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WESTERN UNIVERSITY

DISRUPTING THE STATUS QUO:

**Leveraging Collective Teacher Efficacy for the Achievement and Well-Being of
BIPOC and Low Socioeconomic Students**

Author #1

AN ORGANIZATIONAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE AND POSTDOCTORAL STUDIES

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DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

LONDON, ONTARIO

Abstract

At Mel Morgan Middle School (MMMS), a high percentage of students are of low socioeconomic status (SES) and come from marginalized backgrounds. Compounding this problem is data that shows students at MMMS also experience significant academic challenges. Educational challenges for students of low SES are like those experienced by students who are Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour (BIPOC). Faculty beliefs and assumptions about how to effectively educate BIPOC and low SES students is posited as a problem beyond their control. Despite the Legacy Regional Centre for Education's (LRCE) commitment to student success through policies and documents such as student success planning, inclusive education, and culturally responsive pedagogy, challenges still exist. As a solution to the problem of practice (PoP), this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) presents a solution to disrupt the status quo by leveraging collective teacher efficacy (CTE) for the success and well-being of all students. Explored through an Indigenous lens and highlighting the Indigenous principles of respect, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity, interconnection and collective action will propel the solution to the problem. Essential to collective teacher efficacy is an environment that promotes strong relationships and collaborative teacher inquiry (CTI). As an administrative leader, continuous school improvement through the student success planning process and CTI will be explored through transformational, and adaptive leadership approaches. Guided by an ethic of care, collective teacher efficacy has significant potential to impact the education of all students. This is especially true for BIPOC and low SES students.

Keywords: culturally responsive pedagogy, collective teacher efficacy, relationships, transformational leadership, adaptive leadership, ethic of care

Executive Summary

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) explores a problem of practice (PoP) at Mel Morgan Middle School (anonymized) that addresses collective teacher efficacy as it relates to improved student success and the well-being of BIPOC and low socioeconomic status students. The purpose of this OIP is to propose a solution to a relevant PoP by using research-informed data that considers leveraging collective teacher efficacy to address achievement and well-being in these struggling groups. Guided by an Indigenous lens and highlighting the Indigenous principles of respect, responsibility, relevance, and reciprocity, it will show that all students have the potential to learn regardless of their backgrounds. The problem of practice is explored through a conceptual framework that highlights the critical paradigm and a solid foundation of relationships.

Chapter 1 begins by introducing the organizational context of the problem and the internal and external factors that affect the PoP at MMMS. Leadership agency is described using a critical social justice lens while also respecting leadership practices that enhance the educational success of marginalized groups. Using my administrative experience as the vice-principal leading continuous school improvement, the gap between the present and the desired future state is explained by comparing the current realities of the organization to what could be based on altered practices. Guiding questions emerging from the problem of practice are outlined and phenomena that contribute to the main problem, such as poverty and deficit mindsets, are discussed. The leadership-focused vision for change places emphasis on the five practices of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership. This vision comes from aligning the context of the organization with Kouzes and Posner's five effective leadership behaviours: challenge the process, model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart.

Using Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model (Cawsey et al., 2016), the chapter concludes with a description of organizational change readiness by addressing internal and external factors that shape change.

Chapter 2 describes the planning and development of the proposed solution to the PoP. This chapter begins with a description of transformational, adaptive and Indigenous leadership approaches. It explains how these leadership approaches connect the leader's agency to effect change and the proposed solution of leveraging CTE to improve the achievement and well-being of BIPOC and low SES students. Four possible solutions to address the problem of practice are explained: (a) leader learner teams, (b) cultural proficiency and culturally responsive pedagogy, (c) the middle school model, and (d) collective teacher efficacy. The chosen solution combines aspects of three of the four proposed solutions while focusing on collective teacher efficacy as the driving force for change and disrupting the status quo.

Chapter 3 outlines the implementation, evaluation, and communication of the change plan in relation to the PoP. Connecting the organizational analysis from Chapter 2, strategies are outlined by summarizing the goals and priorities of the planned change. This explains how the proposed plan fits within the organizational strategy and how an improved situation can be attained for all stakeholders. The plan for managing the transition to the desired state aligns with the conceptual framework, which views change within a social justice lens and is built on relationships and promotes an ethic of care. Chapter 3 also outlines ways to change and ways to communicate the change: (a) Kouzes and Posner's (2017) Five Exemplary Leadership Practices, (b) the Indigenous Four R principles of understanding (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991), and (c) the concept of cultural proficiency (Manville et al., 2017; Lindsey et

al., 2009). These concepts offer a frame to propel the desired change and communication plan forward.

The OIP concludes with next steps and future considerations. These include considering contextual factors, which may require a new organizational assessment analysis, such as internal, external, human, and organizational components. For example, a new CTE cycle may be necessary due to student needs and new staff mentoring will likely be required. Sharing the findings of this plan for the enhancement of CTE would also be beneficial as a means of disrupting the status quo for improved student achievement and the well-being of all students, especially BIPOC and low SES students.

Acknowledgements

This Organizational Improvement Plan is dedicated to my grandchildren, Paisley and Malcolm, born in my third year of doctoral studies.

May education and knowledge be a source of inspiration to you both!

What really makes a teacher is love for the human child; for it is love that transforms the social duty of the educator into the higher consciousness of a mission.

—Maria Montessori

With profound gratitude, I thank my parents, Marjorie and Danie MacDonald, for being my life's anchor. I am deeply privileged to have had a lifetime filled with educational experiences because you taught me from a young age the cardinal importance of school. Through your influence, I have learned that with education comes the responsibility to share my knowledge in a way that positively impacts others. Your unconditional love is omnipresent and has been the wind beneath my wings. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I would also like to acknowledge my children, Ryan and Erin Bursey, and their partners Jenna and Gregor. Education has impacted your lives as it has mine, and you impress me daily with the things you do. Thank you for cheering me on as I studied at this later stage in my life. You have all turned into beautifully kind and responsible adults who know and appreciate the value of knowledge. I think of you all with utmost fondness and pride and know that you will instill the love of learning in your own children. I hope that your life's endeavours will continue to be cathartic and meaningful.

Thank you also to Dr. Erin Keith, my OIP supervisor. I must have picked a four-leaf clover the day I was assigned to you! Your knowledge, guidance, and kindness as my professor, supervisor, and professional critical friend are very appreciated. You believed in my ability when I wavered and always lifted me with your words of encouragement. Your positivity is completely contagious. I am most fortunate that our paths have crossed!

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Acronyms

BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour

CP: Cultural Proficiency

CPM: Change Path Model

CRP: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

CTE: Collective Teacher Efficacy

CTI: Collaborative Teacher Inquiry

DOEECD: Department of Education and Early Childhood Development

Four R's: Respect, Responsibility, Relevance, and Reciprocity

LLT: Leader Learner Teams

L-M-R Model: Linear-Active, Multi-Active, Reactive

LRCE: Legacy Regional Centre for Education

MMMS: Mel Morgan Middle School

MTSS: Multi-Tiered System of Supports

OIP: Organizational Improvement Plan

PESTE: Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technology, Environment

PLC: Professional Learning Community

PoP: Problem of Practice

PREP: Provincial Racial Equity Policy

SAC: Student Advisory Council

SES: Socioeconomic Status

SSP: Student Success Planning

UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

VUCA: volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous

Definitions

ally: Members of the dominant group who support ending oppression in all aspects of social life by supporting and advocating for those from marginalized groups.

BIPOC: An acronym that stands for Black, Indigenous, and People of Colour.

collaborative teacher inquiry: Collaborative inquiry is a structure in which members of a professional learning community (PLC) come together to systematically examine their educational practices.

collective teacher efficacy: Educators' shared beliefs that through their combined efforts they can positively influence student outcomes, including those students who are disengaged, unmotivated, and/or disadvantaged.

cultural proficiency: A mindset or worldview through which to examine our beliefs, values, assumptions, and behaviours.

culture: A set of practices and beliefs that is shared with members of a particular group and that distinguishes one group from others. It is inclusive of and involves more than ethnic or racial differences; it includes shared characteristics of human description, including race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and identity, faith, spirituality, ableness, geography, ancestry, language, history, occupation, and affiliations.

culturally responsive teaching: A pedagogy that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural references in all aspects of learning; being aware of cultural differences; examining teaching materials and practice; and adapting programs and interventions, as appropriate, to respond to different student needs.

ethics of care: Placing students at the centre of the educational process to be nurtured and encouraged. This involves social responsibility, moral decision making, and concepts of loyalty, trust, and empowerment.

Four R's: Indigenous principles of respect, responsibility, reciprocity, and relevance.

funds of knowledge: A term that encompasses the knowledge, skills, and experiences acquired through the historical and cultural interactions of an individual in their community, family life, and culture through everyday living. The knowledge students embody that can directly or indirectly connect to formal classroom learning.

L-M-R model: A model of attaining cultural competence that considers personalities of the group and appropriate interactions of that group. L-M-R stands for linear-active, multi-active, and reactive.

middle school model: A model of schooling for young adolescence that promotes relationships, socio-emotional and academic development, and common planning time for teachers of a specific group of children.

professional learning community: An inclusive group of people motivated by a shared learning vision who support and work with each other, finding ways to inquire on their practice and together learn new and better approaches to enhancing all student's learning.

Chapter 1

Introduction and Problem

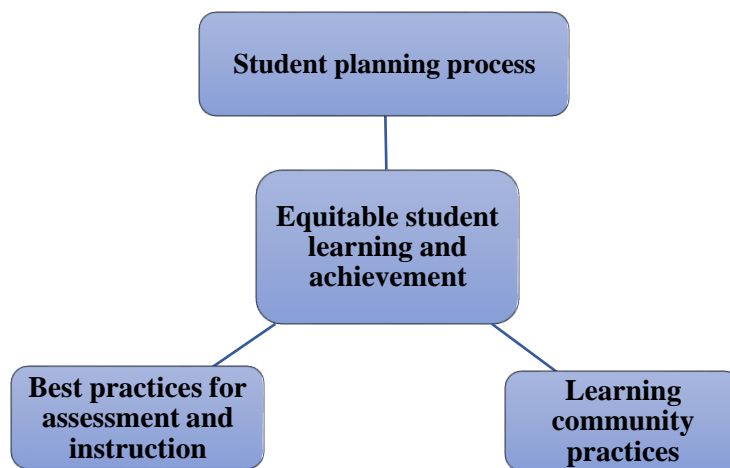
The organization at the centre of this Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) is a small middle school located in the community I grew up in. It will be referred to as Mel Morgan Middle School (MMMS) for anonymization purposes. The school community has a history of low socioeconomics, which impacts students' school experiences in often negative ways, especially in terms of their academic success. In response to the many struggles witnessed each day at MMMS, this PoP attempts to reconcile these struggles with a solution that highlights human connection and purposeful change through a process of collective teacher efficacy (CTE). Donohoo (2017) explains that CTE is context specific and refers to educator's shared belief that they can positively impact student outcomes including those populations that continue to be oppressed including black, Indigenous, people of colour (BIPOC) and of low socioeconomic status (SES). For these populations, human connection is of critical importance to the long-term success of students in school, especially for those who continue to struggle (Battiste, 2002; Daniels & Billingsley, 2018; Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Lee & Marshall, 2013; Pierson, 2013). Building a solid foundation of meaningful relationships within my school community is inspired by the deeply rooted connection I have with it. I see myself reflected in the people I encounter each day: I was once that student; I was once that teacher. Thus, the problem of practice stems from the troubling connection between poverty and low student achievement at MMMS, which keeps an already vulnerable population at continued risk.

Organizational Context

The organizational context of this OIP is a small, publicly funded middle school in Nova Scotia serving approximately 250 students from grades 6-8. MMMS students come from diverse backgrounds including mostly low SES, some visible minorities, and several immigrant students. The goals of the Legacy Regional Centre for Education (LRCE), a pseudonym, are noble and ambitious. The LRCE aspires to what the Nova Scotia Education Act (2018) considers the fair and equitable treatment of all students, ensuring educational benefit for all. Furthermore, an umbrella goal for all provincial schools is closing the achievement gap. Supporting these goals are various practices, procedures, documents, and policies, which include the Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy, Provincial Racial Equity Policy (PREP), culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS), Treaty Education, and Student Success Planning (SSP). Student Success Planning (SSP), as shown in Figure 1, is the provincial framework that aims at attaining every child's educational success.

Figure 1

Student Success Planning



The Student Success Planning Framework was introduced in 2016 and was the new provincial way of addressing school improvement. At its inception, SSP was not readily accepted, nor efficiency implemented. There was much confusion around its process and was often thought of as one more thing for teachers and school administrators to do in the name of being accountable to provincial mandates and board expectations. Each consecutive year of SSP practices brought more clarity of its intention and purpose. It was consistently supported by school personnel specifically hired to help schools navigate the process. Time, money and resources allotted to the process allowed it some success at schools where administrators actively supported the process. Its main focus is on equitable student learning and achievement through a collaborative and collective process which relies on distributed leadership. In schools that are dedicated to the process and intention of the framework, there has been augmented levels of collective teacher efficacy and student achievement. success and improved. SSP continues to be the process schools follow for greater school effectiveness, a defining factor of transformational leadership (Hewitt et al., 2014; Northouse, 2019). The successful implementation of the SSP framework relies on distributed and shared leadership, complimentary facets of transformational leadership (Northouse, 2019), and communication between all stakeholders. In addition, adaptive leadership works as an asset to propel SSP as it “is concerned with how people change and adjust to new circumstances” (Northouse, 2019, p. 258). At the heart of SSP is the need for effective relationships in a “learning team culture” (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). This learning team culture thrives on relationships which promote respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility, which are the Indigenous Four R’s. In addition, culturally responsive pedagogy works in tandem with transformational leadership and relationship building as it is concerned with responding appropriately to differences. relations The SSP process requires work to be done

in professional learning communities (PLC) and focuses on school achievement goals in mathematics and literacy. Improvement through PLC, or community-mindedness, reflect holistic Indigenous ways of knowing whereby “*there is always more wisdom in the circle than there is in one individual*” (Kenny & Fraser, 2012, p. 145, emphasis in the original). One way to confront inequities is by supporting collaborative curiosity through the PLC structure in the SSP framework which also boosts collective teacher efficacy (Donohoo, 2017; Lindsey et al., 2009). An additional SSP goal includes a safe and inclusive learning environment. Safe and inclusive environments, promote student and staff psychological safety and increased learning, especially among diverse student populations (Donohoo & Katz, 2020; Nishina et al., 2019). Fundamental to SSP is teacher classroom practice and efficacy which is the belief that a desired result can be attained. Through an ongoing cycle of reflection and action, classroom practice and collective efficacy have implications for improving instruction and student outcomes. (Donohoo & Katz, 2020; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). Reflecting, or looking inward to achieve better understanding, is significant to the critical paradigm and becoming culturally proficient, which is “a model for individual transformation and organizational change” (Lindsey et al., 2009, p. 4). Knowing oneself in order to communicate effectively with others is also an element of adaptive, transformational and Indigenous leadership. Through the SSP process and adaptive, transformational, and Indigenous ways, an opportunity exists to improve school effectiveness and teacher efficacy. Promoting purposeful, positive interaction geared toward an outcome that is collectively defined and solved will be a beneficial change for others (Battiste, 2002; Hewitt et al., 2014; Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Northouse, 2019).

Organizational Structure: Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose, and Goal

The formal, hierarchal structure of the LRCE consists of the executive regional director, human resources, programs and student services, and finance and operations departments. There are directors, coordinators, and consultants within each of these departments. New leadership positions have also been created, including coordinators of African Canadian Services and Mi'kmaw Services. Within the district there are 38 educational sites consisting of elementary, middle, senior, and adult high schools. Declining population in the area forced the closure of some schools and the reconfiguration of all the remaining schools within the LRCE. Through a formal process of change, elementary schools have become grades primary to five as opposed to grades primary to six; middle schools contain grades six, seven, and eight; and senior high schools go from grades nine to twelve. There are several schools that contain grades primary to eight. As of 2020, all schools have a pre-primary program.

The business plan of the regional centre identifies a very well-intentioned mission around school improvement through collaborative, collective work, achieved through and culturally responsive teaching and learning (Legacy Regional Centre for Education, 2019), but this mission is often not promoted or clearly understood in the schools nor within the departments of the centre. This impedes the work needed to be done in schools through the SSP process as lack of clarity in the LRCE mission keeps schools, such as MMMS, from being able to develop a clear and defining vision. In fact, some of the more influential departments in the LRCE tend toward what Mittal and Alias (2016, p. 65) call harsh power bases of “personal coercion” and “legitimate position.” In essence, employees are often scared of negative consequences if their actions are deemed incorrect. Considering that collaborative, collective action is an expectation for school improvement and effectiveness, the high degree of “power distance” (Mittal & Alias,

2016) creates mistrust. Furthermore, “groupthink,” whereby a deeply cohesive group wants unanimity often ignoring other more realistic, alternate forms of action, is also pervasive (Cawsey et al., 2016). Unhealthy “mechanistic” type practices like these impair the flexibility schools require to meet student needs. While the current structure does not function ideally, the new CEO and programs coordinator are known for their respectful leadership approaches and for providing rationale as to why things should be done, adhering to what Mittal and Elias (2016) refer to as “informational power.” Also promising, is the Nova Scotia Educational Leadership Consortium (NSEL) which provides training to new educator leaders and focuses on leadership which benefits diverse populations such as instructional, transformational, and adaptive leadership approaches. The successful integration of new leadership, new policies, and purposeful mission and structures are bringing about much needed alignment that is slowly and ultimately affecting the mandatory operational systems of LRCE schools. Alignment such as this is imperative in an effort to destabilize the status quo and augment collective teacher efficacy for the improved achievement of BIPOC and low SES students.

Leadership Approaches within the Legacy Regional Centre for Education

According to Amachukwu, Stanley, and Olulube (2015), leadership is a social process of influencing others to achieve goals and to maximize efforts of stakeholders. In organizations, leadership approaches are used to help motivate follower behaviour, help them adapt to change and limit stakeholder resistance (Amachukwu, Stanley, & Olulube, 2015). Two of the most evident leadership practices in the Legacy Regional Centre for Education (LRCE) are instructional leadership and transactional leadership. According to McEwan (2002), instructional leadership is the management of curriculum by principals and encompasses such practices as setting high expectations, creating a positive climate, communicating the mission and vision of

the school, and developing teachers. As Blasé and Blasé (1999) point out, instructional leadership, is supposed to be supportive and collaborative, but in the LRCE it is mostly centred on classroom practices whereby teacher practice is critiqued. This has led to the belief that school change rests solely on the classroom teacher. Teachers within the LRCE have become reluctant to embrace new change initiatives that come with instructional leadership, as the workload that comes with change is often heavy. Furthermore, time to receive and implement adequate professional development is lacking and as a result, teachers feel overworked and inadequate.

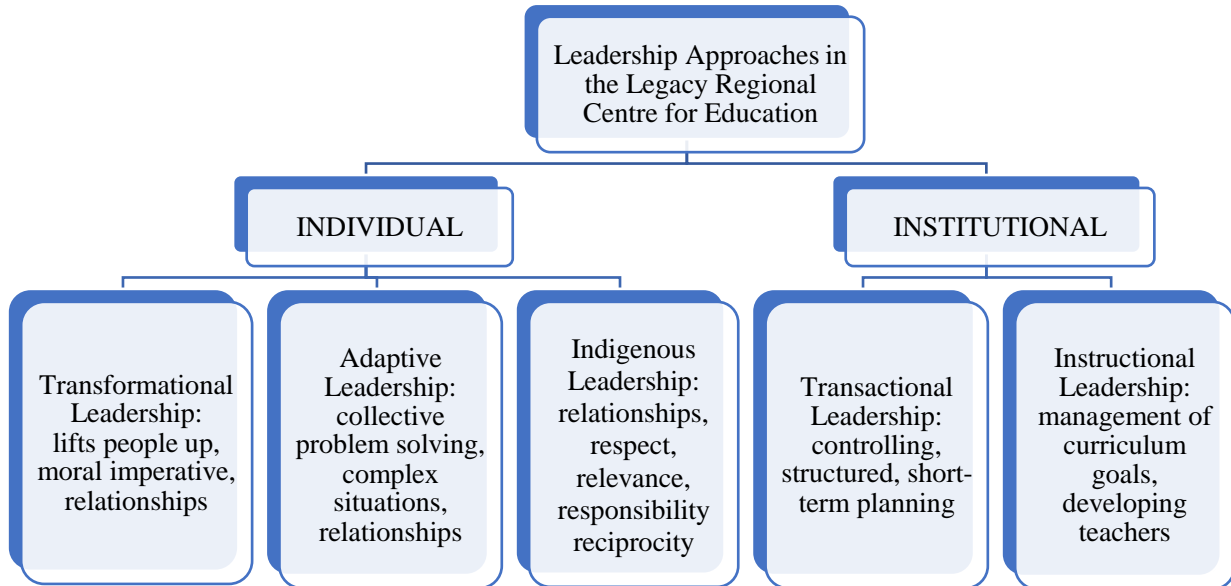
In addition to instructional leadership, transactional leadership is another leadership approach practiced within the LRCE. Transactional leadership is marked by hierarchal governance, with power and decisions being concentrated at the top. This type of leadership is reactive and according to Calabrese (2002) it keeps leaders from true change readiness. Based on the factors of contingent rewards and management by exception, transactional leadership tries to balance what must be done with payoffs for doing it or negative reinforcement patterns (Northouse, 2019). Transactional leaders indicate what needs be done and then expect that it be done in a particular way without much consideration of a collective approach (Burns, 1978). This is true of the LRCE's top-down practices whereby certain programs and practices in literacy and mathematics must be followed despite provincial documents that suggest otherwise. Burns (1978) suggests this type of leadership behaviour has the potential to impact followers' psychological safety, or a sense of safety to take risks (Donohoo & Katz, 2020) within their workplace. At MMMS, change is hard to implement as stakeholders often fear reprisal. Because this fear exists, and the psychological safety of educators is a real concern, there must be consistent hope and optimism exerted by the leader. It is my moral imperative, as a

transformational and Indigenous leader, to protect stakeholders by being a role model of consistently hopeful behaviour. This OIP will attempt to navigate and negate circumstances which keep educators from transformational, adaptive action.

