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## Fostering and Sustaining an Inclusive and Cognitively Diverse Learning Culture that Promotes Innovative and Agile Thinking

Krista Zavits

Western University, KWAUD2@uwo.ca

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## Abstract

This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) addresses the problem of practice (PoP) of how leaders in the International School of Central Eastern Europe (a pseudonym) elementary school might foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. The plan is theory-based, research-informed, and looks to transfer learning into practice. It is built on a foundation of social constructivism and pragmatic-idealism and is firmly grounded in constructivist, ethical, and distributed leadership. Contextually oriented, the PoP grew in response to the need for schools to re-envision teaching and learning so students can thrive in an ever-changing, globalized society. It views change through continuous improvement. Bound by time constraints and the desire to empower faculty to lead change, an integrative approach was generated. The OIP intertwines an eight-step process with the organization's inquiry cycle and key principles focused on maintaining a strengths-based approach to change. The framework connects the traditional hierarchy with a network structure. The dual operating system supports the cultivation of self-efficacy and collective efficacy fostering innovation in support of continuous change that focuses on improving teaching and learning. The resulting integrative framework, the accelerated improvement cycle, will be leveraged within the elementary division. The implementation of this approach will engage participants in reflective, reciprocal learning opportunities that encourage members to challenge one another's assumptions to bring about positive, meaningful, and sustainable change. A critical examination of policy and the impact of the school's dominantly Western philosophy and a workforce that does not personify the underrepresented minorities requires future investigation.

*Keywords:* learning culture, cognitively diverse, innovative, agile thinking, continuous improvement, dual operating system

## Executive Summary

We live in a society that promotes human capital as the most precious economic resource. Society is traversing a pandemic that has dramatically altered the world in which we live and learn. Globalization and the pandemic have created an opportunity for educators to reimagine how we approach teaching and learning (Azorín, 2020; Harris, 2020; Zhao, 2020; Zhao et al., 2019). Educators find themselves on the precipice of change. We can choose to step back and resume what we have always done, or we can unearth the courage to jump forward and explore new pathways. This Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) aspires to take the necessary leap forward.

This OIP seeks to address the problem of practice (PoP) of how leaders in the International School of Central Eastern Europe (ISCEE; a pseudonym) elementary school might foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. Perspectives matter. Cognitive constructs are unique to individual interpretation despite sharing commonalities (Canan & Sousa-Poza, 2019). When stakeholders embrace cognitive diversity, they seek to understand different perspectives, challenge our assumptions, alter our behaviors, and change practice through double-loop learning (Argyris, 1976). This success depends on creating a learning culture in which faculty members feel empowered to build one another's individual and collective capacity to prepare learners to thrive in today's world.

This OIP is grounded in the theoretical underpinnings of pragmatic-idealism and social constructivism. It recognizes the need for systems and structures that create the time and circumstances for collaborative and interactive learning opportunities. It promotes the

application of theory to practice, inspiring educators to engage their students in impactful learning experiences that prepare them to thrive and make a difference in our globalized society.

Chapter 1 profiles the internal and external organizational context of ISCEE, connecting the environment to the identified need for change. Research-informed, this OIP aspires to move theory into practice to create ongoing, impactful, sustainable improvement. Grounded in ethical, constructivist, and distributed leadership with pragmatic-idealism and social constructivist underpinnings, a collaborative approach focusing on developing self-efficacy and collective efficacy is employed. Teachers' beliefs in their ability to improve student learning are ranked number one in influencing student success (Hattie & Zierer, 2018), creating an inclusive learning culture building on relational trust pivotal to success. Guided by questions emerging from the PoP, the chapter concludes with a leadership-focused vision for change and an assessment of the institution's readiness for change. Mobilizing faculty to engage in innovative and agile thinking requires a carefully considered framework for leading the change process.

Chapter 2 focuses on planning and development. The framework identified to lead the change aligns with the leadership approaches and practices and is contextually relevant, ensuring greater possibility for successful implementation and sustainability. Internal and external models have been combined into an integrative framework to ensure organizational relevance. The resulting innovative framework combines Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate with ISCEE's (2016) Professional Inquiry Cycle and Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) five principles of Appreciative Inquiry. Together, these three approaches create a dynamic framework that is contextually relevant and promotes continuous improvement using a strength-based and proactive approach to organizational change. The resulting integrated model is called the Accelerated Improvement Cycle (AIC). At the heart of the AIC is Kotter's (2014a) dual operating system. Combining the

traditional hierarchy with a networked improvement community (NIC) promotes a dynamic, symbiotic structure that allows for continuous change through innovative and agile thinking that leads to paradigm shifts in pedagogic practice. This chapter culminates with an assessment of ethical leadership implications throughout the change process.

Chapter 3 focuses on implementation, evaluation, and communication outlining the strategy for planned change. Well-designed implementation plans, assessment practices, and communication plans that scaffold, guide, analyze, and promote the change are pivotal to the OIP's success. The change strategy is framed within the AIC and articulates high yet achievable goals that align with the organizational context, leadership approach, and leadership agency. The transition plan accounts for anticipated challenges and possible mitigations through seeking to understand stakeholder reactions in advance of implementation. Recognizing ongoing assessment and analysis is essential to the change plan success (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016), an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework (MEF) is employed. The MEF ensures ongoing processes are in place to observe, assess, and evaluate the effectiveness of the AIC and its impact on organizational improvement. Baseline, monitoring, and evaluation data sources are identified, and timelines and responsible persons are confirmed to ensure MEF is sustained. Ethical considerations are identified and recommended responses are articulated to promote an ethical approach to monitoring and evaluation. A detailed communication plan considers stakeholder needs and the best approach for communicating the change to the internal and external community. This chapter concludes with next steps, future considerations, and final reflections.

The next steps for this OIP begin with a robust communication plan to create excitement and interest. Advertising and filling the learning forward coach positions so the newly formed guiding coalition can engage in professional development in preparation for a successful rollout

in the new school year is also necessary. Increased self-efficacy and collective efficacy ensure an increased likelihood of success and greater competency (Donohoo, 2017) as the guiding coalition engages in fostering an inclusive and cognitively diverse learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. It is important to note that this PoP focuses on cognitive diversity. Identity diversity is not addressed, yet it also needs to be considered. Recruitment and retainment of interculturally competent and identity diverse faculty will further promote an inclusive learning culture and address the dominantly Western approaches to teaching and learning.

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## Acronyms

AI (Appreciative inquiry)

AIC (Accelerated improvement cycle)

CRA (Core reflection approach)

DTL (Director of teaching and learning)

ES SLT (Elementary school senior leadership team)

EQs (Evaluation questions)

GC (Guiding coalition)

ISCEE (International School of Central Eastern Europe)

MEF (Monitoring and evaluation framework)

MVV (Mission, vision, values)

NIC (Networked improvement community)

PDSA (Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle)

PESTE (Political, economic, social, technological, environmental/ecological)

PGEP (Professional growth and evaluation policy)

PIC (Professional inquiry cycle)

PoP (Problem of Practice)

OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)

SLT (Senior leadership team)

TBO (The big opportunity)

## Glossary of Terms

*Capacity building*: “The process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world” (United Nations, n.d., Capacity Building section, para. 1).

*Cognitive diversity*: The differences in perspective resulting from information access, organization, processing, and representation (Aggarwal & Woolley, 2019; Miller et al., 1998; Page, 2020; Reynolds & Lewis, 2017).

*Collective efficacy*: The group’s perception of its capacity to realize the identified outcome (Donohoo, 2017; Eells, 2011; Goddard et al., 2004).

*Competencies*: Dispositions, attitudes, and behaviors.

*Constructivist leadership*: The “fostering [of] capacity through the complex, dynamic processes of purposeful reciprocal learning” (Lambert et al., 2016, p. 10).

*Continuous change*: The recurring pattern of adjustments to organizational processes and practices both social and professional (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

*Continuous improvement*: Continuous improvement is an ongoing cycle of learning in praxis that focuses on collective, purposeful, constant, and evolving change (Bryk et al., 2011; Cawsey et al., 2016; Hayes, 2018; Orlikowski, 1996; Weik & Quinn, 1999) aligned with strategic direction of the organization.

*Culture*: The visible artifacts, the accepted attitudes, beliefs, and values, and the underlying or hidden, shared assumptions deeply rooted within the organization (Schein 2017).

*Distributed leadership*: The process of mobilizing organizational activities within and across multiple stakeholders at all levels of the institution (Harris, 2004, 2009; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Spillane, 2006; Spillane et al., 2004).

*Double-loop learning:* The process of seeking to understand different perspectives and challenge assumptions and values resulting in an alteration in behavior and a change in practice (Argyris, 1976).

*Dual operating system:* The symbiotic existence of a hierarchy and network improvement community within an organization.

*Effective feedback:* Effective feedback is defined as reciprocal communication based on multiple perspectives that challenge how we think and act (individually and collectively) to promote change.

*Episodic change:* The infrequent and intentional responding to the organization's failure to adapt to the changing environment (Weick & Quinn, 1999).

*Ethical leadership:* An inclusive, collaborative, and strength-based approach through which responsible leaders recognize and continuously reflect upon the impact of the change process on all participants.

*Evaluation plan:* The evaluation plan is a collaborative and reflective learning opportunity to evaluate the overall success of the initiative and inform future decision-making (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

*Faculty:* Educators (teachers, assistant teachers, and leadership) who have the professional responsibility to facilitate the development of student cognitive, affective, ethical, emotional, and physical domains of their growth.

*Faculty conversations:* Weekly, 90-minute meetings.

*Global citizen:* An outlook on life and behavior, aiming to improve the world for both current and future generations (ISCEE, n.d.).



*Guiding coalition (GC):* The GC is a core group of leaders, formal and informal, who promote and sustain a sense of urgency as they guide, support, and collaborate with volunteers to realize the Big Opportunity while maintaining the connection between the hierarchy and the NIC.

*Identity diversity:* The observable (race, gender, age) and unobservable (sexual orientation, cultural practices, socioeconomic status) attributes that make people different (Page, 2020).

*Inclusive learning culture:* An organization's collective belief in its capacity and commitment to a shared, interactive, and accessible process of inquiry that encourages all members to participate and considers multiple perspectives to deepen understanding of innovative ideas in the pursuit of continuous.

*Innovative and agile thinking:* An open-minded approach to embracing multiple possibilities and perspectives to create iterative and new ideas.

*Internationalism:* A philosophy that values diversity and our common humanity and enables us to achieve new understandings, broadening our local and global experiences and, in the process, empowering us to become citizens of the world (ISCEE, n.d.).

*Learning:* A “process that leads to sustained and demonstrable consolidation or extension of conceptual understanding, competencies, and character” (ISCEE, 2017, p. 9).

*Learning walks:* Short classroom observations by teachers, assistant teachers, and leadership followed by conversations to promote reflective thinking.

*Middle leadership:* A formal, stipended leadership role taken on by teachers or assistant teachers.

*Monitoring and evaluation framework (MEF)*: The MEF integrates the monitoring plan with the evaluation plan providing a structured approach aligned with context and purpose encouraging collaboration and a successful change outcome (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

*Monitoring plan*: The monitoring plan is an ongoing assessment process used to track implementation and progress to ensure decision-making promotes internal and external accountability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016).

*Preparatory periods*: Nonteaching periods that teachers use to plan, assess, and collaborate with other members of faculty.

*Self-efficacy*: The belief in one's ability to achieve a desired goal (Bandura, 1977).

*Senior leadership*: The formal, contracted leaders in the school. The senior leadership team at ISCEE consists of the director, the elementary, middle, and high school principals, the elementary associate principal two directors of teaching and learning, the director of technology, the advancement director, and the business manager.

*Single-loop learning*: Learning that involves a change in practice, but behaviors remain intact (Argyris, 1976).

*Staff*: Employees who perform necessary roles in the school community that are not directly related to teaching and learning; for example, technicians, maintenance workers, and office assistants.

## **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Problem of Practice**

Today's interconnected world requires individuals to communicate, collaborate, and compete intellectually on a global scale. Globalization has produced the knowledge economy in which rapid change and human capital have become central to success. Educational institutions are not immune and find themselves encased in a pragmatic-driven perspective viewing education as a privatized, market-driven product, ensuring future success in the global economy (Allan, 2013). Educators must rethink their approaches to teaching and learning for educational institutions to succeed. This requires a focus beyond the academic curriculum.

In addition to the academic curriculum, students require an additional set of competencies (dispositions, attitudes, behaviors) to be successful in today's society (Longview Foundation, 2008; Schleicher, 2011, 2012; Skelton, 2016; Stobie, 2016; Wang et al., 2011; Zhao, 2010; Zhao et al., 2019). Learning for the future requires educators to think beyond traditional teaching to embody and support developing the complex set of competencies necessary to engage successfully in our diverse, global society. The challenge lies in preparing current faculty to successfully deliver the global competencies needed to prepare students for life in a heterogeneous society (Longview Foundation, 2008; Schleicher, 2012; Wang et al., 2011; Zhao, 2010). Chapter 1 focuses on the development of an Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) for the International School of Central Eastern Europe (ISCEE; a pseudonym) that promotes teacher preparation in support of student learning in the 21st century.

This chapter chronicles the organization context of ISCEE within the broader contextual forces and leadership position and approach laying the foundation for the identified Problem of Practice (PoP). Next, it frames the PoP within current practice and the desired future organizational state identifying emerging lines of inquiry. The chapter concludes with a

leadership-focused vision for change and an analysis of ISCEE's organizational change readiness.

### **Organizational History and Context**

ISCEE is a multiage through Grade 12 private, independent, co-educational, international day-school located in Eastern Europe. Established initially as an embassy school in the 1970s, ISCEE is considered a medium-sized school and offers an English-medium learning environment. The majority of ISCEE's families represent the business and diplomatic community. ISCEE's student population is close to 1,000, representing 61 diverse nationalities. There are 152 faculty representing 17 Western nationalities. ISCEE implements a concept-based, inquiry approach to teaching and learning following an American, International, standards-based curriculum. The mission (ISCEE, n.d.) highlights the importance of developing global citizens and lifelong learners.

The school's core values (ISCEE, n.d.) promote inclusivity, critical thinking, creativity, inquiry, cross-cultural understanding, and welcoming perspectives. The school's current strategic plan (ISCEE, 2017) aligns with the mission and core values, emphasizing creativity as a key characteristic of learning, preparing students for a globalized world, and using innovative teaching approaches that promote problem solving, critical and creative thinking, and engaged students. In addition, the school has operationalized definitions for global citizenship and internationalism (ISCEE, n.d.) that emphasize the importance of collaboration, valuing and respecting diversity, and providing an equitable and inclusive culture that prepares its learners to be active contributors in society. In 2016, ISCEE overhauled its professional growth and evaluation policy (PGEP) to align with its guiding statements, strategic direction, and beliefs about learning. The new approach recognizes choice, is inquiry-based, encourages collaboration,

and focuses on engaging others' strengths to support personal and organizational growth and development. Community members have defined ISCEE's culture as one of kindness, open-mindedness, and respect. Faculty have defined the learning culture as supportive and viewed the revised PGEP as a valuable learning tool. They value the learning opportunities afforded by colleagues.

A not-for-profit international school, ISCEE is overseen by a 12-member board of trustees responsible for strategic and financial oversight and a safe and effective educational environment. In addition, the board has one employee and nonvoting member, the director, who is responsible for the implementation of board strategic decisions and policies in addition to operational oversight. ISCEE maintains a traditional hierarchical leadership. The traditional hierarchy promotes the perception that all change initiatives are top-down, which discourages informal leadership and disempowers faculty to enact change.

The senior leadership team (SLT) consists of the director, the elementary, middle, and high school principals, the elementary associate principal, two directors of teaching and learning (DTLs), the director of technology, and the advancement director. The business manager is also a member of the SLT but does not regularly attend meetings. Other faculty and staff are invited to join and input into SLT discussions when it pertains to their work environment. Middle leadership consists of heads of department, grade level leads, curriculum leads, and a dean of students in the high school and middle school. Instructional and curriculum leads make up the middle leadership in the elementary school. The director believes in a distributed leadership model leveraging individual strengths (Lynch, 2012) and allocating oversight focused on interdependent interactions. For example, within the SLT, strength-based collaborative teams are purposely established to address specific outcomes. New to the school this year, the director has

ensured continuity during their transition. Although a traditional hierarchical model is in place, the director continues the allocation of divisional oversight to the three principals. My agency falls within the elementary division. As the elementary principal, it is my responsibility to leverage rich perspectives, value diverse processing styles, and support inclusivity in decision-making to foster innovative and agile thinking. Having provided an outline of the organization's history and context it is now necessary to articulate my leadership position in relation to this OIP.

### **Leadership Position Statement**

Our core values, experiences, and the meaning individuals attribute to their experiences impact how people interpret and interact with the world and those around us. Trigger events (Avolio & Hannah, 2008) in my life have pushed me to question and reflect upon preconceived notions and adjust my core beliefs. It is essential to acknowledge the role experiences, beliefs, and sense-making play in influencing change enactment (Arafah, 2014; Diem & Young, 2015; Dumas & Anderson, 2014; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009; Trilokekar & El Masri, 2017). In this section, I identify my worldview and how it impacts my leadership practice and my agency within the context of this OIP.

Living internationally for 25 years has allowed me to re-examine and reframe my conventional views. Immersing myself in cultures disparate from my own allowed me to engage in new experiences, access multiple perspectives, and interact and connect with others as I pushed myself to think in diverse ways. My international experiences have shaped who I am as a leader. My worldview does not fall neatly into one philosophical orientation. Instead, my worldview harnesses components of pragmatism, idealism, and constructivism.

My life experiences inform me that both pragmatism and idealism are necessary and possible components of international education. Through the pragmatic lens, I believe in practical and relevant learning opportunities that prepare students to succeed in the global economy. At the same time, I am an idealist. I believe student success rests upon developing their capacity to become citizens of the world who embrace mutual acceptance and contribute to a more peaceful, egalitarian, and ecologically sustainable world (Freire, 1968/2000; Tarc, 2013; Tate, 2012). As a pragmatist, I take a rationale and realistic stance (Dewey, 2003; Mumford & Van Doorn, 2001; Morgan, 2014). I recognize the importance of experience and action in the cultivation of perspectives and understanding (Sousa-Poza & Correa-Martinez, 2005). As an idealist, I also view my reality through my ideals and intentions recognizing the limitations of my understanding (Canan & Sousa-Poza, 2019; Sousa-Poza & Correa-Martinez, 2005). These two perspectives, pragmatic and idealist, are often described as antithetical. Cambridge and Thompson (2004) have argued that the pragmatic and idealist are rarely found in pure form. Mahowald (2013) has also claimed a false dichotomy exists between pragmatism and idealism. Canan and Sousa-Poza (2016, 2019) have viewed the confluence of the two terms as necessary to encourage multiple perspectives and understanding. I agree. My education and leadership roles promote deductive reasoning and the application of theory to a specific context. In tandem, my practical, interactive experiences with my school community promote well-intentioned inductive reasoning grounded in the belief that together, individuals can make a difference and contribute to an inclusive and equitable society. Intertwined with my pragmatic-idealist worldview is constructivism.

Dewey has had a profound impact on education, challenging traditional approaches to learning and advancing the idea that learning is a process built upon prior knowledge and

experience, is practical and hands-on, and involves social interaction focused on observation and reflection (Aubrey & Riley, 2019; Lambert et al., 2002; Merriam & Bierema, 2014). Piaget furthered the idea of building upon previous knowledge by introducing the concept of schemas that are continuously modified and changed through interactions with one's current environment (Aubrey & Riley, 2019; Lambert et al., 2002; Merriam & Bierema, 2014). His contributions have been criticized for limited research samples, research bias, and the linear, compartmental nature of his stages of development (Aubrey & Riley, 2019; Lambert et al., 2002). Building upon the foundations set by Dewey and Piaget, Vygotsky's social constructivism aligns best with my leadership position.

Vygotsky (1983, as cited in Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993), in his social constructivist theory, has highlighted the importance of the social world at the macro level (culture and history) and the micro level (interpersonal interactions) as a prerequisite of learning. Individual beliefs and actions are contextually oriented and inform our reality. I believe in the importance of using cultural tools and symbols to create meaningful interactions, which is why the social constructivist branch of constructivism resonates with me the most.

As the elementary principal at ISCEE, it is essential that I consider my agency and how I use tools and symbols associated with this agency to influence change. A balance of positional and personal power is necessary to foster support (Northouse, 2019; Yukl & Garner, 2020). My position as elementary principal plays a role in organizational change because my legitimate power provides me with access to and control of resource acquisition and distribution and the potential to influence subordinates (Northouse, 2019; Yukl & Gardner, 2020). The use of positional power must be considered carefully as my interactions with and influences on others are pivotal to this process. As a change leader, it is vital that I recognize and acknowledge my



own and others' positional power and analyze how these power sources are and can be used to influence change. It is important I avoid coercive power while ensuring transparency and open communication. Balancing my positional power with personal power is also essential.

Soft power bases are also necessary components of successful change enactment (Cawsey et al., 2016; Mittal & Elias, 2016; Pierro et al., 2013). Positional power involves both referent and expert power focusing on interactions and competence (Northouse, 2019; Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Through social interaction, I have developed my ability to understand, increasing my awareness and capacity to make meaning from experience (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Creswell, 2014; Morgan, 2014). The idealist component of my leadership style recognizes that connecting, collaborating, acting, and critically reflecting with others can change the world (Freire, 1968/2000). By exploring through open-ended questioning, listening attentively, and paraphrasing to confirm patterns, meaning, and understanding (Creswell, 2014), I have developed my contextual and cultural awareness, so I can better understand and am better understood. My pragmatic, idealist, and social constructivist perspective lay the groundwork for my leadership approach.

### **Leadership Approach**

Multiple leadership models have emerged over the past century (Lambert et al., 2016; Northouse, 2019). Table 1 provides a condensed overview of leadership history from 1900 to the present, identifying the most predominant leadership interpretations during the time period. Table 1 is not an exhaustive list, yet highlights the inconsistencies surrounding how leadership is viewed. Scholars agree there is no clear definition of leadership (Cameron & Green, 2020; Northouse, 2019; Rost, 1991). Recognizing the ambiguity surrounding the definition of leadership, it is necessary to provide a foundational understanding of who I am as a leader.

**Table 1***History of Leadership*

Time period	Predominant views of leadership
1900–1929	Centralized, controlled, leader–follower domination
1930	Leader as influencer, both leader and follower have the capacity to influence change
1940	Leaders’ behavior in groups, persuasive leadership versus coercive leadership
1950	Three main themes: behavior in groups leadership, relational leadership toward a common goal, influential leadership for effectiveness
1960	Influential leadership toward a common vision
1970	Organizational behavior, reciprocal process for mobilization
1980	Centralized leadership, influential leadership, traits leadership, transformational leadership
1990–present	Leadership process, authentic leadership, spiritual leadership, servant leadership, adaptive leadership, followership, discursive leadership

*Note.* Adapted from “Box 1.1: The Evolution of Leadership Definitions” by P. G. Northouse, 2019, in *Leadership: Theory and Practice* (8th ed.), pp. 2–4. Copyright 2019 by Sage.

The following section brings clarity to the elements of my leadership approach. My approach to leadership is integrative incorporating components of ethical leadership, constructivist leadership, and distributed leadership. Each of these leadership approaches align with my leadership position containing elements of pragmatism, idealism, and social constructivism.

**Ethical Leadership**

It is essential that leaders critically assess the impact of change, intentional or unintentional, on community members. Leaders influence followers through interactions impacting organizational morals and values (Northouse, 2019). Ethical leadership requires imparting principled expectations of responsibility. Influencing others to achieve the desired objective necessitates a well-thought-out approach to ensure ethical practices are in place. Ethical leadership is complex and not without its challenges. Leaders must consider the interests

of all individuals impacted by decision-making (Hayes, 2018). Social responsibility for society's greater good while ensuring the organization's financial sustainability is a necessary yet complicated balancing act. Starratt's (2005) ethical leadership practices help leaders maintain an ethical approach while ensuring organizational success.

