on uncovering and confronting unexamined and systemic beliefs about learners and learning.

The second resource that is provided is the UDL knowledge, beliefs, and practice survey. The elements of this survey align with the three essential components of UDL previously presented. This survey could therefore provide insight into change driver considerations through both the beginning stages of the change plan and while developing the driver analysis for the practice profile that will be discussed in the installation stage section. This survey is broken into three categories that include both Likert agreement scale and short answer questions in the areas of belief, belief and practice, and knowledge and practice. Including sections that focus on beliefs gives insight into the mental models that are driving practice and, therefore, insight into what may need to be targeted in the change process.

The final resource was initially developed as "a learning tool for teachers to self-assess their professional learning needs in the area of UDL" (Ralabate & Berquist, 2020, p. 172). This survey includes ten multiple choice questions that ask teachers about their instructional practice. After answering a question, a feedback sections comes up congratulating the teacher if their answer aligns with UDL practices and providing information to consider if it does not. For example, the first question asks teachers if a few, some, every or none of their students would be able to articulate the learning goal attached to the lesson they are delivering. The feedback offered if they answer none, few, or some explains the advantages of students being able to articulate the goal of a lesson. These advantages are all connected to the student being able to access and optimize learning. Again, these questions align with the three essential components of UDL. One way to use this tool would be to encourage teachers to do it and then have a single question survey that gets submitted asking them what their PD interests are related to UDL. In this way, they would be able to state what they are most interested in learning more about based on the feedback information that was provided when doing the survey.

This section offers three possibilities for both assessing where the division currently is at in reference to UDL and engaging stakeholders in conversations about learner variability, UDL, and inclusive education. The end goal of gathering this data and having these conversations is

for the division level implementation team to decide if they will discontinue pursuing UDL, continue to build readiness and understanding for UDL, or move into the next stage of the process which involves building readiness for implementation of UDL. Buy-in from the formal division and school leaders at this point is necessary for action taken in the remainder of the change process.

Implementation Infrastructure

The final element to consider in the exploration stage of the change process is implementation infrastructure. The focus of this category is that of developing both general implementation and innovation-specific capacity (Metz et al., 2015). In the case of this OIP, this would need to be done at both the DIT level and at the school level specifically with the teachers who will be expected to action UDL if the decision is made to continue with the implementation process. There is significant crossover in the work done in this category with other categories therefore the actions already discussed in other categories explain this work at the DIT level. With teachers, the goal at this point is to enhance change readiness. As introduced previously, Dym and Hutson (2004) outline a sequence of ways to enhance readiness in response to level of receptivity. These include engaging with and getting involved with those who are experimenting individually, providing information to those who are curious, normalizing or seeding with those who are feeling overwhelmed and disrupting thinking or behaviour with those who are rigidly refusing. Two strategies, one already underway in anticipation of inclusive instructional practices becoming a division strategic priority, will be used with the aim of creating an environment in which each of these response strategies could be employed by the DIT team members in response to individual readiness. This first strategy is to re-orient learning services structures to ensure a balanced focus on the entire continuum and the second is to provide school administrators with short, directed introduction to UDL activities to do with their staff on monthly professional development days. This will serve not only to engage staff with exploring

UDL but also for administrators to gather and directly clarify information to be used in making future decisions.

The foci of reorienting learning services structures include the individual support plan (ISP), collaborative planning circle (CPC) process, and the roles of a range of learning service support teachers in the division. These reorientation actions are occurring parallel to the department adopted a new digital form platform that creates increased local control for identifying and generating relevant data. The ISP will be redeveloped within this platform with the strategy suggestions that are offered aligning with the UDL guideline categories. Orientations sessions for all division teachers will include an overview of UDL and these guidelines as well as explanations of ways to consider embedding the strategy universally rather than just for an individual student. The aim is that of an initial understanding of strategies aligned with UDL and to begin to develop a language of practice. The second reorientation is CPC meetings. Each of the schools in the division holds monthly CPC meetings in which a multi-disciplinary team comes together to problem solve challenges related to a student that teachers bring forward. As a divisional consultant, the writer attends these meetings to offer suggestions on how to embed supports and strategies inclusively. The reorienting aspect of these meetings is tied to bringing the ISP with its UDL aligned strategies into these discussions to responsively build capacity. The final change is a review of the job descriptions of learning service support teachers to reorient to the understanding that the position involves both offering individual level support and universal level support. The aim of these reorientations is increasing levels of readiness for UDL implementation through balancing in an introduction to the UDL guidelines and a focus on aligning targeted and specialized approaches with the universal level.

The second strategy to enhance readiness involves short UDL professional learning and discussion activities delivered by school principals on the monthly division PD days that SCSD has. The aim of these would be to learn about UDL rather than to implement UDL. Dym and Hutson's (2004) outline of how to enhance readiness based how teachers respond would be

shared with administrators with the aim of using that information generate increased readiness. Derbiszewska & Tucker-Smith (2020) have developed a resource that compiles strategies to design professional learning that align with the UDL framework. These would be used not only to learn about UDL but also to experience it. The rollout of this action would involve an orientation session early in the year for principals and outlines that are provided prior to each PD-day. The work involved in putting this together and presenting it falls within the scope of the writer's job description. This would require committing approximately a half hour to this on each PD-day. Some of these sessions would be earmarked as times to complete the surveys mentioned previously.

Installation Stage: Planning and Infrastructure Development

If a decision to proceed with UDL implementation is made at the end of the exploration stage, the work will flow into the installation stage. During the installation stage, UDL is not yet being implemented in division classrooms, but "the necessary individual and organizational competencies and supporting infrastructure are being established so that the new practice can be successfully put in place on the ground in the near future" (Metz et al., 2015, p. 12). During this stage, implementation teams will be actively building their and organization's capacity to support implementation driven by the data collected both during the exploration and installation stages. Within the context of this OIP, it is believed that the exploration activities will take a full year followed by dedicating another year to the installation stage before beginning official implementation in the third year. This does not mean that teachers are not invited or encouraged to begin experimenting with some of the elements of UDL but rather sees this as building readiness as opposed to implementation.

Implementation Infrastructure

The implementation driver AIF (see Figure 7) will guide much of the work that will be completed by the DIT during this phase of the change framework. This framework, presented previously in this OIP, reflects an initial synthesis of the research on the factors necessary to

successful implementation combined with continued research to develop the framework (Fixsen et al., 2009). This framework begins from the assumption of implementing an innovation, which reflects a new way of working, requiring both new learning and a changed system to facilitate that work (Fixsen et al., 2019). For the DIT to be able to effectively do its work will require all member of the team having a working understanding of the drivers. Therefore, the first task at this stage of the change process will be a professional learning and discussion session focused on introducing and understanding the implementation driver triangle. This session would also include initial brainstorming around each of the elements specific to implementing UDL in SCSD. Beyond this initial introduction, actions outlined in the remainder of this section will aid in identifying and then enacting the work that must be done before being able to move into implementation.

