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INTEGRATING CULTURALLY SUSTAINING PEDAGOGY TO DISRUPT OPPRESSIVE PRACTICE

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Abstract

I present a plan for addressing and remedying a history of institutionalized racism at a midsized elementary school in British Columbia. Mountainview Elementary—a pseudonym used throughout the OIP to maintain confidentiality of both the school and school district, was designed 25 years ago to serve a White, Christian demographic seeking an elite educational ethos. The school now finds itself serving a demographic that is 90% South Asian with a large proportion of English language learners ([Mountainview, 2021]). The conservative, Eurocentric approaches to education that made the school attractive historically are still deeply engrained in the organizational structure and pedagogy of the school and now support problematic and highly inequitable educational practices that marginalize the South Asian community. Implementing inclusive, equitable, and culturally relevant structures to support the needs of all learners will require identifying and mitigating bias among the staff, incorporating the voices of the South Asian parents, and mobilizing the knowledge of community stakeholders to integrate culturally relevant curriculum into daily practice. At the heart of my approach to solving the problem at Mountainview are notions of social constructivism and social justice theory which support the enhancement of students' sense of self and the reflection of family values. My framework for leading change is based in authentic and distributed approaches to leadership that develop trust and employ shared decision-making. A hybrid model for change implementation, strategies for evaluating and monitoring change, and next steps for achieving lasting organizational change at Mountainview are discussed.

Keywords: Eurocentric, Social Constructivism, Social Justice, Authentic Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Inclusive, Equitable, Culturally Responsive, Bias, Institutionalized Racism, South Asian

Executive Summary

The Organizational Improvement Plan (OIP) represents three years of considerable research for a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership (EdD). Additionally, it focuses on collecting, observing, and disseminating research to address a problem of practice at a mid-sized public elementary school in British Columbia. Paramount to the framework of the OIP is the philosophical belief in providing inclusive and equitable learning opportunities to all students through the development of culturally responsive and sustainable programming at Mountainview Elementary, as per Central Public School District's (CPSD) equity framework—both organizational names are pseudonyms used to maintain confidentiality. Given the conservative and Eurocentric approaches to education, coupled with a strong demand for a private institution in the public system by White Christian families established at Mountainview, equitable practices for marginalized communities are non-existent. Further highlighting the issue is the concern that institutionalized racism is evident toward a dominant South Asian Punjabi student demographic. As the principal of Mountainview Elementary, my chief concern is the noticeable absence of South Asian cultural representation and voice throughout programming. This absence begs the question: Can understanding bias and its ability to shape professional practice, coupled with community engagement, lead to equitable and inclusive practices that enrich the educational experience for students and their families? This foundational question is central to each chapter of the OIP, beginning with the problem, possible solutions, and an implementation plan.

Chapter one discusses the problem of practice by illustrating Mountainview's historical and political context. Mountainview's inception in 1995 developed out of the political aspirations fundamental to conservative beliefs of competition within systems and a lack of confidence in public schooling. Yet, at this time, choice in public schools did not exist in CPSD, adding to a

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disenfranchised conservative view of public schools' lack of differentiation. Due to these conservative views, the strong demand for private schools resulted in an exodus of families from the public system. CPSD's solution to conservatism and declining district enrollment was the creation of Mountainview, a public school that mirrored private schools in its elite, White, conservative, and exclusive organizational structure. While deemed a success for CPSD, as seen through high demand from White families and a dramatic reduction of students leaving CPSD, other challenges eventually emerged. Over 25 years, Mountainview transitioned from a 100% White demographic to the current 90% South Asian demographic ([Mountainview, 2021]). However, while the cultures shifted, the Eurocentric teaching, conservative organizational culture, and practices remain. Due to the radical transition and entrenched belief in maintaining the status quo from administration and staff, Mountainview defines institutionalized racism through the perpetuation of white dominance. Understanding the problem of practice associated with the transition of cultures at Mountainview requires a conceptual understanding of the social constructivism framework and a view of approaches to change management through an authentic and distributed leadership lens. Guiding questions emerge from the problem of practice—the possible correlation between a lack of culturally responsive instruction and lack of South Asian representation inhibits optimum student learning, the potential connection between bias informing teacher practice that prevents cultural responsiveness, and the possible connection between a lack of community engagement to promote inclusive and equitable practices for marginalized communities—are scrutinized. To conclude, chapter one completes an assessment of change readiness at Mountainview.

Chapter two focuses on developing a plan that addresses the problem of practice as laid out in chapter one. Applying authentic and distributed leadership approaches at Mountainview

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are necessary considering the authoritarian, top-down leadership practices primarily used by past leaders. These approaches are informed by social constructivism theory by applying asset based community development (ABCD) and network improvement communities (NICs) that engage the needed change structures by including additional stakeholder voices. As such, three organizational change model are proposed to support this OIP. Lewin's theory of planned change (1947), Kotter's stage model of organizational change (Kotter, 2012), and Bridges transition model (Bridges, 2003) are discussed in relation to social constructivism as well as authentic and distributed leadership. To frame the specific factors around what needs to change at Mountainview, Nadler and Tushman's Congruence Model (1989) juxtaposes the problem's internal and external influences that create incongruencies in the school, which ultimately produce dysfunction resulting in the problem of practice.

Furthermore, the gap between the current and future state is analyzed in more detail with proposed solutions required to move the organization forward. Three proposed solutions are discussed, with two selected to address the problem of practice hypothetically. Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion on necessary ethical considerations for the OIP.

Chapter three considers developing and implementing a systematic and hypothetical plan for change at Mountainview. An in-depth review of a hybrid change model consisting of a combination between the Bridges Transition Model and Kotter's eight steps works in tandem with social constructivism theory and authentic and distributed leadership approaches. This hybrid model is necessary for addressing the many challenges associated with dismantling oppressive structures currently inhibiting inclusive and equitable practices required for culturally responsive practices. These interrelated change models, theories, and leadership styles situate within the requirement to continuously measure and evaluate progress throughout the change

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plan utilizing several measurement tools. Additionally, a communication plan is clearly articulated with the embedded tenets of social constructivism, authentic and distributed leadership styles to create inclusive and equitable programming at Mountainview. Finally, the OIP concludes by considering the next steps and future considerations necessary to ensure sustainable change at the school.

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Advancing on my educational journey would not be possible without the support and guidance of several influential members who continue to shape my leadership. Firstly, I need to thank the many families at Mountainview who have guided my journey through their courage in speaking up, voicing concern, and presenting their request for inclusion. I cherish and hold dear our conversations around the simple proposition that their children feel a sense of belonging while in my care. The stories of oppression that families have shared with me during my time at Mountainview will guide my social justice practices for the remainder of my career.

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Acronyms

ABCD (Asset Based Community Development)

BCPVPA (British Columbia Principals and Vice Principals Association)

CCRJ (Central Community Restorative Justice)

CPSD (Central Public School District)

CRP (Culturally Responsive Practice)

ELL (English Language Learners)

MOE (Ministry of Education)

NIC (Network Improvement Community)

OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development)

OIP (Organizational Improvement Plan)

PDSA (Plan Do Study Act)

POP (Problem of Practice)

SCT (Social Constructivism Theory)

TPC (Theory of Planned Change)

Chapter One: The Problem

Mountainview Elementary School presents a significant problem of practice concerning fundamental issues of equity and social justice. In this organizational improvement plan (OIP) I address the need to implement changes at the school for the benefit of all stakeholders—parents, students, and staff. The changes I propose will remedy a serious misalignment in values, practices, and philosophies between the school's current state and the school board's vision of equitable, inclusive, and socially just educational practice. Historically catering exclusively to a conservative, White, upper-middle class demographic, Mountainview Elementary has, over 26 years, undergone a radical demographic shift. Formerly comprised of more than 90% White families, Mountainview is now comprised of 90% South Asian families ([Mountainview, 2021]), and finds itself caught up in political and socio-cultural reforms relevant to that demographic. Mountainview's inability—or refusal—to change its educational practices, however, has marginalized the South Asian families.

To understand and address the marginalization of the South Asian community at Mountainview I will describe Mountainview's historical context and current readiness for change as well as the changing political landscape of the school district. I will articulate a leadership approach and conceptual framework that I believe are fundamental to solving the problems at Mountainview. Further, I will present three lines of inquiry that surround this problem of practice and recommend solution-focused research that might help move the school toward developing an equitable and inclusive environment. Finally, to ensure optimal chances for success in this endeavour, I will incorporate four strategies: recognizing bias, collaborating with stakeholders, monitoring the change as it occurs, and articulating future considerations.

Organizational Context

Understanding the organizational context of Mountainview Elementary requires attention to its origins, to the broader community and its changing socio-cultural ethnicities, and to the school board that must meet the needs of a diversifying community. These elements have created a situation in which an elementary school is caught between competing forces—between a staff determined to preserve the status quo and the school board’s policy on equity and inclusivity.

Central Public School District (CPSD) is located in a highly conservative and highly religious region of British Columbia. In the mid 1990s, 75% of CPSD's community identified as English speaking and 64% as Christian (Government of Canada, 2021). The public school system's secularism, however, constituted, for many of those families, a disconnect of values between school and home (Gianesin & Bonaker, 2003; Glenn, 2018; Hyers & Hyer, 2008; Shekitka, 2022), a disconnect which resulted in many families gravitating toward the private system. Other traditional beliefs and values certainly also played a role in that gravitation—the belief, for example, that parents are entitled to more choice in the curriculum than is permitted by secular requirements for a consistent curriculum amongst public schools, and to the freedom to 'shop around' and find schools that closely align with family values (Cholbi, 2014; Glenn, 2018). Greater family involvement in school decisions and less involvement of government and school board politics are significant components of the community’s conservative ethos which holds that families should have authentic involvement in their children's education and primary say about school programming (Gianesin et al., 2003; Glenn, 2018; Shekitka, 2022). In the early 1990s, then, CPSD faced significant enrollment loss because of rising community interest in a private Christian education system. Because each student represents a dollar value, significant enrollment loss had negative fiscal ramifications for CPSD's overall operations. Therefore,

CPSD needed to respond to the espoused beliefs of its solidly conservative, faith-based families or experience further enrolment losses. To address the issue of declining enrolment and fiscal losses simultaneously and respond to the political and religious dynamics of the larger community, CPSD created Mountainview Elementary School in the mid 90s.

Structured similarly to private schools, Mountainview was conceived as an option in the public school system for families wanting a private school experience—in particular, the experience of exclusive registration processes and attendance requirements, school uniforms, and embedded values reflective of the conservative, religious community—but without high tuition costs. Mountainview was CPSD's attempt to reflect those views of public education by offering a choice among schools, shared fundamentals (non-negotiables within a functional school), and the inclusion of families in organizational processes (Boerema, 2006; Glenn, 2018).

In 1995, Mountainview, espousing many of the conservative values characteristic of private schools, opened its doors. Requiring 'Parents to be Partners' in the school's decision-making ([Mountainview, 2021]), returning to traditional methods of stand-and-deliver instruction, and laying out strict discipline policies in the student's code of conduct and organizational mission statement resulted in substantial interest on the part of the community in this new school. Additionally, Mountainview promoted an exclusive, elitist ethos that further appealed to conservative Christian families: The school was geographically somewhat isolated on the outskirts of the community, offered no transportation services, and instituted in-person registration requirements, features that effectively discouraged all but the most committed and economically advantaged families from attending. Because registration had to be done in person, families who did not own a vehicle were forced to camp on the school grounds for several days to register their children. Only those families who could navigate the registration process could

secure a spot at Mountainview. All these processes added to the exclusive ethos surrounding Mountainview and ensured that only a majority of conservative, White families could attend.

Between 1995 and 2008, Mountainview was served by three principals, each from the private system. These principals reinforced private school leadership expectations (Ghavifekr & Ramzy, 2020); Hoyer & Sparks, 2017): zero-tolerance approaches to student behaviour, more time focussed on accommodating parental voices and less time on interactions with students, and limited teacher autonomy through direct oversight of all curricula, oversight that ensured consistency in teaching activities and lessons at each grade. The broader community during these years, however, was experiencing a gradual demographic and socio-political transition. By 2011 an influx of immigrant families, primarily from South Asia, accounted for 22% of the total population (Government of Canada, 2021); ten years prior, this demographic had been less than 10% (Government of Canada, 2021). Likewise, although the community remained a conservative district, increasingly liberalized views in favour of supporting immigrant families' socio-cultural and socioeconomic welfare were emerging (Hyers & Hyers, 2008; Maloberti, 2011). As many immigrant families had children in the school system, CPSD needed to adjust and incorporate more liberalized values to meet the needs of the changing socio-cultural dynamic.

By 2012, the CPSD board's vision had evolved to emphasize, in all its schools, liberal ideologies—equity, inclusivity, and socially just approaches to education, ideologies that were articulated in the board's mission statement ([CPSD], 2021). This new vision directly affected the schools, focusing them on inclusive education and support for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds, and leaving no room for exemptions at the school level. Mountainview, however, had been established exclusively within a conservative sociopolitical framework. The board's new liberalized requirements challenged the very foundation of

Mountainview's policies and its staff and family ideologies, and Mountainview lost much of its exclusivity. A change in registration processes and district transportation guidelines made it possible for families from across the district to enroll, and within six years Mountainview's clientele changed from White to the now dominant 90% South Asian, Punjabi-speaking demographic, a significant portion of which identify as ELL. Families from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and students with disabilities were also able to enroll. Yet, while processes governing who could attend Mountainview changed as the families changed, many of the staff, educational and organizational practices, and school expectations remained.

Early administrations at Mountainview had used strict approaches to behaviour that aligned with conservative parental expectations; indeed, a belief still exists among the tenured staff that punitive measures to rectify student behaviour must continue. Rather than use culturally appropriate methods such as teachable moments (Ladson-Billings, 1995) to address behaviour, expectations that students be suspended or removed from class, regardless of the severity of their infractions, continue. Likewise, requirements around high parental involvement have not changed, even though language poses a significant barrier to such involvement for many families. As well, both parents in many families work full-time jobs, and several lack adequate transportation to visit Mountainview making the ability to attend meetings at a teacher's request challenging. Lack of change in policies such as these exacerbates the disconnect in expectations between Mountainview's conservative approaches to education and the families it now serves.

Continued adherence to Mountainview's old norms and espoused beliefs, and to its original vision and mission statements, has made Mountainview's transition to inclusivity and equity—to the honouring of culturally responsive practices—a challenge for new and tenured staff and the school's remaining families. Rather than adopting culturally responsive practices,

the school remains politically and pedagogically unchanged in its outdated structures and practices which appeal to a homogeneous population that no longer comprises the demographic majority (Omodan & Tsotetsi, 2020). Further, given its conservative penchant for resisting socially progressive change (White, Kinney, Danek Smith, & Harben, 2019), Mountainview's political views, dating from the 1990s, now serve as a new problem for the district.

Indeed, the same processes that made Mountainview successful and addressed CPSD's declining enrolment challenges 26 years ago are now problematic for CPSD. Should Mountainview fail to adopt inclusive and culturally responsive practices to meet the needs of its current demographic, the school will find itself in direct opposition to CPSD's vision of inclusion and equity for all learners. Even more problematically, the school now serves as an example of institutionalized racism in the public education system. While globalization—the integration of different knowledge bases and educational systems worldwide (Godwin, 2015)—began to develop in the broader community through an influx of newcomers, Mountainview remained firmly entrenched in Eurocentric approaches that evoke a sense of superiority over other cultures and languages (Gunduz, 2013; Utt, 2018).). By refusing to change practices and integrate programming reflective of the South Asian community, Mountainview demonstrates its preference for Eurocentric policies that reinforce White privilege and power.

Leadership Position and Lens Statement

As the principal at Mountainview, I am clear in my belief that the school requires an articulation of the tenets of culturally responsive practice in order to develop new understandings and approaches to education that better align with the needs of our South Asian students and their families. I believe the staff must adopt new educational pedagogies that are inclusive of

cultural diversity, pedagogies that challenge the staff's current subscription to the social ideologies of a conservative, White ethos (Glimpse & Ford, 2010).

Ladson-Billings (1995) developed the notion of culturally responsive practices (CRP) for schools. Her studies highlight several gaps facing marginalized students in Western, Eurocentric education systems, primarily the absence of their cultures and lived experiences within curricula and school programming. This absence means these students cannot be optimally engaged with the school or with learning. To support students' diverse cultural needs, Ladson-Billings (1995) emphasized the importance of integrating their background knowledge into lessons. The brain is hard-wired, she claims, to connect new knowledge with previously learned knowledge; it is essential, therefore, to acknowledge culture throughout a student's education (Gil & Johnson, 2021; Jeynes, 2017; Klinger & Solano-Flores, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995). When teachers attend to their diverse students' background knowledge, CRP results in an increase in learning—primarily because educators move away from a deficit mindset and focus on the students' assets and the knowledge they bring with them to school. This mindset helps teachers develop student-centered instruction, thus empowering marginalized students to take ownership of their learning. CRP also provides opportunities for the school to meet its learners' needs more succinctly. It forces staff to consider their own implicit biases toward race, culture, and languages, and how a lack of understanding of these elements further marginalizes non-white students. Reflecting different cultures in classrooms and school programming builds on the cultural competence of the learners. Students become more tolerant of others as they see how unique each culture is and the strengths that diverse cultures provide to society. Finally, in promoting CRP, students feel empowered and valued at school and engage in optimal learning experiences (Gil & Johnson, 2021; Jeynes, 2017; Klinger & Solano-Flores, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Working within Social Constructivism Theory

Developing an inclusive environment that promotes culturally responsive practices underpins my approach to education, an approach that lies within social constructivism theory (SCT). Social constructivism theorizes that the social norms and understandings we develop derive from our collective experience of the culture and society in which we operate. Knowledge is not simply an individual achievement; it is influenced by and develops as a consequence of interactions with community members (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera, Milne, Teunissen, Lingard, & Watling, 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015). The idea of shared collective knowledge is crucial to understanding organizational behaviour at Mountainview.

Theoretically, in globalized communities where religion, culture, language, and socio-economics interact, individual interpretations of others are deconstructed and reconstructed to form new knowledge of the world collectively, reducing ignorance while building tolerance toward others. Members, interacting, realize there is no one universal truth to social differences but that, instead, truth is subjective (North, 2016; Sterian & Macanu, 2016). In homogeneous communities and organizations such as Mountainview in its earliest years, where no divergence in political and cultural knowledge exists, ignorance of the world and others is reinforced through White privilege and situational power (Glimps & Ford, 2010), and biases, assumptions, and misunderstandings toward other cultures remain entrenched. Without opposing views that challenge their beliefs, members do not question, deconstruct, or reconstruct new knowledge of the world around them, and oppressive societal hierarchies remain (Omodan & Tsotetsi, 2020).

Given Mountainview's history, it is easy to see the disconnect between deeply embedded Eurocentric, White, conservative beliefs and the needs of the marginalized demographic. The educational views of some staff align with the conventional framework, and they strive to

maintain traditional norms and behaviours that are central to Eurocentrism while resisting change (White et al., 2019). Adopting the fundamental underpinning of social constructivism, however, means that new knowledge could be gained in collaboration with the South Asian community and previously established notions disrupted. Thus, staff members could construct a new understanding of socio-cultural differences and learn to connect with and reflect South Asian values at school (Bereiter, 1994; Walker et al., 2015). Learning from and with each other are hallmarks of social constructivism. Mountainview has an opportunity to advance and become culturally responsive if it can learn to engage with the South Asian families and various South Asian resources within the broader municipality.

Given the type of change I aim to accomplish at Mountainview, I must lead the school openly and transparently, and reduce barriers between staff, stakeholders, and school leadership while increasing trust and creating a more positive environment for everyone (Gavin, 2019; Hickey, Flaherty, & McNamara, 2022). Such leadership requires engaging in meaningful, authentic, and ethical interactions with stakeholders and including their voices in decision-making processes. Thus, I have chosen to use authentic and distributed leadership approaches which are consistent with my leadership philosophy of leading with integrity while encouraging others to be involved in decisions that impact the school. These leadership approaches align with the tenets of social constructivism in that they can create new understandings of society through their encouragement of meaningful relationships that build on the shared knowledge, skills, and perspectives of the various participants within organizations (Goksoy, 2016).

My Agency in the Change Process

As the school principal, I am guided in my practice by the guidelines, rules, and laws of the BC Schools Act, the Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines, BC Teachers Regulation

Branch standards, and CPSD's school policies. Each of these regulatory bodies provides administrators with procedures intended to ensure equitable and inclusive work expectations for employees while at the same time holding staff accountable for their professional duties in educating and caring for students. At the local level, leaders are committed to ensuring the district's vision and academic standards are adhered to at each school. In addition, I must monitor my own actions per the BC Principals and Vice Principals Leadership standards (BCPVPA, 2022) that outline responsibilities of ethical, instructional, relational, and organizational leadership.

I have over twenty years of public education experience in varying capacities, including as an educational assistant, teacher, counselor, vice-principal, and principal. Each level of practice provided me opportunities to engage in work as a change leader, work that required me to act in the best interests of some of the most vulnerable members of the system. Having witnessed the systemic barriers to inclusion that many marginalized communities continue to face—barriers caused by racism, power hierarchies, and bias—I have developed a compassionate and ethical leadership stance about creating inclusive environments.

My experiences have contributed to the development of my liberal philosophy of education. Godwin (2015) articulates three guiding principles for liberal education—that it i) is multidisciplinary, providing broad exposure to arts, humanities, social and natural sciences; ii) favours general education, incorporating in curriculum a broad view of the world that is meaningful to all students; and iii) strives to engrain fundamental skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, analysis, communication, and global citizenship, and foster a sense of social responsibility including responsibility for the collective welfare of society. Liberal education embodies elements of social constructivism, including constructivism's vested interest in

supporting all citizens by reducing barriers to inclusivity through collective efforts to incorporate diverse communal knowledge (Chandler & Teckchandani, 2015). Additionally, a liberal approach to supporting immigrant families will disrupt staff beliefs in traditional absolutes concerning social behaviour. This disruption should help to demonstrate that rigid approaches to governance and education do not work with immigrant communities (Aleman & Salkever, 2001; Entigar, 2021).