Due to the increasingly complex nature of schools, transactional leadership is a less effective way to lead the people tasked with meeting student needs. As such, schools within the LRCE are presently transitioning from a transactional way of operating to more adaptive and transformational leadership approaches as shown in Figure 2, Leadership Approaches in the Legacy Regional Centre for Education. Leadership that is transformational and adaptive help expedite necessary processes in the organization through which interdependence [and relationships] are necessary to achieve a common goal (Lichtenstein et al., 2006). While instructional leadership is still at the forefront, more transformative and adaptive ways of approaching change in the system are becoming increasingly common. This is evident within all schools of the LRCE as the school board actively promotes the Nova Scotia Department of Education initiatives as well as culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and learning (Hollie, 2017). Resources such as these attempt to leverage the strengths students bring to school making learning more relevant and meaningful. Within the SSP framework at Mel Morgan Middle School, these resources are also foundational for driving the change initiative.

Figure 2

Leadership Approaches in the Legacy Regional Centre for Education



Within Nova Scotia, all public schools are accountable to the Nova Scotia Department of Education. At the department level, there have been many recently developed procedures, policies, practices, and documents such as the Student Success Planning Framework, Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, Multi-Tiered System of Supports, and Treaty Education. These documents are based on change focusing on collective action through PLC, and are supported by leadership approaches which are transformational, adaptive, and based on relationships. These documents are all foundational for the work needed to be done at Mel Morgan Middle School in consideration of the PoP of improved student achievement and teacher efficacy. These procedures, policies, practices, and documents are having an impact on how schools function and have forced the reconsideration of traditional, transactional practice.

In intricate systems such as schools which are often volatile, uncertain, complex, and uncertain (VUCA) (Systems Innovation, 2020) “the transforming leader [must be adaptive and have] a moral compass ... [which] seeks to lift followers ... to higher levels of purpose and achievement” (Calabrese, 2002 p. 89). This type of leader must empower and nurture followers, raising their individual consciousness to rise above self-interest for the greater good (Northouse, 2019). In addition to this, an adaptive leader needs skills to apply in a wide variety of settings, situations, and challenges (Northouse, 2019). Also, the adaptive leadership model “acknowledges the importance of promoting values such as equality, justice, and community (Northouse, 2019, p. 275) which are all elements of transformational leadership. Further to transformational and adaptive approaches, Indigenous leadership, which focuses on “meaningful and respectful relationships with others,” is closely linked to a transformational approach (Lee & Marshall, 2009, p.140). Promisingly, executive leadership roles within the LRCE are being filled more frequently by people who demonstrate the ability to lead people within a complex system, and leadership is becoming less about individual traits and actions and more about collective, collaborative ventures. School principals, as is my role at MMMS, are expected not only to be instructional leaders but also leaders who exhibit a moral conscience and can adapt to change. Leadership styles like this promise to be deeply influential in increasing school effectiveness. In addition to leadership, practices are beginning to align more closely with overarching provincial policies and structures. Capitalizing on overarching policies and structures, as well as evolving leadership practices, holds great promise for advancing high levels of student achievement (Dietel, 2012) toward a more socially just education system. Transformational, adaptive, and Indigenous leadership approaches will be further elaborated in in Chapter 2. Furthermore, these

approaches will be linked to critical theory and how they do the work of action needed in the critical paradigm.

Leadership Position and Lens Statement

Connected with my Aboriginal identity, I am a thoughtful, reflective, and capable professional leader who can identify and solve complex problems in education. I can confidently say that I am a respected leader who builds meaningful relationships with people and works with them to identify areas that need improvement by creating practical, viable plans of action that build on individual and collective strengths. Within a critical worldview, working against the forces of oppression has always been at the forefront of my educational and personal endeavours. Even at a young age, I had a strong sense of what ought to be and was not typically accepting of the status quo. Being pragmatic, I understand that the “utopian aspirations of the critical paradigm may never be realized, but a more democratic society may materialize” (Scotland, 2012, p. 13). Furthermore, it is essential that today’s school leaders be humanistic and dedicated to promoting the success of all students: their moral compass elevating followers to augmented levels of purpose and achievement (Calabrese, 2002; Owens & Valesky, 2011). Leaders with this mindset see the potential of human capital within the organization, and members of the organization create change collectively because it is the right thing to do. There can no longer be an option to remain within the surety of the status quo; rather, educational leaders must venture into the uncertain world of progress and human emancipation (Asghar, 2013; Dugan & Humbles, 2018). Organizations committed to a higher purpose change because it is the right thing to do (Calabrese, 2002). Working with a critical purpose “aspires to advance the habits of mind, hand, and heart in leaders in practice who strive to ensure excellence, equity, and social justice in education” (Western University, 2020). With this mindset, I situate my work within the critical

paradigm and remain true to Ciulla's (2009) idea that leaders unselfishly serve the interests of others.

Critical Theory

Critical theory is an approach to understanding social problems and aims to reveal and challenge power structures that exist within them (Murphy & Fleming, 2010). Critical theory is a school of thought situated on the structure of oppression and the normalized notion of how things are and sets out to critique and acknowledge that reality is the mere construction of an idea and is, in fact, not necessarily a universal truth in any final way (Murphy & Fleming, 2010).

Influenced by Karl Marx, Jurgen Habermas, an influential social and political thinker from Germany's Frankfurt School, argues that social problems stem from societal structures and cultural assumptions (Habermas, 1984). Habermas also posits that societal change relies on knowing our own self-identity which is intimately tied into relationships with others (Murphy & Fleming, 2010). This idea of knowing ourselves and our relationships with others is a significant idea central to the conceptual framework of this OIP.

The critical paradigm allows for a deeper understanding of what exists and how we know it exists. Ultimately, it considers the emancipation of people through increased social and political freedom and rights. The nature of the reality is investigated through a relative ontology which considers multiple realities and a subjective epistemology whereby understanding is co-created between knower and respondent. Furthermore, reality involves perceptions and interaction with the environment, and all factors about the phenomenon are considered and interpreted (Asghar, 2013; Scotland, 2012). A critical approach not only permits the analysis and exploration of a particular situation or problem but also offers ways of seeking change and reformation. Because of this reformative aspect, the critical dimension of investigating

knowledge goes beyond just the observation and reflective practice but aims for a better world.

Max Horkheimer, a founding father of critical theory, explains that

critical theory challenges the status quo and strives for a balanced and democratic society.

It is particularly concerned with the issue of power relations within the society and interaction of race, class, gender, education, economy, religion and other social institutions that contribute to a social system (Asghar, 2013, p. 3123).

In addition to this critical purpose, critical theory is concerned ultimately about the human experience of emancipation against things that oppress them. Considering this and based on altered practices, a more desirable state is possible. Within critical theory consciousness, the unbalanced social state that presently exists for students in oppressed situations, like at Mel Morgan Middle School (MMMS), a pseudonym, can be improved. It is critical that unbalanced social factors be modified by challenging the status quo of the dominating political-economic system which exploits the most vulnerable.

Critical Social Justice

Brazilian educator Paulo Freire argues, in simple terms, that education equates to freedom and a more democratic society. This idea of democracy relates to critical theory and is needed for the emancipation of those who are oppressed. Communicating in a democratic way is a necessary component required for change to happen within this OIP. Freire (1970) explains that a neutral education system is nonexistent and that education functions to either promote conformity or it is a practice in liberation teaches students how to transform their world. A socially just education system requires a consistent and persistent effort “by actively engaging in reclaiming, appropriating, sustaining, and advancing inherent human rights of equity, equality,

and fairness in social, economic, educational, and personal dimensions” (Theoharis, 2007, p. 223). However, this effort is not always enough. As Ryan and Tuters (2017, p. 570) argue:

perhaps the most daunting challenges rest with the very organizations in which they work. These institutions can be deeply unjust . . . [and] activist leaders cannot always do the things they know will advance their social justice agendas. This is because they face significant obstacles in their quests. Most significantly, social justice leaders routinely encounter active resistance from unsympathetic colleagues when they seek to introduce, endorse or advance social justice [initiatives].

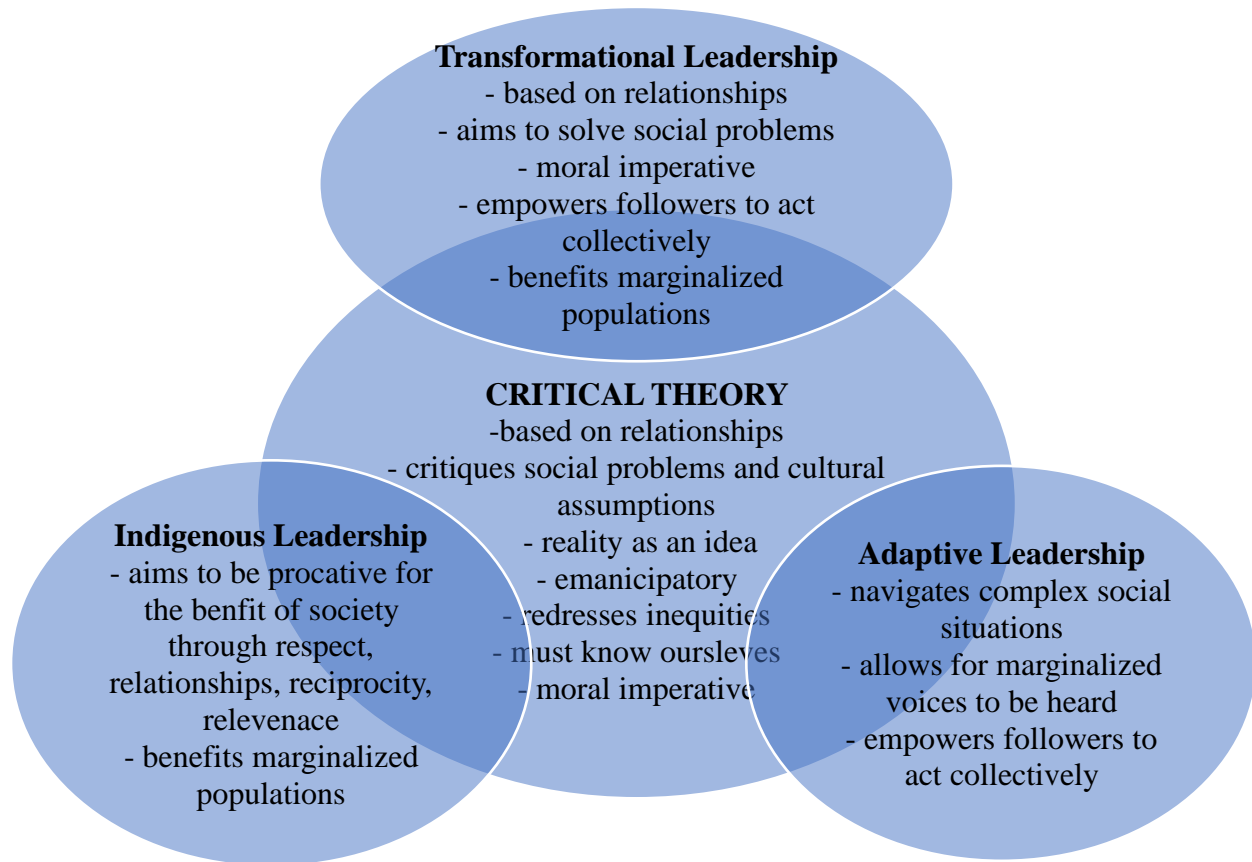
Further to this, literature around social justice change and critical pedagogy indicates that reform is required at multiple levels (Comber, 2015; Ryan & Tuters, 2017) through leadership that is dynamic and advances organizational processes and interdependent actions toward a collective vision (Lichenstein et al., 2006; Sensoy, 2009).

Despite resistance, schools that demonstrate exemplary social justice leadership have demonstrated success with students from all cultural backgrounds (Theoharis, 2007). In work that involves educational leadership and resistance, critical social justice practices grounded in positive beliefs about diversity and academic possibilities of marginalized students (Gay, 2010; Gonzalez et al., 2006; Hollie, 2017; Lindsey et al., 2009) have significant potential for student success, increased cultural competence and collective efficacy. These ideas are fitting and hopeful as practices, policies, and procedures within Nova Scotia have recently changed, making inclusion a main priority in aid of levelling the playing field, challenging the status quo, and making way for progress and change (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2018, 2019). Reminiscent of the work done by Freire (1970), education equates to freedom and a more democratic society.

In the critical social justice mindset of respect, care, recognition, and empathy (Theoharis, 2007) and the ethical principles of care, critique, and justice (Ehrich et al., 2015; Starratt, 2017), it is my intention to conduct the work associated with my problem of practice in a transformational, adaptive way through an Indigenous lens. *Miawpukek*, my own First nation, means “where the rivers meet” and has been the inspiration for understanding my leadership style. A river metaphor offers respect to the land but also represents the fluid interconnection we have with each other. Bringing together my Aboriginal identity and my leadership practices in the Western world through this river metaphor meshes both. As Kenny and Fraser (2012, p. 125) explain, “blending ancient Indigenous ways with modern Western ways often presents challenges that require innovative interventions.” In light of this, understanding that change in complex and dynamic social systems involving equally complex and dynamic social processes cannot be accomplished by just one person or in just one way; rather, it involves multi-faceted, non-linear interaction among people done intrusting, optimism environments (Lichtenstein et al., 2006). As Figure 3, Connecting Critical Theory and Transformational, Adaptive and Indigenous Leadership Approaches shows, leadership that is transformational, adaptive, and seen through an Indigenous lens, can propel the action needed for the PoP and the does critical work related to social justice.

Figure 3:

Connecting Critical Theory with Transformational, Adaptive and Indigenous Leadership



Remaining true to leadership that ensures loyalty to relationships, fair and equitable treatment of people, and continuous action to redress injustices is my moral imperative. Drawing on these transformational principles through an adaptive leadership approach allows for flexible and appropriate ways of leading that let me stay true to myself as an eternally optimism individual. I am also able to accomplish the task at hand which juxtaposes “the activities of the leader in relation to the work of the followers in the contexts in which they find themselves” (Northouse, 2019, p. 257). The behaviour of an adaptive leader is essential as they help others do their work, adapting to the myriad challenges their followers may face (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Northouse, 2019; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Most influential in my approach will be transformational and Indigenous leadership approaches, both highlighting the help leaders provide to followers that

allows organizations to attain success through meaningful, high-quality positive relationships based on trust, mutual respect, and interrelated actions between “self” and “other” (Battiste, 2002; Hewitt et al., 2014; Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Northouse, 2019). Within a critical paradigm, framed by a critical social justice lens and transformational, and adaptive leadership approaches, I will critically examine the achievement gap that exists for students in my school. I will also investigate the effects of poverty on children in school and how poverty has insidious effects that are similar to other forms of oppression. To help empower and improve the life chances of marginalized children, student-centred leadership practices that integrate critical leadership perspectives can ultimately effect school and bring about increased student achievement for those groups who continue to be most at risk. In an education system where conditions change frequently and “people feel apprehensive and insecure about what is going on around them . . . they long for bona fide leadership they can trust and for leaders who are honest and good” (Northouse, 2008, p. 197). It is this kind of ethical leadership that will serve to address the inequities that continue to exist within educational settings and guide solutions to the PoP in this OIP.

Leadership Problem of Practice (*What is the problem?*)

At Mel Morgan Middle School, one in three children live in poverty and, to date, students underperform at the highest rates, are the poorest in the province and the majority come from marginalized backgrounds (Fisher & Frank, 2020; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2020). This indicates an achievement gap and is problematic because research shows that lower levels of education negatively affect the poverty-stricken population, which has significant social implications and impacts their health (Ferguson & Mueller, 2007). Research on children living in poverty suggests that they are less likely to experience educational success than their more

affluent counterparts (Frank & Fisher, 2020). As vice-principal, I am responsible for the Student Success Planning process, the structure by which provincial schools, grades primary to twelve, attempt to improve student achievement and school effectiveness (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). Since education is a human right and higher levels of educational success confer many social and health benefits, it is my moral imperative to shed light on educational conditions that impede and promote school success. The problem of practice stems from the troubling connection between low student achievement and BIPOC and low socioeconomic status students. This creates the impetus to analyze teacher practices which improve student achievement and could be propelled by the Student Success Planning process. The problem of practices therefore aims to uncover the reasons why too few students are benefiting from the SSP process keeping the most vulnerable at continued risk and presents a solution to disrupt the status quo by leveraging collective teacher efficacy (CTE) for the success and well-being of all students.

Problem of Practice: A Matter of Moral Imperative

My specific problem of practice has been inspired by my own ancestry and my personal experience as an educator. Being a Mi'kmaw person has always influenced who I am and how I interpret the world. At an early age, I began to learn about and understand the harm that has been inflicted on Aboriginal people and other marginalized groups throughout history. I felt then, as I do now, that it is imperative for people to learn about and be proactive in eradicating the ill effects of systemic mistreatment of nondominant groups. Even though it is everyone's responsibility to correct the wrong doings of the past, many people still suffer today. The generational impact of social injustice has had negative consequences on even the youngest of marginalized children and their quality of life has suffered, especially with regards to an

education system they should be successful in. Education is a fundamental human right (United Nations, 1948) and confers many social and health benefits, but children living in poverty and within other marginalized groups continue to struggle (Fisher & Frank, 2020; World Bank, 2001; UNESCO, 2019). This is alarming because “Canadian research confirms poverty’s negative influence on student behaviour, achievement and retention in school” (Ferguson et al., 2007). So, if education is a human right and some groups of children have less educational success, then it is my moral imperative to learn about and influence how educational systems respond to the many inequities that continue to exist in our world by exploring programs and practices that promote increased inclusion and improved student achievement. The responsibility for systemic change rests on all of us, and it is this sensitivity to issues of injustice that will continue to shape my work in education.

With a humanistic worldview shaped by a critical paradigm, I commit to the idea put forth by Owens and Valesky (2011, p. 31), that “it is generally accepted today that school leaders are administrators whose professional practice is dedicated to promoting success of all students, regardless of their race; family background; gender; or any other social, financial, or personal characteristics.” Furthermore, and in aid of this, having a transformational mindset allows for improved school effectiveness while also fundamentally rethinking and reworking education to make it socially just, equitable, and democratic so the status quo can be destabilized and oppressive conditions challenged and changed (Lichtenstein et al., 2006).

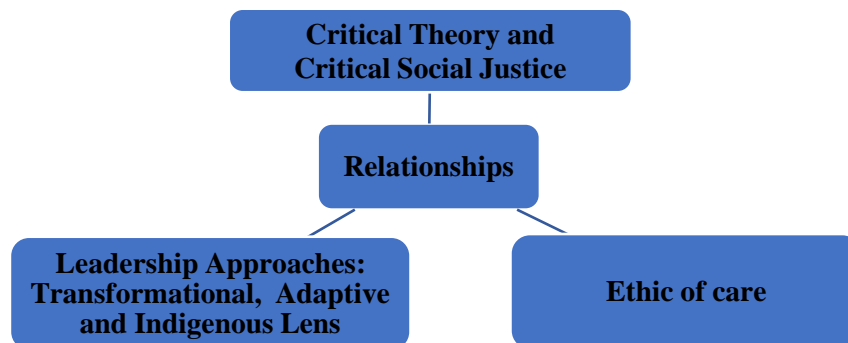
Framing the Problem of Practice (*Why Change?*)

Analyzing and understanding the historical context of poverty and how poverty affects children in school can help uncover why many poor students continue to underperform compared to their more affluent counterparts. Unfortunately, many marginalized students including BIPOC

are also considered low SES. To aid in understanding why the need for change, this OIP is guided by a conceptual framework as shown in Figure 4, Conceptual Framework, that highlights relationships, an ethic of care, critical theory, transformational, adaptive and Indigenous leadership approaches. Framing the PoP within these perspectives helps us better understand the complex nature of poverty and the troubling connection between poverty and low student achievement. By using these guiding concepts, the status quo can be challenged, creating the impetus to investigate such factors as teacher efficacy, equity in education, deficit mindsets, and leadership practices that aim to negate factors that keep children who are BIPOC and/or low SES (Jensen, 2010; Ladsen-Billings, 2020; Nova Scotia, 2019). Creating viable change requires an understanding of the broad political, economic, sociocultural, and technological issues of a particular situation.