Starratt's (2005) multidimensional approach to ethical leadership lends itself to my PoP's focus on fostering and sustaining a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture. Ethical leadership necessitates an inclusive and collaborative approach (Ehrich et al., 2015; Northouse, 2019) requiring responsible leaders (Liu, 2017; Northouse, 2019) who recognize strengths (Dion, 2012) and continuously reflect upon the impact of the change process on all participants. Starratt's ethics of justice, critique, and care are inherent in my plan.

The ethics of justice ensures fair and equitable treatment (Starratt, 2005). It manifests itself in my objective to create an inclusive learning culture that is reciprocal (Lambert et al., 2002; Lambert et al., 2016). The ethics of critique focuses on the power structures established within social relationships and organizations (Starratt, 2005). Power structures exist both explicitly and implicitly within the organization (Cawsey et al., 2016) requiring critical analysis of policies and practice that may contribute to an imbalance of power. Finally, the development of relationships that promote trust, mutual respect, and understanding are integral components of the ethics of care (Starratt, 2005) and are central to my change plan. As a change leader, it is essential to continuously reflect on and reinforce these ethical approaches as I look to foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture through a constructivist approach to leadership.

## **Constructivist Leadership**

Critics of constructivist leadership argue that the multiple perspectives that make up constructivist epistemology create inconsistencies in the interpretation of the terminology (Davis & Sumara, 2002; Kirschner et al., 2010; Phillips, 1995). The lack of shared understanding makes it essential to clearly define the term for this OIP. In addition, critics suggest that because constructivist theories originate outside the field of education and are descriptive, they lack alignment in application in the field (Davis & Sumara, 2002; Kirschner et al., 2010). This can lead to fragmentation and incoherence of understanding. Despite the concern expressed regarding incoherence, critics of constructivism commend the emphasis on active participation and the social nature of learning (Kirschner et al., 2010; Phillips, 1995), recognizing their pivotal role in the learning experience.

Learning and leading are interconnected concepts critical to adult and organizational change (Lambert et al., 2002). A constructivist approach is fundamental to learning for leaders like me who believe that learning is an active, social process in which meaning is created through individual and shared experiences. The elementary faculty also support a constructivist approach to their learning as evidenced in ISCEE's (2016) PGEP, teaching and learning handbook (ISCEE, 2017), and yearly climate surveys (ISCEE, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020). The concept of leadership and the essential role it plays in learning continues to evolve, influenced by the intersecting relationship between the knowledge era and leadership (Fullan, 2005, 2011; Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Lambert et al., 2016; Leithwood et al., 2004). Coherence is lacking in the discourse surrounding constructivist leadership.

For this OIP's context, Lambert et al.'s (2016) definition of constructivist leadership II, referenced as constructivist leadership from this point forward, is used. Lambert et al. (2016)

have defined constructivist leadership as “*fostering capacity through the complex, dynamic processes of purposeful reciprocal learning*” (p. 10, italics in original). This clarity of definition addresses the need for consistency in terminology. Recognizing the importance of collective learning, it is also essential to acknowledge the role individuals play within the group making relational trust pivotal. Individuals generate greater understanding when interacting with others in purposeful reciprocal learning (Lambert et al., 2002, Lambert et al., 2016). When individuals engage in reciprocal interactions, stakeholders become aware of the commonalities and differences between our perspectives and the perspectives of others (Canan & Sousa-Poza, 2019), which can lead to growth and new understandings. Empowering individuals within the group to take on leadership roles and ensure that processes are in place to support reciprocal learning supports the distributed leadership approach.

### **Distributed Leadership**

Like much nomenclature in education, the terminology surrounding the concept of distributed leadership is ambiguous (Harris, 2009, 2013; Spillane, 2006). Clarity of definition is necessary to ensure understanding of the role distributed leadership plays in my leadership approach.

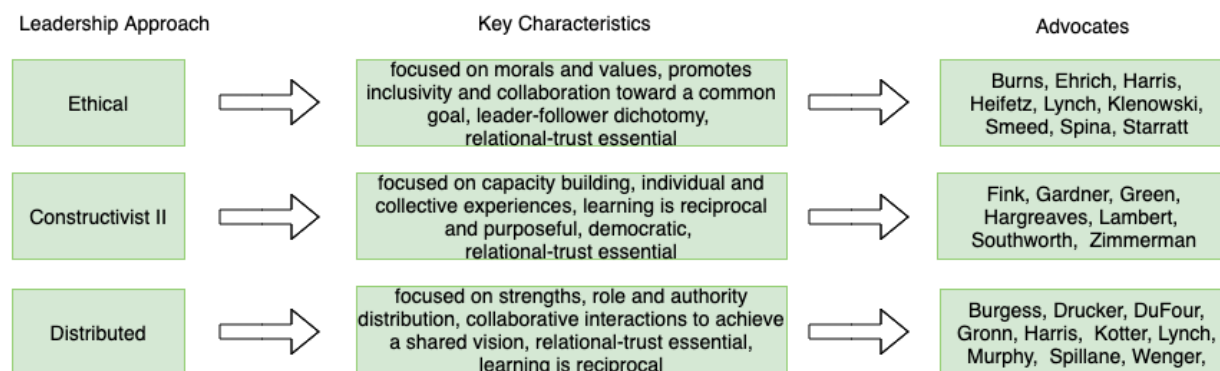
Distributed leadership is the process of mobilizing organizational activities within and across multiple stakeholders at all institution levels (Harris, 2004, 2009; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Spillane, 2006; Spillane et al., 2004). Distributed leaders recognize that everyone has the potential to lead given the right circumstances. Focusing on a strength-based approach and distributing leadership to match individual expertise contribute to continued progress toward the organization’s shared vision. Successful leaders recognize that organizations will not flourish if

personnel work in isolation (Gardner, 1990; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Murphy, 1968; Senge, 1990).

ISCEE's director recognizes the need for and believes in a distributed leadership model aligning my leadership approach with the head of school's approach and providing me the agency necessary to oversee the implementation of the OIP. Distributed leadership also aligns with ethical and constructivist leadership entailing an inclusive and collaborative approach built on relational trust.

Successful distributed leadership is built on a foundation of trust and reciprocal learning (Gronn, 2002; Harris, 2016; Yukl & Gardner, 2020), which must be carefully planned and coordinated (Harris, 2009, 2016). Harris (2004, 2009) has cautioned that successful implementation will not be realized without careful planning and organization. Chapter 2 introduces the Accelerated Improvement Cycle (AIC) for building this foundation of trust and reciprocal learning, as well as the identified solution for achieving the objective of this OIP. Chapter 3 outlines the plan for thoughtful, organized implementation and evaluation of the OIP. Ensuring systems and structures are in place to support distributed leadership positively impacts school improvement (Hallinger & Heck, 2009; Heck & Hallinger, 2010).

The role of leadership is essential in fostering and sustaining organizational improvement. Figure 1 outlines the dimensions of my leadership approach.

**Figure 1***Dimensions of My Leadership Approach*

*Note.* This figure outlines the key characteristics and advocates of leadership approaches that influence my leadership approach. Adapted from “Figure 1.2. Evolutionary Dimensions of Leadership,” by L. Lambert, D. P. Zimmerman, and M. E. Gardner, 2016, *Liberating Leadership capacity: Pathways to Educational Wisdom*, pp. 12–13. Copyright 2016 by Teachers College Press.

My leadership approach is complex and multidimensional, allowing for flexibility and adaptability to meet the organization’s current contextual needs as it grows and changes (Fink & Markholt, 2013; Wagner & Kegan, 2006). Fullan (2008) confirmed that leadership approaches must adapt to fit the context of the organization. Educational leadership is exhausting and time-consuming, requiring constant remixing and adaptation of the core practices depending upon the organizational context. Therefore, recognizing, understanding, and communicating one’s leadership approach to change is an essential component of the improvement process. My leadership approach combines the key characteristics of ethical, constructivist, and distributed leadership modifying and blending these approaches, as necessary, to achieve the identified organizational goals.

My leadership approach is a process built on morals, values, and relational trust. At the core of my leadership approach is recognizing the importance of building individual and group capacity through purposeful, reciprocal learning that utilizes organizational members' strengths to achieve a common goal. Having established my leadership position and approach, articulating this OIP's problem of practice (PoP) is the next logical step.

### **Leadership Problem of Practice**

Today's globalized society emphasizes human capital and the knowledge economy (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2010; Pietrzak & Paliszkiwicz, 2015; Rizvi & Lingard, 2009; Trilokekar & El Masri, 2017). The global workforce is more identity and cognitively diverse than ever before. Identity diversity is the observable (e.g., race, gender, age) and unobservable (e.g., sexual orientation, cultural practices, socioeconomic status) attributes that make people different (Page, 2020). Cognitive diversity is the differences in perspective resulting from information access, organization, processing, and representation (Aggarwal & Woolley, 2019; Miller et al., 1998; Page 2020; Reynolds & Lewis, 2017). Canan and Sousa-Poza (2016) contended that individuals have unique perspectives which contain commonalities with others' perspectives. Who we are and how we think play pivotal roles in achieving success in the knowledge economy (Page, 2020), yet identity and cognitive diversity are often lacking in organizational makeup.

### **Problem of Practice**

This PoP addresses the lack of utilization of cognitive diversity within the learning culture at the ISCEE. An inclusive learning culture is built on innovative and agile thinking, which is defined as an open-minded approach to embracing multiple possibilities and perspectives to create iterative and new ideas. Ensuring systems and structures are in place is a



pragmatic necessity for developing a learning culture that promotes cognitive diversity, invites the inclusion of multiple perspectives, and inspires innovative and agile thinking. Promoting collaboration to develop new, creative, authentic, and meaningful learning experiences ensures educators fulfil the moral obligation to support the development of students, so they can thrive in the knowledge economy and the globalized world.

Cognitively diverse teams are less likely to engage in *groupthink* (Janis, 1972) in which decisions are made without considering all possible alternatives (Bryk, 2015) including dissenting views (Cawsey et al., 2016). Groupthink often stifles individuality and limits the diversity of thought. Teams are more likely to engage in innovative and agile decision-making when collaborating with others who think and process information differently (Cox & Blake, 1991; Nemeth, 1986; Reynolds & Lewis, 2017; Rink & Ellemers, 2007). Achieving a cognitively diverse learning culture at ISCEE is hindered by groupthink.

### **Gap Between Current Practice and Future Organizational State**

The case for valuing the role of diversity in society has been around since the 17th century, when John Stuart Mill identified diversity as a critical source of economic growth (Mill, 1871). Although riddled with gaps in awareness and understanding of the wide array of theories, diversity has also appeared in the field of organizational studies influenced by gender studies and the field of educational leadership influenced by critically oriented perspectives (Capper, 2019). Efforts to promote change in favor of more heterogeneous institutions that place greater emphasis on the inclusion of diverse perspectives as a tool to foster innovative and agile thinking have become the norm in businesses and schools. ISCEE identifies as one of these organizations.

Despite ISCEE's efforts, the school continues to fall short of fostering a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes regular, ongoing innovative and agile

thinking. The current learning culture tends to avoid cognitive dissonance in favor of conformity, slowing change in practice. Leadership and faculty members prefer niceness (Elmore & Jones, 2007) over engaging in productive learning conversations (Elmore & Jones, 2007; Katz et al., 2018) that push current thinking and behaviors and promote personal and collegial growth (Katz et al., 2018). Groupthink impacts ISCEE's learning culture stagnating the ability for teams to engage in healthy decision-making that considers multiple possibilities. Adding another barrier is the lack of identity and cognitive diversity resulting from homogeneous recruiting practices, as evidenced by the faculty's demographic makeup.

Retention rates are high at the school and strong bonds have been formed among faculty. Highly cohesive teams prefer decision-making patterns of compliance and avoid constructive debate limiting their ability to develop new, creative, authentic, and meaningful learning experiences that support students' growth and ability to thrive in the knowledge economy and the globalized world. This OIP addresses the PoP of how leaders in the ISCEE elementary school might foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking.

### **Framing the Problem of Practice**

My theoretical underpinnings of social constructivism and constructivist leadership stress the importance of the social world in the construction of knowledge through interactive experience within the cultural context of the organization. The abstract nature of culture and its complexity influence institutional capacity for change (Lambert et al., 2016; Schein, 2017). Multiple cultures exist within a school including macro cultures, organizational cultures, subcultures, and microcultures (Schein, 2017). Culture is shaped by institutional history, influenced by stakeholders, and cultivated by the school's written and unwritten policies and

procedures. Schein (2017) identified three levels of organizational culture: visible artifacts, the accepted attitudes, beliefs, and values, and the underlying or hidden, shared assumptions deeply rooted within the organization. Schein referenced the third level as the *cultural DNA* of the organization. These unconsciously agreed-upon assumptions provide the foundation for what is acceptable and unacceptable within a culture (Cawsey et al., 2016; Schein, 2017) and contribute to the organization's capacity to learn.

Organizational cultures focused on learning recognize the importance of leveraging social capital to support and empower individuals and groups to actively engage in the change process (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). This idea aligns with the distributed and ethical components of my leadership approach. I recognize the importance of distributing leadership and empowering others to contribute to the organization's continued growth in pursuit of a shared vision. It requires establishing policies and practices that promote a more balanced distribution of power and cultivate relational trust, mutual respect, and understanding. Organizations are also aware that not all collaboration promotes change.

Balkanized cultures demonstrate loyalty to specific groups within the organization (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Grade-level teams and departments may exhibit greater loyalty to their subgroup than to the organization inhibiting growth toward a common goal. Balkanization often promotes groupthink and niceness over productive conversations focused on growth. Balkanization, groupthink, and niceness contribute to ineffective learning cultures and should be avoided when developing a learning culture.

### **Developing a Learning Culture**

A clear connection exists between culture and shared learning (Fullan, 2001; Ritchhart, 2015; Schein, 2017), which builds upon patterns of social interactions, beliefs, values, attitudes,

traditions, and perceptions of the members of the organization (Fullan, 2001; Oxford Lexico, n.d.; Ritchhart, 2015; Merriam-Webster, n.d.; Schein, 2017). Piaget theorized learning as an active process through which the individual built upon their current perspectives to create a new understanding of reality (Aubrey & Riley, 2019; Glassman, 1994; Lambert et al., 2002; Lourenço, 2012; Merriam & Bierema, 2014; National Research Council [NRC], 2000).

Vygotsky proposed that learning is a result of macro-level and micro-level social interactions through which individuals build upon their current beliefs to form new understandings through communication (Creswell, 2014; Glassman, 1994; Lambert et al., 2002; Lourenço, 2012; Merriam & Bierema, 2014; Morgan, 2014; NRC, 2000; Tudge & Winterhoff, 1993).

Recognizing that learning is a collaborative endeavor, it is important to consider the role of efficacy in the learning.

Research studies have confirmed that collective efficacy positively impacts student achievement (Donohoo, 2017; Eells, 2011; Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Goddard et al., 2004; Hattie & Zierer, 2018; Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). Hattie ranked collective efficacy as the number one factor influencing student learning success (Donohoo, 2017; Hattie & Zierer, 2018). Thus, teacher beliefs about the group's ability to perform and achieve identified outcomes is crucial to student success making it a necessary component of a learning culture. A teacher's belief about their personal ability is also important.

There are two main forms of efficacy: self-efficacy and collective efficacy. Coined by Bandura (1977) in the seventies, self-efficacy is defined as the belief in one's ability to achieve a desired goal. In schools, the term collective teacher efficacy often replaces collective efficacy. For the purposes of this OIP, the term collective efficacy will be utilized. Collective efficacy is defined as the group's perception of its capacity to realize the identified outcome (Donohoo,

2017; Eells, 2011; Goddard et al., 2004). Collective efficacy is necessary in the development of a successful learning culture that has a positive, sustainable impact on student learning.

Combining the concepts of culture, shared learning, and self-efficacy and collective efficacy, for this OIP, an inclusive learning culture is defined as an organization's collective belief in its capacity and commitment to a shared, interactive, and accessible process of inquiry that encourages all members to participate and consider multiple perspectives in the pursuit of continuous improvement focused on student learning.

### **The Changing Role of Education**

Globalization has created a paradigm shift in workforce demands creating a dual challenge for education systems worldwide (Zhao, 2010; Zhao et al., 2019). The pragmatic coupled with the ideological has created theoretical and practical challenges for education (Longview Foundation, 2008). New competencies are required placing increased political pressure on educators to prepare children to engage with people from multiple backgrounds as responsible and contributing members of a globalized society. Political, economic, social, technological, and environmental/ecological (PESTE) factors shape organizations and influence the need for change (Cawsey et al., 2016).

### **PESTE Analysis**

A PESTE analysis is used to assess the external factors that influence organizational operations. Engaging in a PESTE analysis provides a deeper understanding of how these factors affect ISCEE's context, creating both opportunities and possible barriers to implementation. Political and economic factors focus on possible government interventions or influence at the global, national, and local levels. Social factors identify the impact of organizational demographic trends. Technology factors include the use of technology and innovation to ensure

the organization remains up to date. Environmental factors comprise ecological and environmental influences on an organization.

It is essential to recognize that these factors are in constant flux. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic is an environmental factor that has had a profound impact on education over the past year, requiring schools to continually reassess their approaches to teaching and learning as the environment fluctuates between in-person and online learning. With this variability in mind, a PESTE analysis of ISCEE's current context is outlined in this section.

In the political realm, governments worldwide have tasked educators to reimagine approaches to teaching and learning in order to prepare future generations to successfully compete and attain employment across borders while at the same time developing a deep awareness of cross-cultural differences leading to positive interactions within and across nations (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004; Hayden & Thompson, 2016; Tarc, 2013; Zhao, 2010, 2012). In addition, globalization has mobilized expatriate workers, increasing the demand for, growth of, and competition between international schools, which has forced a more entrepreneurial approach to enrolment (Magno, 2015; Miller, 2018). Marketing and branding have become a necessary, sustainable component of international schools.

Website restructuring and advertising sell the promise of high-quality, innovative learning experiences. The economic reality that international schools now face does not negate educators' innate responsibility to redesign the learning environment and embrace innovative, diverse, and inclusive teaching approaches. The situation presents a challenge for pedagogues who lack the competencies necessary to prepare students (Longview Foundation, 2008; Schleicher, 2012; Wang et al., 2011; Zhao, 2010). Educators find themselves in a continuous tug of war of contrasting viewpoints (Allan, 2013; Tarc, n.d.) focused on the pragmatic pressures to

*sell an education* and the idealistic aims of education. The paradigm shift in education is challenging the belief systems of educators individually and collectively, within the context of the organization.

ISCEE is a not-for-profit organization relying on tuition as its primary source of income. The rapid expansion of international schools has led to increased competition elevating economic security, and increasing pressure on international schools to perform and secure students. The local elite and expatriate community covet international school access, which has resulted in the growth of these schools in the region where ISCEE is situated.

Increased competition has repositioned the importance of branding in order for ISCEE to maintain its reputation as a world-class institution and secure its clientele. ISCEE promises to deliver educational excellence focusing on academic rigor fostered through critical thinking, inquiry, and innovation. Accountability has been placed on leadership to develop teacher capacity to provide high-quality, engaging learning experiences that prepare students to succeed. Leadership accountability is compounded by the demand for heterogeneity and the transient nature of the organization's population.

It is the responsibility of leadership to attract and retain faculty who represent the student body's demographic makeup, yet to do so is a challenging and complex task. With 61 nationalities represented by the student population, ISCEE's 152 faculty represent only 17 (ISCEE, 2020f). For example, the faculty representation is overwhelmingly Western, despite over 20% of the student population coming from Asian countries (ISCEE, 2020f). A clear diversity gap exists between the faculty and the community. However, our interconnected world demands diversity and requires intercultural understanding if individuals are to communicate, collaborate, and compete successfully on a global scale. Thus, leaders of change must recruit and

retain faculty who are both culturally and cognitively diverse to achieve a more heterogeneous learning environment. Both cognitive diversity and identity diversity are necessary to create a truly inclusive culture. For this OIP, the focus is cognitive diversity because it is already accessible in the community creating a greater possibility of short-term success and long-term gain. ISCEE's context will continue to be leveraged to support recruitment and capacity building.

ISCEE boasts a state-of-the-art campus with robust technological infrastructure and resource access positioning the school to deliver high-quality learning experiences both onsite and online. The faculty's capacity to navigate both learning platforms was evidenced when the school was forced to move to a distance learning platform when the government initiated social distancing and lockdown at the COVID-19 pandemic height in the spring of 2020 and intermittently throughout the 2020–2021 school year. Toggling between onsite and online learning demonstrated faculty willingness and capacity to successfully engage in change as evidenced in parent, student, and faculty survey feedback (ISCEE, 2020g, 2020h, 2020j, 2020k, 2020m, 2020n). The success of distance learning demonstrates the faculty's ability and willingness to engage in radical change, which can be leveraged in future change initiatives. School leaders must engage teachers in innovative and agile thinking as stakeholders reimagine their approaches to teaching and learning, so they can prepare students to thrive in the knowledge economy and globalized world.

### **Guiding Questions Emerging From the Problem of Practice**

Change has become a constant today. Schools are under continual pressure to innovate and provide an education that prepares students to thrive and survive in today's global world. Driving successful change is not without its limitations. Reflecting on the current state of this



OIP, I identify three main challenges and constraints that need to be addressed: developing collective commitment, cultivating cognitively diverse and inclusive conversations, and nurturing innovative and agile thinking.

### **Developing Collective Commitment**

Several foreseeable constraints are evident in developing collective commitment that promotes honest and supportive feedback and challenges an individual's beliefs and practices to promote learning (Katz et al., 2018). ISCEE is viewed as a leader among schools across the region and worldwide (ISCEE, n.d.). Teachers from around the world covet the possibility of securing a position at ISCEE. The worldwide pandemic has elevated ISCEE's status further, when the Board and parent community were offered a window into their child's education and the high-quality learning environment. Recognition of faculty efforts during the COVID-19 pandemic and acknowledgment of the opportunity that attending ISCEE has afforded students are regularly communicated by parents, the leadership, and the Board. Faculty self-efficacy is high, which may create a barrier to professional growth.

Teacher confidence has been reinforced during this rampant period of tumultuous change. However, energy depletion over the last year has left them looking toward the end of the pandemic and returning to the status quo. Future learning requires educators to think beyond the status quo and engage and interact in a culture of learning that supports students in developing the complex competencies necessary in the era of globalization and the knowledge economy. To ensure the development of a culture of learning focused on innovative and agile thinking, it is necessary to ask the question: How do I demonstrate the benefits of change outweigh the risks associated with complacency and maintaining the status quo (Cawsey et al., 2016; Fullan et al., 2012; Kotter, 2012, 2014a)? This demonstration requires effective communication.

### **Cultivating Cognitively Diverse and Inclusive Conversations**

Ongoing communication is essential to successful change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Klein, 1996), especially when the possibility of complacency is high (Kotter, 2012b, 2014a). Teachers can influence or resist change depending upon personal needs, beliefs, values, and assumptions. As compelling as it is to seek individuation, it is human nature to want to belong and feel valued. Page (2020) has confirmed the importance of diverse mental constructs in cultivating innovative and agile thinking. Donohoo (2013) has recognized that every teacher brings a diversity of knowledge, experience, and understanding to the table.

As mentioned previously, ISCEE's tight-knit teams are often hindered by groupthink. Members avoid dissension in favor of belonging, impacting the team's capacity to engage in constructive discussions focused on a continuous cycle of self and collective improvement. Nevertheless, the more pronounced the cognitive diversity, the greater the possibility of innovative and agile thinking (Cox & Blake, 1991; Page, 2020). How do I foster a cognitively diverse environment that welcomes multiple perspectives and promotes reciprocal learning through which teachers actively listen, critically question, and reflect on deeply held beliefs and assumptions to construct new understandings that result in improved student learning? Ensuring systems and structures that empower teachers to engage will also be necessary.