Senge (2006) and Bukodi (2017) believe that for lasting change to occur, leaders must be lifelong learners and must support the development of partnerships with 'others' in the system. My experience with students and families who have endured varying degrees of racism, marginalization, and discrimination has helped me understand the importance of reducing the coercive systems at Mountainview (Schein, 2017). Voices representative of the South Asian community are currently absent. To make a difference at Mountainview, I must open communication with all stakeholders and listen to the peripheral voices in the system (Senge, 2006). Further, I must embrace all voices during change processes. Doing so will help to ensure ethical, inclusive, and equitable outcomes for all stakeholders while also offering different perspectives on society and education, and an understanding of how others view the world around them—all of which is paramount in social constructivist theory.

Finally, for leaders to be effective at driving social change, they must possess "integrity, motivation, drive, emotional intelligence, and knowledge of the problem" (Santhidran, Chandran, & Borromeo, p. 351, 2013). Fortunately, my experience has given me the skills needed to address the dilemmas facing marginalized communities. I also possess relevant stories that may help stakeholders understand the importance of changing practices and becoming more inclusive and culturally responsive. Sharing personal stories of marginalized communal struggles and their

educational journeys lessens hierarchical views of leadership. Stories provide a level of humanness that can build connections between leaders and followers (Senge, 2006). Such connections are critical components in developing trust and dialogue and are essential in deconstructing old belief systems while reconstructing new social understandings of others (North, 2016).

Leadership Lens

Historically, leadership approaches at Mountainview have been authoritarian, a style that demands compliance and absolute obedience from subordinate members of an organization (Chang et al., 2021). It stifles trust, disempowers members, and precludes members from engaging in creative and risky but potentially productive struggles. A top-down approach to management at Mountainview provided conservative parents with the leadership they desired but did not allow open dialogue with stakeholders about organizational change. As a result, transparency in decision-making did not exist or was greatly limited, and decisions impacting school programming and educational practices were met with skepticism, fear, anxiety, or resistance (Deszca, Ingols, & Cawsey, 2020). This means, unfortunately, that the ambitions of the small number of Mountainview staff who recognized a need to change were smothered by resistant staff and administration. It is now my responsibility, as principal at Mountainview, to counter the resistance that exists within the school and move the school and the staff forward. I must adopt approaches to leadership that will include input from all stakeholders and, at the same time, be responsive to the school's needs and move beyond past leadership practices (Huber, 2004; Jarrott, 2022). I propose, therefore, to adopt both authentic and distributed leadership approaches as part of my plan for organizational change. Both approaches are driven by the same guiding principle: ethics.

Ethics

A commitment to ethics is critical to reducing barriers and enhancing trust. Ethical leadership responds appropriately to all challenges that arise, demonstrates care for others, and intentionally disrupts structures and policies that lead to inequities by focusing on honesty, justice, respect, community, and transparency (Kuenzi, Mayer, & Greenbaum, 2018; Paterson & Huang, 2019; Richardson, 2012). Pertinent to the context at Mountainview and to the spirit of social constructivism, ethics place community and justice at the center of decision-making. Northouse (2019) argues that leaders struggle with being ethical because it requires them to listen and be tolerant of differences in beliefs and values of stakeholders. Yet ethics are integral to deconstructing Mountainview's former knowledge and to providing space for learning and constructing new ideas that benefit the school community. Given Mountainview's complexities, considerable frustration and emotion may arise among those who resist change. I must not, however, let my ethical values be undermined. I must remain faithful to my convictions about equity; failing to do so would be a loss of moral character (Paterson et al., 2019).

Authentic Leadership

Authentic leadership connects a variety of beliefs, assumptions, and human values that speak to the ethical, integral, and moral bases of leadership practices (Duignan, 2014; Gavin, 2019; Northouse, 2019). Leaders who possess certain qualities—who demonstrate vulnerability and show their true selves, who understand the humanistic needs of the organization and lead change with the expectation of being more equitable—can lift an organization's morale. At the same time, remaining true to one's values is an essential attribute of authentic leadership. Given the nature of the disconnect between Mountainview and the needs of the South Asian community, authentic leadership will be critical to reducing barriers to inclusive, equitable, and

culturally responsive practices. Further, authentic leadership is characterised by qualities that underlie social constructivism: self-awareness, an internalized moral perspective, balanced processing, and relational transparency (Hickey et al., 2022; Gavin, 2019; Northouse, 2019). My educational experience will enable me to lead Mountainview with authenticity by building connections with the community, increasing awareness of the discrimination that marginalized communities face, and dismantling the former authoritarian approach to management by inviting collaborative dialogue with all stakeholders.

Distributed Leadership

Research shows that when staff are active participants in the change process and see their feedback incorporated into the organizational structure and into decision-making, they tend to have more trust and respect for the leader, and more willingness to cooperate (Hickey et al., 2022; Fullan, 2015). This process, known as distributed leadership, creates a productive environment in which ideas are valued rather than discouraged (King & Stevenson, 2017; Hickey et al., 2022). It generates trust and an openness to supporting school-wide initiatives requiring change. While the organization continues to be led by a defined leader, distributed leadership provides individual staff the autonomy and capacity to pursue change initiatives that are consistent with organizational goals while at the same time requiring them to retain their accountability to the organization and primary leader (King & Stevenson, 2017; Northouse, 2019). In that distributed leadership is based on the group's collective knowledge and not on that of an individual, this approach is directly correlated to social constructivism. Further, distributed leadership reduces previously established hierarchies and distrust between staff and leaders. As is the case with authentic leadership, trust is required to engage in collaborative practices with

stakeholders. This approach to leadership, therefore, within a context of top-down demand and control processes, takes significant time to develop.

Framing the Problem of Practice

History and Current State of Mountainview

CPSD experienced significant success in enhancing school enrollment by establishing Mountainview Elementary School in 1995 to cater to a White, conservative, Eurocentric community, success that created a significant power imbalance in favour of Whiteness at Mountainview. "Whiteness" refers to the strategic implementation in organizations of implicitly biased structures that maintain the status quo and favour the power and privilege of White people over other groups (Endres & Gould, 2009; Lynch, 2009; Shah, 2022). Glimps & Ford (2010) argue that White privilege and power continue to dominate schools and keep marginalized communities oppressed in part through a considerable disconnect between the makeup of the student population and the population of educators. A 2009 study indicated that nearly 90% of North American teachers were of European ancestry and identified as middle-class (Cushner, McClelland, & Safford, 2009); Mountainview's staffing composition is no exception. Yet, for many staff, the power imbalance remains invisible; the staff remain unaware that they comprise a dominant group that exacerbates institutional racism. Years of monolithic, White views of others have shaped their belief that all cultures share their values, and South Asian families who send their children to Mountainview are expected to adhere to the school's values.

Exacerbating matters at Mountainview are the top-down authoritarian leadership approaches used by previous administrations. While a top-down leadership style once appealed to the conservative base at Mountainview because it promoted rigid command-and-control policies in discipline and school structure, it is not a practical, culturally responsive way to lead a

diverse organization (Davis, 2018; Zheng, Graham, Farh, & Huang, 2019). Authoritarian leadership promotes closed systems in which decision-making rests solely on the primary leader. Creativity and opportunity for staff and families to have a voice in school direction and engage in problem-solving are stifled. Additionally, while the necessity for change may appear evident to some members of the organization, their ability to promote change from within is hindered by the leader's bias and limited willingness to engage with change initiatives (Barnett, 2018; Davis, 2018; Du, Li, & Luo, 2020). Authoritarian leadership has prevented Mountainview from adapting to shifting market forces and demographic changes, and from embarking on the kind of change that would serve the interests of all stakeholders (Walker & Soule, 2017). A leadership history of White principals and a lack of attention to matters of cultural diversity may be considered evidence that bias and Whiteness have prevented the school from becoming more inclusive and reflective of the South Asian demographic.

Parents and families are less inclined to be involved with a school if their culture is not represented or valued through programming (Gil & Johnson, 2021; Goodwin & King, 2002; Khalifa, Gooden, & Davis, 2016). Relationships between schools and their families and communities influence cultural reform by reducing barriers to inclusivity and equity (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018; Jeynes, 2017; King & Goodwin, 2002; Walker & Soule, 2017). No connection currently exists between Mountainview and the broader South Asian community that could support the diverse needs of Mountainview's families and simultaneously increase the cultural perspectives of the staff. Mountainview recognizes Christian holidays such as Christmas and Easter but makes no attempt to recognize or integrate important South Asian cultural events such as Diwali and Vaisakhi. Although the BC Ministry of Education deems it essential for teachers to incorporate aspects of children's culture, language, and religion into daily instruction and to

incorporate and build upon knowledge of their students' family backgrounds, heritages, languages, beliefs, and perspectives (Ministry of Education, 2022), I have observed little evidence of such incorporation in classrooms or activities at Mountainview.

Language policies are another issue because Mountainview has a significant number of English language learners (ELLs). Only three of the school's 30 staff members can communicate with the families of those children in their own language. The lack of South Asian representation on the staff essentially constitutes a coercive practice that creates an expectation of conformity (Schein, 2017) and that contributes to the school's institutionalized racism. Further, school policy requires that all students speak English while at school. Children who do not adhere to this policy are reprimanded. ELL students, however, make stronger connections to their learning when allowed to talk in both their native language and English (Fredericks & Warriner, 2016). ELL students also require instruction on the vocabulary used in their lessons—on the concepts of addition and subtraction, for example, as well as on math procedures. Such strategies, which would enable ELL students to make the cognitive connections required for deeper learning (Fredericks & Warriner, 2016; Kaplan, 2019), are lacking at Mountainview. Reinforcing an English-only expectation is not in the best interest of the students, serves as a detriment to learning, and illustrates an inequitable and socially unjust practice that needs correcting. Such policies impact and influence both individual and collective behaviour while remaining invisible to the dominant group (Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015).

Inclusive practices are culturally determined and shape how students learn and make sense of their knowledge (Haines et al., 2015; Klinger & Solano-Flores, 2007; Sigstad, Buli-Holmberg, & Morken, 2021). Unfortunately, the change that is required at Mountainview is opposite to the corporate culture view that focuses on achieving excellence. Mountainview

continues to focus on academic rigor and performance outcomes while failing to adopt culturally responsive teaching strategies that could enhance overall student achievement (per Ladson-Billings, 1995). A focus on academic rigor and excellence creates a significant disconnect between practice and culturally responsive practices.

Social constructivism theory helps explain why schools such as Mountainview, with their static organizational beliefs, fail to recognize the need to change and adopt practices that better serve the diverse needs of their students. Shared values and beliefs have not been challenged ideologically by leadership, and no substantial changes in staffing have occurred over the years. Dominant conservative views of a White society continue to dictate the organizational norms of the school regardless of the complete change that has taken place in the demographic composition of the larger community.

Focussing the Problem of Practice

The problem of practice I attempt to address in this organizational improvement plan, therefore, is the disconnect between Mountainview's current programming and teaching practices—the White, Eurocentric, conservative approach to education that inhibits South Asian students and families from seeing their culture reflected at school—and the inclusive programming, teaching practices, and environment that is needed to better serve South Asian students and provide opportunities for them to develop a more profound sense of self at school. Also lacking at Mountainview is family involvement and collaboration between home and school that could improve school programming and learning outcomes for students (Jeynes, 2017). Remediation of these gaps must ensure all members of the school community feel a sense of the kind of belonging that can be created when they see their culture reflected in the school's operation. In short, having a school demographic comprising the most significant visible

minority in Canada (Islam, Khanlou, & Tamim, 2014) necessitates social, racial, and cultural reform at Mountainview.

The Concept of Social Justice

Social justice theory holds that individual members of a society should have equal rights and opportunities afforded to them by society and, congruently, that power held by the dominant peoples or organizations in society should be redistributed to marginalized individuals to enhance their ways of living (Kent State, 2020; Theoharis, 2007; Wang, 2018). Underlying social justice are five pillars: access to resources, equity, diversity, participation, and human rights. Here I comment briefly on issues at Mountainview in terms of each of these pillars.

Access to resources: CPSD appears intentionally to have restricted the access of marginalized families to Mountainview by locating the school on the outskirts of the school district and, between 1995 and 2012, failing to provide transportation to the school. Other exclusive practices at Mountainview, such as a requirement for in-person registration, also posed significant barriers to families who could not drive their children to school or otherwise arrange transportation for them.

Equity and diversity: Equity in education for a diverse demographic requires equitable and diverse curricula and teaching practices—but such programming has been absent from Mountainview which adheres to a Eurocentric view of knowledge and education. Very few of the staff at Mountainview can communicate with the parents of their students in the parents' own language. The ability of South Asian parents to engage with their children's teachers, and with their children's learning, is thereby dramatically limited.

Participation: Social justice requires that individuals have both an opportunity for their voices to be heard on policy matters and a platform from which to speak. Again, the inability of

staff at Mountainview to communicate in the language of the South Asian families they serve and their lack of interest in engaging with community organizations amounts to an exclusionary practice that benefits White stakeholders (Kent State, 2020; Theoharis, 2007; Wang, 2018).

Human rights: Mountainview does not overtly violate this fifth pillar of social justice. Mountainview's violation of the other four pillars, however, and its perpetuation of Eurocentric, biased, and racist practices concerning South Asian families and their children at Mountainview, is a violation of social justice ethics.

Guiding Questions Emerging from the Problem of Practice

The focus of my problem of practice is the significant disconnect between Mountainview's Eurocentric beliefs and practices and the culturally inclusive practices the school's demographics require. In analyzing this issue, I will use three lines of inquiry that focus on three interconnected factors: the staff's failure to use culturally responsive pedagogy; the institutional racism at Mountainview that perpetuates barriers to cultural equity; and the importance of understanding how implicit bias governs practice.

Incorporating Culturally Responsive Practice

Guiding Question One

Mountainview's failure to recognize the cultural identity of the South Asian demographic and to reflect that identity within school programming means that South Asian students can not be as receptive to their learning environment as they might otherwise be (Brunner, 2017). The first guiding question, therefore, is: What impact, if any, will embedding culturally responsive practices into school programming and teacher practices have on student learning and the engagement of families at Mountainview?

Minority families are more inclined to be involved in their children's learning when they can bond over shared values with the school (McConnell & Kubina, 2014). Schools that promote family involvement and develop policies around cultural identity have a positive impact on family sentiment toward the school (Malinen & Roberts-Jeffers, 2019) and on increasing family participation in their children's learning and school engagement. The challenge for Mountainview will be to identify the cultural inequities and practices that inhibit equitable experiences for students and families. It is worth noting, however, that Gent (2017) believes complete cultural parity in schools is impossible to achieve—that one culture will always remain dominant. This notion represents a significant challenge to creating an environment at Mountainview that values diversity.

Incorporating Stakeholder Voice and Knowledge Through Community Engagement

Guiding Question Two

Whiteness and a Eurocentric mentality promote institutional racism at Mountainview. My second guiding question, therefore, asks how Mountainview can address this institutional racism and instead reflect South Asian culture in appropriate ways.

Malinen & Roberts-Jeffers (2019) have shown that marginalized families have a history in public education of having little to no sense of belonging at school and of feeling inferior or disparaged by school staff and families of the dominant culture. The underrepresentation of South Asian parents on the parent advisory committee and the inability of South Asian parents to communicate effectively with their children's teachers may be a result of such feelings at Mountainview. Indeed, marginalized families often refuse to participate in opportunities to improve school organizational culture because they feel they have nothing to offer, or fear being negatively judged by educators (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018). A further barrier to making

changes to reflect the South Asian culture at Mountainview resides in the challenge of finding shared values with families (Malinen & Roberts-Jeffers, 2019) and then incorporating them at the school. Traditionally, schools inform families of the school's values as reflected in school policies; rarely do schools consult families while developing those policies. Inequitable power relations are thus perpetuated via what constitutes yet another coercive practice (Carr & Klassen, 1997; Schein, 2017).

Recognizing Underlying Assumptions and Implicit Bias

Guiding Question Three

Menon et al. (2021) discuss the need to decolonize public education and thereby reduce Westernized interpretations of others while increasing awareness of diverse cultures in classroom pedagogy. They argue that staff must first understand the underlying assumptions and implicit biases embedded in curricula and in teaching practice. Staff must also understand that they may be unaware of the prejudices and stereotypes they hold of other cultures and that they probably continue to reinforce subconscious prejudices throughout their daily actions (Green & Hagiwara, 2020). Unpacking assumptions about marginalized families requires significant support and collective teacher efficacy. However, because of past top-down leadership—which presumed to hold the sole positionality of decision-maker at Mountainview, and because collaboration has not been a priority, the staff lacks understanding of collaborative practices and processes that promote open and constructive dialogue—aimed at improving school culture. Whole school practices to identify bias have, therefore, been compromised (Burleigh et al., 2020) leading to a staff unable to provide feedback regarding direction, policies, and procedures. The third guiding question, therefore, asks: Will working collectively as a staff to identify bias create an awareness of how implicit understandings of various cultures influence practice, particularly how these

understandings continue to marginalize the South Asian students and their families at Mountainview?

Leadership Focussed Vision for Change

Present State of Mountainview

Mountainview's staff is not yet fluent in collaborating and establishing the collective teacher efficacy needed to move toward school improvement (Fullan, 2015). Internal power dynamics, however, have stifled collaborative growth (Deszca et al., 2020) and reduced distributed leadership opportunities for staff, thereby reducing the development of agency and ownership of change (King & Stevenson, 2017). Blame rests with previous leadership at Mountainview, leadership that did not prioritize bias mitigation or engage in meaningful collaborative discussion around school vision and programming. By focussing solely on maintaining the status quo and rigid control (Dillon & Bourke, 2016) conservative, top-down leadership approaches have rendered Mountainview impotent in promoting inclusive and equitable practices.

A further deficiency at Mountainview is its lack of culturally relevant teaching strategies and resources. Mountainview's history indicates that significant work is required here. Although it could do so, the school does not integrate Punjabi via digital media or other interactive means (Jeynes, 2017). Failing to critique its current systems and invest in appropriate resources that incorporate cultural identity for students within classrooms (Sampson, 2019) widens the gap between the school and the families and students it serves. The absence of culturally relevant practices results in a curriculum that has yet to honor and incorporate aspects of South Asian culture and that has yet to make deeper connections for student learning.

Finally, Burleigh et al. (2020) state that implicit bias on the part of teachers is a significant barrier to providing culturally responsive practices and meeting the needs of their students and families. Indeed, implicit bias is deeply ingrained in human behaviour (Bonini & Matias, 2021). Western bias towards minorities often manifests as lack of respect for other cultures and many teachers are not only unfamiliar with the cultural norms of other social groups, they hold negative views of those communities (McClure et al., 2017). As principal, I will find working with staff to understand bias a challenging undertaking. Unless the staff can recognize their biases, however, diversity issues at Mountainview, including the alienation of families, will continue (Harrison-Bernard, Augustus-Wallace, Souza-Smith, Tsien, Casey, & Gunaldo, 2020).

Change Drivers

CPSD created an equity framework that will serve as a significant change driver for Mountainview. The framework consists of four components: (a) addressing structural deficits such as oppression caused by policies, practices, and resource allocation; (b) analyzing self through introspection about how personal bias, beliefs, and assumptions guide practice; (c) analyzing interpersonal connections to help build connectedness to self, school, and others; and (d) challenging pedagogical practices to include student backgrounds and histories in daily curriculum ([CPSD, 2021]).

Embedded in the CPSD framework is a concept Fullan (2021) refers to as social intelligence. Social intelligence enables a staff within an organization to work together to solve intricate social problems—in the case of Mountainview by recognizing social injustices. Within the dissidence between school structure and family needs at Mountainview, there is room for me to foster an environment that will encourage staff to collectively challenge practices that are in opposition to CPSD's equity framework. Fullan (2021) argues that increasing social intelligence

reduces barriers caused by individualistic approaches to education and enhances organizational attitudes as teachers grow in understanding and tolerance of their colleagues' views. Indeed, understanding past leadership practices and the social dynamics of Mountainview requires me to lead with a softer, more supportive approach that is conducive to the development of staff engagement (Riggio & Reichard, 2008) and the potential for collaboration amongst staff and families.

Another change driver at Mountainview will involve a shift from an academic achievement focus to a focus on the whole child. Well-being (Fullan, 2021) is a notion that emphasizes a child's socio-emotional and cultural background, a notion that can be a significant driver toward cultural equity in a school. Students learn best when they feel safe, respected, valued, cared for, and have a sense of meaning in their daily lives. Creating an environment that promotes these feelings and engages students in learning relevant to their lives will require meaningful, experiential learning activities that enhance well-being (Fullan, 2021). Aside from being good practice, such learning activities are mandated by the BC curriculum under the personal and social core competency (Ministry of Education, 2021). The curriculum requires attention to children's lived experiences and requires teachers to embed elements of children's lives—culture, religion, self-identity—into their teaching.

Finally, perhaps the most obvious change driver for Mountainview is the demographic itself. Mountainview has moral, socially just, and ethical obligations to change past practices that appealed to White families but now represent institutionalized racism. Meeting the needs of current students and families is the hallmark of school connectedness and social justice requirements to be inclusive of all community members (Frick et al., 2010; Wang, 2018). Fostering a school culture that honors feedback from stakeholders and facilitates collaborative

practices is integral to moving forward (Fullan, 2021). Failure to adjust will continue to act as a barrier to inclusivity.

Prioritized Areas for Change

To adequately address my problem of practice, areas requiring change must be prioritized. Engaging in meaningful dialogue with parents around their views of education, their culture, and their expectations of Mountainview will be a critical first step. Parents play an essential part in their children's learning and their voices must be more than peripheral (Hornby & Blackwell, 2018; King & Goodwin, 2002; Senge, 2006). To involve parents' voices, Mountainview must engage district and community services for support in acquiring linguistic interpreters. Doing so will make it possible for the school to communicate in English and Punjabi both in speech and in writing, and will allow for effective meetings with parents and for dispensing information in both languages. Bridging the divide caused by different languages is essential to creating the consultative and collaborative practices with parents that are required for cultural reform (Crozier & Davies, 2007).