Figure 4

Conceptual Framework



Poverty in Schools

Poverty is a multidimensional, complex societal issue. It is more than just about not having enough money. Poverty is a lack of fundamental freedoms like food, shelter, education, and health. It makes people vulnerable to ill health and economic strife, exposes them to

potential ill treatment by society and leaves them powerless to influence key decisions that affect their lives (World Bank, 2001; Fisher & Frank, 2020). In school, conditions associated with poverty can make a child's educational experience challenging. Therefore, educational settings must be able to respond in appropriate, sensitive, and equitable ways to enrich the lives of not only impoverished children but other vulnerable populations as well. It is necessary for educators to understand the complex nature of poverty and how poverty can affect children's school experiences. While schools cannot solve poverty, they can investigate why problems exist and provide support, structures, and processes to assist those students who continue to be at increased risk (Jensen, 2010).

The 2019 Provincial Report on Child and Family Poverty in Nova Scotia: Three Decades Lost (Fisher & Frank, 2020) reports that Nova Scotia has done very poorly in reducing child poverty even though it has been the province's mandate to do so for decades. The report found that (a) one in four children live in poverty in Nova Scotia, (b) the number of children living in poverty has been reduced by less than one percent since 1989, (c) Nova Scotia has the third highest poverty rate in Canada, with Cape Breton Island having the highest incidences provincially, (d) the income gap between poor children and some of their peers is staggeringly disproportionate, (e) poverty is most severe for the youngest of children, and (f) immigrant and visible minority children are the most significantly affected (Fisher & Frank, 2020). These findings indicate that schools must continue implementing practices that will benefit those students who fall within these marginalized circumstances.

Deficit Mindsets

Unfortunately, many educators continue to operate within deficit mindsets in the education of marginalized children (Ladsen-Billings, 2020). These mindsets are often fraught with misconceptions and myths and are inappropriate for explaining the underlying reasons for some children's successes and failures. As a result, certain groups of students experience differential treatment and lower expectations (Ladsen-Billings, 2010; Moore, 2008). Justification for this treatment involves such notions that students from low economic conditions cannot be taught effectively, lack motivation, are lazy, come from unsupportive homes, and have uneducated parents who do not care (Ladsen-Billings, 2010; Mancuso, 2014; Moore, 2008). This perceived deviation from "normal" is often characterized by socioeconomic status, race, language, and perceived ability and equates difference with deficits and perpetuates inequities. Such deficit thinking about students in poverty revictimizes the student and blames them for their situation. Oppressive attitudes further marginalize socioeconomically disadvantaged students. The myth of meritocracy, which suggests one gets ahead just by working harder, serves to justify white privilege and places blame on disadvantaged students, accusing them of not working hard enough to succeed (Lindsey et al. 2009; Ullucci & Howard, 2014).

Equitable Leadership Practices

As identified in the literature, schools are complex environments and within these environments the educational leader has the most impact because they can influence how things are done (Hattie, 2015; Jacobson, 2011; Lichtenstein et al., 2006). In addition to this, issues of equity have been the topic of educational conversations and reform for decades. The literature shows that inequitable conditions exist more commonly for marginalized groups of students, such as children living in poverty, immigrant children, and racial minorities (Grant, 2015; Nova

Scotia Department of Education, 2019; OECD, 2008). Inequitable treatment of students has negative consequences for them as individuals and as communities of people. Ramifications include early dropout, lower skill set, fewer opportunities for gainful employment, and social- and health-related problems (World Bank, 2001). The literature also highlights areas to focus needed attention. These areas include: (a) the design of education systems, which involves appropriate policies and procedures; (b) leadership and teaching practices focusing on relationships and a positive school climate; (c) teaching to the strengths of the students and being responsive to the whole child; (d) creating a clear school vision, effective organizational reform, and safe environments, developing people, and engaging parents and community, and (e) allocating resources with particular attention paid to the most vulnerable (Hargreaves & Harris, 2015; Hattie, 2015; Kars & Inandi, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2004).

Political, Economic, Sociocultural, Technology and Environment Analysis

Equally important to analyzing the internal factors of an organization, such as leadership positions and documents, is analyzing external factors. An important and fundamental step of the change process is looking at broad political, economic, and sociocultural factors that influence or inhibit change in an organization. In complex systems such as schools, contexts are increasingly influenced by external factors that either impede or promote operations within the organization, and complex conditions can often make the change effort difficult to navigate (Lichtenstein et al., 2006). For example, the political landscape of the Nova Scotia school system is unstable and volatile. The recommendations presented in *Raise the Bar: A Coherent and Responsive Education Administrative System for Nova Scotia* (Glaze, 2018), which is an attempt by the Nova Scotia government to overhaul the education system, have spurred animosity between educators, regional centres for education, and political leaders. In recent years, the Liberal government has

ignored teacher union collective agreements and imposed legislated changes to end a labour dispute, prompting a provincial teacher union to vote for an illegal teacher walkout (Alphonso, 2018; Nova Scotia, 2018). Teachers were forced to operate under work-to-rule conditions, doing no more than the minimum as required by their contract. Since the implementation of some recommendations of the report, administrators were removed from the NSTU and created their own union called the Provincial Administrators Association of Nova Scotia. Dividing administrators, who are certified teachers first, and the teachers they lead has put strain on relationships in school buildings. Furthermore, sociocultural and economic concerns of the organization include schools whose students experience the highest incidence of poverty in the province along with the lowest provincial academic assessment results (Fisher & Frank, 2020; Nova Scotia, 2020). Encouragingly, students have recently benefited from increased technology support provided by provincial funding. In an attempt to level the playing field, this one-to-one support includes device provision whereby each student in Nova Scotia has access to a computer and internet connection at home and at school. External factors of this nature must be understood in terms of their impediment or support if we are to plan and execute meaningful change.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

Guiding questions emerging from the leadership problem of practice are situated within critical paradigm ideology and the current organizational context, which is complex and dynamic. First, the PoP considers a complex problem of improved student achievement whereby the status quo must be disrupted for true change and collective efficacy examined. The complex nature of the real world and human interactions necessitate leadership inspired by a social justice and complexity model that promotes relationships and necessitates positive interactions to occur

between people in the (Lichtenstein et al., 2018, p. 9). Taking this into account, what high impact leadership practices enable and reflect this collective, collaborative work that needs to be done? Second, and considering the first guiding question, a secondary question must address what best practices constitute the very important practices of building relationships within an organizational context and promoting psychological safety? Third, “complexity leadership theory also provides a pathway for respecting diversity, not only through its formal emphasis on heterogeneity, but also because cultural respect is much easier to cultivate through one-to-one interactions than it is to consistently enact through one-to-many leadership exchanges” (Lichtenstein et al., 2018, p. 9). Further to this, education programs housed in organizations are “supposed to serve moral purposes such as the nurturing of the human, social and intellectual growth” (Starratt, 2017, p. 83). In consideration of these factors and the emphasis on culturally responsive pedagogy within provincial and regional documents that impact the problem of practice, a fourth guiding question considers how the leader might ensure this cultural growth is at the forefront of all meaningful learning. Fifth, also impacting the problem of practice are structures and processes outlined in regional and provincial policies and documents that identify good teaching practices. How can high impact leaders influence ensure teacher efficacy so as to realize the intended purpose of key documents that aim to improve student achievement, inclusion, equity, and well-being? Finally, how can relevant and practical professional learning communities be implemented and used efficiently as a means of driving student success planning goals?

Guiding questions that attempt to consider the many internal and external elements of an organization—including culture, people, tasks, structures, and systems—have the potential to

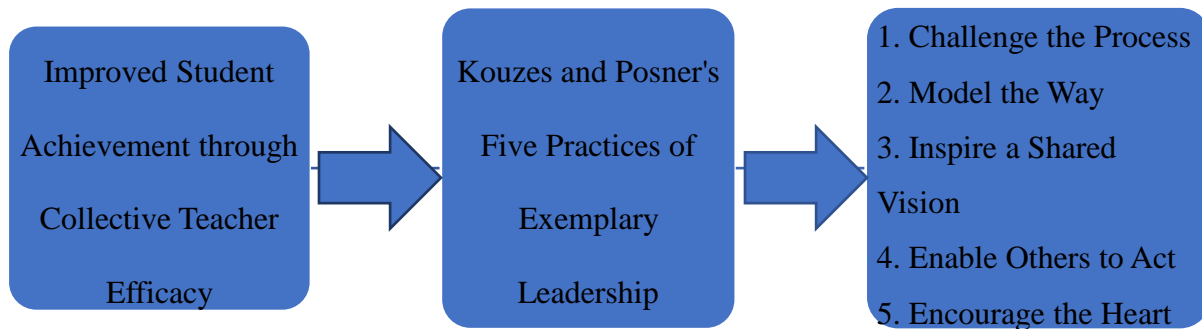
provide insight that could impact change and the possibility of significant social implications within the context of the problem of practice.

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change

The leadership-focused vision for change in this OIP concentrates on improved student achievement through collective teacher efficacy. This focus aims to improve conditions at Mel Morgan Middle School and benefit students from BIPPOC and low SES. Difficulties and possibilities exist at MMMS which when addressed will illuminate the integrated approach to change to help address the PoP in this OIP. Helping to propel my leadership-focused vision for change are the five practices of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) exemplary leadership as shown in Figure 5, Leadership-Focused Vision for Change.

Figure 5

Leadership-Focused Vision for Change



This vision comes from aligning the context of the organization with Kouzes and Posner's five effective leadership practices: challenge the process, model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. This kind of leader-focused vision for change combines the who and what of an organization and presents a framework that considers the importance of positive relationships within the complex interactions of real-world organizations (Cawsey et al., 2016; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Nadler & Tushman,

1980). Furthermore, this leader-focused vision for change is propelled through an Indigenous lens based on hope and optimism required for reconciliation, or improved relations between people. Indigenous leadership literature promotes the essentiality of conditions that provide these two concepts for better conditions and feelings of positivity for an improved social world (Battiste, 2002; Cull, I., Hancock, R., McKeown, S., Pidgeon, M., & Vedan, A., 2010; Kenny & Fraser, 2012). Hope and optimism through a collective and efficacious educational approach has the potential to disrupt the status quo for more equitable conditions for underserved student populations.

Challenge the Process

Leadership involves thinking about the future and making change that is impactful for people and organizations. This is especially true for those leaders who commit to improving the life chances of others (Dugan & Humbles, 2018; Kashani, 2012). As a school administrator, I have the agency and will to inspire change through transformational action. Just as leadership for critical social justice does not advocate for treating all people the same (Ryan & Rottman, 2007), this same leadership must be “flexible and adaptive . . . [and involve] changing behavior in appropriate ways as the situation changes” (Yukl & Mahsud, 2010, p. 81). Firstly, challenging the process involves conducting SSP in a way that allows it to be as effective as possible. At MMMS, there is a tendency to delay SSP for other more pressing and immediate problems happening within the school. This, however, detracts from the consistent attention and action needed to stay true to the process. To change this, the process must be challenged by ensuring consistency in the allocation of time, resources and supports to plan and implement changes required to attain identified school achievement goals which will impact collective efficacy and ultimately improve student achievement of BIPOC and low SES students. Secondly, questioning

deficit mindsets that exist among educators at MMMS in relation to the academic abilities of BIPOC and low SES students must be addressed in order to achieve the desired future state of MMMS. Deficit mindsets, evident in teacher talk, impede collective action and collective teacher efficacy which is an essential requirement of addressing the PoP in this OIP. Thirdly, challenging the process also involves implementing change that allows for personal growth through cultural proficiency and culturally responsive pedagogy. Within the LRCE, culturally responsive pedagogy is talked about but not specifically taught through teacher professional development nor assessed through a formal process. The implementation of CRP is usually left to schools whose administrators feel comfortable with CRP and how it is implemented and assessed within schools and classrooms. Additionally, structures that support CRP, such as teacher professional development and professional learning communities are equally neglected within the LRCE. Fourthly, and furthermore, challenging educators' belief in their own ability to be collectively effective will not only provide hope for improved student achievement but will also support the LRCE mandates that require collaborative practices through PLC and the SSP process.

Model the Way through Inspiration of a Shared Vision

Deeply rooting efficacious practices that increase every student's well-being and achievement is an expectation of the LRCE, and "it is generally accepted today that school leaders are administrators whose professional practice is dedicated to promoting success of all students, regardless of their race; family background; gender; or any other social, financial, or personal characteristics" (Owens and Valesky, 2011, p. 31). In aid of this and to destabilize the status quo, today's leaders must lead by example and commit to being active agents of change, working toward the "long term development of people and institutions so they can adapt, change, prosper, and grow" (Kouzes & Posner, 2017, p. xiv). Within the LRCE there is a well-

intentioned mission, but this mission is not always actively and visibly promoted within schools. Cawsey et al. (2016, p. 129) explain that compelling visions are essential to advance the thinking of stakeholders and help provide directional guidance. They also point out that the “most powerful visions tap into people’s need to be part of something transformative and meaningful.” The vision is directly linked to defining the future state and is central to any gap analysis done by the leader. My agency as a school administrator and leader of the SSP process allows the opportunity to create and promote a clear school vision with the input of school staff. This vision will directly align with the LRCE mission and provincial mandates and support the intention of this OIP by encouraging collective teacher efficacy for improved student achievement.

Enable Others to Act by Encouraging the Heart

Enabling others to act and developing their competence involves building trust and fostering relationships; “focusing on serving others’ needs rather than one’s own builds trust in a leader” (Kouzes & Posner, 2017, p. 18). Active participation on the part of followers comes from encouraging the heart and letting people know they are significant and appreciated and that they belong (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). This beneficial frame of mind serves to explain the importance of understanding people and how they respond to changing situations. This kind of mindset is essential if deficit mindsets are to be changed at Mel Morgan Middle School. Exhibiting virtuous character, being human, being inclusive, and exercising moral imperatives in education is a way to show the meaning of caring and ethical inquiry in educational settings (Starratt, 2017). Being a role model of caring behaviour means leading change in a way that puts positive relationships at the forefront of all that is done; an aspect of Indigenous interaction (Kenny & Fraser, 2012). For any meaningful transformational change to occur, a leader must tend to the psychological safety of the stakeholders. This kind of safety is produced when the new way of doing things is

actually possible and the process of change will not create undue anxiety (Schein, 2010). Change is often fraught with resistance because, as Schein (2010) explains, when doing something new, people often experience what is called “learning anxiety.” However, sometimes new ways of thinking are essential, especially in the realm of complex educational settings and critical social justice inquiry as is the case at MMMS. In Nova Scotia, new educational initiatives such as SSP and CRP can be stress-inducing for many educators but in order to improve conditions for underserved populations, collective effort for their benefit must be encouraged. A way to alleviate anxiety and encourage the heart is to take steps to increase the psychological safety of followers. This is possible by introducing practices such as creating a strong vision, formal and informal training, teacher involvement, practice and feedback, collaborative support, and ensuring the system works within the new way of thinking (Schein, 2010). These behaviours can happen by ensuring time for inquiry and relationship building through professional learning communities. Once again, at MMMS, PLC time is often put on the back burner in order to accomplish other tasks. A commitment to the SSP process will ensure the goals of this OIP of leveraging collective efficacy for improved student achievement of BIPOC and low SES students can be attained. Being a leader with a moral compass, I attempt to lift followers to augmented levels of purpose and achievement (Calabrese, 2002, p. 89), enabling them to act by encouraging their heart. As a change leader within my school, it is my intention to communicate clearly with purposeful intention to influence stakeholder behaviours and minimize resistance.

Organizational Change Readiness

Maintaining the status quo is not a luxury, and change is imperative for the success of all students. As such, successful organizational change requires analyzing multiple, complex dynamics and acting accordingly. Navigating myriad internal and external factors is a daunting

yet required task. This is key to understanding the complexity of leadership theory and that leaders can foster optimal conditions for change but are not the direct source; change occurs over time from interactions between agents (Lichtenstein, et al., 2006). Understanding the need for change means making sense of organizational data, both internal and external, and considering the concerns and viewpoints of all stakeholders. Change leaders must assess the situation, understand how others might see it, and create rationale for why the change is needed. Leaders must take steps to ensure the organization is ready for change if they are to ensure its success (Cawsey et al., 2016). Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model (Cawsey et al., 2016) will be used to help identify the importance of finding congruence between internal and external factors to achieve goals initiated by the need for change. These important components are the culture of the organization, the people in it, the task at hand, and the structures and systems. Striving for congruence between these four components is imperative. The section below will further explain these internal and external factors and how they impact the PoP of leveraging collective efficacy for improved student achievement.

The Culture of the Organizational and the People in It

Components of the congruence model, combined with appropriate leadership, are imperative for any change attempt and for understanding the culture and belief systems of the people who inhabit any given organization on a daily basis. The culture of the organization and the people in it are powerful internal factors that need to be considered to successfully carry out the OIP. It is necessary to consider, however, that analyzing and interpreting an organization's culture and its people's belief system is often difficult because, as Mittal and Elias (2016, p. 61) explain, "culture is a pervasive construct." As Schein (2010, p. 9) accurately notes, "culture is not only all around us but within us as well." He goes on to explain that "values and norms . . .

define our occupation” (p. 8) and because human beings are unique, they bring with them different ways of knowing, showing, and doing.

To assess the culture of the organization and the people in in, several things can be done. Firstly, making connections by first concentrating on the culture of the group, then subgroups, and then individuals, is a way to capitalize on the collective strength of the group and help them identify areas of individual and collective expertise. By having them reflect upon the individual values and beliefs that guide decision making in their own practice, they quickly realize all the positive things they bring to the table. When connections and relationships have been established and leadership is trusted, the task at hand can be investigated by sifting through and analyzing relevant data. Cawsey et al. (2016) explain that “when there has been no well-thought-out effort to develop a shared awareness concerning the need for change, then a piecemeal, disparate, and conflicting assessments of the situation are likely to pervade the organization” (p. 97). To avoid this pitfall as a plan takes shape requires a collective team approach to setting goals for improvement and establishing timelines and baselines. Cawsey et al. (2016) caution against “active inertia” or ingrained “strategic frames.” Years of doing things in a certain way through already-existing structures and systems often makes stakeholders wary and resistant to change. As a way of moving change forward, identifying a transformational vision helps people act for a cause that is greater than themselves (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Northouse, 2019). This is reflective of the ethic of care that focuses on moral action and interpersonal relationships (Ciulla, 2009; Starratt, 2017). In what Cawsey et al. (2016) call “bottom-up visioning,” organizational vision needs to come from a collaborative, collective approach. Bottom-up visioning allows for the inclusion of organizational member voices within the vision statement and the actions from the stakeholders that bring it to life (Northouse,

2019). This is possible with a leader who “has a moral compass and seeks to lift followers, raising them to higher levels of purpose and achievement” (Calabrese, 2002 p. 89). This kind of leader places high value in relationships, has confidence in themselves, inspires action from their followers, and embodies adaptive and ethical leadership principles to transform the present state.

Secondly, a stakeholder analysis can be completed. A stakeholder analysis identifies those people who resist change and those who promote change. Using a change continuum is useful for indicating where stakeholders are in their predispositions toward the specific school change and within the change process. They are awareness, interest, desire for action and take action (Cawsey et al., 2016) as shown in Figure 6, Stakeholder Continuum.

Figure 6

Stakeholder Continuum



At Mel Morgan Middle School, the results of the stakeholder continuum indicate that the majority of stakeholders are ready for change as most fall into the category of desire for change. Furthermore, Table 1, Stakeholder Predispositions to Change, indicate those who are ready to change and those who are resistant to change (Cawsey et al., 2016). The results of the stakeholder analysis, both the continuum and predisposition to change, are useful as they will guide what action should be taken and what tools could be used during the change process depending on the predisposition of stakeholders.