### **Revising Systems and Structures**

Globalization and the knowledge economy require schools to engage in a paradigm shift in teacher competencies to develop student knowledge, skills, and dispositions so they can successfully transition and thrive in an ever-changing world. The traditional hierarchical structures that exist must move toward a more distributive leadership model that empowers teachers to lead and enact change. Bryk (2015) has confirmed the potential of cross-organization

interactions in creating productive learning experiences that build capacity through practice. Fullan and Quinn (2016) have asserted that systems and structures need to be revised to develop learning cultures that cultivate collective efficacy and commit to improved student learning.

As mentioned in the organizational history and context, ISCEE's director believes in distributive leadership. Distributive leadership is also one of my leadership underpinnings. Although evidence of distributive practice exists at ISCEE, a traditional hierarchy remains in place, maintaining the perception that all change initiatives must go through a top-down process. How might I modify the current systems and structures to create a culture of learning that engages faculty in cross-organizational learning experiences that challenge assumptions and ensure a cycle of collaborative, purposeful, and continuous system and structure reform that brings about positive, meaningful, and sustainable change?

### **Leadership Focused Vision for Change**

The objective outcome of this OIP is the creation of a learning culture in which faculty engage in collaborative and inclusive inquiry-based learning experiences. These learning experiences draw upon the cognitive diversity of the internal and external network and resource diversity (internal and external) to build individual and collective efficacy with the ultimate goal of improved student learning. To achieve the desired state, the gap between the ISCEE's current and envisioned state must be articulated, a balance between stakeholder and organizational priorities must be addressed, and the drivers leading change must be identified.

### **The Four-Frame Model**

Bolman and Deal's (2017) four-frame model provides a pragmatic approach for identifying the gaps between ISCEE's current and desired contexts. The four frames are structural, human resource, political, and symbolic. When diagnosing the organization through

each frame, I must remain aware of my personal bias and its impact on decision-making. Choosing to analyze ISCEE's current state using a multiframe approach provides four perspectives of ISCEE's current state, enabling me to reframe my understanding of organizational needs and the next steps necessary to achieve the desired change.

### ***Structural Frame***

The structural frame builds upon Frederick W. Taylor's scientific management approach and Weber's bureaucratic model and represents the blueprint of organizational expectations (Bolman & Deal, 2017). It focuses on how structures embedded within an organization can impact change. A vertical, hierarchical structure remains at ISCEE. Policies, processes, and procedures that articulate roles, responsibilities, and accountability within the organization are in place intending to promote stability (Bolman & Deal, 2017). However, when transferred into practice, they lack clarity in translation, resulting in multiple interpretations and understandings of faculty expectations and follow-through by leadership. Moving forward, ensuring policies and procedures are clearly articulated and understood through common language connected to the guiding statements will reinforce expectations and follow-through.

### ***Human Resource Frame***

The human resource frame is key to this OIP as it focuses on investing in people for organization growth and development leading to economic success (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Rafferty et al., 2013). Leveraging skills, attitudes, and engagement is critical for future success (Allan, 2013; Fullan et al., 2015; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; OECD, 2010). Cultivating relationships builds trust and psychological safety reducing resistance to learner development (Avolio & Hannah, 2008) toward individual and organizational needs alignment.

People will develop and grow when the organization's culture meets their basic human needs. Organizations that invest time and resources create a sense of belonging, recognize stakeholder strengths, commit to a shared vision, and provide opportunities to grow (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Schein, 2017) and develop self and collective efficacy. These organizations lay the foundation in which an innovative and agile learning culture can survive and grow. This symbiotic relationship between the organization and its people directly relates to this plan.

A foundation of psychological trust exists in ISCEE's elementary as evidenced in yearly faculty climate surveys (ISCEE, 2017a, 2018, 2019a, 2020a) and is also evident in faculty retention rates. What is lacking is giving and receiving effective feedback focused on personal growth and student learning.

Effective feedback is one of the most powerful influencers of achievement (Hattie, 2009). For this OIP, effective feedback is defined as reciprocal communication based on multiple perspectives that challenge how individuals think and act (individually and collectively) to promote change. Although relationships and trust exist within ISCEE's elementary, a culture of niceness (Katz et al., 2018) infiltrates learning discussions. Effective feedback must be fostered for ISCEE to ensure continuous improvement focused on augmenting student learning.

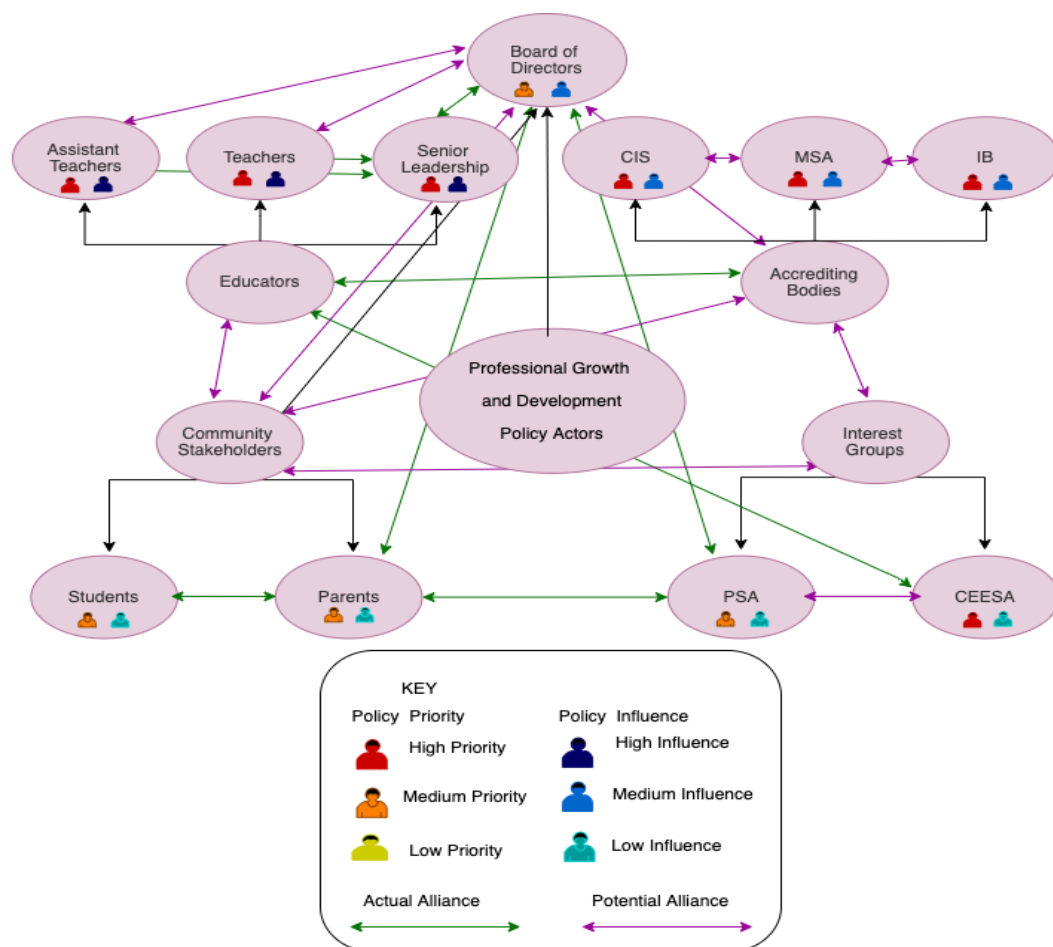
### ***Political Frame***

The knowledge economy is forcing a paradigm shift in approaches to education. A stakeholder analysis identifies support and resistance patterns, formal and informal connections, positions, motives, and power (Cawsey et al., 2016) as key areas of focus. When change agents increase their awareness of the stakeholders affected and question power structures, they are more responsive to community needs (Ehrich et al., 2015) creating opportunities for positive interactions and increasing the likelihood of change.

International schools are complex systems with multiple actors, internal and external, who influence or resist change depending upon personal interests, values, and perspectives, and social capital within the network. Resistance to change is an inevitable component of innovation (Kirsch et al., 2011; Kotter & Schlesinger, 2014). Decreasing resistance requires careful analysis of policy actors and their projected influence on, supporting of, and resistance toward teacher professional growth and development. Figure 2 visualizes ISCEE's external and internal policy actors, their interest policy, their political influence, and their established alliances.

Understanding the political landscape in terms of stakeholder assumptions and influence on the policy provides leverage for leaders to foster and support successful change (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Cawsey et al., 2016; Diem & Young, 2015).

Figure 2 identifies educators, including SLT and the director, as ISCEE's influential policy actors with high policy priority, influence, and established alliances. As a member of the SLT, I am viewed as an influential policy actor supporting my agency to implement this OIP. In addition, I can leverage the support of accrediting bodies and interest groups to foster the establishment of a learning culture focused on collaboration and building self-efficacy and collective efficacy. As a leader of change, I must also pay close attention to the self-interest of parents, students, and board members, whose prioritization of policy and influence can quickly shift based on the perceived impact of the change on student learning. Accrediting bodies and interest groups can also be utilized to support change initiatives. These agencies help educate community stakeholders by communicating the rationale and supporting the need and urgency for the change. They also offer opportunities for professional development helping to build capacity and agency among those impacted by the change.

**Figure 2***Policy Actor Analysis*

*Note.* This figure outlines the current prioritization, influence, and alliances of policy actors concerning professional growth and development at ISCEE.

***Symbolic Frame***

Perspective matters. Individual beliefs and actions are contextually oriented and inform reality (Morgan, 2014). Individuals create understanding through context-bound social, cultural, and historical interactions (Creswell, 2014; Morgan, 2014). How individuals perceive experiences shapes their view of the organization and identifies their place within it (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Schein, 2017). The symbolic frame highlights the importance of an individual's

interpretation of actions and the impact of these perceptions on culture aligning with the focus on cognitive diversity. Symbols come in many forms. Language, vision, values, structures, processes, artifacts, and ceremonies contribute to symbolic meaning and form the basis of the organization's culture (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Schein, 2017). Significant to ISCEE's learning culture is the PGEP (ISCEE, 2016).

The learning culture at ISCEE is premised on the PGEP (ISCEE, 2016). The structure, process, and language of the PGEP align with the mission, vision, and strategic direction of the school and its beliefs about learning. The PGEP is predicated on the importance of human needs.

Individuals are empowered when they have autonomy, are provided with opportunities to improve, and share a common purpose (Pink, 2009). The PGEP recognizes choice, is inquiry-based, encourages collaboration and observation, and focuses on engaging others to support personal and organizational growth. The system consists of three facets, the professional inquiry cycle (PIC), learning walks, and a targeted faculty support plan. The goal of the PIC is to engage educators in a question-investigate-apply-reflect inquiry cycle. It encourages collaboration and accountability through conversation and documentation in the online PIC database. Learning walks are meant to be purposeful, collegial observation opportunities promoting relationship and capacity building while deepening understanding of pedagogic practice through meaningful conversations. The targeted faculty support plan is initiated only when needed to address a significant concern in performance or professional practice. Implemented in 2016, the PGEP is not yet embedded in the learning culture. Time constraints are an identified factor contributing to the lack of integration.

The goal of teacher professional development initiatives in schools cannot merely focus on curriculum knowledge, subject knowledge, or pedagogy. Building teacher capacity must also



include extended periods of learning time focused on differentiation, collaboration, and inquiry that engages educators in active exploration and research that directly impact teaching and learning practices (Darling-Hammond, 1995, 2017). The more exposure teachers have to high-quality professional learning, the more likely they are to use a wide variety of effective practices in the classroom (OECD, 2015, 2017). This type of professional development lacks at ISCEE despite its potential due to perceptions of lack of time.

### **Change Drivers**

Change drivers can be internal or external, drive the need for change, and facilitate the adoption of change initiatives (Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010). Change drivers will be leveraged to drive the need for change and drive the implementation of change. I have identified four key change drivers for this OIP: globalization, formal organization policies and practices, communication, and capacity building. Educational institutions need to respond to globalization to remain viable, and formal organizational policies and practices can be leveraged to support continuous change. Communication also plays a crucial role in the change process (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2016), making it an essential driver of this improvement plan. Finally, capacity building contributes to school improvement (Harris, 2004).

### ***Globalization***

A key external force driving the need for change is globalization, which has accelerated expatriate population growth (Hayden & Thompson, 2011) and increased the demand for international education. The increased mobility of individuals and intellectual capital has given rise to the number of international students estimated to reach upwards of six million by 2025 (Cushner, 2016) increasing the multicultural demographic (Cambridge & Thompson 2004). The international extension of market blocs has led to increased interest in Westernized education

offered by international institutions (Cambridge & Thompson, 2004). Parents are convinced an international education will secure a prosperous future for their children.

Outlined in Chapter 1, ISCEE represents 61 nationalities, with over 20% of the student body coming from Asian countries. ISCEE promotes an internationally minded approach highlighting its commitment to globalization through its online presence, operationalized definitions, policies, and documentation of community events. At the same time, approaches and content remain overwhelmingly Western, highlighting the diversity gap and the need for teacher competency development in intercultural understanding. Walker (2000) has highlighted the important role educational leaders play in ensuring schools keep pace with globalization. Zhao et al. (2019) have confirmed that fundamental changes need to happen within the current education system in order to prepare equip children with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to thrive in the future. Educators and educational institutions must adjust to the changing requirements imposed by globalization and the knowledge economy that drive the need for change.

### ***Policies and Practices***

As outlined in the Organizational History and Context section, ISCEE promotes inclusivity and cross-cultural understanding evidenced in its strategic plan, mission, core values, operationalized definitions, and the revised PGEP (ISCEE, 2016). These beliefs, policies, and practices lay the foundation and provide structure to drive the implementation of change. They also communicate the rationale for change.

### ***Communication***

Communication is the third change driver and is pivotal at all stages of the change process. People need to understand the purpose and impact of the change (Armenakis & Harris,

2002; Beatty, 2016; Klein, 1996). Klein (1996) argued that communicating the rationale, progress, and impact of change is necessary for organizational change to succeed. It is essential to communicate regularly, back and forth (Beatty, 2016; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Whelan-Berry & Somerville, 2010), and in multiple forms (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2016; Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a). Communication that is timely, clear, and transparent, and invites questions and concerns sets change efforts up for success. It will be my responsibility to implement ongoing communication external and internal that addresses concerns and acknowledges efforts and successes to ensure successful facilitation of the OIP. The communication plan is outlined in Chapter 3.

### ***Capacity Building***

The fourth change driver, capacity building, is central to this change plan. Capacity building is defined by the United Nations (n.d.) as “the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that organizations and communities need to survive, adapt, and thrive in a fast-changing world” (Capacity Building section, para. 1). Leading requires building capacity through reciprocal learning (Lambert et al., 2016). Capacity building focuses on developing skills, knowledge (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Whelan-Berry & Somerville 2010), behaviors (Whelan-Berry & Somerville 2010), and competencies (Fullan & Quinn, 2016) that individuals and groups require to achieve the desired objectives (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Whelan-Berry & Somerville 2010). As I look to foster a culture of learning, it is essential that I plan to build pedagogic, leadership, and change capacity. Each of the four drivers outlined above intertwines with the organizational change frameworks, tools, and practices used to implement change.

## **Organizational Change Readiness**

Change is a constant in today's society. Ensuring an organization and its stakeholders are ready for change ensures a more proactive approach and a more optimal environment for achieving the desired state. Assessing change readiness is a necessary first step in preparing for organizational change. Identifying the forces for and against change and the discrepancy between the current and desired state confirms the need for change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2016; Cawsey et al., 2016; Lewin, 1997). ISCEE has no formal system in place to assess change readiness. By employing Lewin's (1997) force field analysis and Cawsey et al.'s (2016) Readiness for Change Questionnaire, I can assess emerging patterns for and against change to identify the gap between the current and preferred state.

### **Force Field Analysis**

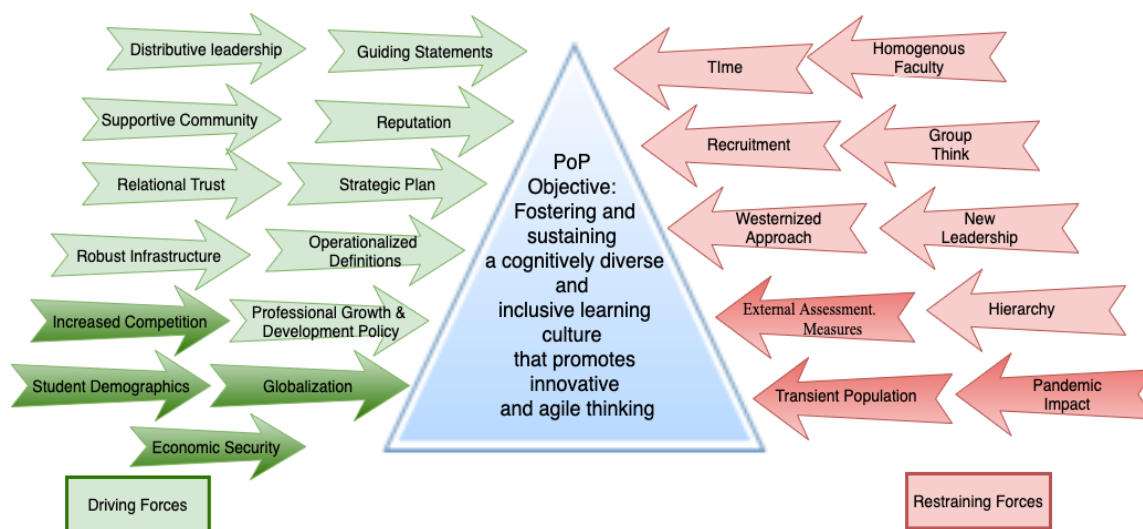
A force field analysis determines and interprets external and internal forces that can support or hinder change. Identifying immediate and long-term forces that drive or restrain change creates the opportunity to determine what forces might be altered to create an environment supportive of the desired change (Cawsey et al., 2016; Lewin, 1997). Awareness of external and internal factors and trends is the first step for organizations preparing to enact change (Beatty, 2016). Figure 3 outlines the internal and external forces and the type of pressure (driving or restraining) they exert on the change initiative.

Nine internal forces and four external forces identified throughout this chapter support the implementation of the OIP. Six internal and four external forces may create barriers to change enactment. The force field analysis indicates an imbalance in favor of the driving forces. Leadership has the opportunity to leverage this imbalance and develop strategies to minimize or eliminate restraining forces. Success of this OIP requires recognition of the restraining forces,

identification of supports and resources necessary to support decrease the constraints, and a plan of action to address the issues identified. Chapter 2 provides a critical analysis of the organization preparing the groundwork for the development of a strategy for change which leverages the driving forces while minimizing the restraining forces.

**Figure 3**

*Force Field Analysis*



*Note.* The solid-colored arrows represent internal forces and the gradient-colored arrows represent external forces.

### Readiness for Change Questionnaire

Using Cawsey et al.'s (2016) Readiness for Change questionnaire, I can reconfirm ISCEE's receptiveness to change outweighs their resistance to change. Questionnaire scores range from -10 to +35. The closer the organization scores are to 35, the greater their readiness for change. ISCEE scored 29/35 on the Readiness for Change questionnaire. Areas for careful consideration when implementing change include solidifying the shared vision, addressing 'turf' protection, establishing the necessity of and drive for and resources to support change, and ensuring that tools and practices are in place to evaluate and monitor change. As the elementary

principal, it is my responsibility to ensure a context that is change ready. Consequently, articulating my approach to leadership practice and organizational improvement is necessary to understand the rationale and approach for fostering and sustaining a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking.

### **Chapter 1 Conclusion**

The knowledge economy has made human growth and development essential. Globalization has impressed upon education the need for learner equity and the importance of intercultural understanding as a prerequisite of success. This chapter served to articulate the PoP by framing it within ISCEE's current context and desired state. The OIP was positioned within the author's leadership underpinnings and personal agency, and is framed by the external and internal factors impacting the sought-after change. Guiding questions emerged from the contextual position. A leadership-focused vision for change was crafted through a multiframe perspective and the identification of change drivers, followed by a change readiness assessment. This chapter has set the stage for developing a leadership framework to understand organizational change, critically analyze the organization, and identify possible solutions to address the PoP effectively and ethically in Chapter 2.

## **Chapter 2: Planning and Development**

Chapter 1 presented a contextual profile of ISCEE's organizational context to the present day identifying the PoP as the need to foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. Positioned within the theoretical foundations of my leadership position and practice and the processes in place at ISCEE, Bolman and Deal's (2017) multiframe approach helped frame the organizational needs and identify the next steps necessary to achieve sustainable change. Change drivers identified and organizational readiness confirmed, the planning and development phase can begin.

Chapter 2 builds upon the foundation established in Chapter 1 with a focus on the planning and development of the framework for change. This chapter begins by examining how individual and organizational leadership approaches will propel change toward the envisioned state. Next, I introduce an integrated framework centered on Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate model and capitalizing on the PIC from ISCEE's (2016) PGEP and one key element from Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) Appreciative Inquiry (AI). A critical organizational analysis follows to diagnose and analyze the needed change, identify possible solutions to address the PoP, and confirm the preferred solution. The chapter concludes with an investigation of the ethical implications of the proposed change.

### **Leadership Approaches to Change**

Enacting an OIP that will propel change at ISCEE requires a multidimensional leadership approach that reflects both the institution's and my own leadership practices and principles. As outlined in Chapter 1, this multidimensional approach incorporates constructivist, ethical, and distributed leadership built upon a pragmatic-idealist and social constructivist worldview. In

addition, this OIP incorporates a continuous improvement approach to change, reflecting the organization's priorities and context.

### **Continuous Improvement**

My OIP envisions change through the lens of continuous improvement, which is defined as an ongoing cycle of learning in praxis focused on collective, purposeful, constant, and evolving change (Bryk et al., 2011; Cawsey et al., 2016; Hayes, 2018; Orlikowski, 1996; Weik & Quinn, 1999) aligned with the strategic direction of the organization. It considers structures and systems already in place and what might be modified or changed. The learning culture I am striving to achieve is one in which the organization collectively believes in its capacity and commitment to a shared, interactive process of inquiry. It encourages inclusive participation through consideration of multiple perspectives in the continuous pursuit of teaching and learning development focused on improving student learning. Embedding the desired learning culture requires a commitment to inclusion and the maturation of cognitively diverse thinking.

### **Cognitive Diversity and Inclusion**

Central to this PoP are inclusion and cognitive diversity. Humans crave both belonging and individuation (Brewer, 1991; Fullan et al., 2018), which is reflected in the degree of acceptance and treatment as a valued member (Pelled et al., 1999) of the learning culture. Inclusion requires recognizing, respecting, and valuing unique perspectives within the community. Each individual brings a different set of mental models, knowledge, and understanding to the conversation (Donohoo, 2013; Miller et al., 1998; Page, 2020). Page (2020) recently proposed that the greater the differences between an individual's heuristics and mental constructs, the more pronounced the team's cognitive diversity. This means the more pronounced the cognitive diversity, the greater the possibility of innovative and agile thinking (Cox & Blake,



1991; Page, 2020). Thus, it stands to reason that leveraging cognitive diversity is necessary for the realization of this PoP and fostering cognitive diversity requires inclusive connections with others. Cognitive diversity and inclusion on their own are not enough. Both must be cultivated within a culture of learning and require relational trust.

### **Relational Trust**

Learning is a social endeavor reliant on multiple perspectives, which requires a complex network of relationships built on a foundation of relational trust. Developing and sustaining relational trust between individuals, within teams, and across the elementary division is necessary for sustained continuous improvement at ISCEE. Relational trust is grounded in constructivist, ethical, and distributed leadership, the chosen leadership approaches for this OIP.