Deconstructing the former top-down authoritarian leadership at Mountainview is another important step. Prioritizing trust through shared decision-making processes is necessary if staff are to understand the need for change. Promoting the diversification of ideas and talent rather than assuming one person has all the answers is vital to this process (Dillon & Bourke, 2016). Parents, some school and district staff, and community organizations together possess the skills and knowledge needed to help Mountainview transition from its current Eurocentric state to one that is inclusive and culturally responsive. Leveraging the thinking of diverse groups through distributed leadership is a priority in leading change at Mountainview.

Because redundancy builds fluency (Deszca et al., 2020), staff meetings must be designed as professional development sessions to supplement other professional development opportunities for teachers. Culturally relevant curricula, pedagogy, and learning activities must be prioritized at these meetings which should include reviews of curricula that are inclusive of other cultures and world views. Addressing cultural inequities by focussing on curricula is a critical priority in moving toward cultural equity (Cultivating Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion in Education Environments, 2021).

Currently at Mountainview, implicit bias impedes progress toward inclusive practices. Staff must first be challenged to recognize their biases toward other cultures and, secondly, must understand how their biases inform their practice (Lypson & Sukhera, 2021). Many staff will be unaware of how their professional actions are discriminatory. Indeed, bias and bias mitigation issues are highly complex, and concrete ideas for changing discriminatory behaviour have not been identified (Lypson & Sukhera, 2021). Nevertheless, leading staff through a collective process that holds everyone accountable for taking discrimination seriously is required.

Future State Vision

My vision for Mountainview is that the school should be culturally responsive in its organizational structure and fully immersive in partnering with all stakeholders—staff, students, parents, and community organizations (Wyatt et al., 2020). In its early years, Mountainview successfully integrated stakeholder feedback which allowed it to grow into a reflection of family and community values. Although the cultural dynamic at Mountainview has changed, the ethical responsibility to create a sense of connectedness for all families remains. A return to this doctrine is part of my vision—because I have an ethical obligation to make critical and socially just

changes for the welfare of the families which my school serves (Frick et al., 2010; Furman, 2004).

My vision parallels that of Harrison et al. (2018)—that Mountainview include community programs to increase family and student connectedness while simultaneously educating staff about culturally responsive practices. Research has shown that including agencies such as community resources, restorative justice, and Gurdwaras enhances community values, cultural awareness, and social capital in school programming (Boyd et al., 2008; Fullan, 2021).

Readiness for Organizational Change

In analyzing a school's readiness for organizational change, it is essential to ask if a change is necessary. Deszca et al. (2020) state that asking this question is a vital starting point in determining a vision and outcome for the school. Mountainview's context and static nature suggest that a slow, well-articulated outline for change is critical; otherwise, individual resistance will overpower the change process (Hoogan & Coote, 2014; Lynch, 2012; Mierzwa & Mierzwa, 2021). Educating the staff about the need to develop a more inclusive educational pedagogy is an evolutionary process and one that must develop slowly. Resistance will be high because this type of change often evokes fear, distrust of leadership, defensiveness, and a need to preserve personal values (Samal & Chatterjee, 2020). Indeed, the top-down leadership approaches used in the past at Mountainview have already created a distrust of administration and a notable divide between leader and follower. Unfamiliarity with change means discomfort and resistance will be extensive (Schein, 2016)—and many staff at Mountainview lack experience with the change process. Finally, differing political views, some conservative and some liberal, have established within the school significant barriers to cultural responsiveness, barriers that are particularly evident in relation to restorative approaches to student behaviour.

Since Mountainview staff appear to a significant degree unfamiliar with the change process, I must lead with a compelling vision. Galbraith (2018) posits that most employees experience a loss of job satisfaction during change processes because of confusion around the purpose of the change, a particular issue when leaders are not clear or transparent about their vision for the organization. To avoid disenfranchising individuals who resist change, clearly articulating the reason for the change and identifying the change drivers and the approaches to be taken will help staff understand why a departure from past practices is required.

Addressing the capacity for change within an organization can be done by conducting an assessment such as that proposed by Deszca et al. (2020) who have designed a framework with six dimensions: previous experience with change, senior management support, the leader's credibility and supportive 'champions' on staff, willingness to change, reward systems, and the ability to measure changes. Each dimension has several descriptors to help the leader score the level of change readiness within that dimension. The overall scoring matrix produces scores between -25 and +50, with any final score above ten indicating that an organization is ready to implement change. Table 1.1 shows Mountainview's scores on each dimension, ranked highest to lowest.

Table 1.1

Mountainview's Readiness for Change

Credible leadership and change champions	+11
Willingness to change	+ 4
Ability to measure change	+ 2
Senior management support	+2
Reward systems	- 1
Previous experience with change	- 6
(Framework from Deszca et al., 2020)	

Mountainview's overall score on the Deszca evaluation tool is 12, indicating that it is in the lower band of change readiness. Provided these scores truly indicate Mountainview's change readiness, it seems appropriate to begin implementing the change process. Otherwise, Mountainview risks further marginalizing South Asian families (Samal & Chatterjee 2020; Deszca et al., 2020) and perpetuating policies and practices no longer tolerated by CPSD. Samal & Chatterjee (2020) identified four organizational change responses: radical, a one-time implementation meant to be transformational; creative, addressing a period of stagnation that threatens core properties (values) that were once appealing but are no longer; intermediate, necessary when core activities (routines) become threatened; and progressive, needed when an organization has had a lengthy period of stability but needs to change to accommodate external influences. In the case of Mountainview, external forces include the changing demographics and the CPSD board's vision. Given the status quo at Mountainview, the lengthy period of stability it has experienced, and its cultural/political dynamics, all four responses to change (per Samal & Chatterjee, 2020) will be required. However, because many of Mountainview's values and core properties are reflective of an era gone by, creative change is most pertinent. Mountainview must redefine itself and strive to meet the needs of its now dominant South Asian culture.

Given the high number of Punjabi-speaking families at Mountainview, staff must learn new communication methods and provide communication options other than English to accommodate these families. Emails, newsletters, signage, and so on must include both languages (English and Punjabi). Staff must no longer expect families to have received and understood their English-only messages. Changing core activities (habitual routines) will also be necessary to create an inclusive environment reflective of South Asian culture.

Finally, Mountainview's refusal to change over the years means there has been little adoption of progressive educational practices that would better meet the needs of the marginalized community. Attempts to change will meet significant resistance from demanding White parents and some staff who will resist liberal approaches inclusive of social justice and cultural reform. Therefore, I must move slowly to achieve the necessary changes.

On its readiness for change assessment, Mountainview scored +4 in terms of willingness to change. While low, this score indicates that a limited but important number of staff desire change. Of Mountainview's staff of 30, this group is comprised of eight people who can be considered change champions and who will be essential to successful implementation of my improvement plan. This core group understands the moral and ethical need for Mountainview to change its practices. They are aware of how current practices continue to marginalize the students they care about. They appear willing to help drive change to benefit all learners.

Internal and External Forces that Shape Change

Deszca et al. (2020) recognize that espoused beliefs that may inhibit the change process are heavily embedded within any organization. Changing the educational philosophies of staff stands to be one of the most challenging components of the whole change process, given how closely educational philosophies are connected to personal political views.

Changing teachers' student discipline practices will also be a challenge. Many teachers fail to consider what might be best for a child, instead defaulting to methods that produce instant results. Expectations that students conform to unrealistically strict school policies, zero tolerance of adverse behaviours, and punitive student discipline measures remain among the staff. Indeed, their customary responses pose significant resistance to change (Samal & Chatterjee 2020), in part because those disciplinary methods align with conservative policies against misbehaviour

within society (Brown et al., 2019; Ganesin et al., 2003). and because staff will need to learn new, culturally responsive discipline methods. Changing the lens through which individuals perceive appropriate discipline is vital in supporting students and families.

Three external sources of pressure are forcing change at Mountainview. The most obvious is the school's demographic itself. Creating an ethic of connectedness whereby marginalized families can see their cultures reflected within the building is critical for any school (Frick et al., 2010). Moving away from the Eurocentrism that appealed to the White upper-middle-class families that once made up the majority of Mountainview's demographic is not a choice but a necessity.

A second external source is the revised curriculum that was introduced in BC eight years ago. This curriculum requires a significant departure from traditional stand and deliver lecture approaches and heavily emphasizes child-centered teaching methods which foster curiosity and inquiry-based and cooperative learning. These mandated approaches to teaching leave no room for staff, administration, or those remaining conservative families at Mountainview to demand the use of traditional teaching practices. Should Mountainview staff ignore the ministerially mandated curriculum, they will be in violation of their obligations to their employer.

A final external influence affecting Mountainview is CPSD. The senior manager overseeing Mountainview reinforces my accountability as principal to align Mountainview with the board's vision. Weekly visits between us and updates on progress are now a routine. I am expected to report information and data to demonstrate that the school is moving toward implementing district expectations—to report, for example, on the approaches I am employing to engage with families, improve student achievement, and increase communication with families. Although CPSD is an external influence, their expectations support my efforts to resolve

approaches to discipline and ensure that all curriculum components are taught. However, while adhering to CPSD's direction there is an expectation that all families, regardless of ideology, continue to have confidence in the school their children attend.

Consequently, during the change process it will be important to remain cognizant that the remaining conservative families must continue to be afforded a sense of belonging at Mountainview. Adhering to certain conservative social and educational fundamentals and instilling responsibility, independence, and acceptance of hard work in children will be paramount to supporting these families. Pew Research Center's (2014) findings indicate that such fundamentals align with a majority of varying ideologies regarding child rearing. It will be essential, therefore, to articulate to all families, particularly the conservative families, that while the change occurring at Mountainview is necessary, their children's education will not suffer as a result. Encouraging conservative families to voice their concerns while at the same time educating them on the need to change will be critical in supporting them throughout the change process.

Chapter Summary

Since its inception in 1995, programming at Mountainview Elementary has been dominated by White, conservative, Eurocentric practices that preclude the institution of inclusive and equitable learning opportunities for all learners. At Mountainview, educational practice has long made it impossible for the dominant South Asian demographic to recognize its culture within school programming. The school embodies institutionalized racism through its perpetuation of practices that appealed to a once dominant, White demographic. Social constructivist theory can contribute to a better understanding of the social forces that hinder change at Mountainview and is utilized to explain Mountainview's situation while at the same

time providing a rationale for changing the social pedagogy. Three guiding questions are proposed to help transition the school away from exclusive, racist practices. These questions examine i) the lack of culturally responsive instruction and South Asian representation that inhibits optimum student learning; ii) the educator bias that prevents culturally responsive practice from occurring; and iii) the lack of community engagement that could promote inclusive and equitable practices for marginalized communities. To conclude the chapter, the results of a change readiness assessment of Mountainview are reported; these indicate the potential the school has for moving forward,

Chapter two includes a discussion of the steps required to plan and develop an organizational improvement plan for Mountainview. These steps include identifying leadership approaches to change, creating a framework for leading the change process, conducting a critical organizational analysis, providing solutions to address the problem of practice, and, finally, analyzing leadership ethics that pertain to the organizational change required at Mountainview.

Chapter 2: Planning and Development

In this chapter I describe how to plan for the changes required to move Mountainview toward inclusive, equitable, and culturally responsive practices, and the two leadership approaches I will adopt to support the successful implementation of those practices. I propose to use two theories of leadership—authentic leadership and distributed leadership—to reduce the authoritarian, top-down hierarchy that has governed Mountainview's decisions and direction for over 20 years. I intend to move the school toward a more democratic model of decision-making whereby staff contribute to and collectively own school decisions. Using Nadler-Tushman's (1980) congruence model, I will conduct a critical organizational analysis to identify areas that require change and will use both Kotter's (2012) and Bridge's (1986) change models to address those areas. I will examine three solutions to the problem of practice, emphasizing two which I believe to have the potential for driving successful and lasting change. Finally, I will consider ethical issues as I work towards ethical and socially just change.

Leadership Approaches to Change

The goal of my organizational improvement plan is to create a culturally responsive school in which families and students see themselves reflected in all aspects of school life, to enhance connections between school and home, and to provide a richer learning experience for students. Achieving this goal requires rectifying a monolithic organizational culture and promoting inclusivity and equity for all stakeholders. A history of Eurocentric world views and closed leadership systems at Mountainview has resulted in a stagnant organizational culture reflective of White conservative values. Much organizational resistance to changing practice correlates with this authoritarian leadership, which created an environment of distrust that undermined employees' enthusiasm and resulted in underperformance and a sterile, complacent

work environment (Zheng et al., 2019). Addressing both the monolithic culture and closed leadership system requires a different approach to leadership. Authentic and distributed approaches to leadership are both applicable to my problem of practice.

Authentic Leadership

Leading with authenticity disrupts toxic and static cultures in schools while reframing and creating new, positive environments beneficial to all stakeholders and fostering warm learning environments for students (Gardner, 2005; Gruenert, 2005; Harris, 2002; Karadag & Oztekin-Bayir, 2018). Authentic leadership has proven effective in dismantling oppressive cultural beliefs in schools by refocussing the school's vision on ethical and moral stewardship. Authentic leaders create awareness of organizational uncertainties, accept mistakes, recognize social justice responsibilities, and redistribute organizational power to focus on relational development; they accept responsibility when mistakes are made rather than accusing others (Karadag & Oztekin-Bayer, 2018).

Authentic leadership is a process and behaviour pattern built on positive psychological competencies that develop transparency, openness, and trust; authentic leadership is guided by meaningful goals and focuses on the development of followers (Karadag & Oztekin-Bayir, 2018). Authentic leadership, however, requires that one remains true to one's own values. This means I must lead with moral fortitude and be deliberate, decisive, positive, encouraging, and motivational with my staff (Dematthews & Izquierdo, 2017; Duignan, 2014). Kernis and Goldman (2006) list five personal qualities of authentic leaders:

- self-understanding: ability to tolerate ambiguity, accurately perceive events, and refrain from acting out defensively;

- embracing the moment: being adaptive and flexible, and recognizing that one is not a static entity;
- trusting in experience to guide behaviours;
- recognizing that people have freedom of choice; and,
- taking creative approaches toward living, trusting firmly in self, and leading with integrity by refusing to fall back on restrictive behaviours or ways of thinking.

Adhering to each of these tenets is vital if I am to achieve change at Mountainview, prevent regression to past leadership styles, and help the school become culturally responsive.

The first tenet, self-understanding, requires my staff and I to embrace ambiguity—to tolerate conditions to which we are not accustomed. Because of the stringent control measures dictated by past leadership, the staff have always understood where the boundaries reside when, for example, dealing with student behaviour. Staff are not familiar with culturally responsive ways to support reluctant learners or deal with misbehaviour; they have never had to deal with multicultural classrooms. When facing organizational change that addresses culture, therefore, the staff and I will have to be prepared to struggle with ambiguity (Ehlert, 2013).

Tenet two requires that my staff and I accept that cultural change requires adaptability, creativity, and the ability to promote fluid rather than rigid expectations (Annanma & Morisson, 2018; Dematthews & Izquierdo, 2017; Sergiovanni, 2005). Embracing the moment requires us to adopt a differentiated approach to instruction to support English language learners.

Concerning tenet three, I am confident that my past professional experience provides me the skill set needed to lead Mountainview towards better supporting the marginalized South Asian community. Coupled with my knowledge of theory, my experience provides a solid

foundation on which to foster a compassionate environment conducive to supporting professional growth for staff.

Staff and aggressive parents may present considerable resistance to change, but tenet four reminds me that, regardless of outside pressures, authentic leaders have choice—and I am choosing to pursue approaches that align with morals and values consistent with the betterment of the school. Maintaining the status quo is a choice but not the right choice.

Tenet five requires that I move the school away from restrictive practices, behaviours, and ways of thinking and disrupt the current Eurocentric world view that oppresses many families; that I instead engage in authentic relationships with South Asian families and provide them a voice in decision-making, showing that I value their input (Karadag & Oztekin-Bayir, 2018).

Authentic leadership is not without its drawbacks, the primary criticism being that it does not provide for analyzing, quantifying, or defining the processes required for implementing change (Northouse, 2019, Dematthews et al., 2017). Further, because authentic leadership aligns with personality type, it can be difficult for someone who is not open to transparency and vulnerability to adopt it. A further critique is that authentic leadership is manipulative—that leaders use charisma to create relationships but are in fact empty vessels with no substance or regard for others as long as the desired change transpires (Dematthews et al., 2017). Research also demonstrates that in organizations that have undergone significant demographic change, leaders find it difficult to identify the best way to move forward and tend to regress to previously established social norms (Duignan, 2014, cited in Dematthews et al., 2017)—to perpetuate organizational practices based on historically dominant socio-cultural and political views (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015). Research also, however,

demonstrates three ways in which these drawbacks can be mitigated: communicating with empathy to reduce perceptions of manipulation, building trust while establishing firm boundaries, and addressing problems as they arise.

Carmichael (2020) recommends daily check-ins with stakeholders because check-ins demonstrate sincere support for success. Asking open-ended questions that reframe the message and reflect empathy—questions such as "Is there anything you need from me to complete your task?"—is perceived by staff as supportive. Building trust with stakeholders is critical to authentic leadership. Because trust takes time to earn, however, the vision and goals of the change initiative must be articulated consistently while ensuring that actions align with espoused values (Carmichael, 2020). In committing to culturally responsive practice and adhering to social constructivism, I must encourage parent voices, engage with the broader community, and promote South Asian culture in the building. Doing so will create the foundation for a social constructivist framework that develops new socio-cultural understandings of “others” while challenging Mountainview’s established, conservative, White norms (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015). I must be transparent and truthful with staff about the needed changes and take responsibility for my actions. I must address challenges with courage and plan carefully to counter problems. Carmichael (2020) recommends being curious about resistance rather than defensive, because resistance can affect how one communicates the vision and strategy, and how these resonate with the team. Appendix A provides an outline of authentic leadership skills.

Distributed Leadership

Distributed leadership complements authentic leadership in reducing the structural hierarchy of top-down management and allowing staff a voice in decision-making processes.

Significant change, however, occurs primarily when a critical mass of like-minded staff is involved. Given the small number of staff at Mountainview who desire change (Table 1.1), it is clear this critical mass does not yet exist. Indeed, the school's current staffing dynamic suggests that Mountainview's closed system of authoritarian leadership has divided the staff into three groups: a dominant group of vocal opposers who heavily favor the status quo and are attempting to sabotage change; a second group comprised of those who are disinterested in what transpires and prefer to be left alone; and a third group of staff who are inclined to be led as long as they see purpose and value in the desired change (Fullan, 2015; Schein, 2016). This third group is essential to target as I attempt to build capacity for change because its members possess the potential to become the real change agents on staff. The best way to engage this group is by sharing decision-making processes with them (Fullan, 2015; Schein et al., 2016). To overcome the resistance of the vocal opposers, engage disengaged staff, provide a voice to those who desire change, and develop the critical mass necessary for sustaining change, I must exercise not only the behaviours and strategies of distributed leadership but the qualities as well—trust, piety, and community-mindedness (Bouwman et al., 2019; Canterino et al., 2020; Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019).

Trust comes about through supporting the organization's members by recognizing the vulnerabilities of individuals and actively listening to their concerns (Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019). Staying consistent with one's vision and not being swayed by dominant resisters on staff helps establish integrity and further build trust with members.

Pious leaders are not afraid to lead with vulnerability. They demonstrate "loyalty, respect, and affection for organizational members" (Sergiovanni, p. 120, 2005; Torres, 2019) and work toward strengthening staff connections. Sergiovanni likens these interactions to the way in

which friends treat each other while maintaining professional boundaries. "Piety," he says, "is a leadership virtue that requires people to look inward toward their narrow community affiliations" (p. 120). The staff at Mountainview do not know how to support marginalized families; they must now begin to reflect on their implicit biases so they may learn to work more closely with South Asian families, learn from them, and support their needs. Working with staff to expand their views will be key to introducing equitable, inclusive, diverse, and culturally responsive practices (Bouwman et al., 2019; Canterino, 2020; Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019).

Finally, community-mindedness is pertinent to change at Mountainview. Engaging with the broader community will help to identify the narrow views staff have of the South Asian demographic and broaden their perspectives on the challenges that demographic faces at school and in the community (Bouwman et al., 2019; Canterino, 2020; Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019). Consistent with social constructivism, engaging with the community helps to reduce the barriers to inclusion caused by ignorance of other cultures (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015). See appendix B for an illustration of the distributed leadership model.

Some criticisms have been levelled at distributed leadership, the most significant being that many leaders do not possess the skills to employ it effectively—that they struggle to identify when to become involved when specific problems arise or fail to adjust their relational supports to properly manage issues within the group (Bouwman et al., 2019; Northouse, 2019). To mitigate these concerns, Ancona & Backman (2010) suggest that decisions at first continue to be made by a centralized leadership and that the leader begin stepping away from direct decision-making as staff gain fluency in collaborative decision-making that aligns with the leader's vision. Other research emphasizes the mitigating effect of including the voices of a variety of stakeholders in decision-making—of external agents such as parents and other community assets

(Ancona & Backman, 2010). Yet another mitigating factor involves building collaborative practices into the structure of the school (Ancona & Backman, 2010; Fullan, 2015)—being deliberate about school timetabling, for example, and constructing staff meetings focused on collaboration and professional development.

Framework For Leading the Change Process

Deszca et al. (2020) argue that the members of an organization, including the organization's leaders, may be aware of needed changes but unsure how to implement a change process. Leaders, therefore, must familiarize themselves with current literature on relevant change models. Here I consider three: Lewin's theory of planned change (TPC) (1947), Kotter's change model (2012), and Bridges' transition model (1986).

Lewin's Theory of Planned Change

Lewin's theory of planned change (TPC) (1947) proposes that organizations comprise interconnected forces that either drive or inhibit change. Whether particular forces require strengthening or reduction determines the possibility of change (Burnes, 2004; Cummings, Bridgman, & Brown, 2016). Lewin identified three phases in the change process: i) unfreezing, ii) moving, and iii) refreezing.

Stage one, unfreezing, requires the leader to recognize a problem, identify the need for change, and mobilize others to act (Cummings et al., 2016; Deszca et al., 2020; Shirey, 2013). Outlining the current policies and practices at Mountainview that perpetuate Western world views and constitute institutionalized racism toward a marginalized community is a first step in demonstrating an urgent need to change practice.