Table 1*Stakeholder Predisposition to Change*

Stakeholder Predispositions to Change		
Description of predisposition:	Attitudes about change:	Number of Staff and Results:
Innovators or early adapters	Individuals who seek change and want variety	6/32
Early majority	Individuals who are receptive to change but are not first adopters	18/32
Late majority	Individuals who follow others once the change has been introduced and tried	5/32
Laggards or late adopters	Individuals who are reluctant to change and do so only after many others have adopted	3/32
Non-adopters	Individuals who will not change or adapt under most circumstances	0/32

The Task at Hand Within Structures and Systems

Identifying a transformational vision and shared goals are two of the many viable ways to create awareness for change in organizations to accomplish the task of increasing collective teacher efficacy and improved student achievement and the well-being of BIPOC and low SES students (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Presently, a vision exists but is not actively and consistently promoted within the school. At the beginning of each school year, a vision and school goals are identified but soon become secondary to many other happenings within the building. A transformational and adaptive leader will consistently ensure that the process of SSP will be adhered to so both the vision and the school goals are the priority for improvement. An adaptive leader can respond to challenges that impede the necessary work of school improvement. The results of the Adaptive Leadership Questionnaire (Northouse, 2019, p. 285) indicate that as an

adaptive leader, I am ready to tackle the changes needed to achieve the work of this OIP. Furthermore, the results show that stakeholders also have faith in my adaptive leadership abilities of exhibiting perspective, identifying challenges, ensuring psychological safety, being consistent with change action, ensuring distributed leadership and listening to marginalized voices (Northouse, 2019).

Transformation of the present state necessitates leaders and followers work together to navigate existing structures and systems (Burns, 1978). In addition to creating a shared vision, inextricably tied to a transformational vision are shared goals and a plan to get things done (Northouse, 2019). With a strengths-based approach, and within the parameters of existing frameworks such as Student Success Planning, stakeholders must be engaged in conversation to identify common areas of agreement to move the vision forward. Respectful of individuality and diversity, Cawsey et al. (2016) explain the importance of having a sense of purpose both individually and collectively: “The best change is what the people think they did themselves” (p. 127). Further to a strengths-based approach and within the Student Success Planning process, professional learning communities (PLCs) are often used to accomplish identified school goals. The principles associated with effective PLCs as identified by Dufour (2017) are a school staff focused on learning rather than teaching, working collaboratively on matters related to learning, and being accountable for the results of the work and continual improvement. Antinluoma et al., (2018, p. 76) explain that PLCs are “an effective strategy to improve teaching and learning . . . [which when] operating within innovative contexts increase the well-being of teachers and students . . . and create positive impacts on student learning.” PLCs are a recommended structure to propel Student Success Planning frameworks and policies into motion and are a promising structure to ensure the goals of increased efficacy for improved student achievement are fruitful.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the PoP identifies a clear, relevant gap between the existing and the desired future state and the need to disrupt the status quo by augmenting collective teacher efficacy for improved student achievement and well-being, especially for BIPOC and low SES students. The identified leadership position and leadership-focused vision for change is situated within a critical paradigm that allows for the contemplation of guiding questions that will help shape the solutions required to carry out this OIP. Chapter 2 explores organization context and the competing internal and external factors that need to be considered when planning and developing the OIP solutions.

Chapter 2

Planning and Development

This chapter outlines various leadership approaches to change and explains how these approaches will propel change forward in relation to the problem of practice. Frameworks for leading the change process will also be identified. A specific approach for leading the process of change, which captures the context of the organization in relation to the problem of practice, will also be discussed. Changes that need to be made will be identified through an organizational or gap analysis and possible solutions that address the PoP will be identified. Finally, ethical considerations and challenges linked to the change process will be addressed.

Leadership Approaches to Change

When leaders are at their best, they model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). These five exemplary leadership practices make a difference in organizational change. Leaders who exhibit these qualities not only create high functioning teams, but they also easily motivate people into becoming loyal, committed, and involved members of an organization (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). These leadership qualities, combined with my strong Indigenous belief in human interconnectedness based on the Four R principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1999), allow me to address my leadership-inspired vision for change appropriately and thoroughly through this OIP. In addition, the L-M-R Model of Cultural Proficiency (Manville et al., 2017), along with the factors that impact culturally proficient learning communities (Lindsey et al., 2009), will aid in understanding people, their personalities, and how they interact with one another. Propelled by adaptive, transformational, and Indigenous leadership approaches, and seen through critical

social justice and complexity theory lenses, this OIP demonstrates how these chosen leadership approaches can be utilized to address the lack of efficacy among educators which impacts achievement and BIPOC and low socioeconomic status students. Reasons for this disparity will be explored to uncover why vulnerable students of these groups continue to be at increased risk.

Adaptive Leadership

The nature of adaptive leadership is based on four viewpoints highlighting supportive, service-oriented relationships that help people find ways to thrive in new situations. These four ways of looking at change come from biological, service orientation, psychotherapy, and systems perspectives. They include helping people thrive, serving people, being supportive, and building relationships. Yukl and Mahsud (2010) argue that different tasks require different patterns of leadership behaviours. In my specific context of educational change at MMMS where conditions are very much volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA), an adaptive leader “engages in activities that mobilize, motivate, organize, orient and focus the attention of others” (Northouse, 2019, p. 258; Higgs & Rowland, 2005). Closely connected to concepts of adaptive leadership are Indigenous leadership values of respect, relevance, responsibility, and reciprocity, which frame the idea of interconnectedness (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1999). Blending Western ways of thinking, such as adaptive leadership, and Indigenous ways of knowing allows for the development of a complimentary, wholistic framework whereby “First Nations worldviews and identities fit alongside and within Western society” (Kenny & Fraser, 2012, p. 129). An adaptive leader can then respond appropriately to situations by accurately assessing and addressing changing circumstances within a wide range of personalities and skills.

Helping people deal with change is a primary characteristic of adaptive leaders. While individual characteristics of an adaptive leader are important, their most important function is

how they inspire the work of their followers (Northouse, 2019). In their study, Higgs and Rowland (2005) identify leadership behaviours as being specifically linked to situations involving implementation of change. Areas of leadership competency identified in their studies are also connected with characteristics of adaptive leadership, such as helping others recognize the need for change, creating structural change within the organization, engaging others in all facets of the change, sustaining change through effective planning and follow-up, and developing people to find their own answers (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Litchensten et al., 2006; Northouse, 2019; Yukl & Mahsud, 2010). Wheatley (2002) argues that, while adaptive leadership is important, for change to occur in complex systems such as schools, a transformational dimension must also exist. This transformational dimension creates connections among leaders and followers that draw attention to matters of motivation and morality, which aim at high levels of purpose and develop people to their fullest potential (Higgs & Rowland, 2005; Northouse, 2019). The next section will explain how this can occur.

Transformational Leadership

James MacGregor Burns (1978) developed the concept of transformational leadership, which was first coined by sociologist James Downton. Later elaborated by Bernard Bass (1985, 1995), they posit transformational leadership as an approach that turns followers into leaders who could move followers to go beyond what is expected and expend extra effort creatively and productively (Bass, 1995; Burns, 1978; Northouse, 2019). Transformational leaders do not rely on power; rather, they tap into a person's needs as they relate to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, moving through basic needs, psychological needs, and self-fulfillment needs (Bass, 1995; MacGuire, 2012). As Calabrese (2002, p. 89) astutely points out, "the transforming leader has a moral compass and seeks to lift followers, raising them to higher levels of purpose and

achievement.” Like adaptive leadership, transformational leadership links leadership and follower behaviours and fit within the critical paradigm (Burns, 1978). In the LRCE, leadership direction at the provincial, regional and school levels are shifting as policies and practices that support equitable, inclusive and culturally responsive education are created and implemented. Some of these include Student Success Planning (2016), the Inclusive Education Policy (2019) and culturally responsive teaching and learning. Within these documents and practices, there is an emphasis on distributed leadership, which is a facet of transformational leadership (Bass, 1995; Burns, 1978). These documents also emphasize different ways students know, show, and do their work, which requires the knowledge of varied pedagogical styles. This is promising because the focus on equity and inclusivity supported by policy and practices will impact how schools work to disrupt the status quo. Before such a change could happen however, appropriate professional development through professional learning communities would need to take place. Increased knowledge about impactful resources would help make an impact on narrowing the existing achievement gap between BIPOC and low SES students and their counterparts and increase efficacy. The LRCE still relies heavily on transactional processes but a transformational mindset focused on creating mutually beneficial relationships based on trust is growing (Northouse, 2019).

In their study of theoretical perspectives of trust, Dirks and Ferrin (2002) identify a relationship-based perspective and a character-based perspective. The relationship-based perspective focuses on the leader-follower relationship and the character-based perspective focuses on their willingness to take risks and be vulnerable in a relationship. This two-dimensional trust, in addition to the transformational leader’s strong values and ideals, allows them to motivate followers defined by their purpose of achieving a greater good (Calabrese,

2002; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Northouse, 2019; Zhu & Akhtar, 2014). In support of this, Northouse (2019, p. 165) points out that transformational leadership allows for “self-efficacy, positive affect, and ability to consider multiple perspective. . . [leading] to positive psychological gains for both leaders and followers.” Addressing educational disparities such as the achievement gap at MMMS needs a leader with a transformational vision who can propel an influential change vision forward.

This notion of transformational leadership is also reflected in Indigenous leadership, whereby relationships remind us of “who we are related to and the responsibilities we have to the collective ‘we’ rather than the individual ‘I’” (Kenny & Fraser, 2012, p. 141). This collective leadership perspective ensures that leadership is spread out and all voices are heard and considered (Sefa Dei, 2019; Northouse, 2019; Shields, 2010). In a transformational mindset, power relations are challenged in an attempt to destabilize the status quo. This is especially important at Mel Morgan Middle School, whose goal it is to ensure improved student achieve through collective action. The still very transactional arena the LRCE operates within limits critical engagement with issues of social justice that impact marginalized and oppressed communities. More meaningful collective action is required, which is the intention of this OIP. Through transformational and adaptive approaches, these mindsets will inextricably link education and social transformation (Freire, 1998; Sefa Dei, 2019; Shields, 2010). Furthermore, transformational leaders question and challenge power dynamics that create and perpetuate inequities and injustices in organizations (Shields, 2010). Moral courage, ethical considerations, and activism are a transformational leader’s compass. At Mel Morgan Middle School, where some children are more successful than others, a transformational vision combined with an adaptive mentality allows for this collective attempt to work together for the greater good

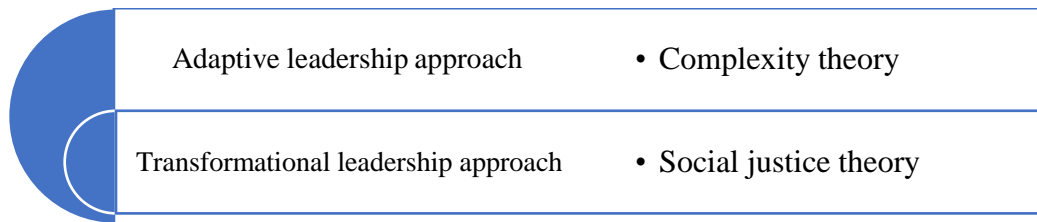
(Caldwell et al., 2011; Shields & Hesbol, 2020; Wilson, 2016). The section that follows explains how these leadership approaches fit well within social justice and complexity leadership theories.

Social Justice and Complexity Leadership Theories

Social justice theory underpins transformational leadership approach, while complexity theory underpins adaptive leadership, as shown in Figure 7, Social Justice and Complexity Theories with Leadership Styles.

Figure 7

Social Justice and Complexity Theories with Leadership Styles



Note. Adapted from Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Montuori & Donnelly, 2017; Shields & Hesbol, 2020.

Combined, these two theories of leadership provide a platform to frame and enact needed change associated with my problem of practice of increased efficacy for marginalized students and the organizational improvement plan. Social justice theory provides a lens through which to envision and enact a redistribution of power by disrupting existing practices that create inequities resulting in achievement gaps (Theorharis, 2007). Complexity theory, on the other hand, which relies on redistributing power to all organizational members, allows for the possibility of accomplishing tasks in an organization where interdependence among people is needed for a collective undertaking (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). In tandem, the complimentary characteristics of these two theoretical paradigms allow for a whole systems view of change that is complex in nature and critically essential to the organization and the people it serves.

How to Change: Framework for Leading the Change Process

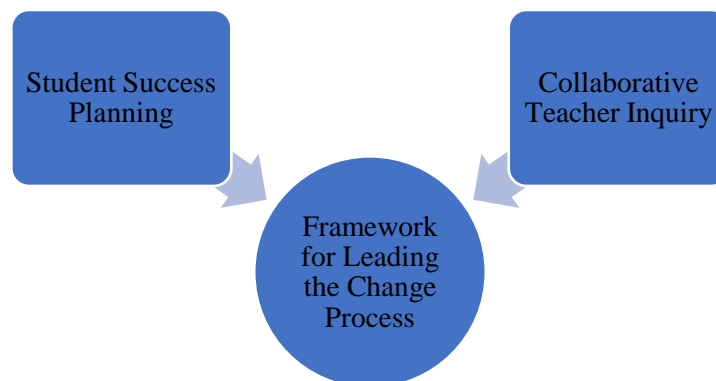
In this section, the framework chosen for leading the change process will be explained in relation to the implementation and attainment of this OIP. Strategic change is marked by a planned, deliberate attempt to shape an organization to be in step with its mission, successfully focusing on the people it serves and adapting to meet their needs (Applebaum et al., 1998). In this regard, knowing how to change is just as important as what to change in the organization. In the Nova Scotia context, publicly funded education aims to achieve a successful educational experience for all students. Furthermore, it aims to address the diverse needs of all students ensuring educational gaps become less and teacher practice is in step with meeting those needs. At MMMS, where I lead the student success planning process, knowing how I am going to lead the change process is imperative. To meet this need, this OIP will speak to educational service delivery that is required to address the disparity that exists between BIPOC and low SES students and their counterparts at Mel Morgan Middle School where I am the administrator leading the change process.

The Legacy Regional Centre for Education (LRCE) within the Nova Scotia education system is highly structured, management-oriented, and affected by the internal and external environment. Mission and goals identified in the LRCE are framed by policies and documents such as Inclusive Education and Student Success Planning. These two important documents address what the organization values. They also describe how success can be realized. However, the messages in these policies and documents must come to align with practices within school buildings making the framework for how to change an imperative piece of the change process. Even though the goals of these documents are noble and ambitious, internal and external environmental factors often undermine the successful implementation of change. For optimal

results in highly strategic environments such as the LRCE and MMMS, a proactive, incremental, and anticipatory approach would be prudent. This approach allows context-specific and deliberate exploration and implementation of collective teacher efficacy practices in the attempt to improve student achievement of marginalized students. As such, my specific framework for leading change will be anchored by Donohoo (2017)'s Collaborative Teacher Inquiry Framework and complimented by the Nova Scotia Student Success Planning Framework (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016) as shown in Figure 8, Framework for Leading the Change Process.

Figure 8

Framework for Leading the Change Process




In the section to follow, the elements and integration of these leadership frames will be explained in relation to how the PoP will be propelled into actionable change. In addition, how the change will be conducted will be done within a critical social justice mindset and with transformational, adaptive, and Indigenous leadership lenses.

The two chosen frameworks for managing change at Mel Morgan Middle School, where I am the administrator leading the change process, are Donohoo (2017)'s Collaborative Inquiry Framework and the Student Success Planning Framework (Nova Scotia Department of education, 2016). The CTI framework consists of four stages: framing the problem, collecting

evidence, analyzing evidence and documenting, sharing, and celebrating. In addition, the SSP framework, while not as detailed or explicit as CTI, allows for flexibility in how it is conducted and identifies elements of what to change. The process of SSP involves reviewing data, supporting personnel, measuring success, and celebrating and/or repeating the process (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). CTI and SSP were chosen as appropriate change models for addressing the PoP in this OIP as they have overlapping points of reference of process and content as shown in Table 2, Commonalities in the CTI and SSP Framing Models.

Table 2

Commonalities in the CTI and SSP Framing Models

Framing Model:	Commonalities:
<p>Collaborative Teacher Inquiry</p>  <p>Student Success Planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - based on stages/steps - connected to broader district/school improvement strategy - meaningful focus - link between professional practice and student results - professional learning communities - professional development - collection/analyzing of data - identifying patterns/themes/making conclusions - vision for change - supporting stakeholders - documenting evidence - measuring success - repeating the process - celebrating the process - critical paradigm

Collaborative Teacher Inquiry and Student Success Planning

Before the official stages of CTI and SSP are commenced, several things must first be considered. The change leader must consider issues regarding the timing of the implementation, the size of PLC inquiry groups, and which participants would be best placed in those groups. These groups are important to how the process is carried out because as Donohoo (2013) explains “collaborative inquiry provides a structure that supports individuals adapting” (p. 87). The change leader must also consider how to best foster academic discourse in a safe environment as discussions around how and what to change can be uncomfortable. As a formal change leader within my school, it is my intention to ensure the psychological safety of all involved in the process.

Psychological Safety

Being a leader with a moral compass, I attempt to lift followers to augmented levels of purpose and achievement (Calabrese, 2002 p. 89) enabling them to act by encouraging their heart and by providing psychological safety. The psychological safety of all stakeholders can be fostered by a leader who creates a strong vision, formal and informal training, teacher involvement, practice and feedback, collaborative support and a system that works within the new way of thinking (Schein, 2010). As an Indigenous leader, it is understood that already victimized, oppressed groups benefit from not being blamed for challenges they frequently face in school (Hare & Pidgeon, 2011) thus the need for optimism and hope. Social justice research identifies core practices that can increase psychological safety of those experiencing oppression. For example, allies help promote psychological safety and are those members of the dominant group who support ending oppression in all aspects of social life. Through their continual action they can: validate and support those from marginalized groups; engage in self-reflection to

uncover socialized blind spots where privilege exists; advocate for groups whose voices are missing by challenging misconceptions; practice humility and take responsibility for making mistakes; and share power and earn trust by taking risks to build relationships with those outside of the dominant group (Hare & Pidgeon, 2011; Sensoy, 2009). At MMMS, ensuring the psychological safety of teachers in the planning and implementation of any change initiative is important as it is the educators that, in turn, assure the psychological safety of their students. Schein (2010) explains that “learning anxiety” can occur when change is introduced and in the LRCE change is frequent and teachers are forced to reconsider how they teach. Promisingly, student success planning at MMMS has gained momentum since its introduction due to the provision of resources both human and monetary. SSP is an initiative which seems to have promise for improvement, but teachers must come to feel that the new way is possible. So, it is a leader’s responsibility to promote and reduce staff anxiety by acting in a way that increases psychological safety within the organization (Donohoo & Katz, 2019; Schein, 2010). When considering the psychological safety of the school community to be affected by change, including stakeholder voices is imperative. Through the implementation of this OIP, answers will come from within through purposeful involvement of school stakeholders such as teachers, parents, and SAC community members. This will be beneficial because decisions made at the local level are often more responsive to aspirations and needs (Sergiovanni, 2009).

Stages of CTI and SSP

In Stage 1 of the CTI and SSP models, collaborative inquiry teams within professional learning communities determine a meaningful focus of needed change and develop goals to accomplish a deficit which exists within the school (Donohoo, 2013). Lichtenstein et al., (2006) explain that people within organizations are constantly involved in interrelated actions that allow

meaning and understanding to emerge in a collective way over time. This meaning happens between people through collaboration rather than with just the actions of specific individuals. For meaning to emerge, “self and others are not separable . . . but are, rather, coevolving” (Lichtenstein et al., p. 4). This is beautifully reflective of Indigenous perspectives of respect, relevance, relevance, and reciprocity (Gardner et al., 2006). The Four R’s are achieved through a process of reciprocity whereby action that is undertaken is mutually beneficial to all members. The work becomes relevant because members understand the responsibility they have to one another by maintaining and promoting respect for individual and collective cultures through time and space. Also, honouring the human spirit in this way gives credence to who we are as individuals and to our collective identities.

Within inquiry teams, or PLC, it must be established that the problem is based on current student need, connected to the vision, be manageable and able to be acted on (Donohoo, 2013). Framing the problem must also link professional practice with improved student achievement by fostering professional discourse (Donohoo, 2013; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). At MMMS, inquiry teams will be formed within mathematics and literacy streams as this is the focus of the SSP framework. Designated areas will be set up to allow the space needed for inquiry teams to do their work.

In Stage 2 of the CTI and SSP models, collecting evidence and implementing changes is the focus. Data collected will be student learning data, demographic data, perceptual data, and school process data which include anything teacher’s use to help them accomplish their work (Donohoo, 2013). Inquiry teams work within PLC communities for which time will be built into the daily schedule of the school. Teachers will begin to implement changes into their practice which focus on issues of equity and social justice and how to improve practice for improved

student learning. As Hirsh and Killion (2007) note “students will benefit when student learning needs are the focus for educators’ professional learning and the entire educational system aligns to support both students and educators” (p. 67). Collection of data will be displayed on data walls in areas where inquiry teams work.

In Stage 3 of the CTI and SSP models, analyzing evidence will occur. The data to be examined is that which helps to continue to propel the process of change and is specifically related to the PoP of increased collective teacher efficacy and improved student achievement of BIPOC and low SES students. The goal of this stage is to use the data to inspire change which becomes deeply rooted within the practices of the building. Triangulation of data ensures its validity within the change (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). In this stage, self-reflection and analyzing assumptions are necessary as they are a part culturally responsive practices promoted in the LRCE and are necessary components of change at MMMS. Looking inward to examine assumptions about our beliefs about teaching is essential as assumptions guide action (Donohoo, 2013). In order to effectively reach all students, teachers must first believe that all students have the potential to learn.