Constructivist leadership identifies relationships as the heart of organizational culture, providing the foundation for what the organization stands for and how stakeholders interact (Lambert et al., 2002; Schein, 2017). Relationships are built on reciprocity and collective efficacy, both essential for purposeful change (Lambert et al., 2016). The reciprocal process is mutually reinforcing, requiring meaning-making with others (Lambert et al., 2002). Together, individuals actively listen, critically question, and reflect on deeply held beliefs and assumptions to construct new understanding. Members of the group must respect themselves and one another as equal contributors and participants, necessitating self and collective efficacy. The necessity of relationships is also evidenced in ethical leadership.

Ethics is about relationships and leadership is a human-centered activity (Ehrich et al., 2015). Ethical leadership involves trust, mutual respect, understanding (Starratt, 2005), credibility, consistency, predictability, and honesty (Mihelič et al., 2010), which are all pivotal to preserving relationships. Starratt's (2005) ethics of care is relationally driven, his ethics of

critique identifies the importance of questioning power structures, and his ethics of justice ensures fair and equitable treatment through democratic practices. The ethical leader acts as a role model of personal and interpersonal interactions (Mihelič et al., 2010) focusing on inclusivity and collaboration (Ehrich et al., 2015; Northouse, 2019), building positive and proactive community morale, and creating a culture that maximizes relational trust. Just as constructivist and ethical leadership identified the pivotal role of relationships, so does distributed leadership.

Schools are made up of independent educators and loosely coupled systems (Scheerens, 2015) which educational change leaders must bring together through a shared vision focused on positively impacting student learning (Donohoo, 2017; Fullan et al., 2018; Goddard et al., 2004). Distributed leadership recognizes the social dimension of leadership (Robinson, 2008). According to Spillane (2006), interactions between formal and informal leaders are an essential element of distributed leadership. Individuals and groups interact, adapt, and establish relationships within the organizational context. These established relationships unfold in multiple ways depending upon individual personalities and member interactions (Scheerens, 2015). Distributed leadership focuses on relationships to encourage collective effort, empower, and build others' capacity to lead themselves (Fullan et al., 2018; Lynch, 2012; Parry & Bryman, 2008). Giving teachers voice empowers self and collective teacher efficacy as they become equal participants in the process (Donohoo, 2017). This collective action is built upon interdependence, respect for one another's thinking, and relational trust.

Creating a learning culture built upon a foundation of relational trust, inclusion, and cognitive diversity is a complex yet necessary task to progress change (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Fullan, 2001; Fullan et al., 2015; Kotter, 2014a; Leithwood et al., 2004). This approach has

inherent challenges. Identified in Chapter 1, three foreseeable constraints were made evident in developing collective commitment to achieve the goals of this OIP. Avoiding complacency (Fullan et al., 2012; Kotter, 2012b,2014a), crafting a compelling change message that motivates and engages faculty in the process (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2016; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a, 2014b), and promoting informed decision-making premised on accurate interpretation of the facts (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) must be addressed throughout the process if positive and sustainable change is to be realized. Enacting continuous improvement through a multidimensional leadership approach is the first step toward achieving the desired change. Creating a framework for leading the change process is the necessary next step.

### **Framework for Leading the Change Process**

Identifying the PoP brings clarity of direction to an OIP as it states the what and the destination at which the organization hopes to arrive (Cawsey et al., 2016; Hayes, 2018; Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Once the end has been idealized and the why recognized, the how must also be addressed (Beatty, 2016; Cawsey et al., 2016; Hayes, 2018; Yukl & Gardner, 2020). Focusing on the process is a pragmatic necessity if this OIP is to realize its potential. This section will elucidate the approach to change by outlining and analyzing the selected framework for leading the change process within ISCEE's context.

### **Defining Change**

ISCEE continues to evolve as it responds to the pressures of globalization and the knowledge economy to meet its current contextual needs. As mentioned previously, the rapid expansion of international schools has increased competition, making branding and marketing a requirement for international school sustainability. The pandemic has also demonstrated the possibilities that exist beyond the traditional approaches to teaching and learning. Dependent on

the external environment, ISCEE must respond to opportunities and threats presented in today's competitive landscape in order to thrive (Beatty, 2016; Cawsey et al., 2016; Hayes, 2018).

Successful implementation of this OIP rests on determining the most suitable type of change.

Organizational change tends to fall into two types. These types are classified as incremental, evolving, or continuous change and discontinuous, intermittent, or episodic change (Cawsey et al., 2016; Nadler & Tushman, 1989; Weick & Quinn, 1999). Using Weick and Quinn's (1999) terminology, continuous change is a recurring pattern of cumulative adjustments to organizational processes and practices, both social and professional. In contrast, episodic change is infrequent, discontinuous, and intentional (Weick & Quinn, 1999). The goal of this OIP is to cultivate purposeful and reciprocal learning through critically reflective questioning of process and practice making continuous improvement the mantra of ISCEE's learning culture. For continuous improvement to be achieved, it is necessary to cultivate a culture of learning that embodies inclusivity through the promulgation of cognitive diversity and that is built upon relational trust. Considering ISCEE's current context and understanding why fostering a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture is necessary for improving student learning, it becomes clear that continuous change is the most suitable for this OIP.

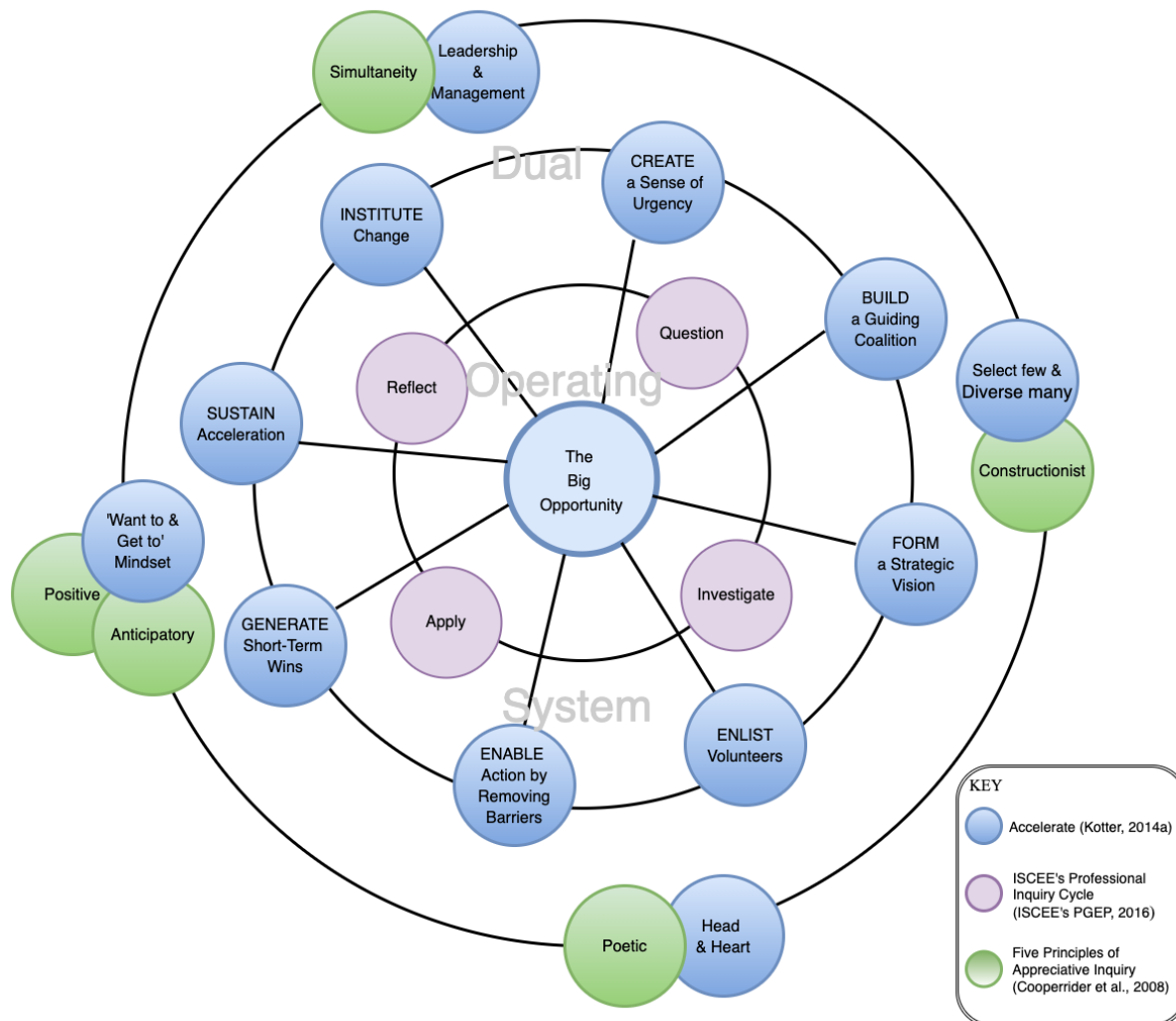
### **Relevant Frameworks to Lead Change**

It is not enough to identify the why and what of change; one must also identify the how (Beatty, 2016; Cawsey et al., 2016). When identifying a framework to implement organizational change, I must ensure alignment with my leadership approaches to change and the organizational context and readiness for change. Keeping this in mind, I have chosen to move away from compartmentalized thinking toward Martin's (2009) integrative thinking, an arguably more innovative approach to reform.

Recognizing that organizational change needs are contextually oriented (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Morgan, 2014; Riel & Martin, 2017), the framework choice needs to be rooted in context and open to possibility. This requires looking at change through the lens of creative resolutions (Martin, 2009) as replication in one context is not possible in another. To this end, I plan to utilize Riel and Martin's (2017) double down pathway. However, instead of just one preferred framework combined with one additional component, I have chosen one preferred framework and leveraged one component from two other models in order to achieve the desired benefit (Riel & Martin, 2017). The preferred framework is Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate. ISCEE's (2016) PIC and the five principles of Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) AI approach are the key elements that complete my framework for leading change. The resulting extended model for leading change is visualized in Figure 4.

### *Accelerate*

The preferred external framework for leading change is Kotter's (2014) Accelerate model. This model is rooted in systems thinking and addresses the current global reality, which requires institutions to develop dynamic, innovative cultures, systems, and structures that enable continuous, incremental change necessary to sustain, thrive, and grow with the times (Cawsey et al., 2016; Hayes, 2018; Kotter, 2014a, 2014b). The Accelerate framework aligns with my approach of continuous adjustments to organizational change. Based on Kotter's previous research on large scale change (Kotter, 2002, 2008, 2012b), Accelerate's organic approach builds upon Kotter's (2012a) original eight phases of change and provides the foundation for leading the change process at ISCEE. The Accelerate framework introduces four foundational principles guided by an updated version of the eight original phases (now referred to as accelerators), establishes a core, the Big Opportunity (TBO), and functions within a dual operating system.

**Figure 4***Accelerated Improvement Cycle Framework*

*Note.* The circles shaded in blue represent the preferred framework. The circles shaded in purple and green represent the key elements. The transparent circles lined in black represent the dynamic nature of the framework aligned with Kotter's (2014a) symbolic structure of a "constantly evolving solar system" (p. 20), which functions within a dual operating system.

**The Four Fundamental Principles.** Kotter (2014a) has identified four core principles fundamental to leading change initiatives and that lay the foundation for the dual operating

system's success. First, successful change involves enlisting a select few to mobilize multiple volunteer stakeholders (Kotter 2012b, 2014a; Kotter Inc., 2021). The second principle is what Kotter (2012b, 2014a; Kotter Inc., 2021) has referred to as a "want to/get to" mindset. Inspiring voluntary commitment requires engaging a network of colleagues toward a shared purpose. The third principle confirms the necessity of both intellect and emotion (Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Kotter Inc., 2021) to move change forward successfully. The fourth principle focuses on increasing leadership capacity and balancing the roles of leadership and management (Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Kotter Inc., 2021). In addition to the four principles, Kotter has confirmed the necessity of a symbiotic relationship between the organization's traditional hierarchy and a dynamic network that capitalizes on agility, creativity, and innovation (Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Kotter Inc., 2021).

**The Dual Operating System.** The dual operating system ensures the symbiotic existence of a hierarchy and NIC within an organization. The hierarchy concentrates on daily organizational management and leadership attending to efficiency improvements through planned, incremental change, while the NIC engages in continuous change embracing innovative and agile thinking (Kotter, 2014a). This integrative system is dynamic. It functions through a guiding coalition (GC). The GC is a core group of leaders, formal and informal, who promote and sustain a sense of urgency as they guide, support, and collaborate with volunteers to realize the TBO while maintaining the connection between the hierarchy and NIC. The eight accelerators help guide the transition toward a dual operating system.

**The Eight Accelerators.** The eight accelerators of change (Kotter, 2014a) include the following: creating a sense of urgency, building a GC, forming a change vision and strategic initiatives, attracting volunteers, enabling action by removing barriers, generating and

celebrating short-term wins, sustaining acceleration, and instituting change. Kotter (2012b) identified three main differences between the original eight phases and the new accelerators of change:

1. The previous phases followed a linear progression to change, whereas the eight accelerators are synchronous and continuous.
2. Instead of a core group leading the change, the goal of Accelerate is to include as many stakeholders as possible.
3. The original phases are based upon a hierarchical structure, whereas Accelerate involves the hierarchy and requires an agile network for successful innovation.

At the core of the phase redesign is the addition of the TBO.

**The Big Opportunity.** The eight accelerators orbit around the TBO. The TBO should not be confused with the change vision. Rather, the TBO promotes positive, in-the-moment change that is both intellectually and emotionally compelling (Kotter 2014a), appealing to both the organization's pragmatic and idealist members. This change must be acted upon quickly before the opportunity disappears. The TBO is the core focus and drives the change vision (Kotter, 2014a). The TBO, dual operating system, eight accelerators, and four principles form the foundation of my framework for change. Transitioning the Accelerate component of the AIC from theory into practice is not without challenges.

Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate framework presents an overarching process for engaging in continuous change implementation. Transitioning Accelerate into practice requires careful consideration of the contextual needs of the organization. Specific tools and resources will need to be identified to guide, assess, and evaluate the implementation. In addition, an analysis of the current organizational structure to determine what needs to change is also required.



ISCEE's current structure is what Kotter (2014a) references as an *augmented hierarchy*. ISCEE enlists committees, external consultants, and task forces to engage in the change process. Implementing new systems and structures to grow the organic, entrepreneurial network while maintaining a stable connection to the hierarchy requires a paradigm shift in thinking. Careful consideration regarding expertise and characteristics will need to be given when determining the members of the GC. At the same time, personal bias will need to be checked to ensure equity and inclusion. Once established, the GC will need additional training and clear communications (in multiple formats) to engage and interact successfully within the dual operating system. These challenges are possible to overcome and will be addressed in Chapter 3. The benefits of Accelerate in ISCEE's current context outweigh the challenges making it a viable component of the AIC framework.

The Accelerate approach to leading change is well suited for my PoP. It focuses on engaging an emotionally and intellectually diverse cross-section of stakeholders, connecting to this OIP's focus on cognitive diversity. It promotes social interaction and collaboration, which rely on relational trust and are necessary components of my leadership approach to change. In addition, the Accelerate framework promotes continuous, incremental change, which is the chosen type of organizational change for this OIP. Like distributed leadership, the dual operating system views leadership as holistic and not exclusive to the traditional leadership model (Harris, 2009, 2016; Hayes, 2018; Lynch, 2012; Spillane, 2006). Finally, the current organizational context is positioned for an approach that focuses on continuous change to thrive and sustain in an ever-changing world. Easily situated within Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate is the one of the integrated components, the PIC, which currently permeates ISCEE's learning culture.

### *ISCEE's Professional Inquiry Cycle*

ISCEE's (2016) PGEP has defined learning as "a process that leads to sustained and demonstrable consolidation or extension of conceptual understanding, competencies, and character" (p.9). ISCEE endeavors to create a learning culture in which inquiry and learning for the future are valued, promoted, and expected by all community members. Systems and structures serve as evidence of ISCEE's commitment to a learning culture. Specific to the purpose of this OIP is the PIC, one of the three main components of ISCEE's (2016) PGEP. The PIC's objective is to build capacity through a collaborative inquiry cycle (question-investigate-apply-reflect cycle) with the goal of promoting self-efficacy and collective efficacy focused on improved student learning. Donohoo and Velasco (2016) confirmed the importance of a collaborative inquiry approach. The collaborative inquiry process provides educators with the opportunity to solve authentic and meaningful daily practice issues through reciprocal and reflective learning focused on student learning and school improvement (Donohoo & Velasco, 2016). Collaborative inquiry builds collective efficacy by leveraging professional capital (Donohoo, 2017; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Katz et al., 2009), making the PIC framework a powerful component of the AIC.

PIC participants begin the year observing teaching and learning and documenting and discussing their observations with colleagues as they formulate their inquiry question. Once questions are established, learners move into the investigation phase, researching and engaging in internal and external professional learning opportunities to investigate their question. New understandings are applied in practice, where participants gather feedback. This documentation is used to reflect on the inquiry's impact on teaching and learning. This collaborative inquiry process acknowledges and honors the role educators play (Donohoo & Velasco, 2016) in

ISCEE's continuous improvement. The PIC, under normal circumstances, permeates the current learning culture of ISCEE, so it stands to reason it should be incorporated into the framework for leading change.

Although the majority of participants recognize the importance of continued growth, productive learning conversations (Elmore & Juli, 2007; Katz et al., 2018) that push current thinking and behaviors and promote personal and collegial growth (Katz et al., 2018) are lacking as outlined in Chapter 1. In addition, the pandemic has placed additional pressure on faculty as they move between onsite, hybrid, and distance learning.

Although the PIC process remains in place, less emphasis and time have been devoted to the process over the past 15 months. Reestablishment of engagement and enthusiasm in the PIC process will be necessary as the pandemic recedes. These challenges will need to be addressed during the implementation process. Promoting a strengths-based approach that considers multiple perspectives and promotes continuous improvement is one way to address these challenges. This thinking led to the consideration of Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) AI as a component of the AIC.

### ***Appreciative Inquiry***

AI was also examined as a possible framework for organizational improvement. AI is a method and philosophy that asserts positive assumptions lead to imagination and innovation (Beatty, 2016). The AI framework builds upon social constructivist ideals, is strength-based, values diversity, supports inclusivity, and takes a pragmatic approach to inquiry (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Lewis et al., 2016; Reed, 2007). Each of these components resonate with my leadership position and approach to this OIP. This inquiry-based approach to learning is also firmly embedded in ISCEE's learning culture. Although an inquiry cycle already exists as part of

ISCEE's (2016) PGEP, the framework lacks guiding principles that promote inclusion and encourage cognitive diversity, which led to the decision to consider the five principles of AI as the second key element within this integrative framework for leading change. The five AI principles provide increased alignment and interconnection between the main framework and the PIC confirming the integration of this component into the framework for leading change.

The five AI principles are constructionist, simultaneity, poetic, anticipatory, and positive. These five principles mesh well with Accelerate's four principles and the PIC. The constructionist principle wholly aligns with my leadership view and approach to change. This principle focuses on the idea that knowledge is socially constructed and requires an interconnection between imagination and reasoning. It can be skillfully interwoven with Kotter's (2014a, 2014b) select few and diverse many principle, with the focus on interaction among individuals to enact change. The simultaneity principle commits to the predominant role of inquiry in the change process connecting to ISCEE's PIC focus on inquiry-based learning. The poetic principle recognizes the importance of past, present, and future, and the cognitively diverse representations of these human experiences, a pivotal component of my PoP. The anticipatory principle recognizes the importance of generating a powerful image of the future to mobilize organizational change interconnecting with Kotter's (2014a) want to/get to mindset. The positive principle focuses on building an environment of positive relationships that build inspiration through affirmative language and thinking. This supports my OIPs focus on relational trust and a strengths-based approach to learning.

AI is not without its critics, however. It focuses on the power of positivity to achieve organizational change (Cooperrider et al., 2012; Reed, 2007). Scholars have expressed concern over the increased focus on positivity (Argyris, 1994; Fineman, 2006; Luthans & Avolio, 2009;

Schooley, 2012; Sweeny, 2017). Argyris (1994) has expressed concern toward the positive approach, arguing it impedes the possibility for double-loop learning. Double-loop learning is the process of seeking to understand different perspectives and challenge assumptions and values resulting in an alteration in behavior and change in practice (Argyris, 1976). Gergen (1978, 1982) has argued that through questioning, central to inquiry, individuals challenge our assumptions, bringing about changes to our practice. This change in practice aligns with Argyris's double-loop learning, suggesting that it is possible to achieve double-loop learning through positive inquiry.

Most organizations focus on deficits over growth. A focus on issues and concerns can promote further problems (Beatty, 2016). Schooley (2012) has suggested that a balance of pessimism and optimism is best. When implementing the AIC framework, it will be essential to ensure practices and procedures are in place to acknowledge concerns while focusing on strengths. Finding the balance between both ensures a greater likelihood of successful change.

Figure 4 provides a schematic visual for my integrative framework for organizational improvement at ISCEE. It is rooted in the PIC process supporting the current culture at ISCEE. Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate provides the necessary systems and processes and aligns with my continuous improvement approach to change. The addition of the five AI principles ensures a strengths-based approach while recognizing the need for balance between positive and problem-based thought. Together, the AIC creates a framework compatible with ISCEE's organizational context and my ethical, constructivist, and distributed leadership approaches. It also allies with the pragmatic-idealist view by providing a practical approach that allows all community members to contribute to meaningful change through the dual operating system. With the

framework for change identified, a critical organizational analysis is necessary to diagnose what needs to change.

### **Critical Organizational Analysis**

This section provides a critical analysis of the organization's current state and the desired future state. The analysis builds upon the previous organizational change readiness findings outlined in Chapter 1, focusing on the crux of this PoP—fostering and sustaining a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. This analysis is conducted through the change agent's lens, who has been a member of the ISCEE community and SLT for nine years. The lens of analysis is strengths-based in line with my beliefs about leading change, the organizational approach to change, and the AI principles, which are integral to the framework for leading change.

### **Diagnosing the Change**

In line with the principles of the AI approach, focusing on what is working well and leveraging these strengths gives value to what has been accomplished and generates commitment, engagement, and mobilization for continuous development (Beatty, 2016; Cooperrider et al., 2008). It also empowers self-efficacy and collective efficacy (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Donohoo, 2017; Lewis et al., 2016; Luthans & Avolio, 2009). Sweeny (2107) has confirmed the benefits of a positive approach to change but cautioned against an overly optimistic view that may inhibit the desired outcome. Identifying ISCEE's strengths in relation to the PoP promotes an optimistic yet pragmatic approach that identifies the gap between the current and future state while promoting a proactive and realistic organizational change approach.

Analyzing the gap between the organization's present and desired future state provides the necessary data to move from a broad, conceptual understanding of the change process to a well-defined, concrete implementation plan (Hayes, 2018). The analysis used Bolman and Deal's (2017) four-frame model previously applied to identify the envisioned state and drivers of change. Reframing allows the change leader to reassess organizational needs through a pragmatic and optimistic lens. All four components of this multidimensional model are utilized to examine the multiple realities that exist as viewed through organizational stakeholders' cognitively diverse perspectives.

### ***Structural Frame***

The structural frame focuses on organizational structures, functions, and expectations and the impact on interactions within and across the organization (Bolman & Deal, 2017). The organization's hierarchical structure and its impact on change are relevant to achieving the desired state.

A hierarchical structure is currently implemented at ISCEE. ISCEE exhibits mechanistic tendencies through formal authority structures, centralized decision-making, and defined processes and procedures (Cawsey et al., 2016) consistent with complex organizations. Kotter (2014a) and Lynch (2012) have acknowledged that hierarchical structures are necessary components of organizations, yet these structures inhibit organizational growth unless augmented by a network structure.