Data and Feedback Loops

Foundational to the data and feedback loops throughout this process is establishing a clear operational definition of UDL (Duda et al., 2014). According to the APA dictionary of psychology an operational definition is “description of something in terms of the procedures, actions, or processes by which it could be observed and measured” (APA, 2021). This definition will not only be used to measure outcomes but also guide implementation teams in enacting the necessary implementation drivers to support implementation and eventually, sustainability. The three essential components of UDL that have been previously identified will frame the work done to establish an operational definition. Both the NIRN and UDL-IRN in their respective research on implementation science and UDL implementation propose a practice profile as a method to create a usable operational definition (NIRN, 2021; Smith et al., 2018). There exist a range of suggestions of what should be included in practice profiles. Common to all is the inclusion of the essential components, an explanation of the essential component’s contribution to the desired outcome, and a rubric outlining what the practice would look like in its ideal, developmental, and unacceptable states (Metz, 2016). UDL implementation research has

extended this profile to include an examination of the necessary conditions, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support implementation (Smith et al., 2018). Figure 15 and the profile included in the Appendix present a proposed outline for a practice profile aligned to this OIP. It is important to note that a practice profile is not a static document that is handed to a team but rather a dynamic document that initially gets developed together and then is used throughout the process to move the system toward coherence (Fixsen et al., 2019). Therefore, the initial thoughts included in this document will need to be discussed, furthered developed, and agreed upon by the DIT before it is ready for use.

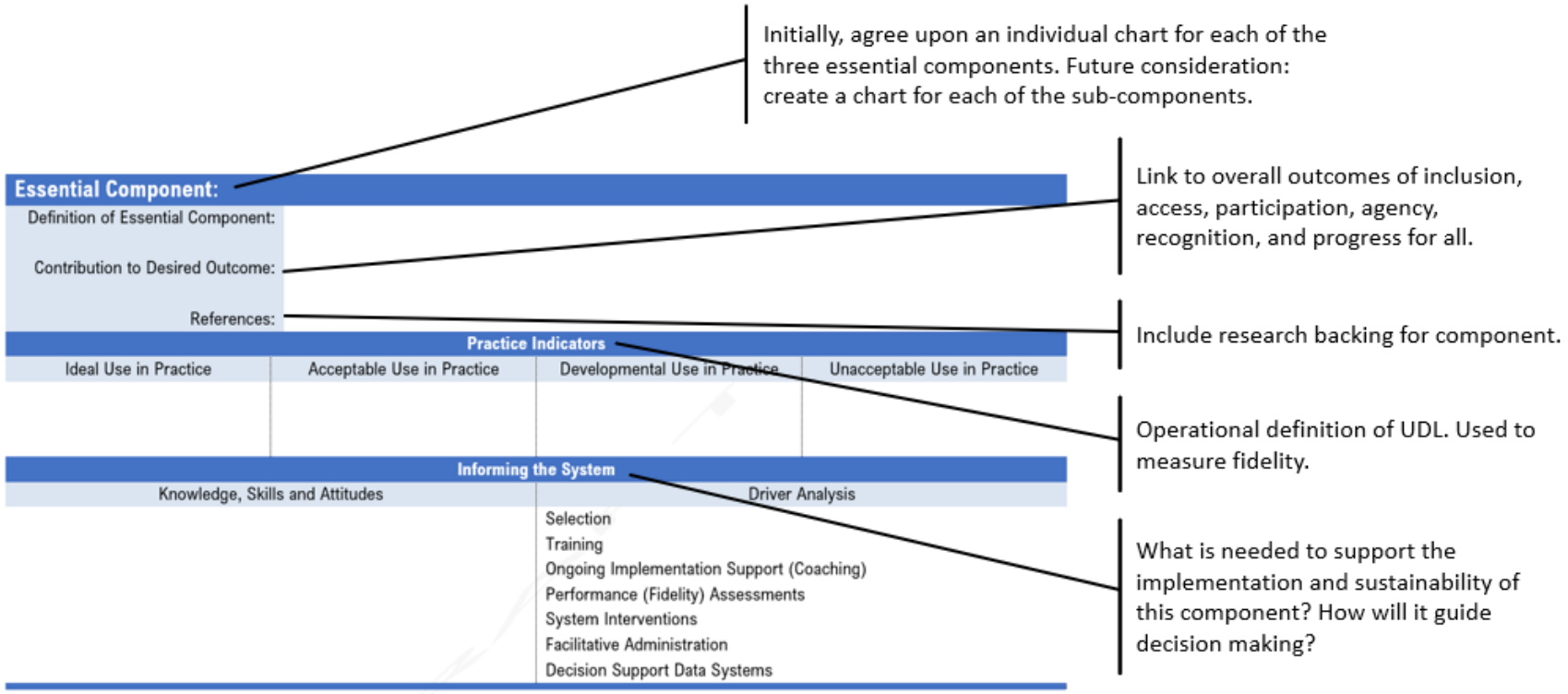
At this stage, the DIT will need to work together to get the practice profile to an agreed upon state. Informing this process will be the research base for and growing understanding of UDL, data and feedback collected during the exploration stage, and awareness of the elements outlined in the change driver AIF previously presented. The elements that should be captured in the change driver section are considerations that connect specifically to change drivers. Smith et al. (2018) created a document that outlines some of these considerations. Under selection they suggest identifying selection criteria for new employees. Training and coaching information should serve as a reference for planning professional development. Discussion on the fidelity assessment for the component will be particularly important as there will need to be agreement on how to capture implementation. Analysis of the organizational drivers should include information that can be used immediately or in the future to make organizational and resourcing decisions. This profile will need to continue to be revisited throughout the change process. More will be discussed on this and the fidelity assessments in the monitoring and evaluation section of this chapter.

Implementation Teams

The last two considerations for the DIT during this stage are ensuring a starting level of UDL understanding before implementation begins and developing a program model for implementation. Discussion of actively building the DIT's own capacity for UDL instructional

Figure 15

SCSD UDL Practice Profile Essential Component Outline



Note. Adapted from *Practice Profile Tool*, National Implementation Research Network (https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED606122.pdf) and from C. Smith, G. Amend, & M. Lane (2018) UDL-IRN SIG: Implementers: An implementation tool that works to define a gold standard.

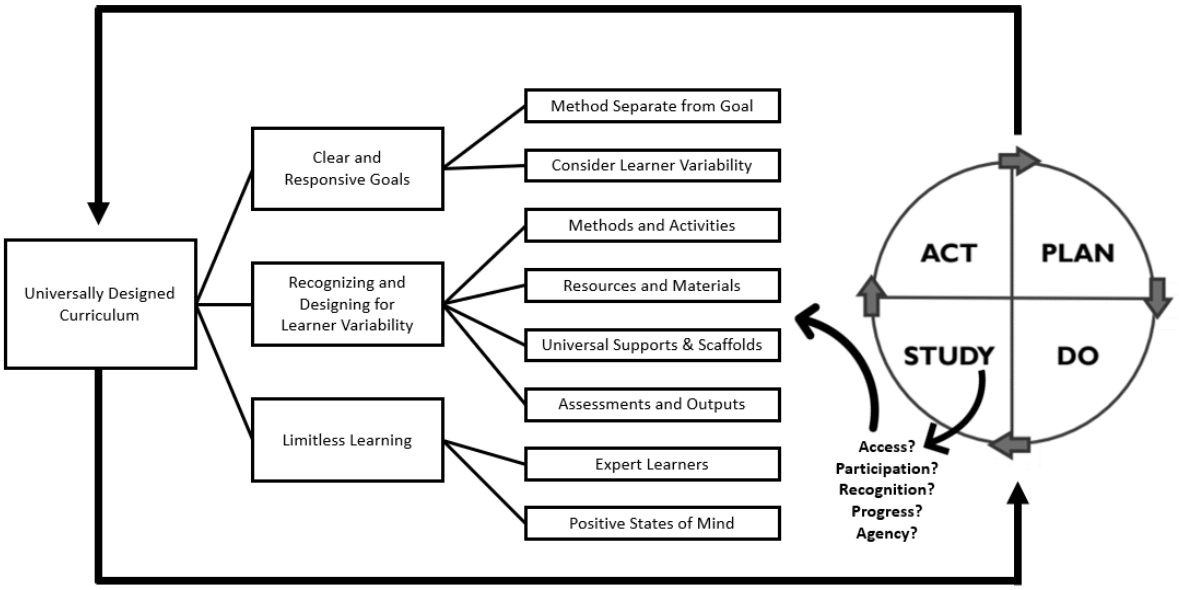
leadership and teacher capacity for UDL-aligned pedagogy should begin when competency drivers are introduced. A combination of the data collected in the exploration stage and what is discovered in the development of the practice profile will reveal specific professional learning needs. The DIT will need to create a plan and engage presenters or partnerships for initial professional learning sessions. Options to consider are using one of the whole division PD days to have a speaker come in and given an overview of UDL, continuing to embed short PD session into monthly staff PD days, and engaging the UDL knowledge present in the division to do individual school sessions, lunch and learns, or webinars. Consideration for diversity in learning at the professional level should be a part of this planning. An ideal professional learning model would include flexible options for staff. For building capacity for UDL leadership, the time that is dedicated in the calendar for leadership professional learning could be considered. The DIT would need to make these decisions with the aim of being prepared for implementation.