In Stage 4 of the CTI and SSP models, documenting, sharing, and celebrating happen. Documenting the work helps educators articulate and clarify what they have done. At MMMS, a documentation summary is required by the district which in turn is summarized and submitted to the province. Documenting gives relevance to teachers’ actions. Another important element in Stage 4 is celebrating the work that has been accomplished. “Through celebration, participants will recognize that together, they are one step closer to achieving greater success for ALL students (Donohoo, 2013, p. 85, emphasis in original). Celebration highlights the power of

working as team and augments collective teacher efficacy, an important element of the PoP and successful implementation of this OIP.

What to Change: Critical Organizational Analysis

The complexity of change necessitates a change leader to understand the distinct difference between the process of how to change in an organization as opposed to what to change (Cawsey et al., 2016). In order to leverage collective teacher efficacy for improved achievement of BIPOC and low SES students, which is the future desired state, it is necessary to identify areas within the organization that need to be changed. Conducting an organizational analysis illuminates the forces that impact change both internally and externally and highlights the importance and need for change. A critical organizational analysis includes a combination of change readiness findings, analysis of organizational components, and relevant research. To conduct the organizational analysis and define the gap which exists between the current and future reality of the Mel Morgan Middle School, the framework for leading the process of change described in the section above will be used. It will identify what needs to change within the organization in order to attain the intended outcome of this OIP of increasing CTE for the benefit of BIPOC and low SES students.

Cawsey et al., (2016) define a gap analysis as the process of “defining and describing a desired future state in contrast to an organization’s present reality” (p. 52). In Chapter 1, an adaptive leadership questionnaire was used to determine the readiness of the change leader to commence change within the organization. The results indicated that the leader was in fact ready to lead the complexity of the change process. Furthermore, the results of two stakeholder analysis, placement of attitude on a continuum and individual predispositions toward change, indicated that the majority of stakeholders were also ready to commence the change needed to

challenge the status quo. The results showed stakeholders opted to work toward conditions that increased collective teacher efficacy for improved achievement of BIPOC and low SES students. The alignment of the school improvement plan with the strategic plan of the board is also evidence that the school community accepts the challenge of changing the present reality.

Following the CTI and SSP framework for leading the change process, as described in the section above, is the most practical and viable way of diagnosing and analyzing needed changes at Mel Morgan Middle School. The elements of each model align well together and serve the purpose of providing a relevant model for highlighting what to change for organizational improvement.

Stage 1: Frame the Problem

Stage 1 of the CTI model of change involves framing the problem. This involves making sense of the change leader's personal concerns and the internal and external organizational data. It is essential that this framing highlights a gap between the present and future state of the organization and identifies a meaningful change vision and focused action (Cawsey et al., 2016; Donohoo, 2013; Donohoo & Katz, 2019). At MMMS, stakeholders are aware an achievement gap exists: the students at MMMS come from the most economically depressed area in Nova Scotia and provincial achievement is the lowest in the province. As identified in the political, economic, sociocultural, technological, and environmental (PESTE) analysis, numerous provincial initiatives and unsteady relations between unions and school boards have caused stakeholders, especially teachers, to become dubious or even cynical about any change effort. Helping them unfreeze from past patterns of response will be essential in an attempt to create a compelling argument about the need to change. Furthermore, teacher talk around inabilities of marginalized students indicates a deficit mindset and lowers collective teacher efficacy. Through

a process of self-reflection and professional development in culturally responsive pedagogy, deficit mindsets can begin to be challenged. This initial stage provides the opportunity to model Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five exemplary leadership behaviours, focusing on securing stakeholder psychological safety and promoting the Four R's through culturally proficient professional learning communities.

Stage 2: Collect Evidence

Stage 2 of the CTI model of change involves making sense of the organization's systems and structures in an attempt to enact the change vision. It will also involve assessing and managing personalities in terms of cultural and power dynamics and stakeholder assets that may contribute to or impede the change. In an attempt to build capacity and mobilize the plan, leader actions will need to be adaptive, transformational, and transformative. Considering the scope of the PoP, the adaptive leader will navigate many facets of the organization to create an environment where people are inspired to work toward change that is not only necessary but is the right thing to do. Of particular importance is creating stakeholder psychological safety and developing a school schedule that allows for appropriate PLC meeting time. Furthermore, involving internal and external support personnel such as teacher teams, program coordinators, consultants, coaches, students, and SAC members will allow for multiple perspectives in uncovering assumptions as to why an achievement gap exists at MMMS. SSP goals will need to be established through PLC planning time and baseline data collected to determine timelines. Building relationships will continue to be essential during this stage as it will help build and sustain momentum and efficiency.

Stage 3: Analyze Evidence

Stage 3 of the CTI model of change concerns the analysis of evidence. This stage, which involves acceleration of the change process, will require continued planning and implementation of the proposed plan. A participative approach will be useful because “you first need to engage and change attitudes and gain acceptance of an initiative before restructuring systems and organizational structures” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 304). A change initiative that is participatory is considered a behavioural-social change whereby cultural and social relationship changes need to be considered (Cawsey et al., 2016; Donohoo, 2013; Donohoo & Katz, 2019). Continued and consistent leadership practices, such as being a role model of purposeful action, belief, and enthusiasm about the collectively inspired change vision, celebrating small successes, and emphasizing relationships, will all be necessary in this third stage of change. This stage is action-oriented with a focus on moving toward the successful attainment of SSP goals. Appropriate collection and interpretation of data will continue to move the plan forward. Leadership will need to be distributed and transformational as indicated in the Student Success Planning document (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016) with each member of the organization knowing who does what, when, and how. This stage will also examine deficit mindsets and focus on a strengths-based approach and culturally responsive pedagogy.

Stage 4: Document, Celebrate, Share

Stage 4 of the CTI model of change involves tracking the change and adjusting where necessary to attain the future desired state of the organization. The leader must continue to institutionalize and adapt to changing situations, which may include modifying the action plan. The behaviour of the leader will need to be ethical and transparent, and managing the change will need to be inextricably linked to the organization’s values and goals because it is these that

influence action (Cawsey et al., 2016; Donohoo, 2013; Donohoo & Katz, 2019). Truly embedding practices and procedures that help propel the change initiative is essential to this step. The goal is to maintain the transformation by establishing deeply seeded practices and norms within PLCs.

Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

In the following section, four potential solutions to address the problem of practice are identified. They are: (a) leader learner teams through PLC, (b) cultural proficiency and culturally responsive pedagogy, (c) middle school model concept, and (d) collective teacher efficacy. The fourth possible solution will be combined with the other potential solutions to create the proposed solution to address the PoP. Each will be explored in terms of their benefits, drawbacks, impact, outcomes and the resources needed to realize the possibilities of their implementation. Each solution and the proposed solution will be guided by the fundamental understanding that the status quo must be disrupted. Identified leadership approaches—adaptive, transformational, and transformative—will guide the execution of the proposed plan with the essentiality of relationships to move it forward.

Possible Solution #1: Leader Learner Teams

Through what Katz et al. (2017) define as leader learner teams (LLTs), small groups of people work together as critical friends to help move each other forward from where they are “stuck.” This solution to address the PoP is relevant because Student Success Planning documents promote this kind of collaboration to improve student achievement and increase equitable conditions. Within the SSP document, leader learner teams are similar to professional learning communities whereby an inclusive group of people motivated by a shared learning vision who support and work with each other, finding ways to inquire on their practice and

together learn new and better approaches to enhancing all student's learning (Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). The leadership approaches—adaptive, transformational and Indigenous are also practical within these teams. For example, adaptive leadership involves navigating and analyzing interactions between people. Looking at the interconnectedness of people and how they tackle complex, adaptive problem solving bodes well for school improvement. In addition, respectful, responsible, reciprocal, and relevant interactions (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1999; Kenny & Fraser, 2012) within LLT and PLC are where tensions or solutions that increase organizational capacity by efficient and purposeful practice can be found (Lichtenstein et al., 2006). This relates to where a leader needs help “with respect to influencing . . . [others] to engage in the kind of professional learning that has an impact on teaching practice around an area of focus as determined by data” (Katz et al., 2018, p. 87). LLTs within existing PLCs hold potential for mobilizing this OIP, which addresses the kind of interrelated collaboration for moving identified SSP goals forward. In complex systems such as schools, this type of LLT inquiry is an adaptive response. There is no set path for how to solve the problem, but LLT members rely on inquiry and interaction with one another to come up with solutions that are job-embedded and needs-based (Katz et al., 2018).

Benefits, Drawbacks, Impact, Outcomes, and Resources Needed

The benefits of LLTs are based on the notion that together is better (Katz et al., 2017). Efficient and effective LLTs have many benefits: (a) they promote relationships, (b) they are collegial and professional, (c) they allow for the work between self and others, (d) they are holistic and considerate of others, (e) they can be embedded in Student Success Planning, and (f) they promote open and honest critique for improved conditions that promote equity (Katz et al., 2017). Furthermore, LLTs are a complimentary addition to the required PLC structure in the LRCE. In turbulent times, as is the case within the LRCE, teachers need to know they are

capable and appreciated for their work. LLTs will inspire teamwork and confidence so teachers can effectively reach their students.

While the benefits of leader learner teams are many, there are significant drawbacks. Teachers require professional development to become familiar with LLTs, and school leadership must do its due diligence with the process and ensure there is time for it in the school schedule. Another potential drawback is staff turnover each year, which limits LLTs effectiveness and makes it difficult to sustain.

While the drawbacks may be a deterrent, the potential impact and outcomes of LLTs outweigh the challenges. LLTs create the “tension” that adaptive leadership promotes, and they challenge thinking for organizational improvement. Research indicates that teachers have the most influence on student learning and, with their professional knowledge and practice, inequitable practices can be identified, modified, and implemented, leading to increased equity (Gay, 2010; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Even though leader learner teams hold potential for improvement, they are only one piece of the puzzle of addressing the PoP. Within a structured framework with an appropriate leadership framework and change path, LLTs could be one piece of what is needed to address student achievement and well-being, especially for BIPOC and low SES students.

Possible Solution #2: Cultural Proficiency and Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

The second possible solution to address the PoP is heightening the critical importance of attaining cultural proficiency and implementing culturally responsive pedagogy. Cultural proficiency (CP) can be defined as a way of being, or a worldview, that allows individuals and organizations to interact effectively with people who differ from them (Lindsey et al., 2009). Table 2 outlines the progression from cultural destructiveness to cultural proficiency.

Table 3*Cultural Proficiency*

Compliance-based tolerance for diversity	Transformation for equity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural destructiveness: seeking to eliminate the cultures of all “others” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural precompetence: becoming increasingly aware of what you and the school do not know about working in diverse settings
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural incapacity: trivializing other cultures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural competence: manifesting behaviours so as to be inclusive of others
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural blindness: pretending not to see or acknowledge the cultures of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cultural proficiency: advocating for lifelong learning and creating a socially just democracy

Note. Adapted from Lindsey et al., 2009.

Practices that move people and organizations toward cultural proficiency are essential in responding to oppressive situations. In addition to CP, teachers must also embrace culturally responsive pedagogy. Culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) is a teaching method that recognizes the importance of including students’ cultural references in all aspects of learning, is aware of cultural differences, examines teaching materials and practices, and adapts programs and interventions, as appropriate, to respond to different student needs (Gay, 2010; Gonzalez et al., 2006; Hollie, 2017).

Moving toward cultural proficiency and culturally responsive practices requires considerable commitment from all stakeholders. It is not an immediate quick fix to the PoP in this OIP. Implementing CP and CRP happens over time with much introspection and professional development, hope, optimism, and asset thinking which are concepts highlighted in Indigenous literature (Battiste, 2002, Cull, Hancock, McKeown, Pidgeon, & Vedan, 2010; Kenny & Fraser, 2012). Becoming culturally proficient is a journey that happens through continual self-assessment at the individual as well as the organizational level. But making the

effort to implement culturally responsive practices and striving for CP and CRP makes the negation of deficit mindsets possible.

Benefits, Drawbacks, Impact, Outcomes, and Resources Needed

The benefits of a culturally proficient and culturally responsive approach will impact the wider community and create sensitivity to diversity and issues of equity, defining tenets of this OIP. Hollie (2017, p. 9) describes cultural responsiveness as “a movement, led by the people who are singularly focused on primary quality, equitable, and liberating education for all students.” This mindset is significant because high poverty and low test scores indicate that CP and CRP are not being readily embraced, effectively promoted, or appropriately internalized within the LRCE.

The Student Success Planning process could be a potential vehicle through which CP and CRP could thrive. In addition to mandatory literacy and mathematics goals, a promising third goal relating to a safe and inclusive school environment is a part of the SSP framework. The third goal could provide a foundation that would nourish and grow literacy and mathematics. Supporting culturally responsive practices, in turn, then supports academic achievement and well-being. Northouse (2019, p. 434) suggests that a culturally responsive leader would “need to develop communication competencies that would enable them to articulate and implement their vision in a diverse workplace.” At MMMS, the needs are high and diverse. Communication and clear targets are needed to improve conditions at the school, increase accountability, and achieve SSP goals. As Leithwood et al. (2004, p. 3) explain “the impact of leadership tends to be greatest in schools where the learning needs of students are most acute.” Conditions that empower followers and promote their psychological safety reduce barriers for true transformational change.

Elements of CRP can also be conveniently implemented into the SSP structure through leader learner teams. The adaptive, transformational, and transformative leadership approach chosen to guide this OIP fits within the complexities that come with CRP and its intention to transform conditions for transformative change (Gay, 2010; Hollie, 2017; Lindsey, 2009). Though CRP requires a significant and honest commitment on the part of stakeholders, the considerable potential it has to build healthy relationships based on understanding, mutual respect, and well-being makes it worth the effort.

Possible Solution #3: Middle School Model

The middle school model is a model of schooling for young adolescents that promotes relationships, socio-emotional and academic development, and common planning time for teachers of a specific group of children. The middle school philosophy focuses on “elements and educational objectives that make up a complete educational program for youngsters who are coming of age” (This We Believe in Action, 2012, p. viii).

Benefits, Drawbacks, Impact, Outcomes, and Resources Needed

The middle school model in my board has succumbed to internal and external factors, such as time, money, and commitment, that impede its success. The LRCE committed to this model several years ago, but the remaining centres for education have not embraced it as wholeheartedly as the LRCE. One drawback is that it is not promoted provincially, which limits support for and embrace of this structure. At MMMS, we were starting to have success with certain aspects of the middle school philosophy, but this success was undermined when aspects of the model were changed or halted. Middle school models thrive with transformational leaders who are “concerned with emotions, values, ethics, standards and long-term goals” (Northouse, 2019, p. 163). This type of leadership would not only be beneficial to young adolescents but also BIPOC and low SES students. In high poverty areas in need of improvement, leaders need to be

creative and do “things differently in order to improve the life chances of all students” (Stoll and Temperley, 2009, p. 12). I am hopeful for a resurgence of the middle school philosophy under the transformational and creative leadership of the new superintendent of the LRCE.

The benefits of the already-existing middle school model include the promotion of the whole child and a focus on adolescent characteristics and understanding how adolescents learn, matching pedagogy with practice through relationships, a key concept of this OIP (Styron et al., 2008). The middle school model is impactful because it addresses the needs of young adolescents and truly considers all facets of their well-being and development. Unfortunately, while the middle school model is touted, the required resources, such as professional development, scheduled planning time, and fiscal support, are not provided. With better promotion, support, and uptake, the middle school mentality could lead to increased student achievement and well-being. A bonafide resurgence of the middle school philosophy under transformational and creative leadership could be a way forward, producing more equitable conditions and student success. But without this leadership and support, it will not flourish.

Proposed Solution: Collective Teacher Efficacy

The proposed solution to address the problem of practice in this organizational improvement plan is to leverage collective teacher efficacy for the improved achievement and well-being of BIPOC and low socioeconomic status students. Collective teacher efficacy can be defined as “a group’s shared belief in its conjoint capability to organize and execute the course of action required to produce given levels of attainment” (Bandura, 1997, p. 476). Promisingly, research reveals a positive correlation between CTE and improved results (Donohoo, 2020; Donohoo & Katz, 2019). An implementation cycle of CTE, as shown in Figure 9, would include the following: the leader promotes CTE through relationships, collaborative teacher inquiry is

fostered, professional learning communities including leader learner teams are established, and teachers engage in relevant professional development. A better understanding of students' lived experiences will lead to more positive interactions between teachers and students, increasing student success. This CTE cycle will be further explained in the discussion of the change implementation plan in Chapter 3.

Figure 9

Collective Teacher Efficacy Change Implementation



Note. Adapted from Donohoo & Katz, 2019

Benefits, Drawbacks, Impact, Outcomes, and Resources Needed

The successful implementation of CTE will depend on two things, as identified by Katz et al., (2018): a leader must have the ability to provide an atmosphere of professional learning, and they must have an in-depth understanding of the challenges facing the school. At MMMS, students and staff struggle in many ways. CTE will address specific issues as they pertain to teaching and learning. The research literature points out that the biggest influence on student achievement is teacher professional practice in the classroom, and “if teacher practice doesn’t change in classrooms where students are struggling to achieve, it’s unlikely that student learning will improve” (Katz et al., 2018, p 3). Following the collaborative teacher inquiry model

(Donohoo, 2013) will enhance teacher professional practice. This model has several stages, which include framing the problem, collecting evidence, analyzing evidence, and documenting, celebrating, and sharing (Donohoo, 2013). These stages align with the already-existing Student Success Planning Framework (Nova Scotia, 2016). Within CTI stages, the focus is on professional development through professional learning communities. PD will be specifically related to student learning needs and teaching practices that support and enhance their success. These include the possible solutions identified to address the PoP: leader learner teams, cultural proficiency and culturally responsive pedagogy, and the middle school philosophy.

Although CTI provides “a structure that supports individuals in adapting” (Donohoo, 2013, p. 87), there are still likely to be challenges to the proposed solution. For example, the middle school philosophy promotes common planning time for cross-curricular development of lessons and recognizes that this is essential for CTE to flourish. But scheduling constraints undermine efforts to create common planning time and leader learner teams, which impedes change attempts. Another potential yet real challenge is teacher commitment to doing things in a new way. The leader’s ability to inspire and connect with their teachers will be fundamental to them to seeing themselves as change agents. Fiscal restraints could also pose a problem. There is often misalignment between the demands placed on schools and the financial support they need to make things happen. However, if funding were allocated specifically to SSP, and coaching and mentoring were in place, the plan could become a real success.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

As humans, we have an ethical and social responsibility to all humans and nonhumans alike (Kenny & Fraser, 2006; Sefa Dei, 2019). Sefa Dei (2019, p. 355) reminds us that “it is about the ethics of caring for everyone.” This mindset is critical in the implementation of this

OIP, as caring for others in a deeply ethical way will help destabilize the status quo and increase equity for those living in oppressed situations. In the section below, ethics pertaining to leadership and organizational change that address social justice issues within complex systems will be discussed with specific reference to adaptive, transformational, and transformative leadership.

Ethical Leadership Within an Organization

This OIP is attempting to make change that is not only transformational but also adaptive and transformative. All three leadership approaches require a sound ethical foundation. Caldwell (2011) explains that “it is an ethically based leadership model that integrates a commitment to values and outcomes by optimizing the long-term interests of stakeholders and society and honouring the moral duties owed by organizations to their stakeholders” (p. 176). Northouse (2019) also supports this same kind of ethical integration of values which supports and honours stakeholders and their organization.

The adaptive, and transformational leadership approaches, which can address the PoP and are required for implementation of this OIP, are all guided by ethical frames. In essence, ethical leadership

is concerned about the moral purpose of education . . . [and] is about relationships.

Ethical leaders . . . act fairly and justly. They are viewed as caring, honest and principled persons . . . They promote values such as inclusion, collaboration and social justice . . .

[and] they promote the achievement of all students, especially those who are least advantaged and marginalized by the current system. (Ehrich et al., 2015, p. 197)

According to Ciulla (2009), leading organizational change is especially important because a leader’s job includes taking responsibility for others in a mutually trusting and caring

relationship. In their study on trust in leadership, Dirks and Ferrin (2002) identify a relationship perspective whereby mutual care and trust denotes high-quality relationships. These are the relationships needed for the kind of transformational change required in this OIP.