ISCEE exhibits some components of an organic organization (Cawsey et al., 2016) assembling committees and task forces and hiring external consultants with the goal of engaging and inspiring innovation. A distributed leadership model promotes a flexible and decentralized leadership approach, which promotes horizontal and vertical communication. It also increases

the availability of expertise across the organization (Robinson, 2008). The desire to integrate an agile network exists. However, in practice, progress is often stalled or slowed down by the hierarchy's bureaucratic necessities. Reassessment and reorganization of the current structure is necessary to create Kotter's (2014a) dual operating system and promote agile and innovative thinking, a pivotal component of this OIP. A successful structure's evolution depends on leadership approaches, roles and responsibilities, communication, and interactions and requires investment in human resources.

### ***Human Resources Frame***

A symbiotic relationship exists between organizations and people (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Schein, 2017). When this symbiotic relationship is inadequate one or both can suffer due to exploitation (Bolman & Deal, 2017). Thus, investing in personnel is necessary for organizational growth. With the new director's arrival in August 2020, the leadership team established core leadership beliefs that were shared with the faculty and staff (ISCEE, 2021c). ISCEE's (2021d) leadership beliefs promote relational trust, belonging, mutual respect, integrity, and positive intent, and empower members to support one another to contribute meaningfully to continuous improvement. Although only recently put in writing, these core beliefs are well-established in ISCEE's culture, as evidenced in recruitment interest and faculty longevity (ISCEE, 2020f). ISCEE also demonstrates empowerment through its investment in learning and diversity as evidenced in ISCEE's (2016) PGEP and its focus on global citizenship and intercultural understanding (ISCEE, n.d.).

Simultaneously, the pandemic's day-to-day uncertainty has taken a physical and emotional toll on faculty and staff. Normally open to change, the pandemic has skewed their perception of personal and collective efficacy in response to change. However, the pandemic



also prompted innovation, presenting opportunities for educators to reimagine their teaching and learning approaches (Azorín, 2020; Harris, 2020; Zhao, 2020). Harnessing the opportunity for continuous learning presented by the pandemic requires careful consideration of the faculty's physical and emotional wellbeing. Further, growth can still be achieved through attention to cognitively diverse learning experiences.

ISCEE's faculty is predominantly Western and follows a Westernized approach to teaching and learning. ISCEE often finds itself caught in single-loop learning, in which a change in practice occurs, but values and belief systems remain intact (Argyris, 1976; Evans et al., 2012; Pietrzak & Paliszkievicz, 2015). Argyris (1976, 1994) has suggested that single-loop learning encourages learning within the parameters of the organization's plan and strategic goals. If the learning fits with the current thinking it is welcomed. These fundamental assumptions exist within ISCEE's culture maintaining a single-loop approach to learning. Faculty prefer to identify a solution that aligns with the current approach over challenging the underlying beliefs and assumptions behind why people do what people do (Argyris, 1976; Bryk, 2015; Evans et al., 2012). Achieving the desired organizational state requires engagement in double-loop learning.

Argyris (1976) has argued that underlying values, assumptions, systems, and processes must be questioned for double-loop learning to occur. Double-loop learning requires the culture of the organization to allow individuals to question foundational facets of the organization. ISCEE has created a safe and supportive learning culture laying a foundation for double-loop learning but requires support systems to implement this next and necessary phase of its learning culture. Developing these support systems is dependent upon individual and group interests.

### ***Political Frame***

Competing interests are inherent in an organization's informal and formal daily interactions (Cawsey et al., 2016; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Hayes, 2018). These competing interests are more prevalent in times of change (Bolman & Deal, 2017; Hayes, 2018). Economic security, a supportive community, a world-class reputation, and the school's transparent and proactive response to learning and wellbeing during the global pandemic position ISCEE in a favorable position with students, parents, and the board and their support of innovative change. ISCEE's current political positioning is on solid ground in the formal sense. Informally, competing interests exist within and among grade levels and disciplines. Identifying opportunities to open up conversations that allow for individuals and groups to understand different perspectives and needs and engage in decision-making that is beneficial for all students is a necessary next step. Connected to this are the stories that define the organization's successful learning culture.

### ***Symbolic Frame***

Symbols come in many forms. An organization's vision, values, stories, and celebrations give meaning and purpose to the organization (Creswell, 2014; Bolman & Deal, 2017; Morgan, 2014). Significant to ISCEE's learning culture is the PGEP (ISCEE, 2016). As outlined in Chapter 1, the PGEP framework is premised on shared purpose, choice, empowerment, and collaboration through inquiry toward personal and collective growth.

The majority of ISCEE elementary faculty recognize the importance of professional growth and appreciate a system that honors choice and promotes collaboration toward improved personal, group, and student learning (ISCEE, 2017a, 2018, 2019a, 2020a). Limited time and

opportunities to engage with colleagues in professional inquiry through the PIC and observations via learning walks remain a challenge.

Time is allocated for each team to engage in professional learning conversations. A carefully crafted master schedule (ISCEE, 2020d) ensures a minimum of one 80-minute block for each grade level team (Kindergarten through Grade 5) and a minimum of one 60-minute block for the multiage and encore teams to use for collaborative learning. Each teacher has between seven and 12 additional preparatory periods throughout the week in addition to the designated collaborative block. Elementary faculty also have 90 minutes set aside each Tuesday afternoon for full faculty conversations. Eight of these 90-minute sessions are set aside for PIC learning (ISCEE, 2020e). Despite time allocation, opportunities to engage in high-quality professional learning compete with other professional responsibilities, often taking precedence over personal and collaborative growth.

In the last year, the pandemic's impact has generated further barriers to the learning process. To sustain the professional inquiry process, the SLT reframed the process as a collective inquiry focusing on how best to support learning and wellbeing during a global pandemic? However, learning walks have become sporadic and PIC learning conversations have been reassigned to support personal and professional needs. Professional conversations have adapted to meet physical distancing requirements and to accommodate faculty required to remain off-campus. Reinstatement of the full PIC process, the reestablishment of learning walks, and finding ways to ensure time is utilized efficiently and effectively must be prioritized to implement this OIP successfully.

This OIP aims to foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. This section has engaged in critical organizational

analysis to diagnose the needed change, identify possible solutions to address the PoP, and confirm the preferred solution. In line with the principles of AI, it has focused on ISCEE's strengths, promoting a proactive yet pragmatic approach to gap identification. Utilizing Bolman and Deal's (2017) four-frame model, three changes were highlighted.

The first gap confirms that the current hierarchical structure needs to adjust to include the network structure of Kotter's (2014a) dual operating system to expand the distributed leadership and empower teachers to engage in innovative practices. The second gap identifies the need for systems and structures that support strengthening self-efficacy and collective efficacy while creating opportunities for faculty to embrace and engage in perspective-taking that promotes double-loop learning. The third gap focuses on ensuring that adequate time is allocated, protected, and utilized to ensure high-quality professional learning opportunities. The following section identifies possible solutions to address these gaps between the current and future state.

### **Possible Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice**

The following section identifies three possible solutions to catalyze continuous change to reach the desired future state. The three solutions were arrived at following careful analysis of my leadership agency and approach and ISCEE's history, context, change readiness, and critical organizational analysis. The lack of a network structure to promote innovative and agile thinking, the need to foster self-efficacy and collective efficacy through cognitively diverse learning experiences, and the absence of time and opportunities to promote reflective, reciprocal learning were identified as areas in need of restructuring. These identified gaps between the current and desired future state played an integral role in determining the three solutions that follow. Each solution will include a description, identify the benefits and challenges, and identify its impact. Following the analysis of the three solutions, a preferred solution will be identified.

**Solution 1: Maintain the Status Quo**

ISCEE's position as a leading international school is predicated on a high-quality learning environment for both students and faculty. An innovative PGEP has captured the attention of other international schools that have implemented similar frameworks. The learning culture at ISCEE is context-based, aligns with the guiding statements, and is pragmatic while valuing a holistic and inclusive approach and focuses on reciprocal collaborative learning relationships to build self and collective efficacy. ISCEE continues as a leader of learning even with the onset of the pandemic. This makes maintaining the status quo a viable solution requiring consideration of both the benefits and challenges of this approach.

***Benefits***

ISCEE continues to have access to resources. Community confidence ensures stable enrolment, and a supportive board has approved additional funding for technological and human resources. There is a continued focus on quality student learning experiences and an increased focus on faculty and student wellbeing resulting from the pandemic's emotional and physical impacts. The disruption caused by the global pandemic has propelled change forward and has led to the questioning of values, assumptions, and systems necessary components of double-loop learning.

***Challenges***

The outbreak of the COVID-19 in early 2020 disrupted normal school operations worldwide (Azorín, 2020; Harris, 2020; Zhao, 2020). ISCEE has not been exempt from the challenges confronted by schools over the last 15 months. Uncertainty has become commonplace, increasing anxiety and stress and adversely affecting emotional and physical wellbeing. Daily functions have become arduous tasks with the added safety protocols and the

implementation of hybrid and distance learning. Time remains a concern as evidenced in the organizational analysis. The virus's impact on personnel has also led to increased extended absences (ISCEE, 2021a) limiting whole staff learning opportunities. The reality of the pandemic has impeded the status quo.

Solution 1 identifies as a possibility for change. The reality is that the status quo has already been interrupted by the global pandemic's onset (Azorín, 2020; Harris, 2020; Zhao, 2020). The type of change is disruptive, not continuous, and may not foster sustained double-loop learning already limited under normal circumstances. The current context also puts the health and wellbeing of faculty at continued risk.

### **Solution 2: Establish Networked Improvement Communities**

Effective network structures promote interconnected, cognitively diverse learning cultures focused on big opportunities that increase agility and innovation (Kotter, 2014a). Distinct from the traditional hierarchy, networks are dynamic systems of internal and external partners working collaboratively to identify creative opportunities that move the organization forward (Bryk et al., 2011; Katz et al., 2009; Kotter, 2014a). Networks are quite common in schools (Katz et al., 2009; Lewis, 2015). The Department of Education in the United Kingdom has sponsored multiple networks across the education system and networks such as the National Writing Project and the Network for Performance-Based Schools can be found across North America (Katz et al., 2009).

NICs are formed on the premise of building *practice-based evidence* (Bryk, 2015). NICs maintain student learning as the shared outcome connecting theory to praxis through inquiry and learning by doing (Lewis, 2015). NICs are often viewed as professional learning communities because of the focus on improving practice through inquiry teams. However, NICs move beyond

the practice of collaborative inquiry that defines the professional learning community. NICs view organizational issues as complex, rooted in multiple levels of the organization. NICs harness the power of cognitive diversity, autonomy, decentralized leadership, and a focus on continuous improvement for the collective (Surowiecki, 2004). NICs are a feasible solution for implementing the desired change, necessitating reviewing the implementation benefits and challenges.

### ***Benefits***

Several advantages aligned with the context and approaches in this OIP are evident in the NICs model. These include a dynamic structure that fosters continuous, sustainable improvement, a focus on informal and formal leadership structures, inquiry-based research premised on challenging current assumptions and beliefs about practice, and the promotion of a cognitively diverse learning culture. NICs provide the opportunity for cognitively rich and rewarding learning conversations (Bambino, 2002; Kotter, 2014a; Kubiak & Bertram, 2010). Given that continuous change is a reality of globalization and the knowledge economy and schools are not immune to this reality, NICs provide the structure needed for teachers to engage in innovative and agile thinking and make informed paradigm shifts to pedagogic practices.

NICs are a viable solution. If chosen, NICs would be integrated into ISCEE's (2016) PGEP through the PIC framework. The NICs would form the network component of the dual operating system. The GC would maintain the connection between the network of NICs and ISCEE's traditional hierarchy. In addition, the NICs would expand the current PIC by shifting the practice to collaborative, team learning. This expansion would bring forth multiple perspectives, fostering innovative and agile thinking. The NICs would also cultivate self-efficacy and collective efficacy through the collaborative approach.

## *Challenges*

Although NICs have multiple benefits, they are not without challenges. Katz et al. (2009) have asserted that NICs require ongoing, intentional cultivation for successful and sustainable implementation. This necessitates the provision of time for learning to navigate the NIC structure and for engaging in the process of inquiry through practice-based evidence. Although PICs are in existence at ISCEE, faculty continue to engage in “solutionitis” (Bryk, 2015), niceness (Elmore & Juli, 2007), and groupthink (Janis, 1972), requiring capacity building opportunities that help move thinking toward productive learning conversations (Elmore & Juli, 2007; Katz et al. 2018) that challenge assumptions about practice (Argyris, 1976). In addition, the departure from the traditional hierarchical approach will require embedded relational trust from leadership and faculty.

Solution 2 aligns with this OIP’s leadership position and approach to change and provides a framework for establishing the network component of Kotter’s (2014a) dual operating system. The NICs also promote continuous change and supports core components of the PoP: cognitive diversity, inclusivity, and innovation and agile thinking. Although its implementation will have financial and time implications, these are within possibility. It will require a paradigm shift in thinking, which will present challenges, but it remains a viable solution.

### **Solution 3: Core Reflection Approach**

The Core Reflection Approach (CRA) is a holistic framework that originated in the Netherlands and is a component of Dutch teacher education (Younghee et al., 2012). Central to the CRA is, of course, engaging in reflective practice.

Long considered a key component of professional growth (Schön, 1983), teacher reflection often lacks the depth necessary to alter beliefs (Korthagen, 2014; Korthagen &



Nuijten, 2019; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006). Korthagen and Nuijten (2019) recently argued that surface-level reflection occurs due to a lack of time and the need for an immediate solution. Deep reflection requires examining assumptions to make sense of the full experience and promote new thinking (Argyris, 1976; Bryk, 2015; Donohoo & Velasco, 2016; Evans et al., 2012; Korthagen & Nuijten, 2019). The CRA provides a structure through which to support discussions as individuals engage in sense-making and reconstruct their beliefs.

CRA is built upon seven interconnected levels of reflection, external and internal, including the environment, behavior, competencies, beliefs, identity, mission, and core qualities (Korthagen & Nuijten, 2019). Korthagen and Nuijten (2019) have stressed the importance of reflecting on and aligning both the rational (thinking and action) with the emotional (feelings, desires, ideals). Core reflection weaves the personal into the professional bringing to the forefront underlying assumptions that inhibit change.

### ***Benefits***

The CRA model is strengths-based and inquiry-based with an emphasis on double-loop learning (Korthagen, 2014; Korthagen & Nuijten, 2019; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006). It follows a pragmatic-idealist approach to deepening understanding of oneself through internal/external and rational/emotional reflection (Korthagen & Nuijten, 2019; Korthagen & Vasalos, 2006). CRA focuses on both emotional and cognitive thought recognizing the important role both head and heart play in the learning process. Through reflection, teachers challenge their beliefs and assumptions changing their behavior, and aligning with the continuous approach to change.

The CRA is another viable solution that could be integrated into the current PGEP (ISCEE, 2016). The CRA would support the move away from groupthink and the culture of niceness within ISCEE's learning culture. This approach maintains the inquiry-based approach

of the PIC. Double-loop learning is also emphasized in the CRA model by ensuring that reflection results in a change in both beliefs and practice.

### ***Challenges***

The CRA model focuses on individual growth only, which is at odds with the focus of this OIP, which extends beyond the individual to promote cognitive diversity and a collaborative culture of learning. Because the CRA process is individualized, there is an increased risk that teachers will choose not to engage or engage at a surface level due to lack of time and want of an immediate solution (Korthagen & Nuijten, 2019). Korthagen and Nuijten (2019) recently recommended training for successful implementation, which has fiscal and time implications. Adapting the model to create a collaborative CRA is a possibility. Solution 3 promotes reflective thinking that results in changes in beliefs and practices. Financial implications and time constraints are feasible but need to be considered should CRA be identified as the chosen option.

### **Preferred Solution**

The PoP objective is to foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. This OIP is grounded in a constructivist, ethical, and distributed leadership approach and founded on pragmatic-idealism and social constructivism. Table 2 outlines the rationale, connections to the leadership position and approach, and identifies the benefits, challenges, and trade-offs based on the current organizational context, the desired future state, and the framework for change.

As indicated in Table 2, multiple connections can be made between each solution and the PoP, and connections across the three solutions are also evident. All three solutions can realize double-loop learning and have the potential for increasing self-efficacy, collective efficacy, or

both. Each solution recognizes the challenge of finding time to engage in the process. Given the focus of the OIP, it is clear that Solution 2, establishing NICs, is the most viable option.

**Table 2**

*Comparative Table of Possible Solutions*

Variable	Solution 1: Maintain the status quo	Solution 2: Establish network improvement committees	Solution 3: Core reflection approach
Rationale	ISCEE's reputation as a leader among schools indicates we are doing okay.	Promotes interconnection, cognitive diversity.	Promotes deep reflection focused on change.
Connection to leadership position and approach	Practical, holistic, and inclusive; promotes collaborative and reciprocal learning around shared purpose.	Focused on process; balances collaboration with autonomy; promotes formal and informal leadership.	Focused on process; holistic; respects individuality; promotes self-realization.
Benefits	Aligns with guiding statements; PGEP requires review and refinement; stakeholder financial (board) and operational (board, parents, and students); possibility for double-loop learning exists.	Dynamic structure; continuous sustainable improvement; informal and formal leadership structures; inquiry-based; challenges beliefs and assumptions about practice; promotes a cognitively diverse learning culture; encourages agile and innovative thinking.	Promotes double-loop learning; strengths-based approach; inquiry-based; challenges beliefs and assumptions.
Challenges	Worldwide pandemic; time to engage in the process; increased absences; health and wellbeing.	Time and financial resources for professional development; time to engage in the process; challenges traditional approaches to leadership and teacher learning.	Time and financial resources for professional development; time to engage in the process; focused on the individual.
Trade-offs	Change is disruptive; health and wellbeing.	Paradigm shift in leadership approach.	Identifies with a hierarchical model.

For schools to become more effective, they need to become more efficient and knowledgeable about reforms before putting them into action (Bryk, 2015; Bryk et al., 2011). NICs can be viewed as the network component of Kotter's (2014a) dual operating system. It focuses on collaborative inquiry aligned with ISCEEs approach to professional learning. NICs promote solicitation of multiple perspectives (Bryk et al., 2011), challenging assumptions, and supporting collective capacity building through reciprocal learning. Implementing NICs requires the development of a roadmap and the establishment of agreements and protocols (Bryk, 2015; Bryk et al., 2011) which maintains shared purpose and provides structure as the organization moves away from a traditional hierarchy toward collaborative dependency through engagement in a network of cognitively diverse participants focused on continuous improvement.

The proposed solution takes into account the complexity and dynamic nature of continuous improvement. Challenges will arise with the NICs implementation, including acceptance of the paradigm shift in leadership by both the leadership team and faculty, the financial implications and time constraints, and the cultural shift within the organization. Acknowledging these challenges exist, it is essential to assess the preferred solution. The following section employs the plan-do-study-act (PDSA) model to assess NICs.

### **Application of the Preferred Solution**

The PDSA cycle is rooted in the scientific method and provides organizations with a structure to test change plans (Leis & Shojanian, 2017; Reed & Card, 2016; Taylor et al., 2014). The PDSA follows a four-stage inquiry cycle to assess change. The first stage involves identifying the proposed solution (plan), the second stage tests the solution in action (do), the third stage examines the results from the test (study), and the final stage focuses on necessary

adjustments (act). The PDSA cycle is a pragmatic approach allowing for a prompt assessment and prediction of the identified solution.

During the plan stage, the proposed solution is to implement NICs to complement the systems and structures already in place to foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. In the do stage, the NICs would be developed within the elementary division of ISCEE and would include teachers, assistants, leadership, and staff grouped by interest. Procedures, protocols, and tools would be used to develop NICs in tandem with the hierarchy and guide the inquiry process. During the do phase, observations about the process would be recorded, documenting the experience and the learning outcomes. These data inform the third stage, study. It is predicted that the NICs will promote continuous, innovative thinking that transfers into practice. It is likely the data will also reveal the need for more time to engage in the NICs in addition to time dedicated to teaching and learning. Finally, the fourth stage is act. Based on feedback from the study section of the cycle, necessary adaptations and additions will be identified. The modifications and supplements will be incorporated into the plan and the next PDSA cycle begins. This cycle of continuous improvement ensures continued development and refinement of the NICs within the context of ISCEE. When assessing organizational change, leadership ethics must also be considered.

The PDSA cycle provides a structure for the reflective assessment of the identified solution for organizational improvement through prediction. Assessing the NICs through the PDSA cycle allows me to reconfirm the solution's suitability in advance of implementation. The process provides increased confidence in the solution choice and establishes an outline for the change implementation plan, which is articulated in Chapter 3.

## **Ethical Leadership and Organizational Change**

Ethical leadership plays a pivotal role in organizational improvement. Ethical leadership is human-centered (Ehrich et al., 2015; Mihelič et al., 2010). Change impacts people as it is people who drive, create, sustain, and resist change. There is an ethical dimension to every change decision (Dion, 2012; Mihelič et al., 2010). Ethical leadership is embedded in culture and context, requiring examining the imbalance of power structures that exist in leadership (Liu, 2017). As a constructivist and distributed leader, I relate to the relational perspective of leadership and recognize the role the imbalance of power plays when leaders interact, engage, and negotiate with their followers. Social relations dictate a responsibility to others within the context of the organization (Liu, 2017). Northouse (2019) has recently confirmed the importance of service to others in ethical leadership. Northouse has identified this teleological approach as *altruism* through which leaders act in their followers' best interest. Leaders demonstrate they are in the service to others when they empower and care for their team.

Relationships drive a commitment to an ethics of care. Relationships require respect. Interactions that value one another's perspectives and empower and support decision-making generate trust and respect (Liu, 2017; Mihelič et al., 2010; Northouse, 2019) necessary for building relationships. Leaders who engage both personally and professionally with their faculty deepen their understanding of individual team members. Developing relationships is a complex process. It requires leaders to listen attentively (Mihelič et al., 2010; Northouse, 2019, Starratt, 2005), demonstrate empathy, and welcome alternative views confirming all voices matter (Northouse, 2019; Starratt, 2005). Starratt (2005) has asserted that a school committed to the ethics of care puts human relationships first. Relationships play a fundamental role in this OIP. The importance of relationships has been interwoven throughout Chapter 1 and this chapter.

Relationships are fundamental to my leadership approach. They permeate ISCEE's culture and will be integral to the implementation plan. Social-emotional wellbeing also needs to be considered.

Research indicates teachers' social-emotional wellbeing influences their overall effectiveness and efficacy (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009; Jones et al., 2013; Roeser et al., 2012). Leaders impact teachers' social-emotional wellbeing, which influences the learning culture (Konu et al., 2010; Leithwood, 2007; Mihelič et al., 2010; Starratt, 2005). The learning environment is positively impacted when teachers are provided the skills and support to maintain personal social-emotional wellbeing (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Promoting and modeling a caring environment in which members of the community feel heard and valued, are provided resources and opportunities to engage in practices, and are encouraged to seek support improves social-emotional wellbeing.

The pandemic has brought teacher social-emotional wellbeing to the forefront of decision-making at ISCEE. As vaccines are distributed, pandemic restrictions are lifted, and schools resume a more stable approach to teaching and learning, it will be important not to lose sight of the role social-emotional wellbeing plays in educator effectiveness and efficacy. Celebrating successes, recognizing commitment, stressing a collaborative and supportive culture, and maintaining a family feel (Starratt, 2005) will ensure an ethic of care is realized. Connected to relationships and interactions is the ethics of justice.