The final task for the DIT at this stage will be to develop an implementation action plan that embeds the improvement cycle AIF. The use of this AIF is based on an understanding of the cascading factors associated with the learning and unlearning associated with change. To impact the multiple system levels associated with this change will require a process that allows for continuous improvement and communication across system levels (Senge, 2006). The improvement cycle AIF involves using plan-do-study-act (PDSA) cycles as a "process for making decisions systemically while engaging in continuous improvement" (Duda & Wilson, 2018, p. 15). The data gathered through the cycles are used both to refine the practice and the organizational structures that support the practice. This process supports the inclusive leadership aim of developing a culture of learning (Rayner, 2007). Figure 16 presents a framework that incorporates key elements of the change vision that can be referenced in developing an approach to improvement cycles. Universally designed curriculum as the aim for the improvement cycles is defined using the essential components outlined in the practice profile. PDSA cycles focus on developing universally designed curriculum practices. At the study

stage of the cycle the metrics for inclusion agreed upon in the change process are used to analyse if the practice is enhancing inclusion. If it is not, essential component information informs the next cycle.

Figure 16

SCSD UDL Continuous Improvement Cycles



Note. This figure outlines the continuous improvement cycles for this change plan. PDSA cycles are evaluated on for exclusions and UDL essential elements are used in successive cycles to find ways to include a larger diversity of students.

The DIT needs to first agree upon this process and then agree upon a model to enact it. Several possible models, aligned with specific UDL essential components were suggested in chapter 2. A discussion followed the presentation of these possible solutions outlining how all the essential components must be present to fully implement UDL and it was proposed that all presented solutions be worked into the change plan. One of the key practices of adaptive leadership discussed previously is that of maintaining a productive level of disequilibrium (Heifetz et al., 2009). As UDL is a complex construct and can appear overwhelming with all its interlocking elements, it will be important to proceed with implementation in a way that facilitates changed practice but does not overwhelm. The challenge with this when considering

whole division implementation is the variability in responsiveness to change that will exist. The inclusion of staff selection when considering competency drivers in the driver AIF reflects this idea through the recommendation to begin the work with those who are most responsive and ready and continue to build readiness with others (Fixsen et al., 2019). Given this, a prototyping framework in which practitioners can decide on the focus of their PDSA cycles within a set of guidelines that align with the aim of UDL would work well in this context. Within this approach, whole schools or teams of teachers could decide on specific inquiries to engage in.

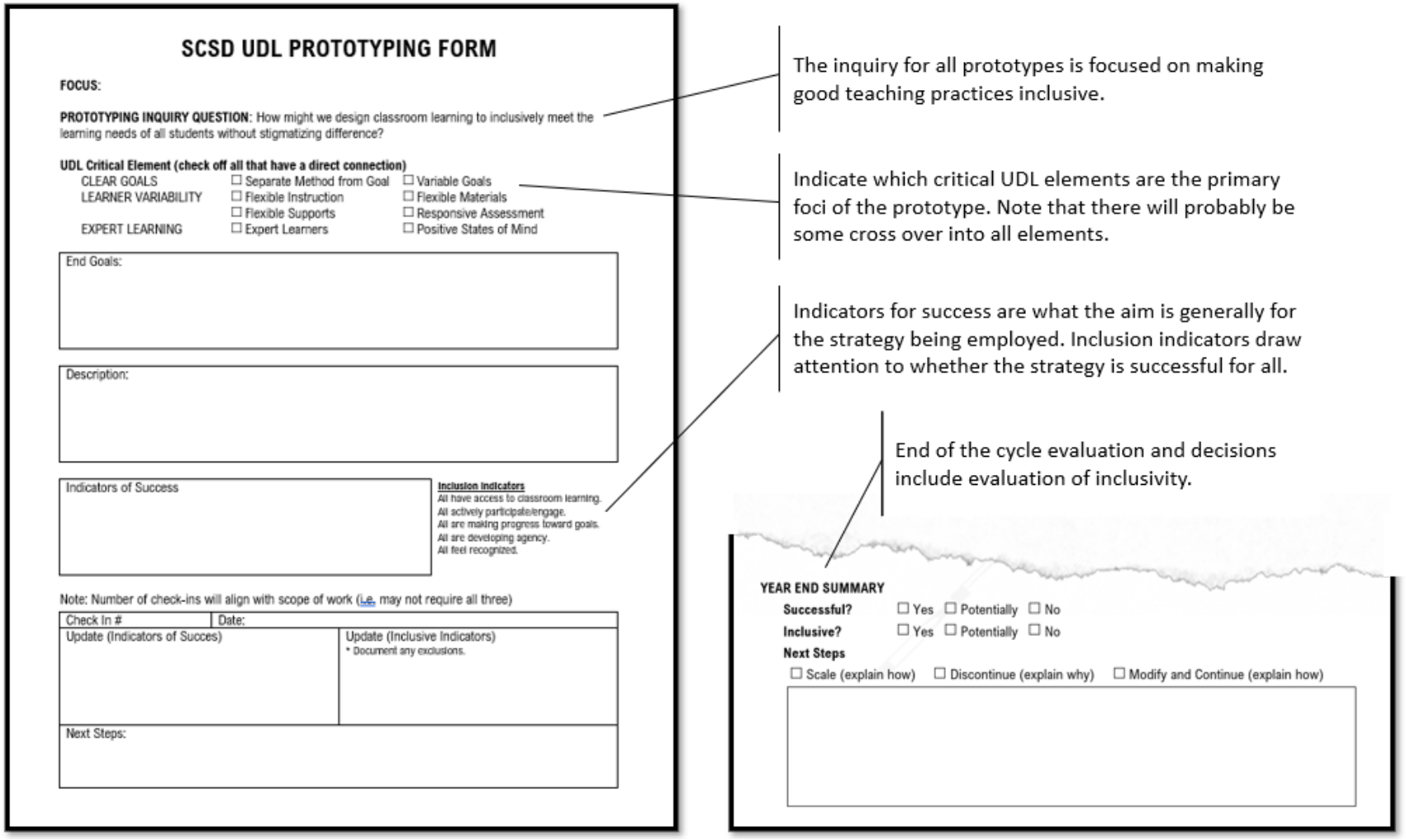
Figure 17 presents a potential outline of a form to frame this process. An important element of this form is that it includes explicit evaluation on the inclusivity of the practice that is being trialed. Identifying students who are not included creates the condition to explore what barriers they may be experiencing and how curriculum can be designed to eliminate those barriers. Additionally, it creates the opportunity to track which groups of students are most often excluded in learning. This intentionally brings the work required to develop critical consciousness into the process. This approach, if done at a whole school level, would better ensure that the requirement of schools focusing on strategic priorities was being met. At this point in the change process, the DIT needs to establish a plan not only for how these inquiries will work but also ensure that the communication pathways to the DIT and school level implementation teams exist to inform how each needs to respond in their work of creating an enabling environment.