In an educational system such as the Legacy Regional Centre of Education (LRCE), which is still very traditional and transactional and demands accountability, it is important to remember, as Nygaard et al. (2015) remind us, that traditional, top-down power structures are problematic because they can instill a counter-ethical ethos in an organization. These authors conclude that demands for ethical behaviour will not necessarily translate into ethical behaviour; rather, this behaviour must be modelled by the leader. Research also reveals that ethical leadership is essential in an educational setting where accountability around student performance is required (Ehrich, 2015), as is the case within LRCE. It is because of this that a leader's ethical position is imperative to any organizational change. To support this, Calabrese (2002, p. 89) points out that "the transforming leader has a moral compass and seeks to lift followers, raising them to higher levels of purpose and achievement." Leaders with this transformational mindset see the potential of human capital within the organization. Collectively, members of the organization create change for the students because it is the right thing to do and, as Calabrese further points out, "organizations committed to a higher cause change in the right direction" (p. 101). However, Starratt (2017, p. 79) points out that, because morality is somewhat abstract, it is often difficult to implement the thoughts and actions of morality. While this may be true, he goes on to explain that ethical judgements can be made easier by considering three ethical components: the ethics of care, critique, and justice. Combining these three perspectives allows the educational leader "to move toward the 'best' choice under the circumstances." As such, it is

my moral and ethical imperative to lead in a way that influences followers to a higher moral standard while also caring for, respecting, and serving others in an honest, ethical way.

Social Justice within Complex Systems

Disrupting the status quo requires ethically sound judgements and leadership. Social justice work is ultimately concerned with correcting situations that create marginalization (Theorharis, 2007). Within complex systems, complexity theory relies on redistributing power to all organizational members, creating interdependence among people and allowing for the possibility of accomplishing collective tasks (Lichtenstein et al., 2006; Uhl-Bien et al., 2007). The collective undertaking being addressed by the PoP in this OIP is about disrupting existing practices that create marginalization, inequity, and achievement gaps. Critical social justice theory (CSJT) requires respect, care, recognition, and empathy. CSJT is based on “the exercise of altering . . . [institutional and organizational] arrangements by actively engaging in reclaiming, appropriating, sustaining, and advancing inherent human rights of equity, equality, and fairness in social, economic, educational, and personal dimensions” (Theoharis, p. 223), all of which are dependent on an ethical framework.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined various leadership approaches to change, including adaptive, transformational, and Indigenous approaches. These approaches were applied to a framework chosen to lead this change. The changes that need to be made were identified through an organizational or gap analysis, and possible solutions that address the PoP and the implementation of this OIP were identified. Finally, considerations for achieving ethical organizational change and leadership in addition to social justice work within complex organizations were discussed as they relate to the change process.

Chapter 3

Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication

This chapter will outline the development of a framework that proposes a way for implementing, evaluating, and communicating the organizational change process. This framework and process are necessary to effectively address the specific problem of practice (PoP) of challenging the status quo and leveraging collective teacher efficacy for improved student success and the well-being of marginalized students. The change implementation plan will show the transition of the organization from its current state to its future desired state and explain the chosen model for structural change. This chapter will also explain approaches for monitoring and evaluating the change process while communicating the need for change. It ends with the identification of next steps and future considerations.

Change Implementation Plan

Connecting with the organizational analysis in Chapter 2, the proposed strategy for change involves the school leader fostering a sense of collective teacher efficacy (CTE) through collaborative teacher inquiry (CTI), which relies on professional learning through school teams or professional learning communities (PLC) as was outlined in Figure 9, Collective Teacher Efficacy Change Implementation in Chapter 2. The goal of the implementation plan stemming from the PoP is to disrupt the status quo by elevating collective teacher efficacy for increased student achievement and the well-being of all students, especially BIPOC and low SES students.

As a means of achieving the goal of disrupting the status quo, Donohoo's (2013) CTI model will move change through cyclical stages in parallel to the steps outlined in Nova Scotia's Student Success Planning Framework (2016) for continuous school improvement. The combination and alignment of these models, as shown in Table 4, CTI and SSP Alignment, will

aid in analyzing the internal and external components of changes needed to address the existing gap between the present and the future desired state.

Table 4

CTI and SSP Alignment Steps

Model	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3	Stage 4
Collaborative teacher inquiry (CTI)	Frame the problem: determine a meaningful purpose	Collect evidence: develop shared understandings	Analyze evidence: make meaning of data	Document, share, celebrate: record findings, celebrate successes, reflect, debrief
Student success planning framework (SSP)	Review: the context for areas of strength and needed improvement	Support: support implementation of the plan	Measure: goals to determine student achievement and well-being	Celebrate/repeat: celebrate successes, plan next steps for cycle 2 of continuous improvement

Note. Adapted from Donohoo, 2013; and Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016.

Collective Teacher Efficacy

In educational environments where collective teacher efficacy is thriving, teachers' positive beliefs about their own teaching indirectly impact the learning of their students. This, in turn, impacts the beliefs students have about their own ability (Donohoo & Katz, 2017).

Collective teacher efficacy refers to “educators’ shared beliefs that through their combined efforts they can positively influence student outcomes, including those students who are disengaged, unmotivated, and/or disadvantaged” (Donohoo & Katz, 2019 p. 15). A study by Bandura (1993) demonstrated that collective efficacy is more strongly correlated with student achievement than socioeconomic status is. Jensen (2009) explains that students living in poverty have brain operating systems that require a specific academic environment. Part of that environment is “a champion’s mindset and confidence” (Jensen, 2009, p.55). Collective teacher

efficacy has the potential to help produce that very important and needed environment and mindset.

The following section will explain how collaborative teacher inquiry, professional learning communities, leadership, and relationships help create the conditions required to build collective teacher efficacy.

Collaborative Teacher Inquiry

Collaborative teacher inquiry is a structure that can be used to address school improvement and the achievement of all students (Donohoo, 2013). CTI can be defined as “a structure in which members of a professional learning community (PLC) come together to systematically examine their educational practices” (Donohoo, 2013, p. 2). CTI is also a practice that can be influential on teacher effectiveness and increased teacher efficacy. For the purpose of this OIP of leveraging CTE for improve student achievement, the CTI model, and its alignment with SSP, will be used to move change through a series of cyclical stages for continuous improvement. As shown in Table 4, CTI and SSP Alignment, the four stages of CTI are (a) framing the problem; (b) collecting evidence; (c) analyzing evidence; and (d) documenting, sharing, and celebrating. Stage 1 involves framing the problem by determining a meaningful purpose, stage two requires collecting evidence and developing a shared understanding, stage three involves analyzing evidence and making meaning of data, and stage four calls for documenting and sharing findings, celebrating successes, reflecting, and debriefing. Operating within professional learning communities, the stages of CTI guide teams through the formal process of inquiry. PLC and CTI are productive and promising ways to respond to adaptive challenges in schools, relying on the collective wisdom of a team of educators for the benefit of all students.

Professional Learning Communities and Teacher Professional Development

Professional learning communities hold the potential to improve both teaching practices and student learning. PLC can be defined as an inclusive group of people who are motivated by a shared learning vision that support and work with each other to find ways to inquire on their practice and learn new and better approaches for enhancing all students' learning (Antinluoma et al., 2018; Donohoo & Katz, 2019; Dufour, 1998; Lindsey et al., 2009). As shown in Table 5, Professional Learning Communities, the PLC have a community-specific focus that highlights culture and the need to be responsive to diverse student populations (Lindsey et al., 2009). For this OIP, it will be necessary to debunk myths of how economically disadvantaged students learn and how teachers can most effectively teach them. Through purposeful professional development, the PLC structure provides an ideal way for this to happen. At Mel Morgan Middle School, consistently using the PLC structure gives credence to the importance of dedicating time and space to the process of the structure. For example, within PLC essential practices to CTE can happen such as teacher discourse, identify and working towards school goals, and professional development for improved teacher practice. PLC provides the dedicated time and space for this to happen and as Donohoo (2013) points out "classroom practice, [is] an important predictor of student learning and achievement, [and] is influenced by teacher learning" (p. 23). Furthermore, this collaboration aligns educational priorities across provincial, board, and school levels blending SSP, CRP and PLC together.

Table 5*Culturally Proficient Learning Communities*

Essential elements of culturally proficient PLC	Elements of PLC	Cultural competence characterized by
Assess culture and cultural identity	-shared personal practice -feedback that supports individual and organizational improvement	-individual and group assessments -peer-to-peer support -intentional pd to improve student learning
Value diversity	-shared beliefs, values, and vision -focus on student learning	-acknowledge multiple perspectives and common purpose and base vision on data
Manage the dynamics of diversity	-collaboration and shared power	-open communication about issues of marginalization
Adapt to diversity	-supportive and shared conditions	-allowing for multiple voices -adaptive practices
Institutionalize cultural knowledge	-collective learning and knowledge generation to support student learning needs	-student needs identified by benchmarks -continual improvement model

Note. Adapted from Lindsey et al. 2009.

To further elaborate, in a report on public policy, Leppard (2018) identifies that leading requires seeing everyone as learners. Within the SSP framework, this kind of leadership is referred to as distributed leadership and as explained in Chapter 2, distributed leadership is a part of transformational leadership. The PLC structure not only allows time and space for the school improvement plan to happen, but it is also a space where teachers can learn how to become leaders through professional development hence the need for PLC and teacher professional development. Considering the role of teacher learning in improved student learning, it is reasonable for a leader to promote and support strong professional learning communities, as they “produce schools where students are able to meet the high expectations set for them and achieve outcomes that they might not thought possible” (Donohoo, 2013, p. 93). Professional learning communities and relevant teacher professional development will enhance the life chances of the

students at Mel Morgan Middle School by allowing a dedicated time and space for the work building CTE to happen.

Leadership and Collective Teacher Efficacy

Effective, supportive leadership is a strong predictor of teacher collaboration for improved instruction and increased student success. Leppard (2018) argues that schools are complex systems that need to adapt to the challenges they face. He points out that all leadership is ethical and prioritizing the best interests of the students and their success is an educational leader's primary purpose. In their study, Goddard et al., (2015, p. 26) demonstrated that "a principal's instructional leadership significantly predicts collective efficacy by influencing teachers' collaborative work." Considering this, a leader's belief in the importance and promotion of collective efficacy cannot be underestimated. As shown in a study by Preus (2011), effective leadership that fosters an environment of collaborative inquiry boosts collective teacher efficacy, which, in turn, impacts student outcomes (Donohoo, 2017). More importantly and connected to this PoP is that collective teacher efficacy is shown to have significant impact on those students coming from socioeconomically disadvantaged situations, which relates directly to the context of the students at Mel Morgan Middle School.

The Four Steps to the CTI Implementation Plan

As explained in the previous section, collaborative teacher inquiry fosters collective teacher efficacy. Efficacious professional learning communities then, in turn, identify relevant professional development that attempts to respond to adaptive challenges as they pertain to student learning. Through the CTI stages and a cycle of continuous improvement, viable plans of action can be developed. The CTI stages are: (a) frame the problem; (b) collect evidence; (c)

analyze evidence; and (d) document, celebrate, and celebrate. Each of the stages is outlined and explained in the following section.

Stage 1: Frame the Problem

As identified in chapter one, poverty at Mel Morgan Middle School is a significant issue. Compounding this is the fact that low SES is also often associated with BIPOC students. Poverty is not only an educational issue, but it is also a complex sociocultural and economic issue that impacts all facets of a child's life (Fisher & Frank, 2020; World Bank, 2002). In school, conditions associated with poverty can make a child's experience very difficult. While schools cannot solve poverty, they can respond in appropriate, sensitive, and equitable ways that can enrich the lives of not only socioeconomically disadvantaged students but also other vulnerable populations. As identified in the PESTE analysis in Chapter 1, students at MMMS are the most economically challenged in the province and the least successful on provincial literacy and numeracy assessments. Also identified in the PESTE analysis is the external factor that new educational legislation has negatively impacted the educational atmosphere in Nova Scotia. At Mel Morgan Middle School, this unease is omnipresent hence the need for a leader who demonstrates consistent positivity and who tends to the psychological safety of all stakeholders. This is a contributing external factor that impacts schools and its educators, leading to strained school climates. Fortunately, faculty at MMMS work well together and normally rise up in the face of internal and external pressures. This bodes well for the implementation of this plan as it is the teachers who will need to do most of the work. Unfortunately, faculty hold myths and misconceptions about BIPOC and low SES children and why they are successful or unsuccessful. These myths and misconceptions significantly impact classroom environments and teaching practices. Low teacher expectations of student performance is a significant factor that impedes the implementation of this plan and must be addressed. Compounding this issue is low morale as

a result of existing political pressures and internal turmoil due to issues of communication. Furthermore, collective teacher efficacy practices such as mastery moments which are repeated successful practices and vicarious learning, which is learning through observation, are infrequent. The infrequency of these needed practices for CTE negatively impacts affective states affecting psychological safety and relational trust (Donohoo & Katz, 2020). Therefore, for social persuasion to happen, leading teams in a hopeful and optimistic manner to act differently is of vital importance, especially in this very important first stage of implementation. As Donohoo and Katz (2020) point out “trust builds while engaging in the adaptive work necessary for achieving quality implementation” (p. 65).

In stage 1, it will be important to work in a process of collaboration through change teams. At MMMS, cross-curricular teams will be established with emphasis on literacy and numeracy in the content areas, as dictated by the SSP framework. To accurately interpret data and ensure triangulation and validity, information from many sources will be considered. After reviewing internal and external data—such as provincial assessments, student report cards, attendance reports, day-to-day work of the student, and student/parent/teacher surveys, conversations, and observations—student achievement goals will be established and a theory of action formulated (Donohoo, 2013). Provincial and school board documents such as the inclusion policy, the LRCE strategic plan, professional teaching standards, and SSP framework will be reviewed so educators are made aware of and utilize existing documents that impact the change process. Examining data and documents will heighten the understanding of the gap between the present and the desired future state and the need for change. In addition, in a process of self-reflection during stage 1, educators will be able to examine existing beliefs, values, and assumption and the impact these have on their teaching and student outcomes.

Stage 1 of the CTI change plan, framing the problem, involves identifying the need for change, identifying a gap between the present and the desired future state, collectively creating a powerful vision for change, communicating this vision with stakeholders, and enacting a viable plan of action through a theory of action. A theory of action can be thought of as a road map that helps a team realize a vision with a concrete strategy (Donohoo, 2013). Theories of action are a necessary component of the SSP process for continuous improvement at MMMS. As vice-principal, I am responsible for this process. In my role, some key ideas facing my leadership as a change agent include: knowing myself and optimizing my leadership skills, problem solving little by little, knowing and building relationships with internal and external stakeholders to work together to design and enact a plan, maximizing formal and informal leadership roles within the school to influence the change path, using specific strategies to influence change, and managing reactions to avoid problems and cultivate a positive environment (Cawsey et al., 2016). It is essential that I am cognizant of my leadership responsibilities because informal leaders will also need to possess these leadership qualities.

Stage 2: Collect Evidence

The purpose of stage 2 in the CTI change process is to support the attainment of the identified goals through a continuous learning process and develop a way to enact the change vision and necessary change. Professional learning communities (Dufour & Eaker, 1998) and leader learner teams (Katz et al., 2018) are two ways purposeful practice can be initialized and the change leader can influence change. PLCs and LLTs are two ways school leaders can influence informal change leaders and, in doing so, ensure leadership becomes distributed or shared (Northouse, 2019), which is another requirement of PLC within the SSP structure. By reinforcing the change vision of improved student achievement and the well-being of BIPOC and low SES students, the plan becomes mobilized because it is the right thing to do ethically and

morally and this appeals to a sense of shared values, which would have been identified in stage 1. In addition, data is continually analyzed for small incremental improvement (Cawsey et al., 2016; Donohoo, 2017; Nova Scotia Department of Education, 2016). A strengths-based approach is also necessary for teachers to share their expertise in PLC environments. Collective efficacy is increased through collaboration, shifting mindsets from deficit to asset thinking, improving both teaching and learning, and encouraging a more culturally responsive environment of teaching and learning (Donohoo, 2017; Hollie, 2017). Sharratt's Learning Walks and Talk could be a potential avenue for collecting evidence of activities happening in classrooms (Vukokic, 2019). These learning walks and talks provide opportunities to have authentic, non-judgemental conversations about observable practices of student learning in a climate of trust, relationships and psychological safety. By visiting classrooms and asking students specific questions, as outlined in Table 5, educational leaders can gauge what was seen, what was meaningful, and lessons learned to assess if practices are meeting their needs.

Table 6

Student Questions

Student Questions
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are you learning? Why are you learning that? 2. How are you doing in that learning? How do you know? 3. How will you improve? 4. Where do you go for help if you are stuck?

Note. Adapted from Vukovic, 2019.

Learning walks and talks fit within CTI and are well suited to promote collective teacher efficacy and propel increased student achievement and well-being forward.

Stage 3: Analyze Evidence

In stage 3 of the change implementation process, working within established professional learning communities and practicing the essential components of effective leader learner teams will be instrumental to the change plan's momentum. By practicing distributed or shared leadership, change team champions help steer and manage the team to self-manage and increase their autonomy. Clearly understanding the purpose, tasks, and team goals, celebrating small victories together, and having confidence in team members will promote collegiality and bolster confidence. These aspects of PLCs are outlined critical components of the Nova Scotia approach to learner teams and essential ingredients to any productive and successful PLC (Dudar et al., 2017; DuFour & Eaker, 1998; Lindsey et al., 2009; Nova Scotia, 2016).

Stage 3 of the CTI cycle also focuses on propelling change actions forward by observing what is working and making modifications where necessary. It is imperative to continually monitor student learning data and check teachers' assumptions. In a system of culturally proficient learning communities that have equity at the forefront, for student and teacher learning to continue, assumptions, values, beliefs, and behaviours must be kept in check and deficit mindsets must be challenged and ultimately diminished. Practicing culturally proficient learning communities is an intentional practice that not only builds community but also builds capacity to move the change plan forward (Dudar et al., 2017; Lindsey et al., 2009; Gay, 2010). Furthermore, culturally responsive learning communities is a purpose structure which supports the attainment of the future desired state of the organization whereby augmented levels CTE and achievement of BIPOC and low SES is the focus.

Additionally, in stage 3 of the CTI cycle, it cannot be forgotten that organizational trust is imperative for any successful change outcome and "the quality of the school output is considered

to be mainly related to principals' leadership behaviours and teachers' feelings of organizational trust depending on those behaviours" (Kars & Inandi, 2018, p. 146). Having already established and continually reinforced healthy, collegial relationships and organizational trust, school leaders can effectively move in and out of classrooms to observe and assess change actions. Classroom walkthroughs (Vukovic, 2019) and checklists are an effective strategy to observe and measure the change effort. At the end of this step, and through a process of critical self-reflection, teachers' beliefs and mindsets about teaching and learning should have shifted, reconciling what was once believed to a new way of thinking (Donohoo, 2019; Katz et al., 2017)

Stage 4: Document, Share, Celebrate

In stage 4 of the CTI cycle of change, attention will be paid to stabilizing the new changes and assessing which structures and processes may need adjustment to move forward with the next cycle of improvement. Evaluating progress, drawing conclusions, and celebrating successes happen during this step. Also, at this juncture, plans to continue with the same identified improvement goals can be discussed or a new problem, practice, or goal(s) can be established. In addition, during this stage, having established a solid sense of collective teacher efficacy, teachers will feel a collective sense of success in their own practice and collective ability. This will be of great importance considering the scope of their work in increasing equitably conditions for vulnerable student populations.

Managing the Transition

Effectively managing the transition requires consideration of elements such as potential stakeholder reactions, psychological safety and relational trust, the communication plan, needed supports and resources, and potential implementation issues. Connecting with the possible solutions to address the problem of practice identified in Chapter 2, the elements of the transition

need to be closely examined to minimize negative reactions and maximize productivity to achieve the desired, envisioned future state.

Psychological Safety, Relational Trust, and Potential Stakeholder Reactions

While managing the transition of the implementation plan, the leader must behave proactively rather reactively. An effective transformational and adaptive leader must attempt to build relational trust at the onset of the plan (Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). These leaders must also create conditions that promote a sense of psychological safety. The psychological safety of stakeholders is important through all steps of the change process but is especially important for teachers as it allows them to take risks (Donohoo & Katz, 2020). “Where there is a sense of psychological safety, educators feel like valued team members with important contributions to make to team efforts” (Donohoo & Katz, 2019 p. 65). Relational trust is an outcome of psychological safety while engaging in adaptive work is necessary to achieve the successful implementation of any change plan. Enacting proactive measures, such as relational trust and psychological safety, can minimize or eliminate potential negative reactions from stakeholders. Reactions, negative or positive, are managed by a change leader who is aware of and capitalizes on stakeholders’ specific strengths. A proactive change leader who understands the process of change and understands the people who make up the organization will have the most chance at success. Furthermore, the four components of collective teacher efficacy—mastery experiences, vicarious learning, affective states, and social persuasion—can all be maximized to work in favour of the desired goals and outcomes.

Communication Plan

In addition to establishing psychological safety, an effective leader must also be able to effectively communicate the change plan through every step of the process. The communication plan will be guided by the four stages of CTI. Once again, this is a proactive measure.