Stage two, commonly referred to as 'movement,' looks at change not as an event but as a prolonged and ongoing process that involves the entire organization (Cummings et al., 2016;

Deszca et al., 2020; Shirey, 2013). This stage requires a detailed plan to move the school forward, away from the status quo and toward a future state. During this stage, the staff is likely to suffer a great deal of uncertainty about the new plan as well as discomfort as the organization moves away from previously established norms; a sense of lingering in 'no man's land' may occur (Deszca et al., 2020). Helping the Mountainview staff feel supported as they alter their current conservative approaches to teaching and thinking in favour of more liberal policies supportive of the South Asian community will require significant time. In fostering space for the change to happen and to ensure the desired state becomes a reality, leaders must be effective coaches, clear communicators, and supportive of all members of the organization (Deszca et al., 2020; Shirey, 2013).

The third stage—refreezing—involves “stabilizing the change [so it becomes] embedded into existing systems such as culture, policies and practices” (Shirey, 2013, p. 70). This third stage is critical to achieving a future state that is equitable, inclusive, and reflective of South Asian families. Developing culturally sensitive practices in each classroom, practices that make cultural connections to learning, will be the new norm for “higher-level performance” (Shirey, 2013, p. 70) for staff, a norm that will replace the expectations of high academic and behavioural performance that once defined Mountainview.

TPC has many advantages—versatility, practicality, simplicity in application and understanding. Further, because it dates from the early twentieth century, it is one of the most well-known and widely used change models (Cummings et al., 2020; Deszca et al., 2020; Shirey, 2013). TPC works best in organizations that use top-down management systems because the model identifies senior management as the champion required for change to take place (Shirey, 2013). TPC also, however, has limitations. It has been described as overly simplistic, lacking in

detail and direction at each stage, rigid in the freezing stage, and unable to accommodate the level of complexity and unpredictability that change involves (Cummings et al., 2016; Deszca, 2020; Shirey, 2013; Zambianguardian, 2021).

TPC's limitations make it less than ideal as a theory of change for Mountainview. Given Mountainview's complex political and socio-cultural context, I require a model that provides a clearer articulation of when and how to transition between stages. Further, given the staff's unfamiliarity with change, I require a model that provides insight into the psychology of change. TPC tends to be combative rather than nurturing of the organization's members, with the focus resting heavily on the two opposing forces fighting for control—on those who want to preserve the status quo versus the leader who wants change (Cummings et al., 2016; Zambianguardian, 2021). While the top-down approach can be a strength, it is a weakness for many organizations—and would be so for Mountainview, which has little experience with change and has primarily been led in a top-down manner. As well, a combative rather than supportive model would undermine my ability to develop trust with staff. Thus, a change model that emphasizes both authentic and distributed leadership is required—a model that is democratic, nurturing, trustworthy, ethical, and conducive of sharing in the decision-making process. TPC fails to provide room to lead change in an authentic and shared manner.

Kotter's Change Model

Because it can be practically applied across different organizations, the Kotter change model (2012) is the best received theoretical model among organizations embarking on change (Appelbaum et al., 2012). Kotter's model comprises eight steps:

i) Establish a sense of urgency to motivate the members of an organization to move away from the status quo and the complacent routines embedded in current practice; this means identifying

the organization's problem and articulating how it adversely affects the organization's *raison d'être* (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2020).

- ii) Create a guiding coalition: Because no one member of an organization can successfully drive change alone, a group of like-minded members who are passionate about moving the organization forward must be assembled (Applebaum et al., 2012). It is critical, however, to acquire the 'right' members to lead the change. Kotter (1995) identifies positional power, expertise, credibility, and leadership as qualities needed to support a change initiative.
- iii) Develop a vision and strategy: A compelling vision is critical to dismantling the status quo and moving beyond the immediate objectives of the organization (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). Research demonstrates that leaders who lack a clear and practical vision create confusion for members and dismantle potential member support, thus moving the organization in a less desired direction (Deszca et al., 2020).
- iv) Communicate the change vision: Continuous dialogue around the how and why of a change reduces barriers established by ambiguity and can affect how members respond (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). Reducing ambiguity ensures that those members who initially supported the change process remain engaged. For those ambivalent toward change, constant reminders help clarify the process and assure them it is here to stay.
- v) Empower broad-based action: This stage involves encouraging people to think about how to achieve the desired changes rather than dwelling on aspects of the process they do not support (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca, 2020; Kotter, 2012). Kotter (2012) argues that empowering employees is a critical step because empowerment reduces barriers in structures, systems, needed skills, and supervisors. Communication, he says, will achieve little if employees are not empowered and encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility in the change process.

vi) Generate short term wins: This stage recognizes changes as they occur and the work that has already been done by the members (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012).

Celebrating short-term wins allows members to see that their efforts in moving the organization forward are working. Kotter (2012) suggests that celebrating short term wins helps the guiding coalition test and adjust their vision for the organization as it is implemented.

vii) Consolidate gains and produce more change: Step 7 requires the organization to build on the momentum achieved by short-term wins to energize members and create additional change agents (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2012; Kotter, 2012). By providing data that emphasize progress, the leader reinforces the perception that the change process is working. Further, celebrating short-term gains helps to rectify challenges such as systems and structures that are yet to align with the vision, and which could lead to regression and a stalling of the change effort (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2012).

viii) Anchor new approaches in the corporate culture: Applebaum et al. (2012) argue that failure to cement new processes achieved during Kotter's first seven steps will lead to regression. Members will return to old practices with which they are comfortable. To prevent relapse, Kotter advises leaders to emphasize how the new approaches, behaviours, and attitudes have helped improve performance; leaders can thereby help to ensure that the next generation of management will accept and continue the new approach.

While Kotter's model is promising, drawbacks exist (Appelbaum et al., 2012). The model is prescribed and rigid, leaving no room for skipping steps or deviating from their order (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2020; Kang et al., 2020; Kotter, 2012). Although Kotter (2012) holds that his model employs a distributed rather than leader-centered approach to change, many researchers challenge this claim, arguing that Kotter's approach is top-down and

that the coalition of leaders directs the members to carry out the coalition's vision (Applebaum et al., 2012; Deszca et al., 2020; Kang et al., 2020; Shields, 2018). Others find the model inadequate for addressing complex issues within organizations in which multiple coalitions are required (Chappell et al., 2016).

Bridges' Transition Model

When changes such as the demographic changes at Mountainview occur, they are often situational, event-based, and external to individuals and organizations (Van Ryzin et al., 2011). Often, an emotional response is elicited in the members of the organization as they transition through internal processes to come to terms with change and ultimately re-orient themselves to a new reality (Bridges, 2003). Bridges' model is helpful for leaders in organizations unfamiliar with change and in situations in which social dynamics threaten established norms (Change Management Institute, 2020). To help leaders understand the emotions connected with change, Bridges' model examines the psychological impacts of change on members over three phases: the ending zone of what currently is, the neutral zone, and new beginnings.

Applying the model to Mountainview, Bridges and Mitchell (2000) would argue that, during the ending zone, Mountainview staff must let go of old habits and prepare to move beyond the conservative, Eurocentric routines and expectations that once made the school appealing to the White demographic. During this phase, staff will feel ambivalent towards the leader, anxious, and perhaps abandoned (Dima & Skehill, 2011). Those who experienced success with Mountainview's past policies will struggle to adopt new systems inclusive of the South Asian community and may attempt to block change (Bridges & Mitchell, 2000).

The next phase, the neutral zone or explorations phase, is highly uncomfortable for many who typically do not want to spend much time there (Bridges & Mitchell, 2000). This phase is

challenging because leaders and staff must devote considerable time to disrupting previously established beliefs and realizing the need to implement new processes. Staff must engage in risky but productive struggles with their views and the views of others, and I as leader must allow them time to do so (Bridges, 1986).

The final phase, new beginnings, occurs as some staff members embrace the changes and demonstrate willingness to implement them and incorporate them into practice. Bridges (1986) cautions, however, that some members will fail to arrive at new beginnings because the neutral zone has scared them, shaken their confidence, challenged their competence, and forced them to question their values. However, as in Kotter's model (2012), the group that arrives at new beginnings will become an influential asset in driving overall change. Sharing leadership responsibilities with this group will help successfully to transition past practices to new ones.

In analyzing the external changes at Mountainview—demographic, communal, political, and curricular—the school falls within Bridges and Mitchell's views of required adaptation. While the staff may understand that changes are needed, they will experience psychological trauma throughout the change process. Faced with such trauma, organizational leaders may find they lack a strategic framework for moving out of each phase (Abbas, 2020) and many find the abstract nature of the change model not concise enough to use effectively. As well, Abbas (2020) argues that, because of its human focus, Bridges' model fails to consider other aspects of the organization that may require change, such as organizational strategies and structures.

A Hybrid Model

Given the type of change required at Mountainview, Lewin's TPC model (1947) is not a good choice for me as leader. To eliminate top-down leadership, develop trust with employees, and change the status quo, I need a model for change that permits the staff and administration to

work together to create a shared vision for the future state of Mountainview. I propose to move forward with a hybrid model of change, a combination of Bridges' (1986) and Kotter's (2012) models. The strengths of one model will offset the weaknesses of the other. Further, both support my commitment to authentic and distributed leadership.

The Bridges' model takes account of the psychological impacts that change has on staff members. Permitting me to be empathic toward staff during the transition phases, authentic leadership combined with the Bridges model will help me build positive psychological capital with employees and promote their self-efficacy, optimism, hope, and resiliency (Bridges, 2009; Gardner et al., 2005; Maher et al., 2017), thus supporting their transitions between stages. Further, the changes that have transpired in the CPSD community are rooted in globalization, making the Bridges model with its grounding in social constructivism a good choice for promoting the ability of staff to learn, network, and collaborate with the community, and manage the diversity and complexities associated with globalization (Toolshero, 2022). Certain stages of the Bridges model, however, may require significantly more time to work through than others, particularly as the staff learns to adopt inclusive new approaches to education. Additionally, ambiguity around the time required for each stage and how to move forward from one stage to the next will create uncertainty. Thus, I propose to combine the Bridges model (1986) with Kotter's model (2012) to add a more structured component to the change process.

Kotter's model (2012) relies on momentum created by the change agents, including staff and other stakeholders, to move the organization forward (Applebaum, 2012; Fullan, 2015; Kotter, 2012), momentum that is critical if individual members are resistant to change. Kotter's model offsets the lack of structure in the Bridges model by strictly mandating ordered phases that leaders can use to guide their staff. As an example, phase 2 of the Bridges model (1986), the

neutral zone, offers no time frame or strategies for moving staff forward and research suggests considerable time may be spent here. Uncertainty around how to transition out of this phase may stall forward momentum (Applebaum, 2012; Fullan, 2015; Kotter, 2011). Kotter's model outlines strategies, including distributing decision-making to staff and additional stakeholders, that can help leaders move their staff swiftly from phase to phase.

As with the Bridges model, Kotter's distributed leadership model considers the importance of social constructivism through inclusive processes of shared decision-making. A hybrid model that considers both the individual psychological impacts and the strength of the collective group may well produce the desired outcomes at Mountainview. Table 2.1 illustrates the merger of both models to formulate the hybrid model.

Table 2.1

Hybrid Change Model

<i>Bridges:</i>	<i>Kotter:</i>
<u>Phase 1</u> Ending Phase	-Sense of urgency, forming a guiding coalition, have a powerful group to lead change effort.
<u>Phase 2</u> Neutral Zone	-Work as a team, create a vision, communicate the vision, empower others to act on the vision, plan for short term wins.
<u>Phase 3</u> New Beginnings	-Improve on the changes, institutionalize new approaches.

Adapted from Brisson-Banks, 2010

Critical Organizational Analysis

A critical organizational analysis is a process for evaluating an organization's inputs, environment, resources, history, strategies, and outputs, and for helping to identify and eliminate problems associated with those six interconnected areas (Corporate Finance Institute, 2022; Deszca et al., 2020; Nadler & Tushman, 1980). I have chosen to conduct an organizational

analysis using Nadler & Tushman's (1980) congruence model (see Appendix C) which illustrates the external and internal variables influencing the performance of organizations such as Mountainview. In many cases, these variables are contradictory factors that oppose each other, confuse the leader and staff members, and make it difficult to assess which gaps in the organization require attention. Contradictory variables demonstrate how misalignment between the environment and organizational strategies and structures leads to incongruencies and disfunction (Deszca et al., 2020).

The congruence model posits two components that determine organizational output: i) the input or "givens" facing organizations—environmental demands, resources, and the history and culture of the community, and ii) the strategies required to address the organization's strengths and weaknesses—determined by the environmental influences (Nadler & Tushman, 1980) such as community members, local municipal and school board policies, and so on.

Input Analysis

Inputs are the "material with which organizations have to work" (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p. 39) and are the most apparent forces requiring consideration when operating. Nadler & Tushman (1980) identify four inputs important to any organization: the environment, resources, history, and strategy.

Environment. The environmental input facing Mountainview is composed of three interrelated considerations: CPSD's framework for equitable and inclusive education ([CPSD], 2021); the Ministry of Education's core competencies that require cultural responsiveness to be embedded within all provincial public schools (Ministry of Education, 2021); and the dramatic shift that took place in CPSD's municipal demographics between 1995 and 2021. These three factors demand that Mountainview dismantle the exclusive structures and practices that have

been deeply entrenched at the school since its inception in 1995 and that continue to promote White, Eurocentric, conservative approaches to education.

Resources. Resources are primarily tangible assets such as technology, human capital, and information, assets that move an organization forward. Resources may also be intangible, such as reputation and organizational climate (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). The most significant resource available to Mountainview is its students and their families. Given the historically dominant White demographic that attended the school prior to 2012 and the predominantly White staff at Mountainview, there has been little recognition of South Asian culture. Because the South Asian community accounts for a third of the overall population of the municipality in which Mountainview is located (Government of Canada, 2021), many community resources are available which could support culturally responsive practices. Community services, Gurdwaras, and restorative justice programs, for example, are among the community partners who willingly visit schools to help staff learn about and understand cultural norms and differences.

History: From an organization's history emerges a greater understanding of the structures, practices, and values of that organization (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Mountainview was founded to serve a conservative, Christian demographic that demanded a choice in schooling and programming within the broader public school system. Establishing a school to serve a particular demographic, however, hindered flexibility in accommodating the societal changes that have transpired over time. Creating Mountainview served a purpose but the school has become increasingly problematic as its demographic has changed from monolithic to multicultural. Social justice requires that the school dismantle its original elitist, exclusive practices and create inclusive policies.

Strategy: Strategy is the most important input in the congruence model. It "determines the nature of the work organizations do or the tasks they should perform in determining the system's output" (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p. 41). Establishing a school in 1995 to reduce the loss of students from CPSD to the private system was a strategic success. CPSD accurately identified issues causing enrolment decline, assessed parental desires, and formulated a clear vision and mission statement to rectify their organizational dilemma by instituting a new school, Mountainview—a classic example of strategic planning (George et al., 2019). Creating structures and procedures favored by upper-middle-class families led to high demand and intense familial involvement. The current demographic of South Asian families and the dramatic reduction in the number of White upper-middle-class families at the school, however, has created significant social justice inequities. Children who are not proficient in English have few options for communicating with staff in their native language, hindering learning and precluding opportunities for closing gaps in learning (Snyder et al., 2016).

Outputs

Organizational outputs are the organization's products; outputs have to do with performance and effectiveness. Outputs are determined by i) the system, ii) people, and iii) groups or sub-units of the organization (Nadler & Tushman, 1980; Roberts et al., 2013). At the organizational level at Mountainview, cohesion is created by a consistent set of expectations that all stakeholders follow. These school-wide expectations are displayed throughout the building—a strict homework policy, zero tolerance toward student misbehaviour, high academic achievement expectations, regular skills assessment, teacher directed instruction, and unrealistically high expectations for parental involvement. These expectations are no longer

culturally responsive. For many long-serving staff members, however, they provide a standard set of rules to guide practice, and are used to hold families accountable for children's learning.

Organizational Elements

The congruence model comprises four core elements: i) organizational tasks; ii) people who perform the tasks; iii) formal organizational structures; and iv) informal structures (Nadler & Tushman, 1980).

Nadler & Tushman (1980) acknowledge that the people within the organization who perform the organizational task, and their knowledge, skillsets, perceptions, expectancies, and backgrounds, may affect organizational output. Because little staff turnover has taken place over the years at Mountainview, many long-term teachers continue to perpetuate Eurocentric practices and conservative values. Their penchant for traditional teaching practices and rigid discipline approaches coupled with their long tenure at Mountainview makes them a challenge to contend with in the change process. Some staff members, however, support change, understand the necessity to engage with the South Asian community, and embrace new opportunities to enrich their students' school experience.

The formal processes of an organization comprise the "range of processes, structures, and methods designed to help individuals perform their tasks" (Nadler & Tushman, 1980, p. 44). From its inception, Mountainview established clear, Eurocentric expectations of staff, students, and parents. Rigid processes ensured the school was in demand and provided parents with the conservative ideology they wanted. Staff handbooks outlined expectations set forth by administration, set standard curricular expectations across each grade, and required teachers to use the same materials with little flexibility or autonomy amongst classrooms. Top-down authoritarian administration discouraged collaborative practice; staff members tended to comply

rather than take risks or be creative. Over time, closed systems and silos of teaching practice (Fullan, 2015) came to dominate at Mountainview.

Unwritten, informal processes and implicit expectations in an organization are also responsible for organizational operations (Nadler & Tushman, 1980). Few student behaviour issues exist at Mountainview and student achievement is often above the district average ([CPSD, 2021]) because previous administrators screened applicants and accepted only those students who came from families they deemed desirable. Students with Individual Education Plans (IEPs) were 'flagged' and not admitted. This informal practice generated a false school narrative of academic superiority while perpetuating social justice inequities. By restricting access, Mountainview blatantly discriminated against families and students with special needs.

Desired Future State

In terms of Nadler and Tushman's congruence model (1989), Mountainview is in the reacting phase of change. Culturally relevant practice requires that students be empowered intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically, and that the school replace Eurocentric practices with a liberal, socially just model reflective of the globalized community it now serves (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Given the school's challenges, several structures and processes currently inhibiting an optimal meeting of the South Asian community's needs must be recreated. A significant opportunity exists to engage the broader community's voice, and to learn alongside them and embed elements of their culture into school programming. Integrating cultural representation, changing practices to become more culturally responsive (particularly when addressing misbehaviour), and improving communication methods to ensure messaging is not lost in translation are necessary features of the future state of Mountainview. Socially just and culturally

relevant approaches to education will enhance student learning and family participation in their children's learning (Jeynes, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Malinen & Roberts-Jeffers, 2019).

Further, community partners can be engaged to support the staff in developing their understanding of cultural norms that are foreign to them. Blickem et al. (2018) and Walker et al. (2015) refer to this as asset-based community development (ABCD), whereby the community's collective knowledge helps organizations shape change toward culturally sustaining practices. Combining family and community perspectives will help move Mountainview forward, reduce Eurocentric biases, structures, procedures, and perceptions of others, and provide staff with the necessary tools and knowledge to integrate culture into practice. Silencing the vocal minority in their resistance to change may be another outcome.

Solutions to Address the Problem of Practice

The problem of practice I address in this organizational improvement plan (OIP) concerns the considerable challenges that must be faced to move Mountainview Elementary School away from its current White, conservative, Eurocentric approaches to education to an approach that will benefit all members of the school, including its predominant South Asian demographic. Possible solutions to this problem arise from three inquiry questions:

- i) Will working collectively with staff in meetings and professional development opportunities help them to identify bias and understand how their implicit assumptions about different cultures influence their practice and marginalize the South Asian students they serve?
- ii) How can Mountainview address the institutional racism that South Asian families currently experience at Mountainview and more authentically reflect South Asian culture?

- iii) What impact will embedding culturally responsive approaches into school programming and teaching practices have on student learning and the engagement of families at Mountainview?

Inquiry 1: Recognize Assumptions and Bias

This inquiry aims to determine the processes required to enhance collective teacher efficacy in identifying bias and understanding how it shapes and influences their practice.

Possible Solution One: Guide Staff Through Processes to Understand and Identify Bias

To create an equitable, inclusive, and culturally responsive school, staff must first understand and identify their biases—the opinions they hold and the judgments they make about others based on cultural and social differences (Annanma & Morisson, 2018; Rucker, 2019). Research on the development of culturally responsive schools emphasizes the need for educators to confront their biases early in the change process (Futureready, 2022; Hammond, 2015; Rucker, 2019). Social constructivism holds that opinions are shaped by the experiences individuals have in their lives and their social networks (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015). If a social network is primarily monolithic, as it is at Mountainview, narrow ideologies and views of other cultures become stereotypes that lead to biased behaviour, perpetuate barriers to inclusion, hinder student performance and engagement, and reinforce institutionalized racism (Annanma & Morrison, 2018; Futureready, 2022; Hammond, 2015; Rucker, 2019). I must, therefore, lead the staff through the complicated process of identifying views of self versus others. Although bias mitigation is challenging and research demonstrates no clear solution, Lypson and Sukhera (2021) offer several suggestions to support the endeavour.

Create a Safe Learning Environment. Leaders must strive to create a safe space in which their staff can engage in emotionally sensitive and challenging discussions around bias

and racism. A safe environment requires clearly defined rules that ensure confidentiality and psychological safety, and that reduce fears of being labeled racist (Gonzalez et al., 2021) while at the same time enhancing the ability to recognize racist attitudes. Because discussing racially charged topics involves a great deal of discomfort, I must lead with authenticity, empathy, and honesty, and clarify that mistakes are acceptable.

Flatten the Hierarchy in Facilitation. This step requires a distributed leadership approach that moves the staff conversation away from top-down 'musts' to guidelines and suggestions that facilitate dialogue around practices that are more inclusive and socially just. A leader who facilitates open, collaborative dialogue in a safe space demonstrates vulnerability and willingness to learn alongside staff; such leaders demonstrate they do not have all the answers. This approach allows for a more organic development of solutions that can be owned by the members rather than be dictated by leadership (Fullan, 2015; Gonzalez et al., 2021; King & Stevenson, 2017; Wang, 2018). Ownership of collectively agreed-upon decisions have greater chances of successful implementation.