Initial Implementation Stage: Trying It Out

The initial implementation stage represents the first use of UDL by teachers. Important to recognize at this point is that the teachers will still just be learning how to use UDL within school and district environments that are still just learning how to support it (Duda & Wilson, 2015). This is considered the most fragile time of the change process in which the adaptive leadership actions of regulating distress and maintaining disciplined attention will become critical. Actions necessary for this include ensuring the appropriate supports, coaching, and

Figure 17

SCSD UDL Prototyping Form Proposed Layout



Note. This figure presents a possible prototyping form, highlighting the inclusive elements necessary for this change plan.

responsively troubleshooting (Blase et al., 2015). Key actions through this stage include engaging school implementation teams (SITs) to drive the prototyping process and monitoring and responding to that work to further develop the enabling environment.

Implementation Teams

At this stage of the change process, SITs are developed. Each school will need to create a small team including the members of the DIT that will lead the prototyping process at their school. The DIT will continue to meet regularly focused on the organizational work that will continue to need to be done in response to the learning through the continuous improvement process. SITs will need to work through many of the same processes that the DIT went through but on a smaller and more rapid scale. The first task of the SIT will be to adapt the general improvement cycle process that has been developed to work within their environment. The second task will be to ensure they have the infrastructure and training in place to begin engaging in cycles. Timeline wise, this work represents how the implementation phases are not distinctly separate from each other as some of this work may occur in the later part of the installation phase. The suggestion would be to bring these team together for a day in the April or May with the intention to begin the process in September. The goal would be for each team to have clarity in how they are going to introduce and support the prototyping process. They will need to consider the elements outlined in the prototyping form as well as decide if they will prototype one idea with the whole school or break into smaller groups and prototype several. This session would include a presentation on prototyping ideas that align with the goal of UDL implementation. From this, prototyping would begin, and both SITs and the DIT will meet regularly to focus on developing the enabling environment in response to what is being learned through the implementation process.

Data and Feedback Loops

Data and feedback loops at this stage of the change aim to quickly target and respond to barriers that may exist to UDL implementation (Metz et al., 2015). This should occur both

within schools through the prototyping process and through creating division level feedback loops to identify the system level work necessary to support implementation and sustainability (Fixsen et al., 2019). Processes at both the school and division level may include forums and surveys in addition to the continuation of both SIT and DIT meetings and the crossover that occurs with having DIT members be part of respective SITs. It will be important to also engage students and parents in these feedback loops as their input may provide valuable information in creating the enabling environment. Data collection processes already in place in the division will need to be considered by the DIT as possible vehicles for some of this work. The more variable the options for feedback are, the larger the reach, giving a more complete picture of all that needs to be considered to ensure effective implementation (Metz et al., 2015). Distinct from implementation outcomes reflected in the practice profile, are student outcomes. As discussed previously, the student outcome goals include increased access, participation, agency, and achievement for all students. These should be used to guide the improvement process in the early stages rather than as data to measure if UDL is effective or not in improving student outcomes. The later can only be measured after UDL has been implemented with fidelity. To do this the DIT will need to come to consensus on broader measures for these outcomes as initially they are embedded into the prototyping process. Some considerations for this include prototyping data, surveys, observations, achievement results, and report card and ISP data.

Implementation Infrastructure

The practice profile and fidelity measures previously developed will provide information on infrastructure development at this stage of the change process (Metz et al., 2015). When data from these sources reveal inconsistent implementation, both SITs and the DIT use the implementation driver AIF to determine if poor fidelity is a result of a competency, organizational, or leadership challenge (Fixsen et al., 2019). If it appears to be a result of a competency challenge, the team considers if there is a need for more actions like professional development, coaching, or trouble shooting support (Duda & Wilson, 2018). If it appears to be

an organizational challenge the teams consider how to shift alignment between desired practices and organizational policies, processes, or procedures (Ralabate & Berquist, 2020). Finally, the team also considers the potential of the need for leadership to attend to larger system or organizational barriers. When action is taken to respond to what are believed to be barriers attention is paid to fidelity measures beyond that point to decide if there is need for continued troubleshooting. These feedback loops should provide the information needed to develop the enabling environment continually and responsively. If at any point, any of the implementation teams feels the change driver framework needs to be supplemented with other considerations, the McKinsey 7S framework previously introduced could be engaged to gain understanding of misalignments through another lens.

Full Implementation Stage: Refining and Institutionalizing It

The purpose of framing this problem of practice within the adaptive and inclusive leadership lens was to consider a change process that aimed to shift culture toward one that is more adaptive, more engaged in continuous learning, and more critically conscious. The development of this culture is essential to the goal of the final phase of ensuring that the work on developing increasingly inclusive curriculum continues beyond the time of the change process. The work in the full implementation stage reflects the work in the previous stage but now with a focus on scaling, optimizing, and sustaining the work (Duda et al., 2015). What has been learned through the process should guide the work at this stage. The process shifts from initial to full implementation as it becomes evident that UDL is being integrated into organizational structures and teachers are skillfully implementing it in their classrooms. Some scholars in implementation science have placed a quantitative number of 50% of practitioners implementing the innovation with fidelity and expected outcomes as the mark at which the full implementation stage begins (Metz et al., 2015). As the phases are not distinct but rather flow into each other this number provides a lose approximation for when the implementation teams should shift the balance toward focusing more on sustainability than managing the distress of

new learning. More importantly, is that as the infrastructure is in place to support UDL and teachers are more confident in designing curriculum from a UDL perspective, the benefits in student outcomes should start to become evident. The student outcome data at this point can inform sustainability.

Stakeholder Reactions and Responses

This PoP challenges status quo practices and potentially points out contradictions between espoused values and enacted values. Further, what is being challenged in this change process are often unseen beliefs and practices deeply engrained in the history and culture of separating special and general education. The process of continuous learning presented in this change plan aims to dig down below surface level pedagogical practices to examine and respond to the structures and mental models that drive those practices (Senge, 2006). Each of the AFIs used within this process predict and engage the challenges that generally arise when engaging in adaptive change. Therefore, attention to responding to stakeholder reactions are embedded within the change structure. The useful innovation AIF serves to maintain focus on the vision and alert implementation teams to the need to troubleshoot and respond using the change driver framework. The implementation team and implementation stages AIFs ensure that the right people are responding to the right challenges at the right time. Finally, the continuous improvement cycle AIF embeds within clarity and feedback loops that direct responses. To consider as SCSD moves through this change process will be whether the culture shift naturally occurs in response to the work or if there is a need to explicitly focus professional development for DIT and SIT and others who take on leadership in the process.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation aim to understand if a specific change results in improvement through defining what needs to be improved and creating feedback processes that measure levels of improvement (Langley et al., 2009). Monitoring is the ongoing collection of information and feedback during the change process used to steer decision making and learning

(Patton, 2010). Evaluation is the analysis of the effectiveness and direction of an activity which involves making a judgement about progress and impact (Patton, 2010). Monitoring and evaluation are deeply embedded in the framework used for this OIP. Therefore, many of the monitoring and evaluation tools and approaches have already been discussed in this chapter. Figure 13 presents an overview of the change process including five specific aims. Each of the aims reflects an element of the change process that will need to be monitored and evaluated throughout the process. They are represented in Figure 13 at the time in which they become most critical but monitoring and evaluation of each will remain important from the point of introduction through to the end of the change process and beyond. The remainder of this section will highlight monitoring and evaluation considerations and change plan connections associated with each of these aims. Table 3 provides considerations for measurement tools and approaches that have either been previously presented or will be presented in this section.