Communicating organizational change is an ethical procedure because leaders are responsible for the people in their organization and the leader's credibility and trust are at stake. To avoid miscommunication, leaders must convince their followers to move in a common direction for a common good. Communication plans do four things: solidify the need for change, allow for an understanding of stakeholders' roles, communicate what must be done, and keep people updated about progress (Cawsey et al., 2016). The timing of the communication is also important and follows the steps of the change model. Communication is most successful when it comes from an immediate supervisor, is succinct, and is either face-to-face or uses a variety of media methods (Cawsey et al., 2016).

Potential Implementation Issues

Despite clear communication, issues pertaining to the change plan may emerge. Once again, leadership is crucial. Maintaining a steadfast commitment to the Four R's of Indigenous leadership, respect, responsibility, relevance and reciprocity will help to avoid many potential problems. Furthermore, proactive measures such as clearly communicating messages from the respectful workplace policies and communicating the tenets of social justice will work as measures against relational problems. In the Nova Scotia context, and as identified in the PESTE analysis, a unionized work environment could create a serious potential issue. To mitigate against these issues, it will be necessary for all stakeholders to know and respect union agreements and for the change leader to work closely with union representatives to adhere to all contract items, especially with time allocation for PLC meetings. In addition to union constraints, any social justice reform attempting to destabilize the status quo can be fraught with resistance. Understanding the culture of the school environment is imperative if the change leader is to effectively shift mindsets.

Supports and Resources

For change to be successful, appropriate resources must be in place. Specifically, time, money, technology, and information must be available. Schedules must make space for common planning time for school teams, and external resources, such as funding and time from different departments of the school board, must be accessed. Technological resources have become readily available within MMMS and within the LRCE, and teachers have received training and resources to increase their technological literacy. Finally, information support and resources will come from within the school building as well as from the expertise of LRCE support personnel such as coaches, consultants, and coordinators. Peer mentoring is also an option for teachers who want to work with other teachers within the school building and from other schools. This has proven to be an effective practice for sharing knowledge and expertise.

In summary, the overall goal of the change implementation plan and the goal of this OIP is to increase equity by challenging the status quo of everyday operations to improve student achievement and well-being, especially for those students who continue to struggle. Fostering collaborative teacher inquiry and collective teacher efficacy while effectively managing the change transition will lead to improved learning conditions for both teachers and students and will help the organization become more effective in its purpose and goals.

Change Process Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and control processes provide the change leader with valuable tools. Information gleaned from measurement systems enable change leaders to effectively frame the need for change, match the vision to the outcomes, monitor the environment, guide change through communication, and bring the change plan and its participants to a rewarding and successful end (Cawsey et al., 2016). Neumann et al. (2018, p. 120) define evaluation as the “systematic assessment of the merit of an activity . . . which is planned and purposeful, involving

the collection of data on questions and issues relating to the organization and its change programme.” Using analytic tools to monitor and evaluate the progress of a change plan should guide essential and impactful behaviour. These tools also offer a way to be accountable to overarching control systems. In this case, Mel Morgan Middle School is accountable to the Legacy Regional Centre for Education who are accountable to the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Culture. In consideration of the PoP and the goal of this OIP, the process of monitoring and evaluation is a major ethical consideration. The next section outlines the monitoring and evaluating control efforts (see Appendix A) as they pertain to each step of the change implementation plan.

Stage 1: Frame the Problem

It has been identified that MMMS has a large percentage of socioeconomically disadvantaged students. It has also been identified that educational faculty hold misconceptions and negative beliefs about student learning. Pursuant to the Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy and the LRCE strategic plan, which both promote cultural proficiency and culturally responsive teaching and learning through a process of self-reflection, it will be necessary for educators to situate themselves on the cultural proficiency continuum to challenge their own belief systems. The cultural proficiency continuum (see Table 3 in Chapter 2) is a tool that “provides us with the opportunity to become students of our own assumptions about self, others, and the context in which we work with others” (Lindsey et al., 2009, p. 8). In addition to the cultural proficiency continuum, school-based and systemwide assessment tools will be used to establish baseline data and criteria for moving the change plan forward. These tools include teacher created assessments, school climate surveys, school board created assessments, provincial assessments, student report cards, and publicly available data on literacy and

numeracy results and socioeconomics. These already established monitoring and evaluative tools serve to “track the change periodically and through multiple measures to help assess what is needed, gauge progress toward the goal, and to make modifications as needed” (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 98).

Stage 2: Collect Evidence

Professional learning communities and leader learner teams are two ways purposeful practice will be initialized and used throughout the change process. Hence, there is a need to monitor their effectiveness in an effort to modify action steps or confirm progress. Table 5, as outlined in Chapter 2, will be used as a reference to ensure PLC practice is culturally proficient. This information aligns with the interconnected concepts of the Indigenous four R’s: respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility. Leader learner teams will also be used to move professional learning forward in stage 2 (see Appendix B for the criteria to be used to move school priorities forward).

Stage 3: Analyze Evidence

In stage 3 of the change process, monitoring and evaluation will continue on an ongoing basis. Student assessments will be repeated for comparison data and possible augmentation of results. Results will be displayed using a data wall showing a visual layout of student achievement and movement across achievement levels. Classroom and school walkthroughs will take place for evidence of continued and improved culturally responsive and equitable environments (Appendix C), which include equitable instructional practices, assessment and evaluation, curriculum planning and implementation, professional development, learning resources, and communication and community relations.

Stage 4: Document, Share, Celebrate

In stage 4 of the change process, monitoring and evaluation will continue by assessing if goals have been achieved and if another cycle of steps is necessary. To assist in assessing this, the Innovation Configuration Map, Cultural Proficiency Continuum Self-Reflection, and Collective Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire will be repeated for evidence of improvement. PLC leader inquiry teams, through distributed leadership, will be responsible for collecting and analyzing this data. Further to the monitoring and evaluation process, a summary report will be written as an official document of the process which gets submitted to the LRCE. In turn, summary reports of the SSP process of each school of the LRCE are condensed and submitted to the Nova Scotia Department of Education for final review.

This section outlined which monitoring and evaluation tools will be employed to assess the implementation change plan most effectively at each step of the process. Through the analysis of the data created by these tools, meaningful conclusions can be made to plan for next steps. The next section will present the most effective communication plan for the proposed change.

Plan to Communicate the Need for Change and the Change Process

In the first section of Chapter 3, the CTI model explained a viable change path for disrupting the status quo at Mel Morgan Middle School. However, enacting change is complicated by myriad factors, both human and organizational, that will either promote or impede its success. Through their communication skills, educational leaders must navigate these factors to combine the who, what, when, where, why, and how of the organization to accomplish the identified goals of the school, which ultimately serve to improve education for students. In the following section, the change implementation plan will be summarized by using the four

stages of the CTI model as a guide, explaining both why it's needed within the organization and how clear and effective communication will enhance its success. The concept of relationships will be highlighted within the summary of the plan. Several strategies will be used to frame and communicate the need for change. They include: (a) Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five practices of exemplary leadership, (b) the four R's of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991), and (c) the Lewis L-M-R Model of Culture (Manville et al., 2017). In addition, and connected to this plan, strategies for communicating the change path clearly and persuasively to relevant audiences through appropriate channels will be developed and explained through the CTI framework.

Building Awareness of the Need for Change Summary

Central to the success of this plan and the conceptual framework is the concept of relationships. Healthy, productive relationships are imperative for proficient communication and building awareness of the need for change. Rita Pierson (2013) speaks about the power of connection between educators and their students. This power of connection drives the leadership-focused vision for change. There are many practices that can be promoted and implemented as a means of building relationships and strengthening culturally responsive teaching and learning, as required in the Nova Scotia context. First, Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five effective leadership behaviours will be outlined in the stages of the change implementation plan. They are (a) challenge the process, (b) model the way, (c) inspire a shared vision, (d) enable others to act, and (e) encourage the heart. Second, the Indigenous four R principles of respect, relevance, responsibility, and reciprocity (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991) will also be outlined within the change plan. Third, the Lewis L-M-R Model of Culture (Manville et al.,

2017) will explain how different perspectives can be respected through cultural alignment and behavioural adjustments (see Appendix D for the highlights of these three practices).

By combining these three practices, relationships and communication can be highlighted, providing people with the opportunity to know and trust each other. By building a community of learners and tapping into people's individual and collective strengths, human capital is maximized leveraging collective teacher efficacy for improved achievement of BIPOC and low SES students of Mel Morgan Middle School.

Five Effective Leadership Practices, the Four R's, and the L-M-R Model of Culture

Building relationships and promoting effective communication will be established by combining Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five effective leadership behaviours, the Indigenous four R principles of respect, relevance, responsibility, and reciprocity (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991), and the Lewis L-M-R Model of Culture (Manville et al., 2017). These three practices will help drive the leadership vision for change by inextricably linking people's relationships and their interactions with positive, productive change in real-world organizations (Cawsey et al., 2016; Kouzes & Posner, 2017, Lichtenstein et al., 2006). Kouzes and Posner's (2017) five effective leadership behaviours combine the who and what of an organization and present a framework that considers the importance of relationships within the complex interactions of school environments. These practices include (a) modelling the way, (b) encouraging the heart, (c) inspiring a shared vision, (d) challenging the process, and (e) enabling others to act. By using these five leadership practices, the status quo can be disrupted, and extraordinary things can happen that positively impact students and their well-being. These authors emphasize that everyone can be a leader and "leadership knows no racial or religious bounds, no ethnic or cultural borders" (Kouzes & Posner, 2017, p. 12). This view is significant

as it demonstrates the practicality of augmenting cultural proficiency and culturally responsive practices within the organization.

To be culturally proficient and responsive, one must look inward to assess their own values, beliefs, and assumptions to appropriately communicate with those who differ from them (Manville et al., 2017; Lindsey et al., 2009). This is a necessary component of achieving the goal of this OIP as debunking myths about the abilities and non-abilities of marginalized students is a significant factor which impedes their success. The Lewis L-M-R Model of Culture (Manville et al., 2017) demonstrates that cultural alignment and behavioural adjustments “bring together groups of people with their inevitably different personalities, aspirations, behavioural traits, and ways of working” (Lewis et al., 2017, p. 162). This model explains that there are three basic cultural types: (a) linear-active, (b) multi-active, and (c) reactive. Linear-active types are cool, factual, and decisive planners; multi-active types are warm, emotional, talkative, and impulsive; and reactive types are courteous, compromising, and good listeners (Lewis et al., 2017). Being cognizant of different personality types will give people the skills to communicate effectively and act appropriately.

As a part of being culturally proficient and responsive, the Four R’s of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility are embedded throughout this OIP to be inclusive of the Indigenous belief that we must respect others for who they are, provide relevance for individuals in all circumstances, promote reciprocity in relationships, and encourage responsibility for individual decisions and actions (Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991). This emphasizes a holistic and interconnected way of doing things.

Building awareness of the need for change within the organization requires framing issues for the various stakeholders. To do this, the transformational, adaptive leader engages in

behaviours that evoke stakeholder confidence. For example, influential leaders are role models who are credible and competent, communicate high expectations, have confidence in their followers to increase self-efficacy, and “articulate ideological goals that have moral overtones” (Northouse, 2019, p. 166). In sum, communicating within this framework demonstrates an ethical understanding that educational leaders are responsible for the people they lead, and their actions will ultimately impact others. Understanding this is crucial for any leader, as their behaviour must demonstrate authentic care toward the diverse people who follow them. Thus, communication depends on listening, observing, and responding to others (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). The following sections will explain how this can be done.

Model the Way

By modelling the way, leaders show followers their authentic self and demonstrate self-awareness. They set the example by purposely choosing principles that reflect their “deeply held values – the beliefs, standards, ethics and ideals that drive . . . [them]” (Kouzes & Posner, 2017, p. 48). Effective leaders then align their actions with these principles and build an environment that promotes shared values. Identifying shared values that exist within Mel Morgan Middle School could be done at the beginning of each year by asking specific questions that help faculty clarify the values and beliefs that guide their own personal and professional lives (see Table 6).

Table 7

Entry Slip Questions to Establish Shared Values

Entry slip questions to establish shared values
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did you become an educator? 2. What are your strengths as an educator? In what areas would you like to improve? 3. What makes you happy? 4. How would you describe your personality? 5. What would your ideal school look like? 6. What could I do, as your leader, to assist in you in making your work as a teacher as purposeful and meaningful as possible?

Receiving teacher input through entry slips provides the leader with valuable information, allowing them to know their teachers better and maximize individual and collective strengths by focusing on what each teacher stands for. They will also allow the leader to discover personality types as outlined in the Lewis L-M-R Model of Culture, which “reflect their values and beliefs in their social and business behavior” (Manville et al., 2017, p. 164). In a spirit of reciprocity, the information identified on the entry slip could be shared to promote mutual understanding and appreciation of others. Positive and purposeful communication like this helps foster respectful relationships and is at the forefront of modelling the way and achieving the intended outcome of this OIP.

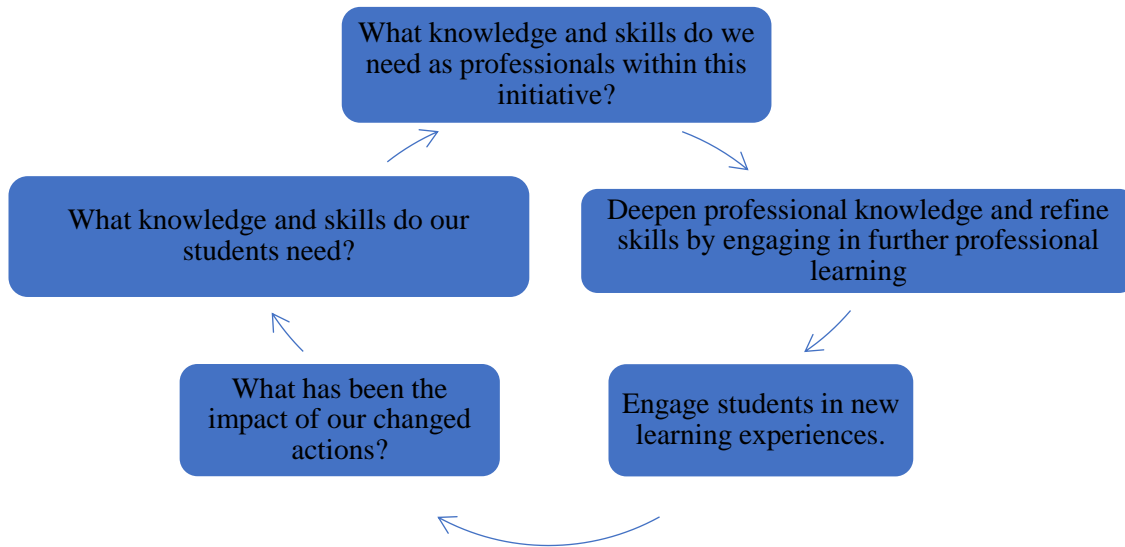
Intentionally interrupting the status quo requires a leader and their followers to identify personal values and then implement practices built on shared values. Considering the entry slip answers, it is reasonable to postulate that most teachers would articulate that helping students is their main reason for becoming a teacher. Research indicates that the classroom teacher and high-quality classroom practice that becomes permanent has the most influence on student achievement and well-being (Katz et al., 2018; Rutherford, 2013). In situations where student achievement and well-being gaps persist, change is imperative. Pursuant to that change, the leader must identify and provide impactful professional learning through trusting, caring, and respectful relationships supported by effective communication.

Placing high value on teacher improvement through collaborative inquiry and relationship building has substantial promise for disrupting the status quo for vulnerable student populations and is reflective of an ethic of care that emphasizes that students, in their educational journey, must be cared for first (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Katz et al. (2018) highlight this

thinking in the Professional Learning Cycle as shown in Figure 7 whereby teacher professional learning is linked inextricably to student success.

Figure 7

The Professional Learning Cycle

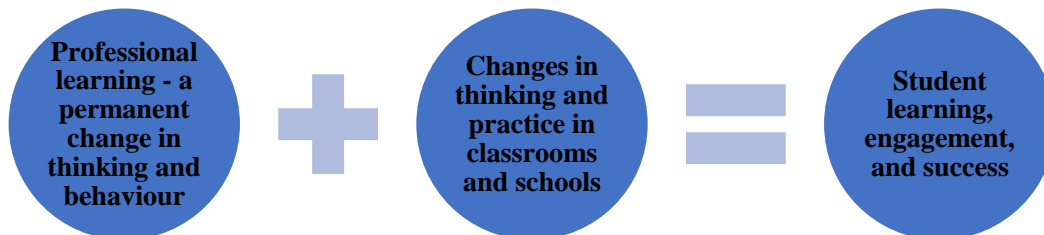


Note. Adapted from Timperley et al., 2008.

Further to this, the Path of School Improvement as shown in Figure 11 places the focus on student learning, engagement, and success, which is an iteration of the primary objective of the Legacy Regional Centre for Education Regional Improvement Plan (2019) and its supporting policies and frameworks.

Figure 11

The Path of School Improvement



Note. Katz & Dack, 2013.

From an ethics of care standpoint, all students must be cared for first and placed at the centre of the educational process, and all actions are in aid of this (Ehrich et al., 2014; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Thus, modelling the way involves developing relationships, identifying shared values, placing students first in the educational process, and leading with an ethic of care.


Encourage the Heart

Encouraging the heart involves showing appreciation to others for their personal best, celebrating what is accomplished individually and together, and building a positive climate by promoting a spirit of community. A transformational leader knows they must tap into “intrinsic motivation and follower development, which fits the needs of today’s work groups, who want to be inspired and empowered to succeed in times of uncertainty” (Northouse, 2019, p. 163). In addition, a transformative leader knows the importance of inspiring people to act for the collective good and needed social change (Kanungo, 2009). As such, promoting collective teacher efficacy, a goal of this OIP, “can positively influence student outcomes, including those students who are disengaged, unmotivated, and/or disadvantaged” (Donohoo & Katz, 2019, p. 15). A leader also encourages the heart by believing in their followers’ abilities, setting high expectations, and providing specific and relevant feedback (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Leaders who encourage the heart know that building relationships and deepening connections amongst people heightens the responsibility they feel toward each other.

In the spirit of critical theory, to achieve identified school goals and to improve education for students at MMMS, especially those who are at risk, it is helpful to understand this feeling of shared responsibility to each other and the students whose lives they touch. Supported by the work of Habermas (1984), effective communication is needed to enhance a shared social identity and inspire the culture of the group. It is also important to understand that communication, as an

essential tool, is a social process whereby *who* we communicate with is equally as important as *how* we communicate (Greenaway et al., 2014). In their study, Greenaway et al. (2014, p. 172) show that “effective communication . . . flows from a sense of contextually defined shared membership.” In this sense, it will be useful to be familiar with different personalities, which may dictate how people communicate and learn together. According to Manville et al., 2017, learning occurs in three domains—self, others, and self and others—through a process of developing cultural competence (see Figure 9).

Figure 12
Developing Cultural Competence

Developing cultural competence		
Self	Others	Self and others
Define your cultural style (categories, influences)	Understand your environment (people, settings)	Recognize barriers to cultural understanding (relate consciously)
		
behave reflectively, suspend judgement, convey respect, empathize, communicate effectively, interact appropriately		

Note. Manville et al., 2017.

Developing cultural competence through effective communication is significant to the goals of this OIP of leveraging CTE for improved student achievement because communication throughout the process of change could be augmented by understanding the benefits of shared group identity, adding to a positive school climate, a sense of psychological safety, and an interconnected cultural identity. By encouraging the heart, groups members feel a genuine sense of recognition tied to their efforts, individual and collective. Specifically, at MMMS, encouraging the heart can be supported with sincere individual recognition and group celebrations.

Encouraging the heart also means caring deeply for people and, just as teachers must care for their students, leaders must care for their teachers. Caring is a leader's ethical responsibility and reflects what Shapiro and Stefkovich (2016) refer to as professional ethics. Professional ethics combines the ethic of care, justice, and critique but focuses specifically on educational professionalism and the need for educational leaders to have a specific and unique ethical paradigm.

Inspire a Shared Vision

Inspiring a shared vision is crucial for any change plan to succeed and serves to augment communication. Its relevance cannot be underestimated. Imagining possibilities that could be realized in the future involves appealing to others' hopes and dreams. By identifying shared aspirations, a leader paints a picture of possibilities in hopes of inspiring a common vision which is a part of my leadership-focused vision for change. "Feeling a strong sense of purpose – particularly one that benefits others and not just yourself – has a profound impact on your performance and health" (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Helping others find what gives their life meaning and purpose can be harnessed for the benefit of identifying a shared vision. At MMMS, a shared vision must be connected to the mission of the organization, which includes the school board as well as the Nova Scotia Department of Education. This mission involves student achievement and well-being, which is also very likely the reason most teachers became educators in the first place. Articulating a shared organizational vision becomes simplified by identifying individual and larger organizational purposes. "Approached properly, it can mobilize and motivate people and have a positive impact on performance and attitudes" (Cawsey et al., 2016, p. 121). Once a shared vision is identified, goals can be set, strategies identified, and objectives

achieved (Cawsey et al., 2016). Inspiring a shared vision leads to change and a more desired future state.