Normalize Bias While Reducing Self-Blame. "Normalizing bias while reducing self-blame can effectively address defensive and emotional reactions by building trust, enhancing comfort, and increasing engagement" (Gonzalez et al., 2021, p. 2). Understanding bias as a normal human condition that transcends all elements of society will help members feel less shame and perhaps empower some to take action to mitigate exclusive practices as they become more comfortable grappling with their bias.

Integrating Research and Evidence around Bias. Gonzalez et al. (2021) and Wang (2018) argue that grounding staff in research and evidence around the negative impacts of bias on performance and social justice initiatives helps to motivate staff to change practice. Providing

evidence in safe spaces around issues related to discrimination can result in changing those practices that perpetuate the marginalization of some communities.

Create Activities that Embrace Discomfort and Promote Critical Reflection. Staff must endure discomfort about their beliefs because doing so leads to "questioning of previous assumptions and catalyzes a paradigm shift" (Gonzalez et al., 2021, p. 2). Incorporating activities that foster discomfort allows members to understand their views of others. Gonzales recommends using first-thought exercises that evoke emotion and mental images when staff hear certain words. Staff then need to focus on why they feel the way they do and juxtapose those feelings with reality. Incorporating activities that identify bias into bimonthly staff meetings is the future state of the school and is a practical bias mitigating strategy (Hazlebaker & Mistry, 2021). Professional development that addresses bias mitigation through district presentations will be provided monthly at staff meetings where dialogue will be facilitated by guest speakers. As well, professional development will be offered monthly after school for those staff members who choose to challenge their biases.

Reinforce Bias Identification as a Lifelong Learning Process. Bias identification must be something that staff and organizations embed in practice and continually refine. Ongoing professional development will be necessary,

Required Resources

Time and people are the most significant resources needed for bias identification at Mountainview. As per social constructivism, human resources are critical for creating safe spaces and flattening the hierarchy to promote collaborative dialogue (Sesardic, 2010).

Designing staff meetings that create safe spaces for dialogue around contentious issues such as

race will not be easy but is a priority for understanding, identifying, and rectifying bias (Gonzalez et al., 2021).

Benefits and Limitations

Many benefits reside within the plan I have presented here. Facilitating collaborative dialogue around bias will benefit both the staff and students because a group's collective knowledge exceeds that of individuals; in a group, decisions are more likely to be vetted using perspective and research than emotion (King and Stevenson, 2017). Creating safe spaces and open dialogue will dismantle the siloed, individual nature of teaching at Mountainview; it will reduce the established, authoritarian hierarchy and the strength of the vocal resisters who heavily influence staff ideology and act as barriers to change (Deszca et al., 2020; Fullan, 2015). The process of bias identification, however, has limitations.

Perhaps the most significant limitation to attempts to mitigate bias is that little evidence exists to demonstrate that it works (Gonzalez, 2021; Green & Hagiwara, 2020). Green & Hagiwara (2020) note that many people continue to perpetuate biased views throughout their daily interactions—because habitual responses are subconscious and comprise the default choice when values are compromised or threatened (Wang, 2018).

Inquiry 2: Incorporate New Voices and Knowledge Through Community Engagement

Inquiry 2 uses asset based community development (ABCD) and network improvement communities (NICs) to bridge the disconnect between Mountainview's Eurocentric views of education and support for the needs of the South Asian community.

Possible Solution Two: Engaging with Community Partners

Viewing society through a social justice lens requires understanding the lived experiences of marginalized communities and adjusting practices in organizations to be more

inclusive and equitable (Frick et al., 2010; Wang, 2018). Given that the South Asian community comprises one-third of CPSD's municipal demographic, Mountainview has a significant opportunity to engage with South Asian community organizations and build social capital with the broader community (Blickem et al., 2018). Two ways of doing so are through asset based community development (ABCD) and network improvement communities (NICs). Both ABCD and NICs aim to harness the community's social capital to enrich and enhance educational experiences for all members, particularly in support of oppressed or marginalized members, by creating partnerships with community organizations (Boyd et al., 2008; Fullan, 2021).

ABCD aims to create community awareness of problems within the community and offer solutions using local resources (Blickem et al., 2018). Integrating collective knowledge from community programs and agencies such as restorative justice, Gurdwaras (South Asian centers for worship and cultural retainment) and various community services will, in theory, reduce the stigma, bias, and cultural ignorance occurring at Mountainview. Incorporating these assets can serve as an intermediary to help a disenfranchised individual or organization realize the individual and cultural strengths of other community members. Guided by social constructivism, ABCD strives to create new knowledge of diverse communities while deconstructing monolithic stereotypes (Blickem et al., 2018).

NICs act in much the same way as ABCD in that they develop trust between community actors and the school to create sustained change. "NICs are one type of a research-practice partnership that provides a model for researchers and educators to bring insights about what works locally to scale" (Kallio & Halverson, 2020, para 1). Unlike ABCD, the goal of NICs is to develop long-term solutions to social issues facing schools; they have a more concise and limited vision than ABCD. They are committed to addressing a particular issue using research and

theory (LeMahieu, 2015), focusing on a problem and how to solve it (Kallio & Halverson, 2020). ABCD identifies a problem and seeks a communal effort to solve the disconnect between school and home; it can be viewed as a solutionist and overly simplistic approach to solving complex problems. NIC, however, refines a complex issue such as that presented by Mountainview, and proposes a theory of improvement with a measurable outcome (LeMahieu, 2015). While ABCD and NICs differ, the commonality of networking with community resources is an essential feature of both. Community networking should enable staff to unlearn old knowledge and develop the social capital with the broader community that will serve the interests of the students and their families (Blickem et al., 2018; LeMahieu, 2015).

At Mountainview, several community resources that can serve as social capital are available to support both staff and parents. CPSD's community restorative justice program, for example, aims to help struggling members adjust to community norms. Instead of punishment, restorative justice mediates between an organization and individual or family to help both move forward in productive ways. Often, restorative justice works in partnership with the school to educate staff about cultural differences that lead to misconduct. Given Mountainview's history, restorative justice programs are significant assets to bridging school and home.

South Asian Community Services can act as linguistic and cultural interpreters between school and home. Many families speak Punjabi at home; tapping into South Asian community resources can support language and further cultural understandings for Mountainview. Likewise, Gurdwaras or Sikh temples are open to all community members regardless of denomination or race. As a principal, I have had the honor of speaking at a Gurdwara on community connectedness. Such opportunities to engage in shared visions for cultural understanding can ultimately help reduce institutionalized racism at Mountainview (Walker et al., 2015).

To ensure the effectiveness of ABCD and NICs involvement at the school requires developing a framework for that involvement. Engaging with community partners—individuals who are skilled in culturally responsive approaches to community engagement, and agencies that focus on bridging cultural misunderstandings—will be essential to creating inclusive environments (Forgeard, 2022). Because staff meetings are essential platforms for creating networks and partnerships, these community partners can present at monthly meetings on ways to engage with families; they can lead staff in discussions of cultural differences between South Asian and North American educational expectations. Monthly evening sessions in which school and community agencies work together with parents can also be offered to address questions or concerns around school programming and support parents' efforts to become involved with the school and their children's learning.

Required Resources

Substantial time and human investment is needed for solution two. Investing in human capital from outside the school will be essential. As a leader who subscribes to authentic and distributed leadership, I will have to create opportunities to make meaningful connections with community partners. Involving ABCD and NICs will demand human investment from staff and community members. Many community services are already accessible to schools. Restorative justice, for example, receives grants from the government to support their involvement with middle schools, although that funding may not be available for elementary schools.

Benefits and Limitations

Social constructivism theorizes that learning is a result of the cultural norms and society we live in; it is not individually constructed but collectively acquired through the interactions of community members (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015). In

subscribing to this theory, Mountainview benefits from the collective knowledge of the South Asian community and the ample resources readily available to it. Indeed, many community agencies are willing to support schools for free and do so. Many community services, however, are stretched thin by the support they offer other schools and organizations. Mountainview will need to be flexible in creating schedules that work with community service programs that may be hard to align with the school's timetable. Further, while some staff are receptive to having community services support their classrooms, the overall appetite of the staff for such involvement is yet to be determined. Because ABCD and NICs rely heavily on relationships (Blickem et al., 2018; LeMahiue, 2015), staff must present an attitude of openness.

Inquiry 3: Integrate Culturally Responsive Curriculum into Daily Practice

Inquiry 3 concerns how a curriculum that reflects students' culture and can help create culturally sustainable practices can be integrated into daily classroom practice.

Possible Solution Three: Integrate Cultural Artifacts into Curricula

Core competencies outlined by the BC Ministry of Education (MOE) (2021) state that teachers must integrate elements of children's culture and lived experiences into daily teachings. Doing so enables students to better understand their own culture and the cultures of others, strengthens their self-identity, builds tolerance toward others, and enriches the learning environment for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Bradshaw et al., 2015; Malinen et al., 2019; Lustic, 2017). CPSD has two district positions dedicated to supporting teachers and schools in these endeavours—the equity helping teacher and the curriculum teacher. Mountainview can enlist the equity helping teacher to help create school goals that support the welfare of all students and reduce inequities created by staff misunderstandings of cultural norms, and can

enlist the curriculum helping teacher to support teachers in developing lessons that match the MOE's requirement for culturally relevant curriculum.

Required Resources

Solution three depends on human resources. For teachers to become more comfortable integrating culturally responsive practices, they will need to engage in professional development and ask for support from the district helping teachers ([CPSD, 2021]) and others. A few teachers on staff have embraced culturally responsive pedagogy and could be a source of knowledge for their colleagues. BC teachers have seven professional development days per year—six teacher-driven days and one day on which the administration determines the focus. I can gear the focus of my one administrative professional day toward supporting the integration of culturally responsive practices in classrooms and strongly encourage staff to continue culturally responsive learning and connect with the district helping teachers. The position of equity teacher is new (2021) and some confusion about roles exists, but creation of the position suggests the district is aware of inequities within schools, a start towards supporting marginalized families.

Benefits and Limitations

The primary benefits to solution three reside in the opportunity it offers for teachers to engage in professional development that connects with the district curriculum helping and equity teachers. These resources are available for all teachers within CPSD and show much promise in ensuring the integration of new practices that are culturally relevant and sustainable. However, perhaps the most significant limitation to learning, integrating, and practicing a new pedagogy is that most tenured teachers lack the competencies needed to change their beliefs and practices (Debnam et al., 2015). The low turnover rate of experienced teachers at Mountainview is a

significant barrier to integrating culturally responsive practices. A few change champions on staff, however, have demonstrated a willingness to move in this direction.

Recommended Solutions

To meet the goals of my problem of practice, solutions one and two are the most promising. Leading staff through bias recognition is necessary to correct injustices and perceptions of others in society and is the primary step needed to create culturally responsive schools. Although de-biasing efforts seldom work to correct individual behaviour (Gonzalez et al., 2021), the ten steps I have outlined offer hope that staff perceptions may shift, particularly when staff can engage in the process in a collective, safe, non-judgemental manner. Authentic leadership creates a safe space by promoting psychological safety and by focussing on the ethical and moral stewardship of the organization, remaining solution-focused, and refusing to cast blame on others (Ferber, 2012; Gardner, 2005; Gruenert, 2005; Harris, 2002; Karadag & Oztekin-Bayir, 2018). It should allow for a fluid conversation about bias to evolve and enable staff to challenge their beliefs and assumptions. Authentic leadership is the best approach for solution one. Solution two requires a different approach.

Solution two blends nicely with the idea of collective and collaborative conversations among staff but requires broader engagement with various stakeholders. Tapping into the many South Asian community agencies within the municipality is necessary for increasing social capital at Mountainview. Solution two, therefore, requires a distributed leadership approach to creating culturally responsive change. This solution requires that not only the staff but families and community resources develop solutions to meet the needs of the students (Blickem et al., 2018; Bouwmans et al., 2019; Canterino et al., 2020; Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019). Additionally, ensuring that stakeholder knowledge is incorporated in decisions optimizes

chances of achieving culturally responsive and sustainable practices at Mountainview. Having parents and community agencies present at staff meetings, and supporting students and staff in culturally appropriate ways within the building, will build cultural capital, paving the way for a culturally responsive school that adheres to distributed leadership's tenet of community-mindedness (Blickem et al., 2018; Bouwmans et al., 2019; Canterino et al., 2020; Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019).

Finally, while integrating culturally responsive pedagogy is an ideal outcome, lessons will not be authentic and relevant to students until the staff understand and identify their biases toward other cultures. Schools can not fully become culturally responsive or culturally sustaining until staff confront and mitigate their biases toward different cultures (Futureready, 2022; Hammond, 2015; Rucker, 2019). Given the deeply entrenched Eurocentric values that guide practice and organizational programming at Mountainview, there is little reason to believe that staff will embrace culturally responsive curricula before confronting their biases. I have yet to see significant evidence of teachers striving to incorporate the culture of the community in lessons, despite that requirement being Ministry mandated. Nor has the school, despite the district inclusivity framework and curricular expectations, attempted to reflect South Asian identity in programming. Therefore, to provide a more substantial possibility of moving toward cultural responsiveness at Mountainview, staff must be led through bias mitigation strategies in tandem with the development of social capital through ABCD and NICs. Using bias mitigation strategies and community resources will build confidence, reduce racial barriers, mitigate ignorance of others, and develop sustainable programming that better reflects student culture (Blickem et al., 2018; LeMahieu, 2015). I address these strategies in chapter three.

Leadership Ethics and Organizational Change

As I attempt to move Mountainview away from its White, Eurocentric, conservative status quo and toward a socially just, inclusive, and equitable environment reflective of its South Asian students and families, I must be mindful of the ethical standards required to embark on change and mindful of the ethics that are most pertinent to the problem. Starratt's (1994) ethical framework, which includes the ethics of critique and justice, underlie all ethical practices (Furman, 2004) that organizational leaders must use. To promote the cultural responsiveness that is central to my problem of practice, however, I argue that an additional ethic is required to sustain change: the ethic of connectedness (Frick & Frick, 2010).

The Foundational Ethic: Critique

The ethic of critique is core to both the British Columbia Principal and Vice Principal's Association (BCPVPA) code of ethics and CPSD's equity framework. This ethic places student well-being at the center of all decision-making, respects individual rights, and works toward dismantling oppression (BCPVPA, 2021; [CPSD, 2021]). Further, this ethic demands that leadership work with staff to identify the barriers to equity that have been established by the Eurocentric and conservative underpinnings of the organizational culture at Mountainview. Both solutions one and two critique past and current practices by engaging in collective work with staff to dismantle oppressive practices and enhance cultural understanding of others.

The Driving Ethic: Social Justice

The ethic of justice holds that a school must establish rules and expectations that are fair to all members of its community and that all who are part of the community must live by those rules (Furman, 2004). While the ethic of critique focuses on barriers to creating equity, the ethic of justice focuses on establishing fairness. Concerning justice, Starratt (1994) states:

No social arrangement is neutral. Every social arrangement, no matter how it presents itself as natural, necessary, or simply 'the way things are', is artificial. It is usually structured to benefit some segments of society at the expense of others. The ethical challenge is to make these social arrangements more responsive to the human and social rights of all the citizens. (p. 47).

Wang (2018) and Theoharis (2007) argue that social justice strives to provide all cultures and members equitable opportunity by reducing exclusionary practices. Failure to do so substantively runs the risk of tokenism (Gent, 2017), which perpetuates White superiority over the South Asian culture. While recognizing important South Asian cultural events at Mountainview is a necessary first step toward social justice, moving beyond such events and developing authentic partnerships with families and community organizations are critical next steps.

The Need to Belong: The Ethic of Connectedness

Mountainview has a moral obligation to strive toward effective community building and improvement of the social welfare of those it serves (Blum, 2005; Frick & Frick, 2018). Further, fostering "an academic environment in which students believe that adults in the school care about their learning and them as individuals" (Blum, 2005, p. 16) is paramount to student success. Accordingly, for students and families to have a true sense of connectedness at Mountainview, the staff must move beyond its academic focus and more toward a focus on the lives of the members of the South Asian community. Connecting with students personally is critical for establishing an environment in which students have a sense of belonging and are fully engaged. Schools that focus on the whole child and develop a strong sense of connectedness have better student attendance rates, higher academic achievement, fewer behavioural issues, and greater family involvement (Blum, 2005, Frick & Frick, 2018). Both ABCD and NICs are viable

tools for promoting a sense of connectedness for students and for providing staff with the tools required to create a sense of belonging for the children.

Chapter Summary

Having focussed on a plan that addresses the problem of practice, this chapter has provided practical leadership approaches—authentic and distributed leadership approaches—that are necessary for managing Mountainview through sustainable change. Previous authoritarian, top-down leadership practices created a situation of complacency and imposed closed systems that stifled creativity on staff. This, in part, has led to a staff that is largely unfamiliar with change. A framework for change informed by social constructivism theory, composed of asset based community development (ABCD) and network improvement communities (NICs), is required to engage the broader community of stakeholders within CPSD.

To support the required framework, three change models have been analyzed—Lewin’s theory of planned change (Lewin, 1947), Kotter’s change model (Kotter, 2012), and Bridges’ transition model (Bridges, 2003). This analysis has resulted in development of a hybrid model combining both Kotter’s and Bridges’ theories—a hybrid model that will best serve the need for organizational change at Mountainview. In addition, Nadler and Tushman’s congruence model (Nadler & Tushman, 1989) has been used to identify the internal and external influences that create incongruencies at Mountainview and produce organizational dysfunction. The chapter concludes with a detailed assessment of the organizational gap between the current and future state of the school and identifies the necessary solutions for sustainable and ethical change.

Chapter 3: Implementation, Evaluation, And Communication

The focus of this chapter is the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the two solutions outlined in chapter two for integrating culturally responsive programming at Mountainview Elementary: leading staff through bias identification and mitigation processes and increasing South Asian voices and representation in school programming. Using the plan, do, study, act (PDSA) model—a change evaluation model that can help leaders monitor a change process and determine next steps—the information collected with the monitoring tools will be used to evaluate and determine the effectiveness of my implementation plan as it unfolds. This chapter also describes how my implementation plan and its results will be communicated to stakeholders. Finally, next steps for Mountainview are recommended and considerations for the future discussed.

Change Implementation Plan

The introduction of culturally responsive programming at Mountainview will take place over a two-year timeline and involve three phases of change, as per the Kotter/Bridges hybrid model. Given the nature of the changes and the many unknown variables involved, the plan cannot specify precisely when each phase should be introduced, nor can it specify the exact amount of time required for each phase. As well, although the plan lays out a two-year framework, the type of change involved will require ongoing refinement and intentional strategies that may well continue beyond the proposed two years, hence the plan's open-ended structure. The interconnectedness of the two solutions (bias mitigation and increasing South Asian voices in school programming), authentic and distributed approaches to leadership, and the Kotter/Bridges hybrid change model (three phases)—provide a solid foundation for the successful implementation of the plan.

Research suggests that collective professional development activities that heavily emphasize authentic and reflective practices amongst colleagues are necessary for reducing biased behaviours (Barnett, 2018; Lypson & Sukhera, 2021; Margerum, 2002; Tigelaar et al., 2006; Richter et al., 2010). Introducing bias identification and bias mitigation strategies at staff meetings, therefore, is an excellent place to start. First, however, a framework to promote psychological safety for group members, such as that described by Marone (2021) for creating "brave spaces," is required. Arao & Clemens (2013) distinguish between "brave" and "safe" places. Briefly, while safe can mean comfortable and unthreatened, brave means risking discomfort among participants while helping them "better understand—and rise to—the challenges of genuine dialogue on diversity and social justice issues" (p. 136).

An authentic leader must promote brave spaces to ensure meaningful dialogue around the need to dismantle oppressive organizational practices. Central to Marone's (2013) brave spaces are four pillars: (a) Recognizing the need for diversity: Because members will arrive with varying points of view on the chosen topics, leaders must accept and overcome differing voices to move forward; simply stating that all voices are welcome is superficial and unproductive. (b) Setting expectations and ground rules: Leaders must outline who speaks first and start with whomever in the group is most marginalized or least heard; using a timer ensures equal airtime for each speaker. (c) Connecting on a personal level: Showing genuine interest in group members and getting to know them on a personal level requires open lines of communication; leaders must schedule time to meet with employees to encourage them to be brave in the face of challenging interactions. (d) Practicing empathy: The leader must listen to all viewpoints, refrain from minimizing others' ideas, and stay focused on solutions. Given the emotionally and politically charged context in which Mountainview's problem of practice lies, a framework for

intervention that de-escalates differences is required. Allowing time to engage in discussion of ideas is important but members must adhere to the expectations of the meeting (Center for Creative Leadership, 2022; Marone, 2021). See Appendix D for a sample template on psychological safety that leaders can share with their staff.

Phase One: Introducing Bias Identification and Mitigation

Implementing phase 1 of the hybrid change model (Table 3.1) will begin the process of dismantling oppressive, status quo practices at Mountainview.

Table 3.1

Phase 1: Bridges/Kotter Hybrid Change Model

Short to Mid Term	Bridges Transition Model	Kotter Change Model
Bias mitigation strategies at staff meetings and professional development. Timeline- September 2022, short-term for creating a sense of urgency at staff meetings (September-December) twice a month. January 2023-reduced to once per month to make way for phase 2 implementation. Professional development once a month beginning October 2022- June 2023 (mid-term).	The Ending phase.	Sense of urgency in the organization, forming a guiding coalition of staff members who become a powerful group to lead the change effort.

Adapted from Brisson-Banks, 2010

During this phase, staff will be invited to focus on how past and current practices have marginalized the South Asian demographic and will begin to realize that change is inevitable. Staff will exhibit emotions characteristic of grief—fear, denial, anger, sadness, frustration, uncertainty, and a sense of loss (Mindtools, 2022). Given the school's history and political aspirations, there is potential for heavy resistance at this stage, and space must not be provided for White, upper-middle-class staff members to grieve their loss of privilege—because doing so reinforces their perception of superiority over other cultures (Applebaum et al., 2012). Instead, the first two steps of Kotter's model (2012) must be begun—create a sense of urgency to change,

and build the support of like-minded staff willing to lead the discussion about change. At this point, distributed decision-making will be critical to moving forward.