I align with the school of thought that sees the ethics of justice as grounded in the community. Equal access and participation are vital components of the ethics of justice (Starratt, 2005). Assuring participation is by choice is also paramount (Northouse, 2019). As the educational leader implementing this OIP, I hope to build an inclusive learning culture where all

participants are equally valued. When making decisions, it is imperative that community voice is represented and careful consideration is given to how those decisions will impact the community and impact individuals. Communication of the change implementation plan and its impact on various internal and external stakeholders must be carefully considered. Intentional or unintentional misrepresentation of the change may derail implementation (Northouse, 2019). Ensuring communication is as transparent and candid as possible will promote effective implementation. Following a set of guiding principles will support the decision-making process and can help guide the communication strategy.

Northouse (2019) has highlighted Beauchamp and Bowie's common principles to guide leaders to ensure fair and just treatment in decision-making. These include ensuring equal access and opportunity according to personal needs, rights, effort, societal contribution, and performance (Northouse, 2019). Ensuring fair and just treatment is a delicate balancing act, given the complexity of school communities and recognizing that different needs, perspectives, and opinions will always exist and can change daily. Humans are complex beings, so consideration of these principles will help me create an inclusive learning culture in which each team member feels valued. Consideration of the ethics of critique is also essential.

The ethics of critique brings awareness to power dynamics and biases within the school's systems and structures. This OIP hopes to foster a community that invites an ethic of critique by embracing cognitive diversity. Cognitive diversity invites multiple perspectives that may not align and that might promote disagreement, which people prefer to avoid. Leaders must embed systems and structures that make passionate disagreement permissible and professional. This requires leaders to act in the followers' best interests (Northouse, 2019), ensuring the conflicts are recognized and resolved in a respectful manner that prioritizes care and wellbeing. Informal



and formal leaders must have the capacity to engage in attentive listening and demonstrate empathy. They must invite calm, respectful engagement in the disagreement. What is essential is ensuring that voices are heard, acknowledged, and considered. Listening and hearing what stakeholders have to say creates a more realistic perspective of the organization. As an ethical leader, I must remain open to critical analysis and continually question my bias contributions to the power imbalance.

Ethics are crucial to effective leadership and successful change implementation. A leader's values are infused in their actions. The morality of leadership necessitates I remain aware of the role ethics play in my leadership approach and how ethics permeate the daily organizational experience. Starratt (2005) warned of the ongoing leadership paradox that discourages empowerment and encourages hierarchy through policies and procedures while promoting innovation and agile thinking to achieve its mission. I am responsible for embracing each ethical challenge with thoughtful and careful consideration if an ethical consciousness is to penetrate the learning culture.

## **Chapter 2 Conclusion**

This chapter examined the leadership approaches chosen to propel change forward. I outlined an integrated framework for change that connected Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate with ISCEE's (2016) PIC and Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) five principles of AI. Bolman and Deal's (2017) four frames were used to critically assess the identified change. NICs were identified as the preferred solution to address the PoP, and the PDSA cycle was used to assess NICs. The chapter concluded with a reflection on the role of ethical leadership in organizational change. Chapter 3 develops the plan for implementing, monitoring, evaluating, and communicating the organizational change.

### **Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, and Communication**

Chapter 3 builds upon the contextual profile of ISCEE outlined in Chapter 1 and Chapter 2's establishment of an integrated framework for change and the identification of NICs as the preferred solution to address the PoP. It focuses on the implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and communication plan for the OIP. The chapter concludes with next steps and future considerations.

#### **Change Implementation Plan**

This section begins by aligning change implementation with organizational context. Next, the priorities of the planned change are identified. Following the articulation of priorities, potential implementation issues are identified followed with solutions for how they might be addressed. Finally, limitations of the change implementation plan are acknowledged.

#### **Alignment with Organizational Context and Direction**

The change implementation plan is guided by ISCEE's mission, core values, and the current strategic plan as communicated in Chapter 1. Implementing a distributed leadership approach empowers others to lead the organization toward the agreed vision. ISCEE (n.d., 2017c) has recognized the importance of lifelong learning through innovative teaching approaches that emphasize inquiry, agency, and collaboration while valuing and respecting diversity to ensure an equitable and inclusive culture. This stance aligns with my constructivist and ethical leadership underpinnings that emphasize the key role inclusive and interactive experiences play in building understanding.

The primary goal of this OIP is to foster and sustain a cognitively diverse and inclusive learning culture that promotes innovative and agile thinking. Having identified the organization's readiness for change in Chapter 1 and providing an analysis of the needed changes in Chapter 2,

it is clear the elementary school is ready to embark on the pathway of continuous change and that the OIP aligns with ISCEE's overall strategic plan. Having established what the OIP plans to accomplish, it is necessary to address the planned change's priorities.

### **Priorities of the Planned Change**

Fostering and sustaining a learning culture relies on collective responsibility focused on individual and collective growth (Elmore & Jones, 2007; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). For change to be successful, it must be carefully planned and coordinated requiring multiple leaders across the organization. This aligns with my distributed leadership approach. Creating a system that connects the hierarchy with distributed leadership promotes the opportunity for capacity building to innovate and change. The AIC framework for change requires a dual operating system promoting the expansion of leadership opportunities that support continuous change in pursuit of the TBO. Implementing the dual operating system necessitates a modification to ISCEE's current leadership structure.

### ***Implementing the Principles***

Principles act as a consistent guide in the change process (Cooperrider et al., 2012; Reed, 2007). Principles help individuals to stay on track and avoid barriers, increasing their chances of success. Integrating the Accelerate principles with the AI principles will guide and reinforce this OIP's implementation by encouraging the exploration of already-existing strengths and successes to instigate positive change.

ISCEE has just completed a community-wide review of its mission, vision, and values (MVV). The revised guiding statements will be introduced to the community in August 2021. The GC will utilize the principles to frame the shared vision through a positive lens (positive and anticipatory) that will inspire and continue to motivate faculty (want to/get to mindset) who have

contributed to their development and those new to the community. The GC (select few) will engage the constructionist, poetic, and head and heart principles through interactions with faculty (diverse many) that invite individuals to share subjective and objective stories to inform thinking about the current context and future possibilities in relation to the guiding statements. The GC will lead and manage by modeling genuine curiosity and interest (simultaneity), demonstrating and cultivating an openness to continuous improvement through inquiry. The dual operating system will support the GC's implementation of the principles.

### *Establishing the Dual Operating System*

A hierarchical structure remains in existence at ISCEE. Hierarchical structures decrease agility and innovation within organizations (Kotter, 2014a; Glor, 2007) yet remain a necessary component of organizational management. When leadership is also distributed outside the traditional hierarchical structure, change implementation is more likely to achieve success. Kotter (2014a) and Glor (2007) have agreed that when leadership is distributed, employees feel empowered and are more likely to engage in change. Connecting a network with the traditional hierarchy creates an environment in which continuous change is possible.

Establishing NICs actualizes the dual operating system of the AIC framework. The hierarchy and network are both autonomous and symbiotic, as visualized in Appendix A. Kotter (2014a) has contended that the hierarchy focuses on maintaining systems and structures while the network mobilizes agile and innovative thinking. Together the two structures are dynamic and ensure the organization is firmly in the present with an eye on the future (Kotter, 2014a). Members of the GC will populate both systems, coordinating and maintaining alignment. It is understood that maintaining this interconnection is a complex and challenging feat requiring a

group of committed stakeholders to ensure successful and ongoing implementation become a sustainable reality.

### ***Identifying the Guiding Coalition (GC)***

The GC will be made up of the principal, associate principal, DTL, division-wide middle leaders, and learning forward coaches in the elementary school. The learning forward coaches will replace the curriculum lead middle leadership positions. The curriculum lead positions were established to support the curriculum review cycle and ensure new pedagogical practices were transferred into praxis. The curriculum and pedagogical practices are firmly established. Curriculum responsibilities have been redistributed across middle leadership positions and will involve other faculty members as disciplines come up for review. For example, the DTLs have established systems and structures to guide and support faculty in managing curriculum review and sustaining pedagogical practice. Faculty also support the decision of re-institutionalization of coaching roles.

In a recent recruitment process, it became evident through faculty feedback that increased coaching opportunities would be well received, making it feasible to replace the current curriculum lead roles with learning forward coaches. The director has given his full support for the leadership structure change, approving it for implementation beginning in the 2021-2022 school year. The learning forward coach positions were filled in the spring of 2021, the GC has been established, and capacity building has begun. These actions will ensure that expertise and credibility, two of the four characteristics Kotter (2012a) defended as fundamental to an effective GC, are met. Kotter's (2012a) third characteristic, position power, is met by including the ES SLT. The fourth characteristic, leadership, is present both formally and informally through elementary SLT members, middle leadership and other members of faculty who express interest

and engage in the AIC. As identified in the AIC framework in Chapter 2 and Kotter's principles (2014a, 2020), it is essential to note that management skills are also necessary.

Ensuring a balance between management and leadership skills plays a critical role in the success of the GC. The establishment of NICs and a GC are necessary steps to achieve the desired change outlined in the OIP. However, by themselves, these modifications are not enough to empower stakeholders to engage in change. Establishing and maintaining a sense of urgency sparked by the TBO creates the momentum necessary to establish and sustain continuous change.

### ***Creating a Sense of Urgency Through the Big Opportunity***

Research indicates that most change implementation plans do not achieve their intended outcome (Cawsey et al., 2016; Hall, 2013; Neumann et al., 2018). Glor (2007) has contended that 65% to 75% of organizational change efforts prove unsuccessful. Kotter (2014b) has argued that for change to be successful, a sense of urgency around the TBO needs to be established with more than half of the relevant stakeholders.

Having identified the GC, it will be necessary to gain momentum with what Kotter (2014a, 2021) has referenced as the diverse many. Momentum is accomplished by creating a sense of urgency around a TBO aligned to the vision and strategic direction of the organization. The TBO will promote both head and heart, emphasizing a meaningful, pragmatic, and ideologically compelling opportunity for stakeholders to engage with and support. For a TBO of this nature to be realized, the sense of urgency needs to capitalize on a window of opportunity (Kotter, 2014a). The current pandemic has presented a window of opportunity.

COVID-19 has created a crisis in education which represents an opportunity to restructure teaching and learning (Bird & Bhardwaj, 2020; Kreling & Williams, 2020; Zhao, 2020). Educational institutions have found themselves immersed in discontinuous change that

requires a paradigm shift in teaching and learning approaches. ISCEE has also been impacted as identified in Chapter 2.

ISCEE has recognized the opportunities presented by the pandemic adding the necessary resources to implement changes and ensure high levels of learning continue for all students, whether on campus or off-site, as evidenced in its COVID-19 budget (ISCEE, 2019b, 2020b) and through the director's weekly updates (ISCEE, 2019c, 2020c, 2021b). The window of opportunity is transitioning the discontinuous change into continuous change and avoiding the status quo's return (Bird & Bhardwaj, 2020; Kreling & Williams, 2020; Zhao, 2020). Promoting the benefits of this window of opportunity requires recruitment of the diverse many by the GC.

### ***Generating the Interest of the Diverse Many***

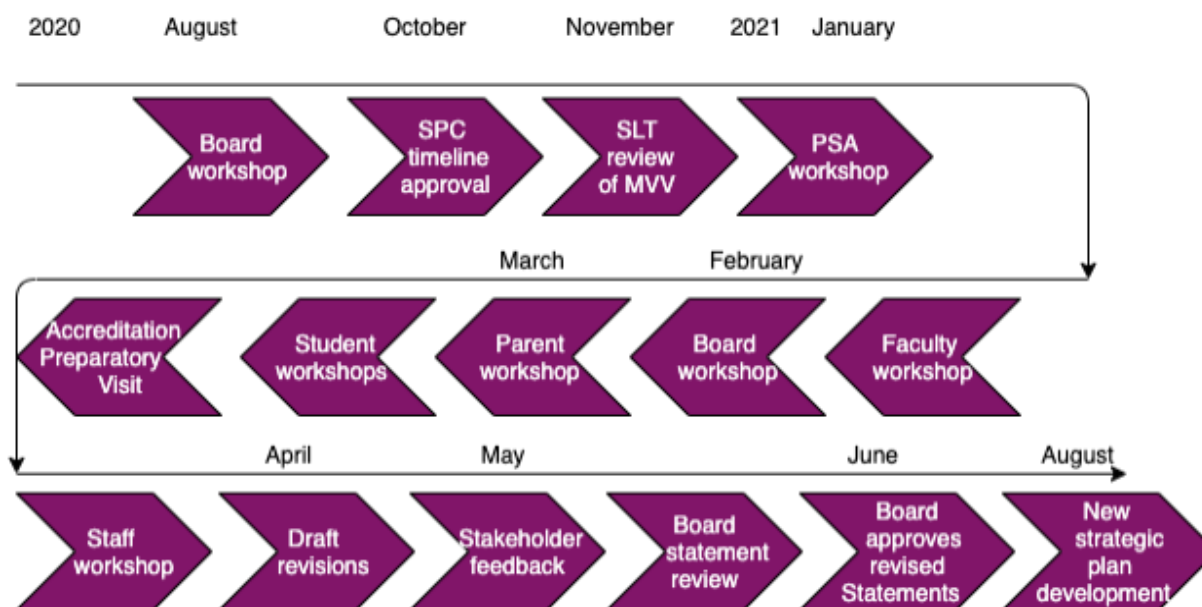
The GC will promote an open invitation to elementary faculty members and other interested faculty and staff to engage in NICs through the well-established and stakeholder-supported PIC. This inclusive and collaborative process (Ehrich et al., 2015; Northouse, 2019) aligns with my ethical leadership approach. It also promotes the social nature of learning through active participation, aligning with my constructivist leadership approach. GC members will align areas of interest to promote during the faculty orientation in August 2021 to mobilize a minimum of 50% of the elementary faculty as early adopters into NICs. The GC will accomplish this goal by identifying strategies that amplify the sense of urgency among colleagues to elevate excitement and draw members into the NICs through thought-provoking initiatives that will grow sub initiatives and drive continuous change forward.

Enlisting volunteers as participants in the NIC will support the removal of barriers and foster inclusivity by leveraging cognitive diversity, which will build self-efficacy and collective efficacy. Barriers removed and action enabled will promote an environment of innovative and

agile thinking in which short-term wins can be realized and celebrated. The first step to accomplishing this outcome is the formation of the strategic vision. ISCEE began this process in August 2020, beginning with the MVV review process outlined in Figure 5 (ISCEE, 2020i).

**Figure 5**

*MVV Review Timeline*



*Note.* The timeline indicates the rollout for MVV review. The pandemic stalled the process in the fall. However, ISCEE has since caught up and is on target for completion and approval of the revised MVV statements in June 2021 and will begin creating the new strategic plan in August 2021.

A powerful vision is necessary to engage stakeholders in action (Beatty, 2016; Cawsey et al., 2016; Katz et al., 2018; Kotter, 2002, 2012b, 2014a). Kotter (2002, 2012b) has contended that focus and growth toward the desired state are impeded without an agreed-upon vision. Whelan-Berry and Somerville (2010) have confirmed that a compelling vision is critical to the change process. Beatty (2016) has asserted that an inspirational vision motivates and aligns



stakeholders on both an intellectual and emotional level. ISCEE's focus on the MVV review process has created passion and excitement within the community. This passion and excitement will be leveraged to guide the change vision that aligns with the TBO and informs the strategic initiatives of this OIP through the NIC.

For the NIC to be successful, the TBO and strategic vision are not enough. Relationships, collaborative learning, capacity building, leadership, and accountability are also essential components. Well-established relationships build a foundation of trust by promoting interdependence, common language, and shared purpose (Katz et al., 2009), and lay the groundwork for collaborative, innovative, and agile thinking (Bryk et al., 2011; Katz et al., 2009). The objective of the NIC is to create a collaborative community of learning in which constructive debate, collaborative problem-solving, and idea testing build self-efficacy and collective efficacy, which positively impact student learning (Katz et al., 2009). It must be acknowledged that putting collaborative inquiry into practice involves some degree of conflict, which presents a challenge as most people prefer conflict avoidance (Cawsey et al., 2016; Mihelič et al., 2010) and requires coaching or training for individuals to effectively address conflict (Beatty, 2016). In my formal role as elementary principal, it will be essential for me to support, motivate, and inspire informal and formal leaders to overcome conflict avoidance. I must ensure processes and procedures are in place that break down barriers to promote productive and constructive learning conversations (Donohoo, 2017; Fullan & Quinn, 2016). Once established, the NICs will utilize the PIC framework to engage teachers in collaborative, team learning.

### ***Utilization of the PIC***

At the core of the AIC framework is the PIC process, which is currently an integral component of ISCEE's learning culture, ensuring connection to the current context. The PIC is one of the three components of the PGEP (ISCEE, 2016) outlined in Chapter 1 in the Leadership Focused Vision for Change section. The PIC will focus the NICs through its collaborative inquiry cycle, engaging faculty in cognitively diverse interactions while promoting the continued development of self and collective efficacy. This collaborative and constructivist approach to learning empowers faculty to take on informal leadership roles and lead continuous change. Even with priorities established, potential implementation issues will arise and need to be addressed.

### **Addressing Potential Implementation Issues**

Potential implementation issues accompany change initiatives. These must be addressed to foster change and ensure sustainability. Barriers to change can occur due to stakeholder reaction, resource access, and sustaining and institutionalizing the change.

### ***Stakeholder Reaction***

Change elicits both positive and negative reactions from stakeholders (Cawsey et al., 2016). These reactions are unique to the individual and can change over time (Dudar et al., 2017). Negative perceptions increase when stakeholders impacted by the change perceive the consequences outweighing the benefits (Cawsey et al., 2016). When the benefits of change are perceived to outweigh the costs, people are more willing to engage in and accept the change. It becomes a complex balancing act for change agents as they work to tip the scales in favor of change throughout the process. As identified in Chapters 1 and 2, developing and sustaining relational trust is necessary for sustained, continuous improvement.

Recognizing that change can be viewed as threatening, creating a safe and supportive environment within the NICs is essential. Given that NICs are social organizations (Bryk et al., 2011), they require relational trust. Positive interactions within NICs are more easily promoted when relational trust is present. A culture that promotes relational trust creates an environment that promotes learning and collaboration (Katz et al., 2018) by creating psychological safety. Establishing protocols helps promote relational trust and increase NIC members' willingness to take calculated risks needed to innovate.

Protocols benefit learning communities (Dudar et al., 2017). They provide structure to collaborative groups and help establish group norms, so conversations are inclusive and remain focused ensuring effective and efficient use of time (Allen & Blythe, 2015; Elmore et al., 2007; Katz et al., 2018). Protocols will be co-created by the GC to ensure a common approach, common language, and shared understanding. Examples of well-established protocols will be reviewed (e.g., Allen & Blythe, 2015; Easton, 2009; Katz et al., 2018) and adapted to fit ISCEE's context to create a safe and supportive environment. Providing access to the necessary resources is also necessary for change, yet may result in potential implementation issues.

### ***Resource Access***

This OIP is premised on oversight of resources necessary to foster and leverage change. Human, fiscal, information, and time are all necessary resources of change implementation. My career has allowed me to work at high-performing organizations on high-performing leadership teams around the world. I have been provided high-quality professional development opportunities to build my leadership capacity for leading change. I have developed my capacity to embrace change through personal transitions to diverse countries around the globe. However,

for this OIP to be successful, all relevant stakeholders will require training, external and internal, human and informational. This requires capital and time.

ISCEE is financially stable. There is an established middle leadership stipend with principal oversight and ISCEE offers a robust professional development budget of \$150,000 (ISCEE, 2021d). Control of the professional development budget currently rests with the DTLs. Recent dialogue with the new director has indicated that conversations are in process, which will provide principals with more oversight in their division. This will afford me, as elementary principal, greater opportunity to provide the necessary professional learning to drive change forward. Should the change not be realized, I will need to advocate for access to funds to support the OIP's implementation. Once funds are secured, time needs to be identified and protected.

Outlined in Chapter 2, the elementary schedule ensures time throughout the day and the school year for collaborative learning focused on the PIC. However, unforeseen circumstances often usurp this time allocation. The pandemic has made it especially difficult to protect this time. To ensure successful implementation, it will be necessary to advocate for the protection of the allocated time. One way to protect the time provided is to use protocols as outlined earlier in this section. Another is to plan for more PIC opportunities throughout the year.

In the 2021–2022 school year, 37 Tuesdays available for full faculty conversations (ISCEE, 2021). Factoring in 17 Tuesdays for student support conversations, middle leadership conversations, conferences, ordering, reporting, and unforeseen circumstances, it is plausible to increase the number of sessions dedicated to PICs. Twenty 90-minute sessions could be dedicated to PICs, more than doubling the time commitment. The additional time addresses the concern for more time to engage in NICs as indicated in the Study section of the PDSA

assessment in Chapter 2. Having addressed the need for time and funding, it is necessary to consider the potential issues in sustaining and institutionalizing change.

### *Sustaining and Institutionalizing Change*

Embedding the change in the culture is necessary for commitment over time. For change to take hold, it must be embedded in the organization's beliefs, values, and assumptions (Schein, 2017). ISCEE is a seasoned organization, its well-established culture outlined in Chapter 1. The goals of this OIP are in alignment with ISCEE's vision and strategic direction. Systems and structures are in place to support goal attainment, and access to the resources necessary to obtain the identified goals is available. ISCEE has begun to engage in continuous change through the PIC, which forms the learning culture's foundation. Although progress has been made in developing a learning culture, there is still room for growth. The foundation for change implementation is in place but does not ensure the change will be sustained or institutionalized. Embedding the change requires the GC to build momentum and implement structures to monitor and evaluate change.

The GC must ensure processes are in place to continuously motivate the NIC's members and motivate interest in relevant stakeholders not yet committed to the process. Maintaining a sense of purpose and drive can be addressed by celebrating short-term wins. Change takes time (Hall, 2013; Kotter, 2012b). Convincing others to stay the course requires effort. Celebrating and acknowledging short-term wins helps sustain motivation. (Kotter, 2012b, 2014a). To celebrate short-term wins, it is important to understand what constitutes a short-term win.

Kotter (2012a) identified the three necessary characteristics of a short-term win: visible, tangible, and relevant. The GC will be responsible for celebrating and reminding stakeholders of the successes along the way by making short-term wins readily accessible to the community.

Celebrating these successes using confirmed evidence communicates that the benefits of change outweigh the consequences. Demonstrating the change has a positive impact motivates those involved to continue the course. Highlighting short-term wins also has persuasion power as the wins encourage those watching from the sidelines to consider the possibility of joining the change. In addition, identifying short-term wins provides the GC with data to assess progress, identify challenges, and modify the OIP as necessary. These data support the monitoring and evaluation process.

The next step in the improvement process is establishing a practical framework to assess the change process. Research has indicated that monitoring and evaluating change is necessary for program success (Hall, 2013; Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Neuman et al., 2018; Rossi et al., 2004). Neuman et al. (2018) have contended formal and systematic processes must be in place for change implementation to be effective. Hall (2013) asserted that learning from the assessment of the change process must occur for change implementation to be successful. This OIP focuses on continuous improvement and requires an effective monitoring plan and evaluation plan to ensure a systematic, well-communicated, and aligned process that promotes a shared understanding of the plan of action.

### ***Human Nature***

Humans play an active role in organizational life. Organizational cultures are built on assumptions about what it means to interact with others to create an open, trusting, and productive environment (Schein, 2017; Schein & Schein, 2018). Individuals within organizations bring with them personal assumptions about what it means to relate with others. How individuals choose to interact with one another depends on the established boundaries and expectations of both individuals and the organization (Schein, 2017; Schein & Schein, 2018).

A culture of learning is established at ISCEE, as evidenced in Chapter 1. However, learning in some area of the organization has stagnated in a single-loop process due to groupthink (Janis, 1972) and niceness (Elmore & Jones, 2007). The opportunity to engage in productive learning conversations (Elmore & Jones, 2007; Katz et al., 2018) that push current thinking, challenge assumptions, and change behaviors to promote double-loop learning (Argyris, 1976) exists but must be carefully cultivated.