Aim 1: Evaluating and Monitoring Readiness for Change

The purpose of the exploration stage of the change model is to evaluate and develop change readiness. Activities and measures previously presented to do this are listed in Table 3. The final decision made by the DIT on whether to proceed with the change process will be done in response to the ongoing evaluation on change readiness throughout this phase of the change process. Beyond this initial focus on change readiness, there will be a continued need to consider individual readiness for change. The awareness of the individualized component to readiness is built into the change driver AIF. As mentioned previously, one of the competency drivers is related to selection of those to engage, beginning with better ensuring implementation success through engaging willing early adopters. Dym & Hutson's (2004) leveraging readiness continuum previously presented can serve as a leadership tool throughout the process to inform how to responsively engage stakeholders at their individual level of readiness. This tool outlines the actions of people at each level of readiness and describes how to respond allowing for the range from those who are ready to engage to those who rigidly refuse. To ensure effective use of

this tool, an understanding of it would need to be developed with DIT, SIT and others who take on leadership roles through a professional development session.

Table 3

Potential Monitoring and Evaluations Tools and Approaches for Change Aims

Aim	Potential Tools and/or Approaches
Readiness for change	▪ UDL Knowledge, Beliefs, and Practices Survey (Ralabate & Berquist, 2020) ▪ UDL Professional Development Needs Assessment Survey (Ralabate & Berquist, 2020) ▪ UDL Implementation Willingness and Interest Survey (Ralabate & Berquest, 2020) ▪ Feedback generated during UDL monthly introduction sessions on PD days. ▪ DIT members decision to proceed ▪ Leveraging Readiness Chart (Dym & Hutson, 2004)
Evaluating and Monitoring UDL	▪ Operational definition of UDL (research-driven) specific to the context of this PoP. ▪ Practice profile developed specifically for this PoP. ▪ Montgomery County Public Schools Evaluation of UDL Projects Questionnaire (Cooper-Martin & Wolanin, 2014) ▪ Universal Design for Learning Observation Measurement Tool (UDL-OMT) (Basham et al., 2020) ▪ UDL Territory Approach (Moore) ▪ Locally developed observation and survey tools.
Evaluating and Monitoring the Implementation Process	▪ Operational definition of UDL (research-driven) specific to the context of this PoP. ▪ Practice profile developed specifically for this PoP. ▪ Change Driver AIF (and associated research that outlines considerations for each of the change drivers) ▪ Prototyping process feedback associated with student measures of access, participation, achievement, and empowerment. ▪ Locally developed surveys, observations, and engagement sessions.
Student Outcomes	▪ Locally developed observation and survey measures (educators, students, parents) ▪ Individual Support Plan data (effective strategies create access to learning) ▪ Provincial testing ▪ Progress in ongoing literacy and numeracy assessments ▪ Divisional reporting (report cards) ▪ Individual support plans (achievement of individualized goals)
Sustainability	▪ Continued use of measures deemed appropriate to support sustainability from other aims. ▪ Evaluation of Coburn (2003) dimensions of scale: depth, sustainability, spread, and shift in ownership

Note. The table outlines tools and considerations for monitoring and evaluation at each stage of the change process.

Aim 2: Evaluating and Monitoring UDL

The aim of UDL is to embed multiple means of engagement, representation, and expression into classroom learning (Rose & Meyer, 2002). The multiple elements to consider in this presents challenges with clearly measuring UDL. To address this, the DIT agreed-upon definition of UDL and supplementing practice profile serve to inform measuring UDL for this change process. The practice profile can be used for observational, self-reflection, or survey approaches to measuring UDL. Table 3 lists several other tools and measures used to assess if UDL is occurring in classrooms. The practice profile is meant to be a working document (Metz, 2016). If the original operational definition of UDL does not seem clear enough as SCSD moves through the change process these tools and documents can be used as a researched sources to further develop the practice profile. For example, the Montgomery County Public Schools evaluation of UDL projects questionnaire (Cooper-Martin & Wolanin, 2014) could inform the development of a survey to measure the level of embedded UDL practices. Additionally, some of the tools used in assessing change readiness could be revisited to monitor changes in UDL aligned practices.

Aim 3: Evaluating and Monitoring the Implementation Process

The task of the DIT and SITs throughout the change process is to evaluate and monitor the implementation process. This work has been outlined in detail in the previous section. One further consideration in this area is the ongoing use of surveys, observations, and engagement sessions to get a range of stakeholder input. Much of what is presented in the change process section focuses on practitioner feedback. Given a definition of UDL that locates an essential component as student agency it will be important to engage student voice in assessing effectiveness. Additionally, it is always important to engage parents in educational change and particularly important in a division that sees parent partnership as foundational to its work. Therefore, consideration will need to be given to these populations for monitoring and evaluation, perhaps even considering how to include them in implementation teams.

Aim 4: Evaluating and Monitoring Student Outcomes

Implementation science acknowledges that improving educational practice will require monitoring and evaluating both implementation and student outcomes (Duda et al., 2015). Implementation outcomes include those presented in the vision for change: changes to teaching and learning practice, the structures and systems that support them, and the mental models that drive them. The importance of beginning the change process with a definition of inclusion that includes metric reflects the need to consider more than achievement in measuring success. Ainscow (2005) highlights the role that measurement plays in prioritizing actions and approaches. In education, data is required for monitoring progress, impact, planning and organizing but "within a context that values narrowly conceived criteria for determining success, such moves can act as a barrier to the development of a more inclusive education system" (Ainscow, 2005, p. 119). To counter this, Ainscow suggests measuring presence, participation, and achievement for all students, paying particular attention to those groups of learners who are at the most risk of marginalization, exclusion, or underachievement (Ainscow, 2016). He further goes on to emphasize the need to incorporate the views of learners themselves in the quality of their participation and to understand achievement as more than test and examination results. Kozleski et al. (2013) closely mirrors this in their research, suggesting measures for "curriculum access, participation, opportunities to learn, and accomplishments" (p. 222). The idea of accomplishments extends achievement to include such things as self-regulated learning, self-determination, and meaningful and inclusive beyond school outcomes. Therefore, measuring student outcomes will need to include traditional achievement data in addition to data on such things as individual support plan effectiveness, classroom presence, educational access, active classroom participation and engagement, and agency in learning and life. These are used within the prototyping process as measurements to decide on next actions, but DIT and SITs will also need to consider data sources, surveys, observations, and other approaches to ensure collection

of data from a range of stakeholders and in a range of ways to measure each of these outcomes beyond the prototyping process.

Aim 5: Evaluating and Monitoring for Sustainability

It is widely acknowledged now that inclusion is not a state that can be arrived at but rather is an ongoing process that is continually worked toward (Ainscow, 2006). Thus, the long-term goals for this OIP are connected to conditions that sustain inclusive work. In the final stage of the change process both the DIT and SITs will need to intentionally consider these. They will need to examine the various tools and approaches used throughout and decide if they should become part of the fabric of teaching practice or if they are no longer needed. Coburn (2003) presents a four-dimension conceptualization of scale that aids in these considerations. Firstly, to be considered 'at scale,' Coburn (2003) argues, change must move beyond the surface to "alter teacher's beliefs, norms in social interaction, and pedagogical principles" (p. 4). Many of the tools used during the process along with observation and dialogue could given insight into if this is where SCSD is at or if more work is needed to get there.