A guiding coalition of staff willing to share the leadership workload will be a powerful contribution to the change process. Influencing organizational change requires more than the principal's sole efforts. Research demonstrates that peer-to-peer learning mobilizes the expertise within the organization and promotes the development of management and leadership skills—necessary features for distributed leadership (Palmer & Blake, 2018). A coalition will be able to create brave spaces at staff meetings within which staff can actively discuss issues of inclusivity, equity, and culture. At first these will be whole group activities but as change agents become more comfortable and intentional in developing brave spaces, and the framework for brave spaces becomes better understood, members of the coalition can facilitate focus groups and engage in other staff development strategies that address bias through authentic practices.

Barnett (2018) recommends a bias identification activity in which staff are presented with artifacts from various cultures and invited to express their first thought. “First thought, second look” activities force staff to confront their blind spots, be vulnerable, and engage in dialogue around their assumptions. Leading staff through discomfoting conversations around first thoughts creates opportunity to deconstruct old beliefs and encourages individuals to wonder, “What if the opposite of what I think is true?” (Barnett, 2018, para 8). Mountainview’s principal must engage in activities such as these alongside the staff. Doing so will demonstrate vulnerability, willingness confront bias and help promote a brave environment. For additional samples of tools that change agents can use during break-out sessions for bias identification and mitigation, see Appendix E.

Refining and building on new knowledge is an essential component of bias mitigation and a pillar of social constructivism (Tigelaar et al., 2006). Another component of bias mitigation will involve engaging staff in culturally diverse activities and reflective practices. Although staff cannot be required to participate in after-school professional development, it is hoped that interested staff will attend once a month after school and help to strengthen the guiding coalition. Some staff have already been attending professional development sessions after school so it is reasonable to believe that a few will participate when culturally responsive professional development is offered. However, to address the gap in knowledge that will arise between staff who attend the optional after-school sessions and those who do not, time will be allocated at subsequent staff meetings for staff members to share their learning with the broader group.

Phase Two: Including South Asian Voices

Promoting the development of social capital for Mountainview staff that integrates the lived experiences of the South Asian community with school programming and making the school inclusive and equitable for all students is the primary focus of the problem of practice. Drawing upon voices from outside the immediate staff of Mountainview School will be an important part of this process. Once the staff becomes accustomed to the norms of the staff meetings as these are established through bias mitigation activities, outside voices can be called upon. Because moving too quickly may result in resistance, a four-month adjustment period will take place before any attempt to integrate South Asian voices.

Shah & Blank (2004) and Shah (2022) state that when schools expand decision-making to community partners, they gain new expertise and resources for developing inclusive environments. Fundamental to the organizational improvement plan is a belief in the tenet of

social constructivism that holds that harnessing the skill and assets of various community actors disrupts the monolithic knowledge of dominant cultures. Thus, integrating South Asian voices will initiate the unlearning of past practices that are not appropriate for Mountainview's South Asian demographic (Shah, 2022). Table 3.2 outlines a timeline for integrating South Asian voices, which will include parental voices and those of community agencies, consistent with Phase 2 of the hybrid change model.

Table 3.2

Phase 2- The Bridges/Kotter Hybrid Change Model

Mid to Long Term	Bridges Transition Model	Kotter Change Model
Integrating South Asian voices/lived experiences into school programming-Community Networking through ABCD, NICs. Timeline- January 2023- indefinitely (Mid to Long term goal).	Neutral Zone.	Working together as a team, creating a vision, empowering others to act on the vision, planning for short term wins.

Adapted from Brisson-Banks (2010)

During Phase 2, exploration of diverse cultural issues will continue, and staff may experience growing discomfort which may require considerable time to dissipate (Brisson-Banks, 2009). Discomfort directly results from staff having no choice but to examine their views and wrestle with gaps between what they have always believed and what they are learning, and with being required to collaborate as a team and consider additional stakeholder voices. Staff may experience feelings of fear and defensiveness about their practice, and psychological turmoil (Bridges, 1986). The Bridges transition model (1986) recognizes that staff can get stuck in this phase and lose momentum; Kotter's eight steps, however, can be used to propel the staff beyond the neutral zone. While staff struggle to come to terms with their new reality, Kotter's model recommends planning for short-term wins, continuing to challenge assumptions, and

articulating a clear and compelling vision for the future (Deszca et al., 2020). This vision will depend on the staff owning the change process by sharing leadership responsibilities as per distributed leadership (Bouwman et al., 2019; Canterino, 2020; Deszca et al., 2020; Fullan, 2015; Sergiovanni, 2005; Torres, 2019).

There is a higher likelihood of avoiding a stall during a change process if staff can be mobilized to be solution-focused. Rather than allowing an indefinite amount of time for staff to mourn their loss of power, phase 2 requires that others, beyond staff, become part of the process. Introducing the concepts of both asset based community development (ABCD) and network improvement communities (NICs) to the guiding coalition and the broader staff will be an important step in acquiring additional stakeholder knowledge that can help solve pertinent issues (LeMahieu, Grunow, Baker, McKay, 2017; Nordstrom, & Gomez, 2017).

ABCD is a change process that aims to build on the strengths and assets of a community and move individuals and organizations away from deficit thinking. Schools that adopt ABCD actively seek student, family, and community organization involvement and feedback to incorporate into school and lesson programming (Blickem et al., 2018; Nurture development, 2022). By focussing on students' cultural backgrounds, schools can adopt culturally responsive practices as, consistent with social constructivism (Goksoy, 2016; Sukhera et al., 2018; Walker & Shore, 2015), they learn to embrace the knowledge of stakeholders. Thus, as well as driving change through the development of relationships with community assets, ABCD mitigates bias by educating staff members about different cultures. The nine ABCD principles (Table 3.3) will encourage Mountainview staff to recognize the wealth of knowledge their students and their students' families bring to the school, and to recognize the need to change their practice.

Additionally, in adhering to the nine principles of ABCD, there is greater likelihood of successfully engaging with the broader community.

Table 3.3

Nine Principles of Asset Based Community Development (ABCD)

- (a) *individuals*: focussing on the gifts and skills of community residents rather than on their needs drives change;
- (b) *relationships foster a sense of community*: intentionally building a sense of community through relationships drives social change;
- (c) *citizens at the center*: because citizens are actors in services, not solely recipients of services, integrating their voice into decision making creates inclusive and equitable practices;
- (d) *distribute leadership*: including voices of leaders from community agencies, congregations (Gurdwaras), businesses, etc., fosters inclusivity;
- (e) *demonstrate care and motivate people to act*: focussing on the motivation of community members reduces apathetic behaviour;
- (f) *listening to conversations and asking questions*: providing open lines of communication either through one on one dialogue, small groups, or surveys guides intentional listening and develops relational trust;
- (g) *citizen centered*: local people control the organizational culture and set the agenda for advancement;
- (h) *institutions have reached their ceiling*: engaging the community to support organizations that are increasingly challenged to solve community problems helps mitigate these challenges; and
- (i) *institutions are servants*: engaging the broader community is better done by local individuals than by external programs.

Adapted from Nurture Development (2016)

Although ABCD has strengths that support relationships, additional strategies are needed to drive change. NICs act in much the same way as ABCD but offer a more analytical approach to problem-solving. NICs "address gaps between the aspirations of an education system and its capacity to deliver a high-quality education to all its communities, in every classroom, and for every child" (LeMahieu et al., 2017, p. 6). To effectively initiate a NIC, a leader must have the support of a guiding coalition and stringently adhere to the five domains of NICs (Table 3.4) (McKay, 2017) which lead to strategic action on the part of the organization. These domains act as a guide for leaders to use, to support all stakeholders involved.

Table 3.4***Five Domains of Network Improvement Communities (NICs)***

- (a) *understanding the problem*: the guiding coalition works in tandem with the principal to develop a theory of action;
- (b) *learning the method*: the network team creates tools to test and monitor implementation strategies;
- (c) *building the infrastructure*: once a plan is developed, the guiding coalition invites the voice of additional stakeholders who have relevant knowledge of the problem (families, community agencies, and district staff who can provide professional development);
- (d) *sustaining the work*: the guiding coalition is responsible for ensuring and maintaining the success of NICs, continually aspiring to improve; and
- (e) *crafting the narrative*: developing a solid network culture committed to improving the organizational culture for the betterment of students.

Adapted from Mackay (2017)

To begin the process of ABCD and involvement of NICs, local South Asian community leaders with whom relationships have already been developed can be called upon; these include leaders from Gurdwaras, community services, and Central Community Restorative Justice (CCRJ). The guiding coalition of staff members may also have connections to various organizations or leaders that can be drawn upon. Once communication has been established, these community leaders, agencies, and actors will be invited to present at staff meetings and provide professional development for staff outside the bookends of the school day. Presentations may address cultural differences and introduce activities classroom teachers can use.

Understanding cultural differences, learning new norms, and appreciating the students' diverse backgrounds will be vital messaging in these presentations. Monthly evening presentations from South Asian Community services that could become a staple of school programming can be held at Mountainview for parents. Additionally, staff will be invited to these presentations—although they can not be mandated to attend, the goal is to have a few members of the guiding coalition be present. Doing so would demonstrate a commitment from the staff to the community, that

Mountainview embraces cultural change. Further, while the process of establishing communication and developing relationships will begin in the winter term with the broader staff, ensuring that the principal and the coalition group make connections and commit to the process early in the fall will be essential if the school is to be prepared for implementation during the winter term.

To ensure successful NIC implementation, all practices involving the community must adhere to district guidelines concerning criminal record checks and daily health and safety checks per COVID protocols. As well, the scheduling of evening sessions that involve parents and occur outside the school must be coordinated with the school district and the city (the board has a joint agreement with the city to share resources). Planning will ensure parent nights and community events do not conflict.

Phase Three: New Beginnings/Approaches

The third phase of the implementation plan requires long-term programming to consolidate the gains achieved in phases one and two and to firmly establish culturally responsive practices. Bridge's transition model (1986) refers to this phase as new beginnings; Kotter refers to this step as institutionalizing new approaches.

After staff have been led through bias recognition and mitigation and have incorporated stakeholder and community voices into school planning, a new reality should emerge for Mountainview. At this stage, all stakeholders must share their experiences of the journey as their feedback will help to determine necessary steps for continuous improvement. Therefore, guest speakers, bias mitigation strategies at staff meetings, monthly presentations to parents, and professional development opportunities should continue regularly. Table 3.5 outlines this final phase in the change model.

Table 3.5***Phase Three: The Bridges/Kotter Hybrid Change Model***

Outcomes From Solutions (Long Term maintenance)	Bridges Transition Model	Kotter Change Model
Feedback from stakeholders sets future topics at staff meetings and parent sessions.	New Beginnings.	Improve on the changes, institutionalize new approaches.
Bias mitigation, ABCD, NICs remain ongoing.		
Timeline- Ongoing from September 2024- Indefinitely (Long term).		

Adapted from Brisson-Banks (2010)

Stakeholder Reactions

Monitoring stakeholder reactions during change is a crucial undertaking (Deszca et al., 2020). Being receptive to staff, parental, and student input is imperative so that issues and concerns can be identified and addressed as they arise. Feedback about the context, content, and speed of the change plan will help shape each step. A range of emotions from stakeholders can be expected throughout the change implementation process, with heavy resistance likely to occur during phases one and two. Levels of parental input may vary from tentativeness to excitement about getting involved. Some parents have already expressed the view that it is not their place to provide suggestions about programming, while others have become aggressively involved and are demanding even more involvement. Balancing all views while encouraging silent stakeholders to become more active will be challenging.

Supports and Resources

The organizational improvement plan to be implemented at Mountainview relies on staff members coming to understand and recognize that change must occur and on their willingness to comply. A change in practice will be evidenced in part by those who attend the culturally

responsive professional development sessions offered by community actors and the curriculum and equity helping teachers, and by those who make demonstrable efforts to promote South Asian parent feedback in their classrooms. Change such as that envisioned here for Mountainview cannot happen based on administrative leadership initiatives alone. The school can transform into a more inclusive, equitable, and socially just environment only through the development of a collective understanding and through the will of fundamental change agents. Additional support is needed for the change agents, however, as they act on initiatives that might jeopardize their relations with their colleagues. As these change agents assume risk by leading change, they will need to feel support from the school administration. Offering them time to collaborate with community members during the school day may be required as a gesture of good faith, as per authentic and distributed leadership (Ferber, 2012; Gardner, 2005; Gruenert, 2005; Harris, 2002; Karadag & Oztekin-Bayir, 2018). Further, it will be important that community members present at staff meetings and host monthly parent sessions. Parent attendance will be necessary to ensure success and engagement with the school.

As change agents on staff begin to feel supported and trusted, they can be encouraged to reach out to community agencies to develop connections and invite them to Mountainview. Once they have identified community services willing to help the school, those agencies and change agents can be invited to meet with school administration to ensure their goals align. At these meetings formal structures can be established for time commitment at staff meetings, precise activities, goals, and the frequency of meetings needed to support the goals. As more community resources become active with the school, new plans may be required to accommodate scheduling particularly in the offering of culturally relevant professional development in concert with district resources. Each month, the change agents and administration will meet to discuss the

community organizations' efficacy and determine the next steps. Building community agency into the school's programming through presentations at staff meetings and supporting teachers in their classrooms will become staples of Mountainview's future state.

Limitations

Research is clear that an effective bias mitigation tool does not currently exist (Lypson & Sukhera, 2021); any plan for bias mitigation, therefore, will be subject to limitations. The most glaring limitation of the present plan lies in the willingness of staff to engage in authentic and meaningful reflective exercises with their colleagues and thereby to identify personal biases. For the plan to be successful, staff must approach discussions and activities with open minds. Doing so will prove challenging given the closed systems promoted by past leadership. Further, a group of committed members must emerge and become the change champions needed to create a guiding coalition. This group is integral to promoting NICs and engaging in the ABCD strategies required for promoting collaboration amongst community stakeholders. For Mountainview to become a culturally responsive school—through bias identification and mitigation processes, and increasing South Asian voice and representation in school programming—staff commitment is essential.

Finally, COVID-19 continues to present challenges for all aspects of school operation. Schools have had to institute safety measures on short notice. At times, volunteers have been permitted in the building, at other times no visitors have been allowed at all. Staff may be feeling exhausted and lacking the energy to undertake a change of the magnitude proposed here. Further, COVID-19 poses a significant challenge to implementing ABCD and NICs, and the energy required by ever-changing restrictions comprises a potent inhibitor. COVID has only highlighted

the considerable gaps and barriers that exist in efforts to create equitable and inclusive environments (OECD, 2020).

Change Processes Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and evaluation are critical components in driving organizational change. Indeed, measuring the efficacy of a strategy or a program can affect the direction, content, and outcome of that strategy or program (Deszca et al., 2020). Monitoring refers to the continuous collection of data and information about change processes for the purposes of (a) improving those practices or strategies for future implementation; (b) creating stakeholder responsibility that ensures results are used appropriately; (c) making knowledgeable decisions about future plans; and (d) promoting the empowerment of all who are involved (Deszca et al., 2020; Sports Development, 2022). Evaluation refers to the assessment of the effectiveness of a program through the analysis of data and information gathered throughout the change process. Evaluation helps draw conclusions about a program's relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability (Deszca et al., 2020; Sports Development, 2022). Implementing monitoring and evaluation steps from the beginning of a change initiative requires identifying indicators that directly align with the change plan and, in the case of the plan proposed here, that are relevant to the biased pedagogical and personal attitudes toward other cultures possessed by the staff of Mountainview School.

Attempting to change attitudes, particularly biased attitudes, is a highly complex undertaking. Frequently, attitudes change because they are affected by a social situation. Birch & Malim (1998) refer to this as "demand characteristics"—individuals change their responses to questions based on what they perceive the group to believe. Using measurement tools that allow

administration to anticipate challenges from stakeholders at each phase will enable preparations to be made to address potential demand characteristics.

Monitoring Tools

Among the practical monitoring tools that can be used to gather data about the progress of the change implementation plan are surveys at staff meetings and parent evening sessions, anecdotal observations via equity walks in the school, and think/pair/share activities with staff.

Surveys

Surveys are one of the best ways to measure engagement. Online surveys quickly provide accurate, detailed information that can be correlated and aggregated. Survey algorithms can correlate anecdotal responses and identify consistency (or the lack thereof) amongst short answer responses. Survey responses can also be charted, tracked, organized, and value-based on priority or urgency (Benz, 2019), and provide data which are useful for planning next steps or topics for future staff meetings. Two survey options are available: a digital option using Microsoft teams, and a second hard copy version for any parents who lack access to technology. Exit surveys will be particularly useful after staff meetings to help determine the effectiveness of the bias recognition and mitigation strategies introduced during those meetings.

With surveys, non-responses matter, and it will be important to attend to the number of staff and parents who do not respond. Differing participation rates indicate what topics matter most to people (Judd et al., 2018). Research demonstrates a strong correlation between survey completion rates and levels of engagement with the organization: Those who do not consistently complete surveys are 2.6 times less likely to support change initiatives (Judd et al., 2018). Surveys are, therefore, good indicators of stakeholder resistance or apathy. Analyzing data trends

around particular topics and activities will help to identify steps to take at subsequent meetings and sessions (Stergiou & Poppe, 2019).

The use of surveys aligns with authentic and distributed leadership approaches in providing opportunities and a platform for stakeholders' voices. Surveys promote leadership integrity, which is crucial for change. Not offering regular surveys delivers a message that no one cares about stakeholders' opinions, that their opinions do not matter. Providing opportunities for feedback makes available a specific channel for stakeholder voices (Judd et al., 2018). Judd et al. (2018) found that employees value having a say through surveys even if the outcome is not what they desire. Summarizing survey results at subsequent staff meetings and parent sessions, and highlighting key areas and concerns, demonstrates an authentic appreciation for stakeholder input and involvement.

Finally, surveys can change behaviour. When leaders ask for people's input and insights, they are not just learning from them but also influencing them; psychologists find that asking questions changes behaviour (Judd et al., 2018). The key, however, is consistent messaging and questioning. Formulating questions around bias mitigation that require yes or no responses will improve commitment with many staff following through with the vision—and those who consistently say no to questions are more likely to shift their behaviour because responding to questions leads to reflection (Judd et al., 2018). Aside from staff surveys, parent surveys around inclusion and involvement should have the same desired outcome in influencing behaviour. If the messaging in the surveys indicates a desire to increase parental involvement, parents are more likely to be influenced to do so. Additionally, parents require inclusive surveys in their native language. Developing survey questions in dual languages supports inclusivity, reduces

misunderstandings, and potentially increases the number of participants. See Appendix F for sample questions in English.

Additional Tools

Equity Walks (Observations). Equity walks support ongoing monitoring of the implementation plan (Bailes, 2019; Ontario Principal's Council, 2022; University of Delaware, 2022). They concentrate the leadership lens on observational data that can either confirm or raise questions about school improvement and equity assumptions. Along with surveys, equity walks within the school provide further indications about the efficacy of change strategies and activities at staff meetings and professional development. They provide visual cues that indicate whether the methods introduced to the staff are being transferred into daily practice. Once the expectation is established at staff meetings that equity walks will happen, both the change agents and the principal will conduct monthly walks through the building to look for visible signs that teachers are actively pursuing equitable programming. Some examples of what might be observed concerning equity include pictures and posters representative of different cultures and their significant events and celebrations, and signs warmly welcoming parents and community partners (Bailes, 2019; Ontario Principal's Council, 2022; University of Delaware, 2022). See Appendix G for a detailed template that can be used during equity walks to assist the data collection task. To provide support and exemplars for the staff of what they might include in classroom instruction, the template will be shared with focus groups at staff meetings led by the change team.

Think/Pair/Share. In addition to surveys and equity walks, think/pair/share exercises at staff meetings will also help to monitor engagement and learning. Once a month, break-out sessions led by the change agents will place staff members in pairs discuss questions and share

ideas. Topics posed by the change team about equity, inclusivity, and cultural relevance will focus these discussions, promote learning about the topic, and broaden staff knowledge of other points of view (Simon, 2022). As the staff become more comfortable with such activities, the information gathered from the pairs will be shared with the whole staff. Data collected through these activities will help to determine the next topic to discuss or perhaps provide reason for further, deeper discussions of some topics at future staff meetings. See Appendix H for a sample Think/Pair/Share worksheet.

The Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle (PDSA)

The plan, do, study, act cycle is a model (see Appendix I) that helps organizations evaluate ongoing change in organizational environments (Tichnor-Wagner et al., 2017). Comprised of four components—planning the evaluation, performing the evaluation, studying the results of the evaluation, and finally acting on the results of the evaluation—the cycle operates best in a series of micro-cycles which enable change agents to test change strategies quickly and respond with new strategies if the data indicate a new strategy is needed. Results from one cycle set the path for the next PDSA cycle (Appendix I).

Step 1: Planning

Table 3.6 outlines the goals and strategies planned for the first step of the PDSA cycle. This step correlates with phase 1 of the hybrid change model—planning for the strategic implementation of bias mitigation activities—and outlines the monitoring and evaluation strategies that will take place at this stage.

Step 2 and Step 3: Do and Study

Steps 2 and 3 (Table 3.7) will take place during the fall term, a period which should provide ample time to implement bias identification and mitigation strategies. Data will be

collected at staff meetings through surveys (see Appendix F for a sample of survey questions, performance indicators, and targets) and anecdotal observations of professional development activities. These data will provide evidence about the effectiveness of the implementation of bias identification and mitigation strategies (Tichnor-Wagner et al., 2017). Data accumulated over the three months of the fall term should generate evidence to determine the next steps, which may include altering or maintaining strategies at staff meetings or offering different yet relevant topics for professional development. Data analysis is essential for determining the steps required for the next PDSA cycle (Deszca et al., 2020).

Table 3.6

PDSA Cycle 1- Step 1: Planning for Solution Bias identification and mitigation (First Week of School)

Goals	Evaluation/Monitoring Strategies	Hybrid Change Model: Phase 1
Bias recognition/mitigation. Solidifying a group of change agents through collaboration.	Formulate strategies and monitoring tools, including surveys, Equity Walks, Think/Pair/Share, etc. Determining the frequency of evaluation.	Bridges Transition Model- Ending Phase: Letting go of old habits, routines, expectations, and espoused organizational cultural beliefs. Kotter's Model- Creating a sense of urgency, forming a guiding coalition of like-minded staff powerful to lead change.