The GC needs to actively listen and seek to understand the perspectives of the relevant stakeholders. Creating a safe space for all members to share aspirations and concerns will promote an open and trusting environment necessary for change implementation. As indicated earlier in this Chapter, NICs with established systems and structures contribute positively to the collective whole (Bryk, 2015; Bryk et al., 2011; LeMahieu et al., 2017) creating a culture of learning that invites and promotes respect for diverse perspectives and innovative ideas. It is also recognized that the NICs will be guided by a GC member using established protocols. This, combined with the limited-sized NICs, will support the growth of relational trust through social interactions that promote seeking to understand all perspectives while building self-efficacy and collective efficacy.

### ***Personal Bias***

I recognize that bias will play an active role in the change process. My personal bias, the bias of other GC members, and the bias of NIC members' will be present. Bias must be carefully monitored for the OIP to achieve its objective (Rossi et al., 2004).

Challenging personal bias begins by recognizing it exists. Confronting personal bias requires acknowledging the assumptions and perceptions that may shield reality (Evans et al., 2012). It will be essential to address personal bias with the GC and identify checks and balances

throughout the OIP journey to ensure these biases are continually questioned and personal desires do not misrepresent the progress of the OIP or overshadow the community's needs. Having established the change implementation plan, the ensuing section details the monitoring and evaluation framework (MEF) for tracking change, gauging progress, assessing progress, and determining possible refinements to ensure success.

### **The Monitoring and Evaluation Change Process**

Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) stressed that monitoring and evaluation are essential to any change implementation plan. Together they ensure accountability by providing checks and balances along the way and the opportunity to reflect on what has been learned from the change implementation and how this knowledge can be utilized to support the future strategic direction of the organization (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Neuman et al., 2018; Rossi et al., 2004). This OIP will utilize both monitoring and assessment through an integrated MEF that will observe and evaluate change implementation and effectiveness during and following the enactment of the OIP. I begin by defining what connects and distinguishes monitoring and evaluation plans. Attention is then given to ethical considerations in connection to the MEF. Finally, tools and measures that will be utilized to track change, gauge progress, and assess change are proposed through the PDSA cycle.

### **The Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

Monitoring and evaluation plans have two specific functions yet are mutually reinforcing. Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) have asserted that recognizing the differences and integrating monitoring and evaluation components is critical to maintaining clarity, alignment, and efficacy. An integrated framework provides a structured approach aligned with context and purpose that encourages collaboration and more significant opportunities for a successful change outcome.



Markiewicz and Patrick have acknowledged that implementing the MEF is complex and challenging, requiring considerable skill and insight on the part of the change agent. Kang (2015) has proposed that the first step to tackling complexity is understanding the terminology. Figure 6 distills Markiewicz and Patrick's findings in a Venn diagram. The diagram distinguishes between the two terms while highlighting what Markiewicz and Patrick have described as the *complementaries*. The complementaries confirm that integration of a monitoring plan and an evaluation plan is possible allowing for a more efficient, aligned, and ongoing approach to assessment and analysis of the OIP implementation.

**Figure 6**

*Connecting Monitoring and Evaluation Plans*



### **The Monitoring Plan**

The monitoring plan is best defined as continuous. It is an ongoing assessment process used to track implementation and progress to ensure decision-making promotes internal and

external accountability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Neuman et al., 2018; Rossi et al., 2004).

The scope of day-to-day decision-making considers the activities and outputs as the change agents continuously assess the program's fidelity using identified indicators and targets aligned with the evaluation questions (EQs). The monitoring plan is focused on identifying what is not working in terms of progress and performance and occurs at regular intervals depending upon organizational requirements. It usually takes the form of charts, tables, graphs, and figures.

### **The Evaluation Plan**

The evaluation plan is a collaborative and reflective learning opportunity to evaluate the initiative's overall success (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Neuman et al., 2018; Rossi et al., 2004). Evaluation plans are summative, focusing on improvement that guides future decision-making. Its purpose is to assess the objectives' overall impact, including the change's quality and sustainability. The evaluation plan ascertains what has been learned, what worked, what did not work, and how the process can support future progress.

### ***Existing Complementaries***

Despite several demarcations, Markiewicz and Patrick (2016) have argued there are commonalities between monitoring and evaluation plans, allowing for effective integration of the two plans into one framework. Implementing an integrated monitoring and evaluation framework promotes the utilization of standard tools and measures to track change. EQs provide focus and structures through five domains- appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). The monitoring plan generates responses to the EQs to inform implementation, whereas the evaluation plan uses the EQs to inform learning and identify the next areas for improvement. Both the monitoring and evaluation plans are driven by theory and logic. Program logic is built upon program theory, which must be made explicit.

Since education is a human endeavor involving interactions and moral principles, it is important to be aware of the ethical concerns that can arise during the monitoring and evaluation process.

When implementing an MEF, the critical areas for ethical consideration include stakeholder engagement, data collection, analysis, interpretation, communication, and result utilization. Appendix B presents a detailed ethical framework for the monitoring and evaluation process of this OIP. Bias, relevance, feasibility, responsible use, and timely communication are common ethical considerations that arise during the monitoring and evaluation phases. Appendix B provides recommended responses for each area to ensure ethical leadership is upheld throughout the process. The next section identifies the tools and measures that the ES SLT and the GC will utilize to track change, gauge progress, and assess change using the PDSA.

#### ***Applying the PDSA Model to Assess Change***

Identified in Chapter 2, the PDSA cycle allows change agents to assess change implementation through the scientific process, informed by the scientific method (Leis & Shojania, 2017; Reed & Card, 2016; Taylor et al., 2014). Effective employment of the PDSA methodology ensures a greater possibility of change implementation success (Reed & Card, 2016). The PDSA cycle promotes planned implementation focused on accountability by ensuring criteria, tools, and measures are in place to monitor progress and to evaluate the overall success of the plan using new learning to determine the next areas for improvement (Leis & Shojania, 2017; Taylor et al., 2014), which aligns with the objectives of a MEF. Integrating the PDSA with a MEF will support progress toward successful change implementation.

Change is complex, takes time, and requires perseverance to assess and act on new understandings (Hall, 2013). Table 3 articulates the change process MEF and the AIC framework through the PDSA cycle.

**Table 3***Connecting the PDSA, MEF, and the AIC Framework*

Plan	Do	Study	Act
AIC Principles			
Head & Heart/Poetic			
Want to/Get to Mindset/Positive/Anticipatory			
Management and Leadership/Simultaneity			
Select Few and Diverse Many/Constructivist			
Accelerate			
Promote the Big Opportunity	Form a Strategic Vision	Sustain Acceleration	Institute Change
Creating a Sense of Urgency	Enlist Volunteers (NIC)		
Build a Guiding Coalition	Enable Action by Removing Barriers		
	Generate Short-Term Wins		
Professional Inquiry Cycle			
Question	Apply/Investigate	Investigate	Reflect/Apply
Monitoring and Evaluation Framework			
Develop Evaluation Questions	Monitor	Evaluate	Application of New Learning
Ethical Considerations			
Stakeholder selection	Anonymity	Communication of Findings	Stakeholder selection
Engagement	Consent	Communication of Data Used to Inform	Engagement
Empowerment	Data Interpretation	Future Decision-making	Empowerment
Process and Procedure disclosure	Data Utilization		Process and Procedure disclosure
	Process, Procedure, and Results disclosure		

Double-Loop Learning

*Note.* The AIC is encompassed within the principles of Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate, Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) five AI principles, and ISCEE's (2016) PIC Cycle as outlined in Chapter 2, Figure 1. The amalgamated principles (AIC Principles) are the foundation that guide and reinforce the OIP as it moves from theory to practice (Cooperrider et al., 2008; Kotter, 2014a). These principles help maintain an optimistic, strength-based, and collaborative approach throughout the process.

For change to be successful, it necessitates alterations at the individual, group, and organizational level. Hall (2013) has contended that it can take between three to five years and sometimes longer for change to be realized in a given context. Recognizing this OIP perceives change as continuous, the monitoring and evaluating the change process will focus on change implementation in the timeframe of one school year.

Appendix C outlines the data collection plan, as part of the MEF, throughout the first year of implementation. Monitoring data collection includes attendance at NICs, observations, documenting communication, policies and procedures, surveys, semistructured interviews, financial records, and PIC documentation review. The members of the GC are responsible for collecting and communicating the data. Attendance is reviewed every 6 weeks. Observations by the ES SLT members of the GC are weekly and include follow-up conversations. Learning forward coaches will engage in observations and offer feedback when requested by faculty. Surveys will be initiated five times per year, and semistructured interviews will occur four times per year. Financial records will be reviewed by the elementary principal, DTL, and office assistant monthly, and PIC documentation will be reviewed by progress by the ES SLT every 6 weeks. The data collected during the monitoring phase will track implementation and progress to ensure decision-making promotes internal and external accountability. Evaluation data will also be collected and used as a reflective learning opportunity to evaluate the initiative's overall success.

Evaluation data includes an overall review of documentation, surveys, interviews, the schedule, financial statements, and faculty conversations used for OIP implementation. Evaluation data are collected less frequently than monitoring data as they are used to assess the

overall impact of the OIP's implementation and its future decision-making. For the purposes of this OIP, the data will be analysed at the midpoint and endpoint of the school year.

**Plan.** The planning stage of the PDSA cycle focuses on three of Kotter's (2014a) eight accelerators introduced in Chapter 2: promoting the TBO, creating a sense of urgency, and building a GC. In addition, it is necessary to develop the EQs.

The EQs will unify the monitoring and evaluation plans providing focus and structure through the five domains identified by Markiewicz and Patrick (2016): appropriateness, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability. Identified in Appendix C, the EQs form the basis for formative and summative feedback, promoting the opportunity to reflect on the process to determine what parts of the implementation plan are working and where iterations may be necessary (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Ethical considerations in the plan stage of the PDSA cycle include stakeholder selection, empowerment, engagement, and disclosure of process and procedure.

Change agents must keep the following ethical considerations in mind during the planning phase. Gopichandran and Krishna (2012) have emphasized the importance of fairness and impartiality in ensuring voice and representation across all constituents impacted by the change to ensure empowerment and engagement in the process. Stakeholder selection for the GC needs to be open and transparent. It is essential to ensure clarity surrounding qualifications, roles, and responsibilities (Gopichandran & Krishna, 2012). The development of a concise job description and the implementation of a transparent application, interview, and hiring process aligned with ISCEE's current practices that invite stakeholder participation in the interview and selection process are necessary and pivotal steps. Transparent communication surrounding process and procedure is also necessary to build confidence and credibility in the selection

process (Gopichandran & Krishna, 2012; Rossi et al., 2004). Adherence to these ethical considerations cultivates empowerment and engagement of all impacted community members in the selection process and safeguards against power and accountability being held by a select few. Once the plan is in place, it needs to be implemented.

**Do.** Moving into the application component of the PDSA cycle, four of Kotter's (2014a) phases are put into practice: forming a strategic vision, enlisting volunteers as participants in the NIC, enabling action by removing barriers, and generating short-term wins. At this stage of the OIP, the focus is on monitoring the implementation progress. Baseline data supports the monitoring plan (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016) and can be established using feedback surveys and PIC documents from previous years. Data collection tools for monitoring implementation include feedback surveys, semistructured interviews, learning walks, faculty conversations, and PIC document review. Data collection tools will be communicated and shared through the principal's weekly blog, with reminders at faculty conversations and instructional leads. Emails and calendar invites will be used to confirm interview times. Using the EQs as a central reference point, monitoring foci will be established, indicators and targets will be identified where appropriate, data sources confirmed, responsible personnel named, and a timeline for data collection established. Data collected will be used to identify and celebrate short-term wins along the way to ensure continued engagement and sustainability (Fullan & Quinn, 2016; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a; Neuman, 2018). Appendix C presents the detailed MEF based on Markiewicz and Patrick's (2016) MEF. As a change leader, I must be aware of the ethical challenges associated with collecting and using data to monitor and evaluate change (Hall, 2013).

Recognizing the ethical challenges associated with collecting and assessing data is critical and is presented in Appendix B. The type and amount of data collected, and the frequency of

collection, all present challenges (Rossi, 2004). Some individuals or NICs may participate more actively than others in the data collection process as information recall is prone to human inaccuracy (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Rossi et al., 2004).

**Study.** The study phase aligns with Kotter's (2014a) sustain acceleration phase and connects with the evaluation component of the MEF. During this phase of the MEF, identified stakeholders investigate and reflect on the data collected to assess progress against success criteria in order to evaluate the overall progress of OIP (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016; Neuman et al., 2018). Building on the monitoring information, ethical considerations remain paramount to ensure validity. Key ethical concerns are identified in Appendix B. When the OIP timeline is completed, the overall findings need to be used to inform future decision-making and communicated to all stakeholders and the wider community (Gopichandran & Krishna, 2012).

**Act.** The fourth phase of the PDSA cycle promotes the use of the findings to adjust the organization's future strategic direction (Pietrzak & Paliszkievicz, 2015; Reed & Card, 2016). This aligns with Argyris' (1976) concept of double-loop learning, which is premised on the idea of questioning beliefs and systems to enact change. In this phase, relevant stakeholders will engage in single-loop learning by using the articulated conclusions from the evaluation plan to confirm if the objectives of the OIP were achieved. Double-loop learning will occur if the data initiates questioning the current structures and informs future strategic decision-making. For this OIP, this means institutionalizing the AIC in the elementary and initiating interest in implementing the AIC in the other divisions. For this objective to be realized, stakeholder engagement must be empowered by communicating a sense of urgency through the articulation of the TBO. This requires a plan to communicate the need for change and the change process.



## **Communicating the Need for Change and the Change Process**

Highlighted in Chapter 1 is the essential role communication plays in successful change (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Beatty, 2016; Klein, 1996; Lewis, 2019). Delivery of the change message is integral to the success of the OIP as a culture of learning requires the continuous and reciprocal flow of communication (Schein, 2017). Change implementation tends to fail when change leaders over-focus on implementation strategies and recipient responses (Lewis, 2019). Successful change implementation recognizes the role of social constructions within organizations.

Communication contributes to the social construction of an organization. Change leader interactions with stakeholders and stakeholder interactions with one another are rooted in communication and contribute to organizational change success or failure (Beatty, 2016; Lewis, 2019). The communication delivery method will determine stakeholder reaction to the change (Klein, 1996; Lewis, 2019). The following section identifies the principles of effective communication and outlines a communication strategy and plan for building, maintaining, and sustaining awareness and acceptance of the need for change.

### **Key Principles of Change Communication**

How the change message is presented determines how the individuals impacted will react to the change (Klein, 1996; Lewis, 2019). Klein (1996) has promoted six essential communication principles change leaders need to consider when devising a communication strategy. Implementing these principles will help build and maintain relational trust. The first principle promotes redundancy and multimedia to aid retention. Message repetition using multiple platforms increases the likelihood that stakeholders will process, understand, and retain the message (Armenakis & Harris, 2002; Cawsey et al., 2016; Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Klein,

1996; Kotter, 2012b, 2014a). Within the context of this OIP, platforms including email, Google applications, meeting agendas, and the elementary principal's weekly blogs will be used.

Principle two recognizes the value of face-to-face communication. Face-to-face communication has a more significant impact than any other communication form (Klein, 1996; Schein, 2017) because it increases interaction. It also provides the opportunity to immediately address concerns, assumptions, and misconceptions (Klein, 1996; Lewis, 2019). Klein (1996) has asserted face-to-face communication is more compelling in groups because it builds relationships and engages multiple perspectives. Formal and informal conversations will ensure face-to-face communication throughout the change process. The elementary faculty engages in weekly conversations and teams meet regularly throughout the week. Both of these venues provide the opportunity for face-to-face communication. Informal conversations promoting the OIP can happen in the hallways, at lunch, and during informal drop-ins. As the change leader, it is my responsibility to ensure the dissemination of information is clearly articulated while also unearthing and clarifying misunderstandings and assumptions. This will be accomplished through face-to-face and multimedia platforms.

Klein's (1996) third and fourth principles recognize the role hierarchical authority plays in message delivery. Employees are more likely to pay attention to messages delivered by individuals with positional power. As elementary principal, I have positional power and sit at the top of the elementary school hierarchy. The director of ISCEE also supports the OIP, has positional power, and sits at the top of the organizational hierarchy. Although positional power supports message retention, it is also essential to involve stakeholder's voices.

Klein's (1996) fifth principle involves identifying opinion leaders, community members with personality or network power (Cawsey et al. 2016) to support the change as they can

influence and persuade others to support the initiative. Lewis (2019) recently identified a continuum of stakeholder participation that ranges from symbolic representation of the few who inform stakeholders that they are an essential part of the change to resource representation of the diverse many that imparts agency and resources to empower stakeholders to play an integral role in the change. At ISCEE, stakeholders fall closer to the resource approach. The GC will be empowered to solicit feedback from the diverse many to guide decision-making and implementation.

Klein's (1996) sixth principle ensures the message is personally relevant as constituents are more likely to retain information that impacts them directly. Calling attention to stakeholder interests and the impact the change will have on individuals and the organization plays an integral role in convincing community members of the necessity for change (Beatty, 2016; Lewis, 2019). The OIP is personally relevant to faculty. It promotes personal growth through the PIC that the faculty created. In addition, the AIC ensures the TBO focuses a sense of urgency by provoking stakeholder connection through thoughts and feelings (Kotter, 2014a). Klein's (1996) six principles may be used throughout the change process's different stages, although their use will vary depending upon the stage.

### **Communication in the Change Process Phases**

Cawsey et al. (2016) have concurred with Klein (1996) that communication methods will vary depending on the change stage. Cawsey et al. (2016) have articulated four phases of change: prechange, developing the need for change, midstream change, and confirming the change. This OIP's plan to communicate change will integrate components of the AIC framework outlined in Chapter 2 with Cawsey et al.'s (2016) change process phases and Klein's (1996) six principles for communicating change.

## **The Change Process Communication Plan**

The purpose of the change process communication plan is to ensure communication strategies are in place to build awareness around the need for change, the change process, and the change outcomes. For the change process communication plan to be effective, it must align with the change process implementation plan (Gilley et al., 2009; Goodman & Truss, 2004; Klein, 1996). The change process implementation plan for this OIP is an integrated framework using components of Kotter's (2014a) Accelerate, Cooperrider et al.'s (2008) AI principles, and ISCEE's (2016) PIC Cycle as outlined in Chapter 2. When communicating change, leaders must always keep ethical considerations at the forefront, ensuring responsible communication to maintain credibility and trust. Appendix D articulates the communication strategy blueprint for this OIP. The communication strategy blueprint is based on the assumption that, given the current context, the change will be positive involving modifications aligned with best practice (Klein, 1996). The change readiness findings in Chapter 1 and critical organizational analysis in Chapter 2 indicate that ISCEE's elementary school is positioned to engage in continuous change. A robust communication plan will support successful implementation.

Cawsey et al.'s (2016) four-phase change process defines the change timeline. Integrated across all four phases is the TBO because ongoing engagement in the implementation process requires ensuring the TBO remains at the forefront of all communication (Kotter, 2014a). The eight accelerators are aligned with each phase, followed by objectives, activities, and communication needs essential and specific to each phase. As the leader of change, I must ensure an ethical approach to communication considering the impact of my actions and words on stakeholders (Lynch, 2012) and by creating opportunities for all voices to be heard (Ehrich et al., 2015; Starratt, 2005).

Klein's (1996) six principles appear next in the blueprint. Principle three and four have been combined because I represent both the line manager and direct supervisor for this OIP. Principles one, two, three, and five have the same actions in their prechange and developing the need for change phase, whereas opinion leaders engage in the same actions across all four phases. It is essential to recognize the role that personal relevance plays in the change process. Ongoing transparent communication reconfirming the benefits of participation, recognizing support systems, and identifying modifications along the way, ensures continued commitment to the plan. At the foundation of the change strategy blueprint are the AIC principles. The principles form the bedrock of all communication and maintain a strengths-based and inclusive approach built on relational trust.

Stage 1, the prechange phase, focuses on creating a sense of urgency and building the GC. It requires confronting the status quo and rationalizing the need for change. Communication at this stage requires demonstrating the benefits of change outweigh the risks of complacency (Beatty, 2016; Fullan et al., 2012; Goodman & Truss, 2004; Kotter, 2012a, 2014a; Lewis, 2019). Presenting research and data that aligns the OIP plan with the organization's strategic direction and demonstrates the need for change is the logical first step. Transparent disclosure of processes and procedures confirms ethical considerations are in place during stakeholder selection promoting greater engagement and empowerment of stakeholders.

Moving into Stage 2, developing the need for change, I will build momentum in preparation for change implementation. Promoting the strategic vision, articulating the GC's and NIC's purposes, and confirming members' roles and responsibilities can be leveraged to build excitement. Ongoing dissemination of information ensures a reduction in uncertainty and equivocality (Gilley et al., 2009; Lewis, 2019). Lewis (2019) has asserted that agents of change

must respond to strategic, structural, and job-related insecurities to break down barriers to change. At the same time, leaders must ensure clarity of language and consistency of understanding to minimize interpretations. Engaging stakeholders in conversations to elicit concerns provides the opportunity to dispel assumptions and worries. Ensuring language is operationalized to fit ISCEE's context and aligns with the school's values and direction will help remove barriers and empower individuals to participate.

When the change has taken root, the OIP enters the midstream change phase. It is at this stage that the MEF is utilized to observe and assess change. Communication of concerns and possible modifications will need to be clear and timely to maintain relational trust. The GC will celebrate short-term wins to confirm successes, maintain momentum, and inspire interest in those not yet involved in the process. In this phase, ethical considerations are paramount. It is essential to ensure consent and anonymity where necessary while recognizing and checking biases when interpreting and utilizing data. Ethical practices firmly in place, restating process and procedure, confirming roles and responsibility, soliciting feedback, and sharing results will reassure stakeholders and garner continued support and engagement. For example, GC members will present progress, confirm research, and share data at weekly faculty conversations. Faculty will have the opportunity to ask questions and clarify assumptions as they engage with the NIC members.

The final stage, confirm the change stage, completes the communication plan. At this stage, the objective is to evaluate the overall process and determine future decision-making. In this phase, findings will be shared with the broader community to foster greater participation in the NICs during the second year of implementation. GC members and their NICs will be invited to share their findings with other stakeholders, internal and external. This will be accomplished

through semistructured conversations, written commentary, webinars, and presentations. Ethical considerations regarding the communication and use of data to inform future decision-making are critical at this stage. As the change leader, I must ensure that all communication, formal and informal, adheres to the school's high moral standards, that anonymity is maintained where necessary, and biases, assumptions, and perceptions do not distort the intended message. Data will be anonymized to ensure ethical standards are maintained.

### **Chapter 3 Conclusion**

By identifying priorities, possible implementation issues, and limitations, this OIP is positioned to achieve the desired state. Embedding transparent processes and procedures within a well-developed MEF ensures regular review, confirms the need for necessary modifications, and creates a greater likelihood of successful implementation and future sustainability (Markiewicz & Patrick, 2016). Designing a robust communication strategy builds and maintains awareness around the need for change and sustains the change moving forward. Together, implementation, evaluation, and communication ensure a greater likelihood of positive change

### **Next Steps and Future Considerations**

The development of this OIP is complete and the implementation process has begun. The beginning phase of implementation already in progress, as the change leader, I must also address the next steps and contemplate future considerations. The next four steps include communicating the change implementation plan, establishing the TBO, building a sense of urgency, and implementing a professional development plan to build the capacity of the GC. As the OIP is implemented, considering future possibilities to ensure change is sustained will also be necessary.

## Next Steps

The first step was to communicate the approved change in middle leadership roles. Face-to-face conversations with the current curriculum leads regarding the rationale for changing the position from a curriculum focus have already occurred. The learning forward coaches' job description, visualized in Appendix E, confirms the purpose of the new LFC positions by identifying the necessary qualifications, skills, and experience, and providing an outline of the responsibilities connected to the role. These positions filled and the GC established, steps two and three, the development of the TBO and creating a sense of urgency, are necessary.