Inspiring a shared vision requires a leader to listen intently to what people say and how they feel. Listening is a communication skill that involves asking questions and being open to different perspectives. Listening to understand diverse perspectives aligns with culturally proficient behaviours and allows for the opportunity to be heard and understood (Lewis et al., 2016; Lindsey et al., 2009). A transformational leader understands the importance of listening to the individual needs of followers and providing individualized consideration (Northouse, 2019). By doing so, they create conditions that result in people going beyond what is expected. When people feel heard and understood, they are more likely to feel their own sense of uniqueness. While it is essential to adhere to the overall vision of the organization, being listened to allows each person to feel a sense of belonging within the larger whole (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Inspiring a shared vision must also be an ethical consideration. Leaders touch the lives of others, which is inherently a moral activity. They are responsible for student learning and the improved life chances of their students. Therefore, it is essential to communicate in a way that is value driven. Leaders must communicate with sound interpersonal and intrapersonal skills, socio-emotional insight, and an understanding of all students' and staff members' backgrounds and cultures (Calabrese, 2002; Northouse, 2019; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016).

Challenge the Process

Challenging the process, imperative within the critical paradigm, involves searching for opportunities that speak to the greater good, looking outward for various ways to improve, experimenting by taking risks, learning from those experiences, and celebrating small wins (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). The most important aspect of challenging the process, however, is

challenging the status quo. Challenging the process, for the purpose of this OIP, is a very important practice considering the problem of practice is improved student achievement and well-being for students of marginalized groups.

At MMMS, the process can be challenged, and the status quo disrupted, by appealing to others' sense of purpose and meaning in their lives and then connecting this with the overall mission, vision, goals, and objectives of the organization. Doing so allows the transformational and transformative leader to connect with them in ways that attempt to permanently change social conditions (Montuori & Donnelly, 2017) and appeal to a higher sense of self, which is a part of ethical change (Calabrese, 2002; Ciulla, 2009; Northouse, 2019; Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2016). Calabrese (2002, p. 91) states that "the motivation is to bring benefit to the members of the organization and the community the organization serves." This idea is ethically heuristic, and people do the right thing because it is the right thing to do (Calabrese, 2002). For students at MMMS, change needs to happen because apathy for the status quo is not meeting their needs. Encouraging respectful, responsible, relevant, and reciprocal relationships is, again, at the heart of the change. With a solid foundation of meaningful relationships with their followers, transformational leaders can encourage initiative in others by creating conditions that foster distributed leadership, which aligns with educational policies and frameworks in the Nova Scotia context. Distributed leadership provides the opportunity for everyone to become a leader with the same moral purpose. Through collaborative teacher inquiry, relevant professional development, pilot projects, mentoring programs, guest speakers, and conferences, the leader can encourage and exercise oversight for new learning experiences that will ultimately benefit the school and its community.

Leaders who challenge the process are proactive. They create situations by causing things to happen as opposed to responding to things after they happen. In this sense, effective communication is therefore also important. The leader must inspire others, through their words and actions, to consider new possibilities so all members of the organization, especially students at risk, can learn in an equitable environment. Explaining the universal benefit to followers in a way that exudes great care will, in turn, connect the challenge to the greater good.

Enable Others to Act

Enabling others to act is about growing and strengthening positive relationships. Building trust and fostering collaboration helps strengthen others by increasing their self-determination, group efficacy and ensuring psychological safety. Growing people's autonomy comes from respecting and trusting them in relationships that are reciprocal. Kouzes and Posner (2017, p. 212) wisely point out that "reciprocity leads to predictability and stability in relationships; in other words, trust." Furthermore, showing genuine concern for others and active listening to understand people builds mutual empathy (Lewis et al., 2016).

At MMMS, enabling others to act requires the leader to believe with their head, heart, and actions in the absolute importance of meaningful relationships. Building interconnectedness with followers is paramount if the goals of the school are to be realized and the greater good achieved. This can be done by modelling and encouraging face-to-face social interactions, setting high expectations, fostering accountability, and giving choice (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

As a leader, commitment to enacting these practices is essential. Modelling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart all frame how the plan for communicating the need for change and the change process will happen.

Strategies to Communicate

In the section on the change implementation plan, the CTI strategy for change outlined four steps of the change plan: (a) framing the problem; (b) collecting evidence; (c) analyzing evidence; and (d) documenting, sharing, and celebrating. In consideration of these stages, it is acknowledged that the process may be accelerated or decelerated according to the needs of the school throughout the months and year. Strategies to communicate at each step will be similarly varied. In addition to the stages and strategies, communication that enhances the five exemplary leadership practices (Kouzes & Posner, 2017), the four R's (Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Kenny & Fraser, 2012), and the Lewis L-M-R Model of Culture (Manville et al., 2017) will be utilized (see Appendix E). The strategies to communicate must purposely and specifically reflect the purpose of the change plan. Disrupting the status quo, augmenting collective teacher efficacy through culturally responsive practices, and focusing on student achievement and well-being is the goal of this OIP and therefore communication that emphasizes these elements will be used.

Stage 1: Frame the Problem (beginning of the year)

The purpose of stage 1 of the change plan is to prepare stakeholders for change by creating awareness of the need for change, framing the problem, and reviewing the context for areas of strength and needed improvement. Building relationships, a concept identified consistently throughout this OIP, will continue to be of great importance and promoted consistently and regularly. Before faculty are even face-to-face in September, an email will be sent to all staff with a welcome note and a plan for the first two days of school when the change plan will be introduced. Being a role model of positivity will start immediately. On the first day, teachers will be welcomed with a smile and enthusiasm. Building on people's social nature, community building will be employed at the first staff meeting and at every staff meeting from then on. These activities promote interconnectedness and early awareness of the tools for cultural proficiency (Greenaway et al., 2014; Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Lindsey et al., 2009). Using a

PowerPoint presentation, staff will be shown summaries of the province's and school board's organizational missions, and they will learn that we too will be articulating our own vision as a school community that will complement the mission of the organization. To facilitate this, staff will complete the entry slip outlined in Table 7 above. This entry slip allows for the identification of shared values, which will ultimately define the vision and the actions of the change plan. Staff will use their responses from the entry slip to identify common shared values while also reflecting on the mission of the LRCE. They will also share their identified areas of strength and areas in which they would like to improve. The leader will listen intently to ensure they capitalize on people's strengths in the future. Next, in small PLC groups, staff will articulate a possible school vision statement. Each small group will share their vision statement, and then, as a large group, a school vision will be written. This vision statement will be presented to the student advisory council for input and final acceptance. Inspiring a shared vision will allow staff at MMMS to imagine the possibilities of an improved future state and work together within a common purpose (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

On the second day, after the community building exercise and a brief review of the previous day, staff will learn about cultural proficiency and how it can function to impact education, and then they will be asked to place themselves where they believe they are situated on the cultural proficiency continuum. At each monthly staff meeting thereafter, staff will receive direct instruction on cultural proficiency and culturally responsive practices, both of which are required practices and are specifically outlined in educational policies and documents of the Nova Scotia Department of Education and the LRCE. Knowledge of these practices will build further connections among staff and a consideration of diverse perspectives (Hollie, 2017, Lindsey et al., 2009). The second day will also include time to consider student data, such as

student well-being surveys, provincial assessment results, report cards, and attendance records. The first iteration of possible school goals will be articulated in literacy, numeracy, and well-being as required by the Student Success Planning framework (2016). It will be very likely that goals will be tweaked once new student data is available from formative assessments and initial baseline assessments. Finally, during the first two days of the new school year, staff will be encouraged to congregate together over a shared meal and storytelling, allowing for natural connections to occur. In so doing, the leader is purposely promoting a spirit of community to enhance collaboration in what Kouzes and Posner (2017) call encouraging the heart.

Stage 2: Collect Evidence (beginning to mid-year)

Stage 2 of the change plan includes mobilizing the plan, supporting the people and structures that sustain it, and moving the plan forward. During the mid-September staff meeting, the SSP framework will be reviewed and staff will continue learning about the tools of CP and CRP. Staff will also learn that common meeting times will be given to collaborative, cross-curricular teams and grade level teams. Mentors will be invited to this meeting to explain their supporting role and to explain that LRCE supported release days are available for collaboration-related activities that support moving school goals forward. Reaching outside the organization for expertise is an exemplary leadership practice that enables others to act (Kouzes & Posner, 2017).

During the first scheduled collaborative meeting, the leader will explain the collaborative teacher inquiry process; in subsequent meetings, teacher leaders will have the chance to embrace that role, thus enhancing distributed leadership (Donohoo & Katz, 2020; Montuori & Donnelly, 2017; Northouse, 2002). At each consecutive meeting, leader learner team practices will be introduced, practiced, and utilized. “The purpose of LLT .. [PLC] meetings is for group members to act as ‘critical friends’ to one another, share their inquiries and what they are learning, and to

receive critical feedback that pushes their thinking beyond what they could do on their own” (Katz et al., 2018). LLT are beneficial to the collaborative process.

During the first day of school, teachers will learn what the students themselves value in their lives, and then teacher and students will co-construct criteria regarding expectations of comportment. This forges unity and gives students the opportunity to have their voices heard, which makes them feel included in the operations of their school. Kouzes and Posner (2017) call this practice “modelling the way.”

During stages 1 and 2 of the change plan, the leader will also communicate through many other channels. For example, communication of the change plan’s progress will be transmitted via email and through informal face-to-face communication with staff. Being visible in the halls and classrooms of the school will be a common practice. Greeting staff and students at the door will also forge relationship and a spirit of friendliness. The leader will also encourage people’s hearts by calling people by their names, smiling, laughing, and frequently saying please and thank you (Kouzes & Posner, 2017). Formal meetings with the student advisory council will be held on a monthly basis. Monthly newsletters will be distributed to parents/guardians highlighting pertinent information related to school goals and other successes. Information will also be disseminated through social media.

During the October scheduled staff meeting, school goals related to literacy, numeracy, and student well-being will be identified. Creating school goals in October will give teachers the chance to get to know their students, their strengths, and areas of needed improvement. The school’s vision and goals will be visible in common school areas and in each classroom. Teaching strategies related to achieving those goals will be posted in each classroom to ensure consistency in practice. Also, during the October staff meeting, CP and CRP will be reviewed

and the benefits of collaborative inquiry and how it impacts collective teacher efficacy will be stressed. It is essential that shared values around the importance of student achievement and well-being are revisited to keep momentum moving toward identified goals and the common good. Finally, it is imperative that the leader continues to encourage the heart by providing genuine recognition to teams and individuals for their performance and contributions in their journey to disrupting the status quo.

Stage 3: Analyze Evidence (midyear)

Stage 3 of the change plan involves accelerating change to reach goals, analyzing and measuring evidence, and observing what is happening. Stage 3 also involves observing and acknowledging milestones of achievement for all members of the school. At this point in the plan, collective teacher efficacy should be well established and teacher's combined efforts should be visible due to the positive influence they are having on students (Donohoo, 2017). In addition, teachers' individual efforts to become more culturally proficient should be indirectly affecting students as their awareness and appreciation of cultural diversity expands. Midyear data of academic achievement and well-being surveys will be compared to baseline assessments and growth in both areas should be visible. Students should be feeling successful as a result of their teachers' collaborative efforts to influence their achievement and well-being through CRP. During formal and informal school walkthroughs and teacher appraisals, CRP should be more and more evident in classrooms and lessons (Hollie, 2012). Furthermore, students should be feeling a sense of pride by seeing themselves reflected in the hallways and classrooms of their school, affirming that they are significant and that they belong. Monthly social justice-based assemblies celebrating diversity and individual student accomplishments will continue. In addition, daily "way to go" awards will be given to students who are caught acting virtuously.

Finally, “just because” notes that have a positive message about each student will continue to be mailed home.

Stage 4: Document, Share, and Celebrate (mid to end of year)

Stage 4 of the change plan includes evaluating change, modifying plans as needed, planning next steps, and celebrating successes. At this point in the change plan, practices intentionally put into place to disrupt the status quo should be natural and permanent.

Communicating the success of the change will happen through verbal and written praise of the change effort. In addition, increased student achievement will be evident in the use of data walls, which will show a visual of comparative of growth from baseline, midyear, and end of year data. Collective teacher efficacy will be apparent as teachers’ combined efforts will have increased student achievement and well-being. Finally, students and teachers will have benefited from exemplary leadership practices resulting in improved teaching and learning.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

There are several next steps that need consideration after the completion of the change plan outlined in this OIP. First, before the commencement of a new change plan cycle in the next school year, contextual factors must be considered. Considering that organizations and the people who inhabit them are continually changing, it will be important to conduct a new organizational analysis to assess change readiness. Additionally, policies, practices, and procedures of the organization may have changed, requiring adjustments in how the change plan is implemented so that appropriate actions can be aligned with current realities. Second, in the likelihood of staff changes, the shared values of the group will need to be reassessed. Shared values are important to the articulation of an organizational vision and how the work is conducted. New staff will not have benefited from the experience of previous teachers and so would need to quickly acclimatize to the new environment. Pairing new teachers with teacher

mentors would give credence to the importance of distributed leadership and the notion that everyone is a leader. Third, students' gained improvements in literacy, numeracy, and well-being may require the SSP goals to be modified and/or changed completely. Reconsideration of these goals will depend on what the data dictates. Fourth, the practices outlined in this OIP could be shared with other schools of similar student makeup and context. Consideration would need to be given to the fact that all schools, leaders, teachers, and students are different and will have different needs, areas of strengths, and areas in need of improvement. Fifth, considering the research-proven effectiveness of collaborative teacher inquiry and the benefits of collective teacher efficacy on student outcomes, it is recommended that all schools within the LRCE support the practices that CTI promote for increased CTE. The PESTE analysis conducted for this OIP indicates that teachers are currently feeling unrest within their workplaces due to factors beyond their control. Implementing CTI would increase needed support and morale for these teachers. This is especially true within today's educational institutions where adaptive challenges are the norm. By reframing practices and bolstering efficacy, teachers could better adapt to changes in the education system to do the important work of disrupting the status quo. A new way of doing things requires individuals to adopt new values and beliefs and this could happen through CTI, where teachers come together to systematically examine their educational practices for the benefit of the students they teach (Donohoo, 2017).

Conclusion

In conclusion, this OIP outlines a problem of practice that requires action inspired by a moral imperative to intentionally disrupt the status quo. It also challenges the status quo by requiring change to be seen through an Indigenous lens. Throughout this OIP, the critical paradigm guides the actions of the leader as change is enacted in a transformational,

transformative, and adaptive way. The concept of relationships and the importance of human interconnectedness is weaved throughout the introduction, development, and implementation stages. The importance of relationships to the change process is paramount as the leader engages followers by using exemplary leadership practices. The change plan is guided by the alignment of several models that draw on four stages, moving the plan from point to point. Highlighted in the change process is the importance of becoming culturally proficient and responsive through an approach that requires educators to look inward first. Through collaboration and building collective teacher efficacy, teachers become adaptive to changes and can respond in new ways to new situations. By doing so, they can actualize their purpose for becoming educators, helping to change systems for the benefit of their students.

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Appendix A

Monitoring and Evaluation Summary

CTI Cycle	Monitoring and evaluation tools
Frame the problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -diagnostic evaluation of current efficacy state using Collective Efficacy Scale Questionnaire -student and teacher school climate survey - analyze data from student assessments and reports - conduct schoolwide Innovation Configuration assessment -conduct cultural proficiency self-reflection -anticipation guide assessing knowledge of how best to teach students from low SES
Collect evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -conduct student assessment to establish baseline -conduct classroom walkthroughs to ensure compliance with equitable practices outlined in Innovation Configuration Map -create data wall as a visual with relevant school student data
Analyze evidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -repeat student assessments and compare data for possible augmentation -conduct classroom walkthroughs and CTE for the continued evidence of culturally responsive environments
Document, share, celebrate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -have goals been achieved or is another cycle of steps necessary -repeat of IC Map for evidence of movement -repeat of cultural proficiency continuum self-reflection for evidence of movement -repeat of CTE Scale Questionnaire -staff reflection exit slips

Note. Adapted from Cawsey et al., 2015; Donohoo, J. 2013; Nova Scotia, 2016.

Appendix B

Inquiry Template for School Leaders

<p>What are your school improvement priorities?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student learning foci: Evidence (that needs to be an area of focus for students): • Teacher learning foci: Evidence (that needs to be an area of focus for teachers): 				
<p>Where are you stuck as a leader in this school improvement process?</p> <p>On what, and with whom?</p>				
<p>What leader learning opportunities does this define for you? (Your adaptive challenge defines your leadership inquiry question.)</p>				
<p>What's the transfer potential from your learning, in terms of intelligent leadership practices?</p>				
Plan	Plan	Plan	Assess	Reflect
What am I hoping to learn next?	My next best learning move: What <i>specifically</i> will I do to try to learn this?	How will I know if I have learned what I am hoping to learn? What conversation, observation and/or product will I look at to know?	What happened? What did I find out when I considered those evidence sources?	What did I learn <i>from</i> this move? What did I learn <i>about</i> this move as a transferable intelligent leadership practice?

Note. Katz et al., 2017.

Appendix C

Culturally Responsive/Efficacious School and Classroom Walkthrough Template

Descriptor of equity	Level Level 1 - insufficient evidence Level 2 – sparce evidence Level 3 – some evidence Level 4 – sufficient evidence Level 5 – strong evidence
Instructional practices	1 2 3 4 5
Assessment and evaluation	1 2 3 4 5
Curriculum planning and implementation	1 2 3 4 5
Professional development	1 2 3 4 5
Learning resources	1 2 3 4 5
Communication	1 2 3 4 5
Community relations	1 2 3 4 5
Sets high expectations	1 2 3 4 5
Uses positive, motivating feedback	1 2 3 4 5
Integrates students’ voice	1 2 3 4 5
Engages student in personally meaningful learning	1 2 3 4 5
Checks for understanding	1 2 3 4 5
Uses collaboratively developed success criteria and learning goals (clear and visible)	1 2 3 4 5

Note. Adapted from Donohoo, J., 2013; Nova Scotia, 2011.

Appendix D

**Relationships and Communication: Five Effective Leadership Practices, The Four R's, and
the L-M-R Model of Culture**

Relationships and communication		
Five effective leadership practices	The four R Indigenous principles	L-M-R model of culture personalities
<p>Model the way - leadership behaviour that earns respect by affirming shared values</p> <p>Encourage the heart - showing appreciation and creating a spirit of community</p> <p>Inspire a shared vision - inspiring commitment by imagining possibilities</p> <p>Challenge the process - searching for ways to improve, learning from experience</p> <p>Enable others to act - building trust and relationships and developing people</p>	<p>Respect - high regard for others for who they are</p> <p>Reciprocity - exchange of actions in relationships for mutual benefit</p> <p>Relevance - individuals are significant in all circumstances</p> <p>Responsibility - accountability of individual actions and decisions</p>	<p>Linear-active - cool, factual, and decisive planners</p> <p>Multi-active - warm, emotional, loquacious, and impulsive communicators</p> <p>Reactive - courteous, amiable, accommodating compromisers, and good listeners</p>

Note. Adapted from Kouzes & Posner, 2017; Kirkness & Barnhardt, 1991; Kenny & Fraser, 2012; Manville et al., 2006.

Appendix E

Strategies to Communicate

School year months	CTI/SSP/Change path	Strategies to communicate	The five exemplary leadership practices, the four R's, L-M-R model
RELATIONSHIPS			
September	Stage 1:	- welcome email to all staff	Model the way
October	framing the problem prepare by creating awareness of the need for change, review the context	before school starts - initial face-to-face staff meeting and one each month which includes	RESPECT
November	for areas of strength and needed improvement, frame the problem	community building activities to bolster relationships	Linear-active
December	Stage 2:	- cocreated criteria of expectations and shared school vision posted in staff areas	Inspire a Shared Vision
January	collect evidence organize action plan, support implementation of the plan, collect evidence	- clear visibility of shared vision throughout school building - emails to staff to review collectively established plan/expectations	RELEVANCE
February	Stage 3:	monthly newsletter to stakeholders (school faculty, parents/guardians/CBVRCE departments/community and SAC members)	Challenge the Process
March	analyze evidence drive change actions and goals to determine student achievement and well-being, enact plan, analyze evidence	- clear display of school goals in common areas (literacy, numeracy, well-being)	RECIPROCITY
April	Stage 4:	- data on data walls	Multi-active
May	document, share, celebrate evaluate change, modify,	- continue sending <i>Way to Go</i> positive message letters home to parents/guardians	Enable Others to Act
June			RESPONSIBILITY
			Reactive
			Encourage the Heart

	<p>plan next steps and future considerations, celebrate successes, plan next steps for cycle 2 of continuous improvement, reassess documents, share, celebrate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - monthly social justice themed assembly - monthly newsletter -midyear data analysis compared to initial baseline information -end of year data compared to baseline and midyear -celebrating together 	
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