Adapted from Brisson-Banks (2010)

Step 4: Act

As data are collected, the leadership and the guiding coalition will discuss the next strategic steps to take as suggested by the data. Observation methods may change, new strategies may be incorporated, and evaluation periods may be lengthened or shortened. Data and observations will help in creating the next PDSA cycle. As the PDSA is a series of mini-cycles determined by each previous evaluation (Tichnor-Wagner et al., 2017), it is difficult to decide which steps are next in advance of data collection. However, this phase of the hybrid model is the phase in which actual change will occur. It is important to continue building momentum,

refine strategies through ongoing assessment, and institutionalize the changes that are developing. Table 3.8 outlines the fourth step in the PDSA cycle.

Table 3.7

PDSA Cycle 1- Steps 2 and 3: Doing and Studying Results (Fall term)

Stakeholders Involved	Program/Frequency	Bias Recognition Strategy	Evaluation Strategies	Hybrid Change Model: Phase 2
Senior Management, School Administration, School Staff, Curriculum department.	Bi-Weekly staff meetings. Professional development (once per month).	First thought-second look. Change agents lead focus groups at staff meetings. Bias and culturally relevant strategies for classrooms.	Microsoft Teams survey, Equity Walks, think/pair/share activities. Anecdotal observations on # of staff in attendance.	Exploring new ideas, risk productive struggle, working together as a team, create a vision, communicate the vision, empower others to act, plan for short term wins.

Adapted from Brisson-Banks (2010)

Table 3.8

PDSA Cycle 1- Step 4: Acting on Results (Winter term- Ongoing until Objective Achieved)

Stakeholders Involved	Program/Frequency	Bias Recognition Strategy	Evaluation Strategies	Hybrid Change Model: Phase 3
Leadership, guiding coalition of change agents/ eventually all stakeholders.	To be determined by data from steps 2 and 3 of the PDSA cycle.	Dependant on Data- Strategies may be different from steps 1 and 2.	Different forms of evaluation may be required (Data dependant).	Implementing necessary adjustments, improving on changes, galvanizing new approaches in organizational culture.

*Note. The Hybrid Change model adapted from Brisson-Banks (2010)

After recognizing the need for bias identification and mitigation at Mountainview, building a team to drive change, engaging in strategies to identify and mitigate bias, and evaluating change using PDSA, the implementation of additional stakeholder voices will start in the winter term. This phase of the change process aims to broaden the scope of those involved in

the change process and broaden the voices involved at Mountainview by working with community members through ABCD and NICs. During this time, the coalition will be responsible for monitoring two different yet connected PDSA cycles (see Appendix J). Table 3.9 outlines the processes involved for ABCD/NICs, from planning to acting.

Communicating the Need for Change and Change Processes

Creating a vision for organizational change is an inexact process, often seeming ambiguous and less clear to members than to leaders. Ambiguity can lead to rumors that spread quickly and create anxiety and resistance to change among staff. Developing a communications plan that effectively relays the leader's vision and dissolves rumors that may become rampant in the organization requires the leader to be clear, concise, and comprehensive (Deszca et al., 2020). Further, while leaders may understand what and why change needs to occur, others often have different opinions about what, if indeed anything, needs to change (Deszca et al., 2020). The organization's strategic goals must be aligned to meet the needs of those it serves while staff are helped to understand and move toward a clearly articulated objective.

Deszca et al. (2020) propose that a clear communications plan that can mitigate rumors and effectively move a staff—and ultimately an organization—forward has four main goals: (1) creating a sense of urgency throughout the organization; (2) educating staff on how the change will impact them (transparency); (3) communicating structural changes that influence how operations and processes are carried out; and (4) keeping stakeholders informed about the progress of the implementation as it unfolds. While these goals are necessary, they are insufficient for a complete plan—which also requires strategies for the timing and focus of implementation. Thus, as an implementation plan progresses and change occurs, the direction of the communications plan must also adapt and change as new challenges arise.

Table 3.9*Planning to Build a Community Network (First Week of winter term)*

Goals	Evaluation/Monitoring Strategies	Hybrid Change Model: Phase 1
Include community agencies/partners to promote cultural awareness-Bias mitigation. Plan to build ABCD and NICs for Mountainview.	Formulate strategies and monitoring tools, including surveys, anecdotal observation queries (Equity Walks), think/pair/share activities. Determine the frequency of evaluation.	Bridges Transition Model- Ending Phase: Letting go of old habits, routines, expectations, and espoused organizational cultural beliefs. Kotter's Model- Creating a sense of urgency, forming a guiding coalition of like-minded staff powerful to lead change.

Implementation and Data Collection (Mid-January through March)

Program/Frequency	Strategies	Evaluation Strategies	Hybrid Change Model: Phase 2
South Asian community presentations at staff meetings (once a month).	Presentations on cultural norms, differences, expectations between school and home.	Microsoft Teams survey. Observations/ # of parents in attendance at evening sessions.	Explore new ideas, risk productive struggle, work together as a team, create a vision, communicate the vision, empower others to act, plan for short term wins.
Evening parent sessions held by community resources (once a month).	Engaging Mountainview parents, bridging school and home.		

Acting on Results (March 2023- ongoing)

Stakeholders Involved	Program/Frequency	Bias Recognition Strategy	Evaluation Strategies	Hybrid Change Model: Phase 3
Leadership, guiding coalition of change agents/ eventually all stakeholders.	To be determined by data from steps 2 and 3 of the PDSA cycle.	Dependant on Data- Strategies may be different from steps 1 and 2.	Different forms of evaluation may be required (Data dependant).	Implementing necessary adjustments, improving on changes, galvanizing new approaches in organizational culture.

To support the goals of an implementation plan and provide the evidence leaders need to make adjustments, Deszca et al. (2020) outline four phases of a complete communications plan: (a) the pre-change phase; (b) developing the need for change; (c) mid-stream change phase, and (d) confirming the change phase. During the pre-change phase, leaders should focus on

convincing upper management and others in a position of influence that change is needed (Muller-Frommeyer & Kauffeld, 2021; Klein, 1996). Having senior management support the change initiative is key to success; without such support, change is unlikely. Leaders must create awareness of change and relay a compelling vision of the organization's future (Klein, 1996). In developing the need for change, the change leader articulates the upcoming changes and their impacts. During the midstream phase, any progress in the change initiative must be communicated back to stakeholders to gain their feedback and clarify the new roles, structures, and systems that comprise the change (Muller-Frommeyer & Kauffeld, 2021; Klein, 1996). Finally, during the fourth phase, confirming the change, Klein (1996) recommends that communications should inform employees of success, celebrate change, and prepare for the organization's next steps. See Appendix K for a detailed outline of a communications plan, including its phases, goals, and strategies connected to the PDSA and the hybrid change model.

Pre-Change Phase

Given the history of Mountainview coupled with its earlier political connections with CPSD's board, as outlined in chapters 1 and 2, consulting with senior leadership before initiating change is a necessary step. Klein (1996) refers to this step as justifying the change to build initial momentum that can support change. A primary goal of this organizational improvement plan is to reduce the social injustices caused by the institutional racism that perpetuates the marginalization of South Asian families at Mountainview. Highlighting to senior management that change is urgent given the racist undertones of Mountainview's current organizational culture is a starting point. Because inclusivity and equitable practices are core to CPSD's operational framework ([CPSD, 2021]), underscoring Mountainview's current noninclusive and inequitable conservative practices will further create a sense of urgency to change. Discussions

with senior management will provide them with "an issue-selling perspective" (Dutton, et al., 2001, p. 717). They will learn about the micro issues that the site leader has been dealing with, issues that must be changed but which have not been visible to senior leadership. Klein (1996) believes that face-to-face communication is the best way to initiate a conversation with senior leadership when addressing systemic challenges.

Aside from selling the perspective to senior leadership, selling it to potential champions of change on staff is equally essential. Doing so "frames people outside the top management team as potentially potent initiators of change" (Dutton et al., 2001, p. 717). For an authentic leader who practices distributed leadership, the best way to initiate change is through a group of core change champions on staff who are passionate about the change initiative. Currently, seven members of staff are interested in moving the school forward. This core group will engage in face-to-face discussions about how Mountainview can move forward more inclusively and equitably for all students. Klein (1996) refers to this as establishing line authority; he supports the use of staff champions to reduce perceived hierarchy and top-down directives that stifle change. Providing the core staff with responsibilities, freedoms, and supports that enable them to become "communication partners" (Klein, 1996, p. 35) improves the chances for successful implementation of the plan for change.

Face-to-face meetings with senior management and the core staff team are the preferred mode of communication for first discussions around the need for change (Klein, 1996). While phone calls, emails, and social media platforms have their roles in communications, these are not ideal for initial meetings. When the message is complex, face-to-face communication in a group situation is best. "It provides the communicator with an opportunity to capitalize on the different perspectives and interpretations that are likely to result from a complex message in terms of

providing explanations and clarifications relevant to potential variations of understanding” (Weick, 1989 as cited in Klein, 1996, p. 35). In-person meetings allow all members to discern the nuances of a situation through body language and other non-verbal cues that are impossible to see virtually or in written text. Because the challenges at Mountainview have to do with racism, political interest, Eurocentricity, bias, and personal beliefs, face-to-face communication will help to reduce misunderstandings that could be created through written communiques (Gingras, 2007). Starting the process face-to-face with a small contingent of change champions and listening to their perspectives should provide insight into how remaining staff members will respond so that their responses can be addressed accordingly.

Given the emotionally-charged nature of the changes required at Mountainview, face-to-face meetings are essential in the early communications phase. Currently, COVID-19 safety measures make large gatherings such as staff meetings inadvisable, however, virtual meetings are preferable until safety measures lift. Emails and written communications provide room for misinterpretation, thus multiple face-to-face meetings will be required to reduce potential for miscommunication (Dutton et al., 2001). Once senior management and change champions have a clear understanding and a sense of urgency to engage in change, however, weekly meetings can be scaled back and other forms of communication including emails, text messaging, and phone calls can play a larger role in the communications plan.

Developing The Need for Change

Developing the need for change is part of the 'doing' stage of the PDSA cycle and is the second step of the hybrid Bridges/Kotter change model outlined in Table 3.9. Relaying the plan to stakeholders announces that the change process is formally beginning. Staff will explore the rationale behind the change and struggle to understand why change is being introduced. Given

their background and experience at Mountainview, many of the tenured staff members are likely to resist and push back, and Klein (1996) warns that resistance will be strong when a proposed change is more than incremental. Given the magnitude of the organizational change planned for Mountainview and the emotionally charged nature of the proposed changes, the plan must be broken into incremental steps and those steps communicated cautiously to minimize the wall of resistance that many members will initially construct. Accounting and preparing for their reactions ahead of time will help to implement a proper communication strategy.

The problem of practice at Mountainview is highly complex and comprises personal values and espoused beliefs that guide practice. Introducing the topic at a face-to-face staff meeting, therefore, is an important communication strategy. Such communication will allow staff to air their concerns and permit their resistance to be addressed in a personal manner. Further, holding in-person meetings aligns with Klein's (1996) belief in using line authority as the primary means of communicating change to staff. The school principal has credibility and can deliver the message that changing from an exclusive school to one that is inclusive of all community members will promote equitable practices for all learners. This message will require dialogue about "current processes that need to be re-examined and cultural elements such as values and behavioural norms that require scrutiny" (Klein, 1996, p.40). A critical part of the message will be that even though CPSD perpetuated the exclusive nature of Mountainview for many years, senior management now supports the proposed change because it aligns with the CPSD's equity framework.

Part of successfully communicating the organizational improvement plan to staff is ensuring they can see themselves becoming part of the change effort. A leadership approach rooted in distributed and authentic styles that will ensure each member has a voice and an active

role is critical to success. Staff are more inclined to adopt change and less likely to resist when they are involved and are active participants than when they are simply told to change (Deszca et al., 2020). Given Mountainview's history of authoritarian leadership, it is critical to establish an open system of communication at staff meetings. Rather than being directed by administration to engage in initiatives, as staff have been accustomed to, meetings need to be established in a manner whereby staff share their input, voice concerns, and contribute in meaningful ways—doing so is essential to mitigating resistance. Additionally, there may be a need to encourage senior leadership to attend some staff meetings—doing so would reinforce CPSD's commitment to the equity framework and demonstrate to staff, that they believe in the merit of inclusivity while honouring the hard work needing to be done at Mountainview. Klein (1996) suggests that one way to ensure successful communication is to ensure message redundancy because, as Deszca et al. (2020) argue, redundancy builds fluency. Weekly emails to staff updating them on the changes as they occur—in addition to summarizing the change plan, will help to promote message redundancy and keep the staff informed throughout the change process—while at the same time holding stakeholders accountable for their level of involvement.

Midstream Change

The midstream phase requires communicating the goals of the change process to all the various stakeholders (Deszca et al., 2020). See Appendix K for an example of how the midstream phase reaches out to parents and South Asian community organizations through ABCD and NICs to help drive the desired change. The midstream phase illustrates both a liberal approach to education and the theoretical view of social constructivism in that voices representative of all political and cultural demographics at the school will be included. Doing so ensures barriers to social justice are dismantled, ignorance is reduced, and new knowledge is

formed collaboratively (Chandler, 2013). Both ABCD and NICs will be crucial to educating Mountainview staff about cultural differences, to challenging beliefs and bias through staff meeting presentations, and to helping move the school toward becoming more inclusive and culturally dynamic. Harnessing social capital from community partners will further reduce cultural misunderstandings and barriers to equity (Boyd et al., 2008; Fullan, 2021).

Parents will be invited to attend monthly evening sessions which will be hosted jointly by administration and South Asian community partners. Evening sessions will include presentations on cultural differences, supports for bridging the gap between school and home, and methods to increase parental involvement. While the scope of the midstream phase is much broader than that of the initial two phases, it aims to achieve three primary objectives (Klein, 1996): (1) to provide those who were not initially involved with the change the rationale for the change—detailed and thorough information about what needs to change and why; (2) to create awareness for those not initially involved so that they can become engaged to some degree as the plan unfolds; and (3) to correct misinformation and rumors about change that may be circulating. Weekly emails to staff updating them on change and reinforcing their involvement in the change process are critical during midstream change. Aside from keeping the staff apprised of how other stakeholders are becoming assets in driving change, these messages about how the school is changing to meet the needs of all learners will act as another level of message redundancy. Reminding staff that change is continuous and evolving also promotes message retention (Klein, 1996). Parents will also be updated about the new initiative through emails, weekly newsletters, and information sessions at the school. To support these initiatives, building relationships with parents via morning greetings and after-school departure conversations will provide opportunities to encourage their involvement.

Including parents in the discussion and involving them in the change process is part of the doing cycle of the PDSA change and evaluation model. Data are collected through parental feedback surveys, anecdotal observations of parent sessions, emails, and conversations with parents. Data will also be collected from staff through surveys, anecdotal observations at staff meetings and equity walks, NIC and ABCD collaborations, staff attendance at professional development sessions, and through additional activities. It is critical to relay the data collected from feedback cycles to the stakeholders, as doing so will further dispel rumors and misunderstandings of the change process (Deszca et al., 2020). Presenting all the data collected in this phase will allow for more extensive dialogue with staff and parents about the need to change. It will also provide evidence of the need to change roles and practices, particularly important for those who resist; data are difficult to challenge. Data collected through surveys, equity walks, and think/pair/share activities will be collated and presented in pie charts and excel spreadsheets and graphs, and will be disseminated via email, websites, social media platforms (if appropriate), and face-to-face meetings with staff and parents. Data allow for visual representations of how changing organizational structures and practices can become a new norm at Mountainview (Deszca et al., 2020).

Finally, during this second step in the PDSA model and phase 2 in the hybrid Bridges/Kotter model, changes must be celebrated to maintain momentum for the staff and demonstrate that their efforts are worthwhile. Data will help to shape and guide the next steps in the change plan and should be reviewed extensively with the core team, broader staff, parents, and senior management. Doing so will ensure that next steps align with the vision and help keep the change path steady. The need to continuously support the plan through message redundancy in the final phase of the communications plan is essential to maintain momentum.

Confirming the Change Phase

This phase requires communicating and celebrating the successes of the change plan (Deszca et al., 2020). It also aligns with the last step in the PDSA cycle—act—and the third phase of the hybrid Bridges/Kotter model. Data collected from the midstream phase will allow for a new course of action if needed. Any course corrections suggested by the data must be implemented if the change plan is to be successful. Celebrating the successes achieved in the previous three phases, however, and recognizing progress is vital for reinforcing dedication and mitigating stress for staff members (Deszca et al., 2020). All stakeholders must understand, however, that the final step in the change journey has not yet been reached and that change must be continuous, adaptive, and responsive to the community's needs (Klein, 1996). For stakeholders to fully grasp the fluidity of change, they must be reminded of where they began, what they have undergone, and where they currently are.

The first phase of the communications plan is about clearly articulating the need for change and discussing it with senior management and the change agents on staff who can represent line authority. This phase aligns with the plan step of the PDSA cycle and phase one of the hybrid Bridges/Kotter change model in bringing an awareness of change to stakeholders while creating a sense of urgency to change.

The second phase of the communications plan enlarges the scope of stakeholder involvement. Here communication moves beyond staff and assistant superintendent awareness to public participation. Parents will provide valuable insight into their cultures and their expectations for Mountainview. Providing parent feedback to the larger community via monthly newsletters will inform families of some of the new culturally responsive practices, processes, and programming Mountainview intends to implement. It is vital that messaging in newsletters

emphasizes that new programming implementation stems from participatory feedback and data from parent sessions and community involvement.

Next Steps and Future Considerations

Before beginning to implement a change process at Mountainview, the issues the school faces and how the school's history has contributed to its current problems must be clearly conceptualized and understood. These issues and concerns, as discomforting as they are, must be articulated to all stakeholders. The only way to address the disconnect between current practice at Mountainview and the kind of practice that should be taking place is to confront and challenge the conservative, White, Eurocentric culture that has dominated Mountainview for so long.

The principal at Mountainview has a great deal of autonomy in day-to-day school operations but must remain accountable to CPSD's direction. Quite possibly, the challenges at Mountainview may be considered small from their perspective. Conversations are occurring between the principal and an assistant superintendent who expects regular updates on efforts to ensure Mountainview implements board expectations. Ensuring curricular excellence and maintaining high student achievement remain district priorities and may limit the changes that are planned. Continue to engage in dialogue with senior leadership is vital. Failure to acquire support before implementing organizational change of the magnitude propose here may result in a plan that fails long before implementation can even begin. Discussing the divide between Mountainview's practices and CPSD's equity framework is an excellent place to start the conversation. Highlighting current practices at Mountainview that run counter to CPSD's equity framework will illustrate the need for significant change that senior leaders must not ignore. Whether the political will exists to counter the status quo, however, is an open question. Any desire on the part of the district to move the school forward will likely be made apparent in the

first meetings between school administration and senior management. If senior management stands behind their equity framework, if they truly desire to promote inclusion for all learners in the district, then this organizational improvement plan stands a good chance of implementation and of creating meaningful and sustainable change. If senior management does not show immediate support for the plan, however, additional meetings over a long period may be required to convince them of the need to act—therefore, engaging early with senior management is critical.

After engaging with senior management, school administration will then need to engage with like-minded staff at Mountainview and determine their appetite for leading the kind of change being proposed. Given the static nature of the organization and the lack of staff turnover at Mountainview, many of the staff who could serve as potential change champions may not in fact want to challenge the status quo or risk their relationships with their colleagues. Treading carefully while at the same time trying to highlight the injustices and systemic racism that occurs daily at Mountainview is a delicate balance and, as acknowledged throughout this organizational improvement plan, cannot be accomplished alone. Continuing to keep the problem in front of the staff while enhancing the desire, courage, and integrity of change champions in the school to drive change will be imperative. Some will resist the task if it is pushed too hard or if their practices are criticized. Helping them to understand that education—and their practice as teachers—must evolve will be vital to the task. When we know better, we do better. Past practices that were once acceptable are no longer acceptable. Given a new demographic, and new knowledge about inclusion and equity, failure to change is not an option.

The final step in the change process requires dialogue with students and their families. As essential stakeholders in this organizational improvement plan, they must be invited into the

conversation and their stories heard; school staff and principal must be prepared to learn from them and to ask what they want from staff and principal as educators. The entire reason for change at Mountainview is to create a school that is more inclusive of their cultures and community. Mountainview's White, male principal must avoid creating the perception that he knows best what other cultures want or need.

The problem of practice identified at Mountainview, and the proposed organizational improvement plan, makes clear that continuing efforts to understand the complexities of bias, political beliefs, culture, and how these factors shape practice, will be required if the school is to move forward. Staff and principal must continue to learn and be prepared to act on new knowledge related to the changes that must be made at Mountainview.