Coburn's (2003) second long-term goal of spread is more than just spread to an increasing number of classrooms. It also involves spread in which the norms and principles that are being focused on influence allocation of resources, how schools are organized, routines, policies, procedures, and professional development at both the school and divisional level. This will have been measured throughout the process as it is the focus of change in implementation science. Another component used to measure spread is the evaluation of networks and partnerships that have deepened the spread of learning taking place ensuring the work has become more than a series of isolated efforts. This reflects an approach in which the change is naturally supported through the way those in education work together. The DIT and SITs need to evaluate if the initiative continues to be seen as driven by outside forces or if continuous learning focused on increasing inclusion has become an assumed part of teaching practice and ensure that the right level of support is in place based on their evaluation.

Coburn (2003) also argues that a supportive professional community is critical to the sustainability of a change effort. She presents research on the dampening impact of competing priorities, changing demands, and teacher turnover on change efforts beyond the time of focus. She proposes that both a profession community of school colleagues and connection with teachers from other schools is important to sustainability. This long-term consideration will be important as the formal change process comes to an end. Evaluating achievement of this condition can be done through observation or teacher survey. The final condition is a shift in ownership which can be measured by whether the effort continues beyond the time of focus. Coburn's work (2003) would outline indicators for this as schools and teachers assuming responsibility for continued professional learning and stakeholder consideration for maintaining the work done in the change effort as new circumstances, initiatives, and priorities arise. The DIT and SITs evaluating each of these factors would give them insight into what needs to happen beyond the change process for the work to be sustained.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and Change Process

The AIFs used throughout the change process serve not only to guide the work involved with the change process but also to facilitate the clarity and connection that contributes to effective communication amongst stakeholders throughout the change process (Fixsen et al., 2019). When implemented with fidelity, each of the AIFs provides answers and clarity to the range of what, who, when and how questions that will arise from varying stakeholders during a change process. Additionally, the data and feedback loops inherent to each of these frameworks serve as the communication across a range of stakeholder levels required in data-informed decision making. Collectively, the AIFs and data and feedback loops inherent to this plan reflect the communication plan for this change process. Newman (2016) suggests five elements to consider when creating a change communication plan. These are "audience analysis, communication objectives, communication channels, responsibilities, and timing" (p. 1).

Following is an exploration of key communication highlights and considerations with each of the individual AIFs used in this change process.

What: Usable Innovation

The useable innovation AIF outlines specific and non-negotiable criteria that implementation teams develop to clarify specifically what the targeted innovation is (Metz et al., 2015). Without clearly first defining what UDL is, teachers would be left to "independently identify core components and make decisions on how to integrate it" (Duda & Wilson, 2018). Within the traditional and integrative context of the OIP this would likely result in "UDL" being implemented in a way that aligns with integrative approaches. Therefore, it will be critical not only for the DIT to develop and agree upon this definition and the associated practice profile but that it be clearly and repeatedly communicated to all stakeholders. The definition, practice profile, and any associated documents and processes will need to be intentionally developed to move all division stakeholders toward first a common understanding of UDL and then toward the development of common UDL-aligned language of practice.

Who: Implementation Teams

The implementation team AIF clearly defines who will engage in the ongoing implementation work associated with the change at varying levels of the system (Duda at el., 2014). Defining both divisional and school teams further clarifies responsibilities and communication pathways. Having these teams in place and communicating their function should also serve to reduce some level of resistance due to knowing that implementation will be monitored, and system structures modified to ensure it is supported. A critical responsibility of implementation teams will be "creating pathways of communication with stakeholders, including families, community members, policy makers, and other implementation teams" (Duda & Wilson, 2018). Figure 15, and the following discussion on the change process, located data and feedback loops as one of the three components focused on during each phase of the change process and outlined how teams at varying levels engage them. This reflects the need to

consider clear communication pathways, data collection strategies, and feedback looks throughout the division in all change work done.

When and How: Implementation Phases

The implementation phases AIF outlines four discrete but overlapping phases of the change process (Fixsen et al., 2019). Understanding these phases aids implementation teams in understanding when to shift from one stage to the next, and even potentially when there is a need to shift back to an earlier stage (Duda & Wilson, 2018). Data and feedback loops built into the change process will communicate to implementation teams when to move between phases. Data collected in the first phase will indicate if and when readiness exists to move into the installation stage. The evaluation of the system through the change driver AIF communicates initially in the installation stage what needs to be in place to move into implementation and later in the stage readiness to move into initiation. Work done by the DIT and SITs in developing a prototyping process that is responsive to each school communicates not only what will be done in the implementation stages but also that it is time to shift into that phase. Throughout the initial and full implementation stages, the work is informed through the data and feedback loops previously built into the change processes.

One communication component unique to this PoP that is not built into the framework is consideration for what gets the change off the ground. As mentioned previously inclusive teaching and learning practices have been established as a strategic priority for SCSD. What has not been established is the use of UDL to address this PoP. Thus, the writer as the change agent in this plan will need to engage senior administration in dialogue outlining the change plan before the plan begins. The framework chosen for this change plan takes this into consideration. The purpose of the initial exploration stage is to engage a range of stakeholders in exploring UDL in ways that reflect the work that will be required to proceed in each of their respective roles. The end of this phase requires a decision to either proceed with UDL and this framework to address this strategic priority or to look for another way. In this way, the actual

implementation of UDL only gets underway at the end of the exploration stage because of the decision made by those who can do the organizational and leadership work involved.

How: Implementation Drivers

The implementation drivers AIF offers an organized and research-based tool that implementation teams can use to develop the enabling environment needed for the implementation to succeed (Metz et al., 2015). Action plans at all levels are developed from a combination of data collected and understanding of this framework. This framework also serves to inform policy and resourcing decisions that are made at the division and school levels as it outlines the key variables that ensure the system will be able to support teachers to implement and sustain UDL aligned teaching and learning practices (Fixsen et al., 2019). Further, the communication pathways that move information up levels of the system in the initial explanation of the teams AIF in chapter 2 better ensure that the challenges that are arise are responded to at the correct system level.

How: Implementation Cycles

The improvement cycle AIF is an improvement process that creates opportunities to try out and continually improve something new (Blase et al., 2015). The process accounts for the complexity of implementation, acknowledging that different components may need to be modified to achieve success. Each improvement cycle creates the opportunity to change different factors until what is most effective is discovered. Significant communication needs happen within these cycles to ensure the whole scope of what could be modified to achieve effective practice is considered. In the immediate context, teachers can work together or with support teachers or administrators to consider how the practice itself can be changed. Beyond this, competency and organizational drivers need to be considered as ways to better enable the use of UDL in classrooms. This potentially drivers resourcing and policy conversations to ensure alignment. Important to the whole picture of communication in this change process is that none of these AIFs function alone. For the implementation cycle AIF to provide the feedback loops

necessary for this change there needs to be a clearly define innovation, teams with clearly defined roles, a change path model with clearly defined steps, and a clear understanding of the competency, organizational, and leadership drivers that will support effective data collection and communication and therefore also effective implementation.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Movement toward inclusive teaching and learning practices requires those who work in education to move out of their comfort zone as they explore new and different ways of interpreting, designing, and delivering curriculum. It requires working collaboratively to identify barriers, problem solve, and sense-make both at the teaching and organizational levels. This effort, if sustained, will be rewarded with more effective classrooms that can reach and engage a broader range of learner diversity. Further, this process aims to support students to better understand and take charge of their own learning. This work, if accomplished will move schools and classrooms toward being genuine learning communities in which the learning of staff and students feed into and strengthen each other. The first steps in what is ongoing work to breaking down learning and organizational barriers has been outlined in this chapter.