The establishment of learning forward coaches provides the catalyst for creating the TBO. As evidenced in this chapter, elementary teachers have expressed interest in re-establishing coaching roles to support their growth and development. The LFC positions meet this request and will be utilized to rationalize the need for continuous change. The LFCs and other members of the GC will be tasked with promoting the NICs as opportunities to empower the elementary members to enact meaningful change and make a difference in their own lives, the lives of their students, and society. Connecting head and heart to bring people on board and create a sense of urgency will propel the OIP into action. Sustaining the sense of urgency will require ongoing capacity building which is the fourth step.

The members of the GC will require access to professional development opportunities to build their leadership capacity. External and internal, formal and informal learning experiences need to be provided to deepen understanding of the components of the OIP. For example, training focused on understanding the AIC framework and navigating the hierarchy and the NICs of the dual operating system is necessary. Professional development surrounding the purpose and implementation of the MEF is also needed to ensure training in the collection methods and data



use. This also includes examining ethical considerations when collecting, monitoring, evaluating, and analyzing data for future use. Finally, professional development to support informal leaders in the coaching role is also necessary. As GC members build their capacity, their self-efficacy and collective efficacy will improve, enabling them to contribute more competently to the success of the OIP.

As the GC's understanding develops, they will become more competent in sharing their perspectives and the cognitively diverse perspectives of the NICs members with whom they collaborate. The voices of the many will bring forth ideas to further improve implementation. Iterations will be considered and modifications implemented that align with the TBO and the strategic vision. As modifications are made, they will confirm the value of inclusion and cognitive diversity and their role in innovative and agile thinking. As this OIP moves forward and becomes firmly established in the culture at ISCEE, additional opportunities to enhance the learning culture will immerge for consideration.

### **Future Considerations**

Change takes time. This OIP outlines the first year of implementation. Future years will require continued energy focused on the TBO. The GC will need to maintain urgency through continuous problem solving of challenges encountered along the way, the continuous promotion of new opportunities, and the celebration of incremental successes. As NICs successfully integrate new initiatives and ideas spread across the division and cause a paradigm shift in behaviors, transference into the hierarchy's systems and structures will be necessary to institutionalize the practice. Communicating these successes to the middle school and high school divisions, the wider community, and beyond is crucial if the OIP is to embed itself into the DNA (Kotter, 2014a) of the organization.

Expanding the NICs beyond the elementary school opens up more cognitively diverse opportunities for continuous change. As the elementary school engages in NICs, the GC will communicate successes through PIC sharing, presentations on the OIP, and informal conversations. The goal would be to amass interest in the other divisions, ISCEE's wider community, and the International Schools of Central Eastern Europe's Association (a pseudonym). Once interest is aroused, these individuals and groups will be invited to join the NICs. Student contributions will also serve to increase inclusivity, cognitive diversity, and innovative and agile thinking.

Cognitive diversity can be cultivated further by expanding of the NICs to include other individuals and groups within and beyond ISCEE's community. Currently, elementary student learning contributions focus mainly on the areas of growth and development. We have the opportunity to extend their role further and allow them to contribute their thoughts and ideas to the reinvention of education (Zhao et al., 2019). Seeking to include students in conversations that reflect on the what, why, and how of the learning experience is the next step. The inclusion of their voice in the conversations allows them to become owners of their learning and learning environment. Beyond the focus of cognitive diversity, identity diversity can and must continue to grow alongside this OIP through recruitment and retainment practices.

ISCEE's faculty lacks diversity, as evidenced in Chapter 1. The teachers' and assistants' demographic makeup does not align with the student population's demographic makeup. Critical reflection on the impact of the school's dominantly Western philosophy and workforce on policy and practice is needed. Future hiring practices must consider the teachers' and assistants' homogeneous nature and the need for the development of interculturally competent faculty. Recruiting and retaining interculturally competent and identity diverse faculty that reflect the

student body promotes a culturally responsive, inclusive learning environment that enhances innovative and agile thinking by bolstering cognitive diversity and expanding identity diversity.

### **Final Reflections**

Embarking on this OIP required me to reflect on my past experiences and consider how those experiences shaped who I am as a leader and my beliefs about leading change. This journey has required me to carefully analyze my organizational context and its readiness for change. I have spent countless hours reviewing the literature, exploring theories, and identifying tools, resources, and frameworks that align with my leadership approach and the organizational context. This research's culmination is the cultivation of a vision for organizational improvement that will foster an inclusive culture of learning that promotes cognitive diversity to stimulate innovative and agile thinking.

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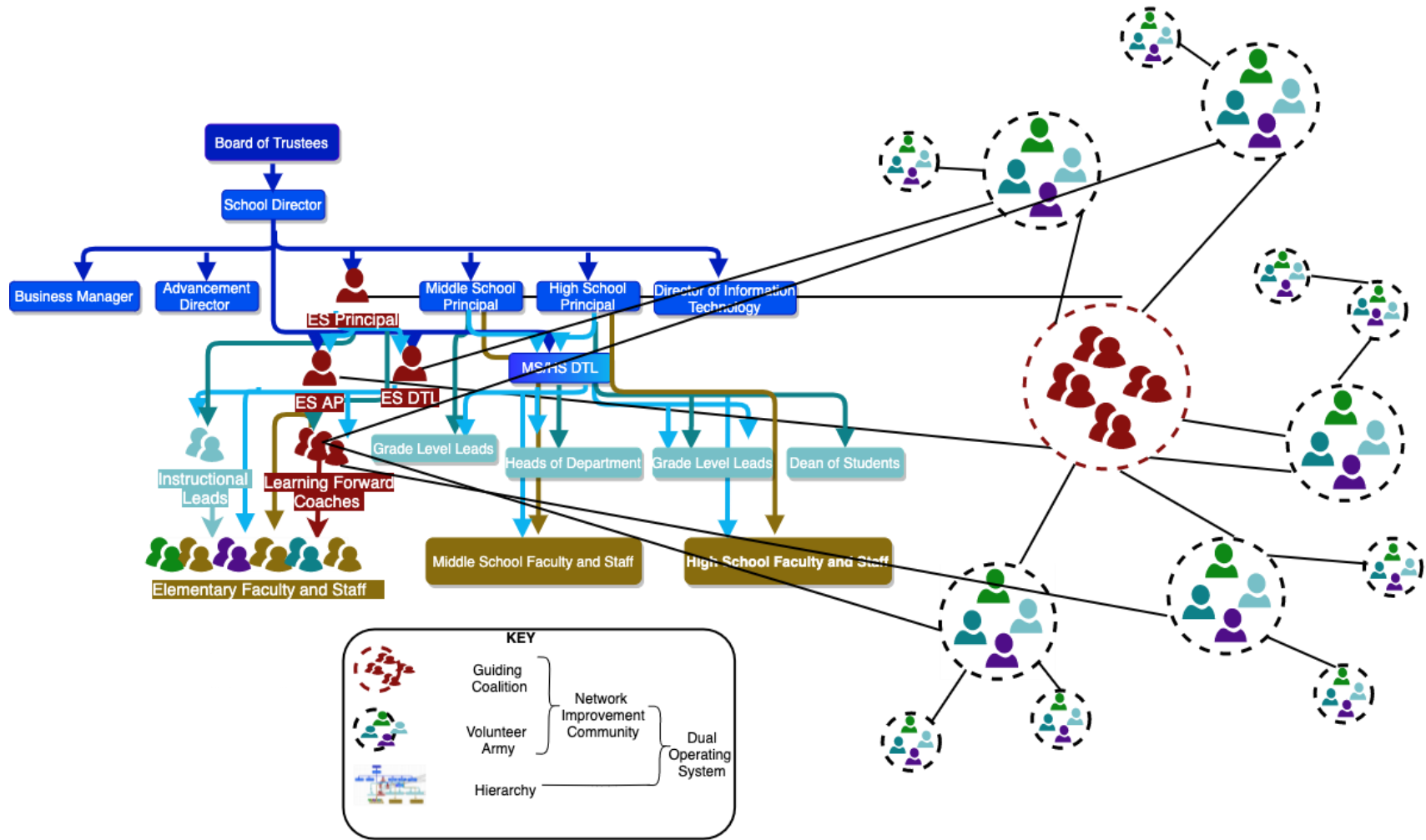
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Appendix A: ISCEE Elementary’s Dual Operating System (Revised)



Note. Adapted from *Accelerate: Building Strategic Agility for a Faster Moving World*, by J. P. Kotter, 2014a, p. 178. Copyright 2014 by Harvard Business Review.

### Appendix B: Ethical Implications Associated With the MEF

Area of focus	Ethical considerations	Recommended response
Stakeholder involvement	Bias in selection to participate Stakeholder voice	Open and transparent selection process- identification of criteria Encourage, empower, and engage stakeholders in feedback process
Methodology	Relevance of focus, indicators, targets, and data collection methods Feasibility	Involve relevant stakeholders in determining focus, indicators, targets, and data collection  Ensure measures in place to assess fiscal responsibility
Data collection	Responsible use	Training Ensure informed consent Password protect online documents and limit access to hard copies Maintain anonymity and confidentiality Communicate any data breaches to relevant stakeholders using multiple delivery methods
Data analysis, interpretation, and communication of findings	Personal Bias	Use checks and balances to ensure impartiality throughout the process Use all data collected Communicate and make available all results using multiple delivery methods
Use in future decision-making	Appropriate and timely utilization and communication	Transfer findings into practical application in alignment with strategic vision Transparent and timely communication to relevant stakeholders using multiple delivery methods

*Note.* Adapted from “Monitoring ‘Monitoring’ and Evaluating ‘Evaluation’: An Ethical Framework for Monitoring and Evaluation in

Public Health,” by V. Gopichandran & A. K. I. Krishna, 2012, *Journal of Medical Ethics*, 39(1), p. 31.

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**Appendix C: Monitoring and Evaluation Framework**

EQ: Appropriateness	Baseline data	Indicators and targets		Monitoring data sources	Who is responsible and when	Evaluation methods	Method implementation	Who is responsible and when
<p>Headline Question: To what extent the impacted stakeholders actively participate in the OIP?</p> <p>Subsidiary Questions: To what extent was the TBO clearly articulated? To what extent was the dual operating system established? To what extent were assumptions about the OIP addressed? To what extent did OIP meet the needs of the elementary faculty? To what extent did the OIP meet the needs of the broader community?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> % of faculty participating in a collaborative PIC outside their main cohort</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> identification of assumptions associated with the OIP</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> faculty participating in NICs/ collaborating on a PIC outside their main cohort</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> documenting communication of terminology, process, and procedure</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> identify assumptions associated with the OIP</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 15% increase faculty participating in a collaborative PIC outside their main cohort</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No target identified</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 75% of assumptions identified and addressed</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance at NIC Conversations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Observations</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> documenting communication, policies, and procedures</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Surveys</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Semistructured interviews</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: every 6 weeks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: scheduled ES SLT— weekly LFCs as requested</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: Communication weekly and policies and procedures: monthly</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: August, November, February, April, June</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: October, January, March, May</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Attendance review</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reflective analysis and evaluation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reflective analysis and evaluation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Once per semester and end of cycle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once per semester and end of cycle</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Once per semester and end of cycle</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: middle and end of year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: middle and end of year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: middle and end of year</p>

EQ: Effectiveness	Baseline data	Indicators and targets		Monitoring data sources	Who is responsible and when	Evaluation methods	Method implementation	Who is responsible and when
<p>Headline Question: To what extent was the OIP able to achieve the PoP?</p> <p>Subsidiary Questions: To what extent does the OIP address self-efficacy and collective efficacy?</p> <p>To what extent does the OIP increase focus cognitive diversity and inclusivity?</p> <p>To what degree can innovative and agile thinking be attributed to the implementation of the OIP?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Current level of self-efficacy and collective efficacy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Current level of cognitive diversity and inclusivity within the PIC</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Current level of innovative and agile thinking resulting from PIC participation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Changes in self-efficacy and collective efficacy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Changes in understanding of and openness to cognitively diverse perspectives</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Examples of innovative and agile thinking resulting from participation OIP implementation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No target identified</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No target identified</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> 50% of innovative and agile thinking connected to OIP participation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> PIC documentation review</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Semi-structured interviews</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Surveys</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: every 6 weeks</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: October, January, March, May</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: August, November, February, April, June</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Document Review</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Survey Review</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Interview Review</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Reflective analysis and evaluation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reflective analysis and evaluation</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Reflective analysis and evaluation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: first and second semester</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: middle and end of year</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: middle and end of year</p>

EQ: Efficiency	Baseline data	Indicators and targets		Monitoring data sources	Who is responsible and when	Evaluation methods	Method implementation	Who is responsible and when
<p>Headline Question: To what extent did the OIP maximize the use of resources for optimal results? Subsidiary Questions: To what degree was time maximized? To what degree did the OIP ensure fiscal responsibility?</p>	<p>Productive use of: <input type="checkbox"/> Time</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> 50% of scheduled professional development time dedicated to PIC</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Orientation, Professional Development Days, Faculty Conversations</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> GC: monthly</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule reviews</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Schedule analysis</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: beginning, middle, and end of year</p>
	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Funding</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial expenditures</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> within 5-10% of estimated costs</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial Records</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Principal and Office Assistant: monthly</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Financial statement review</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Budget analysis</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Principal and Office Assistant: Monthly</p>
EQ: Impact								
<p>Headline Question: What were the expected/unexpected and direct/indirect results of the OIP implementation?</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Current faculty participation</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Identification of factors that contributed/impeded desired results</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> No target identified</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Observations</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: scheduled sessions</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Faculty conversations</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> Visible thinking routines</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: beginning, middle, and end of year</p>
<p>Subsidiary Questions: To what extent did the OIP address the PoP? What factors contributed to the desired impact? What factors impeded the desired impact?</p>				<p><input type="checkbox"/> Semi-structured interviews</p>	<p><input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: October, January, March, May</p>			



EQ: Sustainability	Baseline data	Indicators and targets	Monitoring data sources	Who is responsible and when	Evaluation methods	Method implementation	Who is responsible and when	
Headline Question: What evidence exists to demonstrate the program would have beneficial impact beyond the scope of the OIP?	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of innovative practices applied in the classroom  <input type="checkbox"/> Student growth data	<input type="checkbox"/> No indicator identified  <input type="checkbox"/> student growth tied to innovative practice	<input type="checkbox"/> 15% increase in the number of innovative practices applied in the classroom  <input type="checkbox"/> 50% of faculty identify connection between innovative practices and student growth	<input type="checkbox"/> PIC documentation review  <input type="checkbox"/> Semi- structured interviews  <input type="checkbox"/> Surveys	<input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: every 6 weeks  <input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: October, January, March, May  <input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT: August, November, February, April, June	<input type="checkbox"/> Document Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Once per semester and end of cycle	<input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: first and second semester
						<input type="checkbox"/> Survey Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Once per semester and end of cycle	<input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: middle and end of year
Subsidiary Questions: What areas of the PoP did not have the intended impact? What areas of the PoP contributed to continuous change?					<input type="checkbox"/> Interview Review	<input type="checkbox"/> Once per semester and end of cycle	<input type="checkbox"/> ES SLT and GC: middle and end of year	

*Note.* Adapted from *Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Frameworks*, by A. Markiewicz and I. Patrick, 2016, p. 178. Copyright

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### Appendix D: Communication Strategy Blueprint

Prechange phase	Developing the need for change	Midstream change phase	Confirm the change phase
Promote the TBO			
<p>Creating a sense of urgency Build a guiding coalition</p> <p>Objectives: Confront the status quo, rationalizing the need for change</p> <p>Activities: Confirm alignment with strategic direction, prepare research, collect baseline data, propose systems and structures, confirm resource needs (fiscal, time, human), confirm GC members</p> <p>Communication Needs: Explain objective and rationale, present research and baseline data substantiating the need for change and aligning the proposed change with the strategic direction of the organization</p>	<p>Form a strategic vision Enlist volunteers (NIC) Enable action by removing barriers</p> <p>Objectives: Develop momentum, prepare for change,</p> <p>Activities: Engage GC &amp; NIC participants in professional development, encourage stakeholder feedback, build relational trust, reassure support</p> <p>Communication Needs: Promote the vision, introduce the GC and its purpose, raise awareness and dispel concerns, canvas stakeholders for volunteers to participate in the NICs, identify roles and responsibilities of participants</p>	<p>Generate short-term wins Sustain acceleration</p> <p>Objective: Maintain momentum, monitor change</p> <p>Activities: Assess change and modify process where needed, maintain relational trust, share concerns and suggested modifications, identify misconceptions, inspire interest</p> <p>Communication Needs: Solicit feedback on process, celebrate short-term wins, confirm modifications, clarify misconceptions, restate roles, responsibilities, and expectations, reassure and support GC and NIC members</p>	<p>Institute change</p> <p>Objectives: Evaluate change, institutionalize successes, identify next steps</p> <p>Activities: Celebrate successes, promote expansion of NICs</p> <p>Communication Needs: Present successes to the wider community</p>
Ethical considerations			
<p>Stakeholder selection Engagement Empowerment Process and procedure disclosure</p>		<p>Anonymity Consent Data Interpretation Data Utilization Process, procedure, and results disclosure Communication of findings Communication of data used to Inform Future decision-making</p>	

Principles	Prechange phase	Developing the need for change	Midstream change phase	Confirm the change phase
Redundancy and multimedia for retention	Promote objectives and activities through presentations, the weekly blog, and email.	GC and NIC members celebrate short-term wins via email, weekly blog, and school social media accounts.	GC and NIC members promote success and next steps via all relevant multimedia platforms, acknowledges participants for their role in the success of the OIP, and encourages participation of those not yet involved.	Redundancy and multimedia for retention
Face-to-face communication	Engage in regular formal presentations and meetings (faculty conversations, leadership and team meetings, etc.) and informal discussions.	GC and NIC members share successes, acknowledge concerns, and address misconceptions and changes resulting from feedback via formal meetings and informal discussions.	GC and NIC members promote success and next steps via formal meetings and informal discussions, acknowledges participants for their role in the success of the OIP, and encourages participation of those not yet involved.	Face-to-face communication
Line manager/direct supervisor as effective communication channel	Implement a combination of principle 1 and 2.	ES Principal celebrates short-term wins, confirms changes, reminds participants of roles, responsibilities and expectations while reassure support mechanisms are in place.	ES Principal promotes success and next steps via all relevant social media platforms, formal meetings and informal discussions, acknowledges participants for their role in the success of the OIP, and encourages participation of those not yet involved.	Line manager/direct supervisor as effective communication channel
Opinion leaders	Plan weekly face-to-face conversations with GC to ensure they have access to all necessary information and questions surfacing in their NICs are clarified. Maintain ongoing documentation for reference.			

Principles	Prechange phase	Developing the need for change	Midstream change phase	Confirm the change phase
Personal relevance of the change	Communicate individual benefits of change and recognize necessary support systems using face-to-face communication when possible.		ES Principal discloses all modifications to impacted personnel in a timely and transparent fashion using face-to-face communication when possible.	ES Principal continues to acknowledge and clarify personal impact as necessary.
AIC Principles				
Head & Heart/Poetic				
Want to/get to Mindset, Positive, Anticipatory				
Management and leadership, Simultaneity				
Many leaders, Multiple stakeholders, Constructivist				

*Note.* Adapted from “A Management Communication Strategy for Change,” by S. M. Klein, 1996, *Journal of Organizational Change*

*Management*, 9(2), pp. 37, 39. Copyright 1996 by Emerald.

**Appendix E:**  
**Elementary Learning Forward Coach Job Description**

Job Title: Elementary Learning Forward Coach

Reports To: Elementary Senior Leadership

Stipend: \$2,000.00, time in lieu, and additional professional development funds

Position Overview:

The Elementary Learning Forward Coach (LFC) is a stipend position. The LFC works collaboratively with all stakeholders to ensure the shared vision is understood and implemented to support the teaching and learning needs of all learners. A member of the guiding coalition, the LFC promotes, engages, and guides faculty and staff in continuous learning and improvement using the accelerated improvement cycle (AIC).

Qualifications and Experience:

**Personal Attributes**

- Implements and manages relationships and change effectively, maintaining a solution-based approach to learning
- Cultivates an environment of trust and inclusion
- Maintains a solution-based approach
- Establishes cooperative and collaborative working relationships with staff, students, and parents
- Engages in informal and formal leadership for personal, collegial, and divisional growth.
- Models the skill sets and dispositions of a contemporary learner through the use of internal and external professional learning networks, technology and social media
- Demonstrates initiative, flexibility, and a proactive attitude on a personal and professional level

- Openly considers and respects multiple perspectives
- Demonstrates an interdisciplinary mindset and is a connector and collaborator within and across disciplines
- Contributes to a positive school climate, seeking continuous improvement and sustainability
- Illustrates organizational and time-management skills

### **Knowledge**

- Demonstrates
  - a solid knowledge of content and pedagogy, making connections within and across disciplines
  - a concrete understanding of primary developmental stages
  - knowledge of best practice in leadership
  - a deep understanding of and commitment to the mission, vision, and values of the ISCEE community
- Is up to date on current educational pedagogy and andragogy theory and practice

### **Degrees and Qualifications**

- Holds a valid teaching certification (or equivalent) in an elementary teaching field (Masters desired)
- Recent professional development or qualifications (desired) in leadership and change management

### **Skills and Experience**

- Demonstrates
  - excellence in leadership capabilities
  - a deep understanding of and commitment to the mission, vision, and values of the ISCEE community
  - ongoing professional growth and development for personal and collective efficacy

- Commitment to continuous improvement and sustainability at ISCEE
- a deep understanding of and commitment to the mission, vision, and values of the ISCEE community
- effective communication in English, both in written and oral form
- Literate in current trends in innovation and technology

### **Key Responsibilities**

- Commitment to and enforcement of
  - child protection and safeguarding policies and practices
  - inclusion, diversity, equity, and access for all stakeholders
- Work collaboratively with the senior leadership, middle leadership, and all members of the ISCEE Community
- Monitor, and/or review the direction of goals and initiatives aligned with the school's purpose and guiding principles
- Promote and lead PIC groups aligned with the guiding statements and opportunities that support innovation and continuous improvement.
- Model best practice in teaching and learning by inviting and encouraging colleagues to observe in classroom
- Support the establishment and maintenance of network improvement communities formed around PICs
- Encourage and model learning observations through regular learning walks and reflective follow up conversations focused on the PIC
- Locate and guide the collection of up-to-date research to support PIC development
- Aide in the development and implementation of monitoring and evaluation frameworks to analyze, assess, and reflect, evaluate, and communicate continuous improvement efforts and their impact on teaching and learning

- Ensure anonymity is maintained where necessary in line with country legislation and school policy and procedure
- Ensure continued documentation of the PIC and use of data to inform teaching and learning
- Host and participate in data analysis conversations to reflect, inform, and adapt teaching and learning practices
- Participate in continuous growth and development opportunities to build self and collective efficacy focused on improved student learning
- Support the facilitation of internal and external professional learning opportunities
- Ensure the maintenance ongoing documentation of Professional Inquiry Cycles (PICs)
- Lead and participate in workshops, conversations, and education sessions that promote understanding of the role professional growth plays improved student learning
- Engage in regular communication and review team member's PIC documentation to ensure steady progress, access to research, and opportunities to transfer theory into praxis.
- Communicate information and follow through on action items presented at middle leadership and faculty conversations
- Engage in the curriculum planning cycle as required by the DTL

ISCEE takes child safeguarding measures seriously. Appointments are subject to satisfactory enhanced criminal checks.

*Note.* This job description (ISCEE, 2021c), created by the elementary principal, was approved by ISCEE's director and shared with the elementary faculty on April 16, 2021, as part of the position advertisement.