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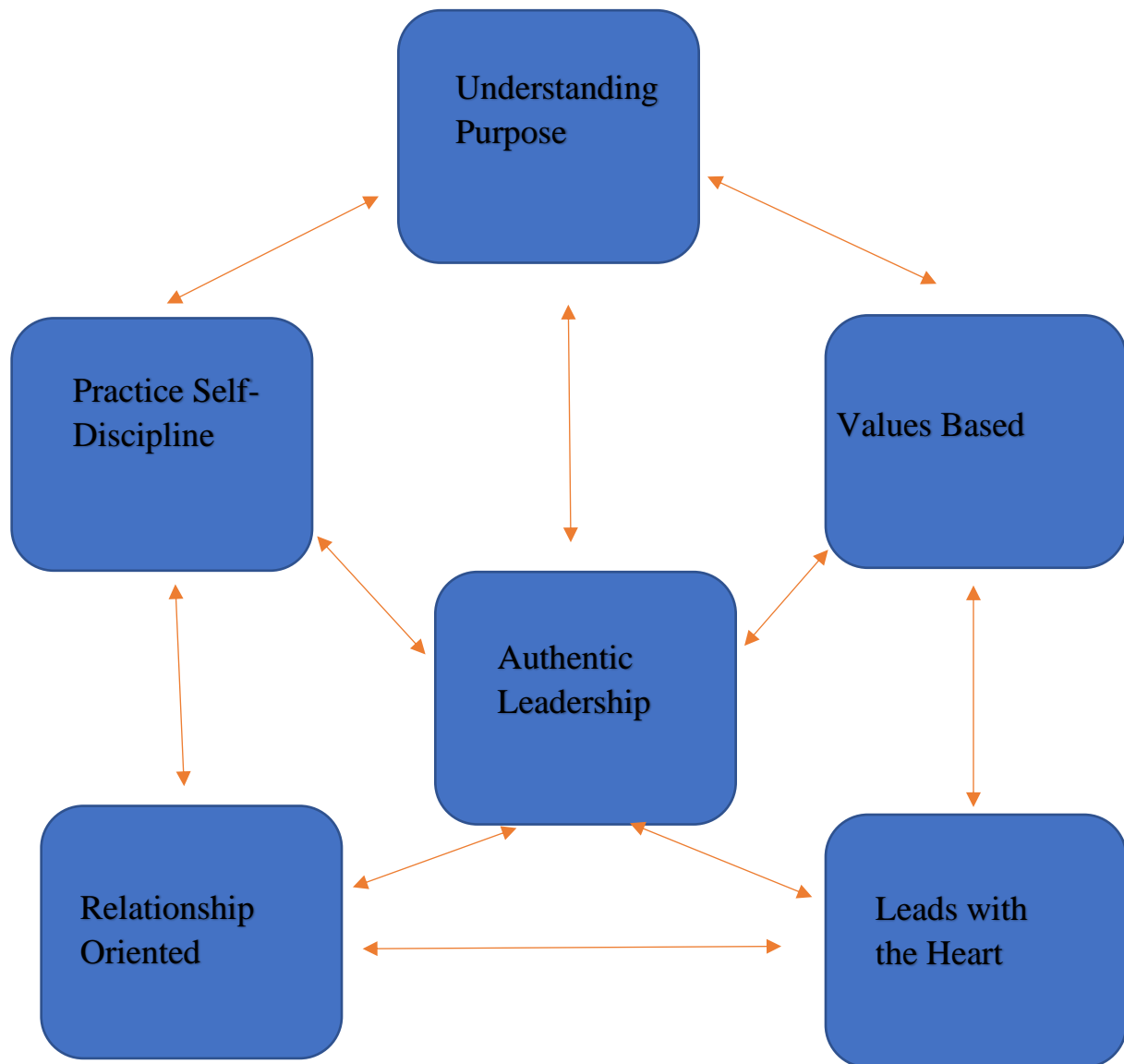
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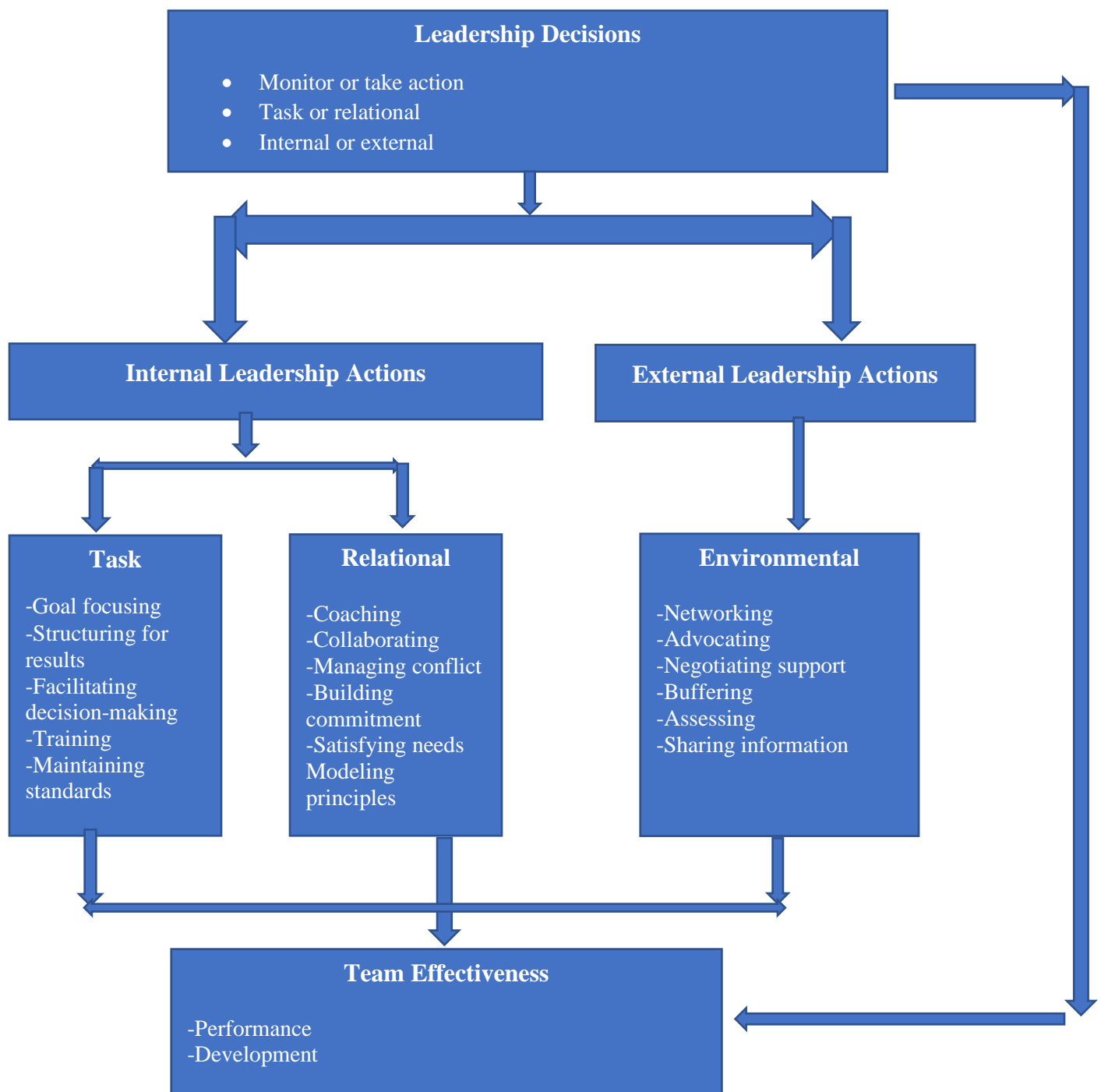
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Appendix A

Authentic Leadership Model



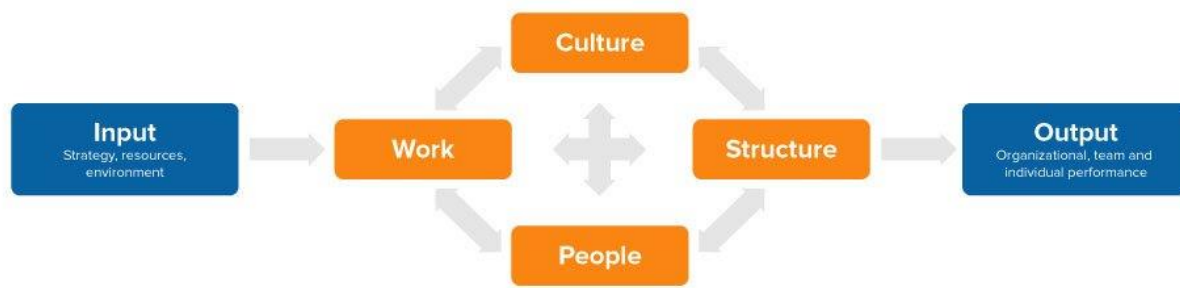
Adapted from Johnson, S. (2019, September 1). *Authentic leadership theory and practical applications in nuclear medicine*. Journal of Nuclear Medicine Technology. Retrieved March 28, 2022, from <https://tech.snmjournals.org/content/47/3/181>

Appendix B**Distributed Leadership Model**

Adapted from Northouse, P.G. (2019). *Leadership: Theory and practice*. SAGE Publications

Appendix C

Nadler and Tushman Congruence Model



*Note: The Nadler-Tushman Congruence Model: Aligning the drivers of high performance. Retrieved December 9, 2021, from https://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newSTR_95.htm.

Appendix D

Brave Spaces/Psychological Safety Framework



*Safe and Brave Spaces framework retrieved from <https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/what-is-psychological-safety-at-work/> by the Center for Creative Leadership, 2022.

Appendix E

Recognizing Bias Checklist

CHECKLIST: Creating an Anti-Bias Learning Environment

Use this list to Identify strengths and areas in need of improvement

Images...

	We do this well	Needs improvement
Does the physical environment contain images of people from diverse backgrounds (for example, diverse cultures and religions, and people of different ages)?		
Does the physical environment include images that counter existing stereotypes (for example, a Mexican physician instead of a Mexican in a sombrero taking a siesta)?		
Does the physical environment include images of diverse people engaged in everyday dress and activities)?		
Does the physical environment include images of people with a range of different abilities and body types engaged in a variety of activities?		
Does the physical environment include images of many different kinds of family compositions and socioeconomic groups?		
Does the physical environment include images that demonstrate the geographic diversity of family dwellings, neighborhoods, and communities (for example, urban, rural, suburban)?		
Does the physical environment include images that counter gender stereotypes (for example women demonstrating physical strength and men performing domestic tasks or caring for children)?		
Does the physical environment include images of people from diverse backgrounds interacting with one another?		

Experiences...

	We do this well	Needs improvement
Do textbooks and other curricular resources include content and illustrations that reflect the experiences of people from diverse backgrounds?		
Does the school provide opportunities for all students and staff to participate in anti-bias education programs that promote awareness of personal biases and provide opportunities to develop skills to challenge bias?		
Does the curriculum promote understanding of diverse perspectives, including the values, attitudes and behaviors that support cultural pluralism?		
Do the teaching strategies reflect a variety of learning styles?		
Does the school staff provide equal opportunities and maintain high expectations for all students?		
Do school policies and procedures foster positive interactions among staff, students and students' families?		
Does the school foster students' learning of other languages, including sign language, as legitimate means of communication?		
Does the curriculum help students develop decision-making abilities, social participation skills, and a sense of political efficacy needed for effective citizenship?		

*Adapted from Anti-Defamation League's Checklist for Identifying Bias and Creating an Anti-Bias Learning environment, from www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/creating-an-anti-bias-learning-environment.

Appendix F

Survey Questions/Performance Indicators

<u>Sources of Data</u>	<u>Survey questions/Performance indicators</u>	<u>Targets</u>
Staff Exit Survey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) What resonated with you during the "first look-second thought" activity? 2) Does the collaborative exercise help with identifying personal bias? Please rate on a scale of 1 -5 (with 1 being not at all, and 5 being very much) 3) Will these activities support you in your classroom? Please rate on the scale of 1-5 (1 being not at all, 5 being very much)- if not at all, please explain why? 	<p>Staff engagement- Majority involved, good dialogue being demonstrated.</p> <p>Survey results- Looking for improvement over several sessions that indicate an understanding of bias and that staff are changing or are willing to change practice. If no improvement in the mini cycle- new activities or survey questions will be developed.</p>
Parent session Survey	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Did you find this session helpful? Please indicate on a scale of 1 -5 (1 being not at all, 5 being very much so). Please write what was or what was not useful? 2) Do you see your family culture represented in Mountainview? Yes or No? If not, how can we improve? 	<p>Target- Looking to achieve scores of 5. A score of 5 means that Mountainview is supportive of cultural differences and reflective of.</p> <p>Parent sessions will be monitored for attendance. Baseline attendance will be set at the first session and subsequent sessions will be monitored for fluctuations in parent attendance. The goal is to achieve around 25% of parental attendance for the short term (Roughly 70 parents).</p> <p>5 is optimal score from all staff.</p>

<p>Community presentations at staff meetings/Daily classroom walk throughs.</p>	<p>3) How can Mountainview improve in reflecting culture (please state)?</p> <p>1) Did you find this presentation useful (rate 1-5. 1 being not at all, 5 being very much)?</p> <p>2) What are some strategies you will incorporate into practice?</p> <p>3) Daily classroom walk throughs analyze if new knowledge is transferred to practice.</p>	<p>5 is optimal score from all parents.</p>
<p>After school professional development on culture and bias recognition.</p>	<p><u>Performance indicators</u></p> <p>Short term- track staff attendance at professional development. Acquire anecdotal evidence around which pro-d staff would like to have offered for future (needs to be on cultural relevance).</p>	<p>-25% staff attendance initially (short term).</p> <p>-Visible representation of other cultures on display in classrooms, relevant curricula is used to engage with diverse students. ABCD/NIC presentations ongoing in classrooms.</p>

Appendix G

Equity Walk Observation Template

Equity Component	Question	Evidence in school and classrooms you see	To promote learning conversations...
Public Space	What evidence of equity is demonstrated in the school's public spaces?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key Messages • Pictures/Posters • Significant events/celebrations 	
	<p>Is there evidence of inclusion?</p> <p>What leadership opportunities are available for students?</p> <p>How does the resource rooms/library demonstrate equity?</p> <p>What can you discern from "walking the walls"?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Warm & welcoming to parents and community – benches, plants, information • Events supported by the school 	
Classrooms as Learning	<p>How is the learning environment inclusive and reflective of individual learning profiles?</p> <p>What evidence is there of a culture of high expectations?</p> <p>What evidence do you see in the environment that demonstrates culturally relevant and responsive teaching and learning?</p> <p>Is the student work visible?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cuing systems • Anchor charts • Exemplars • Rubrics • All students' work represented • Pictures reflect classroom diversity • Seating Arrangements 	

	<p>Is it some students' work or all students' work?</p> <p>What technology is available for teaching and learning in the classroom environment?</p> <p>Is there evidence of differentiated instruction?</p> <p>Is the learning environment intellectually challenging and stimulating for all learners?</p> <p>How does the learning environment help students develop awareness, understanding and acceptance of oneself and others?</p>		
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*Adapted from Equity Walks, Ontario Principal's Council.
<https://app.principals.ca/files/vault/EquityWalkMatrix.pdf>

Appendix H

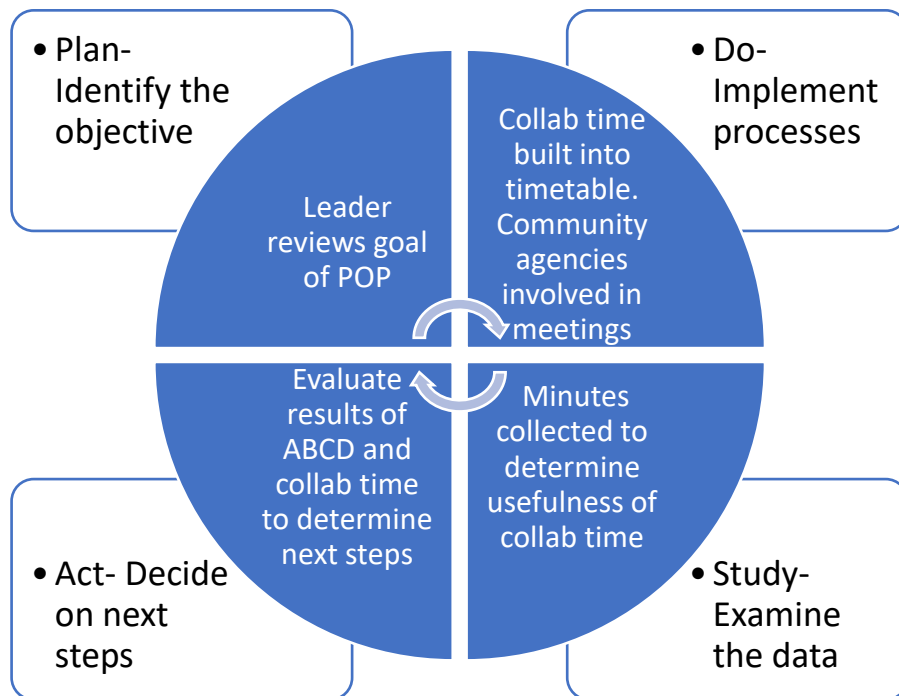
Think/Pair/Share

Prompt or Question	What I thought	My partner thought	What we will share

*Adapted from <https://www.studenthandouts.com/english/reflective-writing/think-pair-share-chart-worksheet.html>

Appendix I

Plan, Do, Study, Act Cycle for POP

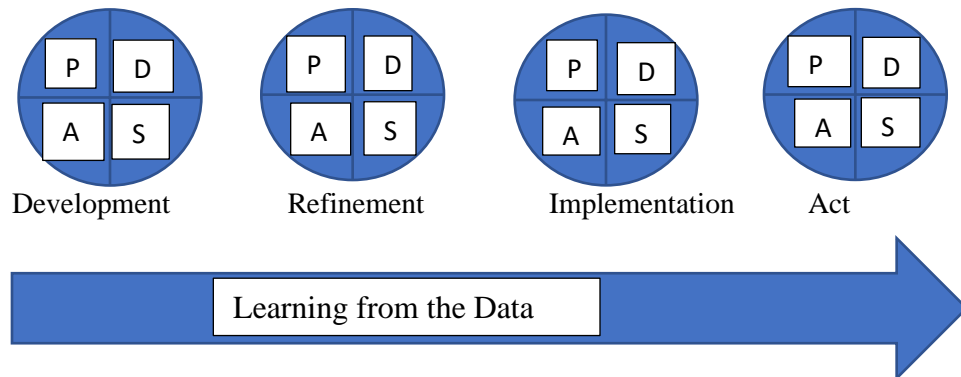


*Note- PDSA cycle adapted from *What is the plan-do-check-act (PDSA) cycle?* ASQ. (n.d.). Retrieved November 20, 2021, from <https://asq.org/quality-resources/pdca-cycle>.

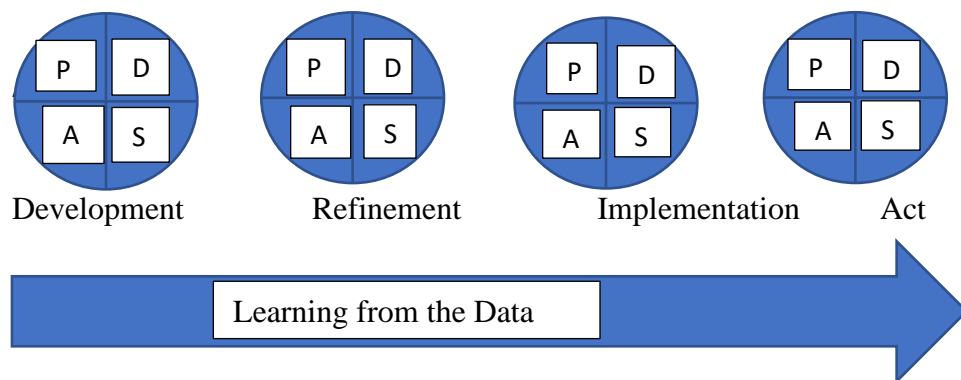
Appendix J

Bias Mitigation and ABCD/NIC PDSA Cycles

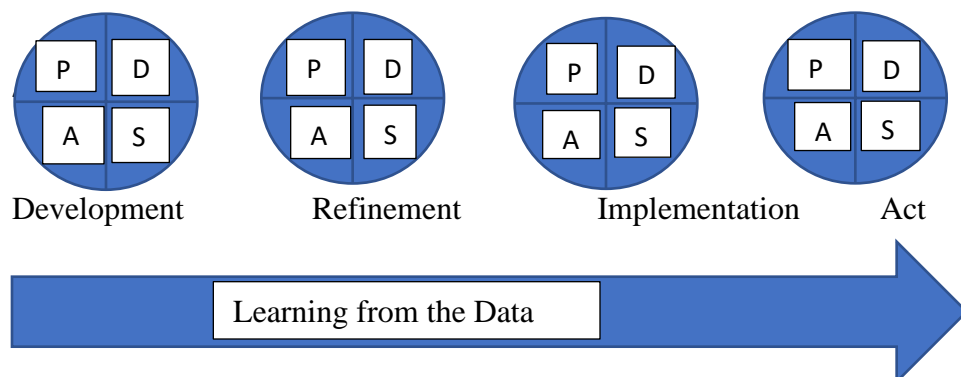
Bias Mitigation at Staff Meetings and Professional Development Fall 2022



Continuous refinement of Bias strategies January 2023 as needed



Introduction of South Asian voice re: Parents, ABCD and NIC: January 2023-Ongoing



*Note. Adapted from Researchgate (2009). https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Repeated-use-of-PDSA-cycle-Adapted-from-Langley-et-al-2009_fig1_317943804

Appendix K

Communication Plan

Phases	Goals	PDSA Cycle	Bridges/Kotter	Communication	Individuals
Pre-change Phase	Creating a sense of urgency	Planning	Phase 1 -Letting go of old ways and organizational routines. -Creating a sense of urgency. -Forming a Guiding coalition.	-Face to Face meetings -Direct supervisor -Emails -Microsoft Teams meetings -Line authority	-Change agent(leader) -CPSD senior management team -Change champions on staff
Developing the need for change	Educating staff on the need for change and the impact on the future state	Doing and study	Phase 2 -Exploration and engagement in risk productive struggle. -Working together as a team -Creating a vision. -Communicating a vision -Empowering others to act -Plan for short term wins	-Face to Face meetings -Microsoft Teams meetings -Emails -Redundant messaging (redundancy builds fluency)	-Change agent -Core group of change champions on staff -Whole staff (staff meetings, emails etc.)
Midstream Change	Staff are made aware of any structural or job changes in the future state	Doing and Study	Phase 2 (see above)	-Face to Face meetings -Microsoft Teams -Emails -Redundant messaging -One on one follow ups	-Change agent -Core group of change champions on staff -Whole staff -Community partners -Parents -Direct supervisor
Confirming the Change	Keeping people informed of the progress	Acting	Phase 3 -Staff and school implement the necessary adjustments/incorporate into practice -Improve on changes -Institutionalize new changes into organizational culture	-Face to Face meetings -Microsoft Teams -Emails -Redundant messaging -One on one follow ups	-Change agent -Core group of change champions on staff -Whole staff (staff meetings, emails etc.) -Community partners -Direct supervisor -Parents

*Note. Adapted from Deszca et al's (2020) communication plan goals and Klein (1996) communication plan strategies combined with Brisson-Banks' (2010) managing change and transitions: a comparison of different models and their commonalities.