This OIP targets specifically inclusion in reference to those who are excluded because they are believed to be “unable”. These beliefs and practices often intersect with other forms of diversity including culture, country of origin, gender identity, mental health, economic status, and others. Barriers associated with each of these will need to be examined both as they stand alone and as how they intersect with ability-based beliefs and practices in a quest toward greater inclusivity in curriculum. The long-term goal for this work is that inclusion becomes a lens through which all work done in the division is looked at and accounted for. This would be particularly relevant when division priorities are decided upon. Rather than viewing inclusion as a priority, each priority would be analyzed and enacted in a way that includes safeguards for inclusivity and compares outcomes for marginalized groups to broader outcomes to ensure that marginalizing barriers have been considered. The intentional analysis of exclusions in the

prototyping document presented in this OIP reflects how this could be embedded into any initiative that the division engages in.

This OIP focused primarily on the universal level of the continuum of supports and services. As the universal level changes, it will be important to revisit targeted and specialized level structures to ensure that they continue to align and are implemented in ways that are effective. A future consideration is thus that of doing a review of these structures. This could be embedded into the reviews completed at the end of the full implementation phase or could be done separately using a similar process. The stakeholder group that would be brought into this may be broader as these levels often reach out in partnership with community organizations.

The final consideration gets to the heart of the how deeply systemic this issue is and is connected to the teams AIF. Within this AIF it is suggested that as barriers are encountered that cannot be addressed at a given level of the system it should be moved up to the next level. It must be acknowledged that teachers can only do so much toward inclusivity within the provincially mandated curriculum and resources. The review of provincial ministry documents completed for this OIP reflects a misalignment within its own inclusive education policy and documentation and further misalignment with its curriculum and assessment practices. Although this a big mountain to move, the pending implementation of a new curriculum creates opportunities for the leveled advocacy work proposed in the teams AIF. Program of studies documents that pay particular attention to separating the goal from the method and include degrees of learning as well as approved resources that move beyond one size fits all textbooks would go a long way in supporting school divisions across the province to enact the inclusive education policy that the province espouses.

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Appendix: SCSD UDL Practice Profile Working Document

UDL-Informed Inclusive Classroom Learning Practice Profile for Sursum Corda School Division

Purpose of this Practice Profile

The purpose of this practice profile is to ensure the UDL is defined in a way that it can be "taught, learned, used, and measured". This practice profile is informed by research on universal design for learning (UDL) and inclusive teaching and learning practices that align with UDL. The practice profile is used in the implementation process to inform a range of decisions to ensure an enabling UDL environment.

Note this practice profile is a starting point informed by the research done to complete the attached organizational improvement plan. This is not a complete profile. Many of the sections include only beginning ideas and will need to be further developed in response to learning throughout the change process. Although elements of this document may serve as a starting point, practice profiles are meant to be collaboratively developed and responsively modified by implementation teams to ensure that they reflect the contexts they are applied in (Smith et al., 2018).

Inclusive Education Guiding Principles

The guiding principles established by Alberta Education within its definition of inclusive education align with the UDL aim of ensuring all students have access to learning. These principles (included below) should serve as the foundation to the work this practice profile aims to define, direct, and support.

Alberta Education Inclusive Education Guiding Principles (Source: https://www.alberta.ca/inclusive-education.aspx)

- **Anticipate, value and support diversity and learner differences:** Welcoming, caring, respectful and safe learning environments create a sense of belonging for all learners and their families.
- **High expectations for all learners:** Creating a culture of high expectations begins with an accessible curriculum and meaningful and relevant learning experiences. Educators and families act on the idea that, with the right instructional supports, every learner can be successful.

- **Understand learners' strengths and needs:** Meaningful data is gathered and shared at all levels of the system—by teachers, families, schools, school authorities and the Ministry—to understand and respond to the strengths and needs of individual learners.
- **Remove barriers within learning environments:** All education partners work together to remove barriers within the learning environment so that all learners are successful and can participate in the school community.
- **Build capacity:** Government, school and system leaders, teachers, education professionals, families and community partners have ongoing opportunities, relationships and resources that develop, strengthen, and renew their understanding, skills, and abilities to create flexible and responsive learning environments. Capacity building takes place at the personal, school and system levels.
- **Collaborate for success:** All education stakeholders, including school and system staff, families, community partners, post-secondary institutions, teacher preparation programs and government are committed to collaboration to support the success of all learners.

Desired Student Outcomes: Presence, Access, Participation, and Learning Equity

Alberta Education's inclusive education policy does not explicitly define the aimed for outcomes of inclusive education. Ainscow (2005) identifies a common and agreed upon definition of inclusion as a necessary precondition to inclusive change. Further, through an extensive review of over tens years of research on inclusive change, he recommends the inclusion of four key elements in defining inclusive education, including:

- Inclusion is a process.
- Inclusion is concerned with the identification and removal of barriers.
- Inclusion is about the presence, participation, and achievement of all students.
- Inclusion involves a particular emphasis on those groups of learners who may be at risk of marginalization, exclusion, or underachievement.

From this definition, the aim of the work done associated with this practice profile is to ensure that at at-risk groups of learners experience equitable access, opportunities and/or results in the following areas:

- general education classroom presence
- access to and opportunities for learning
- active participation in classroom learning
- learning progress aligned with the program of studies and targeted individual goals

Desired Practice Outcomes: Essential Components of UDL Informed Inclusive Learning

Smith, Amend and Lane (2018), as contributors to the UDL-IRN developed a UDL practice profile that serves as the starting point in defining the essential components for the SCSD practice profile. The wording of these has been expanded with the aim of deeper clarity. A review of research on UDL and UDL-aligned inclusive education practices was used to break each of the three components in sub-components that would better support the proto-typing process proposed in the organizational improvement plan attached to this practice profile. Connecting these components to the decisions of what is taught, how it is taught, and how support is provided in the learning process serves as a starting point to define the prototyping work. To achieve full implementation of UDL all these components must work together, reflecting the practice indicators including the profile below.

Research used to identify sub-components:

Center for Applied Special Technologies (2021). *UDL guidelines.* https://udlguidelines.cast.org/

Hart, S., Dixon, A., Drummond, M.J., & McIntyre, D. (2004). *Learning without limits.* Open Press University.

Meyer, A., Rose, D & Gordan, D. (2016). *Universal design for learning: Theory and practice.* CAST Inc.

Rose, D. & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning.* ASCD.

Schumm, J.S., Vaughn, S., & Leavell, A.G. (1994). Planning pyramid: a framework for planning for diverse student needs during content area
instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 47*(8), 608-615.
Smith, C., Amend, G., & Lane, M. (2018). *An implementation tool that works to define a gold standard.* UDL-IRN SIG Implementers.
Swann, M., Peacock, D.A., Hart, S., & Drummond, M.J. (2012). *Creating learning without limits.* Open Press University.

Essential Component: Clear and Responsive Goals

Definition of Essential Component:	The essential learning of the goal is identified with methods, materials, assessments, and degrees of learning remaining flexible.
Contribution to Outcome:	▪ Goal clarity better ensures focused engagement for both teachers and students. ▪ Clarifying the specific learning goal free from method, materials, assessments, and degrees of learning allows educators to design learning experiences in ways that eliminate the barriers that may exist within any of these elements. ▪ Designing learning experiences that allow students to flexibly engage with understood degrees of learning counters that the potential damaging impacts of deterministic and deficit thinking.
Citation of Research Used:	Meyer, A., Rose, D & Gordan, D. (2016). *Universal design for learning: Theory and practice.* CAST Inc. Rose, D. & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning.* ASCD. Schumm, J.S., Vaughn, S., & Leavell, A.G. (1994). Planning pyramid: a framework for planning for diverse student needs during content area instruction. *The Reading Teacher, 47*(8), 608-615. Smith, C., Amend, G., & Lane, M. (2018). *An implementation tool that works to define a gold standard.* UDL-IRN SIG Implementers.

Practice Indicators

Ideal Use in Practice	Acceptable Use in Practice	Developmental Use in Practice	Unacceptable Use in Practice
Sub-Component 1: Separate Method from Goal			
• learning goals aligned with program of studies • goals defined as separate from means • multiple paths/options to achieve goals • goals clearly defined for students	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• learning goals not aligned with POS • goals and means not separated • single path/option to achieve goals • students unaware of goals
Sub-Component 2: Plan for Learner Variability			

• goals that allow for full range of learner variability (all-some-few pyramid structure) • options to engage with each of the degrees of learning are open to all students (i.e., goals are not pre-determined for students) • students supported to develop an understanding of "just right" level of learning challenge • pre-requisite skills and background knowledge considered in degrees of learning • ISP used to plan and deliver inclusive access point curriculum for students who require it	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• goals do not account for learner variability • students placed in pre-determined ability groups with material worked on completely disconnected from classroom learning

Informing the System	
Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes	Driver Analysis
• knowledge of Program of Studies • ability to unpack the standard (all-some-few + access points) • ability to recognize and respond to learner variability • ability to support students in understanding "just right learning level" • knowledge of the specific standard (i.e., prerequisite skills, aligned lower and higher-level standards, breakdown to components…etc.)	**Selection** **Training** ▪ unpacking curriculum goals ▪ pedagogical approaches that support degrees of learning **Ongoing Implementation Support (Coaching)** **Performance (Fidelity) Assessments** **System Interventions** ▪ consideration of leveled learning materials to align with degrees of learning **Facilitative Administration** **Decision Support Data Systems**

Essential Component: Recognizing and Designing for Learner Variability

Definition of Essential Component:	The use of the UDL Guidelines (CAST, 2021) in designing learning reduces barriers to learning through the inclusion of multiple means of engagement, representation, and action and expression. In curriculum planning this involves ensuring flexibility in (1) methods and activities, (2) resources and materials, (3) universal supports and scaffolds, and (4) assessments and outputs.
Contribution to Desired Outcome:	▪ Flexible use of multiple means better ensures the elimination of the unique learning barriers each student faces. ▪ When multiple means are available to all students, difference is not stigmatized, and the potential damaging impact of deterministic thinking is countered.
Citation of Research Used:	Center for Applied Special Technologies (2021). *UDL guidelines.* https://udlguidelines.cast.org/ Meyer, A., Rose, D & Gordan, D. (2016). *Universal design for learning: Theory and practice.* CAST Inc. Rose, D. & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning.* ASCD. Smith, C., Amend, G., & Lane, M. (2018). *An implementation tool that works to define a gold standard.* UDL-IRN SIG Implementers.

Practice Indicators

Ideal Use in Practice	Acceptable Use in Practice	Developmental Use in Practice	Unacceptable Use in Practice
Sub-Component 1: Methods and Activities			
• Identifies full range of method and activity barriers • Flexible and varied methods (responsive to class profile) • Flexible and varied activities (responsive to class profile)	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• Does not consider barriers. • Single method • Single activity
Sub-Component 2: Resources and Materials			
• Identifies full range of resource and material barriers • Use of technology to reduce barriers to learning • Flexible and varied resources (responsive to class profile)	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• Does not consider barriers. • Single resource • Single set of materials (or no materials)

• Flexible and varied materials (responsive to class profile)			
Sub-Component 3: Universal Supports and Scaffolds			
• Embedded scaffolds • Supports available to all students • Support students in being able to select and use appropriate supports	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• No scaffolds. • No supports
Sub-Component 4: Assessments and Outputs			
• Identifies full range of assessment and output barriers • Use of formative assessment practices • Students are given choices in demonstrating their learning	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• Does not consider barriers. • Only uses summative assessment. • Single approach to show learning

Informing the System

Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes	Driver Analysis
Understanding of and ability to enact UDL Guidelines Ability to identify and address learning barriers Understanding of scaffolding techniques and ways to use without setting predefined limits Ability to use a range of instructional methods Understanding of and ability to use a range of materials Technology for learning knowledge	**Selection** **Training** ▪ Understanding of an application of UDL guidelines **Ongoing Implementation Support (Coaching)** **Performance (Fidelity) Assessments** **System Interventions** **Facilitative Administration** • Instructional resources and materials that allow for flexible instructional practices • Understanding of barriers to learning and learning supports **Decision Support Data Systems**

Essential Component: Limitless Learning

Definition of Essential Component:	UDL aims to develop expert learners. According to CAST (2021), an expert leaner is "purposeful and motivated, resourceful and knowledgeable, strategic and goal directed". Learning can be mediated, and therefore optimized, through both developing the skills associated with "expert learners" and facilitating positive states of mind (Swann et al., 2012).
Contribution to Desired Outcome:	▪ Focusing on the goal of developing expert learners better ensures students are actively engaged through scaffolding them to be in control of their own learning. ▪ Positive internal states of mind positively impact student learning capacity (Hart et al., 2004). ▪ Focusing on both skill development and positive states of minds better positions students for success in lifelong learning and living.
Citation of Research Used:	Hart, S., Dixon, A., Drummond, M.J., & McIntyre, D. (2004). *Learning without limits.* Open Press University. Meyer, A., Rose, D & Gordan, D. (2016). *Universal design for learning: Theory and practice.* CAST Inc. Rose, D. & Meyer, A. (2002). *Teaching every student in the digital age: Universal design for learning.* ASCD. Smith, C., Amend, G., & Lane, M. (2018). *An implementation tool that works to define a gold standard.* UDL-IRN SIG Implementers. Swann, M., Peacock, D.A., Hart, S., & Drummond, M.J. (2012). *Creating learning without limits.* Open Press University.

Practice Indicators

Ideal Use in Practice	Acceptable Use in Practice	Developmental Use in Practice	Unacceptable Use in Practice
Sub-Component 1: Expert Learners			
• teaching students how to choose and use strategies • Incorporating and supporting goal setting • use of learning profiles (students understand and use their learning profiles) • self-regulation options • supporting resource finding	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• does not incorporate strategy instruction • all learning decisions are made for students • students not actively involved in their learning • behavioural responses to dysregulation

---------- Sub-Component 2: Positive States of Mind ----------			
• teaching and learning practices that build confidence, commitment, and excitement • engaging student strengths to support feelings of competence • intentional development of a classroom community • students understand relevance and meaning of learning	Engaging enough of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column to ensure all students in the classroom are learning inclusively at least 85% of the time.	Experimenting with any of the bullet points outlined in the ideal use in practice column.	• student strengths and interests not considered • students do not understand the purpose of learning • classroom community not intentionally developed

Informing the System	
Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes (Competency Drivers)	Driver Analysis
Able to support the development of goal-setting skills Understanding of how to support the development of executive functioning skills Understanding of self-regulation and emotion-regulation strategies Knowledge of how trauma impacts learning Understanding of how internal states of mind impact learning capacity Methods to develop classroom community	**Selection** **Training** **Ongoing Implementation Support (Coaching)** **Performance (Fidelity) Assessments** **System Interventions** **Facilitative Administration** ▪ school-wide focus on positive states of mind and community building **Decision Support Data Systems**